

Chapter 5Culture versus Christianity

When Christianity was brought to the African people, it was presented not only as public and male domination, but also as a preserve of whites and of the ruling class. The result was an overlong precaution with missionaries and of course an important topic in political history. They were often agents of British imperialism as well as opponents of white settler regimes. But far more missionaries were agents of cultural change. (Elphick 1995:10)

That can be said of Alexander Merensky as an example. “Members of the community at Mafolofolo began to enunciate a profound criticism of the role of the missionaries. They argued that they were enemies of the converts. For they teach you that you must be subordinate to the Boers, and although the Boers cannot enforce their laws, the missionaries assist the Boers to place you under their yoke”.

As the differences mounted between the community of Mafolofolo and the missionaries, the Berlin missionaries reached a conclusion that “it would be best for the mission if a foot is placed on the neck of the blacks”. (Delius 1983:176)

Merensky believed that his Christian converts must subject themselves under the Z.A.R, which was governed by Britain at that time. He wrote: “I made it clear to my people that as Christians we could not serve two masters, both Mapoch (Mabhoko) and the Boers. This would only be possible through total deceit”. Merensky denied the converts the options of recognizing the authority of their traditional leader. He was influenced by the fact that his ultimate authority was based on a property right, which in turn depended

on the authority of the Z.A.R. This entailed meeting demands for tax and labour. This ultimately brought a clash of ideas between the traditional chiefs and the missionaries.

This will also mean that the converts or Christians would become more loyal to missionaries than their own chiefs.

Hence chief Dinkwanyane had this to say: “Do we have no land or place .... Have we not continually worked for Merensky and so served him? ..... We helped to build the mill and were not paid, the school and churches. Further we have worked the land for him in the form of the tithe”. (Delius 1983:168)

This difference between Merensky and the traditional leader was based on the traditional practice, which is African culture. Those explanations that have been advanced have been shaped, in the main, by a crude cultural determination. The dominant missionary view was that the conflicts were an inevitable consequence of the fact that the essential basis of chiefly power was religious. This view of the chief's paramount is also facilitated by the conclusion, which became increasingly prevalent amongst the Berlin missionaries that Christian advance depended on the destruction of chiefly power.

The best way of doing was to convert a person wholly. By this it is meant to convert him fully, that is to make him different from his people, that he must be different from his family, different from his nation and different from his Chief. You must isolate yourself from them. You are not like them. You are a Christian and they remain a heathen nation. This means missionaries were to convert people and isolate them from their Traditional Chief. The missionaries were doing that for the sake of the Z.A.R., which wanted to control the whole Transvaal. For they were not controlling the land under Sekhukhune. So Merensky was used by the Republic to isolate King Sekhukhune. After the building of

Botshabelo Merensky believed that the station would develop into an institute. He defined an institute as a mission station located on B.M.S. property and the form of administration being determined by the fact that the mission society both claimed rents from the inhabitants and through its missionary representative governed by the community through mutually agreed codes of law and discipline. He believed that the missionary would on occasion have to enforce the law of the state and represent the interests of the landowners. In 1861 Merensky wrote to the Z.A.R. in Lydenburg through the landdrost. Stressing that he wished to remain nothing more than a missionary in the eyes of his congregation, nonetheless, he will always be willing to support his government in its attempts to maintain law and order.

Merensky and his colleagues were never to display more commitment to the cause of the Pedi paramount than the French missionaries mustered in their support of Moshoeshoe. Merensky and Grutzner were careful to observe the code of conduct laid down for missionaries by the Z.A.R. and sought to avoid presenting any open challenge to the claims of authority of the Boer state or the paramount. Hence Sekhukhune describing the missionaries as people of the Boers in 1864.

The one other factor that made Sekhukhune not to trust the missionaries was their Christian beliefs that seemed to be contrary to the African belief. This double standard by the missionaries, made them to lose support even to their own converts. As one of them by the name of Sam had this to say with a Bible in his hand in Pretoria. "The baruti ba Berlin (The Berlin missionaries) are the Nebuchadnezzar, the men in furnace are Marishani, the heathen and the poor Wesleyan Christians..... These men from Germany bring false doctrines into the land ..... And deliver us over to the Boers". (Millard 1994:149)

“I mean here, the struggle was about land. More and more land was lost to the farmers. Traditional leaders like Sekhukhune as the paramount Chief, Mabhoko and Boleu were not only losing power, but even their subjects were taken as labourers to farmers and the land was steadily moving into the hand of the white man. Chief Mabhoko of the Ndebele was quoted saying: “Mabhoko is for peace if the Boers are prepared to pay Mabhoko one beast for each house because it is his land..... He said earlier that it was his land ..... and he would fight to his death for it”.

Despite the opposition of the landdrost of Lydenburg and the subsequent disapproval of the Uitvoerende Raad these burghers agreed to pay forty head of cattle to the Ndebele ruler. Although these contributions were changed as the land was bought and the buyer received the right to stay, all this happened with the approval of the missionaries. The only things that they did not know or say was that they were not always aware of the suspicion with which they were viewed or of the difference between their British Colonial culture and methods and the culture of the people among whom they were working.

The other methods that the British Colonials used was that of starving the African tribes for submission, they can destroy their crops, or make them to pay tribute to the Z.A.R. with herds of cattle, for instead Sekhukhune was commanded to pay not less than 2 500 cattle to Z.A.R. as war expenses. The whole aim was to make a black man poor so that he may render service to a white man.

The next step Shepstone took was to deliver an ultimatum to the paramount. A message translated into Sepedi by Nachtigal was sent to Sekhukhune informing him that:

“All persons, natives and especially their chiefs as well as whites residing within the territory who wished to continue their residence there as subjects of the Great Queen and

enjoy her protection and other benefits pertaining to such privileges would be obliged to render due obedience to the Governance and to pay such tax as may be found necessary for protection and to enable his excellency to provide for the necessary expenditure contingent on the good government of the country”.

Sekhukhune’s position was clear and he was not prepared to pay anything to the British, to him, there was no difference between the Boers and the British. Sekhukhune had refused to recognize himself as a subject of the Z.A.R. He said:

“I will not stand under the law. I am willing to pay taxes. I have to live by my people and any tax payable by them should come to me as a Chief”. (Delius 1983:211)

When this reached the Z.A.R. they aimed for war with the Pedi Dominion. They started preparing to attack the Maroteng Kingdom. They found it difficult to govern the Z.A.R. with some independent Chiefdom who seemed to be united. The Zulu were still independent. So they planned to attack Sekhukhune through this trap of 2 500 cattle for war expenses. Shepstone had this to say: “There are indications of the existence of a kind of common desire in the Natives mined in S.A. to try and overcome the White intruder..... They are however incapable of precise combination and so long as we can roll one stone out of the way at a time, we shall be alright. Sekhukhune is my first stone”.

When all these plans were made, the missionaries were aware of it. There was nothing that they did to stop the British Colony to destabilize the tribes which they were converting. Instead they became the ones who prepared more for the war. Their aim was to have a good government from Britain. A government to govern better than the Boers.

On 13 May 1875 Nachtigal wrote to the mission director in Berlin: “I read the secret orders from the President to Mr Cooper. If it comes to war I will go with the army as a

preacher for Blacks if my health permits..... I could write a great deal about the plan but it is still secret .... in time you will hear everything ..... God's mills grind slowly but fine, Johannes and Sekhukhune will also learn this lesson but only when it is too late". (Delius 1983:199)

Nachtigal as a companion of Merensky should have discouraged this for he knew that many people were going to die especially children and women, who had nothing to do with the stubborn minds of men. As a Pastor and a missionary he should have protected the tribe he was converting to know God. He should not have been happy to preach to corpses. I mean man needs repentance whilst alive. As a missionary, he should have preached the Gospel of Christ, which is based on the love of one another. Even if he didn't like Sekhukhune and Johannes, he should have remembered what Christ taught about the law of forgiveness.

Let me conclude the land problem by clearly stating the position of the missionaries when blacks wanted to have land of their own. I mean if they wanted to buy land of their own from the Z.A.R. for the missionaries it didn't matter, whether you were a convert Christian or not. The case here-involved Johannes Dinkwanyane one of their converts who had some differences with them concerning culture and Christianity. In October 1875, the acting Landdrost of Lydenburg visited the settlement of Mafolofolo to order Dinkwanyane to count his subject in preparation for the payment of tax within four weeks. Dinkwanyane had rejected this on the reason that they lived on the land belonging to Sekhukhune and could not see how the government had any right to demand taxes from them, and when it was necessary that their people or men should be counted then they join Sekhukhune and let him do the counting. In 1876, with war looming Dinkwanyane dispatched a letter to the

Landdrost of Lydenburg which was forwarded through Nachtigal and which gave some sense of his view of events.

“To the office, all the people ....I will address you Boers, you men who know God, do you think there is a God who will punish lying, theft and deceit? I ask you now for the truth. I pray for the truth because I also speak my whole truth. I say: The land belongs to us, this is my truth, and even if you become angry I will nonetheless stand by it. See that other people... blacks... have settled around here, but they are not so clever as to sell the land because they are ignorant, but you were all too clever... Your cleverness has turn to theft. When I say your cleverness has turned to theft, I say it in relation to the land, because you came to this country, you knew God’s word but ate everything up...and said nothing to anybody, only flogged the people: Your theft has now come into the open. Other men came here who were not of your kind who taught the people about this ... and I mean: those who have bought the land let them take their money back. Let these words be read before all the people so that they can hear the same. I am Johannes the younger son of Sekwati.” (Delius 83:178)

I want to conclude this section by quoting one example taken from “Berliner Missions Werk 2000:4”

“The missionary’s primary and most crucial task was preaching the gospel, encountering African culture and religion, and the gathering and leading of indigenous congregations and Churches over decades. We look back with gratitude, respect and joy on the past achievements of our mission workers in the mission fields, in the church, as well as in the fields of education, school and health. They were leaders in many areas. But unfortunately that is also where the roots of many detrimental developments can be found.”

Today we realize:

The motivation for mission was very complex. In addition to the zeal of the revivalist movements, the feelings of superiority of the White Europeans' in all areas including the religious one, played a huge role, the conviction of a necessary civilizing mission, which was partly colonialist and racist.

Today we recognize and deplore that:

- Our virtues became our snare. The missionary impulse was often stepped in and overwhelmed by the white Europeans' feeling of superiority by colonialism and fascism.
- To this day we often seem to act and conduct ourselves in different manners because of feelings of superiority and the urge towards self- realization.

We confess:

Due to lack of sensitivity towards African history and cultures we have often concerned customer, conduct and religious beliefs foreign to us.

Merensky's account of the position of the paramount in relation to the missionaries and the converts published in 1863 does not reconcile well with his later writings or with his explanation of the conflicts.

"It cannot be ignored that such an enduring movement as the Christian movement in the midst of the society feeds an ever increasing hostility on the parts of the



witchdoctors, the higher classes and the masses. After the protection of God, it has been the arm of King Sekhukhune which had shielded the Christians from the great harm”.

One element in the hostility towards the Christians was the reaction against the cavalier fashion in which converts treated conventional ritual forms and observances. There were complaints that converts did not perform the appropriate rituals of the death of relatives, and so endangered the land and its inhabitants. Christians were also blamed that the attack launched by the Swazi was caused by their disloyalties to the ancestors. These breaches, in a community could bring drought and diseases as a sign of showing that the fathers are angry. In June of 1864 with the outbreak of fever at the capital and in an atmosphere of sharpening animosity towards the converts, Sekhukhune tackled Sebushane.

“Do you not see, son of Mokganedi, how the people here are dying from fever? All the people say that the believers have bewitched them. And divination also points to you”.

All these beliefs and other concerns mattered either for the chief or the community, the Christians have given themselves more time to deal with these concern. Instead the opposite happened. Everybody hold on things that could suit him. Initially the role of the missionaries was to bring light to the people who were living in darkness. It was their responsibility to keep on telling people about the love of God and the peace that God brought to them. The King and the nation were still far from knowing God. They still needed the attention of the missionaries. It seemed that the converts under them then satisfied the missionaries. And the converts were now used to hurt those who are not Christians. Sekhukhune was not exceptional.

African people were always happy when life was lived in full, when children grew to manhood, marrying and ultimately reaching old age. To them, this indicated the positive ness of their gods, which were on the side of the living. Life is the opposite of death. Man is afraid of death. Death comes about the negligence and the disregard of the customary laws of the nation. Death is, a punishment that the departed can use to the living. A healthy nation can defeat death. Death is defeated when people live happily, get married and bear children. When death comes, it must cut the upper layer. The layer of the aged. Such death is not painful like the death of young people and babies. It is believed that if someone dies, the spirit is kept in the world of the dead. That meant that people continued to live or exist in the hereafter. Their spirit particularly that of adults is remembered up to four and five generations. When children are born, the believe is that, one from the departed has come back to life in a form of a spirit. Hence African people take the resembling and likeness serious.

For a nation or community to enjoy life, there must be peace in the land, rain must fall for the sake of crops and their animals, that is livestock to have water and enough food. This can only happen if the gods are showing a shining face to the living. The shining face can only be shown when the living who are the children of the departed are practicing and following the customary laws put down by the ancestors. It is upon their chief or head of the family to encourage their subjects to respect their culture and tradition.

The nation must also remember their gods or ancestors during the time of first fruits. The blood letting ritual ceremony must be conducted as a thanksgiving for the kindness they received from their gods. The same can be said if it is in counter reaction

or different from the above, that will be regarded as a sign showing that, the gods has turned their faces against the living. The ancestors are not happy. These will remind them that there are things which they are not doing right. The gods are talking by bringing in famine, drought, or wars. Punishment by wars could result in letting the death to children and tiny babies. The chief and the nation must look at their footprints or steps to see where they have gone wrong. This also brought conflict of ideas and beliefs at the time of Rev Merensky. An example here is given of Andries Moloi the convert who was Christianized by Rev Merensky.

“Andries Moloi in 1862 in an excess of religious zeal and in order to demonstrate his freedom from superstition shot an ibis, despite taboo’s against harming the bird. When the rains failed to arrive later that year Moloi’s act of bravado was recalled with foreboding, and Lekgolane, whose village lay close to Kgalatlou sent to chief Sekhukhune to discover the appropriate steps to expiate the breach of ritual prohibition”.  
(Delius 115:83)

The other thing that troubled Sekhukhune as a Chief is that of the royal wives. It is commonly known that the chiefs or kings married more than one wife. The citizen or the chief subjects must respect that and even respect royal wives. The introduction of Christianity in Sekhukhune’s land brought some changes of beliefs. Christians believed in a monogamous marriage. Christians believed that monogamy is God’s plan for marriage that is the teaching of the New Testament. (*For the two shall no longer be called two people but one*). That is the ideal relationship for the expression of love between a man and a woman, and is the proper atmosphere within which to develop a Christian family.

Therefore the final decision, Christians affirmed that, the entering into a polygamous marriage by a Christian whether through the normal channels of giving dowry or through inheritance, or gift, is an offence against the laws of the church. The church recommended that:

- Christians who enter into polygamous marriages shall be excommunicated.
- Advising the man to put away all but the first wife, either arranging for the remarriage of those put away or providing for them under a suitable guardianship.

These recommendations caught Sekhukhune napping. Rev Merensky baptized more than two of his wives. Tlakale, one of Sekhukhune's wives was seen moving under the arm of Sebushane, the Christian. The royal house took this seriously; it was against the law for Martinus Sebushane an ordinary man who turned to be a Christian to have an affair with the royal wife. As if this was not enough, Johannes Kgalema Dinkwanyane, the son of Chief Sekwati and the half brother to Sekhukhune became a Christian and was also baptized by Rev Merensky. This also aggravated anger and pain to the king. Dinkwanyane's relationship with the Christians was dividing the nation and the royal house, which Sekhukhune aimed at uniting. Sekhukhune already had problems with the Transvaal Boers who wanted to annex his land. Sekhukhune "described the Berlin Missionaries as the people of the Boers". (Delius 120:83)

Almost everything that the chief valued to be important was rejected by Merensky's converts. The Chief believed that an adult man must drink beer and smoke a pipe of tobacco. The man's wife must make beer for him and his fellow country men to drink. That is done for the sake of demonstrating the independence men have over their wives. It must be remembered that during those days men were idle during peace times

book and even to drink their medicine called the blood of Jesus and the bread called his body was annoying the King. The King did not understand why his people failed to listen to him as their chief when he gives orders? But Merensky whom he regarded as one of the Boers is highly respected by his own people. The King simply believed that the Boers bewitched his nation or Rev Merensky by the simple medicine called the blood of Jesus. The chief did not understand why his people or nation did not want to drink the medicine from his divine healers? The chief believed that the medicine from his divine healers was given to them by their ancestors to heal the nation and it was the only true medicine. His fathers lived and depended on these roots and herbs. It is the only medicine used to protect the land and people. He also depended on it. Instead his nation, because of the Christians called this medicine to be ineffective. They regarded this medicine as something, which was not real. It was a superstitious belief and heathenism. Christians do not believe that the dead has a superpower. Christians believed that the king's divine healer was nothing more than a witchdoctor. He did not have any power from the departed spirit. He was just a liar who enriched himself by telling lies, claiming huge amounts from the people who were consulting him for help. The King on the other hand saw Merensky using his medicine to take control of his subject for the sake of ruling the land.

The king failed to understand why after drinking this red wine called the blood of Jesus the Christians became submissive to Merensky and stubborn to him as a King. That is, Christians are no longer listening to him as their king, but Merensky instead gives directives and orders they simply obeyed. So gradually Rev Merensky is replacing him as king. These and many factors brought conflict between Christians

and African people of Sekhukhuneland. The early Christians or missionaries to Africa failed to think that God has given heritage to every race, tribe and nation to be treasured for its own good. It is my belief that the African community has a heritage, which must be influenced and modified according to the Christian teaching. Let us not simply believe that everything that the missionaries brought or came up with is of real Christian origin like it was during the apostles preaching period. The only thing that could hold us hostage is the central message, which is the gist of the New Testament. That is Salvation by faith alone.

Romans 1:17 reveals how God put people right with himself: it is through faith from beginning to end. As the scripture says: “The person who is put right with God through faith shall live”. The challenges facing African people in this new millennium is to reawaken and try to see the gifts God the almighty has given us in our African religion. It is for the African people to set their religion at par with that of other races and even allow the Holy Spirit to cleanse and see to it that their religion is used for the glory of the living God and in the services of all those who are called upon to serve God.

#### 4. Witchcraft

There are elements in the African religion which are opposed to the will of God. They remain a problem as they are clearly heathen customs and practices. Christians must stand up and fight a clean Christian warfare against the practice of the heathenism without compromise and some delaying tactics. I am referring here to superstition and

witchcraft. These practices and beliefs are still going strong today in the minds of our youth. Many are burnt to death and many are still to die before heathen beliefs are put to rest. It is the role of the church to stand up on its ground and give a final ruling on the matter once and for all. It was not even good to enter the new millennium with this kind of belief. An example:

*Twenty on witch-hunt rap*

*Twenty men arrested in connection with the murder of two elderly women, whom they accused of being witches, appeared in court in Umtata yesterday.*

*Police said the two women were beaten to death and a third injured at Lucingweni village, in Ngceleni, near Umtata, on Sunday night. A group of young men from the same village attacked and accused them of witchcraft. - Sapa.*

5. *Circumcision initiation school*

Circumcision is not against the will of God, though I believe that Christ and the institution of baptism replaced what was good in our heritage and that it is through Christ's grace that we can be saved. But also believe that in this initiation ceremony we must remove the heathen elements attached to it and keep it.

6. *Singing and dancing*

The other important aspect in African religion, which the missionaries disregarded, is

the way of singing and dancing. It is in Africans themselves to sing and dance when they are happy or celebrating a climatic event of the year or give thanks to their gods for a wonderful rainfall or harvest time. That is, first fruit was always celebrated. To sing and dance show oneness of the people. They become one in happiness and even in sorrow. They become one even when they are facing a common enemy. The thing that give them strength and going is to sing. Even women usually came together carrying babies on their back for a common job. Singing whilst working, people will come together singing even if they are burying their dead. Songs become a single comforting word from the masses that are bereaved.

#### 7. Worship (Modimo) as God

The African people as a nation or tribe or family often worship their deity and ancestral spirit. They observe and respect the commands or laws of their deity without questions. They don't forget to give thanks to them. Their gifts to their deity or ancestors are usually cattle, goats, corn, money and some home made beers. This promoted the spirit of giving the gifts of love. These gifts are also given to ordinary man. Hence you will find Africans giving gifts to foreign people as a sign of welcome.

All these wonderful things were ignored by the missionaries in their way to evangelizing African people in Sekhukhuneland. I also believe that the missionaries should have studied carefully this kind of behaviour and beliefs by the African people, then start Christianize some of good the elements and removing totally that is full of paganism. Thus an African man may see his faith growing rather than changing wholly from being African into something else.



Let me conclude by stating the very last thing that pulled the trigger between Christians and African religion, i.e. “Dowry” or “lobola” in Sekhukhune’s language, which is Sepedi. It is the present given to the bride’s family from the groom’s family. This is paid in the form of cattle. Today it is money. The Bapedi people believed that, the marriage gifts or lobola is the outward symbol of a serious undertaking by the families concerned. They bind the husband and the wife together in the sight of their families. The gifts or lobola remained the symbols of the marriage covenant. The gifts prove beyond doubt that the groom will be able to maintain or support his wife. It makes the parents of the bride to release their daughter with open hearts. The dowry or lobola sealed up the sacred relationship established through marriage, a relationship which will be enjoyed for a life long period of time. The lobola brings together families of the two people who become one. The extended families of the new family remain their parents and legal advisers. As far as Rev Merensky and the Christians are concerned, they viewed dowry as a purely buying and selling business. They declared it an un-Christian matter, and Christians must avoid it. It is a daylight robbery business. No one must buy or sell love. To Bapedi custom, you must pay lobola or you remain nobody. No one must recognize you as a son in law or sister in law. You are no name.

9. Renaming Christians by foreign names

This brings me to the renaming of Christians. All converts who were baptized were also given Christian names or new names. New names must make it easier or simple for the missionaries to pronounce it. It must be names, which are found in the Bible, or Western names. John, James, Peter, Andries, Jacob, etc. What they never thought of is that their names are also difficult for the Bapedi people to pronounce. These names are also difficult like the African names, Matlakala, Mokgadi, Nkwegadi, Tlakale, etc. By taking away those names, missionaries were unaware that these names have meaning. They are not just names. The names are given according to events, nature and inherited names. For an example names like Motlalepule are given according to nature, Radintwa named after the events and Thulare as inherited name.

One good example can be the name given to Rev Merensky's child "Mamotshaba". The converts named the child for the child was born when the Christians were on the run. Mamotshaba meaning mother of the flight. The child was named after the events. The name will remind them of the day when they run and hide. Hiding away for Sekhukhune's soldiers. But for missionaries all these were not considered. It is meaningless. Everything was associated with heathenism. African people are born heathens and living lives of heathens. The missionaries are given tasks. They must name Africans with Christian names. Changing them to disregard their culture and customs. Converting them to dislike and hate anything that is regarded as unchristian. Your brother or sister is your enemy if he or she does not become a Christian like you. You must not listen to your father or mother if they don't become Christians like you. They will teach you to be a heathen like them. The missionaries converted their Christians to

disregard the laws and customary teaching passed down by the fore-fathers. The Chief in particular Sekhukhune represented the ancestors or heathenism. He must be rejected. A person was wholly converted, isolating him from his or her roots. All that brought him or her up is unchristian.

There are still many things that Africans of the Bapedi people are observing and respecting which can be modified and be changed into Christian religion as a Christian African heritage. That can only be possible if Africans themselves play their full roles in the Christian community.

The following points stand opposing each other or conflict of ideas

<i>Christian beliefs</i>	<i>African Bapedi beliefs</i>
<p>1. <u>Marriage</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Singing and buying rings</li> <li>➤ Monogamy</li> </ul> <p>2. <u>Youth to manhood</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Confirmation class and baptismal</li> </ul> <p>3. <u>Social lives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Medical doctors</li> <li>➤ Prayer</li> </ul> <p>4. <u>Beliefs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ God is a creator</li> <li>➤ Jesus is God and the mediator</li> <li>➤ Holy spirit</li> <li>➤ Devil cause all the bad and evil things</li> <li>➤ Resurrection of the dead to eternal life after judgment</li> </ul>	<p>1. <u>Marriage</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lobola</li> <li>➤ Polygamy</li> </ul> <p>2. <u>Youth to manhood</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Circumcision and initiation school</li> </ul> <p>3. <u>Social lives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Traditional healers</li> <li>➤ Ritual ceremony</li> </ul> <p>4. <u>Beliefs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The living deity (Modimo) is the creator</li> <li>➤ The ancestors are gods and the mediator</li> <li>➤ The spirit of the departed</li> <li>➤ Witchcraft the causing of all misfortune</li> </ul> <p>Resurrection in a form of spirit to live again (children bearing)</p>

The importance

It will be a serious mistake if I refrain from mentioning or writing the kind of education given to the young men in the initiation school. It is an informal education because nothing is written down. It is the education that separates men from boys. It equips one with the knowledge of his own culture.

Learning and Teaching method

The education is passed on by the word of mouth from generation to generation. Learners at school keep on repeating the words as taught over and over again, until the words are memorized and can be said by heart. Everything that men are doing at the school is kept secretly from women, children and even men or young men who are not from the school. The language used at this school is different from ordinary language. This is used to keep their secret to them only. The language is also used to detect men who might claim to be from the school only to find that they are not.

Philosophy behind it

African people believe mostly in this kind of education. They believe that men who are not from this school will always act irresponsible, ignorant and unreliable. He always behaves like women or children. He has no morals and respect. Their forefathers not from the hands of men who are taught to love their country and to respect the laws put him down.

### Benefits

Men like women and children who are not from this school are not allowed to sit in the courtyard where real men sit and discuss their affairs and try cases. In the courtyard the future of the country or land is decided. It needs men who can stand up and fight for their country or land. According to them men who are not from this school are not taught how to head a family in an African way, so he cannot lead the country for that matter.

### Segregation

It is sometimes difficult for men to be in the same place with men who are not from an African school (initiation school). They cannot bath together in the same room or river. When men are sitting together discussing matters, some idioms are used to highlight those who are not aware of the status where the other one is coming. Their language becomes that of parables, an example can be that of a direct translation. "Goat amongst sheep". All will realize that they are being joined by the uncircumcised men.

### The lesson

The following are examples of the kinds of education taught at the initiation school. These are some of the things which are forbidden for all men when they are at home or in the community. All men must avoid doing them because they are disgusting. The Leader or the educator will say to the Learners: "If something that I am going to say is not good, you must spat saliva to show that you dislike it."

- Educator : “Having sex with another man”.
- Learners : “Spat saliva, not our culture”.
- Educator : “Going naked before women and children”.
- Learners : “Spat saliva, behaving like a crazy man”
- Educator : “Marrying your own daughter”.
- Learners : “Spat saliva, not our culture”
- Educator : “Talking about initiation school to women and children”.
- Learners : “Spat saliva, it is men secrets”.
- Educator : “Disobeying your teacher and elder people”.
- Learners : “Spat saliva, you will make the ancestors angry”.
- Educator : “Failing to attend meeting called by your king”
- Learners : “Spat saliva, your king own you and the whole land”.

### Teaching responsibilities and loyalty

There are other teachings which encourage them to remain loyal and obedient to their teachers, parents and their king.

- Educator : “Defending your own country in a war?”
- Learners : “You are a real man”.
- Educator : “Marrying and bearing children?”
- Learners : “You are a man.”
- Educator : “Heading and giving instructions to your family?”
- Learners : “You are a real man.”
- Educators : “Taking instructions and guidance from the Chief or King
- Learners : “You are a man.”

Young men must know the responsibility facing them in the community and the manner in which they are to respond to these new challenges.

The aim of this kind of informal education is to encourage the graduates to be self-supportive. To work for their daily food for an example the educator or leader will shout. "The spider goes up." The learners respond by saying. "It goes up by its webs." This simply means that for one to rise up or to be rich, he must use his own efforts or resources. Stealing other people's property is strictly condemned. Man must eat the sweat of his own face.

The leader may say : "standing still", the learners respond by saying "like a pole dug in the ground." This also educates them that one must show that he is living, one must progress. The wealth that he might have from his father, like cattle, sheep or goats as a gift that he inherited must grow. It must not be static or decrease. That will make one poorer. For a family man to be poor is a curse. They dislike it, hence saying "Modiidi wa go hloka le pudi ya leleme le letala" meaning so poor that you don't have a mere goat with a blue tongue. Children at the initiation school are not only introduced to the blunt knife that run through their penis's foreskin, but the ignored fact is that, children are taught to be self-disciplined, self-innovative and self-creative.