

Military system and war.

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We have neither fought any war in our village nor gone to war. The wars we have seen are those of the Bakgatla when they fought with the Boers ~~people~~. But after the Anglo-Boer war, Chief Moetlo and the people of his father who had fled to the country of the Bakoena returned. On his return, he separated with his younger brother Lekoakoa. His younger brother remained at Sedutlane. Chief Moetlo sent an army to go and kill his younger brother Lekoakoa and to capture his cattle. When the army reached his place, it became afraid of him. The warriors said that he was the chief's son, who is it that will kill him they said. When Lekoakoa realised what they did, he removed to the village of Matlhako with Chief Taposi. Even here at this village of the Matlhako people no stone wall was built round it as other people do. The people are not taught warfare, they are only taught peace.

They have no guards to guard the village. Every male person is a guard because no person can come to the village unless he is reported. Every person who comes in must be reported so that the people should know him and besides that, he must go and stay at the kgotla where the men would be able to see him and where he must tell them where he comes from, and what he wants. It was for this reason that the people did not worry. They did not have many troubles up to the time the Bakgatla fought with the Boers. It was then that we had trouble, the ~~people~~ ^{Bakgatla} stealing the cattle of the Boers. The Bakgatla were reckless with the stock they reared. Those they had, did not get so easily into their hands, they acted so as to cause a lot of disturbances. The Bakgatla did not fence round their villages. They just built them and left them open. They had no guards to watch hostile armies that come into their villages.

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They also do as we are doing, that is to say that when a traveller comes, he goes to the kgotla so that the people should know where he is going to, where he comes from, what he wants and what tribe he belongs to. All the people must see him at the kgotla, he is given food there and he also sleeps there. The fence of the Bakgatla is the Madikoe river, that is to say when they had crossed it, they had no more fear. If they cross to this side of it, they do not believe that they are safe until they cross over to their side again. Even when they were fighting with the Boers, if they had taken their cattle across the Madikoe river, they knew that it was the end of them, whatever the Boers did, they could never get them back. When the Bakgatla fought with the Boers, they did not fight with assegais, they fought with guns. I do not know where they got them I just saw them with them.

L. L. Isoenyane

The Bakgatla: When they started, they fought with the chief of Phalane and captured his cattle, he was afraid of them and ran away to the mountains. When we stole their cattle, I saw a man running away with a goat which he was carrying. He climbed up the mountain with it. When I asked him what he was doing with it, he said, "Mokgatla was a seed". Chief Ramokoka even went to Makopye who was the head of the Boers, to ask his assistance. We then gave him the remainder, we had already eaten most of them. From here we got into the Boer wars, when they began to fight with the English people. The Bakgatla of Moruleng then fled to Motshodi to the chief Lentsoe, but others remained behind and did not go. The Bakgatla at Motshodi began to send forth an army to go and capture the cattle of the Boers, and as the Bakgatla who came from this side knew where the cattle were,

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they captured a lot of them. When the Boers became aware of them later, they sent an army after them. The army of the Boers came and pitched their camp at the Madikoe river in order to stop the Bakgatla from crossing over from the other side. When they were there, Paul Kruger sent a message to chief Sechele that they should meet the next day. Chief Sechele fired from a cattle kraal and Paul Kruger fired from the open air and while they were firing at each other, Sechele's people loading his guns for him, Sechele shot the finger of Paul Kruger off. Then Paul Kruger ran away back to the camp at the river. While the Boers were at the river they sent a message that food and more men to be sent to them to help them against the Bakgatla. The Boers did not like to help but others offered themselves and these were called volunteers. These rendered assistance but the Bakgatla wiped them out. When chief Lentsoe sent his army out, he placed it under Segale and Ramono and he said "There are the people, go with them and do not ~~play with~~ ^{make} them a play thing. We went along until we crossed the Madikoe river, we passed the Boers at their camp and we captured the cattle at Moreteleletsi (Holfontein). After we got home, a message came from Moru-leng to the effect that food in wagons was being brought for the Boers. When we heard that, the army was sent out under the leadership of Segale and Ramono. We proceeded until we crossed the Madikoe. The Boers had not yet heard of us. After we got to Kaele (Kay se put) we distributed the army, the Makuka went to one side, Majejele to one side and the Mafatsoana to one side. After the distribution, we waited for the wagons to come along. Whilst we were sitting, we saw the doctor of the Boers in front of the wagons, he being in a carriage of four mules. It

came along and then outspanned where we were. After outspanning, that is himself and two Bakgatla boys, a man fired a gunshot and killed the doctor and the carriage was concealed. Whilst we were waiting, we saw two Boers on horseback coming along. When they arrived there, a man shot down the one horse. The Boers were taken by surprise. The rider of the dead horse ran back on foot, the other one who was still on his horse rode away to the camp to inform the others that the wagons had been captured. The Makuka regiment then followed the wagons and when they got up to them, the Boers who were driving them left the wagons and ran away.

The Makuka killed some of them and captured the wagons. They went to look for a spot where the wagons could ^{cross} the river. When the Boers came along, they were very furious. They found the Bakgatla on each side of the road. They came galloping on horseback and found themselves in between. While they were running about, they saw a man standing up and when they stopped. The Bakgatla fired at the same time and killed their horses most frightfully. Then they went to their owners and those whose horses were not killed fled as fast as they could so that they ~~did~~ ^{were} not even ^{able to} look back. After we attacked them, they fled and then we went to capture their cattle wagons. We overtook them before they crossed the Madikoe river. They were unable to cross, so we put up for the night near Mathobudukoane. We had bread and jam for supper so that the next morning there was nothing left of them. At sunrise, the wagons crossed the river.

The people went back to the battle to wipe out all the Boers in the camp. When we arrived there we found not a single man there, it was deserted. We returned home. On arrival, Chief Lentsoe was pleased and he said, "Segale and Ramono, you are men of men if you have been able to capture the wagons of commandant Paul Kruger."

Leaders of the War.

Tsoenyane

Mokae

Segale

Ramono } Chiefs among other leaders.

At the end of the war Mokae was sent to St. Helena because he thought he was clever. For that reason chief Lentsoe removed him from home because he found it useless to keep him there when he was giving trouble.

These are the members of the royal family:

Ishomankane

Ditlhake

Kgamananyane

Lentsoe

Ramono

Ishomankane { ^{Sons}
Ditlhake
Kgamananyane

Kgamananyane { Lentsoe
Ramono & Tsoenyane.

Mokae { Moselekatse

When the war was over, the people of Moruleng returned home. Lentsoe then installed his younger brother Ramono to become chief at Moruleng. When Mokae returned, he heard that Ramono was going to be the chief. He then hastened to see Mokopye the commandant of the Boers and he told him that he (Mokae) was the chief of the Bakgatla of Moruleng. When Ramono went to Mokopye the Boer Commandant to tell him that it was he who was sent by Lentsoe to be the chief here, Mokopye told him that the chief was Mokae. Ramono was astonished and he returned to his elder brother Lentsoe to tell him what Mokae had done. Lentsoe sent out an army to capture Mokae. When it reached Moruleng there was no battle as Lentsoe had thought. Mokae was taken to

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Chief Lentsoe who sent him to St. Helena. It was then that Ramono began to rule at Morōheng. Bitlhake became chief under Ramono at Lesetheng, but the senior was Ramono.

Mottē.

Shields: Shields are things which we copied from the Matebele of Moselekatsē, we did not know them. Even after we had seen them having these shields, we did not use them, we got afraid of them because in fact we were not people who were fighting. What we had were assegais, each person had his own. That is to say each man found his own assegai. The wars of the Bakgatla which I witnessed, were fought by regiments, as I have mentioned above. Women did not fight, they were not helped to run away, they ^{saw} ~~to~~ to it themselves. Even during the Anglo-Boer war, they were at home, they did not hide themselves, they were just by-passed and nobody killed them. Our people did not even know that war was awaiting them they did not know it. All that they knew was famine. It was famine that scattered them hither and thither and not war.

Isoabi.

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