

**PRAISE POETRY OF
THE BAKWENA BA MOGOPA
OF JERICHO**

BY

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**MINI DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF**

MASTER OF ARTS



IN

AFRICAN LANGUAGES

IN THE

FACULTY OF ARTS

AT THE

RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY

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FEBRUARY 1996

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express and record my indebtedness and sincere appreciation to:

1. My God, the Almighty, for giving me the strength and intellect to write this dissertation.
2. My supervisor, Mr H.C. Groenewald, for his guidance and encouragement and my co-supervisor, Mr S.A. Makopo for the part he played.
3. My husband, Solly, who for many years had to cope with a student-wife. He wholeheartedly supported me in my studies despite the trying times we experienced.
4. My children, Keoikantse and Didintle, who were sometimes neglected when the pressure became too much.
5. Information Librarian, Schalk van der Merwe, for his support and motivation.
6. My sisters, Dipuo Phalatse and Dipuo Mabiletsa, who are the driving force behind my success.
7. My parents, Refilwe and Ntsie Mabiletsa, for their love and support and my loving family friend, Lorato Kotsedi, for her love and support.
8. My thanks to all the parents in Jericho, especially Chieftainess Tshetlho and Mpadi Mamogale and the chief's aunt, Constance Sekokotli Mokgethi, who personally gave assistance despite the trying times.
9. To Kathy Nelson for her tireless effort and expertise in typing and editing this dissertation and to Daphne Hamilton and Herkie Blaauw who helped with some of the English translation, I say thank you very much.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsing is hoofsaaklik gegrond op die prysgedigte van die Bakwena ba Mogopa van Jericho. Ander genres van verbale kuns van hierdie stam word ook kortliks beskryf.

Die skripsie is in ses hoofstukke verdeel.

Die eerste hoofstuk sit die doelstelling en doelwitte uiteen en sluit die metodes, veldwerk, die benaderings tot verbale kuns en 'n oorsig van die verbale kuns van die Bakwena ba Mogopa, in.

Die tweede hoofstuk gee die geskiedenis van die Bakwena ba Mogopa en hulle prysgedigte in breë trekke weer. Die historiese agtergrond en die voordrag van die gedigte by verskillende geleenthede, word ook geskets.

Die derde hoofstuk sentreer om stamgroepgedigte waarin die geskiedenis van die Bakwena stam behoue gebly het.

Die vierde hoofstuk beklemtoon prysgedigte wat met die gooi van dolosse gepaard gaan. Die hoofstuk dui ook aan dat prysgedigte wat met die gooi van dolosse gepaard gaan, geüiter word wanneer hulle geraadpleeg word.

Hoofstuk vyf handel oor die strukturele kenmerke van die gedigte, byvoorbeeld, beelde en parallelisme.

Die sesde hoofstuk wat die slothoofstuk is, bevat 'n algemene gevolgtrekking en die verwysings.

SUMMARY

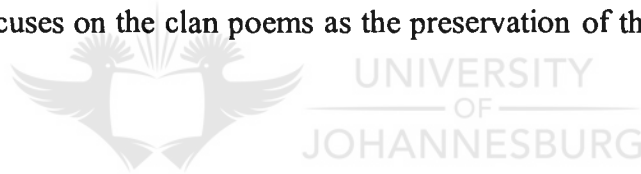
This research is based primarily on the praise-poems of the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho. Other genres of verbal art of this tribe are briefly described.

The study is divided into six chapters.

The first chapter contains the aim and objectives of this study and includes methods, fieldwork, approaches to verbal art and an overview of verbal art among the Bakwena ba Mogopa.

The second chapter is a brief outline of the history of the Bakwena ba Mogopa tribe and their heroic poems. The historical background of these poems as well as performances on different occasions, are outlined.

The third chapter focuses on the clan poems as the preservation of the history of the Bakwena tribe.



The fourth chapter focuses on praise-poems of the divining bones and shows that the actual divination and the praises of divining bones is performed by traditional doctors of the Bakwena ba Mogopa upon consultation.

The fifth chapter concentrates on the structural features of the poems, such as imagery and parallelism.

The sixth and last chapter is a general conclusion and references.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Verbal art such as poetry, songs, sayings, proverbs and stories, expresses the experience of contemporary situations or events or morals to be drawn from such occurrences or situations, or express intense emotions associated with them.

The various genres of Bakwena verbal art show that a close connection exists between the Bakwena and the Northern Sotho. All forms of Bakwena verbal art were meant for the ear rather than for the eye. Most of the songs are characterised by the call and response mode as well as the use of gestures and body movements of various kinds. In them, mime, music and poetry are inextricably intertwined. Structurally they are characterised by mechanisms accompanied by a rhythmical beat.

In earlier times, praise-poems were not written down and were internalised by surviving generations. Only portions which people could remember and transmit orally from generation to generation are still remembered today. The introduction of writing had, amongst other great advantages, the advantage of being able to record praise-poems.

European scholars have, in fact, already published small collections of praise-poems about the chiefs of some Tswana tribes as the Hurutshe, Marete and Tlokwa. Reading books compiled for use in Tswana schools, sometimes include a few praises. Tswanas interested in the history of their own tribes, have occasionally also written down praises of former and present chiefs as taken down from composers and reciters, just as it is in the case of this study of the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho. However, there are still many Tswana tribes who have no written records of their history.

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This dissertation aims to reflect and document verbal art amongst the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho.

An attempt will be made to examine the various genres of verbal art in the tribe. The researcher is of the opinion that she has a moral obligation, after learning about the norms and

values of her tribe, to pass them on to future generations. For this reason she has decided to write this dissertation before they are forgotten.

The aim of this study is to make future generations aware of their **ROOTS**, to know **WHO** they are, **WHERE** they come from and **HOW** the tradition now stands. This study is thus an attempt to stimulate awareness of the culture of the Bakwena. The way man expresses himself through words and actions, questions his own achievements, searches untiringly for new meanings, creates works through which he transcends his limitations, may be called culture. In this sense culture is very important.

If Black people cannot stand up to Western civilisation and find new means of protecting their culture, future generations will lose the wealth of their language when it dies. During the research, the researcher has realised that some genres of verbal art, such as praise-poems, are already gradually dying out with little prospect of continuation. Many aspects of our culture were lost and cannot be recorded.

The researcher hopes that, by completing this work, a foundation will have been laid for the preservation of the culture of the Bakwena and other tribes.

1.2 METHODS AND FIELDWORK

A partially structured interview was selected as an instrument for the collecting of data because of its flexibility. The investigator has also recorded the proceedings at actual ceremonies and then interviewed the praise-singers about the historical background of the praise-poems, to gather as much information as possible. Individuals who knew the historical background of the tribe were interviewed.

The respondents were visited at their homes. The praises of the divining bones were recorded during the actual ritual of throwing divining bones. This allowed for adequate communication between the parties using verbal communication, body language and facial expressions. A number of books, journals, dissertations and publications were also consulted.

Most of the riddles, proverbs and idioms used were collected personally during the research and were already recorded.

Songs sung by children aged between 9 and 15 years were also recorded; these songs are not limited to any one event or occasion. In this study, the researcher attempts to describe both the text and context.

1.3 TERMINOLOGY TO BE USED

1.3.1 Verbal Art

Guma (1967: 1) defines verbal art as:

The oral and traditional literature as a survival of an indefinite past from which it was handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. Being oral, it was most alive out of print and in the bookless world of the ancients. It was repeated re-telling with individual variations here and there, that established confidence in the rightness of what was said and how it was said.

This literature consisted of various categories such as myths, fables, folktales, riddles, proverbs, idioms and praise-poems.

1.3.2 Function of verbal art

Bascom (1954: 67) has identified four main functions of verbal art:

It is a mirror of culture in the sense that it sometimes sets out how ceremonies are to be performed.

It also seeks to justify rituals and institutions to those who perform and observe them.

It is also a pedagogic device.

It is used as a means of applying social pressure and exercising social control in order to maintain conformity to accepted patterns of behaviour.

In this research verbal art will be reduced to two main functions, namely that of entertainment and that of education. This view is implicit in Msimang's discussion of theme in his book **Folktale Influence on the Zulu Novel** (1986: 136) when he says:

"Thence it will also become clear that the Zulu novelist is to a certain degree still continuing the task of the folktale performer. He acts not only as an entertainer but also as a social critic... In a nutshell, Zulu oral literature is committed literature. A folktale performer is an entertainer and an educationist or moralist.

This convinces me that the function of the various types of folklore is double-pronged; they entertain and instruct ... Most folklorists tend to undermine the educative role of the folktale. Perhaps they are misled by the fact that the moral lesson is not summarised at the end of the tale as is the case with Aesop's fables or other tales from Western culture. They miss the important point that Africans are not overtly didactic and that they do not have formal schools, so they teach ... largely by telling stories. Even the riddles which are not at all taken seriously, are not a mere pastime: they also help to sharpen the children's powers of perception and wit. They familiarise them with their environment and the universe so that they may be able to interpret the wonders of nature and apply and relate them to their everyday lives. Entertainment is the means; instruction the end; and theme the embodiment of this instruction."

The entertainment function pertains to the enjoyment of each other's company, enjoyment of the defamiliarised language use, and enjoyment of the content of the particular oral form.

Likewise, the educating function takes on many aspects: educating with regard to the culture specific (history, customs, etc.), with regard to general moral issues, but also with regard to broader socio-political issues.

1.4 APPROACHES TO VERBAL ART

Several approaches can be employed in the study of verbal art. In this study reference will be made to performances and functions of verbal art.

1.4.1 Functionalism

According to Malinowsky (1948:18), interpretation should be derived from the context. Malinowsky maintains that folklore serves a social function.

After studying a Melanesian culture, Malinowsky proposes that an intimate connection exists between the word, the myths and the sacred tales of a tribe on the one hand and their ritual acts, their moral deeds, their social organisation and even their day to day activities on the other hand.

Malinowsky established that the Melanesians use myth to express and enhance religious beliefs, to enforce morality and ensure that the rituals are performed correctly as well as to provide practical guidelines.

He proposes that myth is a pragmatic charter of primitive faith and of moral wisdom.

1.4.2 Performance Approach

Drewal (1988: 1) describes performance as follows:

It might include anything from individual agent's negotiations of everyday life, to the stories people tell each other, popular entertainment, political oratory, guerilla warfare, to bounded events such as theatre, ritual, festivals, parades and more.



Bauman and Briggs (1990: 73) highlight the poetic aspect of performance:

Performance puts the act of speaking on display - objectifies it, lifts it to a degree from its interactional setting and opens it to scrutiny by an audience. Performance heightens awareness of the act of speaking and licences the audience to evaluate the skill and effectiveness of the performer's accomplishments.

Bauman (1978: 1) describes performance as:

..... a mode of spoken verbal communication (which) consists of the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence.

This implies that a performer has certain abilities and duties, is accountable to an audience and is also subject to evaluation both with regard to **what** he/she communicates and **how** it is done.

Bauman (1978: 15) examines how the framing of performance is accomplished. He shows that the frame is established by certain keys which can be seen as codes or signs enabling one to identify, interpret and evaluate performance. The examples of keys Bauman provides are special codes, figurative language, parallelism, special paralinguistic features, special formulae, appeal to tradition.

Bauman (1978: 27) mentions settings as "the culturally defined place where the performance occurs and institutions such as religion, education, politics". It seems justifiable to distinguish two aspects of the total situatedness of performance, namely situation which can be seen as the immediate setting of a performance and context which is the broader socio-political climate. One of the most important keys of performance is the event. A well known type of event has been called the cultural performance by Milton Singer." MacAloon (1984: 4) sees it as "a particularisation of the structure of tradition complementary to its social organisation". These particular instances of cultural organisation include weddings, temple festivals, recitations, plays, dances and musical concerts.

1.5 BACKGROUND OF THE BAKWENA BA MOGOPA OF JERICHO

1.5.1 History and the genealogy of chiefs

In July 1946, Charles Mamogale was appointed as the acting chief after having refused to accept the position for many years. He got married to Priscilla Mphahlele and they were blessed with four children, two girls and two boys namely Moleboge, Sekokotli, Aubrey Mafale and Modibe Ratau. Charles Mamogale died on 14 September 1946 after only a few months in office.

The acting chief to be appointed was Atlas Makopye More who was Charles Mamogale's uncle, being the younger brother of Charles Mamogale's father. He acted on behalf of Aubrey Emmanuel Mafale Mamogale and was recognised as acting regent on 1 November 1948. He ruled over the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho from 1946 to 1962.

After his death in 1962, Aubrey Mafale Mamogale, the eldest son of Charles Mamogale, was inaugurated on 30 September 1962 as chief of the Bakwena. Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale got married to Martha Lekgotlhoane in 1955 and she bore four children, two boys and two

girls, Tshetlho Ivy, Lerothodi, Shosho and Maetsane. Martha passed away in 1964. Aubrey Mafale Mamogale was a teacher by profession and he was known to be strict and diligent. He died on 29 April 1985 after a very short illness.

Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale was succeeded by his first son, Tshetlho Ivy, who was inaugurated on 10 October 1986. Chief Tshetlho Ivy Mamogale is married to Mpadi Eve Thipe and they have four children, Tumisang Ofentse, Martha Bonolo, Mogomotsi Aubrey and Tebogo Francis.

1.5.2 Regiments

Due to the influence of Christianity, circumcision was abandoned after the Manyane regiment had been formed. Hence the *mephato* (regiments) that followed were merely church confirmation regiments. The chief was responsible for naming the regiments. During the research, the researcher managed to obtain the following names of the confirmation regiments and the year in which they were confirmed. These include both boys and girls.

Matshwene	1900
Manaila	1903
Mathamaga	1907
Meleleba	1911
Madingwana	1915 / 1916
Makgasi	1919
Marutla	1925
Matshuba	1927
Mapulana	1935
Matshela	1939

This system of regiments has been discontinued, possibly due to the influence of western civilisation. Today after the members of the group receive their confirmation certificates, they are no longer granted names.

1.5.3 Tribal Organisation

The tribe is composed of the following clans listed in order of rank:

- Mogopa

- Barolong
- Tubatse
- Baphiring

The chieftainship is hereditary. In the government of the tribe the chief is assisted by the *Lekgotla* (public council) which consists of the four leaders of the clans and ordinary members chosen from among the different clans.

Then there is the *pitso* which is a meeting of the people. When the chief wishes to inform the people of the *lekgotla's* decision, he calls a *pitso*. People are then informed of the council's decision and at the same time offered the opportunity to voice their opinions.

1.5.4 Political Organisation

The chief is automatically an ex-officio member of the tribal authority, as the umbrella body of all the political structures. Presently there are the following parties: African National Congress, Azanian Peoples' Organisation, National Party and Peoples' Progressive Party. If prior arrangements are made, members of these parties are free to meet and discuss their matters at any public place.

There is a development forum where other stakeholders are also free to participate. The chief is again an ex-officio member of this development forum.

1.5.5 Social organisation

Both Christians and non-Christians pay lobola for marriage with cattle or an equivalent of that in cash. Weddings are still celebrated and honoured. After confirmation unmarried boys and girls go to town to work. A contract for a year was signed by the parents and the employer; this custom was called *jara*. The payment of one cow was made at the end of the contract. As a result of westernisation, this custom was eventually discontinued and after confirmation children are encouraged to continue with their studies.

For economic and social purposes women and men organise themselves into Burial Societies and stokvels with the aim of assistance during both funerals and feasts. Each society has a

particular name and they are registered with the *kgotla* so that during conflicts or any disputes the council can intervene, using their constitution as a yardstick.

1.5.6 Beliefs of the Bakwena

Diphoko or *dithhare* (protective charms) are still used today e.g. *serokolo* (an amulet) is still used to ward off diseases such as whooping cough or dental abnormalities in children.

A stick called *mopakwane* is still placed at the entrance of a home where a baby has been born to prevent people from entering.

Stillborn and premature babies are buried in their mother's bedroom and, despite laws which have been passed to stop this custom, many families still secretly continue to do so.

In the case of the death of a family member, the mourners shave their heads and wear a piece of black cloth pinned to the left sleeve of their clothes. A widow wears black clothes for a period of one year after the death of her husband.

1.5.7 Churches and Schools

The first church to be built in Jericho was the Hermansburg Lutheran Church, established by the Hermansburg Lutheran Missionary Society in 1864. Nowadays there are many different churches built by various congregations such as Zion Christian Church or Dutch Reformed Church.

Most of the schools and creches were built by the tribe and are named after Bakwena heroes or landmarks - Toloane High School is named after the Toloane river, Mafale Primary is named after Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale, Charles Mamogale Primary School is named after Chief Charles Mamogale, Makopye More Middle School is named after Chief Atlas Makopye More, Martha Mamogale Creche is named after Chief Aubrey Mafale's wife, Mmatope Lower Primary is named after the village Jericho, the Tswana name for Jericho being Mmatope-a-Seretsana.

Only one school is a government-aided school, viz, Kwena-ya-Madiba, which is named after the tribes totem, *Kwena* (crocodile).

1.5.8 Pastoralism and Agriculture

The Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho do not own many cattle. The reason for this is that they have no herd boys as all the children have to attend school.

The land belonging to individuals varies in size. There is an area set aside for agricultural production extending to 3 200 hectares. There are 32 participants falling under the jurisdiction of the Bakwena tribe. Each is entitled to cultivate 100 hectares. They are being subsidised with a certain package including a tractor, a plough, and a planter. Other equipment is shared cooperatively. The corporation is called the Toloane Agricultural Primary Corporation. Today the Bakwena say that they do not reap as much as their grandparents did because of the drought in the area.

When an individual is given a residential site, he is at the same time given five hectares where he can produce food.

The Toloane Agricultural Primary Corporation again helps each farmer to sell their produce. There is separate land set aside for the grazing of their cattle which is done co-operatively.

1.5.9 Development

Compared to other non-Bakwena tribes in the district, the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho may be regarded as wealthy because of the development of the physical structures in their village. The following contribute to the revenue of the tribe: Each shopowner contributes a certain amount of money. The local bus-depot also contributes a certain levy to the tribe for the piece of land they occupy.

CHAPTER 2

2 OVERVIEW OF VERBAL ART AMONG THE BAKWENA BA MOGOPA OF JERICHO

2.1 WISDOM LORE

2.1.1 Proverbs

Guma (1967: 65) describes a proverb as a

...pithy sentence with a general bearing on life and serves to express 'some homely truth' or moral lesson in such an appropriate manner as to make one feel that no better words could have been used to describe the situation.

2.1.1.1 The role of proverbs

The Bakwena use various proverbs in various situations. To highlight these, three recordings were made: firstly at a wedding celebration, secondly at a tribal court session and thirdly at a tribal gathering.

2.1.1.2 Traditional court session

In this situation proverbs are used by someone to get at his opponent, or to try to make out a good case for himself by drawing some analogy through the image in a proverb.

During the court proceedings, people may use proverbs in order to influence the verdict. The power of the proverbs serves the same purpose as English law books. Proverbs were used in the following situations and they contributed to the legal jargon:

A young man who was previously caught for stealing cattle was accused of stealing clothes from a local store. His children were found wearing some of the stolen clothes.

After the accused had been questioned at length, the chief summarised the discussion with the following proverbs:

Phokojwe ga a ke a latlha mosele e le wa gagwe (A jackal never discards its trod).

This proverb means that a person cannot change his personality.

Kgomo e tshwarwa ka dinaka, motho o tshwarwa ka leleme (A cow is caught by the horns, while a person is ensnared by his tongue). This proverb was used to emphasize

the fact that the accused failed to produce proof of purchase for the court, i.e. he could not produce a receipt for the clothes. Two other proverbs were used to strengthen the fact that he was a thief because his children were found wearing the stolen clothes, viz *Legodu le rolwa morwalo* (A thief is the one found with stolen goods); and *Legodu ke le le tshwerweng* (A thief is the one caught stealing).

There was some disruption and men shouted "*Ya mosimane ke e nkgwe... ya mosimane ke e nkgwe...*" (The guilty boy must be lashed).

The accused man was held down and given eight lashes plus two extra lashes.

2.1.1.3 Tribal gathering

Another recording was made while the people were gathered at Kwena Madiba High School to celebrate their first matric results. The following proverbs were used by the chief in his concluding speech to warn, advise, challenge and criticise the bad behaviour of the school children:

Mokoduo go tsoiwa o o itekang (Emaciated cow will help the one which is trying) meaning teachers will help students who take pains.

Ntswanyana e bonwa mabotobotong (A puppy is seen on the boundary) meaning a child shows what he will be in the future when he is still very young.

Ditlamehwana tsa pula di baakanngwa go sale gale (Preparations for rain are made well in advance) meaning every child is responsible for his/her own future and he/she should prepare for it.

2.1.1.4 Wedding celebration

At the end of the wedding celebration, the married couple is given admonitions, which people call *go laiwa*. At the wedding which the researcher recorded, the aunts who are portrayed as people who have explored all corners of life, used the following proverbs to advise, to teach, to warn and encourage the married couple so as to save their marriage:

Ntwakgolo ke ya molomo (The biggest fight is that of the mouth) meaning that married couples were advised to solve their problems by discussing not by fighting.

Ga go na mokgoro o o sa neleng (There is no house that does not leak) meaning that every family has its problems.

Pelo potsane e bošwa ka kgole (The heart is a kid; it is tied with a thong) meaning that people should be patient.

2.1.2 Idioms

Ntsanwisi (1965: 14), who concerned himself with a descriptive study of the idiom in Tsonga, says:

The term idiom will be defined as a fixed structural form or a fixed phrasal pattern of words which go together, peculiar to the genius of a language as regards grammatical structure, accepted by usage, and the meaning of which cannot be logically or literally ascertained from its component parts.

For example, the idiom *Go wa putla* (to trip) means to lose one's wealth. The meaning cannot be deduced or inferred from a knowledge of the individual words that make up the idiom. Idioms are native to a language and have the stylistic effect of giving it a typical native ring that is characteristic of its mode of expression.

Among the Bakwena a great many idioms/sayings are made up of various lexical items:

- Infinitive verb with ideophone
Go wa putla (to trip) means to lose all ones wealth
- Infinitive verb with adverbs
Adverb of manner *Go ya lolololo* (to go a long way) means to give unnecessary details
Adverb of place *Go ya badimong* (to go to the ancestors) means to die.
- Infinitive verb incorporating a reflexive prefix
Go ithwala (to carry oneself) means to be pregnant.
- An infinitive followed by object (and adverbs)
Go tshasa motho ka mafura mo matlhong (to smear butter over someone's eyes) means to deceive a person.
- The infinitive followed by two objects
Go opa kgomo lenaka (to hit a cow on the horn) means to speak the truth.

Idioms are called *maele* by the Bakwena. A person not familiar with the genius of the language or with its usage will not understand the meaning of these expressions from their component elements. Some of these expressions may seem illogical but they have been accepted and decreed as good usage by the people who speak this language.

2.1.3 Riddles

Guma (1967: 2) defines the riddle as "...an obscure description of something which the hearer is asked to name."

Moloto (1982: 87) says "Riddles represent the apprehension of daily experience in its simple, complex, didactic, aesthetic, earned and humorous subtleties".

Riddles constitute an art of poetry. The following riddle, for example, is used in the poem "Jericho Village" (op.cit.). Riddles also adds beauty to the spoken language, viz., *Ba gabunya Sephoki Sephonkana sekhurumelo se metsi a monate* (They drink Sephoki Sephonkana the fruit having delicious water). The answer is: *Legapu* (watermelon).

Bakwena riddles provoke thinking and express ideas because they are formed by the Bakwena from an observation of plants, animals and objects surrounding them.

Bakwena riddles are a social institution and therefore cultural creations in that they were not written originally, they are a game in which at least two participants participate. Today, due to western civilisation, the riddling sessions have stopped. Instead of riddling, people watch television and listen to music.

2.2 PROSE FORMS

2.2.1 Myths

Guma (1967: 2) defines a myth as

A tale that professes to relate some happening in which supernatural beings are concerned and probably in so doing to offer an explanation of some natural phenomenon.

A myth is a means of explaining a certain phenomenon in a creative way. It provides an answer to man's attempt to account for the numerous questions that baffle him, for example, the mysteries of life and death, love and hatred. A myth that explains the origin of death is that of *Leobu* (chameleon). It explains why, when people are dead, they never return.

The myth is about a king who sent a chameleon to the people to tell them that although they would die, they would rise again. Leobu (the chameleon) was lazy and lingered on the road. Mogaditshwane (the lizard), the king's body guard, stood listening, then swiftly ran from village to village to tell the people that the king said when they died, they would never rise again.

When Leobu arrived with the message, the people replied:

Santlha, ke santlha, sa morago ke dithuthuntshwane (The real message to be accepted is the first message, the second is worthless).

2.2.2 Fables

Jobes (1962: 564) defines a fable as a short tale related to teach a moral, and the characters are usually animals.

Like proverbs, the Bakwena use them as a warning, as advice, or a challenge, or to encourage or discourage certain behaviour in the upbringing of their children.

The fable *Leeba le Phiri* (The rock pigeon and the hyena) teaches people that they should never trust anyone. It ends with the following proverbs:

Motho ga a itsewe e se naga (It is not possible to know a person as one can know the environment);

Meno-masweu polaya e tshega (White teeth kill whilst laughing) meaning that one should not be deceived by pretenders (who often smile).

This fable and the proverbs enumerated are intended to teach children that no one should ever be trusted.

2.2.3 Folktales

Guma (1967: 2) defines the folktale as

"a popular story handed down by tradition from generation to generation and which was told for the sake of telling a story".

Folktales are narrations meant for entertainment and education. In folktales, animals and human beings are usually involved. Three different types of folktales have been collected, viz

- those with animals as characters
- those with people as characters
- those with ogres as characters

2.2.3.1 Animals

A well-known folktale of the Bakwena tribe is that of *Mmutla le dinonyane* (The hare and the birds). No moral lesson can be deducted from this story, as it is merely told for entertainment.

The most enjoyable part of the tale is when the hare regards the fallen leaves of the marula tree as a cloud. When other animals asked the hare why he was running away as fast as he could, he replied "*Wa re, re tshabang o ntse o bona leru le wele?*" (You ask why we are running away - can't you see that a cloud has fallen?) It is also enjoyable to hear that all the other animals which the hare met, fled with him. After a long race, the animals met the birds who explained to them that it was not a cloud which had fallen, but the leaves of the marula tree.

2.2.3.2 People

The folktale *Motlhanka wa go tlhoka nnete* (A dishonest servant) is used as entertainment but also teaches children that nothing can be kept secret. The moral of the story is repeated in the proverb *Le fa o ka e buela lengopeng magakabe a go bona* (Even if you skin it in a ditch, the pied crows will see you) which means that there is no secret which cannot be revealed.

2.2.3.3 Ogres

In the folktale of *Tselane le Dimo* (Tselane and the Ogre) the children are taught to be responsible and obey their elders.

Tselane's parents were moving to a new home in order to escape from the ogres. Tselane refused to listen to the advice of her parents and remained behind. After they had left, she was captured by the ogre, Dimo, who intended to eat her.

The folktale teaches children the proverb which says *Ngwana yo o sa utlweng molao wa batsadi, o tla utlwa wa manong* (The child who does not listen to his parents, will listen to the vultures) which means that if children do not obey their parents, they land in trouble.

2.3 SONGS

2.3.1 The Status of Songs

A song is often composed for a particular occasion. Traditional and contemporary songs have different functions. They may bring peace and co-operation or they may be destructive. When sung during wars, people are motivated and become active. They may bring happiness or sorrow. Children and adults are given rules and regulations through songs. The Bakwena ba Mogopa, like other groups, exhibit and reflect on their traditions and customs through songs. Children spend much time singing and dancing. This they learn at an early age by listening to and watching their parents.

Songs are best dealt with according to events such as

Initiation of Chief Counsellors

Celebration of Christmas

Praying for Rain

Wedding ceremonies

Graduation feasts

Rituals

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2.3.1.1 Initiation of Chief Counsellors

The following song was composed and sung by the *Matshela* regiment for the *kgosana* (leader) Seneke Mabiletsa, on the day of his inauguration in 1958. The song was sung to the researcher by Mmamakele More, a chorister who sang at the inauguration, and was then recorded. It reads :

Banyana ba Bopedi

Ba tswa botlhabatsatsi

Ba tlile go kopana

Go bona kwa ba tswang

Ka nnete re utlwile

Ba kgoro ya Tubatse

Girls of Bopedi

Are from the east

They have come to meet

To see where they come from

Truly we have heard

The Tubatse clan

<i>Re itumela thata</i>	We are very happy
<i>Go bona kwa re tswang</i>	To see where we came from
<i>Kajeno re tsaletswa</i>	Today we have given birth to
<i>Mosimanyana mono</i>	A little boy here
<i>O bitswa Mabiletsa</i>	He is called Mabiletsa
<i>Tlayang lotlhe lo mmone</i>	Come all to see him
<i>Ka nnete re utlwile</i>	Truly we have heard
<i>Ba kgoro ya Tubatse</i>	The Tubatse clan
<i>Re itumela thata</i>	We are very happy
<i>Go bona kwa re tswang</i>	To see where we are from

2.3.1.2 Celebration of Christmas

During the December holidays, before Christmas, the youths of the community form musical groups which they call *Turupa* or *Masekotšho* (derived from the words "troupe" and "Scottish" respectively). There is a group for each clan. These groups practice every evening after sunset and each has its own uniform, usually consisting of a tartan skirt, a plain white shirt, white takkies, white socks and a beret. On Christmas morning, the various groups gather at the community buildings before the chief's *kgotla* to demonstrate what they have learnt. This procedure of performing before the *kgotla* is called *go dumedisa* (to greet). From the *kgotla* the groups go from house to house entertaining people with the songs they have practised, accompanied by demonstrations of stick and wheel games. The following song was sung by the Mogopa group when they met the Baphiring group:

<i>Baphiring lo tshabe!</i>	Baphiring you must run away!
<i>Lo tshabe ba Mogopa</i>	Run away from the Mogopa group
<i>Re tla le gata ka maoto</i>	We shall trample you with our feet
<i>Ruri wee...</i>	Really and truly...
<i>Re tla le gata ka maoto</i>	We shall trample you with our feet
<i>Ruri wee...</i>	Really and truly...
<i>Re ya tsamaya</i>	We are going

Another song reads:

Group: <i>Banyana ba Mogopa</i>	Group: Girls of the Mogopa tribe
<i>Tshikinyang matheka!</i>	Shake your loins!

	<i>Tshikinyang matheka!</i>		Shake your loins!
	<i>Re tsamayeng!</i>		And let us go!
Response:	<i>Tshikinya!</i>	Response:	Shake!
	<i>Tshikinyang, tshikinyang!</i>		Shake, shake!
	<i>Tshikinyang!</i>		Shake!
	<i>Tshikinya, tshikinya!</i>		Shake, shake!
	<i>Tshikinya matheka!</i>		Shake your loins!
	<i>Re tsamayeng!</i>		And let us go!

2.3.1.3 Prayers for Rain

In the past when the tribe experienced a period of drought, the chief called a gathering called *Pitso ya kgothekgothe* (a gathering for all people). A particular regiment was sent out to the veld to collect all objects such as litter, waste material and bones of dead animals. Traditionally these objects were called *dibeela* (litter). They were believed to be part of the things which impede rain. The gathering was held at the foot of Tsogwe Mountain. The tribe would spend several hours praying to their ancestors to give them rain and to forgive the tribe and the chief for their wrongs.

They informed the researcher that at the end of the ceremony, when they entered the village, it was raining heavily. Today the Bakwena elders say they do not reap enough because this traditional way of praying for rain is no longer practised. One of their praise and prayer songs reads:

<i>Lefatshe le nyorilwe</i>	The land is dry
<i>Bomme le bo ntate</i>	Mothers and fathers
<i>A re rapeleleng pula</i>	Let us pray for rain
<i>E rile ba e bona</i>	When they saw rain clouds
<i>Ba re: "pula e etla"</i>	They said: "the rain is coming"
<i>Ba re: "waa...waa...waa"</i>	They say: "waa...waa...waa"
<i>Re tlhoka pula,</i>	We lack rain
<i>Pula ga e teng mono</i>	There is no rain here

2.3.1.4 Wedding Ceremonies

When the bridegroom and the bride arrive from church, they stop at the gate called *kgorwana* (the gate of the courtyard) and *rakgadi* (an aunt) and *malome* (an uncle) are given the opportunity to praise the bridal couple. This is done to invite the ancestors into the lives of the couple and to inform the audience who the celebrants really are in terms of their ancestral lineage.

The following praise verses were recited by the bride's uncle.

Ke nna motho wa gabo Ntwesatswesane-a-Matlala,

Yo o senang morwesi.

Yo o rileng go rwesana ena

A bo o ilogelwa.

Ka ba ka bona monna wa Lephophotho,

Lephophotho monna wa Matebele

Ka rawesiwa ke ene.

Ke nna motho wa bo Sedikwadikwe-sa-Magala,

Ba re: letlapa ke le le...

kwa Mothulanaledi.

Le le kileng la tshwenya Matabele,

Nna morwa Mogopa-a-Matlala ka le ribolola,

La ribolola ke nna Kgantse-a-Diale.

Nna ga ke utswa dikgomo

Ke utswa basadi.

Ke ba gogetse felong ga Mmathothobolo

A felo ga Mmathothobolo,

Ke bogegelo jwa methepana?

Ga re itse re tla bona teng.

I am a person of the Ntwesatwesane of Matlala,

Who has no helper.

Who when they helped each other

Was left without help.

Then I saw a man of Lephophotho,

Lephophotho a man of the Matebele

I got help from him.

I am a person of Sedikwadikwe of Magala,

They say: the stone is there...

at Mothulanaledi.

That once bothered the Matabele

I, the man of the Mogopa of the Matlala I unturned it,

It was unturned by me, Kgantse of Diale,

I do not steal the cows

I steal the women.

I dragged them to Mmathothobolo's place

It is the place Mmathothobolo,

The place to keep girls?

We don't know, We shall see there.

The praiser accompanies his praises with gestures as the excitement increases. The audience was already ululating and motivating him with words saying *Ipolele* (Tell about yourself),

Tlaya ka tsona (Come with them). At the time, he had a knobkierie in his hand and used it occasionally to frighten the audience. The praise-poem progressed according to the seniority of family members of the bridegroom's ancestors.

After the praiser had ended, another uncle said *A ba tsene* (Let them come in). When they entered, the wedding songs were sung. Here are some of the verses of the wedding songs chanted:

<i>Tsamaya lo bitsa bo malome</i>	Go and call the uncles
<i>Tsamaya lo bitsa bo malome</i>	Go and call the uncles,
<i>majaditlhogo</i>	the head-eaters
<i>Le re setlogolo se a nyalwa</i>	Go and say the grandchild is getting married
<i>Le re setlogolo se a nyalwa kwa Jericho</i>	Say the grandchild is getting married at Jericho
<i>Makoti se thabele lenyalo</i>	Daughter-in-law don't rejoice over marriage
<i>Makoti se thabele lenyalo</i>	Daughter-in-law don't rejoice over marriage
<i>Le tla go sotla</i>	It will disappoint you.

The following song was sung by Malomemajaditlhogo (the uncle the head-eater):

<i>Tlhogo wee! tlhogo wee!</i>	Oh head! Oh head!
<i>Re batla tlhogo ya motho</i>	We want the head of the person
<i>Tlhogo wee! tlhogo wee!</i>	Oh head! Oh head!
<i>Re batla tlhogo ya motho</i>	We want the head of the person
<i>Felo fa, ga re go itse</i>	This place we do not know
<i>Re batla tlhogo ya motho</i>	We want the head of the person
<i>Felo fa, ga re go itse</i>	This place we do not know
<i>Re batla tlhogo ya motho</i>	We want the head of the person

The significance of the song is that the *malome Mojaditlhogo* (the uncle the head-eater) identifies himself amongst all other uncles, that he is the one responsible for the couple. The whole ceremony was run by him. He was the one to decide upon the amount of lobola and to take lobola to the bride's family or to receive the lobola. With the lines

<i>Tlhogo wee! tlhogo wee!</i>	Oh head! Oh head!
<i>Re batla tlhogo ya motho</i>	We want the head of the person

they mean their daughter-in-law must bear children. Traditionally a girl is only called a woman after giving birth to children. Married women who do not have children are called *basetsana* (girls).

At sunset the couple was taken into the house *go laiwa* (to be advised). This was done by aunts who were regarded as people who have experienced life. They used proverbs to advise, to teach, to warn, discourage and provide morals for the married couple so as to ensure success in their marriage.

2.3.1.5 Graduation Feasts

It often happens that the Bakwena celebrate some or other graduation by slaughtering a cow. It is part of Bakwena culture to celebrate any achievement by spilling blood - *go tsholola madi*. The main reason for doing this is to thank their ancestors for safeguarding their children through all the problems that might have occurred during their years of study. The graduation which the researcher recorded is her own graduation ceremony.

The graduates, in their academic regalia, entered whilst singing and dancing. The celebrant walked in front of them. They were welcomed by the audience ululating. Here are some of the verses of the song they were singing; it was sung according to the call and response mode:

Group:	<i>Ntate nthekele</i>	Group:	My father buy me
Response:	<i>Kobo ya thuto</i>	Response:	The blanket of education
Group:	<i>Ntate nthekele</i>	Group:	My father buy me
Response:	<i>Kobo ya thuto</i>	Response:	The blanket of education
	<i>Kobo ya thuto</i>		The blanket of education
	<i>Kobo ya thuto</i>		The blanket of education
Group:	<i>Le nna ke a e rata</i>	Group:	I also like it
Response:	<i>Kobo ya thuto</i>	Response:	The blanket of education
Group:	<i>Ke rata go e apara</i>	Group:	I want to wear it
Response:	<i>Kobo ya thuto</i>	Response:	The blanket of education
Group:	<i>Ke tshaba dipuo</i>	Group:	I am afraid of the talk
	<i>Tsa batho</i>		of the people
	<i>Ga di fele</i>		They do not end

The graduation procession stopped at the *kgorwana* (the entrance to the courtyard) and the praise singing continued. The aunt and uncle were given the chance to add their praises. The poem below was chanted by the mother of the graduate, Refilwe Mabiletsa. This is the praise-name of the celebrant. The mother introduced her daughter to the audience and to the ancestors with this poem. It reads:

<i>Ke Mojaki-a-Moraka-a-Manyoba,</i>	She is Mojaki of Moraka of Manyoba,
<i>Kgaitisadi a Rubene le Taniele.</i>	She is the sister of Reuben and Daniel.
<i>Ke motho wa bo Mmangaole a</i>	She is the person of the Mmangaole of
<i>Mokgalong,</i>	the thorn trees,
<i>E rile a tsoga, a itlhotlhora tlhogo a re:</i>	When she woke up she shook her head saying:
<i>"Ke marothodi ke mebala-a-Kgaka,</i>	"I am the dots the colour of the guinea-fowl,
<i>Mebala e dikgakaneng, Kgaka kgolo</i>	Colours are more visible on the younger guinea-
<i>ga ke na mebala."</i>	fowl than on the big ones."
<i>Tiitii! kgomo seya ka masi moreneng.</i>	Tiitii! the cow that goes to the chief with milk.
<i>Ditshweu ga di ye kgosing.</i>	Whites do not go to the Chiefs.
<i>Mmagadi o kae ke go agetse motse?</i>	Where is Mmagadi, I have built a family for you?
<i>Kgoro tsa mophato nkgakolole</i>	My equal reminds me of what I forget,
<i>molekane,</i>	
<i>Gonyoko, gonyoko, maina a segompieno!</i>	Gonyoko, Gonyoko contemporary names!
<i>Mmamotse motho wa bo Mabiletsa -</i>	Mmamotse the person of the Mabiletsa -
<i>Ke Mabiletsa-Moraka-Manyoba-Tubatse!</i>	She is the Mabiletsa of Moraka of the Manyoba
	Tubatse!

The praises ended and those present took their seats. Speeches and music followed. The important message was that of the guest speaker for that day. He encouraged the youth to attend school because education contributes to the development of the individual. He used many proverbs to advise and to build the youth.

In his message he motivated the parents of the celebrant with the proverb *Kgakakgolo ga ke na mebala, mebala e dikgakaneng* (Small guinea-fowl's colours are more visible than the colours of big guinea-fowl) meaning that even if parents are not as educated as their children, they are seen through their children, therefore they should feel proud. This is their

achievement. They are the graduates for they have completed their task of raising their children correctly.

To the youth he said "*Ditlamelwana tsa pula di baakanngwa go sale gale*" (Preparations for rain are made well in advance) meaning it will be fruitful for them to prepare their future now while time still allows them. He ended his speech by saying: "It is better for one to live like a servant now, so that in the future one should live like a king". It means that hard work pays.

Lastly there was a reply by the celebrant. She thanked her parents for providing her with education. The feast ended with refreshments.

2.3.1.6 Rituals

The rituals involve sacrifice to ancestral spirits. The Bakwena people sometimes participate in rituals because they believe that the ancestors will bring them luck, or prevent ill luck from occurring.

The sacrifice the researcher recorded was for a couple whose children had died unexpectedly and whose car had been stolen. They consulted a traditional doctor who told them that their ancestors were angry with them and were against their family because they did not know this family.

He said it was imperative for them to request blessings from their patrilineal ancestors by slaughtering a white billy goat and calling upon their ancestors to bless their family.

The closest family members viz parents-in-law, aunts and uncles of the couple, were invited. Early on the Saturday morning the goat was slaughtered by the uncle. They took the blood of the goat, some snuff and traditional beer to the corner of the *lapa* (courtyard). They knelt down and, prompted by their great uncle, said the following words:

Re a le dumedisana ntemogolo le koko

*Re bana ba lona, bana ba ngwana wa
gago, Ntsie*

Ke nna Motsomi Malao le Dikeledi

We greet you grandfather and grandmother

We are your children, the child of your
son, Ntsie

I am Motsomi Malao, and Dikeledi

mosadi wa me, le Lerato ngwana wa rona
Ke le itsise motse wa me
Re kopa matlhogonolo badimo ba rona
Re itshwareleng melato yotlhe eo re e le
diretseng
Dijo tsa lona ke tse, motsoko le bojalwa

my wife, and Lerato our child
 I am introducing my family to you.
 We ask for your blessings, our ancestors.
 Forgive us all the wrongs we have done.
 Here is your food, snuff and beer.

They spilt blood, beer and snuff into the corner where they knelt. The meat of the goat was cooked. All the bones were removed and burnt to ashes and the ash was taken and sprinkled on their ancestors' graves. The cooked meat and beer was served for lunch. As they ate and drank, they sang songs for entertainment. This is one of the songs which they sang:

A bo ile re bo kakate...

Let it come so that we can drink...

Fa bo pala re bo tsholole...

If it cannot be taken anymore, let us pour it out...

Another song was:

Mabele mpolae!

Mabele mpolae!

Wee...!

Mabele mpolae

Sorghum beer kill me!

Sorghum beer kill me!

Oh...!

Sorghum beer kill me!

2.4 CONCLUSION

Among the Bakwena ba Mogopa a great many expressions such as proverbs, myths, fables and folktales are still found today. These expressions are a form of verbal art. The tribe exhibits and reflects their tradition in this verbal art. This is learned at an early age by listening and watching the elders. Expressions such as proverbs are used to measure, motivate, emphasize and strengthen. Feasts and songs are actualised in and through their performance and furthermore depend on repeated performance for their continued existence.

Now we turn to the main focus of the study, namely praise poetry.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 HEROIC POEMS OF THE BAKWENA BA MOGOPA

Praise-poems are a form of traditional verbal art common to all Southern Bantu peoples. They are composed not only about the accomplishments of chiefs, headmen, famous warriors and other prominent tribesmen but also about ordinary men and women. There are also praise-poems about tribes and clans, domestic animals, wild animals, trees and crops, rivers, hills and other natural features and of inanimate objects such as bones. In modern times, some have even been composed about schools, villages, trains and bicycles.

The heroic poems collected on the Bakwena ba Mogopa are based on the following:

- Historical events and chiefs, e.g.
 - Bakwena praise-poem
 - Bakwena ba Mogopa praise-poem
 - Praise-poems of the various clans
 - Praise-poem of *Kwena* (Crocodile)
 - Praise-poems of the Chiefs
- Their general way of life, e.g.
 - Praise-poems relating to the village and school
 - praise-poems of ordinary men and women
 - Praise-poem of the bones

3.1.1 Praise-poem of the Bakwena

This poem has been recorded from S. Mogapi who is the *Kgosana* (leader) of the Baphiring clan and a retired teacher. It reads:

<i>Dikolobe tsa ga Mfeta-a-Mogale,</i>	The Pigs of the Mfeta of Mogale,
<i>Tse di tlabang ntšwa di hulare,</i>	That stab dogs and turn their back,
<i>Ijane jwa ga kwetla selemobojang,</i>	Children of the kwetla, summer grass,
<i>A bo bo tla ja theko jwa 'rumo ja bone -</i>	They will eat their spear -
<i>Maganana mankga nama,</i>	They are the people who can smell meat.
<i>Mankga 'nama di mafura,</i>	They smell the fat meat,
<i>Tshoswane tsa go loma botlhoko Lesonya.</i>	The ants that bite painfully, Lesonya.
<i>Tse di lomileng Kabane a kakabala.</i>	Those that bit Kabane and he died.

*Motlhakola o montsho,
Wa ga MmaSeadingwana se marumo.*

The black Motlhakola,
Who belongs to the MmaSeadingwana who has
spears

*Makgaka a mantsho,
A Mma-Seote se naga,
Ba ba suleng ba se na molai,
Ba bile ba se na tsebe ya go utlwa,
Ngwale, boela, yoo o mmokile -
O boka, o sa itse 'ina ja gagwe,
Ina ja gagwe ke Matsodimatsoke.*

The black Makgaka,
Of the Mma-Seote of the veld,
They died without having an advisor,
And not even having ears to hear,
Ngwale, go back, you have praised him
You praise, without knowing his name,
His name is Matsodimatsoke.

Background of this poem

This poem was recorded by Schapera in 1954. Schapera, who was an expert on the laws and customs of the Batswana accounted for the origin of the Bakwena ba Mogopa in the following way:

According to him, the Bakwena ba Molepolole in Botswana and the Bakwena ba Mogopa were one nation and chief Mogale ruled over both tribes at a place called Mabjanamatswane (Swartkoppies). The tribe was called **Bakwena**. Schapera (1954: 34) says that according to the people he consulted, Chief Mogale is the father of Chief Mfeta who was mentioned in the foregoing poem, who in turn was the father of Melore, the father of Malope, who was the father of Mohurutshe, Kwena, Ngwato and Ngwaketsi. Other than the names of these chiefs, very little is known about most of them.

Schapera was informed that after the death of Chief Malope, the tribe split into two separate tribes under Mohurutshe and Kwena who both contested the chieftainship. Mohurutshe moved away with his followers and formed a tribe, who called themselves the Bahurutshe after him. Chief Kwena remained with the remainder of the people at Mabjanamatswane.

According to Schapera (1954: 3), the chiefs' lineage extended as follows: Chief Kwena, succeeded by Mmutle, then Motswasele, Mphela, Ngwaketsi II, Setlhare, Mogopa and finally Kgabo. During the reign of Chief Mogopa, there was a great drought and many people died of starvation. Chief Kgabo was succeeded by his son Chief Motshodi who, once he was chief,

crossed the Madikwe River with his people and settled in an area called Kgalagadi. They renamed the area Motshodi in honour of their chief. Today Motshodi is part of Botswana and the people there are known as **Bakwena Ba Molepolole** (Schapera, 1954: 36). At the beginning of the 17th Century, Chief Mogopa and the rest of the Bakwena tribe moved across the Odi River and settled in the hills of Rathateng. They called themselves **Bakwena ba Mogopa** in honour of their chief.

The praise-poem referred to in 3.1.1 above is the praise-poem of the Bakwena before they dispersed. Their history assists us to understand why the praiser calls them the pigs of the **Mfeta-of-the-Mogale**. As mentioned above, Chief Mfeta was the son of Chief Mogale and both of them were two of the first chiefs of the Bakwena tribe. The praiser calls them "pigs" because of their bad manners. Pigs are known to like wallowing in mud.

When a warthog is chased by dogs, it does not stand and face the dogs to fight, but runs away turning occasionally to attack and bite the dogs before once again turning and running away. This somewhat unflattering analogy highlights the cowardly fighting methods of the Bakwena. Like the wild pig, they do not stand to face the enemy, but run away, occasionally turning to attack. That is why the praiser says that the Bakwena are "pigs-of-Mfeta that stab dogs and then turn their backs".

The praiser describes the Bakwena as "a crowd of young children". This is emphasized by the use of the expression *Ijane* (children).

The praiser also likens the Bakwena to ants, saying that they bite as painfully as ants. The power of ants is sometimes underestimated. The Bakwena were also underestimated by Kabane, a captain in Moselekatse's army, who ended by being defeated by the Bakwena.

The Bakwena are also called the "black motlhakola" by the praiser. A *motlhakola* is a tree which bears bitter fruit. What the praiser infers is that the Bakwena are a stubborn tribe who are sometimes difficult to understand and to work with. This trait did not promote popularity with other tribes.

The praiser ends the poem with the words

*Ngwale, boela, yoo o mmokile
O boka, o sa itse 'ina ja gagwe,
Ina ja gagwe ke Matsodimatsoke.*

Ngwale, go back, you have praised him
You praise, without knowing his name,
His name is Matsodimatsoke.

which is the usual ending for a praise-poem and means that the praiser has recited everything he knows about the people or event being praised.

3.1.2 The Praise-poem of the Tribe : Bakwena ba Mogopa

This poem was recorded from Itumeleng Mabudisa, an ex-student of Toloane school. It reads:

Kgomo e kwa Phaphane : -

The cow is at Phaphane :-

Kwa Mokgale ke kae? Ya re Bakwena!

Where is the place called Mokgale? It says
Bakwena!

Ke a sitega, ke sitega go nanoga.

I am overcome, I cannot stand up.

Ka ge, borraetshomogolo ba swa

Because our grandfathers are dying

Ba ntswaetse wa Kobue.

They have marked Kobue (the cattle post) for me

Ntduetse mosadi wa Phusumane!

Praise me, woman of Phusumane!

Bakwena ba ga Mogopa, balelela difofu

Bakwena ba Mogopa, who cry for the blind

Ba bidiwa Mafololedi a a loleng,

They are called Mafololedi, who have fought

E e matlhomahibidu le Barwa.

A fierce battle with the Matabele nation

Ya re kgomo di bolola ba bo ba bolaane,

Before the cattle go out to graze, they have already
killed the Matabele,

Bakwena ba tsamayang ba kekela.

Bakwena who keep on increasing

*Kgaka tsa matlhaswa mebala e
dikgakaneng.*

A careless guinea-fowl's colours are visible in
in the younger guinea-fowls

Ka Sitlwane le Mokata le oketsega

With Sitlwane of Mokata you increase

Ba bolaile phothi ba iphutha metlhala

They have killed a duiker, and they
gathered their spoors

Ba bolaya kubu ba kubuga!

They killed the hippopotamus, they became alert!

Go tsweletsa katlaatilelo loago,

To continue regional development,

Go bona setshaba se tsoga,

To see the tribe developing,

Bakwena ke motheo wa setso sa bona.

Bakwena are the foundation of their culture

Ba diga phala ba phala ba bangwe.

They drop Impala, they defeat other tribes

Ba jele leeba ba lebetse.

They ate rock pigeon, they forgot the past events

Go ipopa go itira morafe.

To build themselves to form a strong tribe.

Background of the poem

Breuts (No. 28:214)(date unknown) says that the oldest known place where the Bakwena ba Mogopa lived around the beginning of the 17th century was Rathateng which was situated on the lower reaches of the Crocodile River. He says that during the 17th century they moved to Lokwadi (Zandrivierspoort) six miles north-east of the foot of the Phalane mountain. During the first half of the 18th century they settled amongst the Mabjanamatswane koppies to the north-east of Brits. At that time the boundaries of their territory were formed by the Crocodile river in the west, the Apies and Pienaars rivers in the north, and the Hennops river in the south.

In the middle of the 18th century they resided on the eastern side of the Apies river at Mangwatladi or Lengwatladi, west of the Pienaars river for some time. During the last quarter of the 18th century they returned to Mabjanamatswane and later moved to Gwate (Mamogaleskraal) at the foot of the hill known as Thaba ya Morena.

After 1829, the tribe was scattered around the Brits and Pretoria districts, at Makapanstad, at Matshakgane and near Pietersburg. In approximately 1850, they fled to Basutoland where they remained until shortly after 1868. The tribe then returned to Matlhare north-east of Brits and soon afterwards to Mantabole (Bethanie) and Makolokwe (Wolwekraal) both of which are present day abodes of the tribe.

In the course of its history, some parts of the tribe remained at its old abodes or returned to them. Thus there are other sections of the tribe at Hebron, Jericho, Ventersdorp district, Elandsfontein in the Brits district, and Olievenpoort in the Nylstroom district.

Johannes More Segone was the sub-chief at Hebron, situated about 15 km north-west of Pretoria. Samuel More Moopelwa was the sub-chief of Jericho which lies 20 km north of Brits. The sub-chief of the Ventersdorp district and Hartbeeslaagte was Chief Thomas More. The farm Olievenpoort, on which the village of Papegaaikraal is situated, was sold and some of the members of the tribe moved to Bethanie while others remained. Their sub-chief was Salomon. The small group at Elandsfontein (Brits) lived on privately owned land under their headman, Johannes More.

This praise-poem is the only one of the Bakwena ba Mogopa found in the districts of Jericho, Bethanie and Hebron today.

The early Bakwena ba Mogopa were pastoral people. Therefore when the praiser uses the expression "The cow is at Phaphane", he emphasises the fact that it is impossible for the Bakwena to live without cattle and, in fact, compares them to cattle. Cattle play a vital role in the lives of the Bakwena, and when important occasions such as births, initiations, weddings or funerals take place, cattle are slaughtered as part of the ritual and, less importantly, as food for the guests.

The praiser makes many references to cattle in this poem. The early Bakwena were nomadic. The love for their cattle often prevented them from moving to another area because there was insufficient pastural land. Because of the love for cattle, they would rather give the cattle to a member of their family than sell to strangers. This custom is called *tshwaisa* (to give freely). In the poem, the praiser states that his grandfather gave him a cattle post at Kobue.

The Bakwena ba Mogopa were also called Mafololedi, a name they acquired after they had been defeated by the Matabele army. The name Mafololedi comes from the verb *folo* (to behead). This describes the way in which they were beheaded by the Matabele warriors, called Barwa, at the battle of Katatu.

When the praiser says

Ba diga phala ba phala ba bangwe

They drop Impala, they defeat other tribes

Ba jele leeba ba lebetse

They eat rock pigeon they forget the past events

his intention is to state that war has ended and that the Bakwena ba Mogopa have settled down peacefully.

The poem was compiled by one of the well-known praisers, E.B. Masoabi, and appears in the poetry book *A re bokeng* (1987 : 11).

3.1.3 The Praise-poem of Kwena (Crocodile)

The poem was composed by a well-known praiser and poet, S.F. Motlhake.

The composer composed the poem between 1965 and 1966 while working as a teacher amongst the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho at Toloane school. He mentioned that after observing the behaviour of the crocodile, he composed the poem. He says that he had not yet had the opportunity to present the poem in public but it was taught to students from 1966 to 1968. The composer is presently working at the Tlhabane College of Education in Rustenburg. It reads:

Rabolokgolo wa madibana

Ya re ke go bona ka re o sule -

Meno a letse thoko ga bodiba,

Gano le nkgga go tlola lefola.

Batho bangwe ba tloga ba makatsa,

Morwarre o ragilwe ke kgori

Mmele o apare diphekeke,

A nkgwane sepalela metsi.

Maloba ke ikamile ka letsha

Ka kwaela sebi se phaphaletse

Nteko selo ya bo e le kwetsa,

Kwetsa matlhomola bo Phalatse.

Bonno ba gago bo phepaphepa!

Sebaataola tlase ga Madiba,

Legae seetelwa ke badipa,

Bomatwetwe borekgaetsa kgaba

Banna le bomatshaba go disa.

Ba go hutsa ka pelo di botlhoko -

O a ntena senkgagano towe!

Ga a jewe motho, go tswa ga lowe,

Mojimotho ke mosaatane,

O lekane go boswa ka ketane.

Big snake of little fountains

When I saw you, I thought you were dead

Teeth lying next to the fountain

Your mouth stinks terribly.

Some people are surprising,

My friend looks miserable

His body is covered with black and brown stripes
of dirt which water cannot clean.

Some days ago while I was strolling around
the lake

I came across a black inanimate object
floating upon the water

Only to find that it was a trap,

A trap to trap Phalatse and company

Your dwelling is extra clean!

A place for divining bones under fountains,

A home to be visited by stubborn people ,

Visited by diviners who stop bad luck

Men and those who do not want to
become shepherds

They curse with broken hearts -

You disgust me, you mouthstinker!

A person is not eaten from the origin

A cannibal is a devil,

He needs to be tied up with chains.

Background of the poem

The researcher found the poem to be very important to the Bakwena tribe because it said so much about their totem. It is necessary for every tribe and clan to know and understand their totem.

The praiser says that the crocodile is a "big snake" of the rivers. When someone sees a crocodile lying on the banks of the river, he believes that it is dead. When in water, the crocodile floats along, resembling a log. When its prey approaches this "log", the crocodile attacks. One man belonging to the Phalatse family was caught by a crocodile in the Toloane river a few years ago after thinking that the crocodile was a log. It is believed that the crocodile lives in a hole under the river bank. Its nest is extremely clean. Only traditional doctors are able to see these places.

3.1.4 The Praise-poem of the village Jericho

The following poem was composed by a well-known Bakwena praiser, E.B. Masoabi. It reads:

<i>Motse ke oo o kwa Boratelo</i>	The village is there, at Boratelo
<i>Motse wa dithako Jericho, o montle!</i>	The village of stonewalls, Jericho, you are beautiful!
<i>Montlenyana wa dikago dikgolo -</i>	The beautiful village, with huge buildings -
<i>Yo o agilweng jaaka Jerusalema,</i>	The one which is built like Jerusalem,
<i>Jerusalema motse wa kganya.</i>	Jerusalem the glorious village.
<i>Ke Jericho, motse wa kgalalelo,</i>	It is Jericho the village of the bright light,
<i>Kgalalelo e phatsimang jaaka naletsana,</i>	The light which shines like a star,
<i>Naletsang e e reng o e lebile o akabale</i>	The star which while looking at it, you become surprised
<i>O tlhoke ona maina mafatshwa go paka</i>	You lack praising names to testify,
<i>Go akgola ka tlotlo le lorato.</i>	To testify with love and respect.
<i>O agilwe segompieno -</i>	It is built in contemporary style -
<i>O kitlane ke sekgwa sa ga Monyemane.</i>	It is dense, it is a dense forest of the Monyemane.
<i>Botshega-ingate ba ipela ka' tlabula</i>	The younger generations are proud of the early summer
<i>Ba gabunya Sephonki Sephonkana</i>	They eat watermelons

Sekhurumelo sa metsi a a monate.

The lid of delicious water.

*Mmusakgotlha, o tlhabolotse dikago,
go a kgatlhisa*

The chief has improved the buildings, it is pleasing

Meago e mentle, manobonobo

The buildings are beautiful and luxurious

*Kgolleng, mmamputshwana ke
baduladitilo -*

At the Kgotla, old men are respected leaders:-

*Ba re, ga ba buswe ke bo-matshwara
thipana*

They say, they are not ruled by small boys

*Ka ba lallha setso le dingwao tsa
Setswana.*

As they cast away their Tswana culture and norms.

Background of this poem (Refer to the map on page 66)

Jericho is a large village with modern houses. It lies 20 km north of Brits. About 40% of the houses have corrugated iron roofs with approximately 8 rooms each while 60% of houses have approximately 3 or 4 rooms.

The praiser says that Jericho is a village of stone walls. By "stone walls" he means the Tsogwe mountains surrounding the village. The praiser compares the beauty of Jericho with the beauty of Jerusalem. The reason for his describing the village as beautiful is the large buildings found in the village - churches, schools, mortuaries, butcheries and other businesses.

The ruling chiefs all made improvements to the village, including electrification. Therefore, when the praiser says that Jericho shines like a star, he is, in fact, referring to the electric lights that are now found there. At night, the street lights emphasise the beauty of the buildings.

The praiser's mentioning of the younger generations being proud of the early summer infers that the fields are fertile and therefore anything planted in the fields is ready for harvesting long before those of other areas.

The praiser says that at the kgotla, the old men are leaders. By this he means that the Bakwena ba Mogopa culture is one which is respected and revered. As mentioned in

paragraph 1.5.3, leadership is hereditary and the chief is assisted by the *lekgotla*. The praiser calls them *Mamputswana* (old men) and the chiefs benefit greatly from their knowledge.

3.1.5 The Praise-poem of the school Toloane

This poem was composed by the praiser S.S. Mogoatle, an ex-pupil of the school, and was first recited at the 30th anniversary celebration of the school by Mmašheleng Morake. It reads:

Ke leloba le ratwa ke boitlhe!

Ke leloba le kgatlha bafeti!

Rammone o kile a tshwarwa ke kgake,

A imakalela a aparetse.

A fitlhela tshingwana e kgabile!

Ka re, ke moago montle thotaneng

Ke sediba sa thuto, molemi le

moitsaanape.

Ka re, le dingaka di nole teng!

Ke kgogedi ka e gogile merafe yotlhe,

Tsala, tlaya re tlo ja mmogo

Tshingwana ya maungo.

Tlaya kanana ya maswi le dinotshe.

Tlaya re nwe mmogo, tlaya re nwe

gotlhe.

Tlaya o tshotse ditlhabano tlhe!

O tle o rwele merwalo!

O boele gae o rwele masi,

Le mamepe a dinotshe.

Ke masi a a sa noweng ke dikatse,

Ke todi e e sa jeweng ke magwegwe,

Lefa a ka belaela lemepe

Ga o kitla a bona sepe.

Tlaya tlhe, morutwana wa batho!

Tlaya tlhe, motho wa batho!

It is a flower that is loved by all!

It is a flower that interests passers-by!

Rammone was once surprised,

To find himself in this place

He found the garden, so beautiful!

I say it is a beautiful plan of a building on the hills

It is a fountain of knowledge for the farmer and scientist.

I say, even the doctors have drunk here!

It is a magnet it attracts all the tribes,

Come, my friend. Let us eat together!

The garden of fruits.

Come to Canaan the land of milk and honey.

Come let us drink together, let us drink everything.

Come with your weapons please!

Come, carrying your parcels along

Return home, carrying milk,

And the honey of the bees.

It is the milk that cannot be drunk by cats,

It is the honey which cannot be eaten by anything

Even if you desire the honey

You cannot get anything.

Come please, the students of the people!

Come please, poor people!

Ke Kanana ga e gane ope
Ke tulo, e rata motho.

It is Canaan, it refuses no one
 It is the place, it loves people.

Background of this poem

Toloane High School was built by the Bakwena ba Mogopa in 1963 during the reign of Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale. At present the school has 17 classrooms, laboratories, a library and administrative offices. M. Loate was the first principal of the school, followed by M. Mokgoatleng (1965 to 1972), I.C. Chadi (1976 to 1977), A.L. Khuzwayo (1977 to 1979) and the present principal, R.S. Mathipa.

The praiser refers to the school as *leloba* (a flower) comparing the beauty of the school buildings with a flower, which attracts passers-by. When the praiser says that "the doctors have drunk here" he is referring to the guest speaker at the celebration, Dr. S.J.J. Lebethe, a gynaecologist who is an ex-pupil of the school.

The praiser also speaks about "magnets". By using this expression he refers to the quality of education which attracts students to the school. This was proved by 40 graduates who attended the celebration.

3.1.6 The Praise-poem of Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale

This is one of the better known poems of the tribe. It is taught to all primary school children. This poem is the praise-poem of **all** the Bakwena ba Mogopa chiefs. Sources which were consulted revealed that this poem was used for Chiefs Charles Mamogale and Atlas Makopye More. It reads:

<i>Kwena e ntsho ya Modiana-a-Tau</i>	Black crocodile of Modiana of Lion
<i>Fifi la Mokwena,</i>	Darkness of Mokwena
<i>Ya re fa e tlhola Maimana</i>	When it defeats Maimana,
<i>E tswe e eme ka maroo khuting.</i>	It comes out of the hollow standing on its paws.
<i>Kgagarapa ya Mangana,</i>	The courage of Mangana,
<i>Tlhasedi kwa Mmametlhake,</i>	The attacker at Mmametlhake village,
<i>E tlhasetse metse ya batho,</i>	It attacks houses of people,
<i>E tlhasetse metse ya bo-</i>	It attacks villages of the Ramphothokwane
<i>Ramphothokwane-a-Matebele.</i>	of the Matebele Tribe.

*Ka bosigo ka mantobontobo
 Baratani ba santse ba letse
 Ngwetsi e tswa e tshotse lekgabe,
 Ba re, "o tshabang o santse o le
 Mogatsa-a-Mogale",
 O ntse o le mogatse-a-Sekokometsi
 Tsibogong.
 Kwena e tsene le kgomo bodibeng,
 Beng kgomo ba okaoka bodiba,
 Ba bonega bodiba bo tseneng kgomo,
 Ba bo ba tseye thebe, ba hulare.*

At night in the darkness
 while lovers are still relaxing
 The daughter-in-law comes out unprepared,
 They say: "Why should you run away if you are
 Mogale's wife",
 While being Sekokometsi Tsibogong's wife

 The crocodile and the cow have entered the pool,
 The owner of the cow waited at the pool,
 They torched the well which the cow had entered,
 And they took a shield and returned.

Background of this poem

An old woman by the name of Mmakini Mabiletsa, who was the wife of Seneke Mabiletsa, the leader of the Tubatse clan, praised the chief with this poem. She praised the deceased as the coffin was carried out of the house on its way to the tribal hall. The performance was very solemn - nobody spoke and nobody made any remarks.

The late Chief Aubrey Mafale Emmanuel Mamogale was the fourth chief of the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho. He was born on 23 September 1926 at Jericho Village. He attended school in Jericho and in 1945 qualified as a teacher at Hebron College of Education near Koedoespoort, east of Pretoria. At the time, the college was called "Mmanotse-a-Modiana" which was a praise name. Chief Aubrey Mamogale passed away on 29 April 1985 in the Ga-Rankuwa hospital after a short illness. He was buried on 11 May 1985 in the Jericho cemetery.

The praiser called the Bakwena ba Mogopa chiefs the black crocodiles of Modiana the Lion. Their bravery is emphasised and compared to two animals, the crocodile and the lion which are known as ferocious animals.

When the praiser referred to the chief as "The darkness of the Mokwena", she used that name because Bakwena chiefs usually attacked their enemies at night catching them off guard.

The praiser goes on to say that the chiefs attacked and conquered the Mametlhake village at night. They also attacked the Matebele at night and defeated them as well.

The chiefs are also called "Kgagarapa ya Mangana" (the courage of the Mangana), a title they earned when they defeated Maimana and the Matebele tribes.

3.1.7 The Praise-poem of Chief Tshetlho Ivy Mamogale

This poem was recorded at the inauguration of Chief Tshetlho Mamogale which was held on 10 October 1986. The poem was composed and chanted by the chief's uncle, S. Lekgothoane. It reads:

<i>Ke a go dumedisa, Kwena-a-Madiba,</i>	I greet you, Crocodile of the fountains,
<i>Kwena e ntsho ya Modiana-a-Tau,</i>	Black Crocodile of Modiana of Lion,
<i>Ngwana wa ga Mmatope-a-Seretsana,</i>	The child of Mmatope of Seretsana,
<i>Ngwana wa ga bo Mogale-a-Mfeta,</i>	The child of Mogale of Mfeta,
<i>Ruri bogosi o bo tsaletswe!</i>	It is true, you are born a Chief!
<i>Ga bo go rone bo go tshwanetse!</i>	It becomes you, it befits you!
<i>O'moapara tlalo la Nkwe,</i>	You are the one to wear a Leopard's skin,
<i>Kokomana sa ga Charles Mamogale,</i>	The grandchild of Charles Mamogale,
<i>'Itibolo la ya Aubrey Mafale Mamogale.</i>	The first child of Aubrey Mafale Mamogale.
<i>Tshetlho, a ko o nne lna-lebe-seromo!</i>	Tshetlho, be true to your name!
<i>'Ina le bonetswe pele ke motsoga pele!</i>	The name that was seen by the ancient people!
<i>Tshetlho, nonyane e e botlhale!</i>	Tshetlho, an intelligent bird!
<i>Tshetlho, nonyane ya kagiso!</i>	Tshetlho, bird of peace!
<i>Nonyane e tshelang ka maana a dinotsho</i>	The bird that lives on the honey of bees
<i>Kwena e ntsho ya Modiana-a-Tau!</i>	Black crocodile of Modiana of Lion
<i>E tswe, e eme ka maroo khuthing.</i>	It comes out of the hollow, standing on its paws.
<i>Tshetlho, nna tshetlho!</i>	Tshetlho, become a thorn!
<i>Mmutlwa o ilhabang banyana maoto,</i>	A thorn that stabs girl's feet,
<i>Tlhaba ka botlhale, tlhaba batsuolodi,</i>	Stab in an intelligent manner, stab the cruel people,
<i>Tlhaba ba ipagololelang mogodu,</i>	Stab those that do things in their own way,
<i>Tlhaba ba go emang pele 'gosing ja</i>	Stab those that disturb you, in your kingship.
<i>gago.</i>	
<i>Gadimaka, Tshetlho, o se itebale!</i>	Look around Tshetlho, do not relax!

<i>Gadima Bethanie, gadima Hebron,</i>	Look at Bethanie, look at Hebron,
<i>Metse e rweleng di-Kwena.</i>	Villages carrying Crocodiles.
<i>Gata serena, morena!</i>	Step like a chief, chief!
<i>Gata jaaka segojaja!</i>	Step like a brave animal!
<i>Segojaja se marapo a thata!</i>	An animal with tough bones!
<i>O etse bo More Moopelwa</i>	Imitate chief More Moopelwa
<i>Ba ba rileng: "Re bo Mosekaphofu!"</i>	Those who said: "We die for our land!"

Background of this poem

Chief Tshetlho Ivy Raikane Mamogale was the first child of the late Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale. He was crowned on 10 October 1986 at a ceremony held at the Jericho Tribal Hall. Chief Makapan More of the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Hebron conducted the ceremony on behalf of the President of Bophuthatswana, Chief Lucas Manyane Mangope. The chief was given a certificate of approval which named him Chief of the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho.

Although this poem cannot be considered as being accurate in a historical sense, it nonetheless gives some background of the chief and his origin, his culture and his lineage. In short, the praiser says Chief Tshetlho is the first son of the late Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale, the grandson of the late Chief Charles Mamogale, the descendant of the former chiefs More Moopelwa, Chief Mfeta and Chief Mogale. The praise-poem introduced the chief to the audience. The praiser uses the same praise names which are used for other chiefs, namely, "Black Crocodile of Modiana the Lion".

The praiser says that Chief Tshetlho is the son of "Mmatope of Seretsana" which is the Setswana name for their village, Jericho. This title is used to emphasise the fact that he is a son of the soil, a born leader of the tribe and the descendant of the chiefs listed above.

The chief's name is "Tshetlho". The name has two meanings viz thorn and it is also the name of a honey guide. The praiser says that the chief should be able to act as intelligently as the honey guide when leading someone to honey, but should also be able to stab his enemies like a thorn stabs flesh.

The day on which he was crowned, the praiser encouraged the chief to stand and walk like a chief, carrying himself proudly like a brave animal, such as an elephant or lion, would.

3.2 THE CLAN PRAISE-POEM

Jericho is home to four clans. People distinguish between clans originating from the chief's lineage, and those made up of other groups, "*bafaladi*". The four clans are: the Mogopa clan which originates from the chief's lineage, the Barolong clan, the Tubatse clan and the Baphiring clan.

Members of the clans cannot always trace their lineage to a common ancestor although they believe that they are the descendants of a common ancestor. Some clans are named after totems, for example, the totem of the Baphiring is the *phiri* (hyena). Clan members do not eat the flesh or certain parts of an animal which is their totem. The different clans report to the *kgosana* (headman) who then reports to the chief on their behalf.

3.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLAN-PRAISES

The clan praises of the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho consist of names of the patrilineal lineage. These praises also incorporate lines of poetry.

Although these clan praise-poems are not considered accurate historical sources, they highlight some aspects of the history of a particular clan together with the lineage of that clan. Due to the lapse of time and the fact that people in the olden days were illiterate, the composers of traditional praise-poems are not known.

3.3.1 PRAISE-POEM OF THE MÓGOPA CLAN

The poem was recorded from Mmamakele More. Nothing is known of the original composer. She said her grandmother taught her the poem while she was still a young girl. The reason that she remembers the poem is the fact that she chants the poem at many wedding celebrations. It reads:

<i>Ke kgoro e kgolo ya kgosing -</i>	It is the big clan of the chief's family -
<i>Ke More-a-Segwati-a-Ramadingwana,</i>	Which is More of Segwati of Ramadingwana,
<i>Malatsing-a-wa-marapalla</i>	Day's falling in parallel
<i>Leja Nku e pirwa.</i>	It is the eater of the black sheep.

*Ke Nku e phatswa, e rapalla thaba ya
Tsogwe,*

*E e rileng fa e rapalla Setlhare sa-
Mmatope-a-Seretsana,*

Ya bo e ntsitse dinala metsing,

*Ya bo ya re fa bomosalanoka ba tshaba,
Leotwana la robega bomorwa-nku
mafantlhatlheng.*

Morwala kuane a kokomoga...!

Ke kgoro ya Tedie-a-Mamogale,

Ya Raikane-a-banna ba Mogopa,

Ga o mele 'bjang, o mela lekgwarana

*A re, bomonkane lethipa tlang, re bo
robale,*

E re, yo o lorang tlala, a e itorele,

Yo o lorang lehuma, a le itorele.

It is a black and white sheep going straight along
Tsogwe mountain,

Which while passing the village of
Mmatope of Seretsana

It took its nails out of the water

When the animals of the river run away
The wheel broke, the lambs got into trouble.

A respected man became proud...!

It is the clan of Tedie of Mamogale

Of Raikane of men of Mogopa

You do not grow grass, you grow stones

He says, aged people come, let us sleep,

So that the one who dreams of starvation, dreams
of it himself,

The one dreaming of poverty, dreams of it himself.

3.3.1.1 Background of the poem

The Mogopa clan is known as the main clan amongst all the Bakwena ba Mogopa tribes. All the chiefs of the Bakwena ba Mogopa come from this clan. The poet states that this clan was supposed to be called *More-a-Segwati-a-Ramadingwana*. More and Segwati are former chiefs of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. More is Segwati's father and Segwati is Tedie Mamogale's father. Tedie was born in approximately 1910 and grew up during a time when the Bakwena ba Mogopa were involved in fighting wars.

Both Chiefs More and Segwati were killed during the war against Mzilikazi at Katatu. Tedie later became chief and he was followed by Raikane who, according to the poem, was as tough as a stone. After the death of Raikane, his son Charles Mamogale became chief. It was during his reign that the Bakwena ba Mogopa began settling at what is now known as Jericho.

The clan has leaders called *dikgosana* (sub-chiefs). These *dikgosana* are selected by the tribe. The first leader of this clan was L. Mooketsi, followed by C. Mpye, then R. Lebethe, who is still the leader. Their totem is the *kwena* (crocodile).

3.3.2 THE PRAISE-POEM OF THE BAROLONG CLAN

Nothing is known about the person who originally composed this poem. The old lady who recorded the poem says that she knew the poem because when she was at school it was compulsory for everyone to know their clan poem. It reads:

<i>'Namane tsa tholo Barolong,</i>	Calves of the kudu Barolong,
<i>'Di jang mogopo di o lala,</i>	That empty a plate completely,
<i>Ba ga mogorong wa leso -</i>	Those of the valley of death -
<i>Ba ga Marara 'a noto Barolong.</i>	Of Marara of the hammer, Barolong.
<i>Ke ntse ke sa lebale ba kwa Mafikeng -</i>	Not forgetting the Barolong at Mafikeng -
<i>Ba ga bo Kebalepile-ka-ba-gana</i>	Those related to Kebalepile, they are hard to hear,
<i>go utlwa.</i>	
<i>Tseo ke namane tsa Tholo, ga di nke di</i>	Those are the calves of a kudu, they never cry,
<i>lela,</i>	
<i>Ka sa tsona di ja mokgoro di o robala</i>	They destroy the hut completely
<i>Batho ba ba Goma ba ga Gogomela</i>	They are the people of Goma of Gogomela
<i>Ba ga Morara-a-noto Barolong.</i>	Those of Morara of the hammer Barolong.

3.3.2.1 Background of the poem

The totem of the Barolong clan is *tholo* (kudu). With this poem they introduce themselves to the audience. They call themselves the calves of the Barolong tribe. They praise themselves by saying that when they eat, they finish everything in the dish, meaning when they attack other tribes, they kill everybody and burn everything. When they are in trouble, they do not run away. They call themselves *noto* (hammer); that means they are made of iron; they are as strong as iron, they hit and are not hit.

Other Barolong are found in Mafikeng. They are all descendants of Kebalepile. The first leader of this clan was S. Chako who was followed by S. Komane.

3.3.3 THE PRAISE-POEM OF THE TUBATSE CLAN

Mmakodu Thipe, the old lady who provided the researcher with the words of this poem, said she obtained the words from the mother of this clan, Mmagadi Mabiletsa, who was the wife of the leader of this clan. It reads :

Noko tshaba foo!

Ke ngwana wa ga Barwa-robela

Ba nokong Mmabana ke tshwere -

Tilwana dinokeng.

Mmantswerere, Thaga-Segopa ntsholele,

O ntsholele ke je ke kgore,

O le ngwana ga o bolawe ke tlala -

O ntse o rokologa mathe

Tubatse, o fetile...!

Ke mogobjana ke tletse a kgabo.

Ke agile, ba nkgelli, ba tla ka dithoko,

Ba sia, ge ke tla phamola motho,

Ba re: "Mmantswerere Thaga-Segopa

O ntse o rokologa mathe"

E re mabele a basetsana, ke a jele.

Tubatse... Tubatse... goroga!

Mmantsha o kwa letselapata!

O fitlhetse letselapata le tletse,

A 'ina ka tlhako, a kgotlha seretse,

A re, "Tshepo o tlholang eng?"

O ka nta ga tlhola Phothi,

Ngwana o monwana.

A tlhola a bo a itshilla mokokotlo,

Mpedi... Tubatse! ke kgoro ya Mabiletsa-

a-Moraka-a-Manyoba.

Go away porcupine!

I am a child of the sons of destruction

Of porcupine mothers of man, I am holding

Tilwana on the hips.

Mmantswerere, a flock of sparrows, dish up for me,

Dish up for me so that I can eat and be strong

While being a child you do not suffer from
hunger -

You are setting down, your mouth is watering

Tubatse you have crossed.. !

I am a little pool, I am full of monkeys,

I have built, the people who want me come from
all over,

They run away, when I grab a person,

They say: "Mmantswerere, a flock of sparrows

Your little mouth is watering"

I have suckled enough from the breasts of the girls.

Tubatse... Tubatse... arrive!

Mmantsha has crossed to the other side!

She found the road crowded

She stepped in and scooped up the mud,

She said, "Tshepo, what are you peeping at?"

You had better allow a duiker to peep in

You are a small child.

She peeped and stretched his spine

Mpedi... Tubatse, it is a clan of Mabiletsa of

Moraka of Manyoba.

3.3.3.1 Background of the poem

In the Tubatse clan the predominant families are Mabiletsa and Morake. The clan's totem is *noko* (porcupine) and that is why the members of the clan call themselves children of the porcupine. They also call themselves *Barwa-robela*, which, when translated literally, means "the sons of destruction", a name they earned through their bravery in battle.

Another of their names is *Mmantwerere* which means "perfection". The poem refers to a bride and bridegroom who have crossed a pool of muddy water. The "muddy water" refers to a life of strife. The bride and bridegroom are called perfect because they have experienced the problems of life and are now therefore better people.

The clan's first leader was E. Mabiletsa, who was succeeded by his younger brother, L. Mabiletsa, who was followed by his son Seneke Mabiletsa from 1958 to 1983. After his death he was succeeded by T. Morake, who was succeeded by M. Mabiletsa, who was succeeded by S. Mabiletsa. After his death, Shimanki Mabiletsa reigned and was followed by Shelane Mabiletsa who still rules today.

The following poem is recited to people whose surname is Mabiletsa. The poem was recorded at the wedding celebration of one of the families sharing the surname. The uncle who chanted the poem said the Mabiletsa people who stay in Botswana are the composers of this poem.

It reads :

<i>Ba ga Mmangwato ba ga Mabiletsa,</i>	Those of Mmangwato of Mabiletsa,
<i>Lo kile lwa biletsa Sekgoma ntwá,</i>	You once organised a fight against Sekgoma,
<i>Sekgoma ka e le ngwana wa monna -</i>	Sekgoma, as he is a brave man -
<i>Sekgoma le ene a lo e biletsa.</i>	He also organised a fight for you.
<i>Batho, utlwang, kwa nokeng lo utlwe!</i>	People, listen to the river!
<i>Letlametlo le tlhasela Kwena,</i>	A bullfrog is attacking a crocodile,
<i>Letlametlo le roga Kwena.</i>	A bullfrog curses a crocodile.
<i>Mogologolo o rile, di seka tsa rogana</i>	The ancient people said they must never curse,
<i>Ke gakgamala gore ke sale ke eme.</i>	I was so surprised that I found myself standing still.
<i>Rraleaganana le Mmaleganana,</i>	Rraleaganana and Mmaleganana,
<i>Batho bale, ba be ba nna mmogo,</i>	Those people were staying together,
<i>Le gompieno ke Rraleaganana.</i>	Even today he is Rraleaganana.

<i>Mmampheretlha kgomo e tshunyana.</i>	Mmampheretlha the cow with red and white spots on its forehead,
<i>Kgomo e ka pheretlha ya ya dikgageng,</i>	The cow can become wild, and go to the caves,
<i>Go bona tsa ga Mmangwato di lemile</i>	To witness the Mmangwato people fighting
<i>Ga di a lema di thuba Nketana.</i>	They do not fight, they destroy Nketana
<i>Nketana e mo rwala ka dinaka -</i>	They carry him on their horns -
<i>Ke bua ka ba ga Mabiletsa-a-Moroka-</i>	I am speaking about the Mabiletsa of Moraka
<i>a-Manyoba, Ditubatse!</i>	of the Manyoba who are Ditubatse!

3.3.3.2 Background of the Poem

The purpose of their poem is to inform everybody, even future generations, where they come from. They chant the poem at wedding feasts when either the bride or bridegroom belong to the Mabiletsa family.

According to informants this poem was composed by the Mabiletsa people living in Botswana who call themselves the people of Ngwato. Sekgoma is one of the chiefs who ruled over the Bakwena tribe in Botswana. They say they once organised a rebellion against their chief Sekgoma. This action demonstrates their bravery because they are saying that they are not afraid to fight for their rights even if it means fighting against their chiefs.

The line

Letlametlo le roga kwena

A bullfrog curses a crocodile

means that they are not afraid to call a spade a spade. The name "letlametlo" (bullfrog) refers to the Mabiletsa clan while the name "kwena" is used to represent their enemy.

The lines

Mmampheretlha kgomo e tshunyana

Mmampheretlha the cow with the red and white spots on its forehead

Kgomo e ka pheretlha ya ya dikgageng

The cow can become wild and go to the caves

mean that when threatened they fight like a Tshunyana bull when confronted by its enemies. They do not only fight, they destroy everything.

The poem below is recited for the people whose surname is Morake. Like Mabiletsa, Morake is also a dominant surname in this clan. The old lady, Nkiri Morake, from whom the poem was recorded, says it is a poem with which her mother used to praise herself. It reads:

<i>Ke ngwana-a-Morwarobela a ba Nokong,</i>	He is the child of Morwarobela of the porcupine
<i>Mo maotong ga ke na boatamelo,</i>	I do not have any approach,
<i>Mma, ntsholele ke je ke kgore -</i>	Mother, dish up for me so that I can eat and be strong,
<i>E se re o aka o re, "ngwanake ga a bolae",</i>	When you lie you must not say "My child does not kill"
<i>Dilo tseo, ke dilo tsa bophuduhudu.</i>	Those things belong to the steenbuck.
<i>Tlhakwana di ntlhana, ngwana-a-mmala</i>	Hoofs are sharp, a child-of-colours
<i>A boa a sa re fenyaa,</i>	He returns without defeating us,
<i>Monna pitse, o thukutwa tlhogo,</i>	Like a stallion, the man's head is shaken,
<i>Mosadi pitsa a akga leleme,</i>	The woman, at home, always gossips,
<i>Ke ba ga Mabiletse-a-Moraka-Manyoba-Ditubatse!</i>	They are the Mabiletse of Moraka of Manyoba who are Ditubatse!

3.3.3.3 Background of the above poem

The Morakes also call themselves Morwa-robela of Nokong meaning the son of destruction because, like the Tubatse clan, their bravery is legendary. What is inferred is that they must be true to their name and when they fight, they are unbeatable and defeat their enemies.

When they say "Like a stallion, the man is shaken", they mean that the man should be as brave as a horse and not be "like a woman, at home, gossiping".

The final line of the poem refers to the patrilineal lineage. According to informants, Moraka and Mabiletsa were brothers. Manyoba is the name of their father, Paulos, who was the first leader of the clan while Tubatse is the name of their clan named after Paulos' father.

3.3.4 THE PRAISE-POEM OF THE BAPHIRING CLAN

This poem was collected and rewritten by J.H.K. Malao in his poetry book **Mokgako wa Poko**. It reads:

<i>Diphiri tsa gaabo Kgwaile,</i>	The hyenas of Kgwaile,
<i>Kgwaile wa gaabo Lekatana,</i>	Kgwaile of Lekatana,
<i>Lekatana wa gaabo Ntsie,</i>	Lekatana of Ntsie,
<i>Ntsie wa gaabo Phetlhe,</i>	Ntsie of Phetlhe,
<i>Dinamane tsa gaabo tlhare sa Mokwena.</i>	Calves of the Mokwena Tree.
<i>Mma ke lo bolelele, ba a lo tlakoba -</i>	Let me tell you, they praise you -
<i>Kana ga ba le tlakobe fela,</i>	They do not praise you for nothing,
<i>Ba le tlakoba ba itse le se bonngagalane.</i>	They praise you knowing that you are not a coward.
<i>Le se bonngagalane le le bankge!</i>	You are not a coward, you are brave!
<i>Lefa tota le bo lebile -</i>	Even if you are facing big problems -
<i>Le bo lebile jaaka phiri e gadimile lerapo.</i>	You face them like a hyena looking for a bone.
<i>Se itshiang mebele Mokatana,</i>	Do not underestimate your body Mokatana,
<i>Kana ke lona Madimako,</i>	For you are the Madimako (most powerful),
<i>Mmu wa Bakwena lo o gateng setlou!</i>	The soil of the Bakwena, trample it like an elephant!
<i>E re lo araba Bakwena le re: " Mmou! Mmou!"</i>	When you answer Bakwena, you must say: "Mmou! Mmou!"

3.3.4.1 Background of the poem

This praise-poem gives us the origin of the clan. They trace their ancestors' patrilineal line. Members of this clan are the descendants of the same ancestors, viz, Kgwaile, Lekatana, Ntsie and Phetlhe who are the descendants of the Bakwena.

Their ancestors are known to be heroes, the first people to tread on Bakwena soil. Their bravery is compared to that of an elephant. They say that they are not *bonngagalane* (cowards), they are *bankgwe* (heroes) and that they are *Madimako* (all-powerful) and not afraid of *madi* (blood). When the heroes of this clan are questioned, they reply by making a roaring sound *Mmou! Mmou!* giving the impression of animals roaring. Their totem is *phiri* (hyena).

The clan's first leader was Seth Mogapi, followed by Jacob Mogapi, followed by Antipas Mogapi. He was followed by Simeon Mogapi, a retired teacher, who still leads the clan today.

3.4 PERFORMANCE

When a praise-poem is recited or chanted in a hall, or at the royal kraal, all individuals present are in one way or another part of the performance. The performance occurs at a specific place and time. The reason for the celebration is also stated.

The performance of praise-poems is an essential mode for presenting a community with knowledge about their culture, their history as well as their genealogical lineage. The performer has to inspire the audience and hold their attention. The skill and personality of the performer are important, as well as body movements, gestures and his voice, as they are a means of conveying the intended messages.

In most performances of oral literature, audiences are involved. Sometimes the audience is really part of the performance itself. The audience ululates and applauds. The performance is indeed dramatic.

The researcher was a member of the audience at the installation ceremony of their chief, Tshetlho Ivy Mamogale of the Bakwena of Jericho. The audience had the opportunity to listen to the chief's uncle, S. Lekgothoane, praising his nephew. He was known as an expert praise-poet and the audience therefore applauded as soon as he appeared.

The praiser had a spear in his hand, jumped forward, brandished it, stopped in an open space and started his praise in a high pitched voice. He moved to and fro, occasionally stabbing the ground in front of the chief's feet. He formulated words to suit this occasion and words to suit his actions, as when he said:

<i>Tlhaba ka bogale, tlhaba batsuolodi</i>	Stab in an intelligent manner, stab the cruel people
<i>Tlhaba ba ipagololelang mogodu</i>	Stab those that do things in their own way
<i>Tlhaba ba go emang pele gosing</i>	Stab those that disturb you in your kingship
<i>jwa gago</i>	

While saying those words, he used the spear in his hand to strike the ground forcefully at the chief's feet. The audience applauded and ululated. The leader of the Mogopa clan stood up and started reciting the poem of the Bakwena ba Mogopa tribe, the traditional poem of all chiefs, in honour of the chief.

Different performances are influenced by various factors such as age, the energy of the performer, the nature of the occasion and setting.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The historical background offers an explanation to the question "Who are the Bakwena ba Mogopa?".

The Bakwena nation originally split into two groups, viz the Bahurutshe and the Bakwena. The Bakwena split into the Bakwena ba Molepolole and the Bakwena ba Mogopa. The Bakwena ba Mogopa, in turn, split into the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho, the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Bethanie and the Bakwena ba Mogopa of Hebron.

The Bakwena ba Mogopa of Jericho are today found around the Odi districts. Jericho has a population of about eleven thousand people. The Toloane river flows through Jericho. The people living on the one side of the river are called Ma-Jericho whilst people on the other side are called Ma-Setateng.

The clans are important in several respects. They serve to divide the people into smaller groups. The close connection between clan members is expressed in the economic fields since they are duty bound to help one another. Members of the clan perform other ceremonial acts as a unit.

CHAPTER 4

4 PRAISES FOR DIVINING BONES

Praise-poems for divining bones are chanted by a medicineman or woman when throwing bones. They use obscure and figurative language and someone who is not a medicineman cannot understand what is said until he is given an explanation. Knowledge of the bones is a secret known only to the medicineman; any other person who wants to know and understand the language should undergo training under the supervision of an experienced traditional practitioner. The training period is usually two or three years and, at the end of the training period, a cow is given to the traditional practitioner as payment for the training.

When a calamity strikes a homestead or when someone is affected by a disease that is beyond the understanding of man, a traditional medicineman is consulted. Traditional practitioners (*dingaka*) are consulted on practically every occasion when an event occurs outside the natural order of things. Each practitioner has his/her own divining bones, known as *ditaola*.

When someone consults a medicineman, he has to remove his shoes before entering the hut where divination takes place. The consulter is expected to pay a certain fee known as *pula madibogo* (gate opener). The consulter is requested to blow onto the divining bones and the divination is then carried out. In the process of divination the medicineman praises his *ditaola* so that they can reveal the unknown.

The researcher consulted one traditional medicineman in Jericho, Setubi Mabiletsa. He is a well-known, qualified traditional practitioner who has passed the prescribed examination given by the African Pharmacy Board under Section seventy six of the Medical, Dental and Pharmacy Act (No. 13 of 1928) and was given a certificate in 1973 as a competent healer and spiritual practitioner.

4.1 THE PRAISE-POEM OF HIS DIVINATION BONES

<i>Sekanyana, Sekanyana,</i>	Little thing, little thing,
<i>Mafoko se a tsaya kae?</i>	Where does it obtain words?
<i>Mafoko ke tswa marapong,</i>	Words I am from the bones,
<i>Marapong a tse di suleng,</i>	The bones of the dead,

<i>Marapong a bo rraronamogolo,</i>	The bones of our grandfathers,
<i>Kwena, tlhabana, Mabjana masweu.</i>	Crocodile, black, white bones.
<i>Mabjana a banyana ba dikwena.</i>	The bones of the Crocodile girls.
<i>Paulos a sule a go file marumo -</i>	Paulos died giving you the spears -
<i>Marumo dipheko tsa magosi le batho,</i>	Weapons, the healing medicine of the chiefs and people
<i>Taola, bua, bua -</i>	Bones, speak -
<i>Re senolele masaikategang!</i>	Reveal to us the secrets!
<i>Re senolele masaitseweng!</i>	Reveal to us the unknown!

The traditional practitioner has twenty bones. There are four main bones viz *tlou* (elephant), *khudu* (tortoise), *tlhabana* (fight) and *matuma* (egg-shell).

They are followed by male and female *phiri* (hyena), *tau* (lion), *ditshwene* (baboons) and *legwane*, *rremogolo* (grandfather), *mpherefere* (dispute), *tlhapadima*, *motlhakola*, *badimo* (ancestor) and *serumi* (person of low social status).

He said *ditaola* can be praised differently according to the pattern in which they fall. After they have fallen, they are called *lewa* (lies). He explained that the fall of the divining bones is called *Lewa* (lies). He blows onto the divining bones and the divination commences. Once the bones are thrown, he starts praising them, and, using a stick, points to each bone where it lies. He praises each bone and explains its message. He praised them as follows:

4.2 POEMS OF THE DIFFERENT LIES OF THE DIVINATION BONES

4.2.1 Phiri (hyena)

<i>Ke phogojane, sewagodimo,</i>	I am phogojane, one who falls from above,
<i>ke phogojane,</i>	I am phogojane
<i>Se matshiritshiri mantsho -</i>	With lots of black hair -
<i>Sebatana sa naga;</i>	Wild animal of the veld;
<i>Segagolaki sa dintšwa le batho,</i>	Tearing dogs and people.
<i>Ke phogojane, sewagodimo.</i>	I am phogojane, one who falls from above

(*Phogojane* is a young billy goat.) The traditional practitioner says the way in which this bone lies means cruelty because a hyena is a very cruel animal and that the consulter should watch out because someone intends robbing him and stealing his possessions.

4.2.2 Ditshwene (baboons)

Tshwene Moloto -

Mokolomela dithabeng,

Mokolomela dikgageng,

Goruru wa dikgwa,

Mo tshimong a ballang?

Mo mosong ke fa,

Mo motshegareng ke fale....

A baboon of Moloto -

Who enters into the mountain,

Who enters into the caves,

A giant of the dense forests,

In the field, what do you want?

In the morning, I am here,

In the afternoon I am there...

The way in which this bone lies implies that the person will never be able to reap his crops. The crops will be eaten by birds and baboons. He must wash the seeds with a medicine called "moupo" before planting the seeds.

4.2.3 Rremogolo (grandfather)

Ke tlhako, tlhako ya Phala.

Maoto ke tseleng.

Ke lonao lo leele -

Lo leele jaaka tsela ya Kgalagadi.

O lebile kae?

Gareng ga mpa ya lefatshe.

Ke thola, sebelegela nageng.

Setlhako, bofa, o bofe o tiise.

I am the hoof, the hoof of the impala.

My feet are ready.

I have long legs -

Long legs like the path to Kgalagadi.

Where are you going?

Far away from his home.

I am a bitter apple, I give birth anywhere.

The shoe tied up tightly.

The bones say the husband has left the family and is consorting with other women. He is enjoying himself, far away from home. The wife needs very strong medicine to protect her home so that her husband can introspect himself and return home.

4.2.4 Thakadu (ant bear)

Sebatana sa naga,

Se matlhomahibidu,

Se lelekisa kolobe legang.

Seja motho, seja kgomo.

Serwala mmu ka maroo.

Wild animal of the veld,

with red eyes,

Who chases the pig from its home.

The man-eater, the cow-eater.

Who carries the soil in its paws.

The diviner says that *thakadu* represents the ancestors. "Red eyes" means that the ancestors are crying because of being angry with one and will therefore keep on destroying everything one is doing. The consulter has to "spill blood" by slaughtering an animal, preferably a white goat, and then speak to his/her ancestors.

4.2.5 Legwane (A vertebra of any wild animal)

O tlhotlhomatlhotlhama, o ya kae?

Goreng o sa robale?

O batlang, Legwane?

Golo o go batlang, go kotsi -

Go thata ya thata ya mosimane

wa tlou

You walk around, where are you going?

Why don't you sleep?

What do you want, Legwane?

The place you are looking is dangerous -

It is more dangerous than the male elephant

According to the traditional practitioner, this bone reveals that the consulter wants to bewitch somebody. The bone says that the person must not even contemplate doing so because the one he or she wants to bewitch is as tough as an elephant. It says *o bofile* (he/she is secure) - in other words, the person has a very powerful traditional practitioner and the consulter will end up hurting himself if he proceeds with the plan.

4.2.6 Mpherefere (dispute)

Mpherefere o mafaratlhatlha,

O šakgetse o tshwana le Tau.

Mpherefere o lelelang, Mpherefere?

Mpherefere bua, re utlwe!

O Tlhotlhomenyong, nonyane ya pula.

Ga o robale, o lala o menogana,

Mpherefere you are confused,

You are as angry as a lion.

Why are you crying, Mpherefere?

Mpherefere speak, so that we can listen!

You are a waterbird, a bird of rain.

You never sleep, you spend the night tossing,

<i>O lala o rwele masigo ka tlhogo.</i>	You spend the night restlessly.
<i>O ratharatha ka pelo,</i>	You speak to yourself
<i>O pelo botlhoko, Mpherefere.</i>	You are heart broken, Mpherefere.
<i>O ferekane, o mafaratlhatla,</i>	You are miserable, you are confused,
<i>O baba jaaka sekanama.</i>	You are as bitter as the juice of the Sekanama tree.

The way in which this bone lies indicates that there is a fight between the children of the family. The patient should explain the reasons for the fight to the traditional practitioner, so that he can help to put an end to the fight.

4.2.7 Tlhapadima and Motlhakola (These are two vertebrae of a wild animal)

<i>Ke Motlhakola o o tlhako e molelo,</i>	I am Motlhakola with the hot hoof,
<i>Ke tlhakotse gotlhe,</i>	I have swept everything,
<i>Nna Motlhakola yo montsho, bontsho.</i>	I, the black Motlhakola, I am pitch black.
<i>Nna ke Lefifi-lentsho.</i>	I am black - darkness.
<i>Tlhapadima ke tsene letsibong,</i>	Tlhapadima I have entered into the drift,
<i>Letsibogong la bo rra rona</i>	The drift of our grandfathers.
<i>mogologolwane.</i>	

These bones reveal the death of one of the members of the consultant's family. The ancestors have decided to kill him.....

4.3 CONCLUSION

When the traditional practitioner was asked about these poems, he said they are not memorised because the bones fall differently each time. He said these poems are the falling pattern of the flow in front of us. The message is merely the explanation of these poems and what they reveal now. He says that they do not kill, if one kills perhaps intentionally as a result of his carelessness, he and his divination bones are supposed to mourn. The mourning period is one year. During the mourning period no divination commences. He says *di a gana* (they refuse). The pattern of the bones viz Tlhapadima, Motlhakola and Badimo will reveal pitch blackness. When the mourning period is over the traditional practitioner and his divination bones are supposed to *tlhapisiwa* (be washed) with medication from another trusted traditional doctor.

CHAPTER 5

5 FORMAL FEATURES

5.1 PATTERNS OF REPETITION

Repetition is a form of expression that traditional poems employ. Repetition serves both to enhance the rhythm and to emphasise ideas. The traditional poems of the Bakwena employ repetition of sounds, words, word groups and phrases and sentences. Examples of repetition are cited below:

5.1.1 Alliteration

Abrams (1981:7) defines alliteration as:

The repetition of speech sounds in a sequence of nearby words; the terms is usually applied only to consonants and only when the recurrent sound occurs in a conspicuous position at the beginning of a word.

Alliteration means the repetition of consonants in one line in a poem, for example, in the poem for the Mogopa clan, the syllable /kgo/ recurs:

Ke kgoro e kgolo ya kgosing - It is the big clan of the chief's family -

Another example is found in the poem of the Baphiring clan with the recurrence of /le/:

Le se bonngalane le le bankge! You are not a coward, you are brave!

In the poem Tlhapadimo and Motlhakola, there is a recurrence of the /tlhako/ and /mo/ sounds.

It is a combination of word and syllable repetition:

Ke Mo/tlhako/la o o tlhako e molelo, I am Motlhakola with the hot hoofs,

5.1.2 Assonance

Abrams (1981:7) defines assonance as:

The repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds in a sequence of nearby words.

For example, in the poem Bakwena ba Mogopa there is a recurrence of the a sound:

Kgaka tsa Matlaswa mebala e dikgakaneng. A careless guinea-fowl's colours are visible in the younger guinea-fowls

In the poem of the Tubatse clan, there is a recurrence of the e sound:

E re mabele a basetsana ke a jele. I have suckled enough from the breasts of the girls.

5.1.3 Repetition of words or stem

An example from the poem for Chief Tshetlho Ivy Mamogale.

Tshetlho nna tshetlho! Tshetlho, you must be a thorn!

Another example is found in the Baphiring clan praise poem:

E re lo araba Bakwena le re: "Mmou! Mmou!" When you answer Bakwena, you must say: "Mmou! Mmou!"

Another example from the praise-poem of his Divination Bones:

Sekanyana, Sekanyana Little thing, little thing

5.1.4 Linking

Linking is also a form of repetition. Lines following each other are linked either by repetition of either the first word - this pattern is called initial linking or vertical linking - or by the repetition of the last word - this is called final linking or interlocking.

5.1.4.1 Initial Linking or Vertical Linking

Example from Chief Tshetlho Mamogale's praise-poem:

Tshetlho, nonyane e e bothale! Tshetlho an intelligent bird!

Tshetlho, nonyane ya kagiso! Tshetlho a bird of peace!

5.1.4.2 Final-initial linking

Final linking uses the idea at the end of the line to begin the next line. For example, in the praise-poem of Jericho village:

Yo o agilweng jaaka Jerusalema, The one which is built like Jerusalem,

Jerusalema motse wa kganya. Jerusalem the glorious village.

Another example from the praise-poem of his Divination Bones:

*Mafoko ke tswa marapong,
Marapong a tse di suleng,*

Words I am from the bones,
The bones of the dead,

5.1.4.3 Repetition of a phrase or sentence

Example from the poem for *Phiri* (Hyena)

Ke phogojane, sewagodimo, ke phogojane,

I am phogojane, one who falls from
above, I am phogojane

5.1.4.4 Repetition of word-group or sentence

Example from the praise-poem for Toloane

Tlaya re nwe mmogo, tlaya re nwe gotlhe.

Come let us drink together, come let us
drink everything.

Repetition in oral poetry serves to draw attention to the language.

5.2 PARALLELISM

Cope (1968:40-41) describes parallelism as a variety of repetitions to be found par excellence in Zulu poetry, since poetry makes a lot of use of repetition of various kinds which include rhyme. Parallelism occurs when lines utilise the same grammatical units. Sub-categories relevant to parallelism in Bakwena heroic poems are cited below:

5.2.1 Partial parallelism

Partial parallelism occurs when lines following each other employ the same grammatically structures. An example of partial parallelism is found in the following lines quoted from the poem of the Morake surname:

Monna pitse o thukutwa tlhogo,

Like a stallion, the man's head is shaken,

Mosadi pitsa o akga leleme,

The woman, at home, always gossips,

5.2.2 Semantic parallelism

Semantic parallelism occurs when the lines employ identical meaning. An example of semantic parallelism is found in the following lines, quoted from the poem of the Divination Bones:

Re senolele masaikategang!

Reveal to us the unknown!

Re senolele masaitseweng!

Reveal to us the secret!

5.3 IMAGERY

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, imagery is "A figurative illustration used by writers for a particular effect".

Lewis (1954: 80) says "we can find an image in a pure description when such a description makes us imagine something more than factual reflection of an object".

5.3.1 Simile

The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (1989:1187) explains simile as a comparison of one thing with another.

Through comparison poets try to effect meaningful and artistic communication. The poets usually compare two things that often share a common feature with the view of illustrating a certain feature. The two elements of an image are the tenor and the vehicle. The vehicle is used to qualify the tenor. The vehicle serves to emphasize, clarify and enhance the tenor. In a simile, the comparison is explicitly announced by the word "as" or "like" which in Tswana is "*jaaka*" or "*tshwana le*", etc.

An example of a simile taken from the poem Jericho Village

Yo o agilweng jaaka Jerusalema, The one which is built like Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is the vehicle while Jericho, being praised here, is the tenor.

Another example of simile is introduced by the word *tshwana le* (as) in the poem *Mpherefere* (dispute):

O sakgetse o tshwana le tau. You are as angry, you are like a lion.

Tau (lion) is the vehicle while *Mpherefere*, a lie being praised, is the tenor.

5.3.2 Metaphor

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1978: 654) explains a metaphor as:

"An expression which means or describes one thing or idea using words usually used of something also with very similar qualities without using the words "as" or "like".

The researcher used a number of sub-categories which are relevant to the occurrence of metaphors used in the praise-poems of the Bakwena.

5.3.3 Explicit metaphor

Is when the praisers make a direct equation of two things by using an identifying copulative *ke*. This copulative is commonly used to identify one object with another as, for example, in the poem Jericho Village

O kitlane, ke sekgwa sa ga Monyemane. It is dense, it is a dense forest of the Monyemane.

5.3.4 Implicit metaphor

Occurs when the praisers make direct equations of two things without using an identifying copulative. An example taken from the poem for Toloane High School.

Tshingwana ya maungo. The garden of fruit.

5.3.5 Stereotyped expressions

Some of the Bakwena praiser's expressions can be regarded as dead metaphors because they are part of everyday language. In the poem Toloane High School one line reads:

Ke sediba sa thuto, molemi le moitsaanape. It is a fountain of knowledge for the farmer and expert.

This expression is in commonly used to refer to schools. The expression has lost its original effect because normally all the schools produce educated people. They are "fountains of knowledge".

5.3.6 Metonymy

Metonymy names an object by referring to another object which is similar to it, e.g. in the poem Chief Tshetlho Ivy Mamogale, the praiser says:

O moapara 'tlalo la nkwe. You are the one to wear a Leopard's skin.

Here the Leopard's skin refers to the kingship. The leopard skin is called *kobo ya dikgosi* (the blanket of the kings). It symbolises bravery.

5.3.7 Symbolism

A poet may use objects to represent concepts in such a way that it can be interpreted in the same way or be associated with related concepts although it occurs in various instances and contexts. Such an image is called a symbol; related images may form a pattern that can be interpreted as symbolic. A poet does not always explicitly suggest that an object symbolises some concept, or name the object which it symbolises - it is often the reader who feels that the object suggests something else and requires wider interpretation, viz. in the following examples quoted from the poem Chief Aubrey Mafale Mamogale:

<i>Kwena e ntsho ya Modiana-a-Tau</i>	The black crocodile of the Modiana of Lion
<i>Fifi le Mokwena</i>	Darkness of the Mokwena
<i>Ya re fa e tlhola Maimana</i>	When it defeats Maimana
<i>E tswa e eme ka maroo khuthing</i>	It comes out of the hollow, standing on its paws

The Bakwena chiefs are regarded as fearful people in such a way that other tribes are afraid of them as they are afraid of the crocodile and other snakes of the big rivers. It means that these chiefs are heroes who destroy their enemies.

5.4 FIGURES OF SPEECH

5.4.1 Disclaimer

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (1938: 341) explains disclaimer as:

"A statement that disclaims"

In the poem "Bakwena Tribe" the praiser says:

<i>Ngwale, boela yoo o mmokile,</i>	Ngwale go back, you have praised him,
<i>O boka o sa itse 'ina ja gagwe -</i>	You praise without knowing his name -
<i>'Ina ja gagwe ke Matsodimatsoke.</i>	His name is Matsodimatsoke.

The idea in the above three lines contradicts each other but the thought here is that the praiser has actually said everything he knows about the thing or the person praised.

5.4.2 Play on words and puns

Bakwena praisers often use contrived puns and subtle play on words, occasionally with humorous effect. Such a play on words may take various forms, sometimes as a result of a

reduplication of words or syllables. The poet chooses the words simply because he likes the sound and sense they evoke. Thus by reduplication of words for poetic effect, in the poem "Bakwena ba Mogopa Tribe" the praiser says:

Ba diga phala, ba phala ba bangwe. They drop the impala, they defeat other tribes.
Ba bolaya kubu ba kubuga! They killed the hippopotamus, they became alert!

Another example from the poem *Tlhapadima and Motlhakola*; a praiser says:

Nna Motlhakola yo montsho, bontsho. I, the black Motlhakola, the pitch black

5.4.3 Satire

Cohen (1993:195) describes satire as a subtle, gentle or sometimes bitter, fiery criticism of a person, human nature, events, movement or institutions by the use of exaggeration, ridicule, sarcasm, irony and humour in order to reduce its subject to absurdity.

In the praise-poem of the Bakwena Tribe, the praiser says:

Dikolobe tsa ga Mfeta-a-Mogale, The Pigs of the Mfeta of Mogale,
Tse di tllhabang ntšwa di hulare, That stab dogs and turn their back

The impression given in these lines is that they are criticised to correct their bad manners of running instead of facing their enemies and fighting fiercely.

5.4.4 Apostrophe

This occurs when praise-poets often address objects or animals as if they are people:

In the poem *Mpherefere* (dispute) we find the following example of apostrophe:

Mpherefere o lelelang, Mpherefere? Why are you crying, Mpherefere?
Mpherefere bua, re utlwe! Mpherefere speak, so that we can listen!.

CHAPTER 6

6.1 CONCLUSION

According to Bakwena culture a feeling for language, for imagery and for the expression of abstract ideas, through compressed and allusive phraseology, emerges clearly in proverbs. The value of proverbs amongst the Bakwena does not lie only in what they reveal of the thought of the past for its speakers, but also as a model of compressed or forceful language. This approach to proverbs which is evident in the speech of people who are regarded as accomplished speakers or poets of a sort makes the proverbs not only a body of short statements built up over the years but also a technique of verbal expressions which is greatly appreciated by the Bakwena. It is no wonder therefore that the use of the proverbs has continued to be a living tradition among the Bakwena ba Mogopa.

Riddles are common among Bakwena tribes and have also been extensively collected. They are considered to be the special domain of children and are used for entertainment. Although riddles may be regarded as a relatively minor and crude form of art suitable for children, they have some relevance for literacy. Insight into the nature of peoples' behaviour is expressed by the Bakwena in myths, riddles, idioms, proverbs and songs.

The praise poems are used by the Bakwena to advocate courage and endurance. The more the chief achieves in the battle or in the tribal council, the better praise he receives. The poems do not die with these chiefs but remain as reminders of their lives, a treasure, an inspiration and glory to the chief's family, friends and the clan. They are used to make contact with and intercession to the chief when he becomes an ancestral spirit.

The Bakwena ba Mogopa Tribal tribe have their own heroic praise-poems in which the history of the tribe is reflected. These poems reflect and interpret their experiences, achievements, thoughts and feelings and they give a picture of the life of these people.

Songs, feasts, proverbs, idioms and heroic praise-poems are today still actively used amongst the Bakwena. Their culture and talents are reflected in these genres. This society has its own professional poets. This alone is ample testimony of the importance attached to folk-poetry by tribal people and it is also proof of their appreciation of creative talent and aesthetic art.

Due to western civilisation the riddles and myths are declining but many have been collected and recorded by other Bakwena professional writers.

With regard to praise-poems for divining bones, the Bakwena have many praises for the various lies. As a rule, diviners are extremely secretive in all their doings. Their praises tend to heighten this secrecy and mystery by occasionally employing a special vocabulary that is intelligible only to members of their profession.

In conclusion, the researcher is compelled to say:

"As Africans, we can and must learn from others, but in so doing, we must not sacrifice our culture and heritage."



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MAP OF JERICHO VILLAGE

