

The up-bringing of children.

1

This is the manner in which our children are brought up. The boys grow up as herd boys of cattle and small stock. They spend their life in herding stock; they take the milk with which people eat their food home. They grow up by beating each other when they are out in the grazing lands. They beat each other with herd boys of other cattle posts. That is the way they grow up. When they reach a certain stage just before their circumcision, a song is sung the words of which are "Dear me", I nearly died having grown up and yet uncircumcised".

That was the praise song of the uncircumcised lads. They said, "Mamagwane a ga phoring kawane o go tweng Kwawane ga a mele masimong fela, le mo tlhakong ya kgomo wa mela". That is to say, that they were grown up lads who were ready for the school of circumcision. They thus remain in this state. The uncircumcised lads who had confidence in themselves prevented the cattle of the younger lads from drinking water, this being done intentionally in order to challenge the older uncircumcised lads from other cattle posts to a fight with sticks.

Boys and girls grew up in the same way. In their childhood they are brought up by their grandfathers and grandmothers. They are very fond of their grandfathers. The work of a girl as she grows up is grinding, cooking drawing water, working in the lands and the collecting of firewood. These are the duties of girls as they grow up. When the girls and boys have reached the stage of circumcision it happens that they fight with each other for sleeping together. As they grow, the girls sleep together with the boys. The boys do not molest them and nothing ever goes wrong. They just live together as grown

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ups and as yet uncircumcised boys and girls.

2 If a girl has not yet menstruated for the first time there is never any trouble. But you will find that her mother is always on the look out for her daughter to see when she menstruates for the first time. When a girl reports to her mother that "I am not well". The mother will ask, "What is the trouble?" The girl who is in a state of fright, will make an explanation to her mother. Then her mother will say to her, "From now onward, you must never again mix with the boys, and you must never again sleep together with them. You must sleep alone in your blankets.

According to our custom, girls should not wear one another's clothes. They say that that is detrimental to one's waist, and that would cause one to suffer and would affect one during menstruation.

During the day, the girls as they grow up, go out into the roads to hit the wooden ball with sticks, running to and fro and causing a lot of dust. They change from this game to one of the skipping rope, saying as they play "Kgati a e go tsenš ka lepara". At this time of their youth, they are sent the girls' ceremony of their age of puberty. They will then be given the name of their age group on their return. If the girls had been the first to go to the ceremony, on their completion, the boys would go, the same lads who had been sleeping together with the girls before their circumcision. The boys now go out in search of the 'meretlwa' (bush bearing edible berries), they cut thin sticks from it and take them to the chief to request him to send them to the circumcision school. After that, the parents of the children will get together and go to see the chief and they will say, "Chief, the children have grown up, allow them to be taken to the ceremony of initiation into manhood". The chief will say. "I quite understand". If the chief is prepared to cause /them....

3 them to pass through the puberty ceremonies, he will discuss the matter with his younger brothers and ask them if it would be possible to hold the puberty ceremony during the current year. If they agree unanimously on the point that it should be held, he will order that the lads should be collected and brought before him on a specified date. The lads will then set out for the veld.

They will remain there for three months, after which period they will return home. On the day of their coming out as initiates, they will be given the name of their age group. There shall be whistling sounds all round and jubilations. The lads will say, "We have today entered manhood, we are men also". They will now sing a war song on their return home and burn their temporary huts which had been set up for the puberty ceremonies. When they leave this temporary lodge, no one will look back. Every one faces in the direction he is going. That is to say, if you look back you will become a lunatic and you will find yourself going x back to where you came from. If you should die at the circumcision lodge during the puberty ceremonies, your mothers will never be informed; they will keep on preparing food, taking it to the lodge; the father who it will be within his knowledge that his son is dead, slaughters a beast saying that he is slaughtering it for his child at the circumcision lodge, in order that the child's mother should not know anything about it. A woman should not know that a lad has died at the circumcision lodge. It is a secret of the men. On the arrival of the initiates at home, the women hold the hair of their heads. Everyone is not certain whether or not her child has come home. Whilst  
4 the women are holding the hairs of their heads in this way, they are in great anxiety, each one expecting her child to arrive with the others. The woman whose child has died will see by the megokgadu (instructors) which carry the food arriving with wooden vessels which carry the food.

The one who carries that of the deceased will on arrival break the wooden vessel in the middle of the yard. The women will then know that the child is dead. There will be a great weeping in that lapa whilst others are shouting applauses and rejoice. In order to know that the initiates have completed their ceremony, you will see by those who carry the instructors. They will come having smeared themselves with white clay. That is what will show the people at home that the initiates have finished their ceremony. During that night the men and the initiates will come home with wood and again return to the veld during the night, but not to the lodge. The wood having arrived, a wall will be built which will be their place of arrival. They will start a song in the veld which runs thus: "There are your children, whom you said we would eat them up". They are arriving at home, a horn is sounded, there are loud shouts and applauses from women. When they go into the cattle kraal, food comes and they are served, and they eat and old women come with pots of fat and red ochre and species of blacklead used for mixing with fat to smear them and razors to shave their heads. While the initiates are in the cattle kraal, they are singing praises songs. You hear one saying, "Ga e dume .... tshenepi". The next morning after meals, they go out of the cattle kraal, they are glittering from fat and ochre and blacklead. They go to the veld to hunt game together and eat them. They are now called 'boys who have just emerged from the initiation school'. During these days they are being confirmed as men.

5

#### About Cases.

Cases at the chief's kgotla are tried by men of the chief's council. They will consider them and look into them all round the chief being present at the kgotla. When they have seen how the case stands, the chief's headman then places it before the chief and reports how the kgotla found the case to be like. They begin to explain that they have found so and so to be guilty.

The chief will then give judgment as he thinks it fit. Then the chief's headman will say to the guilty parties: "Sons of So and So, you have been found guilty; you have to pay one beast or two. Those who have been tried will now go back to their section and sit down and report the result of the case to each other. They will say: "Sons of So-and So of So and So, "The chief has given judgment and we have been found guilty". Now I say: "You father of So and So, let us pay the fine to avoid the punishment from the chief. The men belonging to the sib will then take the beast to court of the chief; the beast is now the chief's, he is able to do whatever he pleases with it. If he may say "Let it be slaughtered", it will be slaughtered. If he says he is keeping it, he will do so. It is for him to decide, he is the chief, in those days the chiefs were very ~~kind~~ fond of the people. These cattle which are collected from the people as fines, will be distributed among those who work with him that they may look after them and use them as they got no payment from the tribe. The chief will continually remunerate the councillors, sub-chiefs and men who are his helpers in keeping order in the village.

6 These cattle also which a collected as fines were known as 'motle-jewa (those that are to be slaughtered and eaten) because they were the cattle the chief picked out to slaughter for his visitors they the ones the chief picked out from to slaughter for the tribe; they were the means by which the chief supported his tribe; they were very useful to the tribe. Those who were given these cattle by the chief had a free control over them to use them as they desired. They were in their charge as though they were their own although the chief had complete control over them. These cattle were the chest of the tribe and the pack-oxen of the tribe, used as the chief and tribe wished.

Enemies.

It was the custom of the people in the olden times, when they received information about enemies which threatened to attack and plunder their village to send out regiments after them. Secret spying parties were sent out to spy the enemies, the first deed of course being that of getting a witch doctor to doctor the chief's regiments. The doctor comes with 'Dira-ga-di-bone' (medicine), a very important medicine which is blown on the warriors. It is known as 'Dira-ga-di-bone' (Enemies do not see). When the regiments go out, their assegais are treated with the medicines of the chief which protects the village. The witch doctor will give them a charm which they must hit the bull amongst the cattle when they come across them, which will cause the bull to lead the cattle so that they may not refuse to go along. When the regiments are already in the veld, the spying parties will go out to spy the enemies so that they should be able to cross the track of the enemies with this medicine in their possession.

The custom of Warfare of the olden times was to attack by night. That was the practice.

7 They attacked at very early dawn and they could be heard now and then. The horn of the roebuck was sounded, its sound being stronger than the ordinary shout of the voice. You could see a man piercing the ground with his assegai.

Departed spirits.

The departed spirits are our forefathers who communicate with the sick. When a person is sick, it is they of whom it is often said, "Slaughter an animal for him so that the departed spirits may help him in his illness. Then, if a sick person happens to babble in his illness, it is said it is the departed spirits who are speaking with him his grandfathers and grandmothers. His grandmothers will get him 'motlhatlha-badimo' (a shrub burnt to doctor lunatics)

it is medicine which should be placed under his blankets in his bed, it is made to be his pillow so that the pains may subside. When he has recovered, it is said that he has been cured by the departed spirits of his ancestors. There will then be joy; it will be said, "The departed spirits of our ancestors have helped him to recover".

In the wild also, if you happen to be travelling across it and you hear people or voice that sound as those of people talking in the forest or in the bushy river-beds, it will be said, "It is the departed spirits".

The departed spirits visit the sick many times to speak to them and from our creation the departed spirits are our forefathers. The departed spirits speak to a person at the graves also. They speak. If a person does not bear children, it is said, he should speak with the departed spirits and he will be given a child. If a person dies, it is said, "He has been taken away by the departed spirits - his forefathers."

8

#### The Art of Doctoring.

There was much confidence placed in the art of doctoring in the olden times, because our doctors knew how to doctor and to cure completely. They learned the art of doctoring in a marvellous way. They were able to help also in the fields, they knew how to doctor cattle, how to cause rain to fall. The most important of all their doctoring was that they knew how to doctor the grave to find out the cause of one's death. They knew the medicines used to insure successful cattle birth; they protected a village with charms; they knew how to steal cattle from another village by means of medicine. They helped women when their menstruation disappeared, and cured them until it reappeared. They also helped a woman in the difficulties of confinement. They dug in medicinal pegs in the country so that nothing could destroy it; so that there would be no drought. They knew how to stupify a person with their doctoring; they were

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able to identify a wizard by medicines; they knew how to set snares in the lands by means of medicines; they knew how to render anyone unconscious by medicines. For their doctoring they were paid by means of a beast. They were doctors who were not forcing the art of doctoring upon them; they also doctored the sparrows which ate up the kaffir corn; they were really learned people in the art of doctoring; they knew how to prevent the hailstorms; they knew how to rebuke lightning; they knew how to doctor where lightning struck.

Dance.

9

Songs were sung which accompanied the dance. Music was supplied by means of reeds which were blown. Cattle were slaughtered for these dances. The dance continued in full swing till the evening, both men and women taking part such songs as "I can hold you by the hand and draw myself near you" and "I can hug you and draw myself near you". Girls would leap forward in front of the young men who are on the verge of manhood. To a person who sleeps, it was indeed pleasant. The chief is present among his people he jolts among the women; shouts of applause are heard time and again. Experts were invited among men and women. Jingling ornaments worn on the legs; a girl wearing a roebuck skin dress; holding a black and white lamb and giving it first to them; before she left she took some porridge and smeared herself with it; she took her maiden beads and put them on; she took some buttons and put them on; she took a waist ornament and wore it round her waist; you could find them clean and white. The song they sang run thus, 'Masethufela cried throughout the night, she kept us out of sleep. You will find the young men who are on the verge of womanhood going to and fro among the ~~women~~ women. By the way it was ..... The men dressed themselves in stem-buck skin.

10

She says, during the chieftainship of Mabe, the father of Mostlo Mabe, the country was properly looked after; the chieftainship was still firmly established; the chief was still in a position to marry many wives according to the true custom of the Tswana tribe.

Chief Mabe himself had many wives. His first wife is Mantšono of Molokwe; Molokwe of Tswana of Rantlha of Kgasoe.

This wife of the chief was separated from him by the Matebele war when the Matebele chief, Moselekatse went through to Bulawayo. She had no son then. Her children were Ngaka e mang and Botsetsele.

Nthono is a boy who stayed behind in the Bakwena territory, and he is one that I cannot describe because during those times we were still in the Bakwena country.

Ngaka e mang and Botsetsele, the children of the chief, were fetched from Siga at Legole's and they stayed there.

It was the first wife of chief Mabe whom the Matebele took by force when they passed through from Natal to Mashonaland in Rhodesia. They never met again, that is, the ~~the~~ chief and his wife. The war swept them away until it became unknown where they had gone to. That is why there Zulus who call themselves the Ndlovus.

The second wife of Mabe was Madikeledi the daughter of Gopanyane - Gopanyane of Setshogoe ~~akikaxax~~ of Ntšwelingoe. It is then that the children were born

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Here are the children of chief Mabe:

1 Moganetsi, 2. Mostlo, 3. Mokgatle 4. Keledi their ister. Moganetsi, the eldest son of chief, did not rule, he went away in the direction of the Orange river. It is not very well known whether or not he is alive. It is not even known whether or not he has children at present, he disappeared eversince that time. Mostlo became chief in the place of his elder brother Moganetsi. Chief Mostlo, Tshetlha ya seja dihuba, had children by his wives.

Before I tell you about chief Moetlo, let me say that in the 'lapa' of Madikeledi the wife of the chief, there was a woman in it whose name was Masefatloe, she stayed in this 'lapa' as a maid servant; she also had children by chief Mabe. These are the children:

1 Sefatlhoe Mabe, 2 Pitseng Mabe, 3 Mokoko Mabe, 4 Dinyaloe Mabe. These are the children of Mabe and our mother Masefatloe who were born in the 'lapa' of Madikeledi. These are the chief's children, the children of chief Mabe of old, when we were still at Makgophe where chief Mabe died, on those little mountains of Makgophe which you see. We are not able to point out the locality of the grave today, because in the olden days, it was not something that was care for. But if it could be known where the cattle kraal was situated, it could be estimated more or less where the grave was, because he was laid to rest at Makgophe.

He is 'Kgosi-a-Matutu-a-Leema-a-Leemana-a-Matutu'; our chief, we the Bathako, of Matutu and his wives and children according to their order of birth as far as we know. I will also tell you the wives of chief Moetlo in their order and his children in the chronological order of their birth, in those peaceful times of our forefathers. It must be remembered that Moetlo too, Tshetlhaseja-dihuba, was once a ruler. "Sekata-ka Pitse, a bo nkile ka re o tlhokomfisi sentle fa ntse ke bua le wena" (His praises). He had married wives and had children by them. His children of the first wife, who was Mamoaga, of Legatelle of Molotsi are:- 1 Molopyane, 2 Molelekoe 3 Dithong 4 Mataba 5 Boetekae. They are of the first house. There are other wives still, of chief Mabe of the former days Makoela-a-Mathathedi-a-Ntsoedingoe. She had two children only by chief Mabe; they were Monnafela le Mashoegalle. Mapitse also was married by the chief. By her the chief had children. They were 1 Leotoane 2 Setadi, 3 Dikgang and two girls, Mpile and Serontsoe.

Those are the the children of chief Mabe.

Now i will come to chief Mostlo, in the house of Matshela koena. The children were Tshelakoena and Madikeledi and Madiphuti.

In the house of Jefepi was born Makgosi and Masara. In the house of Mathubamakgata there was Mokgatlé the younger brother of Mostlo. He comes after him. His children are Tumagole, Miriane and Motseakgosi, they are of the house of Mashosdi, a girl of Phokeng.

Again in the second house of Mokgatlé, that of Moreki, was born Motlhankobane, Moreki and Nkidi.

There is also the wife of Mostlo, Nkidi of Mosito. In her house was born Ramokuta and Makgabele .

In the house of Moganetsi, was born sekene, Ntoko and Manyakala.

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The Natural Siba of the Batlhako.

As far as we know,

it is the sib of Ramabe, they are together with Masogana and Maenyana.

And then there is the sib of Mommeng together with Bathari.

" " " " " " " " Poo together with Masana.

" " " " " " " " Mogale, Baroka, Bapula & Rantana.

The sib of Tshoana together with Masudubele.

" " " Ropanyane

" " " Khunou

" " " Mokotsoana of Thole of Kgomo

And now Mosheng.

There has come in Leema of Ramoupi with Leema of Tshipi of Mabe. They are the important ones in that of Leema of Ramoupi.

Then there came in Ragoduelo. They are the BaBididi.

" " " " Maleta, their totem is the ox.

" " " " Mangato whose totem is "ducker"

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