

S 440 (22)  
Tr 14

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DIVINATION.

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*Divination methods and cases, Leeuwpoort.*

Divination in Sotho has various methods. A certain doctor whose name is Jim Ngombe knows how to cause a calabash made of the marrow peel to speak. It is said that they take a dry calabash and carve it nicely so as to have a mouth. They fetch the castor-oil plant and take the pods and take out the pith inside leaving the empty pods. They then make holes through them with an awl where they will put a string through. They select two pods from the castor-oil plant, a male and a female. They put a string through them so that they are placed side by side. They make two holes through the calabash on opposite sides so that the string with the pods should go through them.

According to the story told by Shilling a man of the Barotse tribe living at Rakgotho's (Leeuwpoort), he states that milk is churned and fat is produced. The fat which comes from churned milk is mixed with medicine known as "Monyanyo". They grind the root of the "monyanyo" tree and mix it with the fat of churned milk. They now take the pods of the smelling castor-oil plant and they put in the "monyanyo" medicine. When they have put it in, they take the kernels and put them through the pods and then they pull the string and let it go through the holes of the calabash.

When they have done this they close firmly with a lid and they glue it up to keep the air from going in. First of all the man breathes into the calabash and then he closes it. When he has closed it firmly he puts away the calabash from the morning till midday. When he reopens the calabash, he begins to greet and inquires about health. If the calabash does not speak, he goes away for a while and on his coming back again it will speak but before it speaks, it will whistle and then it will say "Good day, how are you getting on, as for me, I am all right". They say that this cup like calabash will begin to tell you your

illness and the medicine you should drink, it will also tell you about your health.

Shilling the man from Barotseland says that at his home, a wife is never guarded. When a man goes away from home, he leaves this calabash at his home. On his return, this calabash will start speaking to him, beginning by whistling. If the wife had had another man, this calabash will tell. It is said that this calabash has two voices, that of a woman and that of a man. Sometimes the man speaks and at another time the woman speaks. Anything which happens here at home, this calabash states it. When a stranger arrives the calabash knows his name, and where he comes from and all has come to say. They say that this calabash is kept at home, it should not be handled by a woman during menstruation or during her pregnancy. She will bleed profusely from underneath and she will shock everybody.

It is stated that in Barotseland long long ago, one's wife was not guarded, it was this calabash that kept a watch over her. Every husband possessed it. It is said that it told a person the diseases he had.

There is a bean known as "Dibabala". There are two kinds, one is red and the other is grey. The witch doctors use it to prevent the action of witchcraft medicines on the grave. To doctor the grave means that if a person who is dead was bewitched, the person who killed him must also follow the deceased. A witch doctor by the name of Seforo of Motlhoki of the tribe of Mfathla who resides at Sefata-mollo lost his sister through death. He took a grey bean and planted it at the head of the grave to germinate. They say that it takes eight days to germinate. It is said that in the course of rotting before it germinates, the murderer's stomach will begin to swell. On the eighth day as it continues to germinate, the stomach of the person bursts and he dies. Now the bean which killed Magerita Makakaba the grey child of Rasekgwari, a man of the Mfathla tribe, was a

one which Seforo had planted. They say that the red bean grows quickly but they say that it usually goes wrong, the grey one is better than the red one.

Another method of doctoring the grave is by means of an axe. The witch doctor takes an axe and chops the head of the grave of the deceased person. This axe is smeared with cruel medicines of the wizards.

The custom of chopping the grave in this manner is a very cruel one. If each and every one of the wizard's family weeps, he dies violently, every one who weeps for the dying.

A Mokwena witch doctor by the name of Sekepe who lives at Dilokwaneng once killed many people at Seleka's by doctoring the graves in this manner. Houses were shut with branches the owners having all died. Today this Mokwena witch doctor refuses to doctor the graves, he says that, "I have finished the children of God in an attempt to get myself rich".

Another man, a fellowman of Rev. Bagolo explains the disease known as Mafonforyane (insanity), in this manner. He says that if a witch doctor wants to cause this disease, he collects the bones of many animals, dog, baboon, lion, hyena, monkey, polecat, hare, eland, elephant, strand-wolf, bear and others. He takes these bones at night when nobody sees him and he buries them for a few days at the cemetery where some one lies buried. Now when these bones are covered up on a grave, the black ants which were eating the corpse will come out and go into the bones of the animals. The witch doctor then comes and he takes out his bones, he goes to grind them into a fine powder. When he has finished grinding them he gets the medicine for insanity which is obtained from the wizards. If he wants insanity to enter a person, he puts this medicine in his tea.

This disease if insanity (mafongforyane) was unknown to the Basotho of long ago. It comes from Natal with Zulu witch doctors.

It is said that when a person suffers from this disease

of insanity, he sees small people who are called "mafongfonyane", it is said that they play with him. He does not see people he sees tiny little people only.

Two Baphalane women of the family of Kgopa who live at Dilokong, gave Rev. Samuel Kgwele <sup>7</sup>to Dilokont<sup>9</sup>, mafongfonyane which came from Johannesburg. They loved him dearly but one day Beta the wife of Kgwele of Mmapela whose tribal totem was an eland, when she was with them said that she had got the better of them because the minister had bought her some chairs and a table.

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