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Tribal government council and headman, Pilansberg.

GOVERNMENT. COUNCIL. HEADMEN.

K32/13

J. Masongoako.

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1 The chief has authority to send people wherever he likes to send them on his own personal business. When the business concerns the chief and tribe, then he has no authority to do so. In that case he should inform the tribe that there is business which concerns it. When a chief sends a certain age group to do some work, he delivers a message to a man who is responsible for announcing that a certain group should go to such and such a place to do certain work there. There is nobody who can complain, they will only be pleased to go, chief Moetlo of the Batlhako tribe was a chief who had all the authority. Whenever he did something, he did not have to ask permission from anybody, he carried it out on his own initiative. When he called up a certain group to go to a certain place, nobody could refuse or murmur, but if it was work which concerned the tribe that had to be done, and he did not have to call up a certain group, he informed the members of the council that there was work to be done. If it was a big job, all the men were informed what the nature of the work to be done was. The men would then decide which group was to do it. An announcement was then made at the kgotla, that a certain group was engaged in such and such a job. When the kgotla dispersed the group knew then what job it had to do. During chief Moetlo's chieftainship, the chief's lands were ploughed, but for that, he did not call the men together to discuss them, that was his own business. Work for which he called the men together was that of a river which was dug up every year. The digging up of this river was a job for the whole tribe of the Batlhako. Their cattle drank water from this river and the people also drew drinking water from it. For these reasons, whenever the work had to be done in this river, the chief would make an announcement to the whole tribe. The chief would summon all the men of the tribe and when they were gathered together, he would inform them that if it was necessary that work should be done in the

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river so that there should be no scarcity of water in the winter. The chief and the men would then consider which group could go to do the work. If the chief wanted a certain group to do work for himself he did not consult anybody about that. Today Chief Molopyane, as far as he is concerned, has authority but it is not to such an extent as Chief Moetlo had. Chief Moetlo sent people as he wished, to do any work he wanted done. When he summoned the people together, he never consulted anybody about the purpose for which he wanted them. He did not even consult his partenal uncles, he just did as he liked. He did not even consult his younger brother. Chief Moetlo used to say that the people were his, and the chieftainship was his. He had councillors as well as petty chiefs, but whenever he issued orders, he had nothing to do with them. It was their duty just to obey if he wanted people from the section of a particular headman. All he did was to send a message to the headman that he wanted his men or his man. These headmen also had no authority to send the people anywhere. He did not want to hear anything about that. If he found out that a certain headman or his (Chief Moetlo) younger brother had sent a person on any errand or to any job without his orders, he made out a case against him. If he wanted a person, he sent one to go and call that person so that he could remonstrate with him personally. He never sent someone to go to that person and say the chief wants you to go to such and such a place, just as Chief Molopyane does. Chief Moetlo also did not like to be helped in his job. The councillors also only had just to listen to what he said. Their work was just to be sent by him into the village to call whomsoever he wanted to send. Today Chief Molopyane rules the tribe with the assistance

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summoned, it is they who advise the chief whether or not they should be called to a meeting. For the people to work for the chief, is one of the things he has cancelled. They no longer do work for him. You find people here and there who still work for him. He ploughs his lands for himself, nobody can be found who still offers himself except the Magodielo section under headman Mokgosi. Most of the people have ceased to work for him and he has to see what he can do for himself. The councillors and headmen have become unmanageable.

Chief Molepyane.

Members of the Council	Headman
Modissadikhu	Mokgosi
Amose	Rankgate
Mantholoene	Meshaka
Rasetopa	Modissadikhu
Tollo	Amose
Meshaka	Tollo

Secretary - Nkatsoa.

When Chief Molepyane appointed men, it was for the purpose of assisting him in his work of ruling the village and the people. These men were not appointed because of having a lot of stock or because they were rich. Most of the members of the kgotla are those who have been chosen by the chief himself. The headmen are chosen by the sections of the people. Each section chooses for itself whom it realises is a man who has understanding. It takes him to the chief to present him as its head. They are the men with whom the chief works, who help him and with whom he deliversates if he wants a certain work to be done. If he wishes to say something to the tribe, he informs these men first. They will decide whether or not the matter should be referred to the tribe. If the chief wants a meeting with the councillors only, the headmen do not attend

that meeting. If the chief wants a meeting of the councillors and headmen, it is then that they all attend, to hear what the chief has to say. Otherwise, only those who are wanted attend. The meeting of the headmen and councillors is summoned by the chief if he has something for which he wants them, or if he wants to tell them something. A tribal meeting takes place by order of the chief and with the consent of the councillors or the headmen. The an announcement it made that all the men should attend to kg tle. When a meeting is summoned, there is a man who is the special announcer. That is his only job in the village. If the people have to attend a meeting, he is told to announce that they should do so. He is told to state which of the men are wanted. If all the men are required to attend, he states. If it is the councillors or the headmen who are required, he must state. Those who are not called remain at home and only those who are ~~wax~~ called attend. By law, those who have been called must all attend. Even if they do not all attend, the discussions are proceeded with. Nothing is done to absentees, they are only remonstrated with by the chief. A meeting is never held in the absence of the chief, but if the chief has told one of the headmen to inform the people what he has called them for, then the meeting can proceed, merely of course to be told what the chief says or what he wants. Otherwise the meeting cannot be held until the chief attends. If he is absent, nothing is done, unless he has instructed one of the councillors to inform the people the purpose of the meeting.

- 5 Matters which are discussed by members of the Kgotla or by headmen, are those about which the chief wishes to inform the tribe. These men will consider together with the chief whether or not the matters can be placed before the tribe. If they are unan<sup>m</sup>ious on the point, they call a meeting of the tribe in order that they may hear the results thereof. If they disagree, or ~~be~~ consider that the matters do not deserve being taken to the tribal meeting, then they drop

them and go on to something else. If the chief has called a meeting of headmen, he speaks first and informs them the matter for which he has called them, and what he wants done. A meeting of headmen or councillors is held at the Kgotla. If a meeting is called, no one should attend unless he is one who belongs to the kgotla. If there is no understanding between them, they call a meeting of the tribe so that they may help them. But it is not common for the members of the kgotla to disagree with the chief to such an extent that an appeal for assistance should be made to the tribe. When the chief explains a matter to them, they discover immediately whether it should be referred to the tribe or not. The kgotla or the members of the council have no authority in their meeting to try a case. One's case is tried in the meeting of the tribe. One's case is heard by the chief and the members of the council and anyone else among the men who desires to speak with regard to the case. He may speak if he realizes that they do not follow his arguments. The members of the Council and the headmen are not paid, they work for no remuneration. This means that anyone who does the work of the tribe, does it for nothing. They are not paid also, they work for no pay. Their work is to allot fields to the people. They listen to complaints and then take them to the chief. If a man brings his case, it does not mean that he has to tell it to all the members of the kgotla. He explains it to one man only who will inform the chief about it. The chief will then inform other members of the kgotla and after that a meeting of all the men will be called to hear the case. The reason is that the tribe should not complain that people are tried without their being informed so that they should come and listen. The chief is the one who decides cases, but anyone who wishes to ask something about the man who is being tried, is allowed to ask questions. Afterwards the chief gives judgment in the presence of the tribe.

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<u>Headmen</u>	<u>Headmen</u>
Mokgosi	Areas
Rankgate	Mamakau
Meshaka	Leoma
Modisaadikhu (etc)	Lengening
	Lebesone

Mokgosi became headman through acting for his father. His father was a cripple with one leg cut off. He acted until his father died, he was the headman of the Magodielo section. He is one whom we might say took the place of his younger brother. He is the headman of the Rasekati section. They are named after their father sekati. That is why the people say they are the people of Rasekati.

The other headmen were appointed by their subjects, that is to say in their section they picked out one who appeared to be a wise man. Then they appointed him. Meshaka was appointed in the place of Ranko. The people realised that Ranko did not carry on as they wished. The people of the Masudubele section noticed that Ranko could not serve them as they liked. All the headmen are headed by Modisaadikhu, he is the senior headman because he is the paternal uncle of the Chief. That is why he is senior to them. The chief told these headmen to try cases in their sections, cases of a minor nature.

7 If a person has assaulted another person and caused blood to flow, they must not try such a case. It must go to the chief's court. If a person fails to pay another, their case is tried by their petty chief, also if one has used abusive language to another. If he tries a case, his punishment should not exceed a goat. The petty chief is not authorised to ask for a beast as punishment in his judgment. It is the chief whose punishment may be a beast or more. No taxes are paid to the chiefs, no work is done for them. They do their own work themselves. They do not send people just where they like. But if he sends a person with a message to the chief, that he

is allowed and the person will not refuse. But if a person has other work to do, he may refuse to go. The petty chief cannot do anything to him he will just look at him, because the people are the chief's people and not his. But people pay no tributes to him, even if they have brewed beer or they have slaughtered a beast, they give nothing to him, it is only those who are related to him who give him just as he too gives them when he has slaughtered a beast or when he has made beer.

Masilo.

Relations with others.

Relations do not exist to any great extent among us, we have no person either, who lives in another village, who is our representative there. We have however a custom of the Batsoana, of asking whatever they need from another village. For instance, grazing land for cattle. They talk to the chief of the particular village and ask him for help. The men of Thatlaganyane also used to ask the Batlhako to allow their cattle to drink water for the whole year in their area. The Batlhako gave them this help freely because they had nowhere else to get drinking water for their cattle. Sometimes when cattle belonging to another village were detained by the people of the other, those people informed the chief of the other people to whom the cattle belonged. The chief would then tell his people that anyone whose cattle have gone astray must go to such and such a place. The one whose cattle are missing will go in that direction to look for them. Relations to such an extent as to help each other in work do not exist among us. Each tribe carries out its own work as far as it is capable, that is to say each chief works on its own with its people. If he wanted to show another chief that he had a shortage of workers, the saying applied which is as follows: "Magosi a tshabana bofetsoa", which means that the chiefs are afraid of each other.

Citizenship

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If a person removed his abode to another village and was allowed to reside there, he was not considered an inhabitant until he built a house. When he had built a house and had been given a field, and had ploughed, it was then that he would be counted among the inhabitants in the works of the village.

9 He was however not allowed to say anything at the kgotla. He just had to listen to the old inhabitants and note what they say. He had just to agree with anything that had been said. The saying is, "Moeng o naka di moripa". That is to say, this man must remain for a long time before he has a say at the kgotla, say two years or three years. After this period he may then be allowed to speak at the kgotla. A female person cannot remove her abode to another village unless she has a husband. If she does so, she must have her people in the village with whom she is coming to stay. For such a person, a report is made on her behalf to the headman of the village, she is not given a field and a house. She just stays with her people and they are responsible for her maintenance. A child also, if it comes to the village it is only to its people that it can come. No report is made of its arrival, it just belongs to that house. People who remove their abodes to a village are not molested. They are the chief's people. A person who is an inhabitant has the right to speak at the kgotla but he never opposes the kgotla or the chief, if he does, he is never allowed to say anything. It means that he spoils the kgotla, he makes the people to be wild and to oppose the councillors and the chief. If he is very troublesome, he is driven away from the village until such time as he turns a new leaf. Sometimes if a person is a wizard he is driven away from the village. A man by the name of Rangogo was driven away from the village only for being a wizard. He lives at the boundaries of the country of the Batlhako and the Masekiti people. He was a man who was an inhabitant of the Batlhako country before, and was chased away on account of causing strife and disturbances. A woman named Tobane



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was once caught for bewitching but she was not driven away, she is still living in the territory of the Batlhako. I don't know whether it is because she was caught once only. Only the chief, councillors and the headmen know.

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