

THE FORMS, CONTENTS AND TECHNIQUES
OF TRADITIONAL LITERATURE IN SOUTHERN SOTHO.

by

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DITEBOHO : (ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS).

The roots for the ultimate writing of this essay, were firmly laid in my childhood, during which period I used to listen to various story-tellers in our village. The community was a mixed one, made up of Sotho and Hlubi speakers. In later years, my imagination was further fired by two of my teachers in Bantu languages. One was the then Mr. A.C. Jordan, now Prof. Jordan in the University of Wisconsin, America; and Mr. B.M. Khaketla, the present (1964) Honourable Member Associated with Health and Education in the Basutoland Government. For that initial inspiration and insight into things African, I shall always be grateful to them.

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CHAPTER I

SELELEKELA: (INTRODUCTION).

INTRODUCTION:

1.0.1. The main object of this study is to try and give a review of traditional literature in Southern Sotho. As such then, it must not be regarded as a detailed study of each genre. It is hoped that by so doing, a deeper and fuller understanding of this type of literature will be gained and its value appreciated. This can best be achieved by a systematic review and analysis of the various genres with a view to establishing what techniques operate in them. Their content will also be taken into account because on this basis, one can best arrive at their value and social significance to the community concerned, namely, the Sotho of Basutoland, as well as those of the Republic of South Africa. On the basis of such analysis, it should be possible at a later date to compare and contrast written literature in Southern Sotho with its unwritten counterpart, and see what driving forces are operative in the former as against the latter: what elements, if any, have been taken over from the past into the present. A people's past is its spiritual heritage, and as such, it should not only be nursed and nurtured, but preserved and jealously guarded for all times. This is because of the stability that it provides for, without it, a nation is like a tree without roots,

liable to be blown off by the gentlest of breezes; with it, it can withstand the strongest of hurricanes, because it is firmly rooted. Hence the basic object of this study, which is to place on record in a comprehensive form, all that constitutes the traditional heritage of the Sotho from the literary point of view.

1.0.2. The oral and traditional literature of Southern Sotho, is a survival of an indefinite past from which it was handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Being oral, it was most alive out of print and in the bookless world of the ancients, for print tends to freeze a story and give it stability. 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. It was made up of various genres as follows:-

MYTH: / It is "a tale, and in the original sense of the Greek word muthos any tale would be a myth because it would be an oral communication. It professes to relate some happening in which supernatural beings are concerned and probably in so doing to offer an explanation of some natural phenomenon".¹ The late Professor Alice Werner² quotes the following definition of a myth, as laid down by the Folk-Lore Society of London: "A story told to account for something". From these definitions it is

¹ Cassell's Encyclopaedia of Literature, Vol.I, P.372.

² A. Werner: MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF THE BANTU, P.117.

clear that a myth is a sort of answer that primitive man had to find in an attempt to explain or account for the numerous questions that baffled him. His answers to the mysteries of life and death, love and hatred, etc. took the form of a story, which is generally referred to as a myth.

LEGEND: It is an historical story or narrative that contains a nucleus of historical fact, such as the name of a particular character, but whose historical existence is now so shrouded in mystery, as to be almost mythical or semi-mythical. For this reason, it may also "be said to be distorted history",¹ in that the memory of the historical fact in it has been distorted and elaborated by various elements derived from myths.

FABLE: It is a short story in which the characters are animals. It is usually didactic and points to a certain moral. In it, animate and inanimate things speak and behave like ordinary human beings, with human interests and passions. The various incidents involved, however, are "not necessarily probable", but are mainly "intended to instruct or amuse".²

FOLK-TALE: It is a popular story handed down by tradition from generation to generation and which was told for the sake of telling a story.

RIDDLE: "An obscure description of something which the hearer is asked to name".³ It is really a child of wit, in which the

¹ Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.9, P.447.

² CHAMBERS'S TWENTIETH CENTURY DICTIONARY.

³ Op.cit. P.809.

speaker does "his best to tease", by combining an "accurate description" of an obscure thing "with deliberate misleading of the audience".¹

FROVERB: The concise Oxford Dictionary defines it as a "short pithy saying in general use, adage, saw". To this may be added that proverbs are distilled words of wisdom in which the accumulated experience of the ages is perpetually enshrined.

FOLK-SONG: By this is meant a song that originated among the people and which was traditionally handed down by them. In Southern Sotho, such songs are many and varied. They may, however, be conveniently divided into two main groups with sub-divisions, namely, (i) those that were sung in public, and (ii) secret songs sung by boys and girls undergoing initiation. The latter are generally referred to as Dikoma and are still a highly guarded secret.

Finally, there were praises of various kinds, such as those that were recited by boys from the circumcision lodge; animal-praises, as well as those of divining bones; praise-poems or dithoko, which were the highest oral compositions of Southern Sotho traditional poetry, composed by or on behalf of outstanding personalities in the community, usually chiefs and warriors successful in battle.

¹ Cassel, Op.cit. P.227.

1.0.3. These unwritten forms of the artistic possessions of the past were later collected and reduced to writing by missionaries and some of their converts. The great name here is that of Rev. E. Jacottet of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, with his two volumes entitled LITSOMO TSA BASOTHO,¹ and to which constant reference will be made in the following pages. As the title indicates, myths and legends are collectively referred to as ditshomo in Southern Sotho. Some of them bear the stamp of recent times, particularly from the point of view of their content and vocabulary. In form, however, they are constructed on traditional lines - a veritable case of pouring new wine into old bottles. In the succeeding pages, an attempt will be made to examine the various genres outlined above from the point of view of their form, content and technique.

¹ Part 1, 1st edition, 1909; Part 2, 1st edition, 1911.

CHAPTER II

DITSHOMO

INTRODUCTION:

2.0.1. The term ditshomo is used to indicate a variety of stories. Among these are myths and legends, fables and folk-tales. For this reason, it has not been translated in the heading above because any of these varieties is a "tshomo" in Southern Sotho.

MYTHS:

2.1.1. Southern Sotho mythology deals with a variety of subjects, all revolving around man, on whom the created universe is centred. In view of the fact that the most outstanding events in human life are birth, death and marriage, it is not surprising to find that there are myths that deal with the origin of death, the human institution of marriage, as well as those that seek to explain how certain food-stuffs came to be generally known and accepted.¹

Strangely enough, however, there does not seem to be any myth or story that explains the creation either of man himself or the world in which he lives and moves. This gap may perhaps be due to the fact that according to tradition, the Sotho of Basutoland say they originated from a place called Ntswana-tsatsi, i.e. where the sun rises, or the place of the rising of the sun. It is said to have

¹ Jacottet: LIT SOMO I, PP. 24, 25 and 27 respectively.

been surrounded by tall reeds, and to this day, in consequence thereof, a reed or its substitute is usually erected outside a hut in which there is a new-born baby. To the vast majority of the Sotho, Ntswana-tsatsi is a mythical place whose geographical location is unknown, except for the fact that it is somewhere in the East, in the direction from which the sun rises. In view of this widespread belief, it is rather interesting to note that according to Ellenberger and Macgregor,¹ this place lies mid-way between Frankfort and Vrede in the Orange Free State, and just across the borders of Basutoland.

2.1.2. Tradition also mentions the first Mosotho on earth, presumably the first to emerge from "Lehlakeng, Ntswana-tsatsi," i.e. from the reed-bed at Ntswana-tsatsi. His name was Tlake, sometimes called Mopedi-Moholo, and his his surname was Mosito. Further, there are two extant lines of his praises that have come down to us, and which are generally well-known among the Sotho. It is in the first line of these that the alternative name of Mopedi-Moholo appears. They are:

"Ke Mopedi-moholo wa Raseapara lome,
Ha ke a ikapesa, ke apesitswe."

(I am Mopedi, the eldest son of the wearer of Lome,²
I did not dress myself, I was dressed).

This bit of tradition is also mentioned by Ellenberger

¹ D.F. Ellenberger & J.C. Macgregor: HISTORY OF THE BASUTO, P.18

² According to Ellenberger and Macgregor, lome is an old form of leoma, a wound. This meaning, however, is disputed by several informants in the field, who maintain that a wrong meaning was given to the Baruti, missionaries. According to them, it means godliness, God incarnate. The latter meaning comes out quite clearly in the koma given under 5.6.12 (e).

and Macgregor.¹ Even Arbousset,² one of the first observers of the Sotho of Basutoland, merely records the above belief without giving any story connected with it.

2.1.3. It may be mentioned here that the two lines quoted above, come from two different secret songs, dikoma, collected by the present writer from several old men in Basutoland. Here is one of the relevant stanzas from one of them:

Ho no sitwe³ mang?
Ho no sitwe nna
Tlake Ranapjwane
Mopedi-moholo
Va Raseapara lome;
Lome ke e apere
Ke sa ikapesa,
Ke apesitwe ke batho ka boomo;
Ke bo-Lohokong.
Lohokong jwa Filo,
Filo jwa Sekgele.

(Who was it that failed?
It was I, Tlake Ranapjwane
The eldest Mopedi, son of the wearer of Lome;
Lome I wore not having dressed myself.
I was deliberately dressed by other people:
By Lohokong and company,
Lohokong, son of Filo,
Filo, son of Sekgele).

¹ D.F. Ellenberger & J.C. Macgregor: Op.cit. P.15.

² Arbousset: JOURNAL des MISSIONS, 1844, P.474.

³ The verb stem - sitwe is the perfect form of - sitwa, whose dictionary meaning is "to be unable, to be beaten, to sin."

Ke sitwa ho ya. (I am unable to go).

Kea sitwa. (I am unable).

Cf. Kea hloleha. (ditto).

The idea of "to sin" in the Biblical sense is not contained in these examples. This idea is expressed by - sitelwa as in:

Ho sitelwa motho.

Ba sitetswe Modimo.

For this reason, - sitwe has been translated as "failed", in the sense of having been "unable to".

2.1.4. The next group of myths is that which Drinkwater¹ calls "romantic myths, stories concerned with sex love and the relation between men and women." This group reveals the deeper thoughts of the community and the direction of its mental and spiritual life. Despite their apparent simplicity and childishness, these stories are basic commentaries on the various facets of complicated human nature. Thus in the story of a child who was born with a moon on his chest,² the human weaknesses of jealousy and rivalry between two wives of the same man are brought out in their nakedness. At the same time, the reaction of the community as a whole towards the Molotsana, (wicked person), is clearly brought out, in that as soon as her evil ways are discovered, she is thrown out of the body politic. Further, the bitter fruits of polygamy, sethepu, are equally depicted in this story as they are in that of "Moleso wa Dikgomo."³

2.1.5. Another type mirrors human love between a man and a woman, including the complications that may arise in later life. The various facets of human behaviour in such cases - keenness at the beginning, which later gives way to laxity; readiness to make solemn and binding promises, only to break them in course of time; the revenge that the wronged party may resort to, and the resultant misery that may follow, enveloping even the innocent, all these are clearly brought out in this type of story. A good example here, is the story of Bulane and Tselane,⁴ which also features the Sotho custom of marrying one's first cousin.

¹ J. Drinkwater: THE OUTLINE OF LITERATURE, Revised by H. Shipp, P.11.

² LITSOMO I, P.102.

³ Op.cit. P. 27.

⁴ Op.cit. P. 46.

2.1.6. Then too there is the type of story in which sterling human qualities such as selflessness and self-sacrifice on behalf of others are depicted. Here, we find instances of those rare individuals who, in the face of national calamity, are prepared to bury the self, renounce all they have, and give themselves over to the unknown, in order that others might live. But as so often happens in life, and in keeping with scriptural writings, "He that loseth his life shall find it." An example of such a story is that of Metsi and Metsana.¹

2.1.7. In some, there is a striking friendship as well as cooperation between man and animal, particularly the smaller ones, which are endowed with supernatural powers. Their role is mainly that of protecting the weak and the helpless, as in the case of the child with a moon on his chest. In other cases, however, man must first do something, perform some useful piece of work in an attempt to help himself. His work is then disturbed or undone, especially by birds and doves. But thereafter he is compensated, and the compensation takes the form of something that he has always yearned for and which more than brightens life for him. Thus the despised and childless woman, Nyopakatala,² is helped in her plight and misery by two doves that had first eaten her seed.

Similarly, in the story of the bird that gives sour milk, mafi,³ compensation takes the form of a basic service that benefits the whole family. Such stories also seem to underline the Sotho saying that Kgomo ho tsoswa e itekang, i.e. God helps those who help themselves. Closely connected with this, is the idea that one good turn deserves another, and that the ungrateful are quickly

1 LITSOMO II, P. 54.

2 Op. cit. P. 58.

3 LITSOMO I, P. 52.

punished. This is clearly brought out in the story of the orphan boy Mathoba.¹

Another aspect of this cooperation between man and animal, centres around those children who, for some reason or other, are born in the form of a snake and are usually called Monyohe. In a few cases, however, they assume a canine form. For them to be restored to their normal human form and habits, a willing girl must be found to marry them and live with them as man and wife. Secondly, this girl must, at one time or another, lose her temper or patience with her husband before he can be transformed into a normal human being. Such stories are exemplified in the numerous versions of the Monyohe ² story as well as in that of Ramokoto in Mothibi's collection.³

2.1.8. There is also the type of story that deals with man's visit to the underworld from which he usually returns safe and sound. In his search for this place, man is invariably assisted by a small animal, such as a frog. It answers his inquiries by croaking from its place under the water. This is illustrated in the story of Linanabolele.⁴ Unlike in Greek mythology where the underworld is radically different from that of the living, in that it is a dark and gloomy place peopled by untouchables, in Southern Sotho mythology it is similar to this world. The only difference is that it is a place of plenty, in which the various commodities of this life are found in abundance. The inhabitants of both worlds may even exchange visits

¹ LITSOMO II, P.115.

² LITSOMO I, PP. 67, 72, 79 respectively.

³ I. Mothibi: MORIRIKHOLO LE LITSOMO TSE LING, P. 33.

⁴ LITSOMO I, P. 108.

as in the story above. In this connection, it may perhaps be added that to this day, a Mosotho in real trouble from which he would like an instant escape, usually says he felt like saying, "Lefatshe buleha ke kene." (Earth, open up that I may go in).

This seems to point to the fact that in the Sotho mind, the idea of death as the end of life was never accepted. There are several stories that point to this, such as those of Mosimoli and Mosimotsane,¹ Masilo and Masilonyane² respectively. Masilo, the murderer, is given away by the heart of his victim which turns itself into a little bird that goes and reports him to the relevant authorities. The basic idea here seems to be that one being cannot annihilate another in such a way that it ceases to exist altogether. Such existence is God-given and belongs to Him alone whom the ancients called:

"Tlatlamatjholo Rammoloki,
Rammoloki diatla di maroba."

(Tlatlamatjholo father of the Saviour,
Father of the saviour with hands full of holes);

and to whom they prayed through their ancestors. As such, it cannot be taken away from a created human being by another. It is only the Creator who can take it away from any created being.

2.1.9. The popular hero of these "romantic myths," is Prince Masilo, the helper of damsels in distress. Apart from him, there is also Bulane who, however, is cold and austere, averse to women, and is invariably invisible. When he does appear to the woman of his choice, he is a striking figure clad in shining clothes. His conceit is revealed in his praises in which he calls himself:

¹ Op.cit. P. 89.

² Op.cit. P. 28.

Bulane wa sehana-basadi,
A bula ntlo e dithole.

(Bulane, the refuser of women,
He opened a hut full of dust).

LEGEND:

2.2.10. There are two popular legendary figures in Southern Sotho folk-lore. They are the boy-hero Sankatana, and the man-eater, Dimo. There is an interesting analogy that some informants draw between the story of Senkatana¹ and that of Christ. A few old men in the Roma valley of Basutoland insist on it. According to them, the snake in the garden of Eden is the Kgodumodumo, which they also equate with sin; the sole woman survivor who bore Senkatana, is the virgin Mary, and Senkatana himself, the slayer of the Kgodumodumo, i.e. sin, is Jesus Christ. In the words of one of them:

"Noha kapa kgodumodumo ke sebe; mosadi ya belehileng moshanyana wa Senkatana ke Maria; . Moshanyana ya bolaileng phoofolo eo, ke Jesu."

(The snake or Kgodumodumo is sin; the woman who bore the boy Senkatana is Mary; the boy who killed that animal is Jesus).

This, however, is not borne out by the following considerations: First, the woman survivor who bore Senkatana was with child, whereas Mary was a virgin. Secondly, various versions of this story occur in the other Bantu languages as well, and as far as we know, no such relationship is ever drawn between it and the scriptures. Thirdly, in terms of recorded history, the Sotho of Basutoland, like their brethren in the other parts

¹ Op.cit. P.35.

of Bantu-speaking Africa, had no knowledge of Christ before the advent of the missionaries.

According to the story itself, Senkatana foiled a number of attempts to kill him. And when his enemies ultimately succeeded, it was with his apparent consent. It was probably the miraculous ways in which he foiled their various schemes, as well as the manner of his ultimate giving in, that resulted in history being so worn down about his real self, as to render him a legendary figure. An obvious mythical addition to his story, is the fact that after being killed, his heart is said to have escaped from his body and gone to the birds.

- 2.2.11. The memory of the fearful Dimo on the other hand, is still kept alive in some villages by elders who scare young children with the words, "Dimo ke eo!" (There is Dimo!). It is interesting to note that in some versions, the particular narrator makes him to be of Nguni origin.¹ This, however, is apparently due to the twist or slant of the narrator for historically, it is the Sotho of Basutoland rather than the Nguni who practised cannibalism. What is interesting about Dimo is the fact that although he is such a fearful character, he is invariably overcome by his intended victims. Some of them may already be in his bag, as in the story of Dimo and Mmadiepetsane.² She tricks him into eating his own mother and then escapes, hotly pursued by him. She is stopped by a flooded river, and turns herself into a smooth little stone. Dimo picks it up and, demonstrating to himself what he would have done to her had she been in sight, hurls it across the river, where it turns into Mmadiepetsane. Similarly, in

¹ Op.cit. P. 86.

² LITSOMO I, P. 140.

the story of Tselane,¹ the intended victim escapes in a miraculous way and Dimo gets into trouble. The historical nucleus here, seems to have contained elements of strength, cruelty and gruesomeness, coupled with certain blind spots in the same individual. It is the latter that are exploited by the weak for their own safety.

2.2.12. In present-day Basutoland, chief Mohlomi who died a few years before the arrival of the first French missionaries in 1833, is largely regarded as a legendary figure. The historical fact that he once existed is being pushed to the back-ground and emphasis laid on the miraculous events that are accruing around his name, such as his visit to the land of dog-eaters. It was probably in view of such considerations elsewhere that Cassell² wrote, "The process of legend growth and development is a continuous one, and outstanding personalities much nearer to us in time have already attracted to themselves the nucleus, if not more, of what will become the legends of the future."

FABLES:

2.3.13. In fables, as well as in the rest of Sotho folk-lore where they occur, animals speak and act like human beings. Human actions and passions are attributed to them for purposes of moral instruction. Such instruction flows from the particular story and usually takes the form of a proverb. As a result, there is a close connection between

¹ Op.cit. P.31.

² Cassel: Op.cit. PP. 339-340.

certain fables and proverbs, the latter being a summary or a condensed form of the former. Thus the proverb : Pela e ne e hloke mohatla ka ho roneletsa, (The dassie lacked a tail by sending others), is a condensation of the fable that seeks to explain why the dassie has no tail. The same is true of the saying: Dithoto ke lefa la ba bohlale, (Fools are stepping stones of the wise), which neatly summarises the fable of a donkey that was rudely driven away by an ungrateful lion that it had helped to find food.¹ In some cases, however, the fable seems to be an elaborated form of the proverb. Thus the saying: O se no kgahlwa ke none e hlotsa, (Appearances are deceptive), seems to be elaborated and explained in such a story as that of Masilo and Sojane.² Likewise, Bohlale bo ja mong a bona. (Pride goes before a fall), seems to be elaborated in the story of the boastful blesbok and the tortoise.³

2.3.14. The cleverest character in fables is the hare, Mmutla, who is lovingly referred to as Mmutlanyana, (the clever little hare). He lives on his wits and even succeeds in foiling the lion, who is the king of the animal world. In some cases, he plays the role of a trickster. He challenges two giant animals, the hippo and the elephant to a tug-of-war which he arranges in such a way that they pull against each other without knowing it. He devours the children of a monkey by first posing as their tutor. He tricks and burns Hlolo, the red hare, to death in order to get his bugle. He himself, however,

¹ Unrecorded by Jacottet, but given in the Appendix.

² LITSOMO II, P. 61.

³ Op.cit. P.2.

is not always infallible and occasionally gets into trouble.

Similarly, with birds, the cleverest is usually the smallest of them all, Motinyane or Motintinyane, the Grass Warbler. He too outwits the king of the birds, the eagle, Ntsu. On the other hand, the most despised animal is the tortoise, kgudu. This is mainly due to his unusual form, sebopeho. And among the birds, his counterpart is the owl, Serhooko, who is so hated by the others that he has to hide by day and hunt by night.

2.3.15. In these stories too, virtue is rewarded and vice punished. The despised tortoise occasionally makes his tormentors swallow their words of scorn and derision, and eat humble pie. Even the clever little rabbit is no exception to this, as is proved by the version of the story of the blesbok and the tortoise which substitutes the hare for the blesbok. The tortoise also emerges victorious on two other occasions on which all the other animals had failed, including the lion. He was the only one to remember the name of a certain tree after all the others had forgotten it, just as he was the only one who succeeded in capturing the wily fox that had refused to dig a dam whose water it wanted to drink. The tortoise seems to symbolise a strong and steady character, who is not only reliable, but who is also humble and reserved.

2.3.16. Although animals are personified in fables, they still retain their animal traits and characteristics. The lion roars with a deep voice, and is generally recognised as the king of all the others. The fox is wily and cunning, while the hare is clever and witty. The same is true of the birds. The owl has big eyes which it does not close when it sleeps. The eagle is strong and

majestic, while the grass warbler is small and clever, and is not easily trapped.

2.3.17. These animal stories show a remarkable knowledge of, and familiarity with the habits of the various animals that appear in them. At the same time, however, they seem to be a further commentary on the diverse forms of human nature. Human qualities were apparently recognised in animal behaviour, including man's idiosyncracies which are portrayed in various ways. It is probably for this reason that such animals were personified. The morals that some of the stories point to, and the proverbs that flow from them, seem to support this contention. It is only human beings who are capable of learning from the experience of others, and who can use proverbs to give point to their statements.

FOLK-TALES:

2.4.18. As against the three types of stories dealt with above, there are a number of popular stories that seem to have been told for no purpose other than that of telling a story to provide amusement. These are folk-tales, popular imaginary inventions of the story-tellers of old. Among them, is a type of story in which a person exchanges an article that he possesses for something else. Thereafter, he exchanges his new acquisition for yet another, and so on until the end of the story. Closely allied to this, is the type of story in which a character is involved in a number of incidents or happenings which he occasionally enumerates in summary form at certain intervals. He begins with the last one and works backward up to the first. A good example of such a story is that

of Raseretsana.¹

The characters that appear in folk-tales may either be people, animals or both. They include familiar names such as Dimo and Masilo. The former may even appear as a chief.² The stories themselves are usually short, though a few may be slightly longer. The latter seem to be a series of joined episodes woven round one central figure, usually the hare. Each entity is an end in itself, in that there is no sustained rise in tension towards one final climax. Their origin is probably due to the desire or habit of some narrators to lengthen³ their stories by combining them, rather than tell them separately.

RECENT STORIES:

- 2.5.19. Stories of recent origin bear the stamp of recent times. This is particularly the case from the point of view of their content and vocabulary. In form, however, they are constructed on traditional lines, the characters being either human beings, animals or both. The striking thing here, is that where human beings are concerned, they are either Sotho or Afrikaners (Boers). The Sotho form for Boer is Leburu, and this is the form that is used in them. The reason for this is that the Boers were the only white people with whom the Sotho had any real contact on a large scale for a number of years before Basutoland became a protectorate. As a result, Afrikaans words and concepts

¹ LITSOMO I, P. 150.

² LITSOMO II, P. 81.

³ Cf. LINYAMATSANE in LITSOMO I, P.1.

like fereha from vry came into Southern Sotho much earlier than those of any other European language. Thus in the story of the hare and the lion,¹ the hare goes off to christen an imaginary child. On his return, he tells the lion that he called it Mola-wa-Pele, which is a translation of Afrikaans: Die eerste hoepel, i.e. the first row. In the same story, a butter churn or vat, which was unknown to the Sotho, is called Fitsa ya sereledi, i.e. a pot of butter.

In the love story of the fox and the hyena,² a number of articles pertaining to horse riding are mentioned. Among them are sale, borikgwe, and tomo, all borrowed from Afrikaans, saal, broek and toom respectively. Similarly material objects such as wagons and stirrups were unknown to the Sotho. The same is true of horses. A wagon is called koloi, a word that is used for any moving structure that is big enough to carry several people at a time. Hence a motor-car is often referred to as koloi; a train as koloi va mollo, (A wagon of fire), in addition to terene. Stirrups are meraho from the verb stem - raha, (kick). The idea here is that the rider "kicks" the stirrups out in a firm way for support. A horse is pere from Afrikaans perd. The Sotho pitsi is not a horse but a zebra. The first horses came to Basutoland in 1829. According to Ashton,³ "One of the first horses ever owned by a Mosuto was presented to Moshesh by the Phuthi chief Morcoosi, having been stolen from a farmer in the Cape Colony."

1 LITSOMO II, P. 11.

2 Op.cit. P. 9.

3 H. Ashton: THE BASUTO, P.134.

Chief Moorosi, rather than Moroosi, sent it to Moshweshw through one Dipholo "with instructions to teach the chief how to ride it."¹ On first seeing it, the Basotho called it "kgomo ya Haka," (The cow of Haka), which is the old Sotho form for a horse.²

STYLISTIC ANALYSIS:

2.6.20. In an attempt to reveal the art and techniques of the various story-tellers, a representative sample of stories has been selected and analysed stylistically. The sample includes an example from each type of story mentioned above. But in view of the wide variety that is found under myths, two examples have been done for this group. With the exception of the folk-tale, each example has been analysed under four headings, namely, (a) the narrator's style, (b) the narrator's feelings, (c) the narrator and his audience and (d) the significance of the story. In the case of the folk-tale, however, where the story is merely told for its own sake, only (a) and (c) above will be considered.

2.7.21 MYTHS:

NGWANA YA KGWEDI SEFUBENG.³

(a) STYLE:

The narrator is factual in his style. Fact follows fact with a cumulative effect on the reader or listeners. He employs short sentences which are clear in meaning,

¹ Ellenberger & Macgregor: Loc.cit. F. 195.

² G. Tylden: THE RISE OF THE BASUTO, F. 9.

³ LITSOMO I, F.102.

and logical in arrangement. The effect of all this, is to give the story the appearance of an actual occurrence rather than a mere story. This element of apparent actuality is heightened by the use of dialogue at appropriate moments. It enlivens the story, and intensifies interest in it. This is particularly the case in those instances where the narrator switches from the third to the first person, in which case voice modulation is of paramount importance. By so doing, the narrator reveals the mental processes of the particular character in their nakedness, as though he had heard them from the character's own lips.

He uses striking syntactical constructions, which are grammatically unusual. His relative concord for the third person, class 1 singular, is simply a instead of ya:

Mosadi a se nang bana. (A woman who has no children).
He leaves out the concord of a class 10 noun used without its prefix and which, in such cases, is usually reflected in some form or another in the rest of the sentence. At the same time he uses a compound tense form where a simple predicate would ordinarily be used:

Ha isaisa tshiunyana, mosadi wa Bulane o ne a etla ka tlung ya mosadi eo.

Cf: Ha isaisa tshiunyana di se kae, mosadi wa Bulane a tla ka tlung ya mosadi eo.

(A few days passed and Bulane's wife came to the house of that woman).

Similarly, he uses a qualificative pronoun before an appositional noun, where ordinary usage would place the noun before the qualificative:

Jwale e mong motho wa motse wa Bulane----- .

Cf: Jwale motho e mong wa motse wa Bulane ----- .

(Now a certain person from Bulane's village -----).

He occasionally switches off from the narrative past to the present indicative and uses a present participial in place of a relative clause:

Jwale morena o a mmotsa -----.

Cf: Jwale morena a mmotsa -----.

(Now the chief asked him -----).

A tsebisa Bulane mohlankana ----- a ena le kgwedi sefubeng.

Cf: A tsebisa Bulane mohlankana ----- ya kgwedi or ya nang le kgwedi sefubeng.

(He introduced Bulane to the young man who had a moon on his chest).

He achieves emphasis, inter alia, by repeating the same grammatical form in the same sentence:

Yaba o re ho monna wa hae, ho Bulane.

(Then she said to her husband, to Bulane).

The second locative here, ho Bulane, seems to be of an explanatory nature, i.e. quasi-qualificative, and serves to explain the first one further. Likewise, he weaves in contrast by using a descriptive possessive where none would be used in ordinary speech:

Lekunutu la mosadi wa mofumahadi:

Cf: Lekunutu la mofumahadi:

(The secret of the senior wife).

In talking to her husband about his second wife, the senior wife draws a sharp contrast between herself and the former. She does this by using an ordinary possessive which, however, is followed by an identificative copulative plus a relative clause:

Mosadi wa hao, ke enwa ya tswa beleha ntja.

(Your wife, it is this one who has just given birth to a dog).

Not only is the contrast pointed here, i.e. as against herself, it is also bitter and cutting, for it has a purpose. Its purpose is to antagonise him further against his minor wife by identifying him with her and her "baby dog." The inclusion of this copulative by the speaker more than reveals her hatred for the minor wife, and has the stylistic effect of emphasis.

The narrator also employs repetition pure and simple, without any aim of being emphatic as above. He plays on reduplicated verb stems, giving the idea of diminution, a short space of time:

Ha isaisa mosadi ----- a beleha. (After a little while the woman bore a child).

Ha isaisa dikgwedi. (A few months passed).

Ha isaisa tshiunyana. (A few days passed).

Similarly, in the main body, the title of the story is repeated several times, as though the narrator does not want to part with it, or allow the listeners to forget it.

(b) NARRATOR'S FEELINGS.

The narrator's feelings are carefully concealed throughout the story. But the manner in which he has arranged his facts, indicates which way he is inclined. His sympathies are with the underdog. This is further shown by his choice and use of words at certain points in the story. Thus when he gets to the point where the baby dog is taken out to be thrown away, he refers to the wronged woman as:

Mosadi wa bathonyana.

(The poor little woman).

The use of the noun batho (people) as a possessive stem, ordinarily evokes sympathy. This is more so, when a diminutive suffix is appended to it as above.

His story depicts a clash between two opposing forces: good and evil, the weak and the strong. They vie with each other for supremacy. It is here that the narrator's skill is at its best, further giving an indication of his feelings. The darkness that follows the hiding of the infant behind the pots, heightened and symbolised by the unconscious state of the mother, is scattered by the brief appearance of the mouse, playing with the same child in the same hut. The gloom that follows the destruction of this hut by fire, is dispersed by the sight of the child in the cattle-kraal, and the destruction of the latter is counterbalanced by the appearance of the now grown-up child in the traders' hut. This ding-dong process ends with the forces of evil being completely overcome by those of good and the underdog enabled to come into his own. This sequence, for whose arrangement the narrator is responsible, indicates the way he feels about it all. In disposing of the evil-doer, the narrator shields behind the impersonal construction:

Ha thwe ke molotsana. (And it was said she is a wicked person). Despite this, however, the narrator seems to be in full agreement with this judgement.

(c) NARRATOR AND AUDIENCE:

He takes his audience seriously and treats it with due respect. He does this by presenting it with facts, without

obtruding his own personal feelings and judgement in an obvious manner. The audience is left to draw its own conclusions from the bold and clear features of the story as presented by the narrator.

(d) SIGNIFICANCE:

The basic significance of this story seems to be that evil can never overcome good. These two opposing forces are constantly at war with one another, each striving to gain supremacy over the other. There may be moments in life when the forces of evil may appear triumphant, for evil is a tenacious fighter that is not easily overcome, as symbolised by the apparent success of the molotsana in the greater part of this story. She appears to have everything on her side - normal children, intelligence, influence and complete control over her adoring husband, who carries out all her wishes. On the other hand, the minor wife appears to have everything against her. She is childless - an unbearable stigma in African society, the greatest sufferer being the woman in all cases, and never the man. Her husband is cold and callous towards her, and does not lift a finger to protect her. Throughout this period, the flame of goodness is very weak indeed; but it is there, and not completely blotted out. It is strengthened by the miraculous appearance of the friendly mouse at the most critical hour. This results in the ding-dong struggle for supremacy mentioned above, and ends with the discovery of the molotsana, who is immediately expelled from the community. It may take long to find out a wicked person who is well placed in society. But the wheels of goodness grind exceedingly fine, "the eyes of the blind" are ultimately opened, and the chaff separated from the grain.

NKOLOBE 1

(a) STYLE:

Here too, the narrator's style is factual. Each sentence introduces a new idea which follows logically on the first. Thus he starts off simply by saying:

"E ne e le moshanyana, a rongwa ke mmae, a ye ho kopa setlhare ho malomae. Yaba o a ya."

(It was a boy; and was sent by his mother to go and ask for medicine from his uncle. Then he went).

At the same time, however, he has departed from the usual beginning of most narrators of ditshomo by leaving out the introductory Ba re or Ho thwe, which would then be followed by his first sentence. Neither does he mention the name of the moshanyana concerned, whereas the usual thing is to mention the name of the character or characters quite early in the story. He also departs from normal speech in various ways. For instance, he has omitted the conjunction hore in the very first line, where one would have expected it to be used. Then too, he has used the full, uncontracted infinitive complement after a deficient verb that normally requires such a contraction:

A rongwa ke mmae a ye ho kopa setlhare.

Cf. A rongwa ke mmae hore a yo kopa setlhare.

He is consistent in leaving out elements that one would expect to be included, and in including those that are ordinarily excluded:

Jwale he hoba a belehe ngwana.

Cf. Jwale he hoba a belehe.

The verb stem - beleha is usually intransitive and as such does not ordinarily take an object. But with this narrator,

¹ LITSOMO I, P. 105.

it does. As against this, he also says:

A ipolokela lebese lee a ya fepa ngwana hae thabeng.

Cf. A ipolokela lebese leo a ya fepa ngwana hae thabeng
ka lona.

These elliptical constructions on the one hand, and the full uncontracted forms on the other, including the use of intransitive verbs transitively, serve to give his style a peculiar stamp of its own. Added to this, is the fact that he employs short, staccato-like sentences, in which past and present forms may be counter-balanced:

Yaba o a oroha, a ya hae.

Cf. Yaba o a oroha, o ya hae.

(Then he left and went home).

From beginning to end, the listener is presented with a series of carefully selected and astonishing facts. This selection includes the use of dialogue, which brightens the narrative. It also includes personal comment, as in the case of the younger brother after discovering his elder brother's secret. It further includes a repetition of the same series of events. In this connection, compare the second paragraph with the fourth and sixth, and the third with the fifth. The latter incorporate the ideophone ngwe! as well as the deideophonic verb stem - kgehleha from kgehle !

Unlike that of the first narrator, his story includes a little song of five lines, all addressed to Nkolobe, who is the only character whose name is mentioned in the whole story. All the lines of this song end in his name. The first two are identical, and are used to urge him to cry, thus proclaiming his presence in the closed cave. The third is different,

and refers to his unusual birth in that he was borne by a man and not a woman. The next two lines begin and end alike, differing slightly in the middle. The first, refers to his birth in the veld together with the wild little animals - dipudungwana, the little buffaloes. The second still refers to the same phenomenon, but this time his birth is compared with the miraculous growth of grass. Thus metaphor and simile follow one another in successive lines:

O itlhahetse le dipudungwana naheng, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse jwaleka jwang ha bo mela, Nkolobe;

(Thou were born with little buffaloes in the veld, Nkolobe,
Thou were born like grass sprouting, Nkolobe).

The entire song is repeated five times in the story, punctuating the second, fourth and sixth paragraphs thereof.

The disappointment of the elder boy after the removal of Nkolobe, is indicated in various effective ways. First, by the use of the same predicate:

A lla, a lla tsatsi lohle.

(He cried the whole day).

Secondly, by the use of a particular predicate in the last but one paragraph, which predicate is once more taken up in the final paragraph and harped upon:

A kgasetsa tlung a swabile, a robala.

(He crawled into the hut disappointed and slept).

Hosasane a ya nahenga swabile.

(The next day he went to the veld disappointed).

Mantsiboya a kgutlela hae a swabile.

(In the evening he returned home disappointed).

The use of the contrasting adverbs of time hosasane and mantsiboya also help to emphasise the prolonged state and depth of his disappointment.

(b) NARRATOR'S FEELINGS:

His feelings are indicated in a very subtle way. It is his choice of words, as well as his use of the demonstrative that give one a clue as to his feelings. He is disgusted with the action of this boy who swallowed medicine meant for his mother. He says:

Yaba o kgora mpa, moshanyana eo.

(Then that boy became pregnant).

Now, ho kgora mpa is quite strong, and would only be used to show anger or disgust as above. Compare the more polite idiomatic forms expressive of the same idea:

Ho boela morao.

Ho ema hampe.

The use of the demonstrative eo is also pregnant with meaning in this context. In the next line, it is used following the noun mpa, (stomach), in which case the feeling of disgust is very strong indeed:

Yaba o phela jwalo ka mpa eo ya hae.

(He lived like that with that stomach/pregnancy of his).

The role of the younger boy is also significant. It would seem as if the narrator included him with the sole purpose of using him to expose his brother's misdeeds. After this has been done, he disappears from the scene. Alternatively, the younger boy may be taken as a representative of the elder boy's conscience which keeps pricking him for what he has done. However, he suppresses it for some time, and for some time, seems to be succeeding, in that nobody knows anything about his secret. But then his unsteady conscience gives him no rest, and little slips here and there, such as for example talking aloud in his sleep, ultimately lead to his

being found out and the whole secret exposed, because murder will out. The inclusion of such an agency by the narrator, seems to indicate his own personal feelings.

(c) NARRATOR AND AUDIENCE:

Here too the narrator treats his audience with respect. His story rings true and sincere. His use of Sotho cultural elements such as a younger brother accompanying his elder brother to the pastures, only to lead to his downfall in the end, will go straight to his listeners hearts. He thrills them further by the singing of the little song in praise of Nkolobe, whose cries in response to the magic song are silenced by the miraculous appearance of the breast. The questions of the mother at the end, are questions that could be asked by any mother under the same circumstances. The listeners are thus intellectually satisfied, more so in that they are left to draw their own conclusions at the end.

(d) SIGNIFICANCE:

The basic significance here is that murder will out. It does not matter how careful or cunning one may be in executing it and thereafter deceiving other people by behaving as though nothing unusual has happened, the truth of the matter is that he will ultimately be found out. This, however, may take time, and the culprit may appear to be on top of the world with everything going his way, e.g. the boy milking happily every morning, stealing milk, deceiving his younger brother in the veld, and going off to see Nkolobe in the secret cave. Throughout this period of apparent happiness and success, however, with most people unaware of his real role in society, there may just be one person, perhaps an

insignificant one, who is fully aware of his doings. The Sotho say, Sekgukguni se bonwa ke sebatladi, meaning that one cannot fool all the people all the time. The knowledge of the insignificant person may soon become the property of all, in which case the authorities will act. And it is here that complicated human nature may express itself differently. In the first story, the molotsana is cast out in disgrace, for there is nothing more disgraceful in African society than that a married woman should be returned to her people by her in-laws because of her misdeeds among them. She is a disgrace not only to her immediate family circle but to the entire tribe. In this story, however, the errant boy is merely confronted with his misdeeds, which he acknowledges and confesses. Thereafter, he is left alone. To some, this may appear far too soft and lenient, but to others it may be the most effective way of punishing a culprit, i.e. making him his own policeman for all time, subject to the guidance of his own conscience. For it must be remembered that in the final analysis, every man's final court of appeal is his own conscience.

LEGEND:

2 . 8.22.

MOSHANYANA WA SENKATANA.¹

(a) STYLE:

The narrator's style starts off by being a bit dull and heavy. With the exertion of a few sentences, almost all the others begin alike with an introductory jwale, which is rather over used. Neither do the various events follow one another in a logical and systematic sequence. For instance, after

¹ LITSOMO I, PP. 35 & 38.

introducing the kgodumodumo and all it did, he does not mention the fact that there was a pregnant woman survivor. And yet with the next breath he says: Jwale ho thwe mosadi enwa e ne e le moimana. (Now it is said that this woman was an expectant mother). The listeners do not know what woman he is talking about, in that there has been no previous mention of her. The narrator takes it for granted that they know, because he even uses a demonstrative, which suggests that she has been mentioned before. As a result, he sounds incoherent and disconnected, thus taxing the imagination of his listeners. The reason for this, may be that he is overwhelmed by the gravity of his subject-matter, which tends to make him lose his power of speech.

He occasionally uses consecutive verbal constructions in the present participial, but leaves out others as being understood:

Jwale setjhaba e ntse e se ja, e se metsa feela,
le dikgomo e di metsa, le dimpja le dikgoho.

(Now it keeps on eating the nation, merely swallowing
it, also swallowing cattle, dogs and fowls).

His vocabulary includes archaic words like metsa and dimpja above. Present-day Southern Sotho would use kwenya and dintja respectively.

But he soon gets going, particularly with his dialogue, which is bright and vivid. The surprise of the woman in finding a grown up man in place of her baby is very well expressed in:

Monna towe, ngwana ka o kae?

(You man, where is my child?)

The use of the enclitic towe is very apt, and assists in the creation of a vivid picture of the surprised and shocked woman. He also uses unusual constructions such as:

Ya ahlama hore e tla mo metsa.

Cf. Ya ahlama hore e tle e mo metse.

(It opened its mouth that it might swallow him).

Ho ka kgona a dihelwe.

Cf. E ka kgona a dihelwe.

(It is desirable that he be cast over).

Motse wa qetello a fihla teng.

Cf. A fihla motseng wa ho qetela.

(He came to the last village).

He is dramatic, and his descriptive touches are vivid and realistic due to his use of appropriate ideophones. Thus in describing the slaying of the kgodumodumo, he says a cow said, "Muu!" a dog, "kosee!" and a fowl, "kokolo-koloo!" These are also humorous, especially when one imagines the voice of the narrator rising and falling in imitating the various animal cries. He achieves emphasis by repeating the same predicate several times and reserving its object till the end:

Ha rwallwa, ha rwallwa, ha rwallwa patsi.

(Fire-wood was gathered).

In this connection, also compare:

Jwale he ba tadimane, ba tadimane he banna bana.

(Now then they would look at each other, they would look at each other these men).

In the absence of the introductory jwale before the second predicate, the enclitic he is made to shift its position in

order to follow rather than precede the same predicate. He also uses uncontracted forms mixed with contracted ones:

A le ke le tlo bonang le morena a tle ho bona.
Cf. a le ke le tlo bona..... le morena a tlo bona.
(Come and seeand the chief should also come and see).

The second narrator of the same story¹ has his own peculiar style, which is different from that of the first one. His events follow one another logically and systematically. Even in those instances where certain facts are omitted, the preceding ones are so boldly depicted as to enable the story to flow on without any noticeable gaps and chasms. Thus when Senkatana sets out to slay the kgodumodumo, his mother merely says to him;

Ngwana ka, o ya kae, athe o monyenyane?

(My child, where are you going being so young?)

She does not become hysterical and cling to him as in the first story. Similarly, the various animal cries are merely mentioned here, and not presented as graphically as in the previous story.

Ntja ya lla, poli ya lla, etc.

(The dog cried and the goat cried).

This underscores the wide variety of styles employed by various story-tellers, even in those instances where the subject-matter is the same as above.

His outstanding characteristic is that of using continuous past tenses with a participial complement in place of the usual past tenses:

¹ LITSOMO I, P. 36.

Jwale ba ne ba fihla hae, ba ne ba re ----- .

Cf. Jwale ba fihla hae, ba re ----- .

(They came home and said ---- --).

O na hana.

Cf. A hana. (He refused).

Ba ne ba fihla ba e hlahlela sakeng.

Cf. Ba fihla ba e hlahlela sakeng.

(On arrival they drove it into the cattle-kraal).

This unusual way of speaking, lends a peculiar type of quaintness to his style.

(b) NARRATORS' FEELINGS:

The first narrator indicates his sympathies with Senkatana by the various miraculous ways in which he is made to escape from time to time, and by the fact that one of the conspirators gets hurt every time. Even at the end where they ultimately succeed in killing him, it is with his apparent consent, for the narrator says:

A etsa ka boomo.

(He did so - gave in, deliberately).

Thereafter, he goes on to add that it is said his heart escaped and went to the birds. In other words, he did not die, but merely assumed another form. The impression created here, is that Senkatana was far too great, and far too noble for all those who tried to kill him. That he allowed them to taste apparent success at the end, heightens his greatness of soul as against their ungratefulness and limited vision. The narrator's heart goes out to him.

The second narrator feels basically the same. He, however, provides Senkatana with a magic cow that is capable

of foreseeing danger and warning him accordingly. With the first narrator, the possession of this sixth sense is merely implied and not given any concrete form or expression. The magic cow even warns him against his own mother - (near relations?), who for some reason or other did not like him. This narrator does not allow him to taste death, but leaves him alive. Apparently, he felt that he was far too good to be associated with it. In effect then, both narrators feel the same about him, although they indicate their sympathies differently.

(c) NARRATORS AND AUDIENCE:

The first narrator is inclined to take his audience for granted, and to assume that they know what he is talking about. As a result, they are forced either to ask questions in order to get a proper hang of the story, or to fill in the gaps as best they can. It may be that he did this on purpose in order to provoke questions and thus keep the listeners awake, or that he could not make a proper start. However, he soon makes it up to them, and thrills them with his impersonal constructions which enable him to remain in the background. By the time the story ends, they are in a position either to condemn or condone the actions of the characters as they see them.

The second narrator treats his audience in a more considerate manner. His story flows smoothly in that its various elements are neatly tacked together. And even in those instances where there are gaps, they are easily smoothed over because of the natural sequence of events that constitute the story.

(d) SIGNIFICANCE:

Whoever the real historical figure Senkatana was, it is clear from these stories that he was a great man with unusual qualities. Among these, was that of selflessness, and the realisation that there is more joy in giving than in receiving. In view of this, he did not hesitate to endanger his own life in order to go and release the others - all of whom he did not even know. But for these sterling qualities in him, he could have easily remained concealed with his mother and left them to their fate. In this respect, he could very well be said to symbolise that rare type of person - an Albert Schweitzer or a Dr. van Aswegen of Masianokeng in Basutoland, who gave up all in order to bring relief and sorely needed medical help to the suffering multitudes of the mountain fastnesses. But human beings can be ungrateful and extremely unkind even to their benefactors. This is signified by the numerous attempts to kill Senkatana in both stories. The actions of a selfless man may be misconstrued and misinterpreted, leading to those he set out to help, raising their hands and voices against him. Jealousy on the part of a few, and misunderstanding on that of many, usually go hand in hand in such cases. A few selfish power mongers who feel that they have been robbed of the lime light, may use the untutored masses for their own selfish ends. And in such cases, close relatives can be more cruel than outsiders. The fact that it is So-and-so's son who has been elevated to a high position and not their own, is sufficient to drive them to extremes. This is probably what is signified by the magic cow's warning to Senkatana. The fact that as near relations they are in possession of family secrets, renders them more treacherous than outsiders who may not know them. Senkatana's victory over death in the first story, his triumph over all

his enemies in the second, both signify the eternal truth that evil can never overcome good. A lion may allow a puppy to pull its whiskers merely to humour it. In effect, this is what happens at the end of the first story. It is clear that he still had the necessary strength and ability to foil their attempts as usual. But like a lion humouring a puppy or a mouse, he let them have their way. It is probably in view of such considerations that some of the old men of the Roma valley simply identify him with Christ. It may also be mentioned in passing that in the realm of written Southern Sotho literature, the basic significance of this story has been elaborated by Mofokeng in his play, SENKATANA.

FABLE:

FITSO YA DINONYANA 1

(a) STYLE:

The style here is bright and dramatic. The narrator's choice of words is good, and enables him to say what he wants to say clearly and lucidly. The great take-off by the birds at the beginning of the race is dramatically presented by a reduplicated monosyllabic ideophone, followed by the names of some of the important competitors:

"BoN+su le boLenong le boTlakatshowana le boLehehemu".

The raised and close vowels e, e, u, of the last name have a pleasant effect on the ears of listeners. His use of ideophones objectively also enhances his style:

Tsa utlwa qeng! qeng! qeng!

The reaction of the vast multitude of tired competitors to this sound, is neatly described by a well-chosen predicate that strikes the nail on the head:

Tsa lelala.

(They looked up).

One can almost see them stretching their necks and facing upwards. But they could not see anything, and this is expressed by the use of the deficient verb stem -ma, (merely), together with the ideophones above:

Tsa mpa tsa utlwa qeng! qeng! qeng!

(They merely heard qeng! qeng! qeng!).

Their bewilderment is complete. However, the spell is soon broken and they realise who it is:

Ke motinyane.

(It is the Grass Warbler).

He claims the crown. Their anger and dismay at this, that the winner should be the smallest of them all, is vividly expressed by Lenong. He uses, inter alia, a noun diminutive followed by a qualificative bearing an identical suffix:

Motinyane, o ka hla wa ba morena ha o le nthwanyana
e kalenyana ?

(Motinyane, can you really be a chief, being such a tiny little thing?)

Laughter is irrepressible here, the already diminutive Motinyane being rendered even more diminutive by means of this construction. Similarly, the decision to make the owl keep guard, is based solely on the fact that he has big eyes. But he fails, and Motinyane escapes. The reaction of the others to this is forcefully expressed by the use of the same predicate, incorporating the same objectival concord, but with different subjects:

Phakwe ya mo rutla, lekgwabala mo rutla, le seotsanyana.

(The hawk pulled him; the crow pulled him, and the sparrow-hawk). This is an effective method of indicating different participants in the same action. He has a fascinating style that enables him to say a mouthful without going into unnecessary details.

(b) NARRATOR'S FEELINGS:

The narrator is talking about something that he knows and knows well. He is enthusiastic in his narrative, which is characterised by the use of good language and well-chosen words.

At the same time, however, he is fully aware of the duplicity of certain characters. Thus Motinyane wins the race not because of superior strength or endurance, but simply because of his wits. The others do not know this, yet they are made to challenge his claim to the crown. With this challenge, the narrator seems to agree for he says:

O na sa ka a fofa, a entse ka bohlale, a kene
lepheong la Ntsu.

(He had not flown, but had acted wisely, and hid
beneath the eagle's wing).

Despite his admiration of Motinyane's bohlale, he nevertheless deprives him of the crown that he does not deserve. But from thereon, he takes up a protective attitude towards him.

He creates a loop-hole that enables him to escape. And on being chased by the angry mob, he disappears into the hole of one of them, Lehodi (the pied sterling). At this crucial moment, however, the narrator does not make it occur to any one of them, not even to Lehodi, that he should go in and get him out. Instead, they are all made to go away, except the owl who is told to keep guard. The creation of this loop-hole, seems to heighten the narrator's attachment to Motinyane whom he would not like to see manhandled by the others. He passes the ball on to the owl, who sleeps, and thus enables Motinyane to escape. When asked where he is, Sephooko jumps from his sleep and is made to say:

"Ke yane motsheo, ke mmona ka botshonyana."

(There he is in there; I can see him with his darkish colour).

It is only after the owl has committed such blunders that the narrator makes them instruct Lehodi to go in and get him out. He does not find him, and the wrath of the others falls on the owl. The owl has thus been sacrificed in order to save Motinyane. The narrator may have done this because he probably wanted to explain the reason why the owl hunts by night and sleeps by day. Despite this, however, one feels that he has been unduly hard on him, and very lenient on Motinyane, whose bohlale he admires.

(c) NARRATOR AND AUDIENCE:

Superficially, the narrator treats his audience well. He **thrills** it by the way he talks about the various characters and his apt choice of words. Motinyane is made to "qhoqhotsa leihlo la sephooko," i.e. to strike, tap-tap at the eyes of the owl, while the latter sneaks in terms of the "botshonyana," i.e. "darkishness or blackishness," of the former. Underneath all this, however, lies an element of deceit on the part of the narrator towards his audience. He removes the spot-light of attention from Motinyane's dishonesty, which he plays down, and focuses it on the owl's natural habits, which he exaggerates. Not once is the owl made to blink on being pricked by Motinyane. And while the audience is taken up with this, the narrator uses an intransitive verb transitively, and then goes on to the next thing:

A bona a sa panye leihlo.

Cf. A bona a sa panye.

(He saw him not blinking).

However, everything is done very subtly, to the extent that an uncritical audience may be completely taken in.

(d) SIGNIFICANCE:

The basic significance here seems to be that some people may be extremely unfortunate as compared to others. In effect, Motinyane is merely reprimanded and then allowed to go. All the birds are party to this, for they could not all have genuinely forgotten the presence of Lehodi among them in the first instance, only to remember it in the second. The probable thing is that there may have been one or two who remembered and wanted to suggest the obvious; but a firm look from one or other of the stronger ones, silenced them. An uncle in a position of authority would not, under such circumstances, hesitate to do this, in order to save an errant nephew, motjhana. In any case, Motinyane was not permanently ostracised; the owl was. His fate seems to symbolise those unfortunate people in life who, due to certain natural short-comings on their part, such as being inarticulate or slow witted, may be easily sacrificed in order to save those who have proper connections. Justice is not blind, but it may be so painted, in the interests of some, perhaps because of their bohlala. The Sotho say, Mowa-kgotla ha a tsekiswe, i.e. any man is free to express his opinion. At the same time, however, they also say, Molomo o motshonyana ha o mamelwe, (Literally: a blackish little mouth is not listened to). This is usually applied to the unimportant members of the community, the unknown. It is probably not without significance that the first attempt at written drama in this language, is based on this story, title and all.¹

¹ A. Sekese: PITSO YA DINONYANA.

FOLK-TALE:

2.10.24.

DINYA MATSANE.¹

(a) STYLE:

The story is told in a simple and straightforward manner, although in some instances the narrator uses unusual sentence patterns:

Ha re tsamayeng ho tlola lengope.

Cf. Ha re tsamayeng, re yo tlola lengope ; Or
Ha re yo tlolang lengope.

(Let us go and jump a donga).

His use of dialogue is effective, and so are the exclamations of the fleeing man:

A nna elwa! ke jele kgomo ya molatelle.

(Woe unto me; I have brought endless trouble unto myself)

Coupled with this is his good choice of words which enables him to create vivid mental pictures. Thus the long distance to be covered by this man is expressed by:

A haola masabasaba.

(He traversed wide plains).

The anger and determination of the robbed animals is expressed by means of a number of predicates which are modified by various adverbs:

Tsa fihla di halefile haholo, tsa pota thabana ka
matla, tsa e pota tsatsi lohle, di rata ho mmolaya.

(They arrived very angry, and circled the little
mountain with determination, circled it the whole day,
wanting to kill him).

¹ LITSOMO I, P.1.

The reaction of the various women whose water has been finished by the ever-thirsty one is vividly expressed by the narrator. Their exclamations are very typical indeed:

Ao! O qeta metsi a bana ba ka.

(My! You are finishing my children's water).

A le opa a le re jaa!

(She clapped her hands in amazement).

Likewise, in indicating the fate of this woman after drinking all the available water, the narrator rises by degrees in his comparison:

Mpa ya hae e ne e le kgolo haholo, e ne e feta le hloho ya hae, e ne e feta le ditaba.

(Her stomach was very big, it was bigger than her head, even bigger than the mountains).

The big voice of Motau-moholo can virtually be heard thundering:

Na ke mang, ke mang ya dutseng sedibeng sa rare moholo?

(Who is sitting at the well of my grand-father?)

The reaction of the various animals on being instructed to cut open her stomach are both humorous and dramatic. Humour is further provided by Mmutlanyana's antics about Hlolo's fate. One can almost see him jumping about and saying:

Ka nwa-nwa metsi, ka nwa-nwa metsi, ka re ke Hlolo.

(I drank the water, drank the water, and said it is Hlolo).

This could very well be a naughty child speaking under similar circumstances. The same mechanism is used in depicting Hlolo and Mmutlanyana roasting one another. Their speech is that of small boys of unequal wit and intelligence playing together.

The humorous boasting of the successful small boy over his less intelligent friend, is vividly described in his song of triumph, which neatly summarizes what he has recently accomplished. The narrator also uses swear words in an uninhibited manner:

Yaba e hlaba motau-moholo ka sebonong, jwala sa finyela.

(Then it pricked the anus of the lion and it contracted).

Finally, his style is enhanced by the use of certain words and expressions that are normally confined to folk-lore:

Senthu se nkgae?

(Where is the smell of human flesh from?)

Ngwana ngwana ke, tlo ke o pepe,

Mona ke mofu mofinyetsa-pere.

(My grand-child, come let me carry you on my back,

There is positive danger here).

(b) NARRATOR AND AUDIENCE:

The narrator handles his audience with care, and moves from one incident to another as though he were developing the same basic theme. In actual fact, however, he is not, but is handling a series of joined episodes which are carefully woven round the hare. Each episode is an entity in itself, with its own climax, which is then followed by a beginning of the next one. Thus the first episode ends with the release of water from the woman's stomach. The next one begins with the order of Motau-moholo to the effect that nobody should drink the water and ends with Mmutlanyana in a stone crevice. The third is about Mmutlanyana and Hlolo, and the fourth and final one, is still about Mmutlanyana but with a Motau-moholo this time. The transition from one episode to another, is facilitated by the appearance of the same amusing central character over and over again. Added to this, are his songs of two lines each that punctuate the various episodes, as though they were a bridge between them. They increase the

listeners' interest, as do the individual characteristics of the various animals mentioned, such as the observant nature of the old baboon as against the credulity of all the others, who actually assist in digging their own grave. The narrator achieves his purpose well, which is merely to amuse his audience.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DITSHOMO.

2.11.25. The narrator usually begins with the words, "Ba re e ne ere.....," (They say it happened that.....). This, however is subject to variation as can be seen from the stories analysed above. It is said in a slightly raised voice, higher than that used in normal speech. This is then followed by the story itself, with the names of the chief characters appearing quite early, usually immediately after the introductory phrase. The audience does not respond in any formal way. But as the story progresses, they may stop the narrator and ask questions. The ending is a fixed formula, ke tshomo ka mathetho, (literally: It is a story by means of the end, i.e. that is the end of the story).

2.11.26 As a rule, they are told by grand-mothers at night around the fire in the lapa, or in the hut in which she sleeps with her grand-children. Some men also tell them, and so do some mothers and other members of the household. But the people who are traditionally associated with them are grannies. The fact that they are told at night has the effect of heightening the fantasy and adding to the effectiveness of an able narrator's dramatic techniques. If told by day, one is usually advised to put a stick of grass into one's hair, for fear of growing horns on the head.

2.11.27. In the main body of a story, there may be a little song. It is the most emotionally charged element of the story to which the prose narrative leads. The audience may or may not join in the singing, although some narrators insist on their doing so, in order to remain awake. Where the song is a dialogue, the narrator sings the words of the first character, and the audience those of the second. If it is unknown, the narrator sings both parts with her voice so modulated as to keep them quite distinct. The song may be repeated several times in the course of the story.

The meaning of such songs is basically clear. In some cases it is so clear that the entire song has been taken over by modern Africans in the cities and put to jazz music. A typical example of this is the song of Tselane,¹ which was recorded a few years ago by the Manhattan Brothers on Gallotone, G.B. 1819.

2.11.28. These songs seem to be divisible into three main types. First, there is the type in which the singer sings with a view to bringing about a certain response, as in the case of Tselane above. Secondly, there is the type that may be said to be magical and which is usually a highly guarded secret on the part of the singer. He sings it only when the coast is clear, e.g. the songs of Nkolobe² and Ranretlwa³ respectively. Thirdly, there is the type that virtually summarizes what the singer has just accomplished,

¹ LITSOMO I, P. 31.

² Op.cit. P. 105.

³ LITSOMO II, P. 73.

as in the case of Mmutlanyane and Hlolo.¹ Some of them contain obsolete and archaic words. These, however, do not render the entire song meaningless, so that on the whole, both the singer and listeners understand what it is about.

2.11.29. In view of this, it is interesting to note that in dealing with similar songs from the point of view of Tsonga folk-tales, Miss Beuchat² says, "As is common with magic formulae, the words of these songs are often unintelligible to the narrator and the audience ----- . The words of the song may be unintelligible because they are archaic or obsolete, and no longer used in the language, or because they are merely a series of euphonic syllables." The opposite seems to be the case in Southern Sotho. Both young and old in Basutoland insist that they understand what the songs are about. The unintelligible "euphonic syllables" in Southern Sotho, are usually part of an otherwise intelligible song, and correspond more or less to the "fa la la" of English madrigal songs. In this connection, compare the ending "ho ya na ya lela," found at the end of each line of the song of Senkepeng.³

2.11.30. The vocabulary of some of the songs occasionally includes archaic and obsolete words some of which, however, are still found in the other two Sotho languages. Thus in the song of Senkepeng above, iwela from kwela is now both archaic and obsolete, its modern representative being kwetsa, (tell). The possessive stem me in the example Ntja me, (My dog), is no longer used in ordinary speech, except in traditional compositions. But in Tswana, it is still actively used, e.g.

¹ LITSOMO I, P.1.

² Beuchat: NOTES ON FOLKLORE FORMS IN TSONGA AND RONGA, African studies, Vol.17, No.4, 1958, P.187.

³ LITSOMO I, P. 67.

Bana ba me.

Cf. S. Sotho: Bana ba ka.

In folk-lore, the Southern Sotho stem ka above often occurs as ke as in:

Ngwana ngwana ke.

(My grand-child).

Similarly, the word selo, (a thing), occurs frequently in folk-lore, but is no longer used in Southern Sotho:

A utlwa selo sa re thi!

(He heard a thing falling).

Despite its disappearance, however, it is interesting to note that all the concords that it used to command are still preserved:

O bus ka seo a se utlwileng.

(He talks about what he has heard).

The noun mpja (a dog) occurs in place of the modern ntja, while moshate is used with its present-day Northern Sotho meaning of "the great place." In Southern Sotho, however, it has been replaced by moreneng.

Of the Sotho languages, only Northern Sotho and some Kgatla dialects have the full range of Locative Demonstrative Copulatives. In Southern Sotho folk-lore, a remnant of these forms is found in the example:

Leotwana la ngwana ngwanake sele, le leng sele.

(Here is the little foot of my grandchild, here is another).

It may perhaps be added in passing, that a similar solitary remnant occurs in the first line of hymn 347:¹

"Bonang sona o fihlile

Jesu, ngaka ya batho."

(See, here He is He has arrived

Jesus, the physician of men).

2.11.31. Another lexical feature of these stories is the presence of words of Nguni origin. In one of them,¹ there is a character whose name is Hlohlo-le-Mohlophe; Cf. Nguni - mhlophe, (white). He was bitten by a dog, and the verb stem used is - hlewe, which is the perfect passive form of Nguni - dla, (eat), namely dliwe. In keeping with the sound structure of Southern Sotho, the voiced lateral fricative, orthographically dl of Nguni, has been replaced by its voiceless counterpart hl. This is due to the fact that Southern Sotho has no voiced consonants as such, and when Sotho speakers meet them in other languages, the tendency is to substitute their voiceless series for them. Finally, Dimo addressed his bag in the words:

"Kgetsi ya Dimo, kgoloma, kgoloma re utlwe."

(Dimo's bag, speak, speak that we may hear).

The verb stem - kgoloma is from Zulu - khuluma, (speak).

2.11.32. These stories are further characterised by the use of unusual syntactical constructions, including swear words. In the introduction to his first book, Jacottet says he wrote them as he heard them from the mouths of various narrators, and adds:

"ka ba pene feela e ngolang, 'me ke bolokile litaba

hantle, le mantsoe, kamoo ke a neiloeng kateng."

(I merely became a pen that writes, and I have kept the story intact, and the words, as I was given them).

That such constructions are a basic feature of these stories, is further proved by the fact that living narrators still use them in their narrations. The present writer, who grew up knowing most of those collected by Jacottet with their unusual constructions, recently tried out a simple experiment on two old women from different villages.

¹ LITSOMO II, P. 56.

One lives at Mafefoane, and the other at Mahlanyeng. They were individually asked to narrate the well-known story of Dimo and Mmadiepetsane. They both used such constructions, although at different parts of the same story. The one from Mafefoane said:

Mmadiepetsane mokoting ho titimela fata! fata! fata!

Cf. Mmadiepetsane a titimela mokoting are fata! fata! fata!

(Mmadiepetsane ran very fast towards the hole).

The second one said:

He! Mmadiepetsane, ke nna nna eo!

Cf. He! Mmadiepetsane, ke nna eo!

(I say Mmadiepetsane, there I come).

On the basis of such evidence, including the writer's personal knowledge of ditshomo from childhood, as well as the evidence supplied by those contained in Jacottet's collection, it can be safely concluded that such constructions are part and parcel of most primitive ditshomo. Where they are consistently absent, the language is certain to have been tampered with in some form or another. This is the case for instance with those contained in Moikangoa's collection.¹ A comparison of identical stories in his collection and Jacottet's shows quite clearly that Moikangoa has "polished" his language, and added additional elements where the ancient narrator had left them out. Thus in the story of Dimo and Mmadiepetsane above, the ancient narrator starts off by saying:

"Tlaleng, moseekeng, Mmadiepetsane ha a hela, Dimo
a hlaha hodima thaba, pontsheng."

Moikangoa, on the other hand, starts off by saying:

¹ MOIKANGO: LITSOMO TSA MA-AFRIKA.

"Ba re e ne e le tlaleng ya bojadikata, ho phelwa ka moseeka. Dimo a hlaha hodima thaba."

(They say it was during great starvation/famine, people living on the moseeka grass. Dimo appeared on top of a mountain).

This is really a paraphrase of the above. Even in those instances where virtually identical words are used, Moikangoa's version is always fuller and more "correct" and "upright" than its rugged and unembellished original counter-part. In this connection compare:

ORIGINAL: Dimo ha ile kgotla, Mmadiepetsane a hlobola, a apara dihloho tsa Dimo.

Moikangoa: Eitse moo Dimo a dutseng kgotla le banna ba bang, Mmadiepetsane a sala a hlobola diaparo tsane a di apereng, a apara dihloho tsa Dimo.

Similarly, Moikangoa avoids swear words and expressions.

Where the original narrator says:

Tsatsing leo o hatile a manamane, (i.e. masepe), o naleng tsa Dimo, he simply says:
Kajeno o naleng tsa Dimo.

Likewise, in the story of Dinyamatsane, the original narrator says:

Ya fihla ya nka lehlokwa, yaba e hlaba motau-moholo ka sebonong; jwale sa finyela.

Moikangoa says:

Yaba e thonaka lehlokwana, ya phahamisa mohatla wa ya-kgale, ya hlaba ka tlasa oona. Nama tse bonolo tsa utlwa bohloko tsa finyela.

A study of Moikangoa's stories as against those of Jacottet's, proves beyond doubt that he has tampered with the language in order to suit modern sophisticated ears. This is unfortunate, in that it falsifies the art of the ancients, and deprives it of its natural qualities.

CONCLUSION:

- 2.12.33. There seems to be no myth or story in Southern Sotho that seeks to explain the creation of man or the world. What there is, is the traditional belief that the Sotho originated from Ntswana-tsatsi. Apart from this gap, various myths deal with various topics, such as the origin of death and marriage; the friendship between man and the small animals, and the relations between men and women. Unlike in Greek mythology, the Sotho underworld is similar to this world, and the inhabitants of both worlds may exchange visits. The "dead" continue to live as they had done on this world, though with an abundance of earthly possessions. Basically then, in the Sotho mind, the idea of death as an end to life, was never accepted.

CHAPTER III

DILOTHO : (RIDDLES).

INTRODUCTION:

- 3.0.1. In effect, riddles are a test of wit, in which one member quizzes another or others, by providing them with an "obscure" yet accurate clue in the form of a description of the intended object, with a view to getting them to guess and puzzle it out. As such, they are a game which, however, contains a grain of truth, in that they are based on something that actually exists, and whose form and shape is immediately recognised as soon as the appropriate answer is given. In southern Sotho, this recognition is invariably accompanied by the remark, "E fela!" (How true!). The grain of truth whose recognition results in this remark, is contained in the disguised, accurate clue, that is embedded in the question part of the riddle. The use of one's wit and skill, powers of observation and experience in general, may result in a correct identification of the intended object.
- 3.0.2. There is a close connection between the riddle, on the one hand, and the proverb, on the other. They are both based, and contain to a greater or lesser degree, a grain of truth. Secondly, they both originate from a thorough and accurate observation of man and animals, including the physical world around them. Here, however, the similarity ends, for in the riddle, this accurate observation is usually of a local nature, while in the proverb, it is usually of a much more wider application

and significance, in addition to being universal. In the riddle, the truth is deliberately disguised, only an accurate description thereof being given; in the proverb, it is stated as such, there being no attempt to veil or disguise it. Being meant for a game of puzzling and guessing, the riddle is given a humorous twist and angle, while the proverb, being meant for³ wise counsel, is free from such colouring, and thus retains its basic truth in a pure, undisguised form as in:

Kopano ke matla.¹ (Unity is strength).

These are distilled words of wisdom, and the proverb retains them as such, with their undisguised universal appeal and significance. Further, whereas some proverbs have their root in mythology, particularly fables, from which they originate, riddles do not seem to have any such roots and origin. They are a child of wit and observation, which are individual rather than universal characteristics.

The Southern Sotho word for a riddle is selotho, from the verb stem - lotha, whose dictionary meaning is "to propose a riddle to; to puzzle." Among soccer players in Basutoland and the Orange Free State, this verb stem is also used with the extended meaning of "to dribble," where a rugby player would speak in terms of "to sell a dummy." The ability to dribble or sell a dummy well depends, like ho lotha, on the skill, wit and observation of the individual. And so do riddles.

3.0.3. Their main value and function in the community, is to provide entertainment, especially to children. All other values that may be associated with them, such as being educational and teaching children to be observant, are purely incidental and subsidiary in nature. They are

¹ This is probably a translation of the English equivalent in brackets.

essentially a group game, in which two is the minimum. Either two children may play at them, or two opposing groups may compete with one another. They are mainly associated with children, just as ditshomo are generally associated with grandmothers. Many informants in Basutoland laughingly refer to them as "Fapadi ya bana." (A game for children). Despite this, however, grown ups may also exchange them on occasion, or quiz those younger than themselves. In this way, they may also teach them new ones that they did not know before. Like ditshomo, the favourite time for them is the evening after the day's work is done, and people are relaxing at home. But unlike ditshomo, no taboos or restrictions of any kind are associated with them. All age groups, and both sexes, may exchange them at will at any time of the day or year, except that they are usually reserved for the evening and are particularly liked by children. In winter, they are exchanged indoors around the fire or in the lapa.

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3.0.4. They are asked and answered in set phrases that characterise the question and answer respectively. The formula for the question is a predicate, which is made up of the past form of the subject concord of the first person singular, ka followed by the object concord of the second person singular, o and the verb stem - lotha:

Ka o lotha. (Literally: And I you dribbled, i.e. Guess what?)

The second person to whom this is directed, responds with the formula: Kang? (By means of what?) i.e. the instrumental adverbial formative ka plus the interrogative

noun eng? (what?). The first person then presents his riddle, beginning with the morpheme ka above, followed by the riddle proper. If the second person knows it, he gives the answer in the form of an impersonal identificative copulative, beginning with the high toned ke....., (It is), as follows:

1st Person: Ka o lotha? (Guess what?)

2nd Person: Kang? (By means of what?)

1st Person: Ka mala a nku marangrang?

(By means of a sheep's intestine
mixed up?)

2nd Person: Ke mohlwa. (It is the dog's grass).

When the game is already in progress, this procedure is modified. The first person may omit the introductory ka before the riddle proper, and go straight to it. Likewise, the second person omits the copulative formative ke before his answer, and merely states it:

1st Person: Ka o lotha?

2nd Person: Kang?

1st Person: Masimo a mothating? (Fields on a ridge?)

2nd Person: Dintshi. (Eyelashes).

The final modification is that the person may discard the entire predicate ka o lotha, and go straight to the riddle, while the second person dispenses with his kang? and simply states the answer. The question proper is thus followed immediately by the answer:

Question: Mahahana a diretsana?

(Little caves which are a little muddy?)

Answer: Dinala, ka ditshila tsa tsona.

(Nails, by their dirt).

THE QUESTION:

3.1.5. In the vast majority of cases, the question proper in a riddle, is not really a question but a statement, which may be in either conjugation, positive or negative:

Q. Phate di a lekana ?

(Bedding skins are of equal length and breadth?)

A. Lehodimo le lefatshe.

(Heaven and earth).

Q. Sefate sa motupi ha se jewe ?

(The fruit of the motupi tree is not edible ?)

A. Ntja. (A dog).

There is nothing interrogative in the form of such "questions" for even the intonation that accompanies them is that of an ordinary statement and not a question. In this connection, compare the tonal pattern in the statement:

Phate di a lekana. (LL. HL. LLL), and that of the question:

Phate di a lekana ? (LL. HL. HHH).

In intent, however, they are interrogative, hence the usual question mark at the end, and the partial validity of Doke's statement that, "Though interrogative in intent riddles are never so in form in Bantu."¹ The first part of this statement is applicable to most but not all riddles in Southern Sotho. There are a number that are interrogative in form, and which contain an interrogative word in the question proper. Such interrogative words are kae ? (Where ?), which is the

¹ C.M. Doke: BANTU WISDOM-LORE, AFRICAN STUDIES, Vol. 6, No.3, 1947.

one that is most commonly used; the Sotho interrogative formative na ? (what ?) with limited usage; jwang ? (how ?) and eng ? (what ?) which, however, seems to be confined to the formula kang ? i.e. ka eng ?

Q. Ha o le Morwa tjee, metsi o a nka kae ?

(Being a mere Bushman, where do you get water from ?)

A. Lehapu, (bofubelu ba lehapu le metsi a lona).

(A watermelon, its redness and water)

C. Ka re ka tinketsa ke tinketsa, ka makala hore na

modimo wa Roma o kene le kae ?

(No matter how strongly I tried, I could not discover where the god of the Romans entered ?),

A. Tshupa, e ja mabele sesiung.

(Weevil, it eats corn in the grain basket).

Q. Mmamosana wa poeyana, o tla feta jwang banneng ?

(Thou wearer of short skirts how will you pass the men ?)

A. Fodi, (mohatla wa yona).

(A goat; its tail).

3.1.6. Ordinarily, however, no interrogative word is employed, and the statement of the intended question assumes various forms and shapes. The various possibilities are as follows:

(a) In most instances, it is not a statement at all, but a qualificative phrase. Qualificative phrases of various kinds are used a great deal in such contexts, with the possessive type predominating.

Q. Kgarebe tsa lapa leno ?

(Dames of your family ?)

A. Ditshehetso, (tsa lelwala).

(The supports of a grinding stone).

Q. Kgomo ya bohadi ba mmao ?

(The cow of your mother's lobola ?)

A. Nta. (A louse).

(Possessives).

Q. Monna e molelele e mosweu ?

. (A tall white man?)

A. Tsela ya baeti.

(A travellers' road). (Adjective).

Q. Mosadi ya dinyao le mpeng ?

(A woman who is tattooed even on her stomach ?)

A. Sesi. (A grain basket) (Relative).

(b) It may be two coordinated nouns, joined by means of the conjunctive formative le, (and/with):

Q. Sebopelo le setjamele ?

(The forming place and the starer ?)

A. Leifo le sehlohlolo sa ntlo.

(The hearth and ridge of a hut).

(c) It may be two appositional nouns uncoordinated, but sometimes followed by a predicate and its extension:

Q. Mmamonyamane, motswalehlakeng ?

(The little mother of blackness, comer from the reeds?)

A. Katse. (A cat).

Q. Lehadima, leredi le pota motse ?

(Lightning, a beauty encircling a homestead ?)

A. Namane e nyenyane ha e thala.

(A young calf frolicking).

(d) It may be a single noun with an extended, reduplicated predicate:

Q. Motjodi wa tswa tjoo! wa ba wa tswa tjoo!

(The Cape wagtail quickly went out, and again went out quickly ?)

A. Nale, (ho roka).

(A needle; to sew).

(e) It may be two balanced sentences with contrasting subjects but identical predicates:

Q. Ntsho ya hata, tshweu ya hata ?

(The black one trod, the white one trod ?)

A. Nale le tshwele, (ho roka).

(A needle and cotton, to sew).

(f) It may be a similarly balanced pair of sentences but with identical subjects and contrasting predicates:

Q. Ke enwa a kena, ke enwa a etswa ?

(Here he is coming in, here he is going out ?)

A. Tsela. (A road).

(g) It may be introduced by an interjective followed by a simple imperative and a conjunctive adverb :

Q. Hei, tlo le kwano ?

(You there, come and pass here ?)

A. Monokotshwai, (O tshwasa motho kapa o mmita ka ho butswa ha wona).

(The wild black mulberry; it ensnares a person or attracts him by its ripeness).

(h) It may be introduced by a simple imperative, not preceded by an interjective as above:

Q. Hlaba, o nehele Tshehlanyane ?

(Pierce and give to the little yellow one ?)

A. Lemao, (le etsa lesoba, lesika le kena teng).

(A needle; it makes a hole, the sinew goes into it).

(i) Alternatively, it may be introduced by a vocative interjective preceding the simple imperative in (h) above:

Q. Mme, ntshware ka wa ?

(Mother, hold me I fall ?)

A. Tshilo, (ha ho silwa).

(A grinding stone, when one grinds with it).

(j) It may be two ideophones only:

Q. Gaa, pote ?

(Of quickly biting, of quickly disappearing ?)

A. Letseetse. (A flea).

(k) It may be one ideophone, sometimes reduplicated, but with an adverbial adjunct:

Q. Tseke, dioding ?

(Of flashing in soil ?)

A. Mohoma. (A plough).

Q. Thele-thele ka dilomo ?

(Of falling, falling over cliffs ?)

A. Phoho e theoha lelwaleng.

(Meal flowing from a grinding stone).

(l) It may be one word only, usually a compound noun:

Q. Senyakammele ?

(That which relieves itself through its body ?)

A. Motlhotlo.

(A sieve for straining beer).

3.1.7 (a) The "question" may also consist of a compound sentence, in which case it has more than one statement:

Q. Banna ba bafubedu, ba setsweng morao ke ba batsho, ere ha ba fihla lengopeng ba re, "A!" ebe ba kgutla ?

(Red men followed by black ones and who, on reaching a donga say, "Ah!" and return ?)

A. Hlaha, e setswe morao ke lehoko, e thibelwa ke noka.

(Wild fire, followed by burnt patches, is stopped by a river).

(b) The first part of a compound predicate may be positive, and the second negative:

Q. Ka tswa~~e~~tswa ke tlolatlola, Mmamankwane ha ke mmone?

(Despite my repeated jumping, I cannot see Mmamankwane ?)

A. Sekotlo, (motho ha a ipone sekotlo).

(The occiput; a person does not see the back of his head).

Negative statements seem to appear in two positions only. They may appear either by themselves as in 3.1.5. above, or as part of a compound predicate as in this last example.

(c) The compound sentence may consist of two sentences with the same object, the second sentence being a further explanation of the first:

Q. Halanyane o a loma, o a tlohela, o tla loma ha hlabula le fihla ?

(Halanyane bites and stops, he will bite when summer sets in ?)

A. Bobatsi, (bo siyo mariha, bo teng hlabula).

(The stinging nettle; it is not there in winter. it is there in summer).

LENGTHY QUESTIONS:

3.2.8. The varieties of "questions" discussed above, are found with ordinary types of riddles. Apart from them, however, there are a few other riddles in which the question part is usually long, giving rise to a lengthy riddle. It contains all the data concerning the problem to be solved and from it, the second person must work out the required answer. This type of riddle is called the Problem or Conundrum. Here are typical examples in Southern Sotho:

Q. Monna ya tsamayang le nkwe, podi le letsepa. Nkwe e ja podi, podi e ja letsepa. Ba fihla nokeng eo ba tshwanelang ho e tshela. Ho na le sekepenyana se lekaneng batho ba babedi feela ka nako. Ba tla tshela jwang ?

(A man who is travelling with a leopard, a goat and the plume and ear of a sweet reed. The leopard eats a goat; the goat eats sweet reed. They come to a river which they have to cross. There is a little boat that is big enough for two people only at a time. How will they cross ?)

A. Monna o tla nka podi a tshela le yona, a fihle a e siye ka nqane. A kgutle le sekepe a fihle a nke nkwe, a e tshedise. Ebe o kgutla le podi, o fihla a e theola; a nke letsepa, a le tshedisetse ka ho nkwe. A kgutle, a tlo lata podi, a fihle a thebe le yona ka kwana, ba tsamaye.

(The man will take the goat, cross with it and leave it on the opposite bank. He returns with the boat, takes the leopard and ferries it across. He returns with the goat and deposits it on the opposite bank.

Then he takes the sweet reed and ferries it across to the leopard. He returns alone to fetch the goat. They both alight on the opposite bank and go).

Q. Bahlankana ba bararo le barwetsana ba bona ba bararo ba eya lenyalong. Bahlankana ba boulela, ha ho ya ratang ho bona mohlankana e mong pela morwetsana wa hae. Ba fumana noka e tletse empa ho ena le seketswana se lekaneng batho ba babedi feela ka nako. Ba ya tshela jwang?

(Three young men and their girl friends going to a wedding; the young men are jealous and none would like to see another young man next to his girl friend. They find the river full, but there is a little boat suitable for two people only at a time. How will they cross ?)

A. Ho kena mohlankana le morwetsana wa hae, ba tshela. Ha ba fihla ka mose wane, morwetsana o sala lebopong a le mong. Mohlankana o a se soka, o kgutlela morao ho ba bang. Ha a fihla moo, o a se tlola, o ya ho bona. Ho kena barwetsana ba babedi. Ba se soka, ba tshelela ho yane ya mose. Ba fihla ba se tlola, ba ema lebopong. Se nkuwa ke morwetsana wa pele, o a se soka, o kgutlela bahlankaneng. O fihla a se tlola, a eya ema pela mohlankana wa hae. Ho kena bahlankana ba babedi, ba tshelela barwetsaneng ba bona. Ho theoha a le mong feela, e mong o sala ho sona, o bitsa wa hae. O a tla, o a kena, ba boela morao. Ngwanana o fihla a theoha, a sala lebopong. Mohlankana ya lebopong o siya wa hae moo, o kena sekepeng le mohlankana ya fihlang. Ba se soka, ba ya mohlankaneng yane ya emeng le motho wa hae mose ho noka. Ba fihla ba se tlola. Se nkuwa

ke ngwanana, o tshelela ho ba bang ka kwana. O fihla a se tlola, a ema lebopong. Se nkuwa ke bona, ba tshelela bahlankaneng ba bona. Ba fihla ba se tlola. Se nkuwa ke mohlankana eo morwetsana wa hae a setseng ka kwana. O a se soka, o fihla a mo nka ba tshela mme ba eya lenyalong kaofela.

(A young man and his partner go in and cross. On reaching the opposite bank, the girl gets off and remains there. The young man returns to the others. He gets off, and the two girls get in. They row it across to the girl on the opposite bank. They alight; she gets on and goes to the young men alone. She gets off and stands next to her partner. The other two young men get on, and cross to their girl friends. One gets off and joins his partner on the bank; the other one remains on the boat and calls his partner. She gets on and they go back. The girl gets off and joins the other girl on the bank, while the young man on the bank joins the one on the boat. They cross to that young man who is standing with his partner on the opposite bank. They both get off. The girl takes it alone and crosses to the other girls. She gets off and remains on the bank. They get on and cross to their boy friends. They get off and the young man whose girl friend is left alone, jumps on and rows across to fetch her. They join the others and proceed to the wedding).

THE ANSWER:

- 3.3.9. The answer to a riddle may also assume various forms and shapes. The various possibilities here are as follows:

(a) It may be one word only, usually a noun.

Q. Thari e masoto a mararo ?

(A skin for carrying a child on one's back that has three ends ?)

A. Tsheha.

(Short drawers worn by men. ~~Af~~: stertriem).

(b) It may be two words, an infinitive plus an object.

Q. Mollo o tuka ha Rakgenkgana ?

(Fire burns at Rakgenkgana's ?)

A. Ho tsuba peipi.

(To smoke a pipe)

(c) It may be two nouns joined by the conjunctive formative le. In such cases, the question is usually descriptive of two things or things in the plural.

Q. Kgomo e kgwabana le namane ya yona ?

(A cow with a white streak on its back and its calf ?)

A. Lelwala le tshilo.

(A grinding stone and a grinder).

Q. Phate di a lekana ?

(Bedding skins are of equal length and breadth ?)

A. Lehodimo le lefatshe. (Heaven and earth).

In those instances where the question is descriptive of three things, the answer consists of three nouns.

Q. Mme o sekoti, ntate o kgopo, bana beso ba bararo ?

(My mother is shaped like a hole, father is crooked, the children of my family are three ?).

A. Fitsa, mohwele le maoto a mararo a pitsa.

(A pot, the handle, and the three legs of a pot).

(d) As in (b) and (c) above, it may be two words, but a noun and its qualificative.

Q. Monna e molelele e mosweu ?

(A tall white man ?)

A. Tsela ya baeti.

(A road for travellers).

(e) Alternatively, it may be a noun and its qualificative predicate and object. The pattern of the answer here corresponds to that of the question.

Q. Sehlaha sa nonyana se okamela bodiba ?

(The nest of a bird overhangs an abyss ?)

A. Letswele la kgomo le okamela kganelo.

(The udder of a cow overhangs a milking pail).

(f) It may be a noun followed by an explanatory clause of a participial nature, and which further clarifies the answer.

Q. Kgopo tsa ntja tsii ?

(The ribs of a dog squeak ?)

A. Lemati, ha le kwala.

(A door, when it closes).

The explanatory clause may also be infinitive, indicative positive or adverbial:

Q. Mme, ntshware ke nye ?

(Mother hold me that I may relieve myself ?)

A. Nko, (ho mina).

(A nose, to blow it).

Q. Nonyana e siyang mahe e balehe ?

(A bird that leaves its eggs and runs away ?)

A. Mosi, o siya mollo.

(Smoke, it leaves the fire).

Q. Thota e shweshwe e nngwe?

(A wilderness with one flower ?)

A. Mpa, ka mokgubu.

(The stomach, by the navel).

3.3.10. (a) In all these instances, the noun or the first one where there are more than one, including the infinitive, which serves as answer, is in effect a copulative, based on the particular noun or infinitive. The copulative formative ke is deliberately omitted, but may be reinstated at any time, Cf. 3.0.4. above.

(b) Some riddles have alternative answers to one and the same question. The copulative intention still holds here too.

Q. Phutse le hara thota ?

(A pumpkin in the middle of the veld ?)

A. Kgwedi, mokgubu.

(A moon, a navel).

Q. Ka re ke re ke a kwalla, moloi a feta ?

(No matter how I tried to shut him out, the sorcerer went past ?)

A. Seriti, tweba, mmankgane.

(A shadow, a mouse, a bat).

(c) In some cases, however, the alternative answer is clearly of recent origin as in:

Q. Ka re ke jala tlhanyelo ya ka, ya mela thabeng ?

(I tried to sow my seed and it germinated on a mountain ?)

A. Sephadi, sethunya, (medumo ya ntho tseo e utlwahala hole).

(A whip, a gun; the sound of those things is audible from afar).

(d) Longer answers consisting of more than one sentence are rare. It is only in the problem type of riddle that they abound.

Q. Nthethe a bina moholo a dutse ?

(Nthethe danced while the old one remained seated?)

A. Sefate le makala a sisinyaha, a tsokoteha, athe kutu yona e ikemetse.

(The tree and branches shake, whereas the stump does not shake).

CHARACTERISTICS OF RIDDLES

3.4.11. (a) Riddles can be humorous and aesthetically self sufficient.

Q. Maqheku a qabana ka lehaheng?

(Old men quarreling in a cave ?)

A. Poone e hadikilweng, (ho qhoma).

(Roasted mealies, to explode).

Q. Shweshwe tsa mohlaka o moholo ?

(Flowers of a big cluster of reeds ?)

A. Dinaledi. (The stars).

(b) They are also characterised by a rhythmic pattern of contrasting ideas and concepts, based on a uniform pattern of syllables. This is especially the case with the question part of the riddle, although the answer may occasionally be subject to it too.

Q. Se re se ya kwana eke se tla kwano?

(While going that way, appearing to be coming this way?)

(Syllable pattern: 2.2.2; 2.2.2.).

A. Koloi. (A wagon).

Q. Sehlahle sa nonyana se okanela bodiba ?

(The nest of a bird hangs over an abyss ?)

(Syllable pattern: 3.4.5.3.).

A. Letswele la kgomo le okanela kgameo.

(The udder of a cow hangs over a milking pail).

(Syllable pattern: 3.3.5.3.).

This similarity in the number of syllables employed results in balance being maintained in asking the question and, occasionally, in answering it. The last example above illustrates both types. It also illustrates the parallelism that some of them have, from the point of view of the parts of speech that make them up. Thus in both the question and answer, the subject has its own qualificative, its own predicate and its own object. The depth of the abyss over which the nest hangs, is contrasted with that of the milking pail over which the cow's udder hangs.

(c) Another characteristic is that of brevity and word-economy. Thus two ideophones may constitute a whole riddle.

Q. Qaa, pote ?

(Of quickly biting, quickly disappearing ?)

A. Letsetse. (A flea).

Closely allied to this, is the use of abbreviated or telegraphic forms, which result in compound forms such as:

- Q. Majwana-mabedi, mabetsahole ?
(Two little stones, the far throwers?)
A. Mahlo. (Byes).

In this connection, it may be mentioned that in her article on Bantu riddles, and to which grateful acknowledgement is made in this section, Miss Beauchat¹ gives the above riddle as:

Majoê, mabetsa-holê.

The usual version in Basutoland and the Free State, however, is that given above, which is the same as that given by Segoete, whose book² Miss Beauchat mentions in her bibliography.

- (d) They are also characterised by the use of diminutive forms to indicate the subject.

- Q. Ihlwana la mmao patolo ?
(The little eye of your mother, a hard stone ?)
A. Leihlo la nale.
(The eye of a needle).

- (e) The subject may be in the first person, with the first person subject concord appearing in its past form.

- Q. Ka ja mokotla, ka tsholla phofo ?
(I ate the bag and threw out the meal ?)
A. Mohodu, (ho jewa wona, ho lahlwa moswang).
(Tripe; it is eaten, the chyme is thrown away).

- (f) A number of them are characterised by the use of terms of relations like "my mother," "your mother," in their question part. Such terms, however, do not really refer to actual relations, but are merely

¹ Beauchat: RIDDLES IN BANTU, AFRICAN STUDIES, Vol.16, No.3, 1957, P.143.

² E. Segoete: RAPHETHENG, P.54.

conventional and are calculated to amuse.

Q. Kgomo ya bohadi ba mmao ?

(The cow of your mother's lobola ?)

A. Nta. (A louse).

Q. Mme, ntshware ke nye ?

(Mother, hold me that I may relieve myself ?)

A. Nko, (ho mina).

(A nose, to blow it).

3.4.12.(a) A large number of riddles contains archaic and obsolete words.

Q. Lesapo la mmerikapa ?

(The bone of mmerikapa ?)

A. Leballo. (A lath).

Other words like this are sooko, lapane, moollo, kwantle.

(b) In some cases, the particular word may appear as a noun in a riddle but as a different element in present-day language. Thus the word thata (strength), which is still used with this meaning in Tswana, appears as a noun in the riddle:

Q. Seotswana sa lengana ke eme ke kgantsha thata?

(A wormwood enclosure, I stand, relying on strength ?)

A. Meno. (Teeth).

In present-day Southern Sotho, thata is a relative stem as in:

Ntho e thata.

(A hard or difficult thing).

(c) Some contain words of Nguni origin:

Q. Thope e paqang haholo ?

(A girl who jives vigorously ?)

A. Fitsa, (ha e bela).

(A pot on the boil).

The noun thope is from Nguni intombi, while the verb stem paqa is from -bhaca. Cf. Lepaowa (a Bhaca), from iBhaca. Another word like this is tlhanyelo from Nguni inhlanyelo, (seed). The present-day Sotho word for this is Leo.

(d) Similarly, there are a number of riddles that contain words of foreign origin, predominantly from Afrikaans, expressing or describing articles that were unknown to the Basotho. Cf. stories of recent origin, 2.4.19. above.

Q. Saga morung o motsho ?

(A saw in a black forest ?)

A. Sekere ha se kuta moriri.

(Scissors when it cuts hair).

Other words like these are sekele, levenkele, dihabore, malaselapi, from Afrikaans sekel, winkel, hawer, laslar, respectively. There is also telegrafi from English telegraph.

CONTENT

3.5.13. (a) In their range and scope, Southern Sotho riddles cover the entire community and its customs. They mirror its activities, its material

culture, as well as its abstract ideas. They reflect the basic nature of the Basotho, simple, unaffected and with a keen sense of humour, for a Mosotho will laugh even under the most tragic circumstances. To him, "Lefu leholo ke ditsheho," (Laughter is greater than death), a saying that is perhaps best expressed by the words:

"Oh! death where is thy sting ?

Oh! grave where is thy victory ?"

The Mosotho's accurate observations of what other people do and say, results in a humorous presentation of their foibles and mannerisms:

Q. Monna eo ereng ha a lwanā, a lahla melamu?

(A man who, on fighting, throws away his sticks ?)

A. Sefi sa lejwe; se lahla dipheeke.

(A stone trap throws off its supports).

Q. Monna eo ereng ha a tshwarwa hlohong a bokolle ?

(A man who, on being held on the head, cries aloud?).

A. Phalo, (ha e fala).

(An adze, when it scrapes).

Q. Tata la Rauduudu ?

(The kaross of Rauduudu, i.e. father of a mixed bag ?)

A. Lefifi. (Darkness).

(b) Plants and animals, as well as their characteristics, have given rise to some of the most beautiful riddles in this language. Thus the pumpkin, which normally requires much ground in which to stretch itself before bearing any fruit, is the answer to the riddle:

Q. Thankga-thankga ke ya tswalla kae ?

(Big, big thing, where shall I bring forth my offspring ?)

A. Mokopu. (A pumpkin).

The traditional love of a Mosotho for his cattle, his favourite bull or ox, is something that is well known. They are also reflected in his riddles:

Q. Foho ya lla kgomong tsa Rapompa, ya re Rapompa o shwele?

(A bull lowed among the cattle of Rapompa, and said Rapompa is dead ?)

A. Phalo, (ho fala).

(An adze, to scrape/scratch).

Even the act of slaughtering an animal such as a sheep, has given rise to a riddle:

Q. La re tuka la re nyedi, la ruta nku mokgwabo ?

(It flashed and flashed, and taught a sheep where cattle drink ?)

A. Thipa, (ha ho hlajwa nku).

(A knife, on slaughtering a sheep).

(c) Some riddles reflect the attitude of the Sotho towards their non-Sotho neighbours, particularly the Bushmen. For some reason or another the tendency was to ridicule them, men and women alike.

Q. Mosadi wa Morwa, malaselapi ?

(A Bushwoman, joined rags ?)

A. Kgudu, (mmele wa yona eka malapi a hlahlamanang).

(A tortoise; its body is like rags piled on top of

one another). Cf. the attitude of the other animals towards the tortoise in 2.2.14. above.

Q. Mati la kwalla Barwana ka tlung ?

(The door shut the little Bushmen in the house ?)

A. Lefifi. (Darkness).

(d) Such an attitude of mind, however, usually has a boomerang effect. This is clearly reflected in the following riddle, whose unknown author must have been a non-Catholic, who wanted to have a dig at Roman Catholics in Basutoland:

Q. Ka re ka tinketsa ke tinketsa, ka makala hore na modimo wa roma o kene la kae ?

(No matter how strongly I tied, I could not discover where the god of the Romans came in ?)

A. Tshupa, (a ja mabele sesiung).

(Weevil, it eats corn in the grain basket).

This riddle is sometimes quoted with Fora in place of Roma, in which case reference is to the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in Basutoland. Thus the ridicule to which the Bushmen were subjected, is now embittering relations among the Sotho themselves.

(e) Sotho customs and the birds of Basutoland, have also given rise to a variety of riddles in Southern Sotho. The secretary-bird with its long feathers on the head, bending backward and forward as it trots along, is depicted in the riddle:

Q. Se jere mohlaka, se a eba-eba ?

(It is carrying reeds, and it swings, swings ?)

A. Mmamolangwane, (masiba a yona hlohong).

(The secretary-bird, its feathers on the head).

Some of the divining bones have names such as Namahadi and Phalafala. Before they are scattered on the ground for divining purposes, it is customary for the diviner or the patient to sweep a patch thereon with his hand. From this, comes the riddle:

Q. Fiela-fiela, Nkoko a tswale ?

(Sweep, sweep, that Nkoko may bring forth his child ?)

A. Litaola, (di a fiellwa).

(Divining bones; one sweeps for them).

CLASSIFICATION OF RIDDLES

3.6.14. The most effective method of classifying riddles in Bantu, is that devised by Schapera¹ for Kgatla riddles. He classifies them according to the content of the answer, which is the shortest part of most riddles. With minor variations, this classification has been adopted by various writers on Bantu riddles. Gray has used it for those of Nyanja,² Harries for those of Mwera,³ and Fortune for those of Zezuru and Kalanga.⁴ With minor additions, we shall also use it here for those of Southern Sotho, giving representative examples under each heading.

(a) NATURAL PHENOMENA

Q. Tsee, tsee, meutlweng ?

(Of jumping, jumping in thorns ?)

¹ I. Schapera: KGATLA RIDDLES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE, Bantu studies, 6, 3, 1932.

² E. Gray: Some Riddles of the Nyanja People, Bantu studies, 13, 4, 1939.

³ L. Harries: Some Riddles of the Mwera People, African Studies, 6, 1, 1947.

⁴ G. Fortune: Some Zezuru and Kalanga Riddles, NADA, 27, 1950.

A. Sefako, (ha se tlola-tlola hara jwang).

(Hail, when it jumps about in grass).

Q. Phutse le hara thota ?

(A pumpkin in the middle of the veld ?)

A. Kgwedi, mokgubu.

(The moon, a navel).

Q. Ha o le moo, mmao o kae ?

(When you are there, where is your mother ?)

A. Noka, (mohlodi wa yona).

(A river, its source).

(b) THE VEGETABLE WORLD.

Q. Thankga-thankga ke ya tswalla kae ?

(Big, big thing where shall I bring forth my child ?)

A. Mokopu. (A pumpkin).

Q. Ha o le Morwa tjee, metsi o a nka kae ?

(Being a mere Bushman, where do you get water from ?)

A. Lehapu, (bofubedu ba lehapu le metsi a lona).

(A watermelon, its redness and water).

(c) THE ANIMAL WORLD

(1) Insects:

Q. Qaa, pote ?

(Of quickly biting, quickly disappearing ?)

A. Letseetse. (A flea).

Q. Ngwana Molepe o tswa pula di ena metlwebelele ?

(Molepe's child comes out amid torrential rains ?)

A. Dikokobele, (di tswa hara pula).

(Flying ants, they come out in rain).

(2) Domestic Animals:

Q. Mmamonyamane, motswalehlakeng ?

(The little mother of blackness, comes from the reeds?)

A. Katse. (A cat).

Q. Sefate sa motupi ha se jewe ?

(The motupi tree is not edible ?)

A. Ntja. (A dog).

(3) Game Animals:

Q. Mosadi wa Morwa, malaselapi ?

(A Bushwoman, joined rags ?)

A. Kgudu, mmele wa yona eka malapi a hlahlamanang).

(A tortoise. Its body is like rags piled on top of one another).

Q. Se jere mahlaka se a eba-eba ?

(It is carrying reeds, and it swings, swings ?)

A. Mmamolangwane, (masiba a yona hlohong).

(The Secretary-bird, its feathers on the head).

(4) Reptiles:

Q. Lekokoto la ntja ya tona, ke a dula, ke a ferehana ?

(A big and thin dog, I sit and curl myself ?)

A. Noha. (A snake).

Q. Monna ya fetolang mmala ka nako le nako ?

(A man who changes colour from time to time ?)

A. Lempetje. (A chameleon).

(a) FOOD STUFFS

Q. Barwa ba qabana ka lehaheng ?

(Bushmen quarreling in a cave ?)

A. Jwala, (ha bo bela)

(Beer, when it is fermenting).

Q. Qhekwana le edile ?

(A little old man with a clear face ?)

A. Lebese, (bosweu ba lona).

(Milk, its whiteness).

Q. Diba bo botala kgorong ya Bakgothu ?
(A green pool at the gate of Hottentots ?)

A. Hloya. (Whey).

Q. Baloi ba bina ka lehaheng ?
(Sorcerers singing in a cave ?)

A. Dikgobe, (ha di kaba-kaba).
(Boiled grains of mealies, boiling).

(e) THE HUMAN BODY

Q. Mohlankana ya dulang lehaheng ?
(A young man who lives in a cave?)

A. Leleme. (The tongue).

Q. Lehahana la Raletswai ?
(The little cave of Raletswai, i.e. father of salt?)

A. Lenala. (A nail).

Q. Mme, ntshware ke nye ?
(Mother, hold me that I may relieve myself ?)

A. Nko. (A nose).

(f) DOMESTIC LIFE

Q. Sefate se dulwang ke nonyana tsohle ?
(A tree on which all birds sit ?)

A. Morena, (ke wa bohle).
(A chief; he is for all).

Q. Setoto sa tlala ntlo ?
(Beer in preparation filled the house ?)

A. Moraha ka sakeng.
(Liquid kraal-dung in a cattle-kraal).

Q. Se monate se maribaneng ?
(The pleasant one in empty places ?)

A. Boroko. (Sleep)

(g) UTENSILS AND OTHER OBJECTS.

Q. Thope e paqang naholo ?

(A girl who jives vigorously ?)

A. Pitsa, (ha e bela).

(A pot on the boil).

Q. Monna ya tsohelang lekgalong?

(A man who, on getting up, goes to a mountain pass ?)

A. Moqato.

(A joint of the stertriem).

Q. Monna eo ereng ha a geta ho ja a re xa ?

(A man who on finishing to eat says x ?)

A. Thipa, (ha e kopetswa).

(A knife on being closed).

(h) THE WHITE MAN'S CULTURE

Q. Saga morung o motsho ?

(A saw in a black forest ?)

A. Sekere, ha se kuta moriri.

(A pair of scissors cutting hair).

Q. Bahlankana ba kola-tshweu ba entseng mokoloko?

(Young men with white cockades in a row ?)

A. Telegrafi, (difate tsa yona).

(Telegraph poles).

RECENT RIDDLES:

- 3.7.15. As in the case of stories, there are riddles of recent origin in Southern Sotho. Those that the present writer has collected, are commonly heard in the Roma valley of Basutoland. They are all attributed to an old woman nicknamed Mmadilothe, (the mother of riddles).

In form, they are similar to the old ones; in content, however, they are modern in that they refer to modern things and concepts; particularly those of a Christian nature. Some of them are addressed to high ranking officials of the Roman Catholic Church in Basutoland, of which Mmadilothe is a member. The inclusion of the names of such officials is calculated to tease and amuse. And here we have additional explanation as to the use of terms of relations in a similar context in the old riddles.

Her riddles are divisible into two types. First, there are those that are purely secular, some of which are modifications and/or adaptations of the old ones, including the problem type. Secondly, there are ² the religious ones. These are long in form, and a sound knowledge of the scriptures is imperative for any attempt at unravelling them.

(a) SECULAR:

Q. Rona Basotho re lahla fatshe, Makgowa wona a phuthela?

(We Basotho throw (it) down, but the Europeans fold it up?)

A. Mamina, (Makgowa a a phuthela ka sakatuku).

(Mucus; Europeans fold it with a handkerchief. Afrikaans Sakdoek).

Q. Monna ya hlatsang tsatsi lohle ?

(A man who vomits all day long ?)

A. Terene, ha batho ba ntse ba e tlola.

(The train, as people keep on detraining).

Q. Tshimo ya ka eo ke e lemang ka matsoho, ha dijo tsa yona di butswitse, ke di kotula ka mahlo ?

(My field which I plough with my hands; when its crops are ripe, I harvest them with my eyes).

A. Lengolo, (ke le ngotse ka matsoho, ha ke qetile
ke le bala ka mahlo).

(A letter; I wrote it with my hand and on finishing,
I read it with my eyes).

(b) MODIFICATIONS:

Q. Ntate Masenya ha a tshwarwa hlohong o a bokolla ?
(Mr. Masenya cries aloud on being held on the head ?)

A. Phalo, (ha e fala kobo ya kgomo).
(An adze, when scraping a hide to make a skin blanket).

Cf:

Q. Monna eo ereng ha tshwarwa hlohong a bokolle ?
(A man who cries aloud on being held on the head ?)

A. Phalo, (ha e fala).
(An adze, when it scrapes).

Q. Nkgono Mmaforomonyana ya dinyao le mpeng ?
(Granny Mmaforomonyana, with tattoo marks even on
her stomach ?)

A. Sesi. (A grain basket).

Cf:

Q. Mosadi ya dinyao le mpeng ?
(A woman with tattoo marks even on her stomach ?)

A. Sesi. (A grain basket).

Q. Mabele eso a tletseng lelapa ?
(Our corn that fills the lapa ?)

A. Dinaledi. (The stars).

Cf:

Q. Shweshwe tsa mohlaka o moholo ?
(Flowers of a big cluster of reeds ?)

A. Dinaledi. (The stars).

In most of these examples, Mmadilothe's workmanship is quite clear. Where the old riddle speaks of a man, monna, she uses a male term, ntate, followed by a proper name. The rest of the old riddle is retained. Conversely, where the old riddle refers to a woman, mosadi, she makes her an old woman,

nkgono, followed by a proper name; and where the old riddle has a possessive qualificative, she substitutes her own, to qualify her substantive, as in the last example. This mechanism she follows consistently, even in her problem type of riddle.

(c) PROBLEM TYPE

Q. Ntate Jeremea o ya Rapoleboya ho lata podi ya hae. Nkgono a mo fa letsepa. Ha a fihla Leqhidile, a kgahlwa ke nkwe ya ntate Penane. Ba buisana, ba dumellana. Yaba o a tsamaya. Ha a fihla Makgaleng, a fumana e tletse. Jwale sekepe se lekane yena le phoofolo e le nngwe. Nkwe e ja podi; podi e ja letsepa. Jwale a makala na o tla etsa jwang? A ema le monna wa Mateneng; a fumana polane.

(Mr. Jeremiah goes to Rapoleboya to fetch his goat. Granny gave him the plume and ear of a sweet reed. When he came to Leqhidile, he was attracted by Mr. Penane's leopard. They talked and reached an agreement. He left. When he came to the river Makgaleng, he found it full. Now the boat is suitable for him and one animal only. The leopard eats the goat; the goat eats the sweet reed. He was puzzled what to do. He was at his wits' end; and he found a plan).

A. A nka podi, a e beha. A kgutla a ya nka nkwe. A fihla a e beha, a kgutla le podi. A e beha, a nka letsepa, a le beha ka ho nkwe. A ya nka podi, yaba o a tsamaya ho ya hae, Maphotong.

(He took the goat across and left it there; came back, took the leopard across, and came back with the goat. He dropped it, took the sweet reed, and ferried it across to the leopard. Then he fetched

the goat, and went home to Maphotong). Cf. the first example under 3.2.3. above.

There is an interesting one that she gives, involving a man and his mother-in-law. It seems to be her own invention, with no counter-part in the old type of lengthy riddles. The possibility of its being an adaptation, however, cannot be ruled out, particularly in view of the numerous adaptations illustrated above.

Q. Ka ya Matsieng le monna wa ka le mme. Ra fumana Korokoro e tletse. Ha re geta ho kena, ya re nka le mme. Jwale monna wa ka o tla phallela mang ?
(I went to Matsieng with my husband and my mother. We found the river Korokoro full. After going in, it swept us off with my mother. Now, which one will my husband rescue?)

A. O ile a phallela nna, a tlohela mme, hoba mme a ke ke a etsa ngwana wa hae e motona. Ke latilwe hore ke tlo atisa motse le ngwana.

(He rescued me and left my mother, because my mother cannot bear him a male child, i.e. a son. I was fetched, i.e. married, in order to come and increase the family with my husband - a child of the particular family).

(d) RELIGIOUS TYPE

It is interesting to note here that the one riddle addressed to the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Basutoland, who is a Mosotho, namely, His Grace, Archbishop Mmabathwana, O.M.I. has no religious significance at all. On the contrary, it seems to be an adaptation of

the humorous riddle given under 3.4.11 (c) above:

Q. Ntate Mmabathwana, malomao o ne a le mona. O itse o dumele, o se a bile a tsamaile. Yena o a o rata, empa wena ha o mo rate ?

(Father Mmabathwana, your uncle was here. He greets you and has already left. He likes you, but you do not like him ?)

A. Letsetse; ha motho a isa letsoho, kgale le ile.

(A flea; when one raises the hand, it is gone already).

To Father Gravel,¹ however, she addresses a purely religious one:

Q. Ntate Karafele, ntate o o file kgomo tse supileng. O itse o hame tse tsheletseng kamoo o ratang, ya bosupa o e hamele kgamelong ya yona. Ha o ka chatsa lebese la yona, wa le ja, ha a na ho kopana le wena le kgale?

(Father Gravel, my father has given you seven cows. He said you may milk six of them as you please; but the seventh you must milk into its own milking pail. Should you take some of its milk and use it, he will never agree with you ?)

A. Ntate Modimo o itse ke sebetse ka matsatsi a tsheletseng feela; la bosupa ke la hae qha!

(God the father said I should work for six days only; the seventh is His alone).

Q. Ntho eo re e bonang ka mehla, rona bafo le marena, empa ntate Modimo yena ha a eso e bone mme ha a sa tla e tseba le kgale. E tsejwa ke rona dibopuwa tsa hae feela ?

(A thing that we see everyday, we commoners and chiefs,

¹One of the senior members of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Basutoland.

but which God has never seen, i.e. experienced, and will never experience. It is experienced by us alone, His creatures).

- A. Rona bafo re a tjhakelana le marena a tjhakelana. Ha ke eso utlwe hore Modimo o kile a tjhakela Modimo e mong, mme ntho a jwalo ha e sa tla ba teng hobane Modimo o mong qha!

(We commoners exchange visits and so do chiefs. I have not heard it said that God ever visited another God; and a thing like that will never occur, because there is only one God).

- Q. Bitla le a phela, le mofu o a phela. Ha re ne re tsebisitswe hore mofu o shwele, re fumana a ntse a phela, le lebitla le ntse le phela la hae ?

(The grave is alive and the deceased is alive.

Whereas we had been informed that the deceased was dead, we found him alive and his grave also alive?)

- A. Jonase ha a kwentswe ke hlapi; a dula masiu a mararo le matsatsi a mararo, ya mo hlatsa ka tsatsi la bosupa a ntse a phela, le yona e ntse e le metsing, e phela. A matha ho ya Ninifa ho ya ruta Evangedi.

(Jonas, when he was swallowed by a fish. He spent three days and three nights in its stomach and it vomitted him on the seventh day still alive. It was also alive in water. He ran to Niniveh to spread the Gospel).

Whatever one may feel about these riddles, one thing cannot be disputed: Mmadilotho's knowledge of the scriptures and her ability to breathe a Sotho atmosphere into them. This knowledge, she owes to her Roman Catholic teachers who, in

conjunction with those of other religious denominations, have done yeoman service in the upliftment of the Sotho spiritually and materially. Would that this could always be remembered in these stormy days of rapid changes for, although history is a record of change, it is also a record of something changeless - the truth. And the truth is that we owe them a real debt of gratitude.

CONCLUSION:

- 3.8.16. Although riddles are essentially humorous and are meant to tease and amuse, they nevertheless contain a grain of truth. This is embodied in the question part of the riddle. They owe their origin to a thorough observation of man, animals and the physical world around them. In some cases, they reflect the attitude of the Sotho to their non-Sotho neighbours. The answer to most riddles is short, and their classification is based on it. They are characterised by a number of features, including humour, brevity and word-economy.

CHAPTER IV

MAELE: (PROVERBS AND IDIOMS)

INTRODUCTION:

4.0.1. In Southern Sotho, a proverb is called leele, with the plural maele. But in actual usage, there is a marked preference for the plural form, with the result that in Basutoland particularly, one often hears, "Maele a reng.....," i.e. proverbs which say, and seldom, "Leele le reng, " a proverb which says The latter form is still common in the Republic of South Africa. A proverb is a pithy sentence with a general bearing on life. It 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 particular situation. Various proverbs apply to various situations, and are an embodiment of the distilled and collective experience of the community on such situations. Individually and as a group, they have certain basic characteristics that run through them all. These may be listed as follows:-

- (a) They all have a fixed and rigid form to which they adhere at all times and which is not changeable. 4
- (b) Some are didactic and teach a lesson by expressing a moral or moral ideal which is not particularly difficult of attainment but which is rather a summing up of everyday experience in getting on in the world as it is.
- (c) Others are practical in significance, and suggest a course of action to be followed in a given

situation. In some cases, they may be said to pass a judgment on a particular situation.

(d) They are figurative, employ various structural forms such as contrast and parallelism, rhythm and alliteration, as well as balance.

(e) For them to be firmly established in any language, they must have general acceptance by the community whose collective wit and wisdom they represent.

4.0.2. In their range and scope, proverbs cover a wide field.

They extend over all the areas of the community's activities and daily pursuits. They reflect its customs and general outlook on life. They reflect its attitude to other people, as well as its sense of justice; its physical environment, as well as its plants and animals, including their characteristics. They also reflect the relations between members of a single household, and extend from there to cover the tribe as a whole. They mirror the relations between the chief and the tribe, and vice versa, and bring out the traditional role of cattle in marriage, and the upbringing of children. The striking thing here, as in riddles, is that they are all concerned with those things that the people know in their daily lives, and not with things that fell outside the scope of their experience.

4.0.3. As against proverbs, there are idioms which, in this language, tend to be confused with proverbs. Idioms are characteristic indigenous expressions, whose meanings cannot be ordinarily deduced or inferred from a knowledge of the individual words that make them up. They 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. What is striking about Southern Sotho as against the other neighbouring Bantu languages like Tswana, Northern Sotho, Zulu and Xhosa, which all have special terms for proverbs and idioms respectively, is that Southern Sotho does not seem to distinguish between them. Tswana has diane for proverbs, and maele for idioms; Northern Sotho has diema and dika; Zulu has izaga and iziga, and Xhosa, amachalo and izaci respectively. Southern Sotho uses maele for both of them. As a result, there is a strong tendency to mix them up in this language, as both Sekese and Jankie have done in their respective collections.¹ But they are different from one another, and the differences are so basic, both from the point of view of form and significance, that it would be advisable to keep them apart. Doke's blanket term of aphorisms² ignores these differences, and thus accentuates the prevailing confusion in a language like Southern Sotho. For this reason, it is rejected here.

- 4.0.4. Unlike proverbs, idioms do not have a fixed and regular form to which they adhere at all times. They are changeable and are seldom, if ever, used in their basic form. They are based on a predicate, which is built on a particular verb stem and which may be found associated with a large number of idioms. Proverbs, on the other hand, are based on a noun in primary function or on a subject

¹ Sekese: MEKHOA LE MAELE A BASOTHO
Jankie: ADDITIONS TO PRACTICAL METHOD, in Jacottet's: A PRACTICAL METHOD TO LEARN SESUTO.

² Doke: Op.cit. P.102

concord. In view of this, idioms never have a regular subject of their own; they may be used with all types of subjects, depending on what the speaker wants to say. In this respect, they may perhaps be regarded as ready made indigenous labels, which may be tacked on to a given subject or subject concord, in order to give it a typically Sotho ring: A tswa ka ntshwe di sa fohlwa, a epela mmomo fatshe. (He went out unceremoniously and ran away).

Ba tswa ka ntshwe di sa fohlwa, ba epela mmomo fatshe.

(They went out unceremoniously and ran away.)

Cf: Ho tswa ka ntshwe di sa fohlwa. (To go out unceremoniously).

Ho epela mmomo fatshe. (To run away).

Further, idioms are never didactic, and never teach any moral lesson. Neither do they ever express any fundamental truth or wisdom with a general bearing on life. Rather are they witty and humorous expressions which are connected with a particular phrase, but which are not as staid and dignified as proverbs.

Some proverbs are a bare statement of fact, and thus call a spade a spade, such as:

Kopano ke matla. (Unity is strength).

As against this, some idioms tend to be euphemistic, particularly in those instances where human sex and physiology are concerned, e.g.

Ho ntsha metsi: (To take out water, i.e. to pass water).

Ho boela morao. (To go back, i.e. to be in a family way).

Ho ya mohlabaeng. (To go to the plateau, i.e. to go and relieve oneself).

It is probably because of such idiomatic forms that some Sotho speakers tend to be prudish, and water down proverbs with swear words in them:

Kgomo ha e nye bolokwe kaofela.

Kgomo ha e ntshe bolokwe kaofela.

(One does not say everything at the same time).

Idioms do not seem to have any roots in mythology, in that none seem to originate therefrom, whereas some proverbs do. Instead, a number of idioms are of historical origin, and are thus closely connected with certain historical figures and past incidents in the history of Basutoland. Finally, being based on verbs, idioms are mainly concerned with action, rather than with a symbolic representation of truth. As a result, in them, more than in proverbs, abstract ideas and concepts are rendered in a more concrete and practical manner:

Ho loma motho tsebe. (To whisper something to a person).

Ho kena motho hanong. (To interrupt a person).

Ho ntshana se inong. (To be great friends).

Ho ba mathe le leleme. (ditto)

4.0.5. In their range and scope, idioms also cover a wide range, including the customs, herbs, wild and domestic animals, as well as historical incidents in Basutoland. In all these instances, the basic significance is that of describing the various facets of human action and behaviour by drawing freely from the culture of the people.

Ho isa pelo mafisa. (To give way to sorrow).

Ho thethesa bohadi. (To negotiate lobola terms)

Ho tiisa motse. (To doctor a homestead).

Idioms and proverbs assume various structural forms. These will now be examined in turn, with a view to separating them for this language too.

FORM:

A: IDIOMS:

4.1.6. In their basic form, idioms are based on the infinitive form of a particular verb stem, which is the key-word in the whole construction. This verb stem may appear in its simple form or in one or other of its derivative forms. Its meaning may be purely literal, as in the following examples with the verb stem - ja, (eat):

- Ho ja qhoqha. (To eat stolen goods).
- Ho ja tsuo. (To eat what is not yours).
- Ho ja senyemo. (To eat secretly).
- Ho ja letswebotswebo. (To eat hurriedly).

But there may be a gradual shift of meaning from the literal to the figurative. The literal meaning, however, does not disappear altogether in that it can still be discerned in the meaning of the entire unit of which it is the key-word:

- Ho ja jwang. (To be stark mad).
- Ho ja tlwae. (To be used to a certain habit).
- Ho ja setsi. (To be firmly rooted).
- Ho ja hloho/boko. (To think).
- Ho ja shaba. (To smoke a mixture of dagga and tobacco)

Other verb stems may also be found in similar usage. Here are a few examples with fata, (dig), tlola, (jump) and duba, (knead):

- Ho fata mokoti. (To remain where you are, away from home).
- Ho fata makwatsi. (To be very angry).
- Ho fata seolo. (To work very hard).
- Ho fata kgotso. (To negotiate for peace).

Ho tlola kgati. (To skip).
Ho tlola moedi. (To exceed the bounds).
Ho tlola tekanyo. (ditto)
Ho tlola molao. (To break the law).

Ho duba seretse. (To wallow in mud).
Ho duba hlama. (ditto)
Ho duba botsho. (To wallow in ignorance).
Ho duba motho. (To annoy or trouble a person).
Ho duba maikutlo. (To confuse and upset).
Ho duba kelello. (ditto)

4.1.7. Derivative forms of various verb stems may also be used in similar contexts, with the meaning being either literal or figurative:

Ho jesa motho. (To poison a person).
Ho jesa ngwana. (To give a child meat for the first time).
Ho jana ka dintshi. (To wink at one another).
Ho jela kgwebeleng. (To eat with a sore heart).
Ho jela p_hate. (To help one against another).
Ho jewa ke hloho. (To suffer from head-ache).

4.1.8. The infinitive may be found incorporating the reflexive prefix with its usual significance of reflecting the action back upon the subject.

Ho ithwala. (To be in a family way).
Ho inkela hodimo. (To make oneself important).
Ho ithoma tshotswana. (To pretend to be busy).
Ho itlosa bodutu. (To while away time).
Ho itshehla thabana. (To keep aloof from others).
Ho ikala bophara. (To be free from care).

- Ho gotha ditlhotse. (To nurse recent wounds).
Ho ikenya menwana. (To play sick).
Ho ipolaisa ditsheho. (To laugh a great deal).
Ho iketsa ka matshoho. (To bring trouble unto oneself).

4.1.9. The infinitive may be followed by a noun functioning as an object. In a few instances, this noun is derived from the simple verb stem of the preceding infinitive. Alternatively, the verbal infinitive may be followed by an identical nominal infinitive with objectival function:

- Ho rwala morwalo. (To bear a burden).
Ho nkgana monkgo. (To be of the same mind).
Ho ema seema. (To be of one accord).
Ho ema meemo. (To stand in various stylish ways).
Ho hana bohane. (To refuse completely).
Ho hana ho hana. (ditto)
Ho llisa balli. (To shed crocodile tears).
Ho bona pono. (To see a sight).
Ho bitsa pitso. (To convene a pitso).
Ho botsa potso. (To ask a question).

4.1.10. In terms of the above structural pattern where the infinitive is followed by an object, it is interesting to note that intransitive verb stems change their basic nature and become transitive, in which case they also take an object:

- Ho boya mabotsela. (To return for a second time).
Ho boya sekwele. (To rally round).
Ho shwa mofela. (To die in great numbers).
Ho shwa kodua. (ditto)
Ho shwa moqhobollo. (ditto)

Ho shwa pelo.	(To be dead alive).
Ho kgathala matla.	(To be discouraged).
Ho phinya lonya.	(To disappoint wilfully).
Ho ema hloho.	(To be at one's wits' end).
Ho oma nyoko.	(To be fearless).
Ho oma nthane.	(To be very thirsty).
Ho tjha ntshi.	(To be afraid/ashamed).
Ho sisa pelo.	(To sigh).
Ho nya matsete.	(To reveal secrets).
Ho nyela sediba.	(To burn your boats behind you).
Ho lala ntho ka mmele.	(To overlook).

Here are a few examples with ordinary transitive verbs:

Ho hata kwekwe.	(To walk gracefully).
Ho boka dikgomo.	(To pay your respects to).
Ho kganna dinku.	(To be drunk).
Ho apara nkwe.	(To see red).
Ho qhoba serao.	(To bring up the rear.)
Ho akga lebeko.	(To dance).
Ho sebeletsa Mphahanyane.	(To work for nothing).

4.1.11. In a few instances, the substantival object is never expressed, but is represented by its corresponding object concord, which appears between the infinitive prefix and the verb stem:

Ho di bona matswele.	(To run away).
Ho le tipa-tipa.	(ditto)
Ho bo rokella sehlotlelong.	(To drink out of a big beer pot).

4.1.12. The object of the infinitive may not be a noun but a qualificative pronoun:

Ho qala tsa semana.	(To bring trouble unto oneself).
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- Ho kgwatha tsa semana. (ditto)
Ho lla sa mmokotsane. (To cry bitterly).
Ho hloka sa bobedi. (To be destitute).
Ho dula sa maratswana. (To occupy a position of
authority).
Ho tlamela sa tlung. (To depart secretly by night).
Ho bua la motlosa ngaka. (To tell a tall lie).
Ho hapa tsa batjhana. (To take one's share according
to custom).
Ho ntshana se inong. (To be close friends).
Ho bata sa tloha o tsamaye. (To be bitterly cold).

4.1.13. The object of the infinitive may be followed by a
qualificative, with the possessive type predominating:

- Ho ja tadi ya hae. (To have an affair with a
neighbour's wife).
Ho qela mohope wa metsi. (To ask for a girl's hand
in marriage).
Ho bua ntja e shweleng. (To talk nonsense).
Ho llela bese le qhalaneng. (To cry over spilt milk).
Ho hlakola dieta tsa motho. (To serve as a subordinate)
Ho sebeletsa fifi la mmoto. (To work for nothing).
Ho sebeletsa ntata selala. (ditto)
Ho haha ntlo ya lefokotsane. (To protect the head
with a stick).
Ho etsa moya wa mofu. (To pretend to be strong).
Ho tshepa mohale a sa le yo. (To trust a worthless
person).
Ho tshepa ntshepedi ya bontshepe. (To expect something
that will never happen).
Ho lemela bono sa ngwaha. (To plough late in the year).

Ho sua rapo la puleng. (To perform an endless task).

Ho ja monakaladi wa kebolelwa. (To have things easy).

Ho ja kgomo ya molatelle. (To bring endless trouble
unto oneself).

Ho hloka leaho le tiileng. (To be of no fixed abode).

Ho bona ntja e ntsho. (To faint).

Ho tshaba moru o se nang nkwe. (To fear a harmless
thing).

4.1.14. The infinitive may be followed by an ideophone, as well as by the various types of adverbs:

(a) Ideophones:

Ho etsa phephi. (To escape narrowly).

Ho wa phuhla. (To lose all one's wealth).

Ho oma ngoro. (To be completely dry).

Ho palama tjha. (To ride fast and skilfully).

Ho hana hehehe. (To refuse all together).

(b) Adverbs:

(i) Manner:

Ho ya lolololo. (To expatiate in detail).

Ho ya tootela. (ditto.)

Ho batla fofotho. (To grope in the dark).

Ho robala makokwane. (To sleep with knees
up).

Ho ela ruri. (To be away long).

(ii) Place:

Ho ya ntle. (To go and relieve oneself).

Ho hlaba teng. (To strike the nail on the
head).

Ho nkana fatshe. (To fall).

- Ho robala malopo. (To spend a night in a
strange house).
- Ho silela ifo. (To live from hand to mouth).
- Ho belehela fatshe. (To lose babies at birth -
of a woman).
- Ho ya masihlwane. (To die).
- Ho ya boya-tatho. (ditto).

(iii) Locative Adverbs:

- Ho hlaba bohlabetsaneng. (To stab in a delicate
spot).
- Ho ya thabeng. (To go for circumcision).
- Ho tswa ntjeng. (To strip in order to fight).
- Ho kena tlung. (To be confined - of a woman)
- Ho ya kgweding. (To menstruate).
- Ho dula peneng. (To write).
- Ho otlela hlohong. (To drain the last drops).
- Ho tshohela leomeng. (To be wise after the event!).
- Ho kena tsietsing. (To be in trouble).
- Ho anya kgonong. (To take after).
- Ho qela ho leoto. (To take to the heels).
- Ho ya ha Maotwana-finyela. (To die).
- Ho ya ha Mosima-ha-o-tlale. (ditto).

(iv) Conjunctive Adverbs:

- Ho ya le maidi-idi. (To faint).
- Ho robala le dikgoho. (To turn in early).
- Ho ema le ho makala. (To be surprised).
- Ho ya le kgongwana hodimo. (To be taken in).
- Ho hebehebisana le motho. (To argue, dispute with
a person).
- Ho bonya le morwetsana. (To be in love with a
girl).

(v) Instrumental Adverbs:

- Ho pheha ka lemina. (To be in mourning).
Ho hula ka falese. (To be in dire need).
Ho sutha ka santhao. (To retreat).
Ho jaka ka leleme. (To adopt a foreign
language).
Ho robala ka lephako. (To sleep hungry).
Ho tshwaraka meno. (To be very busy).
Ho tsoha ka matjeke. (To rise early).
Ho tsoha ka meso. (ditto).
Ho ema ka maoto. (To be up and doing).
Ho ema ka ditlhako. (To be tall).
Ho ya ka tshobotsi. (To be partial).
Ho oma ka hloho. (To knod in agreement).

4.1.15. The infinitive may be followed by an adverb as above, but rounded off either by a present participial predicate, or by a qualificative:

- Ho utlwa ka tjhetjhe e feta. (To learn from rumour).
Ho kgahlana le dipela di falla. (To see an unusual
sight).
Ho robala ka mpa e batang. (To sleep on an empty
stomach).
Ho sebetsa ka pelo e ka morao. (To work half-heartedly).
Ho tswa ka ntshwe di sa fohlwa. (To leave unceremo-
niously).
Ho leketla ka bolepo ba sekgo. (To be in grave
danger).
Ho ja ka mehlahare e mmedi. (To be a double dealer).
Ho ya le sephumo sa boroko. (To fall fast asleep).
Ho ema le monna wa Mateneng. (To be surprised).
Ho qabana ka none ya letweba. (To quarrel over a
trifle).

Ho etsa ka matla a dihlopha. (To try one's level best)
Ho kena ka mahlo a matsho. (To enter hurriedly).
Ho lla ka ihlo le le leng. (To shed crocodile tears).
Ho itshetleha ka seolo se se nang bohla.
(To trust a worthless
person).

4.1.16. The second element after the infinitive may be an object, which is then followed by an adverb. The resulting forms here, as above, are very rhythmical.

Ho kolla ntsi hanong. (To be very poor).
Ho siya motho potong. (To leave one in the lurch).
Ho isa pelo mafisa. (To give way to sorrow).
Ho bina koma hae. (To reveal secrets).
Ho fahla mmuso ka lehlabathe. (To brush one's hair
the wrong way).
Ho ntsha mosi ka lengope. (To cry aloud).
Ho oka seso ka makgapha. (To be partial).
Ho tshwara mmamphele ka sekotlo. (To find it
difficult to manage).
Ho otlela tweba sehong. (To save for the future).
Ho qapela pina seemeng. (To join in singing without
practice).
Ho kena ditaba ka sehlotho. (To join an argument
rashly).
Ho ithiba ditsebe ka leshoma. (To refuse to listen).
Ho tlama monwana ka kgwele. (To torture).
Ho kenya metsi ka moedi. (To be a weak link).
Ho ja maeba le bale. (To be stupid).
Ho tsamaya naha ka mpa. (To act foolishly).
Ho seha mpa ka lehare. (To divide relatives).

- 4.1.17. The structural pattern may be the same as above, except that the adverb may be followed by a qualificative:

Ho ribeha motho ka pitsa ya moeta.

(To tell one what he already knows).

Ho otlala dikgomo ka thupa ya mmowane. (To capture easily).

Ho bona tosa le madinyane a yona. (To see an unusual sight).

As an alternative to this, the object is followed by a qualificative, which is then followed by **an** adverb:

Ho dula mosima wa noha hodimo. (To be in imminent danger).

Ho dula mokoti wa noha hodimo. (ditto).

- 4.1.18. The object of the infinitive may be followed by two adverbs:

Ho tlotsa motho ka lera mahlong. (To deceive a person).

Ho tlotsa motho ka mafura mahlong. (ditto).

Ho hloholela pina hodimo bosehla. (To sing out of tune).

- 4.1.19. In those instances where the infinitive is built on a passive verb stem, the second element is always a copulative based on a noun in secondary function. The latter may be succeeded by a qualificative which qualifies it.

Ho hlahelwa ke kotsi. (To be hurt).

Ho bolellwa ke lehlokwa. (To be told by an unnamed person).

- Ho hlajwa ke dihlong. (To be ashamed).
Ho hahlwa ke moya. (To be refreshed by fresh air).
Ho welwa ke ntlo. (To lose one's wife by death).
Ho qetwa ke letsapa. (To be tired).
Ho qetwa ke pelo. (To be short tempered).
Ho rwalwa ke thabo. (To be overjoyed).
Ho hakwa ke ditaba. (To be unable to answer).
Ho jewa ke mala a setswalle. (To play sick).
Ho kgahlwa ke fiso la metseng. (To be attracted by
foreign things and
habits).
Ho kgahlwa ke none e hlotsa. (To be deceived by a
limping buck).

4.1.20. In two instances, the infinitive is followed by a perfect participial predicate:

- Ho ya o ile. (To be away for a long time).
Ho ya ho ile. (To go on continuously).

4.1.21. The infinitive may be followed by two objects, irrespective of the type of verb stem on which it is built, although the applied and the causative forms are also found in this context:

- Ho ruta kwekwe ho thwena. (To teach a monkey tricks)
Ho ruta mpshe lebelo. (ditto)
Ho anya motho leleme. (To fish out information
from one).
Ho rea ngwana lebitso. (To christen a child).
Ho nonya motho maikutlo. (To test one's feelings).
Ho tsota ntho botle. (To admire something).
Ho ema motho lepaketla. (To shield one unfairly).

- Ho roba pere dihaka. (To break in a horse).
Ho roka motho mahlo. (To deceive one).
Ho kgaola motho maoto. (To shorten one's journey).
Ho siela motho letswele. (To be older than one).
Ho beha motho setswetse. (To help in confining).
Ho aparela motho kobo. (To respect).
Ho opela motho mahofi. (To applaud).
Ho tsohela motho matla. (To be antagonistic to one).
Ho tsosa dibata masene. (To arouse sleeping dogs).
Ho ntsha motho kgwao. (To dispel one's misgivings).
Ho opa kgomo lenaka. (To strike the nail on the head).

4.1.22. There may be two objects as above, but with an adverbial extension at the end:

- Ho inela motho matsoho metsing. (To forgive a person)
Ho jela motho morwalo hlohong. (To deprive one of one's rights).
Ho kwetlela motho lerumo ka kobong. (To lure a person).
Ho funyeletsa motho dikobo molaleng. (To despoil a person)

As an alternative to this, the final element may be a qualificative:

- Ho etsa motho mahlo a nyoka. (To deceive one).
Ho hatisa motho masepa a manamane. (To pursue hotly).

4.1.23. A number of idioms are built on the infinitive of the copulative verb stem -ba, (to be). Three structural patterns are associated with it as follows:

- (a) The infinitive is followed by a substantive, which may be a compound noun. The noun pelo, (a heart), is found as the first element of a number of such

compound nouns.

Ho ba letsoho. (To have long fingers).

Ho ba mmele. (To be thick set).

Ho ba palesa. (To be precious).

Ho ba ditsela. (To be about to go).

Ho ba babedi. (To be drunk).

Ho ba pelo-tshweu. (To be glad).

Ho ba pelo-ntsho. (To be sad-hearted).

Ho ba pelo-bohloko (To be sore hearted).

Ho ba pelo-mpe. (To be evil hearted).

Ho ba pelo-ntle. (To be kind hearted).

Ho ba pelo-nolo. (ditto).

Ho ba pelo-hlomohi.(To be merciful).

Ho ba pelo-keletsi.(To be wise hearted).

- (b) The infinitive may be followed by a substantive as above, but with a qualificative after it:

Ho ba nama e hlotseng meno. (To be incorrigible).

Ho ba kgwaba la methati yohle.(To be a jack of all trades).

Ho ba lemao le ntlha-pedi. (To be a double dealer).

Ho ba bana ba mpa. (To be close relations).

Ho ba ngwana ya bobeba. (To be a useful child).

Ho ba ngwana ya phelang. (ditto)

Ho ba mpa e tswileng. (To be a black sheep in the family).

Ho ba leme le mokgaba-kgaba. (To be long winded).

Ho ba hloho e thata. (To be thick skulled).

Ho ba hloho e bonolo. (To be clever).

Ho ba madi a matle. (To be healthy).

Ho ba mokgwatso wa metsi maotong. (To have just arrived).

Ho ba kgomo ya sekenwa ka mahohle. (To be a kind person).

Ho ba ngwana wa setsoha le pelo ya maobane.

(To be always the same).

(c) The infinitive may be followed by an adverb:

Ho ba le seriti. (To be dignified, respectable).

Ho ba le moya. (To be in a fighting mood).

Ho ba le ditaba. (ditto).

Ho ba le lehala. (ditto).

Ho ba le ntwá. (ditto).

Ho ba le kokwana. (To be hungry).

Ho ba le phoofolo. (To be a witch, i.e. be with
a tokolosi).

Ho ba le mapokaetsi. (To be mad). Cf. Ng: amabhungay-zi.

Ho ba le sethokothetsi. (To be lonely). Cf. Ng:
isithukuthezi.

Ho ba le bodutu. (ditto).

Ho ba lehlakeng. (To be in confinement - of a woman).

Ho ba ka hanong. (To be talkative).

Also note this example where the infinitive is followed by two nouns coordinated:

Ho ba mathe le leleme. (To be close friends).

4.1.24.

A few idioms are based on actual historical incidents. The names of the individual characters concerned, and whose exploits are commemorated in such idioms, appear in them. In each case, the verb stem on which the infinitive is built indicates the actual action for which the individual whose name is associated with it is remembered. In most, the infinitive is followed by a possessive qualificative pronoun:

Ho matha la Ntshwekge.¹ (To run as fast as Ntshwekge).

Ho nwa ba Kgaeyane. (To be as drunk as a lord).

Ho kalla ya Mohlomi. (To go on foot).

Ho etsetsa motho sakana la Nkone. (To encircle one).

4.1.25. There are a number of idioms which are of recent origin, and which serve to express concepts that were not there before. In some, an older form is found alongside the new one, the latter being prevalent in the speech of Sotho labourers in the Free State.

Ho tshwara teu. (To lead a span of oxen). Afr: tou.

Cf. Ho tshwara nthau. (To lead a horse).

Ho palama boloto (To ride without a saddle). Afr. bloots.

Ho tshwara ancoroto. (To enter into agreement)

Afr: akkoord.

Ho nyala ka seeta. (To marry according to Christian rites).

Cf. Ho nyala ka dikgomo. (To marry according to custom).

Ho kenya lebitso. (To publish banns).

Ho tea mohala. (To send a telegram).

Ho dula peneng. (To write).

¹ Ntshwekge was a good runner whose speed saved him from a band of Nguni warriors who wanted to kill him. Kgaeyane, a Tlokwa man, boasted to enemies surrounding his chief's place about the invincibility of his chief's warriors. He was drunk and naked. They killed him in that state. Mohlomi was a famous witch-doctor and chief who travelled widely in Southern Africa healing the sick. All his journeys were undertaken on foot. Nkope was unexpectedly found by Nguni warriors who wanted to kill him. He asked them to allow him to recite his praises and those of his chief. They agreed, but encircled him. In the course of his recital, he started jumping up and down the circle and, seeing a narrow opening in the ranks of the enthralled warriors, bolted through it like a bullet, and escaped.

- Ho diha pene. (To stop writing).
Ho dula setulo. (To preside over a meeting).
Ho ja mmetlo. (To lose a job).
Ho ja selallo. (To receive holy communion).
Ho nka pasa. (To carry a pass).
Ho jara pasa. (ditto).
Ho dumedisa Baase. (To greet the master).
Cf. Ho boka dikgomo. (To pay your respects to).
Ho neha motho seke. (To sack a person).
Ho beha ntho paneng. (To pawn a thing).
Ho pota lebenkele ka morao. (To be always asking for
bought things from others).

It is clear from some of these examples that idiom is essentially a matter of environment, and that speakers of the same language from different areas may not always speak alike. It would be extremely difficult for instance, for a Mosotho who has never lived in the Free State to understand what is meant by:

Ho tshwara ankoroto.

- 4.1.26. There is a striking similarity between some of the idioms treated earlier and those of the neighbouring Bantu languages. In some cases, identical words are used for the same idiom.

- S.Sotho: Ho tlosa diboba. (To precede dignitaries).
Xhosa: Ukugabul' izigcawu. (ditto)
S. Sotho: Ho aha mokganya. (To shield the eyes).
Xhosa: Ukwakh' umkhanya. (ditto)
S.Sotho: Ho qela ho leoto. (To take to the heels).
Xhosa: Ukucela ko~~o~~xhongo. (ditto)

- S.Sotho: Ho ba mathe le leleme. (To be close friends).
Xhosa: Ukuba ngumtya nethunga. (ditto)
S.Sotho: Ho diha lentswe. (To speak with a low voice).
Tswana: Go diga lentswe. (ditto)
S.Sotho: Ho bitsa pitso. (To convene a pitso).
Tswana: Go epa pitso. (ditto)
S.Sotho: Ho ntsha mosi ka lengope. (To cry aloud).
N.Sotho: Go ntsha moshi ka lengope. (ditto)
S.Sotho: Ho ba letsoho. (To have long fingers).
N.Sotho: Go ba le seatla. (ditto) .

This fascinating phenomenon is also encountered in proverbs, thus further indicating how closely related these languages are, including their most intimate forms of expression, such as idioms.

B: PROVERBS:

- 4.2.27. Proverbs also assume various structural patterns. The proverb may be a bare statement of fact, in which case it is usually a short and simple sentence consisting of a subject and predicate, which may either be positive or negative.

- Taba di mahlong. (The face is the index of the mind).
Leoto ke moloi. (One never knows where one will end).
Tsietsi e a ruta. (Experience teaches).
Botswa ha bo jelwe. (Laziness does not pay).
Kgomo ha e fulelwe. (It is not costly to keep a beast).
Mafutsana a llelana. (The poor help one another).
Masene hase boi. (Discretion is the better part of valour).
Matsatsi a loyana. (Days are not the same).
Mpho ha e halalwe. (One never refuses a gift).

Ngaka ha e iphekole. (A doctor does not cure himself).

Tanki ha e tankollwe. (Promises must be fulfilled).

Leboela le a ja. (Perseverance pays).

Leboela ha le ngallwe. (You may succeed where you
once failed).

Morena ha a fose. (The king can do no wrong).

Lefu ha le jwetse. (Death may strike at any time).

Mehope e a phetana. (One good turn deserves another).

Kgalapa di a buseletsana. (ditto).

Mekoko ha e qhwaelane. (Every one fends for himself).

Mohau o a bolaya. (Mercy kills).

Moiketsi ha a llelwe. (He who rejects advice deserves
no sympathy).

Ho bua ha se ho phetha. (Great talkers are never great
doers).

4.2.28. There may be a simple subject or its subject concord,
followed by a compound predicate with a participial
complement.

Ngaka e shwa e etile. (A doctor dies abroad).

Moholo o rongwa a eme. (It is no disrespect to ask a
senior for a favour).

Se kgata se le bolepo. (He will ultimately be caught).

Sa bohwenng se ratha se iname. (One does more for his
in-laws than for his
own family).

Tsopa le kgojwa le sa dumela. (Strike the iron while
it is hot).

Ho apolwa ho apeswa. (He is very sick).

E bohola e bothile. (Old age is an encumbrance).

Re tla boka ha di oroha. (We shall see then).

4.2.29. The simple subject may be followed by its predicate and object. These are strongly rhythmical, with instances of alliteration where the subject and predicate are morphologically related. In this connection, it is interesting to note that a verb stem like -fa, (give), may be found used as a nominal subject, with the ideophone fi, (of giving), derived from it, functioning as its object. It is equally interesting to note that in this pattern, the interrogative noun mang ? (who?) which usually appears in objectival function, is found used as a subject and commanding a concord like all other nouns.

Mang o senya motse. (It is not safe to mention names).

Fa o fa fi. (One gives the one who gives him).

Tlaila le tlailela morena. (Do not be afraid to make mistakes so that they may be corrected).

Noko di tshabana bophatshwa. (Arch enemies pretend to be friends on meeting).

Leshano ha le ruise motho. (Lies do not pay).

Lekgotla ha le namelwe maoto. (The court is no respecter of persons).

Leleme ha le na malokeletso. (The tongue is incurable).

Felo e ja serati. (The heart chooses its own).

Ntja e tsokela ya e fang. (A dog follows the one who feeds it).

Leraba le tshwasa ya le tjhehileng. (A trap catches the one who sets it for others).

Ditabana di tswala ditaba. (Mighty things rise from trivial ones).

Meso e tswala meswana. (Procrastination is the thief of time).

Leshala le tswala molora. (A black hen lays a
white egg).

Dithoto ke lefa la ba bohlae. (Fools are stepping
stones of the wise).

Morena ha a tene moduopo. (The king can do no wrong).

Motsamai o ja noha. (A traveller eats anything).

Mollo o tjhesa ya o orileng. (The fire burns the one
next to it).

Mokone o betile morena. (Meat is plentiful).

Moloi ha a mele boya. (An evil doer has no
distinguishing mark).

Pinyane ha e senye motse. (It is wise to keep
certain things secret).

Ntwa ha e etsetswe dikgoka. (Bravery is not connected
with stoutness).

Tshwene ha e ipone lekopo. (One is blind to one's
faults).

Lefu ha le na morena. (Death does not choose).

Mophongwa ha a na moholo. (Even the great may be
deceived).

Moromuwa ha a na lonya. (A chief is liable for his
messengers).

Kgomo ha di na motlohapele. (The last may be the first).

Kgabane ha di rwesane mekadi. (Two of a trade
seldom agree).

- 4.2.30. The simple subject may be followed by a qualificative, which is then followed by a predicate. The latter may be verbal or non-verbal, i.e. copulative. In one instance, the copulative is of the rare type that does not employ any prefixal formative before the base.

Kotlo sa monna ke leralla. (A man may pass water with his back to women).

Leihlo la kgutsana ke lebone. (An orphan notes in detail what others do).

Mohlanka wa moreneng, morena. (The king's messenger is as good as his master).

Mafura a ngwana ke ho rongwa. (A child's virtue is to run errands).

Molomo o mosehlanyana ha o mamelwe. (The words of commoners are often ignored).

Kgomo ya lebese ha e itswale. (A good milker does not beget itself).

Matsobo a morena a malelele. (The chief is generous).

Bitla la kgomo ke molomo. (The grave of a beast is the mouth).

Leshano le pholosang le molemo. (A useful lie is the one that saves).

4.2.31. The subject may be a compound noun, made up of a verb plus a noun, or a nominal infinitive.

Moesha-moriti ha a o dule. (One may do a thing for the benefit of others).

Mofata-sediba ha a se nwe. (ditto).

Mmesa-mohlwane ha a panye. (Victory requires watchful care).

Mmetla-kgola o e lebiša wabo. (Charity begins at home).

Mohana-motho o mo rola molato. (One who rejects another saves him trouble).

Morata-motho o mo tla ka mahlong. (Straight talk breaks no friendship).

Seja-monna ha se mo qete. (An able-bodied person can
always start again).

Mohana-ho jwetswa o tshohela leomeng. (A word is enough
to the wise).

Mona-kodi o a itseba. (The wicked flee when no one
pursues).

Motsheha-fuma o a ipiletsa. (To laugh at the poor brings
ill-luck).

Motsheha-sofe o a itseha. (ditto).

Motsheha-bosehla o a ipiletsa. (ditto).

Mowa-kgotla ha a tsekiswe. (What is said at court is not
blameworthy).

Marema-tlou a ntswe leng. (Elephant hunters are of one
word).

Fha-badimo o ja nabo. (He who gives the gods eats with
them).

In a few cases, the compound noun subject is constructed differently from the forms above. Its second element is of adjectival origin, in that it is due to the elision of the initial element of the compound adjectival concord:

Tsatsi-leholo le ntsha kwena bodibeng. (A rich man has
become poor).

Sejo-senyane ha se fete molomo. (Half a loaf is better
than no bread).

Tsela-kgopo ha e robatse naheng. (The beaten track is the
safest).

Ntja-pedi ha e hlolwe ke phokojwe. (Many hands make
light work).

Mpa-tshehlaha e bolaye. (Food without clothes, is better
than clothes without food).

Bitso-lebe ke seromo. (A bad name is an omen).

Lefu-leholo ke ditsheho. (Laughter is greater than death).

In a limited number of cases, the compound noun is a reduplicated form. In one case, it is a reduplicated imperative with an object concord but with substantival function.

Lehale-hale le a ja. (Unflagging zeal wins).

Tang-tang e betwa ke lerole. (The one behind is choked
by dust).

Mphe-mphe e a lapisa, mokane, motho

o kgonwa ke sa ntlo ya hae. (Constant asking or sending
is not as satisfactory
as doing things for yourself).

A final variation here, is that an entire potential predicate with an object concord and an enclitic, is found used as a subject in the proverb:

O ka nketsang, ha e ahe motse. (Arrogance does not
build a home).

Similarly, the perfect predicate, ke hakilwe, (I have forgotten), is used as a second noun in the proverb:

Bolebadi bo tshwana le ke hakilwe.

(Forgetfulness is like a temporary loss of the memory
of something).

Cf: Borikgwe bo tshwana le hempe.

(The trousers is like the shirt).

- 4.2.32. The second element after a subject may be a predicate, followed by an adverb. Occasionally, the latter is succeeded by a qualificative.

- Monna ha a bone habedi. (Once bitten twice shy).
- Bosiu ha bo se habedi. (ditto).
- Metse e metle kantie. (Appearances are deceptive).
- Tsie e fofa ka mokota. (An army marches on its
stomach).
- Thamahane ha di robale mmoho. (Two of a trade seldom
agree).
- Leshodu le tshwarwa pela sefifi. (One found with
stolen goods is
accusable).
- Foho e tsejwa ka mengwapo. (A brave man is known by
his scars).
- Coba le rekwa ka ho bonwa. (Do not buy what you have
not seen).
- Kgoba le rekwa ka ho bonwa. (ditto).
- Sebopi se apeha ka lengetana. (Masons live in poor
buildings).
- Sefate se tsejwa ka ditholwana. (A tree is known by
its fruit).
- Sehlapi se shwela metsing. (Avoid dangerous pleasures).
- Behole se setle ho mma sona. (A cripple is beautiful
to its mother).
- Phiri e jewa moreneng. (A hyena is eaten at the great
place).
- Phofu e shwela motshwetshweng. (An eland dies where
there is water).
- Morena ke morena ka batho. (A chief is a chief
because of the people).
- Motho ke motho ka batho ba bang. (A person is a person
because of others).

- 4.2.33. The predicate of the subject, to which it may be morphologically related, may be found followed by an object, which is then followed by an adverb.

Kgomo ha e nye bolokwe kaofela. (One does not say
everything at the same time)

Motse o motle diotlwana feela. (Appearances are decep-
tive).

Kgakgi o kgakga se sa mo kgakgeng le borokong.

(He worries about somebody who does not even think
about him).

Alternatively, the final element may be a predicate,
usually participial, or a qualificative:

Motho o retlwa maleo a sa phela. (A person is appealed
to while alive).

Monwana ha o bolaye nta o le mong. (Unity is strength).

Serobe se hahuwa phiri e se e jele. (To become wise
after the event).

Motho o wa le seriti sa hae. (A person dies with his
dignity).

Mosa o ja mong a wona. (Kindness does not always pay).

Bohlale bo ja mong a bona. (From ignorance comfort
flows).

Bohlale ha bo hahe ntlo e le nngwe. (Science and
religion know no bounds).

- 4.2.34. The subject may have an impersonal predicate,
followed by a qualificative.

Moketa ho tsoswa o itekang. (God helps those who help
themselves).

Moketa ho thuswa o itekang. (ditto).

Madiba ho psha a maholo. (Kingdoms wax and wane).
Motse ho aha wa morapedi. (A successful home is that
of a pious man).

Kgutsana ho phela e marapo a thata. (A hard working
orphan does not starve).

Lehlanya ho tsejwa le hlobotseng dikobo.

(A mad man is one who goes about naked).

Tlotlo ho bokwa le ka mpeng. (Do not count your chickens
before they are hatched).

Phokojwe ho hola e itebelang. (A wary jackal may live
long).

Phokojwe ho phela e masene. (One must be wise in
order to live).

Fitsa ho fahwa e belang. (First come, first served).

- 4.2.35. The proverb may be made up of four balanced parts or elements, with a distinctive pause between the first and final two elements. These are a subject and its qualificative, predicate and object.

Ngwana ya tjheleng o tshaba leifo. (A burnt child
dreads the fire).

Motho ya kgutsitseng o patile bohale. (A quiet man
often conceals courage).

Dinyane la motho le dieha ho phapha. (A human baby
takes long to mature).

Lentswe la morena le hahelwa lesaka. (The chief's
word is respected).

Dibana sa pele ha se na ho tshepuwa. (A bird in hand
is worth two in the bush).

Metsi a matjha a ntsha a kgale. (Old things are
replaced by new ones).

Sehole sa monna se loha mano. (A man makes plans).
Fodi e lekgwekgwe e senya mohlape. (A rotten potato
spoils the bag).

As an alternative, the fourth and final item is an
adverb, which may be followed by a qualificative.

Tlalo la motho ha le thakgiswe fatshe. (Any man's
death must be avenged).
Mofufutso wa ntja o tswela boyeng. (A dog works for
its master).
Ngwana ya sa lleng o shwela tharing. (If the shoe
pinches, say so).
Ngwana wa lekgala o tsamaya ka lekeke. (Like father
like son).
Ngwana wa tadi o tsejwa ka mereto. (ditto).
Namane ya kanyesetsa e bonala ka ho ota. (A motherless
child is not well cared
for).

Bana ba kgwale ba bitsana ka molodi. (Children of
the same family share things).

Sehlare sa hole se tjhekwa mohla letsholo.
(Distant friends are seen on national days).

Bana ba lesafo ba jela pitsaneng e le nngwe.
(Children of the same family eat out of the
same pot).

4.2.36. The subject may have a predicate built on a passive
form of the verb, in which case it is regularly followed
by a copulative expressing the agent. In a few cases,
the latter is followed by a qualificative.

Noka e tlatswa ke dinokana. (Great things have small
beginnings).

Noka e tlatswa ke melatswana. (ditto).

Sekgukguni se bonoa ke sebatladi. (There is never a
stalker without a croucher).

Tlou ha e sitwe ke morwalo (Every person is strong
enough to carry his burden).

Marabe o jewa ke bana. (Parents sacrifice on behalf of
their children).

Raka le shwetswe ke molebo. (He has lost his supporter).

Sehwete se tjhekwa ke pelo. (The heart chooses its own).

Ngata e tlangwa ke mong a yona. (Every one can manage
his own affairs).

Namane e nyekwa ke mma yona (A mother is the best person
to care for her children).

Seso se monate ha se ngwauwa ke mong a sona.

(Men love in themselves what they hate in others).

The copulative is also found as a second element after nominal infinitives functioning as subject of the proposition.

Ho tsamaya ke ho bona. (Travel teaches).

Ho hola ke ho bona. (One never stops learning).

Ho fa ke ho ipehela. (Giving is saving for oneself).

Ho fana ke ho ipehela. (ditto).

Ho se tsebe ke lebote. (Ignorance is a painful thing).

Ho ya ka dikgoro ha se ho lahlana. (Going in different
directions is no permanent
parting).

Ho tjhetjha ha ramo ha se ho baleha. (When a ram retreats,
it is not running away).

Ho tjhetjha ha pheleu ha se ho baleha. (ditto).

It is also found after ordinary nouns functioning as subject, and which are identified with another object, which may be qualified by a succeeding qualificative.

Pelo ke motho. (The heart is the man).

Kgotso ke nala. (Peace is prosperity).

Mosadi ke morena. (A woman is respected by all).

Morena ke batho. (No people, no chief).

Tlala ke mong a motse. (Starvation is ever present).

Moloi ke ya tshwerweng. (A sorcerer is one who has
been caught).

Motse ke kgetsi ya masepa. (A homestead is full of
difficulties).

Lefatshe ke lebidi la koloi. (The world turns round).

In a few instances, one noun is identified with two
different objects, expressed by copulatives.

Monono ke mohodi ke mouwane. (Riches are short-lived).

Motse ke marutla ke koma ya mophatong. (Do not wash
dirty linen in public).

Borena ke kgati, ke ntlolane ya ntlole. (Chiftainship
may go from the one to the other).

4.2.37. There are a number of proverbs in which the subject
is not expressed, and in which the first element is a
copulative followed by a qualificative.

Ke tshephe ya se-isa-none. (He is a misleader).

Ke nta ya selomela kobong. (He is a treacherous person).

Ke noha e sibolotsweng. (He is an ungrateful person).

Ke ntja ya seloma mokgoki. (ditto).

Ke pudumo ya moema-nosi. (He is a friendless person).

Ke setswalle sa lengole. (It is a weak friendship).

Ke motjodi o tono se sephatshwa. (He is an unreliable
person).

Ke motlopo wa ho tswala. (It is parental compassion).

Ke naledi e tlasa kgwedi. (He is the chief's favourite).

Ke manoninyana wa sehana beng. (He is an upstart).

4.2.38. The first element may be a qualificative pronoun and not a copulative as above.

Ya dutseng hole lefa ha a le je. (He who is far off
does not get the inheritance)

Ya hlabang yabo ha a tsekiswe. (He who slaughters
his cow is not stopped).

E hlabang ha e bope. (The one that gores does not
bellow).

Se jang ha se tlohe. (A carnivorous animal does not
depart at once).

Tse jang di a rora. (Carnivorous animals roar).

Ya seng ha e tswane. (Those of a party are often
partial).

Se sa feleng se a hlola. (That which does not end
forebodes evil).

Se bonwang se bonwa ke bohle. (What is worth seeing
is seen by all).

4.2.39. The subject may not be expressed but referred to by its subject concord. Impersonal subject concords are also found in this context.

Ha e shwa e a raha. (When it dies it kicks).

E a shwa mahe a bole. (It dies and the eggs rot).

Ha di shwe ka hlwa le le leng. (They do not all die
of the same snow).

Ha di tenwe ke meja. (If one is tired of a place,
he is at liberty to move).

E thala e boela mosehlelong. (One may retrace one's
steps homewards).

Ha di beane manalela. (They do not give one another
a start).

E sa le lenyane, holo di sa tla. (These are beginnings,
great things are yet to come).

Bo tsholwa bo tjhesa, bo tsohe bo fodile. (Tempers
cool down with time).

Ha le fete kgomo le je motho. (Sacrifice a beast
and save a soul).

Ha ho tse fumanwang di tonositse. (Nothing valuable
is easily obtained).

4.2.40,

A few proverbs involve simple conditional clauses. The main statement or the apodosis is in the indicative mood, while the protasis, which is introduced by the conjunction ha, (if/when), is in the participial mood.

Ha o otlantja, e tla betla meno. (If you beat a dog,
it will bare its teeth).

Katse ha e le siyo, tweba di a hlanaka. (Mice play in
the absence of a cat).

Tsatsi ha le tjhaba, taba di a bolela. (Sunrise exposes
all).

Phokojwe e pata mohatla ha e tshela moedi. (One behaves
differently in a strange
place).

4.2.41.

In a few cases, the proverb begins with a vocative form.

Lefatshe, ngamoha ke kene. (Earth, open up and
swallow me).

Kgomo, boela haeno, o hodile. (Old friends are the best!).

Moeti, tlo heso re je ka wena. (Stranger come to our
place that we may eat through you).

Ntshabe, ke tle ke o tshabe. (Respect is reciprocal).

Hlatsinyane, se ithorise bohale. (Do not blow your own
trumpet).

Hlapi, folofela leraha, metsi a pshele o a bona.

(When times are bad, one eats what one would not
normally eat).

4-2-42.

A number of proverbs are made up of two parallel statements in a juxtaposed position. Such statements are contrasting in significance, in that the first may indicate the opposite of the second, and vice versa. They may involve identical parts of speech - a noun or compound noun in the first statement being contrasted with another noun or compound noun in the second one; a predicate with a predicate, an object with an object, and an adverb with an adverb. They may be long or short, depending on the parts of speech that are involved in each section of the contrast pair that constitutes the proverb. These may be indicated as follows:

(a) Contrasting Predicates:

Di a bela, di a hlweba. (Kingdoms wax and wane).

Di pele, di morao. (Do not burn your boats behind
you).

Ho bua ha se ho phetha. (Great talkers are never
great doers).

Hase dijo ke tlakana le a raha. (There is a great deal
of food).

Bo tsholwa bo tjhesa, bo tsohe bo fodile. (Tempers cool
down with time).

(b) Contrasting Objects:

Ngaka e rutwa dihlare, mejo ha e e rutwe. (A doctor
is taught medicine, but not the charges).

Di nwele mahe, ho setse dikgaketla. (They have drunk
the eggs, only the shells remain).

E bona mahe, leraba lona ha e le bone. (It sees the
eggs, not the trap).

Ditaba ke tsa ba babedi, wa boraro o leshano. (Two is
comrany, three is not).

Ho tla tjha kgong ho sale molora. (The wood will burn,
only ash will remain).

Cf. Afr: Die bottel sal bars.

ho bea ditho ho hlahisa kgomo. (Patience is a virtue).

(c) Contrasting Adverbs:

Mokgwa o tswa ntlokgolo o ye ntlwaneng. (Inferiors
copy their superiors).

Kgomo e tshwarwa ka dinaka, motho o tshwarwa ka
diruo. (A man is caught by his own words).

O se ke wa betsa ka lejwe, ha ho betswa ka kgapane.
(Do in Rome as Rome does).

(d) Contrasting Subjects and Objects:

Lepotla-potla le ja kgomo, lesisitheho le ja podi.
(Make haste slowly).

Moiketsi ha a llelwe, ho llelwa moetsuwa. (He who
ignores advice is not pitied,
the ill-advised is).

Moetsuwa ha a le bale, ho le bala moetsi. (The victim
does not forget, the agent does).

Mejo ha e rutanwe, ho rutanwa ditlhare. (Every man
is the architect of his own
fortune).

(e) Contrasting Subjects and Predicates:

Belo le a fela, thota e sale. (Speed ends, the distance remains).

Morena o a shwa, bitso le sale. (A chief dies, the name remains).

Matsoho ke foko, mmetso ke patolo. (The hands are weak, but he is a glutton).

Maila kgaka, maja-kgobe. (He pretends to be better than what he is).

Felo e matla, mmele o bonolo. (The heart is strong, the body is weak).

4.2.43. There are a few proverbs in which a comparison is drawn between the subject of the proposition, and some other object with similar characteristics. The simile, which follows the predicate, is introduced by the manner-comparative adverbial formative jwaleka, (like):

Fatshe le dika-dika jwaleka leoto la koloi.

(The earth turns round like the wheel of a wagon).

O tsamaya jwaleka metsi a sa kgathaleng. (He never gets tired of walking).

4.2.44. As with idioms, there are a number of proverbs that are of recent origin. Some of them include elements of the white man's culture, while others seem to be of Biblical origin.

Sefate se tsejwa ka ditholwana. (A tree is known by its fruit).

Cf. Matthew, Chap.7, verse 20.

Felo e matla, mmele o bonolo. (The heart is strong, the body is weak).

Cf. Matthew, Chap. 26, verse 41.

Dikgomo ke banka ya Mosotho. (Cattle are the bank of a
Mosotho).

Fere e wa e ena le maoto a mane. (To err is human).

Phoso e tsamaya le mohatisi. (ditto).

Bohloko ba seeta bo utluwa ke leoto. (The pinch of the
boot is felt by the foot).

Tshweu ha di tswane. (White men do not give each other
away).

Lekgetho ke kgotso le boroko. (Pay your **taxes** and **remain**
in peace).

In some of these examples, it is interesting to note that the new form is patterned on the old one, alongside which it exists:

Cf: Tshweu ha di tswane. (White men do not give each
other away).

Ya seng ha e tswane. (Those of a party are often
partial).

Ha ho pere e sa kgoptjweng. (To err is human).

Ha ho pitsi epe e sa kgoptjweng. (ditto).

4.2.45. Some proverbs have unusual grammatical forms. In others, forms that are now obsolete in the language are still preserved, while the archaic words that are found in a few, serve to remove them to a far and distant past. These features are illustrated by the following examples:

Bohweru ha bo na molai. (Thieving propensities are
incurable).

Boroka bo a duma. (Things are favourable for you).

Although the nouns bohvera and boroka appear in the dictionary with the meaning of "company of boys at circumcision", and "crowd, noise, joy", respectively, they are hardly ever used in present-day language. The verb stem duma, on the other hand, is used with the meaning of "resound, make a noise", as of lightning. Compare the Northern Sotho meaning as against that of Southern Sotho in:

N. Sotho: Ke duma nama. (I yearn for meat).

S. Sotho: Ke lakatsa nama. (ditto).

Motse ke kgetsi ya masepa. (Dirty linen is not washed
in public).

Cf. Tswana: Kgetsi, (a bag), and S. Sotho: mokotla, (a bag).

Motse ke marutla, ke koma ya mophatong. (Do not wash
dirty linen in public).

Morena ha a tene moduopo. (The king can do no wrong).

The forms marutla, meaning deserted villages, and moduopo, a type of loin covering made of ox tripe, are both archaic.

Pharela banneng ha e hlole. (Many hands make light
work).

Here, the noun pharela from farela, meaning the inability of a cow to calf, with the result that men have to assist it by pulling the calf out, is unusual in the sense that although strengthening has taken place, final -a has not been replaced by -o. In this connection, compare also:

Pha-badimo o ja nabo. (He who gives the gods eats
with them).

Words of Nguni origin are evident in the following examples:

Ha ho tota hloka gala. (There is no man without blemish).

Kgoba le rekwa ka ho bonwa. (Do not buy what you have
not first seen).

Cf: indoda, (a man); icala, (a law suit), and ikhuba,
(a hoe). The latter also appears as goba:

Qoba le rekwa ka ho bonwa.

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There is also a striking similarity between some of
the Southern Sotho proverbs, and those of the neighbouring
Bantu languages:

S. Sotho: Pella e ne e hloke mohatla ka ho romelelsa.

(The dassie lacked a tail by sending others).

Zulu: Imbila yaswel' umsila ngokuyalezela.

S. Sotho: Kgalapa di a buseletsana.

(One good turn deserves another).

Zulu: Imikhomb' iyenana,

(ditto).

S. Sotho: E a shwa, mahe a bole.

(It dies and the eggs rot).

Xhosa: Yakufa, amaqand' ayabola.

(ditto).

S. Sotho: Bitso-lebe ke seromo. (A bad name is an omen).

Tswana: Ina-lebe seromo. (ditto).

S. Sotho: Kgomo ya lebesa ha e itswale. (A good milker does
not beget itself).

Tswana: Ena-mashi ga e itsale. (ditto).

N. Sotho: E maswi ga e ite^vale. (ditto).

S. Sotho: Moketa ho tsoswa o itekang. (God helps those who
help themselves).

N. Sotho: Kgomo go tso^vwa ye e lekago. (ditto).

S. Sotho: Thamahane ha di robale mmoho. (Two of a trade
seldom agree).

N. Sotho: Bahlale babedi ga ba fohlelane peba. (ditto).

S. Sotho: Ho lwana badula-mmoho. (Those who stay together
often quarrel).

N. Sotho: Kgomo go hlabana t^vša šaka le tee. (ditto).

It is possible that the various Bantu-speaking tribes had these and similar proverbs in common before they separated into various groups. The same may be said of similar idioms. Alternatively, they were borrowed by one group from another. At the same time, however, there are also proverbs that are common to both the Bantu and European languages, such as Southern Sotho:

Ngwana ya tjheleng o tshaba leifo, and English:

A burnt child dreads the fire.

Kgomo e pjhehisa mong a yona, and Afrikaans:

Die baas maak die plaas.

In such cases, there can be no possibility of a common origin or mutual influence, in that the groups concerned are culturally distinct. The proverbs concerned are a result of the human mind and experience at various times and places. Human nature is basically the same, and the thought processes that go on in the human mind, coupled with human experience, may be expressed alike in different parts of the world.

4.2.47. Although proverbs do not change their form, it is noteworthy that the forms given by Jankie and Sekese respectively, are not always identical. Here are examples of such pairs with Jankie's forms given first:

Jankie: Ntja-pedi ha e hlolwe ke phokojwe. (Many hands
make light work).

Sekese: Ntja-pedi ha di hlolwe ke phokojwe. (ditto).

Mokgwa o tswa ntlokgolo o ye ntlwaneng. (Inferiors copy their superiors).

Molao o tswa ntlokgolo o ya ntlwaneng. (ditto).

Bohlale ha bo ahe tlung e le nngwe. (Science and religion know no bounds).

Bohlale ha bo hahe ntlo e le nngwe. (ditto).

Mafutsana a lletlana. (The poor help one another),

Mafutsana a lletlana letsetse. (ditto),

Tlaila le tlailela morena. (Do not be afraid to make mistakes so that they may be corrected).

Tlaila le tlailela moreneng. (ditto).

Tlou ha e sitwe ke morwalo. (Every person has enough strength to carry his burden).

Tlou ha e sitwe ke merwalo. (ditto).

E bona mahe, ha e bone leraba. (It sees the eggs but not the trap).

E bona mahe, leraba lona ha e le bone. (ditto).

Qoba le rekwa ka ho bonwa. (Do not buy what you have not first seen).

Kgoba le rekwa ka ho bonwa. (ditto).

Kgomo e tshwarwa ka dinaka, motho ka dipuo. (A man is caught by his own words).

Kgomo e tshwarwa ka dinaka, motho o tshwarwa ka dipuo. (ditto)

Tsatsi-leholo le ntsha kwena bodibeng. (A rich man has become poor).

Tsatsi le leholo le ntsha kwena bodibeng. (ditto)

Phokojwe ho phela e itebelang. (A wary jackal may live long).

Pela ho phela e itebelang. (ditto).

Phokojwe ho phela e diretse. (One must work in order to live).

Phokojwe ho kgora e diretsenyana. (ditto).

Sehlapi se shwela metsing. (Avoid dangerous pleasures).

Sehlapi se bolawa ke metsi. (ditto).

Mmesa-mohlwane ha a panye. (Victory requires watchful care).

Mmesa-mohlwane ha a fanye. (ditto).

The existence of such pairs is unfortunate, and has opened the way for a dangerous tendency which, if not nipped in the bud, may have disastrous consequences for Southern Sotho proverbs. As it is, nobody can speak with authority as to the correctness or otherwise of such alternative forms, which were recorded by some of the first indigenous writers in this language. Informants are equally divided on them; some uphold Jankie's and dismiss Sekese's, and vice versa. In the midst of this wrangling, further alternative pairs, recorded inside and outside Basutoland, are quietly creeping in, with modern prudishness being an additional contributing factor. These are as follows:

Ntja-pedi ha di hlolwe ke phokojwe.

Ntjana-pedi ha di hlolwe ke sebata.

Bohlale ha bo hahe ntlo e le nngwe.

Bohlale ha bo dule tlung e le nngwe.

Fharela banneng ha e hlole.

Fharela banneng ha e site.

Le molato le a itswa.

Le molato le a ikahlola.

E sa le lenyane, holo di sa tla.

E sa le dinyane, holo di sa tla.

Kgomo ha e nye bolokwe kaofela.

Kgomo ha e ntshe bolokwe kaofela.

Marabe o jewa ke bana.

Marabe o jewa ke bana ka mpeng.

This dangerous tendency must be nipped in the bud; otherwise Southern Sotho proverbs may be so watered down as to lose all their salt. As far as the Jankie-Sekese forms are concerned, there is just nothing that can be done about them. They will have to go on existing side by side as alternatives which must be mastered by all who are concerned with Southern Sotho. This applies particularly to teachers, school inspectors and readers of manuscripts, who may not always be aware of them, and who may thus be inclined to insist on those that occur in their own speech or locality.

4.2.48 Finally, from the point of view of their content, maele, i.e. idioms and proverbs, extend over the same general field, but with different emphasis and significance. Idioms, which are mainly concerned with action, depict and describe the various actions, states, and behaviour of people under various circumstances. They depict social norms and patterns, and are tinged with a sense of humour, including instances of euphemism:

- Ho aparela motho kobo. (To hlomirha a person).
Ho phehisa motho. (To donate food for a social occasion).
Ho siela motho letswele. (To be older than....).
Ho boela morao. (To be in a family way).
Ho tshola tlhako morong. (To run away).

They draw freely from the people's culture and history, and describe human disposition and abstract ideas in a very graphic and realistic manner.

- Ho isa pelo mafisa. (To give way to sorrow).
Ho matha la Ntshwekge. (To run as fast as Ntshwekge).
Ho ba kgomo ya sekenwa ka mahohle. (To be a kind person).
Ho ba kgwaba la methati yohle. (To be a jack of all trades, master of none).
Ho utlwa ka tjhotjhe e feta. (To learn from rumour).

Because of this, they touch those basic and fundamental native cords in one's make up, that make one feel, when properly used, that his whole being has been tickled and excited. But they have no depth; nor do they ever constitute a basic commentary on the various actions that they describe. This aspect is left to the proverbs.

Being what we have called distilled words of wisdom, Southern Sotho proverbs constitute the philosophy of life of the Sotho. Their whole life and thought is reflected in them.

As a group, they embody their most basic traditional values, which are the findings of past generations in the struggle for existence. In a community that could neither read nor write, they constituted the unwritten laws of the people, and whose force was perhaps stronger than that of written ones elsewhere,

in that as proverbs, they had the sanction and approval of the community as a whole. Because of this, they touched the heart-strings of every individual, and made him a policeman unto himself. They teach; they counsel. They do this on the basis of past experience, because Tsietsi e a ruta, (Experience teaches). For this reason, they are invaluable to the modern generation, which is beset with its own peculiar problems, in its struggle for existence. A wise man learns from the experience of others, and this for the Sotho, is contained in their proverbs. They point the way, and it is one of hard and clear thinking, hard reasoning and hard work, followed by yet more hard work, before people can live as truly liberated human beings, who depend on themselves rather than on others. The ancient Mosotho says:

Mphe-mphe e a lepisa, motho o kgonwa ke sa ntlo ya hae.
(Literally: Give me, give me is tiring, a person is satisfied by what is truly his).

This is a fundamental truth, and truth hurts sometimes. But it is only truth "that will set you free." There is nothing more degrading and humiliating than to be ever asking for things from others. Conversely, there is nothing more manly, more rewarding and uplifting than the ability and willingness to battle with life's problems, and overcome them. Nothing of value is easily obtained, and this is what the ancients teach us when they say:

Ha ho tse fumanwang di tonositse.

In the struggle for existence and self-help, an idea that is embeded even in ditshomo, one should remember that people can never be equal or completely the same in all respects:

Batho ha ba lekane e se meno.

(Literally: People are not equal, they not being teeth).

But this is no excuse for sitting back and doing nothing, for nothing begets nothing. Rather should one put one's shoulder to the wheel, and plod on patiently, step by step, as does a bird that builds a nest twig by twig:

Nonyana e haha sehlaha tlhokwana ka nngwe.

And in those cases where the road may seem to "wind uphill all the time," it is well to remember that patience is a virtue, and that painstaking work honestly performed, will ultimately yield desirable results:

Ho bea ditho ho hlahisa kgomo.

Lehlohonolo hase lebelo.

Kgomo ha di na motloha pele.

They teach us to desist from pre-judging issues, and to discard unfounded suspicions by first examining facts coolly and objectively. Suspicion corrodes the soul, and may embitter life unnecessarily:

Lehlanya ho tsejwa le hlobotseng dikobo.

Leshodu ke le tshwerweng.

At the same time, they remind us that great talkers are never great doers. All they do, is to bedevil relations between men, and bring untold suffering to the innocent.

Ho bua hase ho phetha.

For this reason, vain-glorious boasting and war-mongering should be frowned upon at all times:

O ka nketsang ha e hahe motse.

Further, they contain fundamental lessons that are applicable to human beings everywhere. The milk of human kindness cannot be bought or manufactured. It is God-given. Pelo ke motho.

In the dusty battle for existence, the spark of human kindness and sympathy should never be allowed to go out. It should be fanned to glow more strongly, and thus scatter the darkness that may otherwise envelop human beings:

Lefu-leholo ke ditsheho.

Humour, wit and laughter, sweeten life, and bring men closer together.

Finally, they contain the pith and marrow around which Sotho life has rotated for generations, drawing succour and sustenance therefrom. These are the love for law and order, peace and good-will towards all men at all times. It was on this sorely needed note that the illustrious Moshweshwe, with Hlubi blood in his veins, was able to attract remnants of broken tribes - refugees of his day, to his mountain fortress at Thaba-Bosiu, and build the present Sotho nation:

Kgotso ke nala.

Kgotso ke kgaitsemi.

Motse ho sha wa morapedi.

In the hands of a skilled and sensitive craftsman, a judicious combination of idioms and proverbs, can result in that type of writing that is characteristic only of the great. Their expressiveness is unbeatable, and gives to the language its essential depth and pliability, which is second to none.

CONCLUSION:

- 4.3.49. Southern Sotho does not distinguish between idioms and proverbs. They are both called maele. But there are fundamental differences between them from the point of view of form and significance. Whereas idioms are based on a verb and may

be used with various subjects, proverbs are based on a noun or subject concord and are fixed. They are didactic and teach a moral lesson. A number of them have alternative forms, and these must be mastered by all who are concerned with Southern Sotho. Further alternative forms that are quietly creeping in must be nipped in the bud; otherwise Southern Sotho proverbs may lose their salt.

CHAPTER V

DIPINA: (SONGS).

INTRODUCTION:

5.0.1. There are, in Southern Sotho, a number of songs which, according to Lestrade, "constitute the lyric and dramatic poetry of Bantu."¹ This poetry in the form of songs, is essentially intimate, personal and subjective. It is descriptive of the joys, sorrows, hopes and aspirations of the individual. It may also treat of devotional themes, in which the emotional rather than the narrative element is uppermost. In it, dance, music and poetry are closely associated, in that the latter is mainly choral, has a refrain or chorus, and is invariably accompanied by hand-clapping, a beating of drums and a stamping of feet on the ground. It is also characterised by a strong rhythm, which conveys such pleasure to the ear that old men no longer able to participate, may be seen nodding their heads in unison. Hence the idiom Ho bina koma ka hloho, (To sing a song by means of the head). It is communal in origin, and the community either took part as a whole, or certain songs were sung by certain age-groups only, with the other people looking on and women ululating in high pitched voices. These various types of songs will be treated under two categories, namely, action songs and ceremonial songs.

¹G.P. Lestrade: TRADITIONAL LITERATURE, THE BANTU-SPEAKING TRIBES OF SOUTH AFRICA, edited by I. Schapera, F. 294.

A. ACTION SONGS:

5.1.2. (i) WORK SONGS:

These were sung at work thus accompanying action, in order to increase its effectiveness by setting a continuous pace, or to while away the tediousness of long working hours. It may be added in passing that even to-day various types of modern work songs are still composed as the occasion demands. For instance, road-workers and other diggers invariably sing such songs to lighten the burden. Traditionally, the simplest type was the continuous humming of a solitary worker; alternatively, it took the form of a single line with a single variation that was repeated over and over again:

Mphe metsi, Modiehi,

Hela, Modiehi, mphe metsi!

(Please give me water Modiehi;

I say Modiehi, please give me water).

Others were sung during communal actions such as hoeing, tanning an ox hide or threshing and grinding corn. These were characterised by the presence of a leader, sephoko who chanted the first line and was then followed by others who repeated it after him. The song itself was short and repetitive. It referred to the actual work being done, and invariably ended in a meaningless fa! la! la!

Mone kobo bohlejana

Ha a ntshe masua-dikobo.

Re suha kobo dicola.

Hom! Hom! Hom!

(The blanket owner, clever little one,
He does not take out the beer for tanning the skin.
We tan the hams of the blanket.
Fa! la! la!).

The nature of the work under hand, dictated the rhythm of the song. It could be slow and deliberate as above, or jingling as in hoeing:

O lla se jwang, ngwanana ?
Sa mahlomola, hii!
Ngwana o bua dintho di kopane le majwe.
Ho, hae! Ho, hae; hae!
(And how do you cry girl ?
A sorrowful one, hii!
The child speaks things that are mingled with stones.
Fa! la! la!).

The jingling type of rhythm also characterised the singing of lullabies, which were slightly longer than the songs above, and which occasionally had certain lines that were repeated at certain intervals:

Ei, ei, ei, ei!
Yare ke etela Mpharane,
Ka fumana ngwana mokgotsi a lla,
Ka ema kantle ka opa diatla.
Ngwana o a lla, o a thola.
Jwetsa mme ka mola,
Ngwana o a lla, o a thola.

Note the repetition of the fifth and final lines.

(Ei, ei, ei, ei!
It happened as I visited Mpharane,
I found my friend's child crying.
I stood outside and clapped my hands.
The child cries, it keeps quiet.
Tell mother that side,
The child cries, it keeps quiet).

There was also the type of work song that constituted a comment on the task being performed, or a complaint about the hard life that it entailed, including the condition of the worker and/or the cruelty and meanness of those in authority over him. This type, which invariably accompanied corn grinding, was often sung by orphan girls or newly married daughters-in-law, dingwetsi, who did not get on well with their mothers-in-law. Such songs were usually much longer than the ordinary work songs, and reflected the mental attitude of the singer, who occasionally imitated one or other of the characters she had in mind, as though she were soliloquising. A good example of this type is given by Mrs. Khaketla¹:

"Ahe, lefu ee! Hee, ma! Hee, ma!

Lefu le qetile batho Matsieng.

Lefu le manyala le siya diboko;

Rona dikgutsana re ana mabitla,

Re ana bo-Ramoeketsi le Phalo."

(Hail death! fa! la! la!

Death has finished people at Matsieng.

Death is evil, it leaves worms;

We orphans swear by graves,

We swear by the late Ramoeketsi, Phalo and others).

(ii) DANCE SONGS:

S.2.3. There are three main types of dance songs, namely, the mohobelo, a recreational dance for men only; mogokopelo or mogogopelo, for young men only, and the mokgibo dance for girls only. In the first two, there

¹C. Khaketla: MOSALI EO U 'NEILENG EENA, P.34.

is the usual leader, senhoko who starts the song in solo fashion, while the others sing the refrain which punctuates the leader's words. This feature is not found with the girls' mokgibo dance.

In the mohobelo, the leader starts off in a fairly high pitched voice and rattles off a few lines before the others join in with the refrain. The latter is short, usually two words only, which are repeated over and over again. As they sing, the dancers sway their bodies to and fro, and stamp the ground rhythmically with their feet. The names of the various mohobelo songs are based on the refrain, which is the shortest part of the song e.g.

Dikgwela, maboloka. (Strings, the savers).

Leader: Tjhabana sena sa batho,
Sa na sa re se a ipopa,
Sa na sa re se itshehla thajana
Sa mpa sa hlolwa ke bona bohole.
(This poor little nation,
Tried to build itself,
Tried to keep aloof from society
But was merely defeated by stupidity).

Chorus: Dikgwela, maboloka.
(Strings, the savers).

In the moookopelo, the dancers clap their hands in unison in order to maintain rhythm. Then the leader chants the first few lines, which the chorus punctuates with the refrain, "Hee, waa, hee!" shaking their bodies up and down all the time. The leader may go on introducing line after line, the ultimate number depending on his ability and ingenuity to

compose on the spur of the moment. What he says is important because he is expected to be witty, and say things that will amuse the audience. Here are two examples of his words:

- (a) Fatshe le teng ka hodimo ho maru,
Le matsha, le mekoti ya makgala.
Rasekaja, kaseotla-merutlhwana,
Ke monna ya reng ha a utlwa fatshe le opa,
A le otle ka tlhako tsa morao,
A re tsa pele di ka mo feteletsa bohata.
(A country there is above the clouds,
It has lakes, it has holes of crabs.
Rasekaja, the jingler of dancing bags,
Is a man who, on feeling the ground touch his feet,
Kicks it with his hind legs,
And says the fore ones would make him more garrulous).
- (b) Dikga-metsi, banana ba ha Maama,
Dikokolofitwe, banana boMpinane;
Senyamo, banana ba ka Lesotho!
Nkgono, nnyadise Mohwabatsane,
Leha a le mobe o tla ntshwanela.
Motswala, nketse madito ke wele,
Ke tapole ya lekwele ha ke butswa.
Tswela ntle motswetse wa hlabula,
Le kantle di a feta ditjotjela.
(The water-drawers, the girls of Maama's,
The herons, Mpinane and others;
Choose the one you love most, ye girls of Basutoland!
Grandmother, let me marry Mohwabatsane,
Although she is ugly, she will do for me.
Cousin, take me for a free gift, I have fallen,

I am a degenerated potato and do not ripen.
Come out, thou newly confined woman of summer,
Even outside the handsome keep passing).

Here, meaning is uppermost, and the leader achieves it by starting his main thought in the first line and completing it in the following one(s). Thus in the first example, the main idea of lefatshe, (country), is introduced in the first line and completed in the second; then comes that of Rasekaja, which is developed and concluded in the succeeding ones. Similarly, in the second example, the idea of girls is disposed of in the first three lines; it is followed in the next two by a plea for Mohwabetsane's hand in marriage. Then comes the plea to his cousin in the next two, which are followed by the last pair addressed to the newly confined woman, motswetse. There is thus a series of independent thoughts, complete in themselves, which are arranged one after the other, within one and the same song.

In the mokgibo dance, the performers kneel on the ground and kgiba i.e. "dance" by moving their heads, hands and shoulders up and down in keeping with the rhythm of the song. The latter, which is short and repetitive, is sung by a group of girls and women nearby, who also clap their hands in unison in order to keep time. The song may be one line only as in:

Morena Sekila, ke mang ya tla thiba lekgalo ?

(Chief Sekila, who will guard the mountain pass?)

Alternatively, it may be two short lines with a refrain:

Nku tseso makgolokgolo,

Di feletse fu le Mosotho.

(The sheep of my family are many hundreds,

They became finished at the death of a Mosotho).

B: CEREMONIAL SONGS:

5.3.4.

There are three main types of ceremonial songs that are still preserved among the Basotho. These are the mokorotlo, a war-song for men only; Kodi-yamalla, the dirge or lamentation, which seems to have been sung by women only, and the prayer, thapelo, particularly for rain, in which the whole tribe participated. Formerly, there were also wedding songs that were sung at various stages in the process of ho thathesa bohadi, i.e. to negotiate marriage agreements. But none of the informants interviewed in this inquiry knew or could remember a single one of them. All that is generally known, is that they once existed; but what they were, nobody seems to know. They seem to have all disappeared, and their place taken by modern ones like:

Tali, moratuwa, ke ne ke o rata,

Ho sentse masenyeletsa,

Masenyeletsa ke mmao.

(Darling, sweetheart, I loved you,

Things have been spoiled by the spoiler,

The spoiler is your mother).

And in the case of the first fruit ceremony of the other tribes, there was really no ceremony as such among the Southern Sotho. All that happened was that if somebody's crops ripened before those of the chief, he had to give some to the latter before eating any.

It was not a ceremony as such, and no songs were connected with it.

(a) MOKOROTLO:

There is a leader who starts the song, and the others follow him in deep throated voices - ho korotla, (to gumble, murmur), swinging their bodies to and fro, and stamping the ground rhythmically with their feet. As they warm up to their song, a man may jump out of the group, run this way and that, brandishing his spear menacingly in the air, in imitation of an encounter with the enemy in battle. The others then stop singing and urge him on, calling him by his special name such as "Kgube! Kgube! Kgube!" Thereafter he returns to the group and the song continues. Traditionally, the mokorotlo was sung only on special occasions, such as when the chief attended a boys' initiation ceremony, or returned with his men from ploughing his field known as "Tshimo ya dira," i.e. a field of enemies. In keeping with the seriousness of war, the sentiments expressed by the words of this song are both lofty and dignified. They refer to the role and fate of a man, as a man, who may die in foreign lands, in defence of his father-land. There, he may be buried by the seboku grass, or be eaten by vultures: ✓

Ngwane motona o shwela thoteng;
Bitla la motho ya marumo, seboku.
Motho wa marumo ha e epelwe hae,
O epelwa ditjhabeng;
Ere a eshwa matlaka a mo je,
A mo apese ka mapheo, manong.

(A male child dies in the veld,
The grave of a man of war is the seboku grass:
A man of war is not buried at home,
He is buried in foreign lands.
And when he dies, the vultures eat him,
They cover him with their wings, the vultures).

Note the earthly manner in which the stark realities of war are portrayed. And this may be the fate of any male child in the community. This fate is introduced in the first line, and paralleled by the idea of his grave in the second, i.e. death in the veld / burial by the seboku grass. The idea of burial is further taken up, developed and completed in the next four lines. For purposes of emphasis, the last line employs the syntactical mechanism of bringing the subject last. Although these lines are arranged in verse form, they could very well be arranged in prose form, in which case the balanced and parallel ideas that they express would perhaps come out even more clearly. Note, for instance, the parallel yet contrasting predicates and adverbs involving the same subject in:

Ha a epelwa hae / O epelwa ditjhabeng.

(He is not buried at home / he is buried in foreign lands).

Despite the syntactical position of the second subject, two subjects and predicates appear in a similarly balanced, parallel form in:

Matlaka a mo je / a mo apesemanong.

(The vultures eat him / they cover him.....the vultures).

There seems to be a note of tenderness in the second part, as if to blunt the sting of death, by the vultures affording him protective covering with their wings. It is thus clear from these lines that thought, arranged in a parallel, balanced form, is uppermost. In other words, what is basic, is thought-arrangement rather than word-arrangement.

(b) KODI-YA-MALLA:

The dirge or lament, was sung after the death of a loved one. It seems to have been sung by women only - a widow who had lost her husband, or a girl who had lost a brother. Men do not seem to have indulged in lamentations, and never feature in them as singers. They were sung about, and not vice versa. This is probably in keeping with the Sotho saying that a man is a sheep, he never cries:

Monna ke nku, ha a ke a lla.

The dirge itself is made up of several stanzas, which are clearly divisible into a leader and a chorus. It is characterised by five main features as follows:

- (a) An early identification of the chief mourner, who sings the leading part, and introduces the basic note and idea - a sense of loss that is sustained by a repetition of identical words in successive lines, which are linked together structurally and meaningfully.
- (b) A heightening of the sense of loss by the chorus, which repeats it, while at the same time introducing a note of contrast.
- (c) The re-appearance of the leader with her initial line, followed by her unbelieving mind in the death of her loved one.
- (d) A pulling together of the various strings by the chorus, which heightens admiration for the deceased, and combines its sentiments with those of the leader to envelop everybody in gloom and misery.
- (e) The use of a few archaic and obsolete words like rare for ntate, (my father), and hloma for nahana, (think/suppose).

Leader: Ke mohihi, mosala-suping,
Ke mohihi, mosala-palapaleng.
Ana ke setse hokae ?
Ka rare ke setse le mang ?

(I am a stupid person who remains in ruins,
I am a stupid person who remains in a bare, open
field.

Where do I remain ?

By my father, with whom do I remain ?)

Chorus: Ha eshwa batho, ra sala le mang ?
Ha fela batho, ho sale diesola.
Ha fela banna, ra sala le mang ?

(People died and with whom do we remain ?
People departed and only weaklings remain.
Real men departed, with whom do we remain ?)

Leader: Ke mohihi, mosala-suping.
Ha le feletse makobotelo,
Hlafing ke a ya;
Ka tsetsekwane ke a nanya,
Ke hloma a itlela,
Kehloma a itswela tsholong.

(I am a stupid person who remains in ruins.
When it has completely set,
To the door I go;
On tip-toe advance I slowly,
Supposing him coming,
Supposing him returning from the hunt).

Chorus: Ha eshwa batho, ra sala le mang ?
Ha eshwa batho, ra sala suping;
Ha eshwa batho, ra sala palapaleng.

(People died, with whom do we remain ?

People died, we remained in ruins,

People died, we remained in a bare, open field).

Apart from emphasising the death of real people, batho, which is on a par with banna, men, as against the remaining weaklings, diesola, the final three lines of the chorus are now virtually identical, and incorporate all the adverbs used by the leader at the beginning. These lines are once more united by an equal distribution and balance of thought:

The death of real men/ Remaining in an unprotected state.

In effect, the last two lines of the chorus merely echo the first one, with but slight adverbial modifications at the end. This stylistic device has the effect of heightening the prevailing void in which all the singers find themselves. In this connection too, note the use of the locative adverb palapaleng, from the noun lepalapala, (a bare field), which appears in the saying:

Kgupa e behetse lepalapaleng.

(A partridge has laid its eggs in a bare field, i.e. a dangerous place).

Hence:

Ha eshwa batho, ra sala palapaleng.

(People died and we remained in a bare open field).

5.3.5. In some cases, however, structural variations occur between the leader and the chorus. The two are independent entities which are structurally unrelated. This occurs in those instances in which the leader is sung by a sister of

the deceased, and not by his widow as above. In such cases, i.e. the former, the leader is a weak, moanful dole, that bemoans the physical disabilities of women in general, rather than the loss of a dear one. The chorus, on the other hand, is self-contained, and incorporates within itself most of the characteristics of the Southern Sotho dirge mentioned above. Bewilderment and a sense of loss are not only introduced in the first line and repeated in successive ones, they are also firmly knitted together at the end. In this way, the chorus more than makes up for the dilute leader - probably sung by an inexperienced young girl, and succeeds in producing the necessary note and tang of sadness:

Leader: Basadi, mapaholle-di-patilwe,
Ba mpa ba ratetswe matla,
Hoba thebe le ho e tsoka
Ba sa ho tsebe.

(Women, the finders out of the hidden,
Have merely been deprived of strength
Because they do not even know
How to shake a shield).

Chorus: Ho ilwe, ana re setse ?
Mmakane re setse le mang ?
Ho ilwe kae koo,
Mmakane ho sa keng ho kgutlwa ?
Ho ilwe kae koo,
Mmakane ho sa tlo kgutlwa re tonwa ?
Ho ilwe, ana ho ilwe ,
Ana ho ilwe boya-batho ?

(It is gone, do we remain?
Oh! With whom do we remain?
Where has it been gone to,
From where it is never returned?
Where has it been gone to,
From where it will not be returned to see us?
It is gone; is it really gone,
Is it really gone to where people go?)

Here, the second, fourth and sixth lines, all commence with the interjection mmakane, (woe unto me!), while the dominating predicate ho ilwe, (it is gone), of the first line, is separated from the contrasting and parallel predicate re setse (we have remained), of the same line, by the interjection ana, (by the way). The initial predicate is repeated in the third and fifth lines, which are completely identical; it is repeated three times, and in rapid succession, in the last two lines, the only intervening element being the interjection ana. Thus the various strings of the chorus are neatly tacked together, and constitute an entity by themselves, which is quite distinct from the leader.

In both dirges, the singers find it difficult to believe that the mourned one has really departed this life. Thus after sunset, the bereaved woman tip-toes to the door, imagining she will see him returning from the hunt. The same basic idea of wavering between belief and disbelief, reality and self-deception, is contained in the very first line of the second chorus:

Ho ilwe, ana re setse?

(It is gone and do we remain?)

In this way, the state of mind of the bereaved is portrayed in a simple and natural manner that goes straight to the heart, because it is so real.

5.3.6. The words of the various songs above, were not composed separately from their music or melody. It was a single inspiration that resulted in both words and music simultaneously, thus giving rise to "an indissoluble whole."¹ In those cases where there was a leader, the main vocal part was sung by a chorus, which was then said to dumela (agree) him. In the case of dance songs, rhythmic variety was obtained by means of various gestures and steps employed, while in that of work songs, the particular action either accompanied the singing or was imitated, e.g. corn grinding or tanning a hide. In each case, the music followed its own peculiar rhythm or rhythmical beats that gave it a certain regularity like that of European verse with its metrical feet. There was, however, no readable, written notation as such, because the language itself was not yet written. For this reason, we have, for purposes of this essay, concerned ourselves only with the words, without going into the realm of musical scales and notation, as that belongs to the sphere of musicology rather than that of traditional literature. The words themselves have been included here as traditional literature because they constitute the very stuff that life has always been made of: that life has never been complete without crying

¹P.R. Kirby: THE MUSICAL PRACTICES OF THE NATIVE RACES OF SOUTH AFRICA, in THE BANTU SPEAKING TRIBES OF SOUTH AFRICA, P.286.

also: M. Read: SONGS OF THE NGONI PEOPLE, BANTU STUDIES, Vol.XI, No.1, 1937.

A.M. Jones: THE STUDY OF AFRICAN MUSICAL RHYTHM, BANTU STUDIES, Vol.XI, No.4, 1937.

babies who have had to be lulled to sleep throughout the ages; that in their various activities and ceremonies, the ancients sang and danced, and that in cases of death, they mourned the loss of a loved one. All these, as expressed in the words of their songs, mirror the life of the people, as do the other branches of traditional literature.

(C) THAPELO:

5.3.7. The various Sotho clans seem to have had their own individual ways of praying for rain, in that each prayed differently from the other. In all cases, however, the prayers were directed at their respective ancestors. They were spoken, and not sung or chanted. The main purpose that they serve here, apart from being traditional ceremonial utterances, is that of indicating the basic attitude of the ancients towards their ancestors. They spoke to them as though they were speaking to ordinary human beings, thus employing prose rather than poetry. As will be seen from the examples below, the prose used is very flat indeed. Among the Fokeng, a vigorous approach, virtually bordering on a reprimand, was adopted. An unpopular ancestor in the hierarchy was singled out by name, and openly blamed for the absence of rain:

Bohareng pula e hana keng ?

Re bonang e nang ka mathoko ?

E hana le Kgetsi, ngwana Mmope.

(Why is rain refusing in the middle ?

What do we see, it falling in neighbouring areas ?

It is Kgetsi; Mmope's child, who refuses with it).

Among the Kwena, there does not seem to have been such an open reproach, but the language used was still

not different from that used in everyday speech. It is a bare statement of the needs of the people and their cattle, directed to their ancestor, Tsholwane:

Tsholwane wee, re batla pula!

Helele! Fula e kae?

Morena re fe pula.

Helele, Tsholwane pula e kae?

Ke sala ka mehla re nyorilwe,

Le dikgomo di nyorilwe.

Tsholwane, pula e kae?

(Tsholwane we want rain.

Hail! Where is rain?

Chief, please give us rain.

Hail, Tsholwane! Where is rain?

Every day we remain thirsty,

And the cattle too are thirsty.

Tsholwane, where is rain?)¹

Apart from these purely clannish ones, there was also a more general prayer that does not seem to have belonged to any particular group but which informants claim to have been used by all, and embodied their common sentiments. It is said to have been sung by the chief and a chorus, which was sung by the people. In the leader's part, reference is made to the pierced hands of the father of the saviour, Rammoloki, whose hands are said to be full of drops of rain, and are tired because of creating us. The chorus, on the other hand, contains an ancestral injunction to the petitioners not to confine their prayers to the ancestors, but to direct them to Modimo, God:

¹

It is interesting to note that Mofolo, apparently drawing from this type of prayer, makes Fekisi pray in more or less the same strain. Cf. End of chapter 7 and beginning of 8: MOETI OA BOCHABELA.

Leader: Modimo a ko utlwe re a rapela;
Medimo e metjha rapelang wa kgale,
Rapelang Tlatlamatjholo rammoloki,
Rammoloki diatla di maroba,
Diatla di marothodi a pula,
Diatla di madi, di madi a dipula,
Atla tsa hao di kgatheste ke ho re bopa.

(God do hear we pray:

Ye new ancestors pray to the ancient one,
Pray to God, the father of the saviour.
The father of the saviour with hands that
have holes,
Hands with drops of rain,
Hands with blood, with the blood of rains,
Thine hands are tired of creating us).

Chorus: Se rapeleng rona,
Le rapela Modimo, rammoloki,
Diatla di maroba.

(Do not pray to us,
Pray to God, the father of the saviour
with hands that have holes).

The central idea of praying is expressed in the first line by the leader's predicate, Re a rapela, (we pray). It is then taken up in the middle of the second line by the plural imperative, rapelang, (pray ye), which is once more repeated at the beginning of the third. The last word of this line, rammoloki, commences the fourth line, while the following word, diatla, in the middle of the same line, is repeated at the beginning of all the remaining ones, although shorn of its prefix at the beginning of the last line. The various lines

are once more neatly linked together in a progressive development of the initial idea expressed in the first line. Also note the modification of the leader's initial predicate, indicative in form, but whose simple verb stem is used imperatively in the second and third lines, before handing the thread over to other elements. This process of developing a single thought in this manner, is often referred to as Parataxis.¹ The late Prof. Lestrade² used to call it Chiasmus or Linking, in that it links various lines through which runs the same central thought.

The chorus dovetails into the leader and brings out the central thought by counterpoising a negative to a positive predicate, including their respective subjects in parallel form:

Se rapeleng rona / Le rapele Modimo.

(Do not pray to us / Pray to God).

This process of linking is also found in the following little ditty, which is also said to have been sung at a certain stage of the modutswane ceremony:

Tshwene-tona rota,

Bana re tle re nwe,

Re tle re nwe filo,

Filo ja nalana.

(Male baboon urinate,

That we children may drink,

That we may drink beer froth.

The beer froth of prosperity).

¹Cf. M. Pei & F. Gaynor: A DICTIONARY OF LINGUISTICS

²G.F. Lestrade: Lecture Notes.

DIKOMA:

5.4.8. Dikoma were sung by boys undergoing circumcision.

According to informants, the mosuwe, teacher, started the song and the boys sang it after him, repeating all his lines and words. Occasionally, and by way of revision, one of the boys would be called upon to lead the others, with the mosuwe keeping a watchful eye on all of them. They were, and still are, a very highly guarded secret. It is from this traditional secrecy that the idiom Ho bina koma hae, i.e. to reveal secrets, owes its origin. Revealing them here in the interests of objective study and scientific truth, is not in any way an affront to the Sotho among whom the present writer grew ^{up} and whose sensibilities he knows and appreciates. Rather is it a genuine attempt at preserving for posterity the little that can still be salvaged pertaining to a valuable national heritage that may soon be lost for all time. As pointed out in the introduction, a nation without a past, is like a tree without roots. Know thyself; whither thou comest, and whither thou goest. It is only on the basis of such knowledge - that type of knowledge that springs from an inner satisfaction of knowing what was, and on the basis of which to plan what must be, that the basic traditional values can be maintained and preserved. And far from being the coarse and sordid things that they are usually supposed to be, those dikoma that have been painfully collected by the present writer at least, seem to do the Sotho real justice, in that they point to a far and distant past, in which the story of Bethlehem was apparently not unknown.

They are also known as difela, with the singular, sefela. These two words, however, have since acquired a specialised meaning of hymns and hymn respectively, in the Christian sense. But various informants insist that they were originally used with the same meaning and connotation as koma and dikoma; and that dikoma tsa Basotho is synonymous with difela tsa Basotho. In this connection, it is striking to note that the first collection of Southern Sotho Christian hymns in Basutoland was called Lifela tsa Sione, i.e. Hymns of Sion, and not Difela tsa Basotho. Some informants also refer to dikoma as dinnete, (truths), with the singular, nnete, (truth):

Koma ke nnete.

(A koma is truth).

- 5.4.9. In them, constant reference is made to Ratladi, (the father of Tladi), to whom the same meaning and significance is attached as to Modimo, God. Further, a circumcision lodge is traditionally referred to as Ha Ratladi, at Ratladi's. On the whole, they are couched in secret language, with a secret vocabulary and concords. As a result, they tend to be obscure and unintelligible to the uninitiated. In some cases, however, the language is remarkably clear and straightforward, so that it can be understood by all. Such occasional flashes, seem to be confined to those instances where the bard wants to impart fundamental lessons to his pupils, because dikoma, though sung, were mainly intended for instruction.

5.4.10. The lessons themselves, seem to be divisible into two types. First, the boys were instructed on the virtues of communal life, the traditional lore of their people, as well as decent habits of living, including what pitfalls to avoid in life. This type of lesson, is contained in one longish koma entitled Konyana tsa Leboya, (The Lambs of the North).¹ Secondly, they are taught what may be called historical excerpts, which deal with migrations and apparent persecutions in the dim and distant past. The contents of this type of lesson, which is covered by several dikoma, are strikingly reminiscent of the Biblical story of the children of Israel, including the miraculous birth of Christ, who is called Tladi in one of them. Cf. Katladi above. In view of the rare nature of dikoma, it has been deemed advisable to quote freely from those collected here in an attempt to illustrate these two types of lessons. Thereafter, their form and technique will be examined.

TRADITIONAL LORE:

5.5.11. The teacher, who is known as kgwesha or mosuwe, starts off by welcoming the boys to the circumcision lodge, and also refers to their desire to undergo this ancient rite. He refers their desire to Modimo, God, to whose care and wisdom he commends them. He further

¹Parts of this koma are quoted in translation by Ellenberger and MacGregor, loc.cit. PP.282-83, but not in the same order as we recorded it.

mentions the other officials of the lodge, as well as their functions:

Modimo wa rona,	Our God,
Modimo wa borare,	God of our fathers ,
O a utlwa:	Thou hearest:
Tshakajwe tsa lata,	The boy initiates fetched,
Tsa lata kgwasha	They fetched the teacher,
Kgwasha morokolo.	The teacher is the fire-maker.

Ratladi o na le letata,	Ratladi has a kaross,
Ke motlala-ntlo;	It is as big as a hut;
Re na le serena.	We have all we need.
Ha re nkeng kobo	Let us take a blanket
Re ikapeseng,	And cover ourselves,
Ho tlo bonahale	So that it should be clear
Hore mona ha Ratladi	That here at Ratladi's
Bohlale bo teng.	There is wisdom.
Bo na le Modimo,	It has God,
Bo na le ditshakajwe.	It has boy initiates.

Ke re le rwabale	I say you must sleep
Le hlabile gotho.	With knees facing upwards;
Le se ke la tshoha	Do not be alarmed,
Ha ho ngwane motle! ¹	There is none better than the others.

He then goes on to instruct them to respect the chief, the institution of chieftainship, as well as the elders of the tribe. Chiefs are poetically referred to as dikgomo, (cattle); the elders of the tribe as dinku, (sheep), and the

¹This refers to the period immediately following the operation, when the wounds are still raw.

tribe as dikonyana, (lambs):

Dinku di a lla,	The sheep are bleating,
Dinku tsa Leboya;	The sheer of the North;
Di batla dikonyana	They want lambs,
Dikonyana tsa tsona.	Their own lambs.
Thaka tsa me,	My friends,
Ha le nkutlwe na?	Don't you hear me?
Ke le ruta thuto	I teach you lessons
tsa molao.	of the law.
Molao ke o nkile	The law I took
Ho baholo ba ka	From my fore-bears
Ba itseng ho nna:	Who said to me:
Hlokomela dikgomo	Respect the chiefs
Esita le e tla ba teng.	Even those still to be born.
E, metswalle ya ka,	Yes, my friends,
Le ya mosallanyana.	Even the last remaining one.

He warns them never to forget what they have been taught. A forgetful student is reminded, but only at the price of a few lashes. But those who remember and are humble, are assured that they have nothing to fear; they are as good as being at home:

Ha o timeletswe	If/When you have forgotten,
Re a o hakolla;	We remind you.
Re na le disao,	We have lashes,
Re a o saolla.	We lash you.
Ha o ntso rarela, ¹	If you continue to be humble,
Ke kgorong tseno.	This is your home.

¹Cf. the sayings: Motse ho aha wa morapedi.
(A homestead that prospers is that of a
humble man).

Kgang, sala moo.
(Stubbornness remain there - i.e. in the lodge).

He tells them that as married men, they will have male children, every one of whom shall belong 'to this very same village", i.e. will be circumcised. This is because from generation to generation, a male child will continue to groan under a bundle of wood carried on his neck and shoulders, in preparation for his initiation:

O tla ba le sekgotlo. You will have a son:
Ha o ena le sekgotlo, When you have a son,
E tla ba sa motse oona ona. He will belong to this very same
village.

Monna ka thata	With difficulty a man
O tla nne a re:	Will continue to say:
Koto se nthobe,	Wooden log do not break me,
Ke o tswisa hole.	I have brought you from far.

They are taught to be hospitable to strangers, and are urged to be friendly even to Bushmen, despite the fact that a Bushman may be trecherous, in that he may shoot with his arrow and then disappear:

Moeti ha a fihla,	When a visitor arrives,
A fihla ho lona:	Arrives at your place,
Oho! Thaka tseso,	Please, ye equals of ours,
Mo feng metsi a nwe.	Give him water to drink.

Se baleheleng Barwa.	Do not flee from Bushmen,
Lona thaka tseso.	Ye equals of ours.
Morwa ya matla	A strong Bushman
O fula a nyamela	Shoots disappearing
Ka seqha sa hae,	With his bow
A qeta ho betsa.	After releasing its arrow.

They are taught to honour and respect their fathers; that none should wish for his father's death in order to get hold of his belongings. When he does die, however, his children should stand together at all times and help each other in difficulties:

Dikgutsana tsa heso,	Orphans of my home district,
Bana ba monna	The children of a man
Ha ba ke ba re:	Never say:
O se a tsofetse,	He is old already,
Ha re mo je mohlape.	Let us deprive him of his stock.
Bana ba Tau	The children of Tau - a man,
Ha a se a shwele,	When he is already dead,
Ba ba hammoho.	Stand together.
Ke ka baka la bona	It is because of them
Ke binang jwalo.	That I sing like that.

They are told that one who has been taught, i.e. circumcised, and properly so, does not steal, and that a thief must be killed:¹

Ya rutilweng hantle,	The one who has been taught,
Hantle le hona,	And well taught at that,
Yena ha a utswe.	He does not steal.
Leshodu lona,	As for a thief,
Lona le bolawe.	It must be killed.

They are also taught to protect property, particularly cattle, which they are urged to defend with their last drop of blood:

¹Cf. the saying: Leshodu ke ntja, le lefa ka hloho ya lona.
(A thief is a dog, it pays with its head).

Ho se be modisana Let there be no herdboy
Ya dumellang tsabo Who allows his cattle
 di haruwe to be captured
A eso hlajwe, Before he is stabbed
A phungwa ka kwebe, And ripped open with a barbed
 spear,
Madi a keleketla. And blood trickles down.

They are warned to be careful in their dealings with women. Some are loose and may take the initiative in inducing them to have illegal dealings with them. This they must resist.

Motshetshe sesila, A woman is dirt;
O a itahla-tahla, She throws herself about
O se o le ho monna: And is already on a man:
Kgaola matenwana! Remove your loin coverings!
Monna o a hana. A man refuses.

Finally, they are urged to be manly and industrious even during their period of initiation, so that when they ultimately return home, they should feel that they are real men, worthy to be numbered among the great.

Mannng le mang Each and every one
O a itlhehehla, Pulls his weight,
Le yena a bine. and sings too.
Hosasa ka moso Tomorrow morning
Ha tsatsi le tjhaba, When the sun rises,
Mohla ke kgutlang, The day I return home,
Ke tle ke be le hona I should be able
Ho bolela ke re: To proclaim and say:
Jwale ke monna! Now I am a man!
Ke be hara dinatla. And be among the great.

HISTORICAL EXCERPTS:

5.6.12.(a) The lessons here cover a wide field of very distant events. It is in these lessons that the name Mosito appears, as well as the contentious word lome. Cf. Chapter 2.1.3 above. Taking them in the order we recorded them, the first one is called MOTJODIMATSHANA, (The Snipe). It tells the story of a character by that name, who swam across the great lakes and crossed to the other side. There, he sat in the middle of the veld and sang, bellowing like a bull.

Motjodimatshana	The Snipe
Wa matsha a maholo,	Of the great lakes
Wa hlapa wa tshela; ¹	Swam and crossed.
Wa re o le mose	When he was across,
Wa dula setsing,	He sat mid-field
Wa kgitlanya kodu.	And bellowed aloud.

His song was heard afar in the South, and a man from there, took a mass of people and left with them.

Kodu ko tetema	The big voice reverberated
Ko utlwahala hole,	And was heard afar,
Hole ka Borweng.	Afar in the South.
Monna wa Borweng	A man from the South
A be a utlwile.	Was quick to hear.
O nkile theko	He took a mass of people
A e phaphathisa,	And left with them.

¹ Informants did not know the direction.

It was also heard at Tebang - the Sotho name for Heidelberg, Transvaal, at the place of Napo, son of Mosito.

Tau ko puruma,	The lion roared
Ko utlwahala hole,	And was heard afar,
Hole ko Tebang,	Afar at Tebang,
Tebang jwa Napo,	The Tebang of Napo,
Napo jwa Mosito.	Napo, son of Mosito.

Then comes the longish stanza already quoted in chapter 2.1.3. above, in which Mopedi-Moholo states that it was he who failed, erred, or was unable to do something that is not mentioned. He goes on to say that thereafter he set off, i.e. Motjodimatshana, to go and report that all the people had disappeared into the red sea, and that when the next day dawned, the self-appointed weaklings of masters, meerkats, had all been completely wiped out:

Ko tswa ko le twanya	I set off and ran
Ho ya bolatola,	To go to the reporting place,
Bolatola batho:	To report about people:
Batho ba fedile,	The people are finished,
Ba feletse makwa,	They have disappeared in the sea,
Makwa-mafubedu.	The red sea.

Mafube-letsatsi	At dawn
Ha tsati le tjhaba,	When the sun rose,
La tjhaba la fetsa,	It rose and finished,
La fetsa meshana	And finished the little
	meerkats,
Meshana boTadi,	The little meerkats, the rats and
	others,
Tadi kgolo-pehi.	The rats that had placed themselves
	in high positions.

(b) The second one is called KOTLO YA MOSITO, (The Punishment of Mosito). It mentions, inter alia, that Mosito,¹ who bears various names, no longer eats, except for the punishment that he receives with both hands, kgaketsa.

Lebidibitlwana	The little rolled one
La marallana,	Of the little stony hills,
Le ho ja ha le je;	Does not even eat.
Le ja le kgaketsa,	He eats with both hands receiving,
Le kgaketsa qilo.	With both hands receiving punishment.

He goes on to call himself Mowa, (the fallen one), and that he faced down, inama, after which this action was reversed, inamoloha; that then his face and eyes cleared, because, on looking up, he looked into a clear and beautiful face of a virgin girl, thole, who was both tall and upright:

Kgomo-nala mowa,	The white and red cow is the fallen,
Mowa ko inama,	The fallen one, I faced down,
Ko inamoloha,	Then faced upwards.
Ko sesa ka mahlong,	My face cleared,
Mahlong ho bôtjha; ¹	In the face was beauty;
Botjha ke thole,	The beauty was a virgin,
Thole mosetsana,	The virgin, a girl,
Tema lekekete. ²	Tall and upright.

This is then followed by the final stanza, in which a comparison is drawn between this upright virgin and the other people who are said to be of the stock of Mosito,

¹botjha with open o, given as meaning bottle, and not new.

²lekekete said to mean ya otlolohileng, i.e. a straight one.

and are full of evil, makóro. They are likened unto springboks, which follow their leader blindly, imitate all its pranks, such as turning off at the same spot, and falling in where it may do so. The few that may escape, are rendered orphans and wear meletsa, i.e. ornaments made of pieces of ostrich eggs. These do not become them, but become a zebra because of its numerous colours:

Ding di sa leme,	The others not being built upright,
Di léma makóro,	Being built in evil,
Makóro jwa tshephe.	The evil of a springbok.
Tshephe ke kgutsana,	The springbok is an orphan,
E rwetse meletsa	It wears ornaments of ostrich eggs
E sa e tshwanele,	Which do not become it,
E tshwanela pitsi;	But become a zebra,
Pitsi ka mebala,	A zebra with colours,
Mebala jwa yona	Its colours
Ke bongwerengwere.	Are many and varied.

- (c) The next one is called SAKA LA BADIMO, (A kraal of the Gods/Ancestors). It is said to have no doors but is simply round. Witchdoctors were called to come and doctor it on all sides. They went round it only once, then inside it, there arose a foal with a hidden head:

Saka la badimo	The kraal of ancestors
Ha le na monyako,	Has no door:
Le le tjhitja feela.	It is merely round.
Bitsang dingaka	Call witchdoctors
Di tlo le pota.	To come and doctor it.
Tsa re di sa pota,	While they were doing so,
Di sa pota hang,	Having gone round it once,
Ka hare ho lona	Inside it
Ha ema petsana	There arose a foal
Ya sepata-hloho.	Of the hidden head.

This foal turned itself into a mountain around which many new villages sprang up. These villages were quite distinct from those of their fore-fathers:

Ya iketsa thaba,	It turned itself into a mountain
Thaba ya bodula	A mountain of to settle,
Ya bodula metse.	Of to settle villages.
Metse-metse ela	Those many villages yonder,
Ke ya bomalome,	Belong to our uncles,
Hase ya borara.	They do not belong to our fore- fathers.

The next stanza gives an injunction as to where to sing dikoma, and where not to sing them. They are to be sung only in the veld and not at home. Hence, probably, the secrecy that has always surrounded them.

Koma ya ntlha	The first <u>koma</u>
E sa binwe hae	It not being sung at home,
E binwa thoteng,	It being sung in the veld;
Thota ja boema	The veld of standing
Ja boema metsi,	Of standing water,
Metsi masothwane	Water, the curled up one,
A se a sothaletse	It is already curled up
Kgahlong jwa tsela,	At the meeting of roads,
Jwa tsela-pedi.	Of two roads.

It ends with a short stanza in which the singer makes a passionate plea to the water to separate, so that they may pass and run away from the snake, monyohé, who has fallen on his back.

Tsela kgahloloha	Road separate,
Baeti re ete,	That we travellers might pass
Re etele tshosi.	And flee from the snake.
Tshosi ke monyohé,	The snake is monyohé,
Ke monyohé rethe! It is monyohé of falling on his back.	

- (d) The fourth one is short, and consists of ten lines only, in which a character named Sekgolokgotjhane, (The Wanderer), is urged to wander on to bondage, where he and the singer are to remain for a while, serving impotent masters who, in the estimation of the singer, are no better than rats.

Sekgolokgotjhane	Wanderer
Sa malaukela,	Of the homeless,
Laukela re ye,	wander on and let us go,
Re ye koo kgwalete,	Let us go there to bondage,
Kgwalete re yang	To bondage where we go
Re sa yo lala;	Not to stay;
Re lale re pota,	But to tarry for a while
Re pota meshana,	Praising little meerkats,
Meshana boTadi,	Little meerkats, the rat and
	others,
Tadi kgolo-pehi.	Rats who have placed themselves
	in high places.

- (e) Then comes the fifth one that tells the story of a virgin who conceived without meeting a man. It centres round two characters, MP^ÔK^Ô or MM^ÔK^Ô, from the verb stem -b^Ôka, (thank); and Phale, explained as motho ya hlotseng sebe, i.e. a person who has defeated sin. Mpoko, (the one who is thanked), is said to have breathed his spirit into Phale, who then conceived a child, (Shosho), who was as big as Lome:

Mpoko a hemela,	Mpoko breathed in,
A hemela ka moya,	He breathed in by his spirit
Phale a emola.	And Phale conceived.
A emola shosho,	She conceived a child,
Shosho lo mokaa,	A child who is so big,

Lo mokaa ka Lome.¹ Who is as big as Lome.

Thereafter, a character named Qhonqholotsane, i.e. one who goes about scratching the ground, as does a pig, set out to visit a cave in which there were cattle, and in which the child, Tladi, was born. His birth was preceded by a sharp flash and crack of lightning, which illumined the entire cave and its contents. This gave the impression of the lightning having demolished the cave, which had then fallen on the cattle inside.

Chonqholotsane	Qhonqholotsane
Kolobe, seepi,	Pig, the expert digger,
Seepi sa mere;	The expert digger of charms;
Mere mehalakela,	Charms, the sweet smelling ones,
Halekela shano	Sweeten the palate,
Shano le mpipi.	The palate and the cave.
Mpipi ke lewa,	<u>Mpipi</u> is a cave,
Le wetse makgomo,	It has fallen on cattle,
Makgomo matewa,	The cattle, the struck ones,
Matewa ke Tladi. ²	The struck ones by Tladi.

¹It is here, inter alia, that informants indignantly refuted the meaning of lome as a wound; and the context here seems to bear them out in full, for how can a child be compared unto a wound? Makara, my best informant on this section said, "Modimo a ke ke a apara leqeba, yaba o tshwaetsa ngwana wa hae hore ba tshwane ka kotsi." (God cannot wear a wound and then infect his son with it, that they should resemble each other). It may be that lome could be derived from *lume, (male man), which is still found in the Southern Sotho word malome (maternal uncle). The only difficulty here is that of meaning, which does not suit or fit the context in which lome is used in these dikoma.

²Informants explained that Tladi means a child. When a woman is expecting, and the child is fully formed, it is said of her: O letladi, i.e. she now carries a fully formed child.

The sun set while they were en route. Then a white moving star cut across the heavens, in the direction of where the thunder and lightning had come from:

Qhonqholotsane,	Qhonqholotsane,
Tsatsi la dikela	The sun set
Re sa le thoteng.	While we were still en route.
Naledi e tshweu	A white star
Ya motataola	Of to walk,
Mahlaba letsolo;	Fierced the heavens.
Letsolo le wele,	The heavens have fallen,
Le wetse makgomo,	They have fallen on cattle,
Matewa ke Tladi.	The struck ones by Tladi.

According to the next stanza, it was not everybody who rejoiced at the birth of Tladi. There were murmurs among wicked men in high places. The ruling chief said, "What shall I eat? I shall eat poisoned drugs and a mixture of other poisonous herbs that will topple the basket of chieftainship."

Tladi e se yona,	The lightning it not being itself -
	that made the noise,
E le hono-hono!	It being murmurings,
Hono-hono tjhitja,	The murmerers being men,
Tjhitja boRamano	Men, the fathers of tricks and the
	like;
BoRamano dilotjha,	The fathers of tricks are the
	sub-chiefs,
Dilotjha bokgati.	The sub-chiefs are the chiftainship.
Kgati: Nka jang? ¹	The chief: what can I eat ?
Nka ja mabofe,	I can eat poisoned drugs,

¹Informants explained: Borena ke kgati, ke ntolane ya ntlole. Borena nka ja bofe, ha ngwana eo a se a bo nkile? (Chieftainship is a skipping rope; it is a succession of jumps, jump me or I jump you. Which chieftainship will I enjoy, when this child has taken it?)

Ka ja malokolodi	Eat a mixture of poisonous herbs,
Ka matheta-kgala.	The topplers of the basket of chieftainship.

This chief then goes on to elaborate on his fears, including those of his subordinates, regarding the birth of Tladi. In metaphorical language, he says chieftainship is a basket which contains the nation, tsie, i.e. locusts; and that it is the nation that perpetually sings his praises. All this is now in danger, because there is a likelihood that when he gives an order/command, or tries to pull them up on something, they will fly away from him and his sub-rulers, and like locusts, scatter to other lands.

Kgala ke sesiu,	Chieftainship is a grain basket,
Sesiu maolla,	A grain basket is the gatherer,
Maolla tsie.	The gatherer of people.
Tsie mphafane;	The people are perpetual praisers;
Ke re ke e kola	When I try and catch them
Ya re qhalanela,	They ran away from us
Ya tlala maota.	And filled other lands.

(f) The sixth one is called BATHO BA SA NELWENG KE PULA.

(People on whom rain never falls). They are women in the underworld, and are eaten by roaring lions because they are barren. Before they can conceive, rain must first fall.

Kwana tlase kwana,	There down there
Ha Rakgomotshwana,	At Rakgomotshwana's
Tau di a rora.	Lions roar.
Di rora di jang?	They roar eating what ?
Di ja kgomo-tshwana.	They eat black and white cows.

Kgomo-tshwana nyopa, The black and white cows are barren
women,
Nyora di sa tswale; Barren women who do not reproduce.
Di re di tlo tswala Before they can do so,
Po ke ho ne pula. Rain must first fall.

The little rains that fall there, do so in torrents.
They act as an ointment that is applied to the barren
women by Sekgele, who then reaps the fruits of praise.

Tulana di nang, The little rains that fall,
Di na medubela, Fall in torrents.
Medubela tlotsi, Torrents are an ointment,
Tlotsi ke Sekgele. The anointer is Sekgele.
Sekgele o di ja, Sekgele eats them,
O di ja mauno, He eats their fruits,
Mauno la jake, The fruits of praises,
Jaka lo mothena. The praises of women.

(g) Finally, there is a short little one of nine lines
only, on a character called Sefadi. He is said to have
come with a new way of life among those who reside in a
foreign land. This land is said to have deep pools, and
is fertile for agricultural purposes.

Sefadi, mothwana, Sefadi, the little person,
Mothwana e monyenyanane The lovable little person
Wa ho tla le botjha. Who came with newness.
Botjha bo renne, Newness has prospered,
Bo renetse kgudu It has prospered for orphans,
Kgudu ramajake. Orphans, dwellers in a foreign
land.

Tshweya ho madiba, At the inheritance are deep pools,
Ho mahlaba-tala, There is ploughing in green fields,
Tala ke bolele. The greenness is fresh water algae.

5.6.13. Dikoma and initiation rites, were always shrouded in mystery and secrecy. Only those who had undergone initiation knew these songs and as men, followed the lessons contained in them. At this early period, initiation was still greatly practiced among the Basotho. But with the arrival of the missionaries, who early frowned upon it, there was a break with this ancient institution, especially on the part of their christian converts, majakane. This was greatly resented by the traditionalists, who stuck to what their fore-fathers had taught them. The result is that the educated Basotho, most of whom went through missionary schools, hardly know these dikoma. Further, initiation is fast dying out, and so are the few isolated old men who knew anything about it. Their dikoma are going with them, thus becoming further removed even from the male section of the population that was their traditional repository. As such then they have virtually become things of the past, "legend," and no longer exercise any influence on the cultural lives of the people.

LANGUAGE:

5.7.14. The language of dikoma abounds in deverbative nouns that are formed by merely hitching on an appropriate prefix to a verb stem without altering its terminal vowel. In this way, a number of self-explanatory nouns that are close to their related verbal bases are formed:

olla (gather) ➤ maolla (the gatherer)

hlaba (pierce) ➤ mahlaba (the piercer)

tewa (struck) ➤ matewa (the struck ones)

laukela (wander) → malaukela (the wanderer)
tataola (walk) → matataola (the walker),

In a few cases, however, the personal ending - i is substituted for terminal - a :

tlotsa (smear/anooint) → tlotsi (the anointer)
tshosa (frighten) → tshosi (the frightener).

5.7.15. Similarly, there are a number of nouns of class 1 (a) - names of characters, that are formed from various verb stems by prefix and the addition of the suffix - ane. The latter is not diminutive in significance, but indicates a perpetual, ceaseless continuity of the action indicated by the simple verb stem:

Fhafa (to praise) → Mphafane (the praiser)
qhonqholotsa(dig) → Qhonqholotsane (the digger)
kgolokgotjha (roll down, move from place to place)
Sekgolokgotjhane (wanderer).

Cf. fofa and sefofane, (aeroplane); kula and sekulane, (patient).

5.7.16. In view of the fact that the vocabulary is that of a secret language, familiar objects and concepts are expressed by means of unusual words that are confined to dikoma:

kgwasha for moruti, (teacher)
makwa for mawatle, (seas). Cf. Lekwa(the Vaal river)
maota for mafatshe (countries)
sekgotlo for mora (a son)
shosho for ngwana (a child).

bongwerengwere for mebalabala (multi-coloured).

This vocabulary also includes the word for a virgin, namely, thole; Cf. sethole, (a heifer). This form was apparently unknown to or withheld from the Roman Catholic translators who translated "virgin" as movirigo in the Roman Catholic liturgy:

Maria movirigo (the virgin Mary) Cf. Maria thole.

5.7.17. The secret vocabulary above is used with a secret set of concords. Thus there is the morpheme ko, which functions either as a subject concord, or a locative prefix, as in Tswana:

Tau ko nuruma, The lion it roared,
Ko utlwahala hole, It was heard afar,
Hole ko Tebang. Afar at Tebang.

In place of the usual possessive concords wa and va, jwa and ja are used:

Tebang jwa Napo, The Tebang of Napo,
Napo jwa Mosito. Napo son of Mosito.
Thota ja boema. A veld of to stand.

Then there is the morpheme lo, which does not seem to have a fixed and regular functional value, in that it may be:

(a) A copulative formative with the value and function of Ke...(it is):

Mauno lo jake. The fruit it is praises.

(b) A possessive concord:

Jake lo mothena. The praises of women.

(c) The first element of an adjectival concord:

Shosho lo mokaa, A child who is so big,
Lo mokaa ka Lome. Who is as big as Lome.

In most instances, however, the first element of the adjectival concord is omitted, resulting in such forms as:

Makwa-mafubedu. (The red sea).

Kgomo-tshwana. (A black and white cow).

As in Northern Sotho, the future forming auxiliary appears as tlo and not tla (ho), as in everyday speech:

Di re di tlo tswala. (Before they can reproduce).

But in other cases, where one would expect to find tlo from tla ho, the full uncontracted form is used:

Di tla ho le pota. (To come and doctor it).

In line with Tswana, locative koo is also used:

he ye koo kgwalete. We should go there to bondage.

In this connection too, compare the noun mauno for fruits, and Tswana maungo.

FORM AND TECHNIQUE:

§ 8.18. The individual lines of each koma are short, each stanza containing, on the average, about six to eight lines. The individual lines are closely knitted together from the point of view of form and sense. This is achieved by employing the following mechanisms:

(a) By commencing the second line with the last word of the first, and the third, with the last one of the second, etc.

Sekgele o di ja,	Sekgele eats them,
O di ja mauno,	He eats them the fruits;
Mauno lo jake,	The fruits are praises,
Jake lo mothena.	The praises of women.

Note that only one word is added at a time, and that at the end of each line. There is thus a gradual development of the basic thought of the first line.

(b) By repeating a subject concord of the first predicate before all the others:

Motjodimatshana	The Snipe
Wa hlapa wa tshela,	Swam and crossed,
Wa re o le mose	When it was across,
Wa dula setsing,	It sat mid-field,
Wa kgitlanya kodu.	And sang aloud.

(c) By commencing the first line with a vocative form, followed in the next line by a possessive, with a deverbative noun as possessive stem. The third line then commences with an imperative form of the simple verb stem from which the noun is formed:

Sekgolokgotjhane	Wanderer
Sa malaukela,	Of the homeless,
Laukela re ye.	Wander on and let us go.

(d) By commencing and ending the first line with a locative form, followed in the next line by another locative, before the predicate is introduced in the third line:

Kwana tlase kwana	There down there,
Ha Rakgomotshwana,	at Rakgomotshwana's,
Tau di a rora.	Lions roar.

(e) By omitting the copulative formative ke, (it is), before the base, and replacing the class 10 relative concord with the corresponding subject concord, di:

Fulana <u>di</u> nang,	The little rains that fall,
Di na medubela,	Fall in torrents,
Medubela tlotsi.	The torrents are an ointment.

(f) By using the ideophone hono-nono! (of murmuring), as a nominal substantive:

Tladi e se yona, The lightning it not being itself.
E le hono-hono! It being murmurs.

In this connection, compare the following expressions in which ideophones are found as copulative basis after ke... :

Ke shwe! lehare la maboya.
(He is a great talker/**liar**).

Cf: Ho re shwe! shwe! shwe! (Of shaving).

Ke lai! thekge! tsolo la Matsieng.
(The lightning of Matsieng is dangerous).

Cf: Ho re lai! (Of lashing, striking).

Ke phetho, ke tu!
(That is all).

Cf: Ho re tu! (Of keeping quiet/finished).

(g) By repeating certain lines at certain intervals under the same koma or different ones. For instance, the last two lines of the last verse of Motjodimatshana are identical with the last two of Sekgolokgotjhane:

Tadi kgolo-pehi. The rats who have placed themselves
in high places.

Similarly, under Mpoko le Fhale, verses two and three end alike in:

Le wetse makgomo, It has fallen on cattle,
Makgomo matewa, Cattle, the struck ones,
Matewa ke Tladi. The struck ones by Tladi.

This process helps the memory, and enables the student to retain as well as recall what has gone before.

(h) By using appositional nouns in a semi-qualificative way:

Makgomo, matewa. The cattle, the struck ones.
Kolobe, seepi. The pig, the expert digger.

(i) By using a certain amount of semantic tone:

Medubela tlotsi, Torrents are an ointment, (LL)
Tlotsi ke Sekgele The anointer is Sekgele. (HH).

On the whole, the language here is characterised by brevity and a telegraphic style. Only the essentials are given, with no conscious attempt at being either detailed or elaborate. Despite this, however, dikoma are far from being dry or devoid of beauty. From an aesthetic point of view, there is hidden beauty in them. There is, for instance, a consistent note of sadness, coupled with bridled bitterness, in the voice of the singer who urges Sekgolo-kgotjhane that they should wander on to bondage, to minister to impotent masters. Similarly, there is an unmistakable note of nostalgic yearning in the voice of the singer who sings about the lambs of the North:

Dinku di a lla, The sheep are bleating,
Dinku tsa Leboya; The sheep of the North;
Di batla dikonyana, They want lambs,
Dikonyana tsa tsona. Their own lambs.

There is warmth and tenderness in referring to Sefadi, the type of warmth and tenderness that characterises a proud and satisfied mother playing with her chubby little child:

Sefadi, mothwana, Sefadi, the little person,
Wa ho tla le botjha. Who came with newness.

There is clarity and vividness in the graphic representation of Motjodimatshana, the snipe, crossing the great lakes and sitting in the middle of the veld to bellow like a bull. The choice of the final predicate here, is very good indeed:

CHAPTER VI

DITHOKO : (PRAISES)

INTRODUCTION:

6.0.1. Dithoko constitute the highest water mark of Southern Sotho traditional literature. They fall into three main categories, namely, those of boy initiates or makolwane, animals and divining bones, as well as those of kings and warriors, i.e. outstanding personalities in the community.

A. MAKOLWANE: (BOY INITIATES)

6.1.2. Before the advent of Europeans and missionaries in Basutoland, all Sotho boys had to undergo initiation. During this period, they were required to compose praises for themselves, which they would recite in public on the day they returned home. The weaker ones, who were incapable of such oral compositions, were assisted by the mosuwe, (teacher), who did most of the composition for them. What they had to do was to memorise, and at regular intervals, repeat the lines they had been taught. Every boy was also required to give himself a new name by which he would be known as a Lekolwane. Such names sometimes became so popular as to supersede the real one(s). This is what happened for instance in the case of Lepoqo who became Letlama and later Moshweshwe. The names that boy-initiates take unto themselves are many and varied. In the vast majority of cases, they are based on a verb stem preceded by the class 5 prefix le-, e.g. Lenepa, Lentsha, Lekena, Lefeta. In those cases where their owners were sons

of chiefs and therefore future rulers, their respective age-groups and regiments were named after them, in which case the individual's name was pluralised by means of the class 6 prefix ma-:

Letlama (Moshweshwe)	→	Matlama (now the name of the Maseru foot-ball club)
Lentsha (Sekonyela)	→	Mantsha
Lenonyane (Mama)	→	Manonyane
Lekena (Lerothodi)	→	Makena
Seodi (Masopha)	→	Diodi.

These names are revealed to the public for the first time on the day the makolwane first recite their praises to the people. Each lekolwane begins his praises with his new name:

Lenepa, rakolantsho,
Rakola se otlala ka mahatleng.
(Lenepa, father of the black cockade,
Father of the cockade that extends to the shoulders).

OR:

Lefeta kgelekgetha o ye tlase,
O yo bona diotlwana meemo,
O yo bona e metshwana methepa.
(Lefeta wander on and go down,
To go and see how huts stand,
To go and see dark complexioned girls).

6.1.3. In some cases, the praises include a little song called lengae, which a reciter sings at a certain stage in the course of his praises. It is usually short and repetitive, and is divisible into two: a solo, sung by the reciter, and a chorus, sung by his associates. The chorus may be a single line, which punctuates all the lines of the leader.

The latter, however, may introduce variations in his solo part as follows:

Leader: O a lla, o a lla moholodi,
O a lla, o a lla moholodi.
(It cries, it cries the blue crane).

Chorus: O a lla, moholodi, o a lla.

Leader: Ntate, wee!
Mme, wee!
Malome, wee!
Kgomo tseso di kalo ka dinaledi.
Tsa malome di kalo ka jwang bola.
(Father, mother, uncle,
Our cattle are as numerous as the stars,
My uncle's are as numerous as that grass).

Ntate, wee!
Mme, wee!
Malome, wee!
Ke bone ngwane motle ditjhabeng,
Ke timeletswe ke lebitso le fane.
(Father, mother, uncle,
I have seen a beautiful girl among foreign
people,
I have forgotten her name and surname).

Ntate, wee!
Mme, wee!
Malome, wee!
Lerato la ngwana enwa le a ntlhola,
Ke ponono se dikoti marameng.

(Father, mother, uncle,
My love for this girl overcomes me,
She is a beauty with dimples on her cheeks).

Thereafter, he continues with his praises, e.g.

Kga-tjeke-tjeke molamu wa kotjane,
Ke re ke betsadikgwale o fokole,
O yo wela ka selakalakeng,
Ka moo ho dutseng tau le tshukudu!

(Of throwing the kotjane stick,
When I throw it at partridges it becomes too light,
and goes and falls in a hot place,
Wherein sits a lion and a rhinoceros).

6.1.4. In saying his praises, a lekolwane stands in an upright position, holding a little stick in his hand. This stick is called a kotjane. He chants his praises in an even voice, with his eyes fixed on the raised kotjane. The praises themselves are mainly imaginary, in that the boys praise themselves on things that are not based on fact, but on imagination and wishful thinking:

Tholang lerata ke faola katse
Ngwana katse ha etsetswe modidietsane.
ba na ka ba etsa jwalo Mathebe
Ngwana katse atlola ba sa mo lemohe,
Qheku la ba la hata motswetse a kula.
(Keep quiet, I am castrating a cat;
Shrieks of applause are not made for a cat.
They did so once at Mathebe,
The cat jumped unexpectedly

And an old man tramped on a sick, newly confined woman).

In this strain, the reciter may attribute a number of desirable qualities unto himself, and may also identify himself with various ferocious animals:

Ke pidipitlwane, ke phuthi, ke hlolo;

Ke mmamphokoro, ke phofu, ke nare.

(I am a short strong man, a greysbuck, a red hare;

I am a bully, an eland, a buffalo).

He may describe his imaginary build and facial features, putting himself in the best possible light:

Mohlankana e motshwana, Lefeta,

Mohlankana ya ntswe le monate;

Mohlankana wa ho sehelwa thebe.

Banana ba mo rata ba sa mo tsebe,

Ba tsamaya ba ithobakanya dikoto.

(A dark complexioned young man, Lefeta,

A young man with a beautiful voice;

A young man to be called a chief,

A young man to be given a shield.

Girls love him without knowing him,

They go about breaking themselves into small pieces).

6.1.5. This process of identifying themselves with various ferocious animals is taken from the praises of chiefs and warriors, who often do the same thing. Flowing from this, is the fact that some makolwane may also take a line or two from the praises of a particular chief or warrior, and add them to theirs. In this connection compare Masopha's line:

Malefetsane e motshwana, Letsitsa, kgaitsemi ya Mpinane

(The dark complexioned Malefetsane, Letsitsa, brother
to Mpinane).

and Lefeta's:

Malefetsane e motshwana, Letlisa,
Kgaitsemi ya Sebina le Mpinane.

(The dark complexioned Malefetsane, Letlisa,
Brother to Sebina and Mpinane).

Similarly, established riddles may be found in their praises:

Seotswana sa langana ke eme,
Ke eme ka ho kgantsha thata.

(The enclosure of wormwood I stand,
I stand depending on my strength).

Cf. the riddle:

Q. Seotswana sa langana ke eme ke kgantsha thata?

A. Meno.

6.1.6. But there may be a grain of truth and factual statements in these praises. This happens, for instance, in those instances where the reciter draws from existing or prevailing prejudices in society, such as those between the traditionalists and the Christian converts, majakane. The latter are ridiculed by the former because they no longer adhere to traditional practices such as lebollo. Instead, they have adopted foreign ways and practices, resulting in their being labelled majakane, which is basically derogative, in that it means hybridated people, and is connected with the idiom Ho jaka ka leleme, (To adopt a foreign tongue). These majakane, from whom the present black intellectuals arise, early tended to look down upon everything African and conversely, to eulogise everything European. The traditionalists resented this and therefore subjected them to ridicule in their praises, in an attempt to uphold and make propaganda for their

ancient institutions. It is this aspect of the matter that is reflected in the praises of some makolwane:

Majakane ho nona a matshehadi,

A matona ke mekotatsie.

(The female converts become fat,

The male ones are as lean as the white stork).

OR:

Maqai le mathisa phuthehang,

Suthang ka moyeng le a nkgā.

Qai le nkgā sa podi ya phooko,

Thisa le nkgā sa kolobe ya motswetse.

(Ye uncircumcised boys and girls congregate,

and move off from the wind's direction, you smell.

An uncircumcised boy smells like a he-goat,

An uncircumcised girl smells like a pig with a litter).

The language is very strong here; it probably shows just how strongly the community felt against the desertion and desecration of traditional institutions.

In this process, direct reference is occasionally made to the foreign practices that characterise the majakane, such as reading books and attending missionary schools, instead of going to "Ha katladi." Further, their usual excuses for not wanting to undergo circumcision are not unknown to the traditionalists who refer to them in their praises:

Sebala-buka, sebala-bosawana,

Qai ekare le tshaba ho bolla

La re: "Ha le mpone ke halaletse,

Ke hahlametswe ke moya wa sekolo.

Thisa ekare le tshaba ho bolla,

La kuta hloho lekorana,

Motutla la o mena malobolobo.

(A book-reader, a reader of nonsense,

An uncircumcised boy in his fear

Says: Don't you see that I am holy,

That I have been influenced by school atmosphere?

An uncircumcised girl in her fear

Chops off all her hair and remains with a shining head,

And folds a blanket in a clumsy way).

Such prejudices have come in since the arrival of the missionaries who, despite the great benefits they have bestowed on the African community at large, were perhaps a bit hasty in frowning upon some of the traditional practices even before they had fully understood them. It is not wise to judge hastily, for nobody can be wise, where nobody knows.

Not only lebollo, but also African names with all their socio-historical significances were cast aside as being symbolic of heathenism. Instead, meaningless appendages to the African like Augustinus or Alfonsina were encouraged and attached to their children before they could be baptised. To the writer's mind, nothing could have been more unfortunate than this, as it is one of those basic and subtle psychological factors that tend to make Africans despise what is essentially African, and adopt foreign ways and practices with disastrous consequences. Having taken a wrong road, and realised that it is wrong, a wise man will re-trace his steps until he gets to the correct one, for:

"Where there is no vision,

The people perish."

6.1.7. Additional grains of truth are also found in those instances where the reciter may refer to his parentage, members of his family and, usually, his unhappy childhood. This is usually in those cases where the reciter may have lost his father quite early in life and his mother left to struggle alone with the family. The reciter sort of gives the listeners a brief account of his life-history, and invariably takes advantage of this opportunity to thank his mother for all she has done for him. He also comforts her in her difficult position. A gifted reciter can really be moving in such cases, and his praises, heightened by a well-chosen lengae, may bring tears to many:

Mme mmangwane mosadi wa batho,
O tiise pelo o se o le moholo,
Ditsietsi ha di makatse mosadi.

Mosala le dikgutsana ha a hloname;
Ha hlonama di ya hodiswa ke mang?
Lefu le manyala nthong tsa batho,
La nka ntate la ntshiya shalabeng.
(Mother dear, thou poor little woman,
Still thine heart, thou art old already;
Difficulties are not surprising to a woman.
The one who remains with orphans never sulks,
If he sulks, who will bring them up?
Death is evil in human affairs,
It took my father and left me very far).

Ha ke na kgaitsemi ke ana lejwe,
Ke ana le thata la morallana.
Mantsokotsane weso, Kgoboso,
Ke elwa a tsokotsa kojwana thabeng.

(I have no sister and swear by a stone,
I swear by a hard one, the iron stone.
My ever waving brother, Kgoboso,
There he is waving a rugged little blanket on the
mountain).

6.1.8. The various reciters show familiarity with birds
and cattle, including their numerous colours:

Nonyana e mebala, moholodi,
E pudutswana hlooho e sa tsofale.

(The multi-coloured bird, the blue crane,
The bluish grey one, with an unaging head).

Mohakajane o maoto a masowana,
Ke ola o theosa o ya le thota.

(The white bellied crow with the white feet,
There it goes across the countryside).

Kgalodikgatwane kgoma basadi,
E eme ka sakeng e a kgabola,
E entse e re ho modisa, "Tlo mpulele."

(Kgalodikgatwane, a tame cow,
Stands in the kraal and lows
Saying to the herdboys, "Do come and let me out.").

6.1.9. They also use a number of words of foreign origin.
For instance, Lefeta in Jankie's collection,¹ uses
such forms as :

¹H.E. Jankie : LITHOKO TSA MAKOLWANE.

mmeiti, (meid/maid); sekenkeboroto, (skinkbord);
nnoi, (nooi); kapoko, (kapok); dilehe, (sleg);
tloloko, (klok/clock), and mofu, (mof).

FORM:

6.2.10. Structurally, these praises are basically the same as dikoma. The essential unit is two lines, the first of which introduces an idea or expectation, which is completed in the second:

Mantsokotsane weso kgoboso,
Ke elwa a tsokotsa kojwana thabeng.
(My ever waving brother Kgoboso,
There he is waving a rugged little blanket on the
mountain).

The various units are thus closely knit together because what is important is not outward decoration, or word-arrangement, but the completion of thought. Another feature in this thought-arrangement is that of linking:

Ha ke na kgaitsemi ke ana lejwe,
Ke ana le thata la morallana.
(I have no sister and swear by a stone,
I swear by a hard one, the iron stone).

Within this structural pattern, various figures of speech are used, particularly the metaphor and the simile:

Ke mmamphokoro, ke phofu, ke nare.
(I am a bully, an eland, a buffalo).

Qai le nkgā sa podi ya phooko,
Thisa le nkgā sa kolobe ya motswetse.
(An uncircumcised boy smells like a he-goat;
An uncircumcised girl smells like a pig with a litter).

Further, as in dikoma, certain lines within the praises of one reciter may be found repeated at certain intervals. For instance, Jankie's Lafeta repeats the following lines on pages 29 and 39:

Ke makaditswe ke mohatsa Tenane,
Eo ereng ha a bona kgomo di hapuwa
A tsole mose a phutle fatshe.

(I was surprised by Tenane's wife
Who, on seeing cattle being captured,
Takes off her dress and strikes the ground with it).

And on pages 33 and 41 he says:

Ke makaditswe ke Ngakana Phatshwana,
Ke itse ke re a phekole bana ba ka
A hlaba podi, yaba o a tsamaya.

(I was surprised by Ngakana Phatshwana:
I asked him to doctor my children,
He slaughtered a goat and went away).

Finally, there are certain lines that are very popular and which occur in the praises of various reciters. In this connection compare:

Lefeta:

Rona le nnake re a etsisana,
A hape tshweu ke hape tshwana
Di yo tshwana ka mmala sakeng,
(My brother and I act alike,
He captures the white one and I the black one,
That they go and match their colours in the kraal)

Lenepa:

Rona le rangwane re a etsisana,
O hapa e tshweu ke hape e tshwana,
Di tle di tshwane ka mmala sakeng.

(My uncle and I act alike:

He captures the white one and I the black one,
That they may match their colours in the kraal).

B. DIPHOOFOLO: (ANIMALS).

6.3.11. The various animals that were known to the ancient Basotho were praised in various ways. Praises were composed for wild and domestic animals, thus indicating that the praisers were intrigued by them and their habits. Their observed habits and characteristics, such as hunting and their methods of running, are included in their praises. For instance, the eland, phofu - the animal that appears in most Bushmen paintings in Basutoland, was noted for its slow trot in running, which seldom developed into a full gallop. Hence its praises:

Mahlehla-thokwana

Tshehlana, mmankwanyane a loti.

(The **side**-ways trotter,

The female yellow one, the eland of the maluti).

Similarly, the fact that Phiri, the hyaena, hunts only by night is reflected in its praises:

Thamahane, ngwane madika tsholo la ka phirima,

Na motshehare o tshabang ho le dika ?

Ke tshaba melato nthong tsa batho.

(Hyaena, hunter by night;

Why are you afraid to hunt by day ?

I fear trouble in people's things).

Despite its sharp and poisonous teeth, the pig, kolobe, was nevertheless known to be very scared of lightning, in whose presence it never rejoiced:

Hodimo la esa kolobe a nona,
Phoofolo e nonang ha le sele.

Kolobe-masheleshele

E nakana di ka hanong,
Thipanyana ya maja ho ntse ho llwa.
(The sky cleared and the pig became fat,
The animal that fattens when it is clear.
Wild boar that runs about,
With little horns in the mouth,
Little knives for eating amid cries).

The hippo was well known for its diving and swimming ability. For this reason it was praised as:

Kubu ho hlapa di potlana,
Tse kgolo di a lala feela.
Kubu ya qwela, ha hlaha mokokotlo,
Ha hlaha le motshetlase wa basadi.
(It is the young hippos that swim,
The big ones merely lie on it.
The hippo dived and only its back showed,
Including its shin bone).

The same is true of the crocodile, kwena:

Lehlapahadi la bokubu le bokwena!
Le a hlape, le a lala, Bakwena,
Ha a na kubu, ha a na kelejane.
(The divining bone of the hippo and crocodile
families,
Swim and lie on it, Bakwena,
It has no hippo; it has no little things).

In the sphere of domestic animals, the beast, kgomo, is the one that was greatly praised. There are general praises for it as follows:

Monakaladi o moholo, banna,
Mmamonatjana, kapola-leshano;
Sehwete sa ho jewa ke mahosana.
Kgomo ha e mele meno a hodimo,
E mela a tlase, boseberwana,
Ya mela a jewang ke basadi.
Kgomo mmu! sella-moreneng,
Ha e lla metsaneng e a ronana.
Modimo o nko e metsi
Wa raselohlanya ditjhaba.

(The big edible bulb, oh man,
The little mother of niceness, opener of the mouth;
The carrot to be eaten by princes.
A beast does not grow the top row of teeth,
It grows the ones that are eaten by women.
A beast lows at the great place,
In ordinary villages its lowing is unbecoming.
The god with the wet nose
Of to cause nations to quarrel).

In addition to this general praise, however, each man could compose praises for his favourite cow or bull. A good example of this, are the praises of Fekisi's cattle as given by Mofolo.¹ A proud owner could also compose praises for his favourite horse or dog:

Ntja ya Ramatla, kgunong,
Mohlathe motsho-motsho
E tswang tlase, Matebeleng.

¹T. Mofolo: MOETI OA BOCHABELA, F.79.

(Ramatla's dog, kgunong
With the pitch black jaw,
That comes from down Nguni land).

6.3.12. A number of Sotho clans venerate certain animals which serve as their totems. Such for instance are the Bakwena, the people of the crocodile; Bataung, of the lion; Batlounge, of the elephant, and the Batshweneng, of the monkey. In the vast majority of such cases, the praises of the particular animal become those of the people who venerate it, e.g. those of the crocodile and the hippo above, are used by the Bakwena and Bakubung respectively.

6.3.13. The structural form and technique employed in these praises is basically the same as that found in dikoma and dithoko tsa makolwane above. Occasionally, use is made in them of archaic and obsolete forms like lohlanya for gabanya, cause to quarrel, and potlana for - nyenyane, small. Although - potlana appears in the dictionary, it is hardly ever used. In these praises, it appears with a subject concord instead of an adjectival concord:

Kubu ho hlapa di potlana.

(It is the small hippos that swim).

The first element of the adjectival concord is omitted in:

Mohlathe motsho-motsho.

(The pitch black jaw).

C. DITOLA: (DIVINING BONES)

6.4.14. Divining bones are made of old bones and horns of animals, especially cattle. They all have names.

There are four main ones, two of which are said to be male, and the other two, female. The male ones are called Kgolo or E tona, made of the hoof of a male beast, and Fhalafala e tona, which is made of the horn of a male beast. The corresponding female ones are Namahadi and Fhalafala e Namahadi. In addition to these four, there are numerous others that are made of bones of various animals whose names they bear, e.g. nku, tshwene, noko. Collectively, they are known as ditaola and are praised as follows:

Makokwana ke ntjana hlabana,
A boPhela a Morapedi,
Malaola tse phelang le tse shweleng.
(Makokwana is a dark brown little dog,
Of the house of Phela, son of Morapedi,
Diviners of the living and the dead).

6.4.15. In divining, the diviner may give them to the patient to scatter on the ground. However, before doing so, he must first sweep a little patch on the ground. The way in which they fall is called lewa, from - wa, fall. Each fall or lewa has its own name, significance and praises. On this basis, there are as many praises as there are mawa, falls, and their names. Mapetla¹ gives a total of thirty nine, while Motlamelle² says there are about thirty or more. As a rule, diviners are extremely secretive in all their doings. This is true also of the significance of the various falls of their divining bones. They, and they alone understand them. The same applies to their praises, which tend to heighten this secrecy

¹J. Mapetla: LIPHOOFOLO, LINONYANA LE LITHOKO TSA TSONA, P.23.

²M. Motlamelle: NGAKA EA MOSOTHO, P.38.

and mystery by occasionally employing a special vocabulary that is intelligible only to members of this profession:

Moholo se ntlhabe,
Se nkise mabelebetlwa;
Mabelebetlwa ke kopela-ditjhaba.
(Moholo, do not gore me,
Do not take me to the grave,
The grave is the container of nations).

The word mabelebetlwa above is confined to these praises. Others like it are Phae for malome, (uncle); mangana for dikgomo, (cattle); mahlehe for bonolo, (soft), and putlo for sehlopha, (a group). What is more, some of these forms are occasionally found with special concords, including the elision of the initial element of the adjectival concord:

Futlo tja boNoko di bolotse bosiu,
Tsa lahla moutlwa mong mophatshwa.
(A group of porcupines grazed by night,
and dropped a black and white quill).

6.4.16. Apart from this special vocabulary, there is also a number of archaic and obsolete words, including some of Nguni origin. Among such words are maloba for maoba, (day before yesterday). Cf. Tswana maloba; beduwa for shapuwa, (be beaten). Cf. Tswana bediwa; meolwane for meedi, (boundaries), Cf. Tswana melelwane; selo for ntho, (a thing) Cf. Tswana selo; and motwana for ngwana, (a child). Cf. Nguni umtwana, e.g.

Motho o matla-matla le motwana,
Kgomo e matla-matla le namane,
Nna ke matla-matla ke ya kgosing,
Ke sa ya bona see kgosi e se jang.

(A person runs with a child,
a cow runs with a calf,
As for me, I run to the great place
I am still going to see what the chief eats).

OR:

Molata towe o tla itatola jwang,
Ha etlara ha o itatola ebe o a beduwa?
(You foreigner, how will you excuse yourself,
Seeing that on doing so you will be beaten up?)

6.4.17. Further, ideophones, including compound nouns in apposition to ordinary nouns, are used freely in these praises:

Basadi, bommatajana-di-ngata,
Tswe! Tswe! sedibeng le mo seba,
Le bile le kgutla le mo seba.
(Women, mothers of numerous little news items,
Of talking, talking at the well backbiting him,
And even returning backbiting him).

OR:

Pela ya re tlwee! Tshwene ya re hoo!
Ya re hou! ya re hoo! Thamaha,
Phatshwana-tolodi ya mafika.
(The rock rabbit said tlwee!, the monkey, hoo!
The red and white spotted one said hou, hoo!
The black and white spotted one of the cliffs).

6.4.18. Some of the praises include proverbs and riddles. For instance, the first line of the following quotation from one of them, constitutes the riddle whose answer is ditaola, divining bones:

Fiela-fiela, Nkoko a tswale,

A se nne a tswalla matlakaleng.

(Sweep a little that Nkoko may bring forth his child,

He should not do so in bits of straw).

And in the following lines, the last one incorporates the proverb: Tsabo moshemane ha di jwe, i.e. those of a boy's family - cattle, are not eaten:

Fhee o ja mangana,

O jela kgomo tsa kgutsana kgudu ya Maphaong.

Mohla e holang kgutsana

Kgomo e tla di tseka

Hobane tsabo moshemane ha di jwe.

(The uncle eats cattle;

He has eaten the cattle of an orphan at Mophaong.

The day the orphan grows up

It will demand them

Because those of a boy's family are not eaten).

6.4.19. A striking feature of some of these praises is the occasional use of negative forms of the present indicative as possessive stems:

Tumi ya merarana ya kwenanyane,

Ya ha ke rare, ya ha ke lome,

Ke tla loma maisao ke hodile.

(Tumi of the little twister of the little crocodile,

Of I do not twist, I do not bite,

I shall bite in years to come when I am grown up).

6.4.20. Finally, a number of praises for various falls, contain names of tribal groups and are said to be applicable to them. Among these groups are the Bakwena and the Batlounge.

In all such cases, the praises of the particular fall, lawa, incorporate those of the totem that is venerated by the particular group. For example, the one that is said to be applicable to the Bakwena is:

Majwe a ha Hlapadiba,
a hlapeng Bakwena di a lale,
Ha a na kubu, ha a na kelejane,
Ha a na selomi se lomang ka metsing.
(Stones of the deep swimmers,
Swim in it ye Bakwena, glide on it,
It has no hippo, it has no little things,
It has no biter that bites in the water).

In this connection, compare the praises of the crocodile in 6.3.11 above; also note the use of the animal concord di in the second line, as though the poet was mentally equating the preceding Bakwena with dikwena, the actual swimmers. The one for the Batloug is said to be:

Tumi ya mabone a tlowatsana,
a tlou se kene ka lenyele hae,
Lenyele le lebe, le malobolobo,
Lenyele la fubela tlou maokgola.
Mehlaleng ya lona ya ditlou,
Ha eba madi, ha eba malobolobo.
Phophotha tseba tlou maokgola,
Tlowana di hole di o fihlele.
(Tumi of the sight of a female elephant,
Of elephant do not enter home secretly.
Secrecy is bad, it is full of graves,
Secrecy discoloured a running elephant.
In your tracks of elephants

There was blood and graves,
Shake your ear, elephant that runs,
That young elephants may grow to your size).

D. DITHOKO

6.5.21. These are traditional praises of chiefs and warriors.

They are based on actual deeds or actions connected with the particular individual who is praised. In a community that could neither read nor write, they constituted an authentic record of past events in the history of the individual and his tribe. The various battles in which he participated, as well as his achievements in them, are all included in his praises. And in view of the fact that they were recited in public, in the presence of his comrades in arms, whatever a man said regarding himself in such battles could easily be checked and verified. Chiefs either composed their own praises or were praised by their official praisers, diroki, with the singular seroki, from roka, praise. In such cases, i.e. the latter, the praises are usually in the third person. In the case of the former, as well as that of individual warriors who invariably composed their own, they are in the first person.

6.5.22. Dithoko are usually confined to chiefs and warriors, i.e. grown-ups who were attached to definite military regiments. But this is not the whole truth, for it is also true to say that individual deeds of bravery on the part of a youth, who did not yet belong to an established military regiment, could and did result in such an one composing praises for himself on the basis of his manly deeds. A classical example here, is that of Lepoqo who, as a youth, vanquished the elderly Ramonaheng and then praised himself as follows:

Ke nna Moshweshwe Moshwashwaila wa ha Kadi,
Lebeola le beotseng Ramonaheng ditedu;
Le ho hola ha di eso hole,
Di ya sala di hola maisao.

(I am Moshweshwe, the barber of Kadi's house,
The barber who shaved Ramonaheng's beard.
It has not even grown yet,
It will remain growing in years to come).

It was after this incident that Lepogo became generally known as Moshweshwe, a name that is based on the monosyllabic ideophone shwe! (of shaving). It is possible, though not certain, that similar praises by less fortunate youths disappeared before they were recorded. Note the use of the first person here, which tends to disappear when Moshweshwe is later praised as the king of the Basotho.¹

6.5.23. In reciting his praises, the reciter jumps forward from the assembled gathering brandishing his spear, and stops in an open space where he can be seen by all. He then starts his praises in a high voice, moving to and fro all the time, occasionally stabbing the ground with his spear to indicate the number of victims killed in battle. In the words of Cook, he starts off "like a fire-engine."² This refers to the speed with which he rattles them off. The raising of the voice in this manner, is probably due to the fact that as they were recited in public, the reciter had to raise it in order to make himself heard to all present. The first thing that he usually mentions is his name, as if introducing himself to the gathering.

¹Cf. Z.D. Mangoaela: LITTHOKO TSA MARENA A BASOTHO, P.5.

²P.A.W. Cook: HISTORY AND IZIBONGO OF THE SWAZI CHIEFS, BANTU STUDIES, Vol.V, No.2, June, 1931.

Cf. a similar practice with makolwane. The same thing happens when a chief is praised by his seroki. This name may be his real name or one that he has acquired or coined for himself on the basis of his deeds, e.g.

Maama, Sekobotela sa Lekena,
Kobotela sa Raletshabisa, tlake!

(Maama, the stooper of Lekena,
The stooper of Raletshabisa, the Vulture!). (Maama)

OR:

Semamarela sa Mohato, Lekena,
Semamarela-batho,
Mamarela batho ba ha Sepiriti!
(The sticker of Mohato, Lekena,
The sticker on to people,
Stick on the people of Sprigg). (Lerothodi).

This is then followed by the names of his parents and relatives, his regiment and enemies, as well as the various geographical areas in which he may have fought or passed. In this manner then, the name of the individual is expanded, elaborated, and various glimpses or items about him given. His entire life-history is thus told in broad outline, and those who know him can fill in the various details within this broad frame-work. For example, in his praises, the late Seeiso, father to the present paramount chief of Basutoland, bears, inter alia, the following names which provide such a frame-work:

Seeiso; Tshwana-Mantata; Nakangwedi sa Mokgatjhane;
Mohale wa Mokgotlong - which is where he was placed by his father among the Tlokwa and among whom he married his second wife, mother to the present paramount chief, who was born at Mokgotlong; Tladi ya motse wa Mohato; Mosala le

dikgutsana tsa Lesotho; Mohale wa sehola jwaleka Tjhaka.

Another factor connected with names, is that various reciters call themselves by numerous ferocious animals, including fearful and dangerous natural phenomena:

Tladi e ntsho ya haboSeeiso,

Ya tjhesa Maseru tsatsi le rapame.

(The black lightning of the house of Seeiso,

Burnt Maseru in the late afternoon). (Maama).

Tshukudu ya Lekena, Lehlabatshwana,

Sebata sa rora meroro se tshabeha,

Tau ya rora e ba bona haufi.

(The rhinoceros of Lekena, Lehlabatshwana,

The wild beast roared, it being fearful to behold,

The lion roared, seeing them near it). (Griffith).

A tla ka sona Tau ya Dinare,

A jaka ka sona ho ditjhaba!

Kwena e eme leseding la thota,

Ya ema lenaka le se le tjhotjhile,

Leihlo la hanella Maloting.

(He came with it, the lion of the Buffaloes,

And stayed with it among foreigners.

The crocodile stood in the middle of the veld,

Stood with its horn already sharply pointed,

Its eye firmly fixed on the maluti). (Jonathane Molapo)

Sekgohola sa Mokgatjhane, qwane,

Sefako sa ngwananyana Nkwebe.

(The heavy rain of Mokgatjhane, the viper,

The hail of the daughter of Nkwebe). (Griffith).

6.5.24. In some instances, however, the reciter may start off by addressing himself to the gathering, urging them to be quiet and listen to what he has to say:

Thea tsebe o mamele ho Selomo,
O mamele ho mohale wa Lerothodi.
(Cork your ear and listen to Selomo,
Listen to the warrior of Lerothodi). (Rafolatsane
Letsie).

OR:

Thea tsebe, o mamele, o sethoto,
O mamele ho lothe sa Lerothodi.
(Cork your ear and listen, you are a fool,
Listen to the companion of Lerothodi). (Sediane).

6.5.25. In the main body of the praises, the reciter may refer to several things. He may refer to the build and personal appearance of the individual he is praising. Thus Griffith who was a man of short stature is described as follows:

Kerefese ha ho motho a teng,
Le ka mahlo o ka mo tlola hodimo.
(Griffith is a very short person,
One can easily overlook him).

On the other hand, the striking personality of Lerothodi Mojela is described as follows:

Naledi e tshweu-tshweu ya Ramatheola,
E tshweu-tshweu ya Ramakgobalo.

O mosehla moshemane wa Tshakajwe,
Ka bosehla o tshwana le lehlabathe,
Ka bosweu o tshwana le dinaledi;

Bongata bo a hana, bo a latola,
Bo re o tshwana le mafube hantle!
(The white shining star of Ramatheola,
The white shining one of Ramakgobalo.

He is yellow-coloured, the son of Tshakajwe;
In his colour he resembles sand,
In his whiteness he resembles the stars.
The majority refuse and dispute;
They say he is identical with the dawn!).

He may refer to geographical areas from which he started on his way to battle. In such cases, the narrative element which is uppermost, can be very beautiful indeed:

Kwena ya tloha Dikgwele e palame,
Mphodi o hahaba le lefatshe,
Ya ehlwa kgorong ha Kgamolane.
Ba mo theola batho ba ha Masopha,
Ba hlaha-hlaha ka kgorwana tsohle,
Ba hlaha dikgorong le dilomong,
Ba betsa ka dikoto le ka marumo,
Ba mmetsa ho ya Phuthiatsana!
(The crocodile left mount Dikgwele mounted,
With mist crawling on the ground,
It went up the pass at Kgamolane's.
They forced him down, the people of Masopha,
They appeared from all angles,
Appeared at passes and precipices,
Attacked him with knobkerries and spears,
Attacked him as far as the small Caledon river).

OR:

Kwena ya dikwena,
Ya Feete le Mokgatjhane
E tswa kuka makgomo ditsenene,
Fakeng tsa Makelaketla le Mangaung.
Yare di le Motati ba mo lahlisa,
Ba mo etsetsa ntwana ya ditlwebelele.
(The crocodile of crocodiles,
Of Feete and Mokgatjhane,
Is from capturing cattle with spears
Twixt Winburg and Bloemfontein.
And when they were at Excelsior, they deprived
him of them,
And engaged him in a pitched battle). (Masopha)

In the same strain, he may also include actual words
uttered in battle or words of advice directed to the
leader by his men:

Yare ho kena ya bua le Diodi,
Ya re, "Bahlankana, le ba hlabe ka marumo,
Le ba hlabe le ba abela dinonyana."

(And when it entered it spoke to the Diodi regiment
and said, "Men, you must stab them with spears,
Stab them and allocate them to the birds).

(Masopha).

OR:

Ba re: "Letlama, qhanolla pere di fule,
Ntwana boholo ke ya hosasa."
(They said, "Letlama off-saddle the horses and let
them graze,
The battle great is for the morrow"). (Griffith).

6.5.26. The reciter may occasionally be sarcastic, and even insulting. For instance, Lerothodi, who was the pillar of resistance against the surrender of guns in 1880, refers to the British as follows:

Ra batla re songwa ke baditjhaba,

Banna ba kwana Kapa le Bay,

Ha le re ba England mahata!

(We were nearly scoffed at by foreigners,

The men of the Cape and Table Bay,

Not to mention those of England, the deceivers!).

Again:

Ho wele makgomo, ho wele mapodi,

Ho be ho wele manku a Maburu;

Ho wele makgomo le Matebele

Le ana a heno a ha Mokotedi.

(Cattle and goats must fall in,

Even the sheep of the Boers must fall in;

Cattle and the Ndebele must fall in,

Including these of your house, the house of Mokotedi)

(Poshodi Mokgatjhane).

OR:

Ha hana le lenyane Letebejana la Peeka,

Motho le qooma a sa e tena,

A re kgomo di wela Qele, di a tshela.

(There refused a small little Ndebele son of Peeka,

He not even wearing a cover over his penis,

And said cattle will cross the Orange river).

6.5.27. He may give a graphic description of a warrior going into battle, or the results of his participation in it:

Eitse hola e hotela, e tuka,
E batla e aba kgabo e kgubedu,
Ha kena leubane la mong a me,
Ntja ya kena e hlahlile mahlo
E behile meno lepalapaleng.

(It happened that as it caught on,
Nearly becoming a red conflagration,
There entered my master's hawk;
The dog went in with its eyes wide open,
Its teeth exposed in a dangerous way). (Masopha).

OR:

A tjhaya fatshe Morena wa Matlama,
A tjhaya fatshe ha fateha mangope;
Tlamana tsa bajwa hara lehlabula,
Otlwanyana tsa tjhela mabaleng,
Difate tsa foforeha makgapetla,
Dirobele tsa phurusetša matlung,
Nonyana tse behelang difateng!

(He struck the ground, the chief of the Matlama,
He struck the ground and dongas emerged;
Plants became frost-bitten in summer,
Huts were burnt to the ground,
Trees shed their bark,
Sparrows fluttered about in houses -
Birds that normally lay their eggs on trees).

(Griffith).

Despite this graphic representation of the effects of war, some reciters occasionally resort to euphemism, as if to blunt the sting of death. Thus in describing the fall of a man who has been shot, Maama simply says:

Mong a pere e putswa a rwabala.

(The rider of the grey horse slept).

OR:

Eitse ha re bapala, motho a wa.
(And as we played, a person fell).

6.5.28. In the vast majority of cases, the reciter does not conclude his praises in any formal way; he merely tapers off to the end. In a few cases, however, the ending is exclamatory, depicting the traditional prancing to and fro mentioned earlier, but which is now accelerated to a faster rate. He thus combines two things, as Damane¹ rightly points out, namely, the act of praising as well as that of jumping up and down, i.e. ho tlala. Thus towards the end of his praises, Morahanye Makgetha says:

"He! He! ke a tla moo,
Ke tlilo ja ka Motlejwa le Mohlaphiso."
(He! He! I am coming there,
I am coming to eat by means of Motlejwa and
Mohlaphiso).

OR:

Hele-hele! Bonang! Hele, bonang!
Le bone wa lona Nare ya mo thula,
Motho a thulwa ke Nare ya Josepfa,
Ya boMosa, ya boMphaphathi,
Dinaka meutlwa, metjotjomela!
(Hele-hele! Look! Hele! Look!
See one of you being struck down by the buffalo,
son of Joseph,
A person was struck down by Joseph's son, a buffalo,
Of the house of Mosa and Mphaphathi,
With thorn-like horns, sharp pointed things!).
(Jonathane Molapo).

¹M. Damane: MARATH'A LILEPE A PUO EA SESOTHO, P.11.

FORM:

6.6.29. The form and technique of dithoko, are to a large extent bound up with what they were intended for, as well as the manner in which they were recited. They were basically intended for the ear and not the eye; for a listening public, and not a reading one. For this reason, the conveyance of thought and action, embellished in various stylistic ways, was urpermost. Such thoughts and actions were conveyed in poetic language without, however, following each other logically or systematically from beginning to end. Neither were they given in any great detail, in that only the major points were mentioned in a telegraphic style, and the rest left to the listeners' imagination. In this process, the basic technique employed is that of introducing a single thought, which is then developed, expanded and concluded. It is then followed by another thought, different from it, but which is similarly treated. The result is a series of independent thoughts, which follow one another without any due consideration as to their meaningful sequence or agreement. Each separate thought is made up of several lines, at the end of which there is a pause in its onward flow. Such a pause constitutes what may be called a verse or a stanza in dithoko. A series of such pauses or stanzas, make up a praise poem.

The various lines within a stanza, are related to each other by parallelism, i.e. a certain similarity between two parts or members of a sentence, whose words correspond to one another. The first member may raise an expectation, which is satisfied or completed by the second,

e.g.

Tladi e ntsho ya haboSeeiso,
Ya tjhesa Maseru tsatsi le rapame.
(The black lightning of the house of Seeiso,
Burnt Maseru in the late afternoon).

OR:

Tshwara thebe e tiya, wa Rasenate,
O a bona fatshe leno le a ya.
(Hold fast your shield, son of Rasenate,
You see your country is going). (Lerothodi).

The flow or progress of thought between these pairs of lines is not interrupted until the distinctive pause that marks the stanza is reached.

As already pointed out, the various stanzas within a praise-poem do not follow one another logically. And because of this, mental gaps and jumps occur in the course of one and the same praise-poem. It was probably in view of this that Prof. Lestrade said, *inter alia*, "that the construction of sentences tends to be laconic and staccato."¹ In this connection too, compare the stringing together of various episodes around one central figure in the longer ditshomo. The same thing obtains in dithoko:

Semamarela sa Mohato, Lekena,
Semamarela-batho,
Mamarela batho ba ha Sepiriti!
Otlang batho ka nare ya dithebe
Mekwetla e ba fahle.
Kwena ya sheba ka hara bodiba,
Ya sheba ka mahlo a le mafubedu,
Bashanayana ba Makgowa ba wela!

¹G.P. Lestrade: THE CRITIC, October, 1935.

(The sticker of Lohato, Lekena,
The sticker on to people,
Stick on the people of Sprigg'.
Strike people by means of buffalo shields
That their backs might get into their eyes.
The crocodile looked into an abyss,
It looked with its eyes red
And European boys fell in!). (Lerothodi).

There are three distinct pauses here, i.e. stanzas. The first three lines constitute an entity by themselves. The next two likewise, and the last three also go together. Thus the various lines of about the same length are combined into groups of two or three, the end of each group marking a pause in the particular thought, and thereby constituting a stanza. From this, it is clear that the basic form of dithoko, as well as that of dikoma, is a couplet of two lines, the second either repeating or in some other way reinforcing or completing the thought started in the first one.

6.6.30. As a result of the writing of European poetry, dithoko are usually written in verse form. But they could also be written in prose form without, however, affecting or altering their melody in any way. For example, the last three lines above would not in any way be affected by the arrangement:

Kwena ya sheba ka hara bodiba; ya sheba ka mahlo
a le mafubedu, bashanyana ba Makgowa ba wela.

On the contrary, the parallelism of the various sentences comes out more fully under this arrangement.

The poetic melody of these parallel lines is ensured by the presence of rhythm, i.e. a recurrence of stressed and unstressed syllables in a relatively regular manner. This rhythm is neither rigid nor uniform in that the praise-poet composed his praises as a result of inspiration within him, exultation, and did not have to conform to a given poetic structure that is meticulously exact or regular in form. Unlike a Western poet, his poetry does not depend on rhyme and meter; it depends on a balance of thought, conveyed by a corresponding balance of sentence, which is accompanied by rhythm:

Sékgohola sa Mokgatjhane, qwane,
Séfako sa ngwananyana Nkwebe,
Ha o 're sa ngwananyana Lengau ?
Se tlohile hae pula e 'ena,
Lefafatsane le 'entse mohodi,
Bahlankana ba tshaba ho palama.

(The down pour of Mokgatjhane, the viper,
The hail of the daughter of Nkwebe,
Why not say that of the daughter of Lengau?
It left home amidst rain
The drizzle having turned itself into mist,
The young men being afraid to mount). (Griffith).

OR:

Tladi e 'ntsho ya habo Seeiso
Ya 'tjhesa Maseru 'tsatsi le 'rapame,
Tarauru a 'ba a tswa a betseha
Paka motshehare wa mantsiboya.

E no 'ba o a 'bona Mabekebeke!
Ha o 'bone o 'bone Mabekebeke
Dithunya ha di 'shebisana melomo.

(The black lightning of the house of Seeiso,
Burnt Maseru in the late afternoon.

(Trower bolted and ran away,
About the middle of the afternoon.
I hope you do see Sir Bartle Frere
If you have seen, you have seen Sir Bartle Frere,
When guns exchange fire). (Maama)

6.6.31. another structural pattern is that of linking up various lines by commencing the next line with the last or middle word or words of the previous line:

Kwena, hlabana, lefatshe le a ya,
Fatshe la ya o le tswaletswe.
Pheta o shwele a o file lerumo,
a o file la dikgomo le la batho.
(Kwena, fight, the country is going,
The country for which you were born is going.
Pheta died having given you a spear,
Having given you that for cattle and that for
people). (Lerothodi).

Mohale a Feete, Manamolela,
Namolela mafutsana le marena,
Mafutsana le marena re tsietswe.
(The warrior of Feete, the protector,
Protect the poor and the chiefs,
The poor and chiefs we are stunned). (Lerothodi).

Note the sonorous and alliterative effect of nasals in this last example. Nasals may also give the effect of plasticity as in:

Semamarela sa Mohato, Lekena,
Semamarela-batho,
Mamarela batho ba ha Sepiriti! (Lerothodi).

6.6.32. another structural feature is that of repetition.

The same predicate may be repeated several times:

A bua le bana ba banyane,

A bua le Hlwele le Moropotsana,

A bua le Maopeng Sethole,

A bua le Mmuso wa Sekonyela.

(He spoke to the children of his brothers,

He spoke to Hlwele and Moropotsna,

Spoke to Maopeng Sethole,

Spoke to Mmuso, son of Sekonyela). (Selebalo

Moshweshwe).

Alternatively, the word-order may be inverted, and an identical predicate which, in the first instance, is followed by its subject and qualificative, repeated twice. These two predicates are then followed by two others which are identical but different from the first two, the first one also being followed by its own subject and qualificative:

Sa kgobohelwa sebata sa Matlama,

Sa kgobohelwa sa re se a ba phutha.

Ba monoketsa batho ba ha Masopha,

Ba monoketsa ba re ba ya baleha.

(It became disgusted the beast of the Matlama,

It became disgusted and wanted to gather them.

They scattered the people of Masopha's,

They scattered and tried to run away) (Griffith)

Note the complete balance between the members of both pairs here. The first line of the first stanza is matched by the first line of the second stanza, and the second one of the first, by the second one of the second.

Repetition also occurs in those instances where separate items are enumerated. In such cases, a series of conjunctive adverbs in le are found following one another, and the predicate employed is the same in all cases:

Ditente e di hlothetse hodimo,

Le dikgomo e setse e di nkile,

Le dipere e setse e di nkile,

Le dinku e setse e di nkile.

(It has uprooted tents,

And the cattle it has already taken,

And horses it has already taken,

And the sheep it has already taken). (Bereng Letsie).

6.6.33. A favourite technique is the use of metaphor, which is the very soul of dithoko. As already pointed out, various reciters identify themselves with various ferocious animals, as well as dangerous natural phenomena like thunder and lightning. As lions, they roar; and as lightning, they thunder and explode, while as vultures, they duck and hide themselves by stooping down:

Tau ya rora e ba bona haufi.

(The lion roared on seeing them near it). (Griffith)

Sa palama fako sa Mokgatjhane.

(It set off, the hail of Mokgatjhane). (ditto).

Griffith ke letolo.

(Griffith is lightning). (ditto)

Letlaka ha le betswa la Lerothodi le a inama.

(When the vulture of Lerothodi is struck, it
ducks down).

(Maama).

In a few instances, however, they identify themselves with beautiful natural phenomena like the rainbow or the early morning star:

Mookodi wa naha ya Moshweshwe,
Wa tshehetsa maru le lefatshe,
Ha lefatshe le tetema.

(The rainbow of the land of Moshweshwe,
Supported the sky and the earth,
When the earth shook).

(Lerothodi)

Naledi ya meso ya boLetshabisa,
Naledi e hlehang le mafube,
Ya na ya hlaha ha dikgoho di lla.

(The early morning star, brother of Letshabisa,
The early morning star that appears with the dawn,
Appeared at cork crow)

(Griffith).

Although metaphor is greatly used, the simile is occasionally found too, sometimes in the same environment as the former:

Letlama, leru la hlaha Botjhabela,
La lopalla eka pula e a na,
Yaka kgwedi e hlaha Thabadimaghwa,
Yaka naledi tsa meso ha di hlaha,
Mafube a rakana le dilemela!

(Letlama, a cloud appeared from the East,
And went up as though it were raining,
Like a moon appearing from snow-capped mountains,
Like morning stars when they appear,
Dawn meeting with the Pleiades).

(Griffith).

Ngwana Morena ke kgaka-mmalane,

Ngwana Morena ke nanabolele,

Eka kgaka e thwena e ya naheng!

(The chief's child is a guinea fowl,

The chief's child is a rare mythical animal,

He is like a guinea fowl running to the veld).

(Letsie II).

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- 6.7.34. An outstanding characteristic of dithoko is the use of obscure allusions, which make it difficult for the modern generation to understand what the reciter was referring to. His contemporaries may have understood him, or could get the necessary explanations from those who did; but later generations, with no historical records to refer to, or old people sufficiently aged to know what is alluded to, are at a complete loss in such cases. The older the praises therefore, the more difficult they are to understand in every respect:

Mohlolo o le hloletse, Maphuthing!

Kgomo ya ha Mmankwane, Seputswe,

E pudutswana ka mahlo kgomohadi,

Phuthing mona e tlile e sa lema,

E ne e ribolotse dinakana hanyane.

(A miracle has befallen you, the Phuthing,

The cow of Mmankwane's, Seputswa,

The female one, grey in colour,

Came to Phuthing here without horns pointing to

opposite directions,

It had small horns just beginning to grow).(Datsebe).

But in those cases where historical records are available or the praises relatively near to our own time, such as the gun war of 1880, some of the allusions may be explained by those who have the necessary background and information. For instance, when Masopha says:

Makatolle wa kgoro di katilwe,
Ho bile ho katilwe le ka Barwana ba Tjhere,
Bongata, bona, bo di hlwele ka mathoko,
Ba ehlwa ka kgorwana tsa basadi,
Ba na ba ehlwa ha ntshusumetse.

(The opener of passes being blocked,
Blocked even by the Bushmen of Gert,
The majority scaled them on the sides,
Scaled them through female passes,
Scaled them by pushing each other up)

he is describing an incident that actually occurred and whose history is known. He is describing the fall of Jwala-Boholo, Sekonyela's stronghold, which had but one entrance to it. This was an opening that was closed by means of a big boulder that could easily be opened from within, but which was well-nigh impossible to open from without. It had been constructed with the help of Bushmen under Gert, and was the only place that was heavily guarded in times of war. When Moshweshwe decided to destroy Sekonyela in 1848, he had no hesitation in picking on Masopha, the best embodiment of the fighting skill and military genius of the house of Mokotedi, to go and open it. The others, i.e. Moshweshwe and his other sons, scaled it from behind and on its sides, pushing each other up as soldiers do in such cases. Hence:

Bongata, bona, bo di hlwele ka mathoko,
Ba ehlwa ka kgorwana tsa basadi,
Ba na ba ehlwa ha ntshusumetse.

For this reason, the ever popular Masopha, "Seodi sa boNthe le Mahlape", calls himself, inter alia:

Tshiya ya motse wa Mohato, Masopha,
A ema a lebella Sekonyela,
Mohale a mano mangata-ngata.

(The pillar of the household of Mohato, Masopha,
Stood and watched Sekonyela,
The warrior with numberless tricks).

He succeeded in opening this heavily guarded boulder from without and therefore:

Yena o hlwele ka kgoro tsa banna,
O hlwele ka hare, setlebe-tlebeng.

(He ascended through the passes of men,
Ascended in the centre, amidst overwhelming odds).

Thus a few lines of dithoko may be packed with fascinating historical events.

6.7.35. They are also characterised by a fair sprinkling of archaic words. Such words, however, are not as numerous as they are generally supposed to be, and as such, are not as great a handicap in the understanding of dithoko as the obscure allusions. What is more, some of them may be understood from the comparative angle with the other Sotho languages. e.g.

Le dipere e setse e di nkile.

The form setse is Tswana, corresponding to Southern Sotho se, already, as in: Le dipere e se e di nkile.

Truly archaic forms, however, do occur, such as the forms underlined in the following quotations:

kgomo ya Batlokwa e rwetse mapupu.
(The Tlokwa cow carries mapupu). (Mokgele Moletsane)

Pitsi ekare di sa rate ho botha
Tsa kinwa kinare, tsa kinwa matolo.
(Are horses on not wanting to lie down
Tied. kinare, tied on the knees?) (Tledima Hlalele)

Kgomo di pehilwe sepohojaneng
Ke mong a tsona, Mmanthatisi.
(Cattle have been put on sepohojaneng,
By their owner, Mmanthatisi). (Moletsane).
Fehilwe is the Sothoised perfect form of Tswana Pega,
(put on top of).

6.7.36. An interesting characteristic of dithoko is the apparent ease and readiness with which various reciters Sothoise words of foreign origin, including foreign names. It would seem as if the reciters' fancy was tickled by such forms as:

Ha tswa dipotsanyane le dilamiki.
(There came out kids and lammertjies, i.e. lambs).
(Foshodi Mokgatjhane).

Thebe e phatshwa, e thamaha,
Ya rata ho praata.
(The black and white shield, the red one with
white spots,
Wanted to speak - afr. praat). (Ntabanyane).

Le ba bolaye thwesene le sekete.

(You should kill them a thousand - Afr. duisend,
and thousand).

Yare mohlankana a dutseng jara a thoba;

Ba dutseng disešemane ba itulele.

(The young man who had spent a year - Afr. jaar,
absconded,

Those who had spent six months - Afr. ses maande,
should remain). (Lerothodi)

Mohale wa qhoba - sekapa, Matela,

Qhoba sekapa, makoloi a eme.

(The warrior who drives sheep - Afr. skape, Matela,
Drive the sheep, the wagons should stop). (Matela I)

O na nke dikgomo Manyanyetsi,

Tsa Maburu le Matebele,

Toromakara hammoho Letsika!

(He lifted cattle at Manyanyetsi,

Those of the Boers and the Matebele,

All mixed together - Afr. deurmekaar, Letsika).

(Letsika Matela).

Also note the following names:

Sepiriti for Sprigg

Majorobela for Major Bell

Tarauru for Trower

Borane or Boranda for Brand

Fepenare for Wepener.

The same process obtains in the case of Nguni words and
names:

A re kgomo di wela Qele, di/a tshela.

(He said cattle cross the Orange river, they cross).

Cf: Nguni ukuwela (to cross), and i Gqili, (the Orange river), which is Senou in Southern Sotho.

(Foshodi Mokgatjhane).

Thamaha e kang ngoka

da bang ba re Molotja, Mosebongo!

(The red one with small white spots like a hyaena,

Others said Molotja, Mosebongo!) (Sekgonyana

Moshweshwe).

Cf: Xhosa: ingcuka, (a hyaena); Mlotshwa and Busobengwe, which are iziduko, Sotho, diboko.

This process seems to point to the basic nature of the Sotho, i.e. friendliness and willingness to try and speak the other man's language, no matter how difficult its sound structure may be. A Sotho among several Nguni speakers, will not hesitate to join them in speaking their language. A Xhosa, on the other hand, will stick to his at all times, irrespective of whether or not the others understand him.

6.7.37. They are also characterised by a certain amount of poetic licence. Various reciters coin their own words at will; use unusual stylistic devices and constructions, including numerous compound forms.

Ba mo etsetsa ntwā ya ditlwebelele.

(They engaged him in a fierce battle). (Masopha)

O mollo o tjhesang ba-o-besi

Mo-o-ori a ka phumoha dipala.

(You are a fire that burns those who make it,
The one who sits round it can develop burns). (Masopha)

Mo-na-ngwana a mo hlathe ka lenala.

(The parent of the child should pinch him). (ditto)

Sa hlaha ka pelo-mpeta

Seodi sa boNthe le Mahlape.

(He appeared with great anger
Seodi, brother to Nthe and Mahlape). (ditto)

Nkau moreneng maobane o ba ile ho Moshweshwe.

(Nkau had gone to Moshweshwe at the great place
yesterday). (ditto).

Nke itihele bodiba ke bo bona.

(I cannot throw myself into an abyss seeing it)
(Lerothodi).

Lekena ke ra-melato-ha-e-fele

E sa be e phethwe ke ba-mo-tswadi.

(Lekena is a man who is always in trouble/debts,
They will ultimately be wiped out by his beggeters).
(Lerothodi³).

Tsolo le lesootho le tswa bitswa,

Le bitswa ke ngwana wa mong a lo.

(The dark brown thunder has been called,
It has been called by its master's child).
(Poshodi Mokgatjhane).

6.7.38. Finally, they are characterised by the presence of semantic tone. There is one form in particular whose tone sequence is often misunderstood. It is the word banana in the quotation below. This word may either be a noun, meaning girls, in which case its tone sequence is LHH; or a verb, as below, meaning to burn, as of flames, in which case its tone sequence is LLL:

Lehohoretse le tsamaile moo,
La hohoretse dipheo la tjhesa,
Tladi tsa benya, mello ya banana,
Ya sala eka di beetse thabeng,
Ho ngwetsi ya marena, ngwetsi ya batho kaofela,
Lekena la Rasenate.

(The bird of thunder went past there,
It spread its wings and burnt,
Lightning flickered, fires burst into flames,
as though they had laid eggs on a mountain,
To the daughter in law of chiefs, the daughter
in law of all people,
Lekena, son of Rasenate) (Lerothodi).

CONCLUSION:

6.8.39. There are three main types of dithoko: those of boy-initiates, animals and divining bones, and those of kings and warriors. The former praise themselves on imaginary things; but in some instances, there is a grain of truth in their praises, which may also include a little

song known as lengae. The various animals, on the other hand, were praised in terms of their known habits and characteristics, thus showing how closely they were observed. Kings and warriors praised themselves on actual deeds. Their praises constitute a factual record of past events, and were recited to a listening rather than a reading public. No details are given and the various things alluded to in passing, are mainly responsible for their incomprehension. They are characterised, inter alia, by repetition, parataxis or linking as well as parallelism.

CHAPTER VII

DIQETO : (CONCLUSIONS).

INTRODUCTION:

7.0.1. Southern Sotho traditional literature falls into two main sections, namely, prose and poetry. The first section comprises:

- (a) Myths.
- (b) Legends.
- (c) Fables.
- (d) Folk-tales.
- (e) Riddles.
- (f) Proverbs.

The second section, on the other hand, is made up of:

- (a) Songs:
 - (i) action songs.
 - (ii) Ceremonial songs.
- (b) Praises:
 - (i) Boy initiates.
 - (ii) Animal praises.
 - (iii) Divining bones.
 - (iv) Dithoko.

In the relevant sections of this essay, attention was drawn to the forms and techniques employed by each of these items. What follows below, are various conclusions drawn from all of them as a body of literature that deals with a single national entity - the Sotho. This has been done because literature, oral or written is a reliable source and record of the pulse of the community with which it deals. It reflects its national thoughts and feelings, culture and customs, as well as its general outlook on life. This flows from the fact that basically, it deals /.....

with life's problems as they are, and in which the men and women of the time and place are involved. As actors on the stage, the stage of life, on which life's drama is gradually unfolded in all its multifarious ways, the various actors may indirectly influence us by what they say and do, and thus pass invaluable information on to us. This is particularly so in the case of traditional literature, in which the actors may be one's own ancestors, whose united voice may thus be heard ringing down the corridor of time, speaking directly to their descendants, through some of the genres of their traditional literature. All that was dear and fundamental to them; all that was sacred and life-giving, proved and tested in the hard school of reality that gives no quarter, is embeded in them. For this reason, they are more than worth preserving. The various conclusions that follow hereunder, flow directly from this body of literature, and in as much as it deals with life and its problems, they also concern themselves with similar issues. At the same time, however, in view of the importance and utter necessity of preserving African traditional literature, positive recommendations will be made under general conclusions, regarding the role that it should play in African schools and Universities:

MYTHS:

- 7.1.2. Myths are answers to certain questions. In these answers, the progenitors of the Sotho give us their own peculiar interpretation of certain universal human problems that have confronted mankind everywhere. Like those of other people elsewhere, their answers are a progressive revelation of their own nation's mind and character. As such then, they constitute their own peculiar contribution to the

intellectual and spiritual possessions of mankind.

7.1.3. The friendship that was noted between man and animal, particularly the smaller ones, seems to point in no uncertain terms to the basic nature of the idea of self-help. Man must first do something in an attempt to help himself before external aid can be extended to him. The same idea finds concrete expression in a number of proverbs like:

Moketa ho tsoswa o itekang.

(God helps those who help themselves).

Botswa ha bo jelwe.

(Nothing of value is easily obtained).

Mphe-mphe e a lapisa, mokane, motho o kgonwa
ke sa ntlo ya hae.

(Give me, give me is tiring, friend; a person is
satisfied by what is his own).

On a larger scale, this idea may be taken to symbolise the necessity for friendship between big and small nations. Like the small animals, to whom baffling human problems, such as inability to bear children, are as simple as pie, the small nations may possess an insight into similar problems that confront the big ones, but which the latter may not have. Because of their small world and its concentrated human problems, the small nations may bring sanity and reality to bear on the big ones, by getting them to focus attention on basic human problems that confront ordinary men and women in their daily lives, and thus alleviate human misery and suffering that would otherwise be clouded by what are regarded as major world problems. These may be important in themselves; but equally important, is the realisation that while engaged in them, there may be hungry and ill-clad people on one's door-steps

for whom life is not what it should be. The introduction of this type of note by the small nations would be beneficial to the big ones by getting them to maintain a proper balance and perspective in their dealings with human beings at home and abroad. In turn, the big ones can, from their vast resources and technical know-how, help the small ones in their struggle for existence; in their fight against disease and poverty, as well as in their natural aspirations for a place in the sun as decent human beings with human dignity and aspirations.

From the stories, however, it emerges quite clearly that there is a definite condition for this. It is that before any help can be extended from without, those in need must first do something to help themselves. Having felt the need for something, they must gird their loins, put the shoulder to the wheel, and sweat it out in the merciless sun of summer, or the biting cold of winter, in an attempt to help themselves. Then, and only then, can external aid be extended to them, in which case it will not only be fully appreciated but maximum benefit will be derived from it. Looked at from any angle, this condition is extremely logical for, what use is there for instance, in imposing good roads on a people, built with external aid and technicians who will soon withdraw from the scene, leaving nobody with the necessary drive, desire and enthusiasm to maintain them? This can only be ensured in those cases where the indigenous people themselves feel the need for such roads, in which case they will leave no stone unturned in learning, in fact, drinking in, all they can from their welcome helpers, so as to be able to continue helping themselves in future.

7.1.4. The idea of death as an end to life was never accepted by the Sotho mind. The so-called dead in the underworld continued to live as they had done on this world, except that it was a much more pleasant type of life with everything in abundance. The living could go there and return safe and sound, without any harm having befallen them. This is in direct contradistinction to what obtains, for example, in Greek mythology, where the shadowy inhabitants of the dark and gloomy underworld are all untouchables. To the Sotho mind, life is endless and indestructible, in that one being cannot take it away from another. The heart of a victim of murder, assumes the form of a living bird that goes off to report the murderer; the mutilated remains of the girl Mosimodi, are carefully collected by a crocodile that shapes them into her original living form; and the burnt ashes of Monyohe are similarly treated by his mother before they assume his erst-while disguised human form and shape. Among the Basotho then, the missionary idea of life after the grave, is as old as the hills.

7.1.5. In the relevant stories, all the other animals are prejudiced against the tortoise, kgudu. They ridicule him at every possible moment. And this is solely due to his form, sebopeho, for which neither he nor they are responsible. Fundamentally then, and in terms of human standards and application, it would seem that whether we like it or not, admit or not, we all have a certain amount of prejudice against those whose appearance - physical or linguistic, is different from our's. We ridicule and call them names, as do the other animals to the tortoise. The South African scene is full of such derogative names that are mutually applied to one another by the various groups that inhabit the sub-continent: "Rooinek" for the

English; "Dutchman" for an Afrikaner; "Natives" or "Kaffirs" for the various Bantu-speaking tribes; "Hotnots" for the Coloureds and "Koelies" for the Indians. Similarly, the Basotho alone have a whole range of such terms that are used to refer to other racial groups: "Leja-hlapi", (fish-eater) for an Englishman; "Ranku-di-kae", (father of where are the sheep?) for an Afrikaner; "Lekwenya-poone", (swallower of whole grains of mealies) for any Nguni person, and "Lekwere-kwere" or Lekirimane for any black man from across the Zambesi.

Equally important, however, is the fact that appearances are deceptive; all that glitters is not gold. The despised and ridiculed tortoise proves this over and over again in the stories. He repeatedly humbles his tormentors by successfully performing various tasks that they had undertaken unsuccessfully. Some of these are basic and more than essential to all of them, such as protecting their precious water from the wily fox and keeping it clean for their consumption. Despite this, however, no acknowledgement is made of this, neither does he receive any recognition for it. His lot remains the same. Yet he remains humble and dignified, and does not harm them in any way, for two wrongs do not make a right. The revellers in ridicule then, only succeed in degrading themselves by indulging in the base and the sordid, instead of concentrating on the true and the good, the spiritually rewarding and uplifting, such as genuine service to their fellow-men, as practised by the tortoise in these stories.

7.1.6. The various stories were old when they were ultimately reduced to writing. They are a common possession of the Sotho. But a single mind must have stood at the beginning of each, although they have come down to us through many hands, each of which has left its own impression. On the whole, they are short, and the number of characters in each is usually small, two or three at a time. The story unfolds itself in scenes which are often variations of the same basic pattern. The main characters are not fully delineated and thus appear as types rather than individual personalities. Collectively, however, they delight, elevate, inspire and refresh. In them, whenever the ancient source goes beyond the mere recording of facts, as in the legend, elements of mythology begin to appear, thus exhibiting a poetic and imaginative character that embodies the event that it recounts.

FABLES:

7.2.7. Despite their apparent simplicity, coupled with wit and humour, fables seem to be a basic commentary on complicated human nature. It is probably for this reason that they are usually didactic and point to a certain moral, which flows from the story and often takes the form of a proverb. And while animals are personified, the purely animal characteristics are nevertheless preserved, thus indicating the dichotomy that exists between man and animal. In this connection too, compare the practice of some Sotho clans to identify themselves with a certain animal that they venerate.

SEKGOMELETSO : (APPENDIX)NGWANA YA KGWEDI SEFUBENG

Ho thwe e ne e le morena e moholo, Bulane. O ne a na le basadi ba babedi. Jwale e mong o ne a se na bana; jwale e mong o na ena le bana. Morena enwa o ne a le kgwedi sefubeng. Jwale mosadi e mong o ne a ratwa haholo ke Bulane; ke yena ya neng a ena le bana. Jwale o ne a hlorisa haholo mosadi a se nang bana.

Jwale ha isa-isa mosadi a se nang bana a emola. Jwale ha isa-isa dikgwedi, ha ba ha fihla nako eo a itshihlollang ka yona. Jwale yaba mosadi a nang le bana o tla mo thusa. Jwale mosadi enwa a beleha ngwana a nang le kgwedi sefubeng. Jwale mmelehisi enwa a mo nka, a mo lahlela ka mora dipitsa, ka mohaolwaneng. Jwale mmae o na ile le maidiidi. Jwale mosadi enwa a phakisa a tswa ka pele. Yaba o fumana ntjanyana ka serobeng; yaba o e tlisa ka pele pela mma ngwana. Jwale yaba o a mo sisinya: Tsoha o bone, o behile ntja! Yaba mosadi enwa a se nang ngwana o a swaba ha a fumana hobane o behile ntja.

Yaba mosadi enwa o phakisa a etswa, a ya ho Bulane, a re: Mosadi wa hao o behile ntja. Yaba Bulane o swaba haholo. Yaba Bulane o re: Ya e nka, o lahle ntja eo. Yaba ba e nka, ba e lahla. Yaba mosadi wa bathonyana o tswa ka tlung ya hae a swabile.

Ha isa-isa tshiunyana, mosadi wa Bulane o ne a etla ka tlung ya mosadi eo; jwale a fumana tweba e ntshitse ngwana

APPENDIXA. THE CHILD WITH A MOON ON HIS CHEST.

It is said it was a great chief, Bulane. He had two wives. Now one of them did not have any children, while the other one had them. This chief had a moon on his chest. One of these women was very much loved by Bulane; it is the one who had children. He ill-treated the one who was without children.

After a short while, the childless woman conceived. A few months passed and it was time for her to be confined. The woman who had children came and helped her. She gave birth to a child who had a moon on his chest. Now the midwife took it, and threw it behind the pots in the cupboard. A mouse quickly took it, and went into its hole with it. The baby's mother was unconscious. The midwife quickly went outside. She found a puppy in a hen's nest, and quickly returned with it and put it next to the child's mother. Then she shook her, "Wake up and see; you have given birth to a dog. "And this childless woman was disappointed when she found she had given birth to a dog.

Then this midwife quickly went outside to Bulane and said, "Your wife has given birth to a dog." Bulane was greatly disappointed. He said, "Go and take that dog and throw it away." They took it and threw it away. And the poor little woman came out of her hut disappointed.

A few days passed and Bulane's (senior) wife came to that hut. She found the mouse having taken out the child

II

ya kgwedi sefubeng, e ntse e mo bapadisa. Jwale a tshoha haholo, a re: Ke ne ke re ekaba ngwana elwa o shwele! Jwale a phakisa a tswa; yaba o re ho monna wa hae, ho Bulane: O ka bona, morena, ke bohloko haholo; empa ditaola di re ekare ke tla fola, wa tjhesa ntlo ya mosadi wa hao, ke enwa ya tswa beleha ntja. Jwale Bulane a arabela mofumahadi wa hae, a re: E ka kgona e tjheswe; ka hobane o ne a mo rata haholo. Jwale mosadi enwa o ne a hopola hore ha ntlo e ka tjheswa ngwana o tla shwa, le tweba e tjhe ke mollo, a se hlole a bona ngwana enwa ya kgwedi sefubeng, hobane a na rata ho mo timetsa.

Yaba tweba e utlwa lekunutu la mosadi wa mofumahadi le morena, ya phakisa ya tswa kapele tlung, ya nka ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng, ya kena le yena kotopong ya lesaka. Jwale morena a tswa hosasane, a tjhesa ntlo eo. Jwale mofumahadi a kgolwa hoba kajeno o timelitse ngwana le tweba hammoho, ha a sa tla hlola a ba bona.

Ha isa tshwana di se kae, mofumahadi o na ya nka bolokwe ka sakeng, a fumana ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng a le ka tlase ho kgomo. Yaba o a tshoha, a re: Ke tla etsa jwang na, hore ke tle ke mmolaye? Yaba, ha a etswa ka sakeng, o sa bobola haholo ka hore o bohloko haholo. Jwale morena o a mmotsa hore: O bohloko keng? Na ha o tla fola e ka kgona ke etse jwang na? Jwale a re: Ditaola di itse e ka kgona o qhaqhollle lesaka lena kaofela la hao la dikgomo, ke hona ke tla fola.

Tweba ya boela ya utlwa lekunutu la mosadi wa mofumahadi le morena. Yaba e a tswa, e a mo nka, ya mo isa tlung ya bahwebi. Jwale ha ho qhaqhollwa lesaka, o na le siyo ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng.

with a moon on his chest and playing with it. She was shocked and said, "I thought that child had died!" Then she quickly went out and said to her husband, Bulane, "You can see, my lord, I am really ill. Divining bones say before I can get well, you must burn down your wife's hut, this one who has just given birth to a dog." Bulane answered his wife and said, "It is well that it should be burnt down," because he loved her very much. Now this woman thought that if the hut were burnt down, the child would die, the mouse would also be burnt by the fire, and she would no longer see this child with a moon on his chest, because she wanted to destroy it.

The mouse overheard the secret of the senior wife and the chief, and quickly left the hut with the child with a moon on his chest, and went into a culvert with it. The chief went out the next day and burnt that hut. The mofumahadi was convinced she had destroyed the child and the mouse, and would not see them again.

A few days passed and the mofumahadi went to get cow-dung from the cattle-kraal. She found the child with a moon on his chest sitting under a cow. She was shocked and said, "What can I do to kill him?" When she left the cattle-kraal, she moaned aloud and said she was very sick. The chief asked her, "What are you suffering from? What can I do that you should be well again?" She said, "Divining bones say you should pull down your cattle-kraal. It is only then that I shall get well."

The mouse overheard the secret of the chief and the senior wife. It went out with the child and took him to a house of traders, bahwebi. When the cattle-kraal was pulled down, the child with a moon on his chest was not there.

Jwale tweba ya tlohelana le yena, ya kgutlela ha habo yona. Jwale ka tsatsi le leng batho ba bang ba ya bapatsa. Jwale e mong motho wa motse wa Bulane a ya reka teng. Jwale a fumana mohlankana enwa a na le ntho e nngwe e kganyang sefubeng ho yena. Jwale a ya, a kgutlela hae monna eo. Jwale a tsebisa Bulane mohlankana eo a mmoneng e motle haholo, a ena le kgwedi sefubeng. Jwale Bulane a tloha kapele ho ya mmona. Jwale a fihla teng, a botsa mohlankana hore: O ngwana mang? O tlile jwang mona?

Jwale mohlankana ya kgwedi sefubeng a qala ho mo hlaloesetsa, a re: Mme o ne a mpeleha, yaba mosadi wa ntate o ntahlela ka mohaolwaneng; yaba tweba e a nkamohela, ya kena le nna mokoting, ya nna ya mphedisa teng. Jwale mosadi wa ntate a nka ntja, a re mme o behile ntja. Bulane a qala ho mo qamakisisa, a qala ho hopola hore mosadi wa hae o na re mosadi e mong o behile ntja. Jwale ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng a mo phetela kamoo a neng a ye lesakeng la dikgomo kateng, ho fihlela tweba e mmalehisa, e mo isa tlung ya bahwebi.

Yaba ntatae o mo phetla sefuba hore a bone hore na ke ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng. Jwale Bulane a fumana hobane ke ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng. Jwale a mo nka, a ya le yena hae. Yaba o mo pata ka tlung ya hae. Yaba o etsa pitso e kgolo, a bitsa batho ba hae kaofela. Ha hlajwa dikgomo, ha ratholwa majwala a mangata. Jwale a re ba ale meseme fatshe moo a patileng ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng.

Yaba o qala ho mo ntsha, a mo tlisa pitsong ena e kgolo. Jwale a mmontsha batho, le kamoo mosadi wa hae a mo etseditseng ka bolotsana bo boholo. Yaba mma ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng o hlobodiswa dikatana tsa hae, a apeswa dikobo tse ntle. Yaba ngwana ya kgwedi sefubeng o bewa morena ke ntatae.

The mouse parted with him there, and went to its home.

One day certain people went to exchange goods, bapatsa. Now a certain man from Bulane's village also went there to buy. He found this young man, who had something shining on his chest. He returned home and told Bulane about the handsome young man he had seen with a moon on his chest. Bulane left there and then to go and see him. On arrival, he asked him, "Whose child are you? How did you come here?"

The young man with a moon on his chest explained to him and said, "My mother gave birth to me, and my father's wife threw me into a cupboard, mohaolwana. Then the mouse received me, went with me into its hole and there looked after me. My father's wife took a dog, and said my mother had given birth to it." Bulane started examining him closely, gamakisisa, and remembered that his senior wife had said the other wife had given birth to a dog. Now the child with a moon on his chest told him how he had gone to the cattle-kraal, until the mouse fled with him, and took him to the house of traders.

Then his father opened his chest, in order to see whether he was really the child with a moon on his chest. He took him and went home with him. He hid him in his hut. He called a big pitso, and invited all his people to it. Cattle were slaughtered and numerous pots of beer brewed. He said they should spread mats on the ground from where he had hidden the child with a moon on his chest. Then he took him out and brought him to this great pitso. He showed him to the people and (explained) how his senior wife had treated him (Bulane) in a treacherous way. Then the mother of the child with a moon on his chest was made to take off her rags and was dressed in beautiful clothes. And the child with a moon on his chest was made a chief by his father.

Ha e le mosadi enwa ya nang le bana ba se nang kgwedi sefubeng a lelekiswa, ha thwe ke molotsana. A phahlelwa thepa ya hae, ha thwe a tsamaye a ye ha habo.

B.

NKOLOBE

E ne e le moshanyana, a rongwa ke mmae, a ye ho kopa setlhare ho malomae. Yaba wa ya. Yaba malomae o a mo fa; eitse tseleng a se ja. Jwale yaba o kgora mpa, moshanyana eo. A fihla ho mmae, a re: Ha se yo. Jwale-he yaba o phela jwalo ka mpa eo ya hae, ho fihlela a re ho moshanyana wabo ya disang le yena: Ke ya thabeng, ke ya bona difi tsa ka tseo ke tjehhileng dinonyana ka tsona. Jwale o a beleha ngwana eo. Jwale-he hoba a belehe ngwana, a mo phuthela, yaba o mo robatsa ka lehaheng. Yaba o a oroha, a ya hae.

Hosasa a nka dikgamelo, a ya hama; a ipolokela lebase ka lenakana, lee a ya fepa ngwana hae thabeng. Ha a qetile ho hama, a ntsha dikgomo ho ya naheng. Jwale a siye moshanyana eo, a re: Sala mona, ke ya thabeng ho bona difi tsa ka. Jwale-he a ye he, a fihle teng thabeng. Jwale a bue, a bue, a re:

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe;

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe!

Eka wena ha o a tswalwa le motho, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse le dipudungwana naheng, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse jwaleka jwang ha bo mela, Nkolobe!

Jwale ngwana a re: Ngwe, ngwe! - Letswele kgehleha, ke anyese Nkolobe. Jwale-he le kgehlehe, a anyese Nkolobe.

As for the woman who had children without a moon on the chest, it was said she is a wicked person, molotsana. She was given her belongings, thema, and it was said she must leave and return to her original home.

B.

NKOLOBE.

It was a boy, and he was sent by his mother to go and ask for medicine from his uncle. He went. His uncle gave it to him; on the way, he ate it. Now he became pregnant, that boy. He came to his mother and said, "It is not there." Then he remained like that with that pregnancy of his, until he said to his younger brother, who used to herd with him, "I am going to the mountain. I am going to see (inspect) my traps with which I have ensnared birds." Then he gave birth to a child, that child. Now after giving birth to a child, he wrapped it and put it to sleep in a cave. Then he left and went home.

Next morning he took the milking pail and went to milk. He kept himself some milk in a little horn, with which to feed his child on the mountain. After milking, he drove the cattle to the pastures. There he left his younger brother and said, "Remain here; I am going to the mountain to see my traps." He went, and arrived at the mountain. Then he spoke and said,

"Cry a little that we may hear, Nkolobe,

Cry a little that we may hear, Nkolobe;

It would seem as if you were not born with anybody
else Nkolobe,

You were born with little buffaloes in the veld, Nkolobe,

You were born like the grass that simply sprouts, Nkolobe."

The child cried and said, "Ngwe! Ngwe!" "Breast, hang down that I might suckle Nkolobe." Then the breast would hang down and he would suckle Nkolobe.

A mo kwalle hape lehaheng. Mantsiboya a oroha, a ya hae.
Jwale he a fihle hae, a robale.

Hosasane o ya sakeng hape ho ya hama; - O boetse hape o
ipolokela lebese ka lenakana. O ntsha dikgomo ho ya naheng.
O bolella moshanyana hape: Sala, ke ya bona difi tsa ka
thabeng. O ya fihla thabeng, o re:

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe;

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe!

Eka wena ha o a tswalwa le motho, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse le dipudungwana naheng, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse jwaleka jwang ha bo mela, Nkolobe;

Jwale he ngwana o re: Ngwe, ngwe! - Letswele kgehleha,
ke anyese Nkolobe. Jwale-he le kgehlehe, a anyese Nkolobe.
Jwale mantsiboya a oroha, a ye hae. Jwale-he a robale.

Hosasane o a hama, o ipolokela lebese hape ka lenakana,
o ya thabeng jwale hape. Moshanyana a makala: Wena ka mehla
yohle o hlola o re o ya bona difi tsa hao! Jwale-he ke ha
moshanyana a pota thaba ka nqa e nngwe le yena; a fihla a
ipata moshanyana. Jwale-he a fihla, a mamela ha ho binelwa
ngwana; a mamela ha ho thwe:

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe;

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe!

Eka wena ha o a tswalwa le motho, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse le dipudungwana naheng, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse jwaleka jwang ha bo mela, Nkolobe!

Yaba moshanyana pina eo o a e utlwa. Yaba o bona ho
nkuwa ngwana, a anyeswa. A re: Bee! kanthe o na le ngwana;
ke tsona difi tsa hae tsee a hlolang a re o tla di bona,
ngwana eo! Yaba he o a theoha moshanyana, a ya dikgomong.

He would then lock him in the cave again. In the late afternoon, he would leave and go home. On arrival at home, he would sleep.

The next morning, he goes to the cattle-kraal again to go and milk. Once more he keeps himself a little milk in a little horn. He drives the cattle to the pastures. He tells the small boy, "Remain, I go to see my traps on the mountain." He goes to the mountain and says:

"Cry a little that we may hear, Nkolobe,

Cry a little that we may hear, Nkolobe.

It would seem as if you were not born with anybody else Nkolobe,

You were born with little buffaloes in the veld, Nkolobe,

You were born like the grass that simply sprouts, Nkolobe."

Now the child says, "Ngwe! Ngwe!" "Breast, hang down that I might suckle Nkolobe." Now it hangs down and he would suckle Nkolobe. In the late afternoon, he would leave and go home. There he would sleep.

The next morning he milks, and once more keeps himself a little milk in a little horn. Now he goes to the mountain again. The small boy expressed surprise, "Every day you always say you are going to see your traps!" Now the little boy went to the other side of the mountain and hid himself there. He listened as it was sung for the child, listened as it was said:

"Cry a little that we may hear Nkolobe,

Cry a little that we may hear Nkolobe,

It would seem that you were not born with anybody else, Nkolobe,

You were born with little buffaloes in the veld Nkolobe,

You were born like the grass that simply sprouts, Nkolobe.

The small boy heard that song. He saw the baby being taken and suckled, and he said, "Pshaw! So he has a child!" Then he left and returned to the cattle.

Jwale a dula pela dikgomo. Jwale a tla ngwanabo, a theoha thabeng. Yaba, ha a fihla, moshanyana o re ho moholwane wa hae, a re: Ke jewa ke hloho. Eo a re: E-ea hae, nnake. Yaba moshanyana o a ya.

A bolella mmae, a re: Mme, ngwaneso o na le ngwana. Yaba mmae o re: Ngwana! Jwang? A re: O na le ngwana wa moshanyana thabeng. Jwale mmae a lemoha, a re: Ke setlhare see ke mo romileng sona ha malomae. Jwale mmae a re: Na o ka mpontsha yena? Yaba o re: E, mme, nka ya o bontsha yena. Yaba ba ya bosiu le ntatae, ba fihla lehaheng; moshanyana a bina:

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe;

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe!

Eka wena ha o a tswalwa le motho, Nkolobe,

O itlhahetse le dipudungwana naheng, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse jwaleka jwang ha bo mela, Nkolobe;

Yaba o a lla, a re: Ngwe, ngwe! Yaba mmae o a mo nka, a mo an-yesa. Ba boela ba kwala lehaha, ba ya le yena hae.

Mmae a ngwana a tsoha a ntsa thabile, a hama; a nna a boloka lebese jwaleka mehla, ka lenakana. Jwale a ntsha dikgomo, a ya naheng. Mohlang oo, moshanyana a sala hae, a se ke a ya le yena. Yaba o nyolohela thabeng; a fihla a re:

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe;

Lla-lla, re utlwe, Nkolobe!

Eka wena ha o a tswalwa le motho, Nkolobe,

O itlhahetse le dipudungwana naheng, Nkolobe;

O itlhahetse jwaleka jwang ha bo mela, Nkolobe;

A se ke a utlwa letho. A ya lehaheng, a fumana ngwana a le siyo. A lla, a lla tsatsi lohle. A fihla hae mantsiboya thabo e le siyo ya mehla. A dula mosing a ntsa lla.

He sat near them. His elder brother also came down from the mountain. When he arrived, the small boy said to him, "I have a headache." He said, "Go home, sonny, nnake." The small boy left.

He told his mother and said, "Mother, my elder brother has a child." His mother said, "A child? How?" He said, "He has a male child at the mountain." Now his mother realised and said, "It is the medicine I had sent him for to his uncle's place." Then she said, "Can you go and show it to me?" He said, "Yes, mother, I can go and show it to you." They went at night with his father, and came to the cave. The small boy sang:

"Cry a little that we may hear Nkolobe,

Cry a little that we may hear Nkolobe,

It would seem that you were not born with anybody else Nkolobe,

You were born with little buffaloes in the veld, Nkolobe,

You were born like the grass that simply sprouts Nkolobe."

Then it cried and said, "Ngwe! Ngwe!" His mother took it and suckled it. Then they closed the cave again and went home with the baby. The boy-mother woke up as happy as ever, milked and kept himself a little milk in a little horn as usual. He drove the cattle out and went to the pastures. That day, the small boy stayed home and did not accompany him to the veld. He went up to the mountain and said:

"Cry a little that we may hear Nkolobe,

Cry a little that we may hear Nkolobe,

It would seem as if you were not born with anybody else Nkolobe,

You were born with little buffaloes in the veld, Nkolobe,

You were born like the grass that simply sprouts, Nkolobe."

He did not hear anything. He went into the cave but did not find the child. He cried; he cried the whole day. He came home in the evening without his usual joy. He sat on the side on which smoke blew, still crying.

VII

Mmae a mmotsa: O llelang, ngwana ka? A re: Ha ke lle, ke jewa ke mosi. Yaba mmae o re ho yena: Tloha mosing; o dulelang mosing? Yaba o a tloha, a kgasetsa tlung a swabile, a robala.

Hosasane a ya naheng le dikgomo a swabile. Mantsiboya a kgutlela hae a swabile. Yaba mmae o a mmotsa: Na o ntse o lla, o llelang? Na o llela ngwana hao? A dumela, a re: E. Jwale mmae a mmitsa ho mo isa ka tlung, a mmontsha yena, a re: Ngwana hao ke enwa. O etsang ka ngwana o le monna? Yaba mmae o a mmotsa, a re: Ngwana enwa o mo nkile kae? A re: ke setlhare seo o neng o nthomile sona ha malome, ka se ja tseleng ha ke kgutla.

C (i).

MOSHANYANA WA SENKATANA

Ho no hlahe phoofolo ya tonana, ho thwe ke kgodumodumo. Jwale-he ya eja batho, setjhaba kaofela. Jwale setjhaba e ntse e se ja e se metsa feela, le dikgomo e di metsa, le dimpja le dikgoho. Jwale ho thwe mosadi enwa e ne e le moimana, a dula thothobolong; jwale a itlotsa ka molora. Jwale he a tloha thothobolong, a kena serobeng. Jwale ha e se e jele batho, e ba qetile, e ntse e batla, e ya nyarela ka serobeng, e fumana mosadi enwa a le teng, empa e ka lejwe, kapa o na nkgamolora.

Jwale-he nakong e nngwe ya tloha, hoba e qete setjhaba, ya tsamaea, ya ya fihla lekgalong. Ya sitwa ho tswa lekgalong ka hobane e kgotshe haholo.

Jwale ha sala mosadi eo a nnotshi, jwale-he mosadi a beleha. Jwale a tswa, a ya sakeng ho batla moitedi: Ngwana eo ke moshemane; jwale ha a boya a fumana motho a se a dutse ka teng, a na le koto le marumo. Jwale mosadi enwa o na re:

VII

His mother asked him, "Why are you crying, my child?" He said, "I am not crying; I am worried by the smoke." Then his mother said, "Get away from the smoke. Why do you sit in it?" He left, crawled to the hut disappointed and slept.

The next day he went to the veld with the cattle disappointed. In the evening he returned home disappointed. Then his mother asked him, "Are you still crying? What are you crying for? Are you crying for your child?" He agreed and said, "Yes." Now his mother called him into the hut and showed him the child and said, "Here is your child. What do you do with a child being a man?" His mother also asked him, "Where did you get this child?" And he said, "It is the medicine for which you had sent me to my uncle's place; I ate it on my way home."

(C) (i)

SENKATANA

There once appeared a big animal called kgodumodumo. It ate the people, the whole nation. It kept on eating people, merely swallowing them together with the cattle, dogs and fowls. Now it is said this woman was pregnant and she sat on an ash-heap and smeared herself with ashes. Then she left the ash-heap and went into a kraal for calves, serobe. Now it had finished all the people; it went about searching. It peeped into the calves' kraal and found this woman there. But she looked like a stone or smelt of ashes.

Now at one time it left, after finishing the nation, and went as far as a mountain pass. It was unable to go through the pass because it was too full. Now that woman alone survived and she gave birth to a child. Then she went out and proceeded to the cattle-kraal to look for dry and loose dung manure, mpitedi. That child was a boy. When she returned, she found a person already sitting in there, having blankets and spears. Now this woman said,

Monna towe, ngwana ka o kae? Jwale o na re: Ke nna, mme.

Jwale mmae o na re: Jo bo! ngwana ka, ke ne ke sa o tsebel!

Jwale o na re: Na batho ba ile kae? Jwale mmae o na re: Ba jewa ke kgodumodumo. Le dikgomo? E. Le dimpja? E. Le dikgoho? E. E kae? O na re: Tswa o bone, ngwana ka.

Jwale ngwana o na etswa he, a ema hodimo ha serobe; mmae le yena a hlwa. Jwale a mo supisa, a re: O a bona mola lekgalong? Ngwana a re: Ke a bona, mme. A re: Ntho yane e thibileng lekgalo, e kang thaba, ke yona kgodumodumo. A kgutla, a boela ka serobeng; a nka marumo a hae, a re: Ke sa ya bona phoofolo yane. Jwale mmae o na lla, a mo tshwara, a re: Ngwana ka, o se ke wa ya nthong yane, e ya o metsa jwale ka ha e metsitse setjhaba! Tjhe, mme, ke tla bona.

A ya, a fihla letlapeng, a leotsa lerumo; a tloha, a tsamaya. Jwale he eitse ha e mmona, ya ahlama hore e tla mo metsa. Jwale he a tsamaya thoko le yona. Jwale ka hoba e sitwa ho tloha, a e pota, a ya kamorao, e ntse e ahlamisitse molomo. Jwale he a ntsha lerumo, a e hlaba, a ntsha le le leng, a e hlaba. Ya robala fatshe, ya eshwa.

Jwale he a ntsha thipa, motho a re: O se ke wa ntsheha. A tlohele, a qale nqe nngwe; kgomo e re: Muu! A tlohele, a qale nqe nngwe; kokolo-kolo! ke kgoho. Jwale a tiisetsa, a e phunya mpa. Batho kaofela ba tswa, le makgomo.

Ba boela ka metse ya bona, ba re: A moshanyana enwa ke morena wa rona! Jwale he moshanyana enwa a nna a tsamaya bathong bana. Hamorao ba mo hloya; jwale ba mo rerile ho mmolaya. Jwale setjhaba kaofela se se se mo hloile. Jwale ba rera, ba re: Re tle re mo tshwareng, re bese mollo wa motonana kgotla, re mo akgeleng teng. Jwale ha a etla, ba re:

VIII

"You man, where is my child?" He said, "It is I, mother." Then she said, "Oh! my child, I did not know you." Then he said, "Where have the people gone to?" And his mother said, "They have been eaten by the kgodumodumo." "And the cattle too?" "Yes." "And the dogs?" "Yes." "And the fowls?" "Yes." "Where is it?" "Come out, and see, my child."

Then the child went out and stood on top of the calves' enclosure. His mother also climbed. And she showed him saying, "Do you see there at the mountain pass?" The child said, "Yes, I see mother." She said, "That thing that fills the pass and which is like a mountain - that is the kgodumodumo. He returned to the calves' enclosure, took his spears and said, "I am still going to see that animal." Now his mother cried and held him saying, "My child, you must not go to that thing; it will swallow you as it has swallowed the nation." "No mother, I shall see." He left, came to a flat stone and sharpened a spear. Then he proceeded. Now when it saw him, it opened its mouth in order to swallow him. But he went to the side. And because it was unable to move, he went round to its back, while it had its mouth wide open. Then he took out a spear and stabbed it. He took out another; one and stabbed it. It fell down and died.

Now he took out a knife, and a person said, "You should not cut me;" and he would leave and start elsewhere. A cow would say, "Muu!" and he would leave off and start elsewhere. A dog would say "Koe!" And he would leave off and start elsewhere. "Kokolo-koloo!" that is a fowl. Now he persevered and cut open its stomach. All the people came out and the cattle.

They went back to their village and said, "Is this boy our chief?" Now this boy kept on moving among these people. After some time, they hated him and wanted to kill him. Now the whole nation hated him already. They plotted saying, "We must hold him and make a big fire at the kgotla and throw him into it." When he came, they said,

IX

Morena, tlo o dule ka mona, tlo o dule ka mona. Jwale a re: Tjhe, ke dula mona. O a itulela. Jwale he ba tadimane, ba tadimane he banna bana. Jwale he, ba re ba mo tshwara, a phonyoha ho bona, ba nke monna osele, ba mo akgele ifo. Jwale o ntsa eme mona, a re: Motho le mo etsang ?

Jwale ba re: Ho ya etswa jwang? Jwale ba tjheka mokoti: Jwale ha ba tjhekile mokoti, ba beya matlakala. Jwale ha a etla, ba re: Morena, tlo o dule ka mona, tlo o dule ka mona. Jwale he a tle, tulo tsa morena e be tsena, morena a dule mona. Jwale he moshanyana wa Senkatana ebe o a dula. Jwale he ba ntse ba lebeletse hoba o a wela, a se ke a wela.

Ba re: Ho ka etswa jwang? Ba re: Ho ka kgona a dihelwe. Jwale he mohlomong ba rera selomo, hore ba ke ba mo dihele. Jwale he ba ne ba entse mokgwa, ba re: A le ke le tlo bonang katlase, le morena a tle ho bona. Jwale o na etella pele. Ba re: kajeno re ya mo dihela. Jwale ha ba fihla hodima selomo, ba re ba mo susumetsa, a fapane le bona, ba dihele osele. A re: Ke ka baka lang ha le dihela motho? Ba re: Pe! Jwale ba swabe. Jwale a thehe he, a ye ho yana; jwale a mo tshware a mo emise.

Ba re: Na ho ya etswa jwang? O ntsa tsamaya le metse, empa metse kaofela e se e mo rerile. Jwale-he ha a se a tsamaile metse haholo, jwale motse wa qetello a fihla teng. Ba re: Ho lokile. Jwale-he ba mo rera jwalo he; jwale ba etsa letsholo. Jwale-he moo ba robetseng ba re a robale mane motsheo wa lehaha. Jwale-he ha rwallwa, ha rwallwa, ha rwallwa patsi; ya eba kgolo.

Jwale ha a robetse ho hahuwe patsi ka nqa tse pedi, a hlokiswa le monyako. Jwale-he ba tjhesa. Jwale a botsa, a re:

"Chief, come and sit this side; come and sit this side." And he said, "No, I shall sit this side." He sits down. They looked at each other, looked at each other, these men. Now they plotted to catch him. He escaped and they held a different man and threw him on the fire-place. Now he was standing nearby and he asked, "What are you doing to this person?"

Now they pondered, "What can be done?" They dug a hole. Thereafter, they put bits of straw and grass, matlakala, and they also put a small piece of an old grain basket, tshesana, on top of the matlakala. When he came, they said: "Chief, come and sit this side; come and sit this side." He came. "The place of the chief is this one; he must sit here." And the boy of Senkatana would sit down. While expecting him to fall in, he would not do so.

They said, "What can be done?" and they said, "It is advisable that he should be pushed over a precipice. Now they agreed on a precipice over which to hurl him. Now they had made a plan and said, "Come and see down there; and the chief should also come and see." He went ahead and they said, "Today we are going to hurl him over a precipice." When they came on top of the precipice, they tried to push him over it. But he stepped aside and they rushed one of their number. He said, "Why do you push this person over?" They said, "Oh!" and were disappointed. He went down to him caught hold of him and lifted him up.

They said, "What can be done?" He kept on moving from village to village; but all the villages had plotted against him. After going through many villages, he came to the last one. They said, "It is all right." They plotted against him and organised a hunting party, letsholo. When they slept, they said he should sleep in the innermost part of the cave, motsheo. They gathered a lot of wood. While he was asleep, they put fire wood on both sides (of the cave) so that he should not have an exit. Then they set fire to it. And he said,

Le entse mollo o kakang! Jwale ba thaba haholo, ba re: Kajeno re mo hlotse. Jwale a tsoha, a re: Le entse mollo a kakang! Ba tseha, ba re: Kajeno o lahlehile. A tsoha he, yaba o a tswa, o ema ho bona. Jwale ba mo tshwara, a etsa ka boomo, ba mmolaya. Jwale he ho thwe pelo ya hae ya tswa, ya baleha, ya ya dinonyaneng.

(ii) MOSHANYANA WA SENKATANA

Batho ba ne ba le bangata; jwale kgodumodumo ya tla, ya fihla ya ba ja. Jwale mosadi e mong a kena ka serobeng; jwale a beleha ngwana eo, ngwana e le moshanyana. Yaba o re o mo nkela moitedi. Mme a re: Mme, moitedi o o isa kae? A re: Ke tla alla wena. Jwale a re: Mme, setjhaba se ile kae? Yaba o re: Se jewe ke kgodumodumo. Yaba o re: Na e kae? A re: Ke yane.

Yaba o nka marumo; yaba o re: Ngwana ka, o ya kae, athe o monyenyanane? A re: Ke ya e bolaya. Yaba o a tsamaya. Yaba o a fihla; e ntsha leleme ha e mmona; a kgaola leleme. Jwale ya ntsha le leng; jwale a e bolaya ka lerumo, yaba e a shwa. Jwale o hlaba mpeng, motho a re ka hara yona: O se ke wa ntlhaba. A boela a hlaba hape, ntja ya lla. A boela a hlaba mpehng ya kgodumodumo, podi ya lla. Yaba motho o re: O se ke wa hlaba podi. Yaba o hlaba kgomo, motho a re: O se ke wa hlaba kgomo. Yaba e a shwa, batho ba tswa.

Eitse ha ba etswa, motho e mong a nea moshanyana wa Senkatana kgomo. E mong a boela a mo nea kgomo. Jwale ya eba morena, a ba busa. Jwale o a di disa kgomo tsena tsa hae. Jwale ba mo tjhekela sekoti, ba re ba tla mmolaya, hobane a ba busa a le monyenyanane.

Jwale kgomo ena ya hae, naheng kwana, a e botsa; lebitso la yona ke Tolodi-phatshwa, ke dithoko tsa yona. A e botsa,

"What a big fire you have made?" They laughed and said, "Today he is lost." Then he woke up, came out, and stood next to them. Now they caught hold of him, he doing it deliberately, and killed him. Now then it is said his heart escaped and went to the birds.

(ii)

SENKATANA

People were many; now a kgodumodumo came, and on arrival, ate them. Now a certain woman went into a calves' kraal. Now she gave birth to that child, the child being a boy. Then she thought of fetching dry dung manure for him. And he said, "Mother, where are you taking dung manure?" She said, "I shall spread it for you." He said, "Mother, where has the nation gone?" and she said, "It has been eaten by the kgodumodumo." He said, "Where is it?" And she said, "There it is." Then he took his spears and she said, "My child, where are you going, being so young?" He said, "I am going to kill it." He left.

He arrived. It took out its tongue on seeing him, and he chopped it off. Now it took out another one, and he killed it with a spear and it died. Then he stabbed its stomach and a person inside said, "You should not stab me." He stabbed it again, and a dog cried. Again he stabbed the stomach of the kgodumodumo, and a goat cried. And then a person said, "Do not stab a cow!" At last it died and people came out.

When they came out, a certain person gave the boy of Senkatana a cow. Another one also gave him a cow. Now he became chief and ruled over them. He herded his cattle. Now they dug a hole for him, thinking they would kill him, because he ruled being young.

Now there at the pastures, he asked this cow of his. Its praise-name is Tolodi-phatshwa. He asked it

Tolodi-phatshwa, ditaba ke dife? Yaba e re: Kwana ba re re ya bolawa; kwana hae ho tjhekilwe sekoti moo o dulang teng; o tle o hane ho dula teng. Jwale ba ne ba fihla hae; ba ne ba re: Tlo o dule mona, morena. Jwale ka hobane kgomo e mmoleletse ditaba naheng, a re: Ha ke dule teng. Ba re: Na o tla dula kae? A re: Tjhe, dula mona, ke dule moo o dutseng teng, wena o dule moo o reng ke dule teng. O na mo tlosa ka matla, ka hobane o na ba hlola. Jwale ba tloha.

Jwale o alositse hape; a di disa hape hosasa. Jwale banna ba bang ba motse o mong ba fihla ho yena, ba mo dumedisa. A re: E. Ba re: Na o ke ke wa re nea kgomo eo ya hao? O na hana; ba ne ba mo qophella; o na hana. Ba ne ba re: Re tla o bolaya. Jwale a re: Le ka e kuka, la e kganna. Jwale ba ne ba e kganna, ba kganna ba habo bona, ba ikganna, ba ya hae. Jwale ba re: Molekana rona, kgomo ya hao e kgannwa jwang? Jwale ba ne ba re ho yena: Re kgannele yona. A ba kgannela yona. O na ya le bona hae, ha habo bona.

Ba ne ba fihla ba e hlahlala sakeng, ba e hlaba. Jwale ha ba qala ho e hlaba, ba hlaba e mong wa bona. Ba ne ba re: E rokele, re tsebe ho e hlaba, hobane ke mona re a hlabana. Jwale ba ne ba e hlaba; jwale ya eshwa. Jwale ba ne ba e rala; ba ne ba qala ho e buwa, ba ne ba buwa e mong wa bona. Jwale ba ne ba re: Oho, mokana rona, rokela kgomo ya hao! O na a re: Tolodi-phatshwa, dumela ha ba o buwa! E ne e dumela he, ba e qeta.

Ba ne ba e thotha jwale, ba ne ba e ratha. Jwale ba ratha ba bang ba habo bona. Ba ne ba re: Wee! mokana rona, bua le kgomo ya hao! O na re: Tolodi-phatshwa, dumela hle ba o bokelle! E ne e dumela, ba e bokella.

and said, "What news, Tolodi-phatshwa?" and it said, "Over there, they say we are to be killed. Over there at home, a hole has been dug where you sit. You must refuse to sit there." They went home and they said, "Come and sit here, chief." And now because the cow had told him the news at the veld, he said, "I do not sit there." They said, "Where are you going to sit," He said, "No, you sit here, and let me sit where you are sitting. Sit where you say I must sit." He removed him forcibly because he was stronger than all of them. Now they left.

He was herding cattle again on the following day. Certain men from a certain village came to him and greeted him. He said, "Hello!" They said, "Cannot you give us that cow of yours?" He refused. They persuaded him but he refused. They said, "We shall kill you." He said, "You may have it and drive it away." They tried to drive it and instead drove their fellow-men, drove themselves and went home. Now they said, "Friend, how is your cow driven? Drive it for us." He drove it for them. He went with them to their home.

They put it into a cattle-kraal and slaughtered it. As they did so, they stabbed one of their number. Then they said, "Praise it, that we may be able to slaughter it because we are slaughtering one another." Then they slaughtered it and it died. They cut it open and started to flay it. Instead, they flayed one of their number. They said, "Please friend, praise your cow." and he said, "Tolodi-phatshwa, let them flay you." It agreed and they finished flaying it.

Now they started to chop it and carry it away. They chopped up some of their number. Then they said, "Friend, please talk to your cow." And he said, "Tolodiphatshwa, please allow them to chop you up." They started to collect its pieces, and collected some of their number. They said, "Friend, please talk to your cow." He said, "Tolodiphatshwa, allow them to collect you." It agreed and they did so.

Ba ne ba e fihlisa ka lapeng, ba ne ba qala ho re ho basadi: Hlatswang dipitsa. Ba ne ba hlatswana. Jwale ba re: Wee! mokana rona, bua le dipitsa tsena, re hlatswe dipitsa tsa kgomo ea hao! O na re: Wee, Tolodi-phatshwa, dumela hle ba hlatswe dipitsa, ba o apehe! Jwale ba ne ba e seha, ba ne ba e kenya ifo pitseng; ba ne ba nka batho ba bang, ba ba kenya ka dipitseng. Ba ne ba re: Wee, mokana rona, bua le kgomo ya hao, re e apehe hantle! O na re: Oee! Tolodi-phatshwa, dumela hle ba o apehe hantle!

Jwale ba e apeha; jwale ebe e a butswa. Ba e tshola, ba re ba ya e aba, ba qala ho fa batho; jwale ba qala ho nka e mong wa bona, ba mo nea motho e mong wa bona. Jwale ba bue le yena, ba re: Morena, bua le kgomo ya hao, e dumele ha re e ja! Jwale e ne e dumela. Jwale ba ne ba re ba mo sehela, o na hana. Ba ne ba e ja kaofela, bona beng ba motse ona, le bana ba bona, le dintja tsa bona. Jwale ba ne ba e thakgisa letlalo.

Jwale hosasa o na tsoha, a nka molamu wa hae hodima seotlwana; a tswa ka monyako. O na fihla pela letlalo, o na o tla letlalo ka molamu, o ne a re: Tolodi-phatshwa, a re ye hae, a re ye ha eso! E ne e tswa ka mmele wa yona, masapo a yona a boela ho yona. Batho ba e jeleng ba ne ba shwa kaofela, le bana ba bona, le dintja tsa bona. O na tsamaya; a fihla ha habo. O na re: Tolodi-phatshwa, o nno tsamaye, o nno utlwe. Ya re: Ho ntse ho lokile moo re yang teng. Jwale ba ne ba tsamaya ho ya fihla ha habo.

Jwale mmae a re: Ngwana ka, o sa phela hantle na? O na re: E. O na re a mo fe bohobe. O na ya ka sakeng ka kgomo ya hae. Jwale e ne e re: O se ke wa bo ja. A re: Na ke se ke ka bo ja ka baka lang na? Ya re: Mmao o o tsholetse setlhare.

They took it to the house and said to the women, "Wash the pots." They washed one another. Then they said, "Friend please talk to these pots, that we may wash the pots of your cow." He said, "Tolodiphatswa, please allow them to wash the pots and cook you." Now they cut it up and put it into the pots on the fire. They took some people and put them into pots. They said, "Please, friend, talk to your cow that we may cook it properly." He said, "Tolodiphatswa, please allow them to cook you properly."

They cooked it then, until it was ripe. They took it off the fire and tried to dish it out and give it to the people. They took one of their number and gave him to one of themselves. Then they spoke to him and said, "Chief, please talk to your cow that it might allow us to eat it." It agreed then. They tried to give him too but he refused. They ate all of it - the owners of this village together with their children. They stretched the skin on the ground.

The next morning he woke up and took his stick from on top of a lana and went outside. He went next to the hide and pounded it with his stick saying, "Tolodiphatswa, let us go home; let us go to our home district, haeso." It regained its body and its bones returned to it. All the people who had eaten it died together with their children and dogs. He left and went home. He said, "Tolodiphatswa, as you go, you must keep on listening and hearing." It said, "Things are all right where we are going." They went on like that until they came home.

Now his mother said to him, "My child, are you still well?" He said, "Yes." He asked her for bread. He then went to the kraal with his cow. It said, "You must not eat it." He said, "Why should I not eat it?" It said, "Your mother has poisoned it."

Jwale o na hana ho bo ja. Jwale mmae o ile masimong; jwale ntatae Senkatana a bo nka, a bo ja. Jwale a shwa. Jwale kgomo ya re: O a bona, he, ho ka be ho shwele wena; mmao ha a o rate.

D. PITSO YA DINONYANA.

Ho thwe dinonyana di ne di etsa pitso e kgolo. Pitsong ena ditaba e ne e le hore di rurele hodimo. Jwale ya tla feta ba bang ka ho rura, ke yena eo e tla ba morena wa tsona. Jwale di ne di tloha di re tu, tu, tu, tu, di rura, bontsu, le bolenong, le botlakatshowana, le bolehehemu, le bommamolangwane, le bokokolofitwe; di ne di rura he, di fofa.

Jwale ha di fihla sebakeng, motinyane wa kena ka lepheong ho ntsu. Jwale ha di kgathala dinonyana, motinyane a ipha sebaka sa ho ya hodimo, ka hobane o na sa ka a fofa, a entse ka bohlale, a kene lepheong la ntsu. Jwale tsa kgutla kaofela dinonyana, tsa boela fatshe, ho bonwe na ya fetileng ba bang ke mang. Tsa utlwa: Qeng, Qeng, qeng! Tsa lelala, tsa se ke tsa bona letho; tsa mpa tsa utlwa: Qeng, qeng, qeng! Ke motinyane. Jwale motinyane a fihla, a re: Ke nna morena, ka hobane ke nna ya fetileng dinonyana kaofela.

Yaba ntsu e a halefa; yaba lenong le re: Motinyane, o ka hla wa ba morena ha o le nthwanyana e kalenyana? Jwale dinonyana kaofela tsa mo rorela. Jwale yaba motinyane o a baleha, wa kena ka mokoting wa maholi. Ha di fihla tsa fumana hobane motinyane o kene mokoting o monyenyanane, di sitwa ho kena. Jwale tsa rera, ha di aloha, hore na ya tla lebela mokoting mona ke mang? Jwale ha thwe ke sephooko, ya mahlo a maholo, ya tshwanetseng ho lebela.

Now he refused to eat it. His mother went to the fields. Senkatana's father took it and ate it. Now he died. And his cow said, "You see, you would have died. Your mother does not like you."

D. A MEETING OF THE BIRDS.

It is said that birds called a great pitso. At this pitso the item for discussion was that they should fly high. The one who would fly higher than the others would become the chief of them all. They left then and said, "tu! tu! tu!" in flying - the eagle, vulture, Egyptian vulture, the Secretary bird and others. They took off and flew.

When they were in mid-air, sebakeng, the grass warbler, Motinyane, slipped under the eagle's wing. Now when the birds became tired, Motinyane took the opportunity and flew high, because he had not flown but had acted wisely and slipped under the wing of the eagle. All the other birds came down in order to see who had surpassed the others. They heard qeng! qeng! qeng! They looked up; did not see anything, but merely heard qeng! qeng! qeng! It is Motinyane. Now Motinyane came and said, "I am chief because I surpassed all the other birds."

The eagle became angry, and the vulture said, "Motinyane, can you really be a chief, when you are such a tiny thing?" Now all the birds became antagonistic towards him. Motinyane ran away and went into the hole of Lehodi. When they arrived, they found that he had gone into a small hole and they were unable to get in. On leaving, they discussed as to who would keep guard at the hole? It was agreed that it should be the owl, Sephooko, who has large eyes.

Jwale tsa tsamaya, tsa ya sela, tsa siya sephooko monyako se lebetse motinyane. Jwale motinyane wa tla, wa tswa motsheo ho mokoti mane; wa nka lehlokwanyana, wa qhoqhotsa leihlo la sephooko. Jwale a bona a sa panye leihlo. Jwale motinyane a boela a kgutlela motsheo, a belaela ha a bona leihlo lena la sephooko le sa panye, a re eka sephooko se ntse se mo tadimile. A boela a nka lehlokwa hape. Jwale a mo qhoqhotsa haholo, a bona hoba sephooko se robetse. Yaba motinyane o a tswa, oa ikela.

Jwale dinonyana tsa fihla, le bontsu, tsa re: Na o kae motinyane? Sephooko a qala ho tsoha, a re: Ke yane motsheo, ke mmona ka botshonyana. Jwale ha thwe: Lehodi, kena, o batle motinyane, a tswe a bolawe. Lehodi a kena, a kena; a fumana motinyane a le siyo, a tlohile. Jwale yaba dinonyana kaofela di halefela sephooko, tsa re a bolawe. Jwale ha a tloha, phakwe ya mo rutla, lekgwaba la mo rutla, le seotsanyana. Jwale dinonyana kaofela tsa hloya sephooko, tsa mo lelekisa hampe.

Ke hona mohla sephooko se tla tsamaya bosiu, ka hobane motsheare dinonyana di mo hloile kaofela.

E. TAU E LAPILENG LE ESELE.¹

Ba re e ne ere e le tau e lapileng, ya tswa ho ya tsoma. Empa diphoofolo tsa e bona mme tsa baleha. Motsheare wa mantsiboya ya teana le esele e fula.

"Esele, ke lapile. Nthuse ho fumana dijo hobane diphoofolo di a baleha."

¹Recorded by the writer.

Now they left and went to look for food, and left the owl at the hole, guarding Motinyane. Motinyane approached from the innermost part of the hole. He took a bit of dry grass, lehlokwanyana, and tap-tapped the eye of the owl with it. He noticed that the owl did not blink. He receded into the back of the hole, suspicious when he did not see the owl blink and thinking that it was looking at him. He took the bit of dry grass again and tap-tapped him vigorously; then he realised that the owl was asleep. He went out, and left.

The birds arrived, including Ntsu and the others, and they said, "Where is Motinyane?" Sephooko woke up frightened and said, "There he is right in there; I can see him with his blackish colour." Then it was said, "Lehodi; go in and look for Motinyane that he might be put to death." Lehodi went in and found him gone. Now all the birds became angry with Sephooko and said he should be killed. And when he left, the hawk pulled him; the crow pulled him, as well as the sparrow-hawk. Now all the birds hated Sephooko and chased him furiously. It is because of this that the owl moves by night, because during the day, all the other birds hate him very much.

E. A HUNGRY LION AND A DONKEY.¹

They say it happened that a hungry lion went out to hunt. But all the animals saw it and ran away. In the late afternoon, it met a donkey, esele, grazing.

"Donkey, I am hungry. The animals run away. Come and help me to find food."

¹Recorded by the writer.

"Morena, na nke u thusa jwang? Nna ke ja jwang feela, mme jwang ha bo balehe".

"Tlo ke tla o ruta ho tsoma. O na le lentswe le monate la ho tsoma. Tlo!"

Tsa tsamaya he. Ha di le tseleng, tau ya re ho esele, "Esele, na o bona moru ola? O na le diphoofolo tse ngata. Eya ka nqane ho oona. Ha o fihla moo, o phahamise lentswe la hao, o bine haholo. Diphoofolo di tla tshoha, di mathe, di tlo feta mona pela ka. Nna ke tla ipata mona. Etlare ha di feta, ke tswe, ke di bolaye, ke di je. O a utlwisisa?"

"E, morena, ke a utlwisisa."

"Tsamaya he."

Esele ya ya. Yare ha e fihla ka nqane ho moru, ya phahamisa lentswe ya bina e re: O-o-o! O-o-o! O-o-o! Diphoofolo tsa tshoha, mme tsa pepetlolotsa ho ya moo tau e ipatileng teng. Tau ya tswa, ya di bolaya. Yaba e dula fatshe ho ja.

Esele ya tla e matha, e peraladitse mosela, e ntse e bina haholo. Ha e fihla, ya re: "Morena, na ke bile le thuso ho wena? Tau ya re: "Thola, sethoto towe. Ntswe la hao le a tshabeha. Ha ke ne ke sa le tsebe, le nna nka be ke balehile. Tsamaya!" Esele ya batho ya tsamaya e swabile.

F.

DINYAMATSANE

Ba re e ne e le mosadi, a re ho monna wa hae: Hojane o a nthata, o ka be o mpolaela nyamatsane, wa ntsha sebete sa yona, ka se ja; ke tla bona hobane o a nthata, ha o ka etsa jwalo. Yaba o re ho yena: O phehe bohobe, jwale o fale bohoho,

"Morena, how can I help you? I eat grass and grass does not run away."

"I shall teach you to hunt. You have a beautiful voice for hunting. Come!"

They left then. On the way, the lion said to the donkey, "Do you see that forest? There are many animals in it. Go round it, when you get there, raise your voice and sing as loud as you can. When the animals hear your song, they will be frightened, run this way, and pass nearby. As for me, I shall hide myself here, and as they pass, I shall jump upon them and kill them. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Morena, - your Majesty, I understand."

"Go then." The donkey went.

When he came to the other side of the forest, he raised his voice and said, "O-o-o! O-o-o! O-o-o!" The animals were frightened and ran towards where the lion was hiding. It sprang out and killed them. Then it sat down to eat. The donkey came running, its tail lifted, and still braying aloud. On arrival, it said, "Morena, have I helped you? Do I know how to hunt?" The lion said, "Shut up, you stupid ass. Your voice is horrible. If I did not know it, I would also have run away. Go!" The poor donkey left disappointed.

F. DINYAMATSANE

They say it was a woman and she said to her husband, "If you loved me, you would go and kill a wild animal, nyamatsane, for me and take out its liver, that I may eat it. It is then that I shall see that you love me." He said to her, "You should cook porridge, bohobe, scrape the burnt crust, bohoho,

O bo tlatse mokotlana. Jwale mosadi enwa a nna a fala bohoho ka matsatsi. Mokotlana wa ba wa tlala haholo. Jwale a tsebisa monna wa hae a re: Kajeno mokotlana o tletse. Yaba monna wa hae o re: Jwale ke a tsamaya, ke ya bolaya nyamatsane.

Jwale a tsamaya, a nka leeto le lelelele ho ya batla dinyamatsane. A nna a tsamaya a ja bohoho bona, a ba a fihla hole moo dinyamatsane di dulang teng. A fumana dinyamatsane di le siyo, di alohetse hole, di siile leqheku la nyamatsane hae. Yaba monna eo o fihla kapele, a bolaya leqheku leo, a le buwa, a ntsha sebete kapele-pele; a ba a etsa mokotlana ka leqheku lena, a kena ka hare ho lona.

Tsa fihla, tsa tla, tsanyalaha, di hopotse ho nkgonwa tsona. Ha di fihla, di re: Senthu se nkgae kae? Di pota-pota di boela di re: Senthu se nkgae kae? Jwale leqhekwana la re: Tjhe, bana ba ka, ha ho senthu. Empa tsona tsa re: Senthu se nkgae kae? Jwale tsa kgutsa, tsa robala. Hosasa tsa tsoha di ya sela.

Ka hobane di ne di belaela, tsa re: Nkgono, ha re tsamayeng, re ye ho sela. Jwale di ne di ja majwana. Jwale monna enwa a nna a inama le yena, a thola majwana; jwale a nna a ja bohoho ka mokotlaneng wa hae. Jwale tsa kgolwa hobane e fela e le nkgonwa tsona. Jwale tsa boela tsa robala hape. Hosasa tsa re: Ha re tsamayeng ho tlola lengope le leholo. Tsa fihla tsa tshethema kaofela, tsa re: Le wena, nkgono, tshethema. A tshethema. Jwale tsa lesa ho belaela. Jwale tsa boela tsa nka leeto le lelelele la ho ya hole, tsa mo siya hae.

Jwale yaba monna enwa o ntsha sebete sa nyamatsane moo a se patileng teng. Yaba o tswa ka lekokong lena la nyamatsane,

FOLK-TALE:

7.3.8. It is clear that this type of story was told to while away idle hours and with no particular end in view.

LEGEND:

7.4.9. From the legendary figure of the boy-hero Senkatana, it may be concluded that whoever he was, and whatever his true story, he was a large hearted man, who did not hesitate to endanger his life in an attempt to help others. In his privileged position next to a loving mother, he realised, as those in comparable positions seldom do, that one's enjoyment of life in seclusion is incomplete, while the majority of the people languish in squalor and poverty. The latter are symbolised by the masses imprisoned in the stomach of the Kgodumodumo. This realisation made him give up his sheltered position next to his mother, in order to go and make life more complete and meaningful for both, by slaying this monster and freeing the others. That they later turned against him, and ultimately put him to death, does not detract from this. On the contrary, it heightens it, and puts it into bold relief as a shining jewel in the sordid spectacle of man's ingratitude to man. Like his name, Senkatana's deeds live on, a shining example of a man who did all in his power to bring life and happiness to others. It is probably in view of such basic considerations that some informants simply identify him with Christ.

The opposite seems to be the case with Dimo. His is a picture of a sadist, a tyrant "who bestrides the narrow world like a colossus", making life intolerable for those weaker than himself. For this reason, he was both

feared and hated for a tyrant never finds a place in a people's heart. His own may be the first to disown him, and be ashamed of any previous connections they may have had with him. This is evidenced by the fact that in some stories, Dimo is occasionally said to be of Nguni rather than Sotho origin. His blind spots such as credulity, love of beer and a lack of detailed observation, are exploited by the weak for their own safety. This probably throws more light on the need for a healthy cooperation and peaceful co-existence between the big and the small, the weak and the strong. Such cooperation would be beneficial to all - Dimo using his great strength to help the weak, and the latter opening his eyes to his blind spots, thus making life fuller and more meaningful for all parties.

RIDDLES AND PROVERBS:

7.5.10. The wit, humour and observation of the Mosotho are evidenced by his riddles, idioms and proverbs. They deal with the world around him, the things that he knew and saw. Although the truth is disguised in the riddle, it is nevertheless there, while in the proverb, it is stated in its naked form. In the latter, the various forms and types of observation are given a staid and regular form in the guise of a saying that is applicable to a particular situation in life. As such then, these proverbs may be said to constitute the voice of the ancient Mosotho, which speaks directly to his descendants, counselling and teaching them from his own experiences in life. Consequently, they are vital and life-giving, for a wise man learns from the experience of others. The lessons embedded in them go hand in hand with those contained in the longish koma

There was also the type of work song that constituted a comment on the task being performed, or a complaint about the hard life that it entailed, including the condition of the worker and/or the cruelty and meanness of those in authority over him. This type, which invariably accompanied corn grinding, was often sung by orphan girls or newly married daughters-in-law, dingwetsi, who did not get on well with their mothers-in-law. Such songs were usually much longer than the ordinary work songs, and reflected the mental attitude of the singer, who occasionally imitated one or other of the characters she had in mind, as though she were soliloquising. A good example of this type is given by Mrs. Khaketla¹:

"Ahe, lefu ee! Hee, ma! Hee, ma!

Lefu le qetile batho Matsieng.

Lefu le manyala le siya diboko;

Rona dikgutsana re ana mabitla,

Re ana bo-Ramoeketsi le Phalo."

(Hail death! fa! la! la!

Death has finished people at Matsieng.

Death is evil, it leaves worms;

We orphans swear by graves,

We swear by the late Ramoeketsi, Phalo and others).

(ii) DANCE SONGS:

- 5.2.3. There are three main types of dance songs, namely, the mohobelo, a recreational dance for men only; moqokopelo or moqoqopelo, for young men only, and the mokgibo dance for girls only. In the first two, there

¹C. Khaketla: MOSALI EO U 'NEILENG EENA, P.34.

(A male child dies in the veld,
The grave of a man of war is the seboku grass,
A man of war is not buried at home,
He is buried in foreign lands.
And when he dies, the vultures eat him,
They cover him with their wings, the vultures).

Cowardice is not the point; the point is to live in peace and concord with other people. Hence the numerous sayings around this central theme:

Kgotso ke nala. (Peace is prosperity),
Kgotso ke kgaitsemi: (Peace is my ^sister/brother).
Mosadi ke morena. (Everybody must respect a woman).
"O ka nketsang?" ha e ahe motse.
(Arrogance does not build a home/village).
Motse ho aha wa morapedi.
(The home that prospers is that of a humble man).
Ntshabe, ke tle ke o tshabe.
(Respect me that I may also respect you).

To me, this about sums up the basic traditional outlook and attitude of the Sotho in relation to their dealings with other people. And if ever there was a time in history when this traditional outlook was needed, it is now, when the Sotho have to adjust themselves to the ever changing world in which they have to live.

SONGS:

7.6.11. In all its forms, Southern Sotho traditional poetry was meant for the ear rather than the eye, to be heard rather than read. From its simplest form - the plaintive note of an absent-minded girl repeating the same line over and over again, to the dikoma and dithoko, the same basic principle applies. Most of the songs, action and ceremonial

are characterised by the presence of a chorus or refrain, as well as the use of gestures and bodily movements of various kinds. In them, drama, music and poetry are inextricably intertwined. Structurally, they are characterised by the mechanisms of linking or chiasmus, and repetition which is accompanied by a regular rhythmical beat, that gives them a certain amount of regularity like that of European verse with its metrical feet.

DIKOMA:

7.7.12. From the historical excerpts contained in the majority of dikoma in this essay, it is clear that the progenitors of the Basotho originally came from somewhere in the North, although the actual place is not mentioned. It is equally clear that they spent some time wandering from place to place, and that they were persecuted, as borne out by the koma on Sekgolokgotjhane, (the wanderer). They crossed a red sea, (makwa-mafubedu); the great lakes, (matsha a maholo), past what is now Heidelberg, Transvaal, which they called Tebang; crossed the Vaal river which, in terms of its present Sotho name, Lekwa, seems to have reminded them of the sea they had crossed. It is also evident that they were familiar with what is called "The Fall" in the scriptures, as borne out by the words of the character with the significant name of Mosito, who says he fell face downwards, and then looked up into the face of a virgin girl, who was tall and upright. They knew about the miracle of a virgin who conceived without meeting a man, and who gave birth to a son in humble surroundings. They knew that his birth was heralded by heavenly signs in the form of lightning, and that it was not welcomed

by all, particularly those in high places at the time. They knew about a shining star that cut across the heavens by night and that led the expert digger of charms - the sweet smelling ones, to the cave in which the child Tladi had been born. On the basis of the contents of the relevant dikoma in this essay, there can be no doubt about any of these points.

Consequently, it is clear that at a certain stage in their otherwise obscure history, the Basotho did receive what Theologians would call revelation. But then something unknown happened, which caused them to leave their undisclosed original home. Probably due to the persecutions that followed they were compelled to sing their songs in secrecy, away from home, in the veld. Hence, perhaps, the secret language in which they are couched and in which only the bare essentials are given. In course of time, however, they seem to have lost this revelation, and because of their traditional way of hiding everything connected with it, whatever traces of it that still remained, were carefully concealed or withheld from the missionaries, who had to re-introduce from scratch, as it were, completely unaware of its former existence. And the fact that they very early frowned upon Lebollo and everything connected with it, probably robbed them of a brilliant opportunity of unearthing what might have been of tremendous help to them.

7.7.13. It may be argued that these dikoma were influenced by Christianity and missionary teachings. This, however, would be more of conjecture and speculation than fact for how could Christianity influence what was inaccessible

to it and its representatives, who early frowned on Lebollo as being a relic of the heathenism from which they had come "to save the noble savage?" Such influence is denied here because there is just no room for it. The whole atmosphere that pervades these dikoma is Sotho from beginning to end. The same is true of their linguistic forms which incorporate the indigenous word for a virgin, which Christian translators badly needed but did not get. Their similarity to certain aspects of the Bible, is simply due to the fact that they tell the same basic story from different backgrounds, one Jewish, and the other, Sotho. And in as much as these are two distinct cultural groups, there can be no possibility of mutual influence or borrowing. The position here is the same as that which obtains in the case of similar stories that are found in different parts of the world, e.g. the disobedient wife. These dikoma then, are held to be native and traditional; and the rich, secret language in which they are couched, supports this contention to the hilt.

7.7.14. The various events referred to in these dikoma, took place centuries ago. Most of their significances and allusions are buried in the mist of time. Who, for instance, are the people who were drowned in the red sea and about whom Motjodimatshana, (the Snipe), sings? Who, in reality, is this Motjodimatshana, and the various characters whose names end in the suffix -ane like Sekgolokgotjhane and Qhonqholotsane? Who are "the little meerkats" about whom they complain so bitterly, and who are said to have placed themselves in high positions? These and similar questions cannot be answered here in that the answers to them lie in the womb of time. Despite

this, however, they are vital questions that constitute a serious challenge to modern scholarship concerning the misty past of the Basotho, as well as that of the other Bantu-speaking tribes of Africa. For this reason, no stone should be left unturned in an attempt to find the correct answers to them. Something must be done to close this yawning gap, and the people to set the ball rolling in this direction, are the Africans themselves, who are the people directly concerned.

DITHOKO:

- 7.8.15. Dithoko are the highest water mark of Southern Sotho traditional poetry. And in view of the fact that they were meant for the ear, thought is fundamental to them. Basically, each thought is made up of a couplet of two lines, the first of which introduces an idea or expectation, which is completed in the second. Then there is a pause. In some cases, however, there may be several lines that constitute a thought; where it ends, there is a distinctive pause in its onward flow. Such a pause, constitutes a verse or stanza, and a series of such stanzas, make up a praise-poem. The stanzas are not arranged in a clear and logical manner. They follow one another indifferently. This haphazard arrangement in thought sequence, results in mental gaps and jumps within one and the same praise-poem. The various praise-poems are further characterised by a recurrence of stressed and unstressed syllables in a relatively regular manner. This constitutes rhythm which, however, is neither rigid nor uniform. It is thought-rhythm rather than vowel-rhyme, and it is accompanied by thought-arrangement rather than word-arrangement, with a parallelism of ideas, whose poetic

melody is ensured by rhythm. This feature, coupled with the illogical arrangement of stanzas mentioned above, allows the traditional poet to ramble freely over his chosen field in response to his inspiration, without having to conform to any pre-determined poetic structure. Unlike a Western poet, his poetry does not depend on rhyme and meter; it depends on a balance of thought, conveyed by a balance of sentence, accompanied by rhythm.

7.8.16. In essence, dithako are an oral history of the people from their own point of view. They are an authentic account of the ups and downs of the nation and its leaders in the form of chiefs and outstanding warriors. Their names and manly deeds on behalf of the nation are perpetually enshrined in them. And the fact that they were recited in public, in the presence of a man's comrade in arms, ensured that their authenticity could be proved and verified. As such then, they are remembered history that keeps the memory of the past alive and preserves it in the present. Because of this, they are valuable source-material for the ultimate writing of a history of the Basotho from their own point of view.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS:

7.9.17. The various genres of Southern Sotho traditional literature show a close connection between the Sotho and the Nguni. This is not surprising because these two linguistic groups lived cheek by jowl for a long time before the advent of Europeans and the emergence of a single unified Sotho nation under Moshweshwe I. He was the son of Mokgatjhane, the son of Peete, the son of a Hlubi man, Mualle. Because of this, the ruling house

of Moshweshwe in present-day Basutoland, commonly referred to as "Bara ba Moshweshwe", i.e. the sons of Moshweshwe, has Nguni blood in its veins. As a result, one often hears the saying in Basutoland:

Matebele ke marena.

(The Ndebele are chiefs).

But there are some Basotho who do not like this, and who argue that according to Sotho custom, Ngwana ke wa dikgomo, i.e. a child born of a woman for whom lobola has been paid, belongs to the family that paid it, irrespective of its fatherhood. This is true. It is equally true to say, however, that the biological factor is never completely ignored in such cases. Proof of this, is the fact that although Peete's real name was Motshwane, he obtained the former from the habit of Sotho women who, in imitation of his Hlubi father, whose knowledge of Sotho was limited, used to say, "Pete! Pete! Pete!" in playing with him as a baby. Compare the verb stem -peteketsa, to speak a language badly.

In the case of European languages, the first layer of foreign influence on Southern Sotho is that of Afrikaans. Again this not surprising, as the Afrikaners were the first Europeans to inhabit the interior of Southern Africa for a long time before the English arrived. As a result of their proximity to the Basotho in large numbers, Afrikaans words and concepts have penetrated very deeply into Southern Sotho. They begin in the stories, where they are by themselves; through the riddles, where they are still predominant, though with an occasional form from English; on to the dithoko, where they are now found side by side with those of English. These various layers are clear and distinct, and correspond very closely to the various historical stages relating to the arrival

and extensive points of contact between the Basotho, on the one hand, and the English and Afrikaners, on the other.

7.9.18 Closely allied to the above, is the existence of an interesting symmetry that is found among the various genres of traditional literature. It is in the form of the old genre with its recent or modern counterpart. Thus there are old and recent stories; old and recent riddles; old and recent idioms, as well as old and recent proverbs. This is a clear indication of the gradual changes that have taken place over the years. On the whole, they fit into the basic pattern of the old, and do not upset it in any way. They merely enhance it by adopting it to the present, without destroying its basic structure. As such then, they are healthy and welcome for changes will occur. But they should be evolutionary rather than revolutionary.

In the case of poetry, where there are also recent forms, the changes are undesirable in that they are revolutionary. The introduction, for instance, of foreign techniques like rhyme and meter, is **contrary** to the basic structure of traditional poetry. They are jarring and artificial, as well as unbecoming to the genius of this language. This reaction is often expressed in the words, "Ke ntho tsa Sekgowa tseno, e seng tsa Sesotho", i.e. those are European things, not Sotho. I endorse this reaction. These mechanisms serve no useful purpose in Southern Sotho poetry. Because of this, they should be left alone where they belong and where they serve such a purpose. The corresponding function in Southern Sotho is performed by the mechanisms outlined in 7.8.15 above. And in so far as they do not knee-halt the poet in any

way, they are self-sufficient and need no external embellishments.

7.9.19. It was pointed out in 7.7.14 above that something must be done to close the yawning gap that exists at present, pertaining to the past and origin of the Sotho. In the search for ancestors and ancestral homes, the investigator will have to reckon with serious difficulties. There are no written records in this field, in that the people could neither read nor write. The historian will therefore be compelled to set out without his usual tools. Secondly, the investigator will have to win the trust and confidence of elderly informants, who can be very difficult and extremely suspicious of unknown young faces that keep asking awkward questions. To avoid such questions that may make him part with some of his secrets, a witch-doctor next door will, on learning what he is wanted for, quickly disappear, and be away for days on end rather than part with them.

But difficulties are there to be overcome; and it is here that African intellectuals can play a vital role. As people in the culture, they can penetrate the various cracks and crevices of African life in a way that no outsider can ever do. From these inaccessible areas to others, let them collect all that they can find and bring it to light for a proper assessment and evaluation. The little that has been done, has been mainly by outsiders. The time has come when the African must do something for himself, and take his rightful place in the search for, and scientific analysis of things that concern him. With the strong rays of independence

beginning to scatter the gloom and inertia of the past, the African must take the initiative and assume the necessary responsibility for putting his house in order. Through the help of African ministers of education and religion, chiefs and sub-chiefs, headmen and teachers, an effective national machinery can be set up for the collecting and collating of data. This is particularly so in Basutoland, where the chieftainship is still very popular among the ordinary people - the true repositories of traditional things. Now is the time to knuckle down to it, to go from village to village and record whatever still remains of this valuable traditional heritage.

7.9.20. In the interim, African traditional literature must be given real prominence in African schools and Universities. It is through the pens of their products that the true spirit of Africa must ultimately find expression. In the stories that deal with the relations between man and man, as well as those that we have categorised as their extension, one finds those fundamental literary qualities that constitute the bone and marrow of all that is truly great and lasting in literature. These are the qualities of simplicity; utter selfishness and a total disregard for the interests of others; the vindictiveness of despised love; retribution for upsetting the social order; willingness to sacrifice all on behalf of others, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil. Herein then lie the seeds for the future development of a dynamic and life-giving indigenous literature that would touch the heart-strings of men everywhere.

In adopting any of these themes for his purposes, an African writer can allow himself that liberty of

conception and expression that is characteristic of folklore as a whole. In a work of art, reference is to a world of fiction and imagination. A character in an historical novel differs from an historical figure in real life, in that he is made only of those sentences that describe him or put into his mouth by the writer. The historicity of the story is maintained in its essentials, but there is ample room for imagination and conception. For this reason, the study of oral literature must be an important concern of every literary scholar who wants to understand the process of literary development. Its fundamental problems are shared with those of written literature, in that there is a continuity between oral and written literature. For instance, to rejuvenate Southern Sotho drama, the element of the chorus found in some of the ceremonial and action songs, could very well be exploited by modern dramatists, as in Greek drama. The same is true of the mechanism of soliloquy that was noticed in the stylistic analysis of some of the stories. In passing, it may be mentioned that some of these devices, including a virtual re-telling of some of the old stories in the form of drama, have been used by a few writers in Southern Sotho. In this connection, compare PITSO EA LINONYANA by Sekese; SENKATANA by Mofokeng and OBE by Taoana.

CONCLUSION:

- 7.10.21. Finally, it must be remembered that what is basic in life, as in literature, is truth. And the painful truth in African society today, is that things African are generally despised and frowned upon as being backward and primitive. While deeply conscious of the numerous benefits bestowed by missionaries in general on the Africans,

I cannot help feeling that this unfortunate attitude stems from their hasty frowning on traditional institutions like Lebollo, which they regarded as relics of heathenism.

Their converts followed suit, and it is mainly from them that the present African intellectuals spring. It is for this reason that I feel compelled to say, "Look to the rock whence you are hewn ----- Look to Abraham your father and Sarah your mother". Every racial group has something to contribute to the common stock, something to contribute to the good of humanity as a whole. It must be genuine, and not a poor imitation of the original. If it is African, it must come from African loins and presented as such to the world, without any internal or external trimmings. As Africans, we can and must learn from others, but in so doing, we must not sacrifice what is ours. Let us preserve our heritage and unite with it the light and learning of the modern world. And in our search for the past, let us remember that history is not only a march of time and a record of change, but that it is also a record of something changeless, namely, the truth. Therefore, our investigation must be undertaken calmly and objectively, with a true spirit of inquiry and humility so characteristic of one who does not know but wants to; one who is groping in the dark in search of light, and prepared to follow that light to wherever it may lead him, for:

"In thy light, we shall see light".

and fill a bag with it." Now this woman kept on scraping the pot for many days, putting the burnt crust into a bag until it was full. Then she told her husband, "Today the bag is full." He said, "I am going now; I am going to kill a wild animal."

He took a long journey to go and look for wild animals. As he went, he lived on the bohoho until he came to where they lived. He found them absent, having gone to graze afar, and having left an old one behind. He quickly killed that one, flayed it and took out its liver, and then made himself another bag with its skin and jumped into it.

The others returned to their grandmother. On arrival they said, "Where does human flesh smell?" They went round and round, and said, "Where does senthu, - human flesh smell?" The old one said, "No my children, there is no human flesh here." But they said, "Where does senthu smell?" Now they kept quiet and slept. The next day, they went to look for food. Because they were suspicious, they said, "Granny let us go and hunt for food." Now they lived on little stones. This man kept on bending and picking up little stones, but eating the bohoho in his bag. Now they were satisfied that he was their grandmother. They slept again. The next day they said, "Let us go and jump a big donga." They all jumped it and said, "Jump too, Granny." He jumped. Now they stopped being suspicious. They went off on another long journey and left him alone.

This man took out the animal liver where he had hidden it. He came out of the skin

a ipha dinaha. Yaba o nka lejwe la morallana, le boreletsana, a le boloka ka mokotlaneng wa hae le sona sebete sa nyamatsane. Tsa nyoloha dinyamatsane, di hopotse ho nkgonwa tsona hae. Jwale eitse ha di fihla, tsa fumana hobane nkgonwa tsona o shwela, hoba ke lekoko feela. Tsa eba bohale, tsa re ho tse ding: Le a bona, re ne re bolele ra re: Na senthu se nkgae kae?

Jwale tsa utlwa mohlala wa hae, tsa mo sala morao. Eitse ha a se a le hole, a retela, a bona lerole le lesesane le hlabile hodimo, a re: Jo! ke dinyamatsane, di tla mpolaya kajeno. Tsa tla, tsa nna tsa tla ka lebelo le leholo, tsa ba tsa mmona ha di le haufi le yena. Yaba o ntsha lejwe lena la morallana mokotlaneng, a le akgela fatshe, ha a di bonela haufi. Yaba le fetoha thaba e boreletsana; yaba o hlwa hodima yona. Tsa rata ho hlwa, empa tsa sitwa, tsa thella. Tsa leka letsatsi kaofela. Tsa sitwa ho hlwa, tsa ba tsa kgathala, tsa robala teng.

Jwale monna eo bosiu, ha di robetse, a tsoha, a tsamaya haholo sebaka se selelele. Tsa tsoha, tsa fumana hobane o tsamaile; tsa utlwa mohlala wa hae, tsa o fofonela ka linko, tsa mo latella, di ntse di matha ka lebelo le leholo. Tsa ba tsa fihla haufi le yena hape; a nna a di tadima. Eitse ha a di bonela haufi, a ntsha lejwe ka mokotlaneng, a le akgela fatshe, la fetoha thabana, a hlwa hodima yona. Yaba di a fihla, tsa rata ho hlwa hodimo, tsa sitwa jwaleka pele. Tsa leka letsatsi lohle, tsa ba tsa robala teng hape la bobedi.

A boela a tswela pele hape-hape, a nna a tsamaya, di sa robetse dinyamatsane. Yare ha a se a le hole, tsa mo sala morao. Tsa nna tsa ya, tsa mo sala morao, tsa ba tsa mo fihlela. Yare ha a di bonela haufi le yena, a ntsha lejwe lena ka mokotlaneng, a le akgela fatshe; la fetoha thabana,

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and ran away. He took a small and smooth iron-stone, and kept it in his bag together with the liver. The animals returned, longing for their grandmother at home. They found that their granny was dead and only the hide remained. They became angry and said to the others, "You see, we said where does senthu smell?"

Now they took his spoor and followed him. When he was very far, he looked round and saw their dust rising in the distance and he said, "Woe unto me, it is the wild animals; they will kill me today." They came at great speed until they saw him nearby. Then he took out the iron-stone from his bag and threw it down. It turned itself into a smooth little mountain and he sat on top of it. They tried to climb it but slipped down and could not do so. They tried the whole day but failed, and became tired. Then they slept there.

At night when they were asleep, he woke up and travelled a long distance. On waking up, they found him gone. They took his spoor and followed him at great speed. They soon neared him. When he saw them near, he took out the stone from the bag, threw it down, and it turned into a little mountain and he sat on top of it. They came and tried to climb it as before but failed. They tried the whole day, and slept there a second time.

He went on again leaving them asleep. When he was far away, they woke up, took his spoor and followed him, until they caught up with him. When he saw them near, he took the stone, threw it down and it became a mountain.

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a hlwa hodima yona, a dula teng. Jwale ha di fihla, tsa rata ho hlwa, tsa sitwa. Tsa pota thabana ho batla kgoro, tsa ba tsa kgathala, tsa robala teng.

Yare bosiu bo boholo, ha di robetse hape la boraro, a theoha, a tsamaya, a tsamaya, a haola masaba-saba ka matla a maholo, hore a iphe sebaka sa ho ya hae. Eitse ha a le hole, tsa tsoha, tsa fofonela hape ka dinko, tsa sala mohlala wa hae morao. Tsa tsamaya. a bosla a retelaha, a bona lerole le hlabile hodimo, a re: A nna elwa! Ke jele kgomo ya molatelle. A tsoela pele leetong la hae, ha a se a tsotile. Tsa nna tsa tla, tsa ba tsa fihla. Eitse ha a di bonela haufi, a ntsha lejwe mokotlaneng, a le akgela fatshe, la fetoha thabana, a hlwa hodima yona. Tsa fihla di halefile haholo, tsa pota thabana ka matla, tsa e pota letsatsi lohle, di rata ho mmolaya. Empa tsa sitwa.

Jwale di tsamaile ka ditshiu tse ngata; tsa robala di kgathetse haholo, hobane di tsamaile halelele. Jwale monna eo, bosiu, a thoba, a theoha thabeng hoja di robetse, a ba a ya fihla ha habo. Jwale ha di tsoha, tsa fumana a se a fihlile motseng wa habo. Eitse ha di etla, tsa tshaba dintja, tsa kgutla. Jwale monna eo a re: Itjhuu-u! Ke kgathetse hakakang! A re ho mosadi wa hae: A ko mphe metsi ke nwe. Yaba wa nwa. Jwale a iqetha kgororo ya mokgathala. Yaba o re ho mosadi: Ya nka disu tsa ho besa mollo. Yaba mosadi o nka disu, a besa mollo o moholo. Jwale a makga mollo wa disu. Jwale monna a tlamolla mokotlana, a ntsha sebete sa nyamatsane, a re: Ke sena sebete sa nyamatsane; o itse o tla dumela hobane ke a o rata ha ke tswa bolaya nyamatsane. Jwale a re ho yena: O ntshe bana ba ka kaofela, ba ye kantle. Yaba o a se besa, sebete sena, a se bea lengetaneng. Jwale a re: O se je,

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He sat on top of it. They tried to climb it but failed. They went round it trying to find a way up but failed. They slept there. At mid-night when they were asleep for the third time, he came down and traversed wide plains in great haste, in an attempt to reach home. When he was far away, they woke up, smelt his spoor with their noses, and followed him. He once more turned round and saw their dust going up on the horizon. He said, "Woe unto me! I have brought endless trouble upon myself!" They kept on coming until they arrived. He took out his stone from the bag, threw it down, and it became a mountain. He sat on top of it. They arrived very angry, circled the mountain with determination for the whole day, wanting to kill him. But they failed.

Because they had been travelling such long distances for so many days, they slept being very tired. Now the man sneaked off at night while they slept and ultimately reached his home. When they woke up, they found him having reached his village. As they approached it, they became afraid of dogs and returned. Now that man said, "How tired I am!" Then he said to his wife, "Please give me water to drink." He drank. Now he said to his wife, "Go and take dry dung, disu, with which to come and light a fire." She did so, and made a big fire. Then the man opened his bag and took out the liver of the wild animal and said, "Here is the liver of the nyamatsane. You said you would believe that I love you if I could kill a nyamatsane." He also said, "Take all my children outside." Then she roasted this liver on a piece of broken pot. He said, "Eat it and finish it."

o se ke wa ba wa fa motho leha a le mong; le ngwana ka a le mong, o se ke wa ba wa mo fa; o je o inotshi. Yaba mosadi o a ja, o a se qeta.

Ha a se qeta, a nyorwa; a nwa metsi nkgong ya hae, a e qeta. A ya ho mosadi e mong, a re: Ngwaneso, a ko mphe metsi. A mo kgella ka mohone wa sephoko. A nwa, a qeta, a re: Ngwaneso, nkgelle hape. Mosadi enwa: Ao! O qeta metsi a bana ba ka. A fetela ka lapeng la mosadi e mong, a re: A ko mphe metsi, ngwaneso, ke nwe, ke nyorilwe. Eya mane nkgong, o nwe. A nka, a a re rii kaofela. Yaba o a tswa. A ya ka seotlwaneng se seng hape, a re: A ko mphe metsi, ngwaneso, ke nwe, ke nyorilwe. Ba re: Ya bona metsi mane nkgong, o nwe. A nka nkgo, a a re rii hape. Mosadi a ya nkgong, a fumana metsi a le siyo kaofela. A le opa a le re jaa, a re: Mmannyeo, o nwele metsi a ka kaofela!

A tsamaya hape, a kena lapeng le leng, a re: Mphe metsi, ke nyorilwe. Ba re: Mo kgelleng. Ba mo kgella ka mohope, a qeta, a re: Nkgelleng metsi hape, ke nyorilwe. Ba mo kgella, a ba a kopa la boraro. Ba tsota beng ba lelapa, ba re: Ao, o qeta metsi a rona! Ba mo nea ka nkgo, a a nka hapee, a a re rii, a a qeta. A tsamaya; a nna a ya le motse, o le moholo, a qela metsi hape ka seotlwaneng se seng. Ba re: Metsi ke ane nkgong, nwa, a nna a a a qeta. Jwale ha a qeta motse kaofela, a ya sedibeng, a fihla a inamela, a monya sediba, a se qeta. A nyoloha, a ya ho se seng hape; o ile a se re rii le sona, a se qeta. A ba a qeta didiba tsa motse kaofela.

A ya nokaneng e pela motse; a fihla a inama moo nokana e kenang teng ho e nngwe. A nwa, a e qeta kaofela. A tsamaya, a ya nokeng e kgolo; a fihla a kgumama ka mangole,

You must not give a single person, not even any of my children. You must eat it alone." She ate it and finished it.

After finishing it, she became thirsty. She drank the water in her water pot and finished it. Then she went to another woman and said, "Friend, please give me water." She gave her with a drinking calabash. She drank and finished it and then said, "Friend, give me again." This woman said "My! you are finishing my children's water." She passed on to another hut and said, "Please give me water, I am thirsty." They said, "There is the water pot. Go and drink." She took it and emptied it. She went out, and went to another hut and said, "Please give me water, I am thirsty." They said, "Look for it in the water pot and drink." She took it and emptied it. The owner went to the pot and found it empty. She exclaimed, "You woman, you have drunk all my water!"

She passed on and entered another hut. She said, "Please give me water, I am thirsty." They said, "Give her." They gave her and she finished it. She said, "Give me water, I am thirsty." They gave her, and she even asked for the third time. The owners of the hut exclaimed and said, "My! You are finishing our water!" They gave her the water pot and she finished it. She went on from hut to hut in the village which was big, asking for water. She kept on finishing it. Having finished all the water in the village, she went to the well and emptied it. She went to another one and emptied it too. She did likewise with all the others.

Then she went to a rivulet near the village and drank where it joined another one. She emptied it. She went to the big river, knelt down

a e nwa, a e geta. A ba a nwa le seretse. A inamoloha, a re: Ha ke eso kgolwe. A fetela ho e nngwe hape, a e nwa, a e re rii, a e geta mosadi enwa. Jwale a ya letsheng le leholo la diphoofolo, a fihla teng, a inama, a nwa. Jwale ha a se a qetile letsha lena la diphoofolo, a sitwa ho tloha, hobane mpa ya hae e ne e le kgolo haholo, e ne e feta le hloho ya hae, e ne e feta le dithaba.

Jwale diphoofolo tsa tla di nyorilwe, di rata ho nwa. Tsa fumana hobane metsi ha a yo letsheng la tsona. Jwale tsa bona ntho ya tonanahadi e dutseng teng letsheng la tsona. Jwale yaba motau moholo o re: Na ke mang, ke mang ya dutseng sedibeng sa rare moholo? Motau moholo a boela a eketsa a re: Na ke mang, ke mang ya dutseng sedibeng sa rare moholo? Jwale tsa atamela, tsa fumana Mokgadi wa Molata. Jwale he tsa mmotsa tsa re: Na o duletseng sedibeng sa rare moholo? A ba a araba, a re: Ke re ka re ke a tloha, diba se ntshwere!

Jwale ha thwe ho diphoofolo: Na ke mang ya tla phunya? Ha thwe: Hlolo, phunya. A re: Monghadi, ke a tshaba. Ha thwe: Mmutlanyana, phunya. A re: Morena, nka etsang ntho e le kale? Ha thwe: Letsa phunya. A re: Wee, ke a sitwa. Tsa itatola jwalo kaofela diphoofolo. Jwale kamorao ha phunya mmutlanyana. Jwale a ema, a phunya ka lenala, ha tswa metsi a mangata; letsha la tlala, le dinoka, le dinokana, le didiba.

Jwale motau moholo a bea molao hore ba se ke ba enwa, metsi a be a hlweke. Yaba diphoofolo di a kgutla di ya mesimeng ya tsona. Ha thwe ho tla nowa hosasane, ha metsi a hlwekile. Jwale mmutlanyana a bona hore benghadi ba robotse; yaba o a tsoha bosiu, o ya nwa letsheng la motau moholo. Jwale mmutlanyana a tla le seretse a neta hlolo mangoleng, le molomong, le phatleng, le nkong, le ka mahetleng, hore ho bonwe hobane ke yena ya nweleng metsi bosiu.

and emptied it. She even drank its mud. She stood up and said, "I am not satisfied yet!" She passed on to another one and emptied it, this woman. Then she went to a big lake for animals and knelt down to drink. After emptying this lake, she could not move because her stomach was so big; it was even bigger than her head, bigger than mountains.

Now the animals arrived thirsty and wanting to drink. They found that there was no water in their lake. They saw a big thing sitting near their lake. Now the lion said, "Who is sitting at my grandfather's lake?" They went nearer and found Mokgadi, daughter of Molata. They asked her, "Why are you sitting at our grandfather's lake?" She answered, "I have been trying to get away but the pool is holding me." Now it was said to the animals, "Who will cut her open?" It was said, "Hlolo, pierce her open!" He said, "Your Majesty, I am afraid." It was then said, "Mmutlanyana, pierce her open." He said, "Morena, what can I do to such a huge thing?" It was said, "Springbok, cut open." He said, "Oh! I am unable to." All the animals excused themselves. Ultimately, Mmutlanyana got up and pierced her with his claws. Water came out and filled the lake, river, rivulets and springs.

Now the lion put a law that they must not drink the water until it had cleared. The animals went to their holes. It was agreed to drink the next day after the water had cleared. When Mmutlanyana saw that they were all asleep, he went out by night and drank from the lion's lake. He returned carrying mud and smeared Hlolo (Red Hare), on the knees, mouth, forehead, nose and tail, so that it should be seen that he had drunk the water by night.

Jwale hosasane motau moholo a tloha, a ya pele letsheng la diphoofolo. Jwale a hlahloba, a fumana hobane e mong o teng ya dukileng metsi. Jwale motau moholo a botsa, a re: Na ke mang, ke mang ya nweleng metsi na? Mmutlanyana a phakisa a mo araba kapele, ka masene, a thalatsa, a be a se a supa hlolo kapele, a re: Mo tadimeng, ke yena ya nweleng metsi a morena. Jwale a re: Bonang seretse mangoleng le molomong wa hlolo. Hlolo a mpa a itatola a swabile, a re: Hase nna ya nweleng metsi! Jwale motau moholo a re: Mo tshwareng le mo shape.

Jwale hobane Hlolo a tshwarwe, hosasane mmutlanyana a ithorisa, a re: Ka nwa-nwa metsi, ka nwa-nwa metsi, ka re ke hlolo! E mong a mo araba, a re: Utlwa! mmutlanyana o reng na? Mmutlanyana ka masene, kapele: Ke re o nnee melamu ya ka. A boela a eketsa hape, ha ba lebetse, a re: Ka nwa-nwa metsi, ka nwa-nwa metsi, ka re ke hlolo! Jwale phoofolo e nngwe ya re ho motau moholo: Na u utlwa se bolelwang ke mmutlanyana na? Jwale motau moholo a re: E, ke ntse ke utlwa. Jwale ba botsa mmutlanyana, ba re: O ntso reng na? Yena a re: Ke nna ke nweleng metsi, ka re ke hlolo. Jwale yaba mmutlanyana o phakisa a baleha ka lebelo. Yaba diphoofolo di a mo phallisa.

Jwale mmutlanyana a bona lepetsonyana, a kena teng kapele, a re tjobe ka lepetsong, a hlahisa tsebe. Ba tswatswile ba tosa tsebe, mmutlanyana a itshwarella ka lepetsong. Ba mo hlaba ka mamao tsebeng, ba ba ba mo tela ba kgutlela hae. Jwale mmutlanyana a tswa, a fumana hlolo, a re: Monna, kajeno le nna ke shapilwe jwale ka wena. Jwale hlolo a re: Monna o nkentse hampe, hobane o nwele metsi wa re ka nna. Jwale mmutlanyana a phakisa a re: Tlo, motswalle, re tsamaye, ke o rute tsa bohale.

The next morning, the lion was the first to go to the lake. He inspected and found that somebody had dirtied the water. He asked, "Who drank the water?" Mmutlanyana quickly answered in a clever manner. Looking round, he pointed at Hlolo and said, "Look at him, he is the one who drank the chief's water. Look at the mud on his mouth and knees." Hlolo denied shamefacedly and said, "It is not I who drank the water." The lion said, "Catch him and beat him up."

The next morning Mmutlanyana praised himself and said, "I drank the water, drank the water, and said it was Hlolo." Somebody said, "Listen! What do you say, Mmutlanyana?" Mmutlanyana quickly said, "I say you should give me my sticks." After a while he said again, "I drank the water, drank the water, and said it was Hlolo." Now another animal said to the lion, "Do you hear what Mmutlanyana says?" The lion said, "Yes." They asked Mmutlanayana, "What are you saying?" He said, "I drank the water and said it was Hlolo." Then he ran away and the others chased him.

Mmutlanyana saw a little crack and quickly went into it, with one ear sticking out. They pulled him by the ear but he held on to the crack. They pricked his ear with needles and ultimately gave him up and returned home. Then he came out and found Hlolo and said to him, "Man, today I have also been punished like you." Hlolo said, "You treated me badly in that you drank the water and said it was me." Mmutlanyana quickly said, "Come, let us go friend, and let me teach you about wisdom."

Jwale ba tsamaya le hlolo; ba fihla moo mokoti o leng teng. Jwale mmutlanyana a re: Ha re besane. Jwale hlolo a re: O ipese pele. Jwale mmutlanyana o na ekga moqhinyetsane, a o tshwara. Jwale a re: Monna, ha re bese mollo haholo. Jwale ba besa sekoti haholo. Jwale mmutlanyana a re ho hlolo: Nkenye. Jwale hlolo a nka mmutlanyana, a mo kenya. Jwale mmutlanyana ha a qala ho utlwa mollo o futhumala, a akgela moqhinyetsane. Jwale wa ohoma; jwale a re: Hlolo, utlwa, ke se ke qhoma; monna, ntshole kapele! Jwale hlolo a mo tshola. Jwale mmutlanyana a kenya hlolo. Jwale hlolo a re: Mmutlanyana, ntshole, ke a tjha! Yaba mmutlanyana o a mo ntsha. Jwale a re: A ko bone letlalo la ka le se le sosobane; ke hlolo. Jwale mmutlanyana a re: Nna, tlalo la ka le thata, ha le sosobane kapele; re boele re bese haholo, re kene hape.

Yaba hlolo le mmutlanyana ba eketsa mollo; mmutlanyana a boela a kenya hlolo. Hlolo o itse ka re: Mmutlanyana, ke a tjha, mmutlanyana a hana ho mo tshola. A tjha, a ba a shwa, a tswa masarong. Jwale mmutlanyana, hoba mollo o time, a kena ka sekoting, a fumana masapo a hlolo. Yaba o a a kuka ho etsa diphala ka oona. Jwale a re:

Pii, pii, hlolo ke moshemanyana,

A mpesa ke se butswe, ka mmesa a butswa.

Yaba nketjwane e re: O reng na, mmutlanyana? Yaba mmutlanyana o boela a eketsa a re:

Pii, pii, hlolo ke moshemanyana,

A mpesa ke se butswe, ka mmesa a butswa.

Jwale mmutlanyana a tholwa ke motau moholo. Yaba o re ho yena: Ntate moholo, ke o lemose kamoo o ka bolayang nama e ngata kateng? Motau moholo a re: E. Yaba o re:

They left with Hlolo and found a hole. Then Mmutlanyana said, "Let us roast one another." Hlolo said, "You must roast yourself first." Mmutlanyana plucked some moghinyetsane, a type of plant, and held it. Then he said, "Let us increase the fire." They made a big fire in the hole. Mmutlanyana said to Hlolo, "Put me in." Hlolo put him in. Now when he felt the heat of the fire, he threw the plant into it. It exploded and he said, "Listen Hlolo, I am already exploding. Take me out quickly." Hlolo took him out. Then he put Hlolo in. Hlolo said, "Mmutlanyana I burn; take me out." He took him out. Hlolo said, "Just look, my skin is wrinkled already." Mmutlanyana said, "My skin is tough. It does not easily become wrinkled. Let us make more fire and go in again." They increased the fire and Mmutlanyana put in Hlolo once more. Hlolo shouted repeatedly saying, "Mmutlanyana, I burn," but Mmutlanyana refused to take him out. He burnt to death and only his bones remained. When the fire had gone out, Mmutlanyana went into the hole and found Hlolo's bones. He took them and made a whistle with them. Then he said/sang:

Pii, Pii! Hlolo is a small boy
 He roasted me, I did not get burnt;
 I roasted him, he got burnt.

The frog said, "What are you saying, Mmutlanyana?" He repeated his song:

Pii, Pii! Hlolo is a small boy,
 He roasted me, I did not get burnt,
 I roasted him, he got burnt.

Now Mmutlanyana was befriended by Motaumoholo, the lion. He said to him, "Grandpa, should I show you how you can kill many animals for meat?" The lion said, "Yes." He said,

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A re tjheke sekoti. Ba se tjheka ka sakeng, ba tjheka haholo.
Yaba o re: Ntate moholo, kena ka teng, o itjhwese ka hara
sona, ebe o hlahisa meno kantle. Motau moholo a etsa jwalo.
Mmutlanyana a ema hodima lesaka, a nka phala, a re:

Pii, pii, diphoofolo tsohle, tlong le bone,
Meno a medile, a medile fatshe!

Diphoofolo tsa utlwa, tsa tla di matha. A re: Kenang
ka sakeng kaofela, ho se ke ha eba ya salang kantle. Tsa
kena kaofela; qetellong ha fihla tshwene e pepile ngwana. Ya
fihla ya nka lehlokwa, yaba e hlaba motau moholo ka sebonong;
jwale sa finyela. Tshwene yaba e re:

Ngwana ngwana ke, tlo ke o pepe,
Mona ke mofu mofinyetsa-pere.

Yaba tshwene e a tsamaya, e nkile ngwana wa yona. Jwale
mmutlanyana a re ho diphoofolo: Tlong, re kwalleng. Tsa kwala
monyako, tsa kwalla ka majwe. Hoba di kwale di qete,
mmutlanyana a re: Ntate moholo, tsoha. Motau moholo a tsoha;
ba bolaya diphoofolo tsena kaofela, ba di buwa.

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"Let us dig a hole." They dug a big one in a cattle kraal. Then Mmutlanyana said, "Grandpa, go in and pretend to be dead by exposing your teeth." The lion did so. Mmutlanyana took his whistle and stood on top of the kraal and said/sang:

Fii, Fii! All you animals come and see,

Teeth have grown, they have grown on the ground."

The animals heard and came running. He said, "Go into the kraal, all of you. Nobody should remain outside." They all went in. At last there came an old baboon carrying a young one on its back. On arrival, it took a small stick and pricked the lion on the anus. It contracted. The baboon said:

My grandchild, come let me carry you on my back,

There is positive danger here.

The baboon left with its child. Mmutlanyana said to the animals, "Come, let us close the kraal." They closed the entrance, blocking it with stones. When they had finished, Mmutlanyana said, "Grandpa, wake up!" The lion woke up and they killed all these animals and flayed them.

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