NOTES

1. MONTSHIMA, a TAWANA

The poem is based on the Lolthokane incident of May, 1881, in which Montshima fell upon Matlabe for occupying Lolthokane territory, Mosweto, the Botlou chief, avenged Matlabe and expelled Montshima to Matseleng. Matlabe was the Tulpanela chief then.

1. see, contracted from selo, applied to the Botlou with contempt.
Baralong, the Botlou section then ruled by chief Mosweto.
2. see jo Baseschippe, the Botlou Baralong. Baseshippe ruled the tribe after Botlou II, its founder.
3. lekgato, figuratively, an invasion. This line refers to the actual attack on the Tshidi.
4. Montshima, the son of Chief Tawana, ruled the Tshidi during a hectic period of South African history; his small tribe was painfully buffeted this way and that, but he was a spirited man, an able leader, and an astute thinker, and the struggle did not break him.

a la botse Motlhware, i.e., ordered Motlhware to fall upon them.
Botsware, an officer in high command in the Tshidi army.
5. difube, on any chase the breasts were the chief's rightful portion, given as a token of loyalty and submission. This line is ironical in intention; Montshima was referring to the counter-attack.
6. observe the undertone of mocking contempt.
Fuba di gatle . . ., Nekgwimiatho was killed in the ensuing fight.
7. Nekgwimiatho a Lesile, a prominent Botlou counsellor and warrior.
8. Mosweto, the Botlou chief of Khumana. He was a constant menace to the Tshidi people, even sending his Boer agents against them. Hence the bitter scorn with which he is referred to, he and his people.

9. Fasokgantshe, Mosweto; father of Sokgantshe, the object of his pride, viz., Nekgwimiatho.
10. le kgwoma, to pack things for a journey; hence, metaphorically, to die.
11. le malamong, simple form lama, from Afrikaans lager.
12. le lekalokosie, the Boer womenfolk.
13. le akile lekgwola, some of the Boers acted as Mosweto's auxiliaries, hence this reference.

Koste, Coetzee, refers to the "borderers" in general, many of whom considered Montshima better dead than alive. (Walker, A History of S. Africa) go kgwoma / . .
2.

po kgwatha, to lie on belly while being thrashed, especially in the case of refractory boys. Applied metaphorically.

17. gware ja mo ninya, figuratively, he is dead.

18. See line 17 above.

19. Morena Tau, refers to Motsiwa; Tau, the father of the famous Botloq II, Tshidi, Seleka, and Napulana.

20. "Note" Matsete's note the references in two or three poems to the meritorious action of the Matsete regiment in this campaign.

Matsete, a regiment of the Tshidi army during Motsiwa's reign, led by Beselo, Motsiwa's son.

21. Motuba a Matsokane, a younger brother of Chief Mafabe of the Rapulana tribe. He was put to shame by Beselo.

22. Letsholo, a game drive; hence, metaphorically, a campaign.

Morolong, Motsiwa; a title of respect applied very often to the paramount chief.

26. Note emphasis laid by ka po boela repeated.

28. setlhakeng, denotes the demolished huts.

32. Ditshakeng, then occupied by the Rapulana.

33. Mainensho, an endearing reference to the Motsiwa by his totem name.

of Morolong, line 26; also "Note" in No. 18, line 32.

34. Baschakeng, the Rapulana Morolong.

II. MOKOKA a SEHUNELO.

1,2. This appeal to him to pursue and recapture the cattle implies promptness and courage on his part.

Mathodinako, Moroka himself by praise-name; an expressive appellation alluding to his piercing, terror-striking look. Note compound derivation.

Baschokanye, a worthy forefather.

3. Tshone, compare the effect of this word in its present context with that of Ah, mel when it is expressive of anguish or resignation. Compare, further, the following citation from Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner".

Ah, well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!

Ordinarily tshone is the Thaping variant for room.

4. Sele, a beast, monster; alluding to the formidable expression of his countenance.

8. Bodibe, Moroka; denotes unflinching danger; implies prowess such as to deter from approach.

7. Temapogi, Moroka; denotes one who stands head and shoulders above his crowd.
66. Holobalihe, Sebogedi's brother also; acted as regent during the minority of Lentswe a Mene.
68. Mogoae, of 'Battle-din'
68 - 72. Meaning somewhat hidden.
68. Napana, a clan in Lechrysler.
69. Nhlabidu a Maanyana, Maanyana was Chief Pule's oldest son. He ruled for a while but deserted and was succeeded by Mene his younger brother. Nhlabidu is the correct name (Samshascoa).
71, 72. Monofu, the large bull rhinoceros; konene, a smaller more ferocious variety; go kafula mene a sikolela.
72. Tshukudu tei mone, refers to Tamana's warriors. Note compound nouns Ditsayabathe and Be-Makgalathipe.
81. Marumo a sentwene, a magatlala, bo-ruboboi.

V. SEBELE A SENSHELE

1. "Go lela ya direng, e bitse ya o se mong a yone. Ba reditse, ka o lelang gone ba re, "Ke yowe o re bitsa". (Miss H. Makgasane).
2,3. Papanja and Kromokositana, districts in Bobrama.
7. "E se matele maa, "go ma ka ba ile go ma madi a a botlhoko, ka kgomo di bonwe maa bathe bone ka sile" (Miss H. Makgasane).
9. Alludes to a clash of arms between the Kgato and Bakwena.
10. Ntseletsa, a tree; "mogau, sole se se bolayan" (S. Phetshu).

Refer to cattle, see note below.

11. The constant peril associated with cattle in those days did not deter any man from striving to possess them.

VI. MONTSHIWA A TAWANA.

1. Refers to the assassination of Bowo and Kgalele, Ntselekatse's tax-collectors; cf. Plaatje, 'Shadi'. The Tahidi were settled at Khumana then and their paramount chief was Tawana. Jeremiah Kaselwanyane, a Tahidi said to be 103 years of age in 1937, says, "Go tlaile Matebile a ga Ntselekatse, a tla mo Nosiga, rona Barolong re le la a ga Khumana. Ba etolana le Matebile ra ba ra ntshanya dikala more. Moe fe re tla tlofa Matebile a thabana le rona ga tla Ntsetidi le Barolong le bo-Morekwa, ba rea go gape dikgomo tsa Matebile ka moreka. Ba tla mo go Tawana go loja thuso. Ga wa na ntshwa nosiwa ma Malau (led by Tlale a Tawana) go ya go thusa bo-Haroroka. Dikgomo tsa ntshwanyana yoe tsa gatana. Holossi wa ya go bolela ka Nosiga, maw
Matebelo a ba tilhasela, a ba bolaya. Nne ya re ha keleka ditoto be
fitlhela batlo ba ga Tamana. Nne ya re junong Notselekatse a ramela kra
go Tamana, "A le wena o apolaya le morafo? re bone ditoto tsa ha-meng
mo morafeng e e na o taile go re gapela?" Tamana, "Batlo hoo ga ke a ba
rama ba itsamaitse fela." Matebelo a ne a ramile Patakele, ntse ngenesis
ya bone. Nne Patakele a sana go fitlhela Matebelo er a re, "Ke makas" nne
ba rama batlo ba le babedi ba ba taile go baya ditseela mo gayo, a le Bowo
le Kgaiile. Nne ba fitlhela ba bina mo gayo mo ba re.

*Kokise ditchesa;
Kokise Bakwana;
Kokise Bafurutse;
Mme bengwe ga ba Xitsaso.*

Basadi ba bota ba nya go re kong, nne ba tsana mo pineng ba ela tilhelo.
Nne ka gona Matebelo a a tsaw!sweng a ya go bolwa, ka go homola Matebelo
a tla tla go tilhasela. Ba tsaw!swengwa Muntshiwa le Nolana, ba ya go ba
bolaya kw.
Nne saina a ga Muntshiwa a dule foo, fa go too:-

"O jele bathe ba etile Hkabo**, etc;

Hkabo, short for Sejakabo, Muntshiwa; derived from go ja nkabo, to

2,3. Express fear of reprisals.

6. Thablosi, Muntshiwa, a praise-name; derived from (v.t.e) go
thatele: of a liberator or establisher of tribal prestige.

Sephiri a Mokothu, noted in No. 4.

7 - 10. Allude to the countless joy of carrion crows and their supposed
acts of gratitude for Muntshiwa's deed.

11. Seopa le Mainela, rivers.

14,15. See note on line 1, above.

16 - 18. Expressive of Bolong contempt for foreigners.

17. Menyathelo, from Bulu ukunyathela; footwear was unknown to
Motelekatse's warriors, see Plaatje, "Mhudi". Further, it may be noted
of line 16 "they (Matebelo) also introduced manners that were extremely
offensive." (Mhudi, by Plaatje).

19,20. Sound a note of profound relief.

19. Maphathama, is here applied in the wider sense of "stern Matebelo
rule and repugnant custom".

21 - 31. Refer partly to his fee as a poet, and partly to the stern
and uncomfortable Bolong hospitality. Observe that the poet is not a
Morolong, but a Nokwana, hence lines 21 to 28 more in the 'go tlhagana' spirit.

26., phorapho, Lotlane and Setumo Phetlhu substituted the word 'nokwana' in certain renderings.

Note another version of this poem on page

VII. KEBALEPILE a MOTSHIWA.

The poem is ascribed to Israel Nolana. Two more versions of it will be found elsewhere in this work. The poem arose out of the Battle of Lotlhakane; the Rapulana, led by their chief, Matlabe, occupied Lotlhakane before the ratification of the boundary settlement by Pretorius in 1881. Whereupon Motshiwa fell upon them as he counted that strip of land as his own.

1. Leopariri, from the Afrikana officers.

Maganacoutwa, his regiment, also known as the Madisakgone or Maisantwa. Maganacoutwa, is used in the sense of 'those who are dauntless and ready of action in time of war'.

2. Onyama, Kebalepile's own mother.

Letantiswa, see above.

4. Mosisi go tlhakane, in the sense of "itches for battle".

5. cf. "...in occasu vestro nec tela nec ullass vitavesce vituvse vices Damaus." — Anecdotes Lib. II. 452 and 453.

6. kwalawale, urging to greater effort.

Mologanna, regiment led by Bathobatho a Motshegaare.

7,8. Names of outstanding fighters in the Malakana regiment.

9. monbena, compare geblela in No. 14

10. Tswana is his grandfather.

12,18. The Motshwae fought in the same battle, it appears, with great distinction. See No. 1 strophe 4.

14 - 16. A mongale is the object of utmost scorn, a social outcast.

17. Seipese, Kebalepile; the exemplar of courage and prowess in his regiment. Properly seipese seipese is a mirror.

19. se le no lorakong, i.e. "se iphitlhile" (Phetlhu).

20. "Notho wa gago ga e te a tsa e a se a tlhajwa." (Phetlhu).

21. bo-Sehane, Sepulana men in general; Sehane himself was a Sepulana, a son of Xpelokeng.

22 - 24. Verbal lies the cause of war. See above.
allowable to think that the author was not a Hongoetse; line 2 suggests a 
foreigner, and strophe 2 would come ill from the lips of a Hongoetse. As 
a taunt it spares no feelings while in spirit it seems strongly of the 
"so tilhaga" practice of the Tswana tribes.

XI. DESERT a MONTSHIMA.

Compare No. IX on page 10, and note divergences in the two versions.
Note also the almost entire absence of genealogical reference. Even praiso-
names are not a strong feature of this poem.

10. Figuratively, he bears no wounds, a strong testimony of prowess
and fighting skill.

12, 13. So strophe 1.

XII. MONTSHIMA a TAWANA.

1 - 6. In 1851 Montshima was routed from Letlhakane by the Boers.
1. Boo e ntsha, Montshima.

a Khunou, H. W. Pretorius; his aggressive expansion policy brought
him into sharp conflict with Chief Montshima.

2. Not historically true but in this type of poetry the idea is
everything, the idea is the fact. Numerous examples of this type of
reference will be found throughout the poems.

4 - 6. Cf. Wookay, Dloa tea Sekwana, — "Me Barolou ka tshabela ka
Cwain, fun Nwokwen; ba san ba ca Sekokolela; ba saa gona, ba tla no
go fasnitsane, no Kanye, me a ba bana ka Nshanun". See pp. 27 and 72.

7 - 10. Cf. Wookay, "Barolou ka thahong ka Sekwana gona, me ba
leleka ntum ya Batswana". 60.

7. Neswana, this is Chief Neswana II of the Bakwena whose
sons were Setsho and Kgosintsa.

10. thlobohile, for thlobogilwe. This change from (x) to (h) is
noticeable in Mafeking.

11. Montshima was not in Mafeking. An echo of the boundary
disputes in which H. W. Pretorius figured so prominently. See events
leading to Keate award, 1871.

12. Boite, probably some Boer adventurer who may have fared
disastrously at the en hands of the Tshidi, at least so the poem says.
See also Read, a missionary.

13. Alludes to Montshima now settled in Mafeking.

14. Egalame /
14. *Bagalashe*, Sir Charles Warren, as he was known among the Barolong tribes. Note his expedition to British Bechuanaland and its satisfactory results as far as the Bantu chiefs were concerned.

22, 23. cf. "Then wars shall cease, the rugged times grow mild", from (Shandes' translation).

Thus strophe 6 is a memorial of joy at the supposed peaceful state of the times and very high praise for Chief Montshima.

XIII. SEBELE A SESEBELE.

Interpretation of this poem may be rendered less difficult by the extensive rearrangement to which I have subjected it.

1. *Hemo o lola*, "go lola ya dira, e bitza yo se wong a yona".

2. Phaphama and Ngomokadinga, districts in Mokwena.

3. "Gampane 'di bitza Sebele hemo tsa direng, a bo dira, 'Sebele weel'!"

4, 5. "Badigapi ba ile go ma andi a a bolthoko, ka lefa di gorogile bathe bona ba metsa kai ntswang."

6. 30. Allude to a Nketo-Ngabato clash of arms in which it appears Sebele distinguished himself.

9. *Letlhapi*, Sebele as a member of the regiment Letlhapi.
10. *Letlaleboleta*, Sebele; note derivation, also play on this word in next line.

15. Alluding to the present conflict.
17. *merole*, the young warriors; properly used of calves.
19. *Selesele*, Sebele; In Greek the same constellation is called *Pleiades*, from *plein*, to sail; the Greeks considered navigation safe after the return of the *Pleiades*. In Zulu it is called *isilimela* and appears when digging operations begin. Compare, Roman *Vergiliae*, from *virga*, a sprout or twig.

20. *Sebedimo*, again Sebele, referring to his spectacular manner; a meteor/...
energy, and eagerness.

3. bana be lefuba, this refers to Senthufe and his supporters.

4. be lele sefuba, his attempted act of usurpation.

5. Makaba II had murdered the nearest claimants of the "crown" for his own peace of mind.

6. However, Gaseitswe escaped. Later, with Mantatis impis helping him, he rose against Makaba and overthrew him. Makaba was killed.

7. Ntsoekane, an important Songwekebe.

megodire, a tree; molobaro, also a tree.

10.11. Montshina, here referred to as Tholo (seboko), was involved as an auxiliary to Senthufe, the refractory junior of Gaseitswe.

modisa na kgadibone, applied to Montshina's kgotla. This customary usage has been noted already.

12.16. Ratshoa, Raseputshane, his father and uncle respectively; properly used without the en prefix ra.

15. of.

"... ambiquam Tyriquesque bilinesque;" Ascleides, Lib. I, 661.

16. An exaggeration, he probably suffered more defeat; correct similarly 10 and 11 above.

19. Madinakate, Gaseitswe; from go dudutse, to yell, to shout.

Rabe, of the house of Rebe; probably relatives on his mother's side.

21. Thiri, denotes his cowardly enemies, especially Borolong.

Muswathaba, in contrast to Ga-Nkholase, Ga-Molopo is non-hilly; there is also a river of that name in Mokwana, see No. 20 XX p. line 69.

XVI. MONTSHINA & TANANA.

1 - 10. Referring to the Battle of Lebokasane in 1861 in which Matlabo, the pro-Boer Borolong, was taught a sharp lesson in humility by Chief Montshina, the pro-British Borolong. Further, see No. 1 line 22, and notes. Mark Letome, one of my informants, made the following statement: "Chief Montshina convened a meeting of the Borolong chiefs to consider the advisability of falling under British protection rather than under Boer oppression, even adding that any who favoured the Boers should cross into the Transvaal. Nogotsi rose and in a haughty manner opposed Montshina's proposition in toto.
He favoured the Boer "native policy* and had no intention to trek to the
frontiers. "Very well then," said Montshina, "let us meet at Lotlhakane
tomorrow." Next day Koswete, the Batlou chief of Khuswa, sent Montshina
a large ox saying, "I pay for the word spoken by Nogotsi." Montshina
returned the ox to its owner without thanks. Thereupon Koswete came in to
help the Batlou. Montshina was routed and driven to Mafeking. According
to Lotesana, Nogotsi spoke in his own right as chief, as his father had died
recently. It is certain that he had his father's younger brother's support,
the support of Motube. This is the only that Nogotsi is mentioned in this
connection, and even then only as a corpse.

1. Modumo, battle-din, through causes mentioned above.
2. Matlou, in Lotlhakane district.
4. bonam, refers to the status and privileges of the Mantswa age-group.
5. Nogotsi, Matlou's son, he was killed in the affray; see, a lo sakeng
7. More in agreement with "Bishaba ke tsa di ipalela Lotlhakane
   tlel" No. VII line 22 and the explanations given.
8. Tsangana, lposi ya Matlou, Chief Tusana.
9. The weight of evidence seems to show that this was the real cause of
   the war, but attention must be paid to Lotesana's statement. See also Walker:
   "A History of South Africa''
10. Motube, younger brother of Matlou. Now that Nogotsi is dead he is
    the heir-apparent.
11. That I am not honoured with favours from you (Montshina), in contrast
    with the Koswetes.
12, 15. Of "Gey von Pittius, Mosette's agent, laid waste the country
to the gates of Mafeking." Again, "many of the borderers still considered
Montshina an enemy better dead." (Walker, "A History of South Africa.")
13. Bo-Maresanang, these same gun-bearing borderers and adventurers;
    note, marel, spears, hence "spears-in-mouth", from position of guns when being
    fired; used with some contempt.
14. Nabotologa, Montshina, a praise-name; from go botologa, see
    explanation in next line.
15. Kgabo, a Botlhaping chieftain of the time.
16. Lepetalebogela, Montshina; note derivation, go metsa and lebolele;
a greedy person, motho yo o megaro.
Keto la Moroneyne, Kgolo's sons slain in a cattle raid.
22. Holzismathe, noted elsewhere.
23. Nadjao, Monshion's minor wife.
24. Tsau ga dikale, expressive of
28. Makelo a kalo, also a poet, author of No. II.
29 - 30 Compare,
"Kena ma ntlha bo ke sa ratege jang?" in line 11, above.
31. bo-Mamakakielo, certain fellow-tribemen of the poet's.
32. Note, shortened from Makanoto.
33. i.e. Takes what he gets and is satisfied with it.
34. Motaza, a poor milch cow.
35. Tired, derived from go dira.
36. Makgotla, a descendant of Makgotla, closely bound with the
Teedi by ties of marriage.
37. reko wa sekalame, "trago tota".

XVII. KURALEPILIE A MONTSHION.

See other versions.
15. This line is addressed to the Rapulous Didibana, a place near
Potshoefstrom occupied by them; hence la Didibana, the Rapuluma.
16. Bo lo dira, i.e., we have bewitched you. Of. dita.
17. le-mbae-langwe, mokgyebe, a charm which anticiates the victim.
18. le-mbae, the Ngakotse country, from its hilly nature.
19. mophethe, also a charm, very bitter.

XVIII. BATHOENG A GASEITSWE.

Bathoeng succeeded his father Gaseitswe and was the first Christian
chief of the Ngakotse tribe.

1 - 5. Indicate that by habit and for reasons of strategy Bathoeng
never wages war except by day. See also No. XX, lines 10, 11. Sethlu
says, "Go re batilhabeni be lekane bo ditshwene".

1. Keomo phela, Bathoeng; go ka na manapo.

2. bo lelo, perhaps this should be written as one word.
3. "Go re batilhabeni be lekane bo ditshwene."
4. Masi a Keona, figuratively, the stain of the enemy.

Kemoa / * *