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THE NDEBELE OF LANGA
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INTRODUCTION

The Ndebele of Langa comprise two chiefdoms living adjacently some distance to the north of the town of Potgietersrus in the Province of Transvaal, South Africa. Both chiefdoms are now included in the Mokerong area of the self-governing state of Lebowa.

The Ndebele of Langa are classified by anthropologists as Northern Transvaal Ndebele. This category includes a number of chiefdoms other than the Langa. The Northern Transvaal Ndebele, again, form part of a broader category known to anthropologists as the Transvaal Ndebele. This category comprises the Northern and Southern Transvaal Ndebele.¹⁾ The Northern and Southern divisions are separated from each other, roughly speaking, by the wide expanse of a plain known as the Springbok Flats, the centre of which is situated at the intersection of Latitude 25 ° South and Longitude 30° East.

The Transvaal Ndebele entered the Transvaal in at least two different migratory streams, namely the Ndebele of Langa on the one hand, and those Ndebele who claim ties with an ancient chief called Musi, Msi, Musi or Mmusi on the other. Some of the chiefdoms related to Musi now form the Southern Transvaal Ndebele, whereas others are classified with the Langa as Northern Transvaal Ndebele.²⁾

The two migratory streams seem to have come from the same original stock, namely the Hlubi, and therefore also from the same general area. The Hlubi, who were a sizeable Bantu-speaking people of the Natal Nguni linguistic cluster, lived along the upper reaches of the Buffalo River until the early part of the 19th Century, and must have been in the same general area when the Transvaal Ndebele departed. The place of origin is variously given as Bohlubing (the Hlubi country),³⁾ the Tugela River,⁴⁾ Lundini, Quathlamba or Kathlamba (i.e. the Drakensberg Mountains), and somewhere between the St Johns River and Durban.⁵⁾ One tradition mentions a Zimbabwe origin, but this seems to have arisen after the original migration. The chiefdoms concerned, appear to have migrated northwards into Zimbabwe before returning to the Transvaal.⁶⁾

The two migratory streams also appear to have entered the Transvaal during the same general period, say A.D. 1650 or thereabouts. Fourie gives the date of migration of Musi's Ndebele as 1500. However, van Warmelo finds fault with this date and

1. van Warmelo 1935, pp. 87-89.
2. van Warmelo 1935, pp. 87-89.
3. Triimpelmann 1936, pp. 38-41; Massie 1905, p. 33.
4. Fourie 1921, p. 31.
5. Transvaal Native Affairs Department 1905, p. 53; Fourie 1921, p. 31.
6. Ziervogel 1959, pp. 5 & 181; Krige 1937, p. 338.

concludes that these Ndebele probably migrated between 1630 and 1670.⁷⁾ My own calculation of the time of the Langa Ndebele migration, which agrees with that of van Warmelo for Musi's Ndebele, is given in the first chapter below.

Various authors have speculated on the meaning and origin of the generic name Ndebele, but they have had very little evidence to work on.⁸⁾ As to its application, however, there seems to be little doubt that it is a Sotho designation for peoples of Nguni stock. The name is applied by Sotho-speaking peoples to various unrelated peoples of Nguni origin. It is thus applied to the Transvaal Ndebele, to the unrelated Zimbabwe Ndebele, and to Nguni neighbours of the Sotho. The fact that different peoples bear the name, does not prove that they are related.⁹⁾ The name itself proves nothing more than that they are of Nguni stock. One must therefore look to the genealogical data surrounding the names of specific chiefs of the past, e.g. Langa or Musi, to find out more about their origins, but even this source can be inconclusive.

Part One of this publication deals with the oral traditions and history of the Ndebele of Langa. Much of the material upon which this part is based, is oral tradition as the title indicates. However, considerable use has also been made of written records as can be seen from the source list. Oral tradition and recorded history have thus been brought together in an attempt to gain historical insight. It will be seen in this part that the oral traditions of the Black peoples of South Africa do shed light on the history of contacts and encounters between Black and White. Oral history, imperfect as it may be, has something to say about the thinking and the motives of the Black peoples in such contacts. The experiences of the Ndebele of Langa in this respect are both unique and representative: unique in that no other Black group went through exactly the same sequence of experiences; and representative in that other Black chiefdoms experienced generally similar contact situations.

Part Two deals with the social structure of the southernmost of the two Langa chiefdoms which is known as ba ga Mapela (those of Mapela's place). This part is an unpretentious ethnographic account dealing with the major structural components of Mapela society. The fact that no attempt has been made to analyse 'the network of all person-to-person relations', ¹⁰⁾ is not due to a theoretical stand on the part of the author. The fieldwork took place in brief spells between other work during the period 1962 to 1967,¹¹⁾ but all in all no more than 100 days were spent in actual fieldwork. Hence the limited aims of this part.¹²⁾

The research upon which this publication is based, was undertaken under the auspices of the Ethnological Section of the Department of Co-operation and Development of the South African Government. I wish to thank the Department and its

7. Fourie 1921, pp. 29-30; van Warmelo 1930, pp. 17-19.

8. Shooter 1857, p. 135; Bryant 1929, p. 425; Ellenberger & Macgregor 1912, p. 120; Fourie 1921, pp. 23-26; Trilimpelmann 1936, p. 38.

9. Ellenberger & Macgregor 1912, p. 120; van Warmelo 1935, p. 87.

10. Firth 1961, p. 30.

11. I was engaged in analysing and indexing articles of anthropological interest in periodicals under the direction of Dr N.J. van Warmelo. This contributed towards the publication in 1977 of his *Anthropology of Southern Africa in Periodicals to 1950*, by the Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg.

12. It is necessary to point out that the present tense used in describing Mapela social structure in Part Two refers to that structure as it was up to 1968 when the original draft was written, unless the context indicates otherwise. No account has been taken of changes that may have occurred since 1968.

officials for allowing me the opportunity to do this research, which I undertook in my capacity as departmental ethnologist. However, I must point out that opinions expressed in this publication are my own and are not necessarily shared by the Department.

A special word of thanks is due to Chief Hendrik M. Langa, the chief by whose permission and with whose friendly encouragement the research at Mapela was done; David Langa the son of Malesela Nkube Langa, who was my motseta (intermediary) at the chiefs court; and Abraham Mogatla, who was my guide and interpreter.

The Ndebele of Langa are babinatlou,
that is to say they venerate the elephant.

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PART ONE

ORAL TRADITIONS AND HISTORY

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CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND MIGRATION

The Ndebele of Langa claim that they were Hlubi originally. They say that their chief in the original home was Langa and that their clan name is derived from him. It is said that Langa lived on the eastern side of a hill, while the majority of his subjects lived to the west of the same hill. Tribesmen going to see the chief used to say that they were going to Langalibalele, i.e. there where the sun (langa) is hot (libalele). They thereby made a play of the name of the chief and the sun-ny position in which his capital was situated. In this way Langa came to be known as Langalibalele.

According to a short manuscript obtained from the Langa ruling family of the Mapela chiefdom, their original home was ga Zulu ga Langa Lebalele (in the Zulu country at Langalibalele's place). I was able to establish that this manuscript was drawn up by the family of the chief sometime between 1905 and 1918. They were therefore able to draw from the memory of spokesmen who were no longer living when I visited them. One spokesman told me that the place of origin was eNgungundlovu (Pietermaritzburg). The original home was also given as Bununu (a general designation for the Zulu-speaking region, i.e. Natal). The terms used by the Langa to indicate their original home must not be interpreted too literally. Ga Zulu must not be taken to mean Zululand Proper, i.e. that part of Natal north of the Tugela River. The Langa Ndebele departed long before the Zulu rose to prominence and gave their name to the country. Similarly, the Langa Ndebele departed long before Pietermaritzburg was established.

The terms must be interpreted generally as indicating the present-day Zulu-speaking region, in other words KwaZulu and Natal.

According to Bryant the Hlubi occupied a position near the Drakensberg Mountains along the upper reaches of the Mzinyathi (Buffalo River) before the rise to power of Shaka Zulu, i.e. before 1820. They were an exceptionally large tribe, comprising many clans and sub-clans. To the south and i^outh-east of them were their relatives the Bhele, Zizi, Dlamini and Mbo (Mkhize).¹⁾

The relationship between the Ndebele of Langa and the Hlubi cannot be established beyond doubt by comparing their chiefly genealogies. The only point of coincidence seems to be the name of Langa. However, according to Bryant the Mbo (Mkhize), Bhele, Phuthi, Polane and the Swazi (the relatives of the Hlubi), all carry their genealogies back to a chief of that name. This appears to be significant, since Bryant calculates that they all lived at about the same time, namely during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Bryant is also able to suggest that at least some of them are one and the same person²⁾.

1 Bryant 1929, pp. 87 & 147.

I agree that there was a Langa who is common to the genealogies of the Hlubi, the Langa Ndebele, and some of the Hlubi relatives mentioned by Bryant. This seems to indicate a turbulent period in Hlubi history during or following Langa's rule. This would explain the hiving off of the Ndebele of Langa and of the Hlubi relatives as well as the prominent placing of Langa's name at the head of these different genealogies.

Some spokesmen claim that the migration from the Hlubi country was led by Langelibalele. Others say that Masebe I led the migration. The latter claim is made in the manuscript history referred to above. This version seems to be more likely than the former in view of the arguments in the previous paragraph. Spokesmen say that Masebe I was also known as Masebethela.

The general period during which the Langa Ndebele left their Hlubi home can be established with some certainty. This can be done by comparing the skeleton genealogy of Langa chiefs (Table I) with their initiation regiment (age-set) chronology (Table II) and relating them to known history as much as possible.

The Langa have a fixed cycle of nine named initiation age-sets, the last on the list being followed by the first. The normal time lapse between the initiation of one age-set and the next is six or eight years. Each age-set thus formed, is led by the highest-ranking youth of the chiefly family who is available for initiation at the time. In this way each past chief was the head of an age-set. The age-sets of early chiefs are well remembered. Spokesmen also know who were the rulers when particular age-sets were formed, and this knowledge reaches as far back as about 1750.

It is therefore a simple matter, using the above information, to fix a date or dates as far back as possible and then to calculate further back from there. (See Table II.) We can thus calculate that Podile, the grandson of Masebe I, was initiated in 1690 or thereabouts. This places the departure from the Hlubi country some 40 years earlier when Masebe I must have been in his prime. The date of departure can therefore be fixed at 1650 with a margin of error of probably no more than 20 years.

The migration took place in easy stages with short stops of a few years along the way. Their route went through Swaziland and the first stop to which we have a written reference is near the present Leydsdorp.³) Present-day spokesmen do not mention Leydsdorp, and Mafefere's place (ga Mafefera) is the first stop mentioned in the manuscript history obtained from the Langa. Ga Mafefera is the home of the Mafefe chiefdom which is a branch of the Pedi. It is situated on the northern bank of the Olifants River, just east of where Longitude 30° East inter-sects the river. The place is about 50 km. in a straight line from Leydsdorp. The Mafefe chiefdom had not yet come into existence when the Langa settled there.

The Langa moved on to Bosega after a short stay at Mafefere's. They travelled through Molep's Poort (Sefate sa Sego) which is the gap through which the Mphogo-diba (Molep's River) flows down to the Olifants. Bosega is the area around Boyne, east of Pietersburg, where the Molepo chiefdom now resides. This chiefdom had not arrived yet, and the closest neighbours of the Langa were the Kekana at Moletlane (Zebediela) and the Matlala at the Matlala Mountains.⁴)

2. Bryant 1929, p. 354 & table facing p. 314.

3. Massie I 905, p. 40; Transvaal Native Affairs Department 1905, p. 55.

4. Anon. 1907 (History - Hendrik Bakenberg etc.).

After a short stay at Bo ega the Langa moved on again, this time to a hill called Ihaba Tihweu a few kilometres south-east of the present-day Pietersburg. They remained there for about four generations. The following chiefs ruled and died at Thaba nhweu: Masebe I, Mapuso, Podile and Masebe II. Very little is remembered about the stay at Thaba TThweu, but there are a few indications of important developments during this period.

Spokesmen say that the Langa were taught circumcision by the Sotho. It was necessary for them to adopt this custom because intermarriage was beginning to take place and the Sotho women refused to marry uncircumcised men. It is probable that they adopted the custom from the people of Matlala who were fairly close neighbours. There do not seem to have been any other Sotho chiefdoms close at hand. The head of a Langa circumcision lodge is known as Matlala to this day. Krige in fact states that the Matlala people claim to have introduced circumcision among the Sotho.⁵⁾

Podile is the earliest Langa chief whose initiation age-set can be determined. Age-sets are formed at the completion of initiation into manhood, of which circumcision is a prominent feature. Podile's grandson Seritarita is praised as follows: Seritarita sa Matshela a ga Podile (Seritarita of the Matshela age-set of Podile). It is well known that Matshela is the praise name of the Matladi ageset. Podile therefore was a member of the Matladi age-set.⁶⁾ (See Table II) Langa spokesmen say that they did not practise circumcision before their migration, but it seems certain that it was performed on Podile. He probably was the first Langa chief to be circumcised.

Another point of interest is that medicated pumpkin for the annual firstfruits festival of the Langa used to be obtained from the Kekana at Moletlane. Spokesmen also say that the Kekana had to be notified when the Langa held initiation and formed age-sets. This implies that the Langa were subject to, or at least recognised the genealogical seniority of, the Kekana. However, Langa spokesmen deny that they were ever subject to the Kekana. They explain the medicated pumpkin by suggesting that there was a famous doctor at Moletlane from whom the pumpkin was obtained.

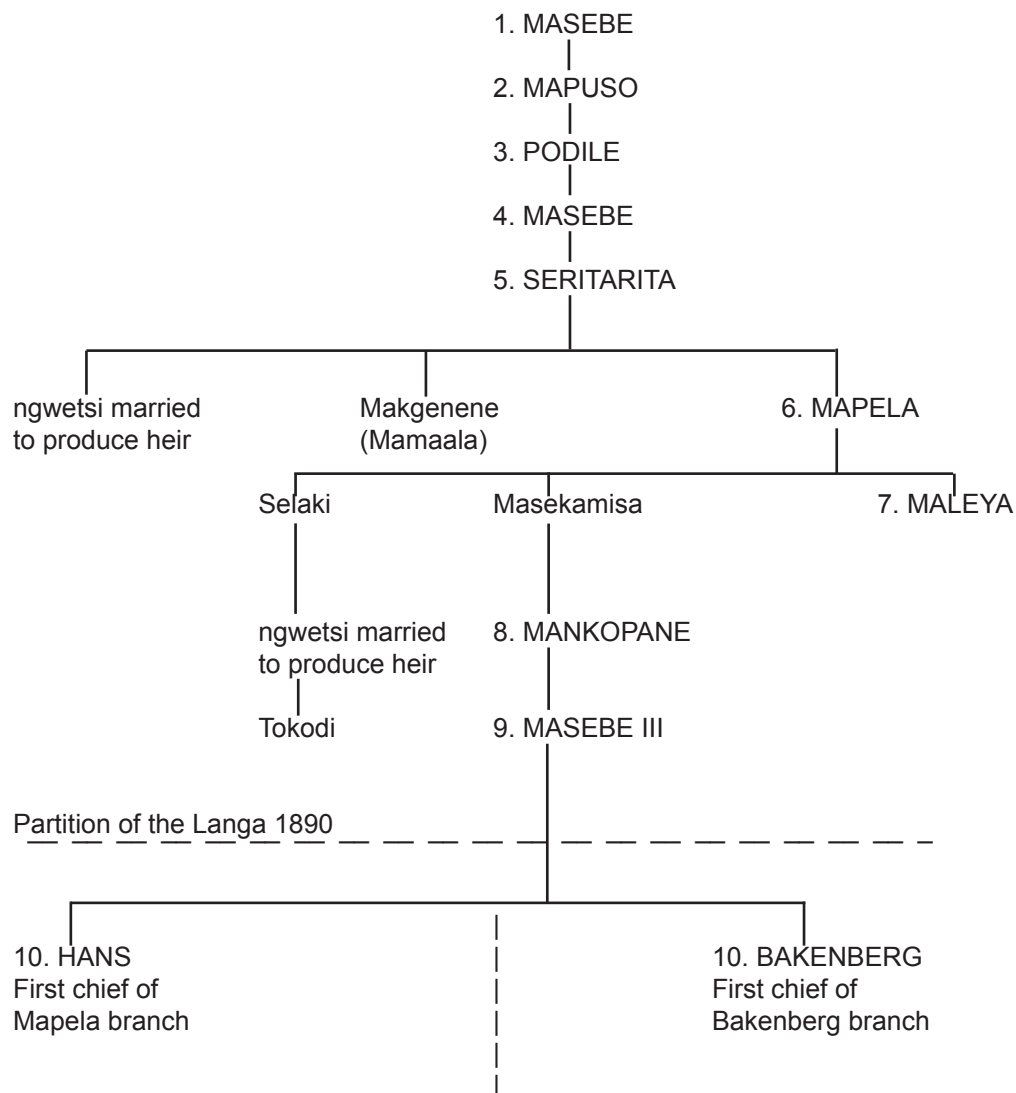
I suggest that when the Langa arrived at Thaba Tshweu, they recognised in the Kekana senior kinsmen from the original home. They then proceeded to express their respect for their senior kinsmen by obtaining medicated pumpkin from them and notifying them when circumcision courses were held. This is in line with the manner in which headmen of the Langa demonstrate loyalty and respect to this day.

5. Krige 1937, footnote on p. 346.

6. The age-sets served as units for military purposes inter alia, and are therefore sometimes referred to as 'regiments' or 'initiation regiments' in the literature. See Chapter XIII.

TABLE I

SKELETON GENEALOGY OF LANGA CHIEFS



NOTES: 1. Names in capitals are those of chiefs.
2. *Ngwetsi* means daughter-in-law.

TABLE II

INITIATION CHRONOLOGY OF THE LANGA

| AGE-SET | YEAR | LEADER | CHIEFTAINSHIP |
|--------------|------|------------|----------------------------|
| 8 Matladi | 1690 | Podile | ? |
| 9 Malekana | 1696 | ? | ? |
| 1 Marema | 1702 | ? | ? |
| 2 Madingwana | 1708 | ? | ? |
| 3 Matlwana | 1714 | ? | ? |
| 4 Mangana | 1720 | Masebe II | ? |
| 5 Matlakana | 1728 | ? | ? |
| 6 Magohu | 1734 | ? | ? |
| 7 Mabitsi | 1740 | ? | ? |
| 8 Matladi | 1748 | Seritarita | Masebe II about 1745-1775 |
| 9 Malekana | 1756 | ? | " |
| 1 Marema | 1764 | ? | " |
| 2 Madingwana | 1770 | ? | " |
| 3 Matlwana | 1778 | ? | Seritarita about 1775-1795 |
| 4 Mangana | 1784 | ? | " |
| 5 Matlakana | 1790 | Mapela | " |
| 6 Magohu | 1798 | ? | Mapela about 1795-1825 |
| 7 Mabitsi | 1806 | ? | " |
| 8 Matladi | 1812 | ? | " |
| 9 Malekana | 1820 | Selaki | " |
| 1 Marema | 1828 | ? | Maleya about 1825-1836 |
| 2 Madingwana | 1836 | Mankopane | " |
| 3 Matlwana | 1844 | ? | Mankopane about 1836-1877 |
| 4 Mangana | 1852 | ? | " |
| 5 Matlakana | 1860 | Masebe III | " |
| 6 Magohu | 1869 | Matlanya | " |
| 7 Mabitsi | 1875 | Sekgoma | " |
| 8 Matladi | 1882 | Hans | Masebe III 1877-1890 |
| 9 Malekana | 1887 | Bakenberg | " |

Notes:

1. The numbers assigned to the age-sets are simply a device for convenient reference. The Langa do not number their age-sets in this way.
2. Dates of age-sets recorded in Berlin Mission reports are 1882 and 1887. These reports also record that girls were initiated in 1868 or 1869, and again in 1875. The reports do not record that boys were initiated in the same years, but according to the custom they should have been. The years 1869 and 1875 have therefore been assigned above.
3. Dates of age-sets deduced from other historical data are 1836 and 1860 (shortly before a Langa delegation met Louis Trichardt and shortly after the Langa moved from Magagamatala to Thutlwane, respectively).
4. The table has a certain internal structure comprising the interrelationships between the data in the various columns and rows. This ensures that the dates assigned in the table are within reason.

CHAPTER II

FROM THABA TSHWEU TO FOTHANE 1775 TO 1853

Masebe II was succeeded by Seritarita at Thaba Tshweu in about 1775. (See Table II). The latter departed with his people and settled at Maleoko, which is on the present-day farm Bultongfontein 239-KR. This is almost directly north of Potgietersrus and west of Pietersburg. It is not known how soon after Seritarita's succession this movement took place. Seritarita remained at Maleoko for about three years before moving on again. This time he settled at Moumong-wa-Matswake on the farm Zuid Holland 773-LR, a few kilometres further west. The name refers to a big fig-tree (*Moumo*) said to have stood at the place and to a person called Matswake. The place was also known as Mokgokgong.

Seritarita died at Moumong-wa-Matswake and was succeeded by Mapela, his son by his third-ranking wife. Traditions regarding Mapela's succession differ to some extent, but it seems that Seritarita's principal wife had had no sons and that his son by his second-ranking wife was not deemed fit for the chieftainship. It also seems that a *ngwetsi* (daughter-in-law) was married to produce an heir on behalf of the principal wife. She bore a son who was named Mosoge. The genealogical situation has been set out in Table I.

According to the rules of succession Mosoge should in time have become chief. According to tradition, however, he was unfit for the chieftainship because he was always in the fields and not at court where he belonged. He is therefore praised as *Mosoge wabo tema* (Mosoge who liked cultivating). There is a further tradition that Mosoge did not want to become chief because he felt this would interfere with the tranquility of his existence. The truth is probably that by the time he became of age, Mapela was too firmly entrenched for Mosoge to dislodge him.

The genealogical seniority of the Mosoge lineage is recognised to this day. This can be seen after circumcision, when the Mosoge are the first to burn their initiation lodge, and also at the naming of the new age-set, which is performed by the head of that group.

Mosoge left Moumong-wa-Matswake with his people during the 'wars of Mzilikazi' (about 1823-1837). He settled at a small hill called Mabjanamaswana just east of Thutlwane and some distance west and north of Moumong-wa-Matswake. At this place he was still subject to the Langa chief.

Langa spokesmen say that Seritarita's son by his second-ranking wife deserted his father, thereby forfeiting his right to succeed. They say *o tlabile bo-*

gosi ka tshosa (he stabbed the chieftainship with a lance). This son, who is invariably referred to by the generic name Mamaala, but whose real name was probably Makgenene, left Moumong-wa-Matswake with his followers. He settled at Tsotsodi on the farm Planknek 43-KS, immediately north-east of the Potgietersrus town lands. He also lived at Segodini on the farm Makapansgat 39-KS, not far from Tsotsodi. Here the Mamaala group was ruled by Makgenene, Selepe and Mphunye (Mapunya).

Tradition relates that the Mamaala group failed to visit Mapela during the old chiefs final illness many years later. They nevertheless returned to the Langa capital after Mapela's death and claimed the chieftainship under Mphunye's leadership. The Langa pointed out that the head of the Mosoge lineage ranked higher than the head of Mamaala. The latter were not satisfied with this reminder and secretly planned to kill Mapela's successor, Mankopane.

Mankopane heard about the plot against him and decided to attack the Mamaala people. However, he decided to delay the attack until they had cultivated their fields so that he could profit from their labours. Mphunye in turn heard of Mankopane's plans and instructed his people to collect sand in the river and to sow with that instead of seed. They did this, and then departed secretly immediately after the completion of the sowing. It is said that they returned to Segodini but that some of them went to Ntsuka's place, which is Witpoort near Moletlane.

After a time Mankopane's people, who were surprised to see that no seed came up, discovered the trick that had been played on them. From that time onwards the people of Mphunye were referred to with the expression Nomayala ngenhlabathi (He who sows with sand). The name Nomayala, Sothoized to Mamaala, has been applied to them ever since.

The difficulty with this romantic tradition is that it claims that the Mamaala people returned to the Langa and departed a second time, whereas there is no tradition of a second return. The people of Mamaala did in fact return at the beginning of Mankopane's rule but only some of them, if any, departed again. Therefore, either the incident of the sowing of sand occurred during the original departure, or the story is fanciful. I am inclined to believe the latter, particularly since there is another tradition regarding the origin of the name. An old spokesman of this group stated that the son of Seritarita who founded this group (probably Makgenene) was a restless person and that he moved from place to place, never sowing more than once at the same place. In this context Nomayala ngenhlabathi is said to mean, He who sows throughout the country.

The genealogical seniority of the Mamaala lineage is still recognised. They are the first after Mosoge to set fire to their circumcision lodge at the conclusion of the initiation rites. The lodge of the ruling family is only set alight after theirs. Mapela thus became chief through the failure of his father's principal wife to produce a son and through the desertion of his higher-ranking half-brother, Makgenene. He ruled well and during his lifetime his people increased in numbers and fame. This was achieved through the incorporation of a number of smaller Sotho chiefdoms or clans. Some of them were conquered, others joined voluntarily. As a result of these conquests and acquisitions during Mapela's stay at Moumong-wa-Matswake, the place also came to be known as Matswake-ga-Mapela-di-a-Ila (Matswake's where the xylophones resound). Spokesmen say there was much merry-making. In this name the pun with the chief's name is obvious.

The Langa had already acquired the following alien subjects when Mapela be-

came chief: the Tlhaloga Kwena of headman Tshaba, the Kwena of headman Lelaka and perhaps also the Dikgomo of headman Lebelo. The Phalane Nareng of headman Mabuela and the Pedi of headman Matlou, who occupied the fertile land near the Mogalakwena River, were attacked a number of times by the Langa before the latter settled at Moumong-wa-Matswake. All these attacks were warded off, but during Mapela's rule internal strife broke out amongst the Phalane. Mapela was then able to defeat them and incorporate a section together with the Pedi of Matlou. Those who fled are the Phalane of Mokoka who now live in the Pilansberg area of Bophuthatswana. The Bididi of Songwane were also defeated and fled to the hill Bobididi near Villa Nora. Only a small section remained with the Langa.

The Kwena of headman Ramorulane and the Hurutshe of headman Molokomme were incorporated after being defeated at Senta Hill and Swartkop respectively. Both these places are said to be north of Thutlwane. The Koni of headmen Masenya and Puka, the Tlokwa of headman Pila and the people of headman Hhokwe joined the Langa voluntarily during Mapela's rule. The Koni of headman Seema joined somewhat later, according to their own account.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Pedi chief Thulare¹ made his greatest expedition up Steelpoort, passing the Mapoch's, Maleoskop, far into the Waterberg and Zoutpansberg District, up to Ganana (Blauwberg), and back over the Draken Mountains. The whole mass of Natives of Transvaal, afraid to fight, asked for peace, and gave tribute, '1) Langa spokesmen do not mention having become tributary to the Pedi, but it is certain that they did.²⁾ The encounter seems to have been so brief and the Pedi yoke so light that it made almost no impression on Langa history.

The Ndebele of Mzilikazi appeared on the scene towards the end of Mapela's rule and only left after his death. Langa spokesmen are rather vague about this period and pass it over lightly, giving the impression that they suffered very little at the hands of Mzilikazi's warriors. However, other sources tell a different tale. Schloemann relates that the people of headman Mabuela spent this period hiding in the hills. Mzilikazi's warriors turned up from time to time to seek them out, and many people were left without ears, noses or limbs.³⁾ The Langa certainly did suffer at the hands of Mzilikazi.⁴⁾

Mapela, in his old age, moved his headquarters to Fothane Hill (Moordkoppie), where he died in about 1825. The present-day Langa chiefdom in whose territory Fothane is situated, is referred to by the name ba ga Mapela (those of Mapela's place) for this reason.

Mapela's rightful successor was Selaki. (See Table I.) Some spokesmen say that he predeceased his father, and others that he ruled for about a year after Mapela's death and then died. Others, again, say that he merely acted as chief for about a year during his father's old age, either because the latter had fled from Mzili-

1. Winter 1912, p. 96; According to Rasmussen 1978, p. 35, the Pedi empire under Thulare actually expanded during the 1810s, and declined soon after his death in 1820 due to quarrels between his sons over the succession.
2. Schloemann 1889, p. 4; Malekutu was the first to succeed Thulare, but he was killed by his brothers - Rasmussen 1978, note 41 on p. 186.
3. Schloemann 1889, pp. 4-5.
4. Anon. 1907 (History - Hendrik Bakenberg etc.).

kazi or because of his infirmity. Whatever the case may be, when Selaki died he had not yet married a principal wife. However, he seems to have left a wife of lesser rank with an infant son. This infant does not seem to have been seriously considered for the chieftainship.

Mapela's next-ranking son was Masekamifa. (See Table I.) He predeceased his father, but left a son called Mankopane. The latter was still young, and consequently Maleya, a son of Mapela by a minor wife, became chief. Maleya ruled from the Ditlotswane hills not far from Fothane. His rule does not appear to have been popular, because Mankopane ousted him as soon as his (Mankopane's) initiation was concluded. Maleya fled to Magagamatala on the farm Ruigtevley 710-LR to the north-west. The following lines in Mankopane's praise refer to this action against Maleya: *Tau e kite ya patla Malekana; Ke selamolela Matebele*. (The lion [i.e. Mankopane] overpowered the Malekana /age-set of Maleya]; He is the intervener on behalf of the Ndebele.)

An intriguing but ambiguous entry dated 10 March 1837 appears in Louis Trichardt's journal.⁵⁾ The entry is the essence of a complaint brought to Trichardt by certain members of the Langa ruling family. It almost certainly refers to Mankopane's succession. The delegation hoped to enlist Trichardt's aid in turning out the ruling chief, whom they regarded as a usurper. The entry reads as follows (my translation, and names in square brackets my interpretation - see Table I): '.... that the chief [Mankopane is a brother's son of Mapelie [Selaki] and that a brother [Maleya] of Mapelie [Selaki] has ruled since the death of Mapelie [Selaki], and that the brother's son Mankopane] has driven the brother [Maleya] of Mapelie [Selaki] away, and has also driven the wife of Mapelie [Selaki] who has the child who ought to become chief away, and has taken her property.'⁶⁾

Since Selaki was Mapela's rightful heir, it would be reasonable to assume that the author is referring to Selaki when he mentions Mapela. Mapela's name was used as a hereditary title for a time because of the prestige attached to it. No interpretation other than the above, seems to fit the genealogical data. The conclusion to be drawn from the journal entry is that Mankopane became chief shortly before the date of the entry, say in 1835 or 1836. I might add that Trichardt, who had problems of his own, left the area a few months later without having assisted the Langa delegation.

A remnant of Thulare's Pedi with Malekutu's widow and son wandered from place to place in search of food and cattle, while the Ndebele of Mzilikazi were still in the Transvaal. They encountered the Ndebele of Langa and were completely defeated and nearly all killed.⁷⁾ This must have occurred shortly before 1835, i.e. just before Mankopane succeeded. The battle is well remembered by Langa spokesmen, but to them it was the Pedi against whom they fought and not just a wandering remnant as stated above.

Langa spokesmen say that during 1837, when Mzilikazi was defeated by the Emigrant Boers and finally departed from the Transvaal, the Langa sent an expedition after him to speed him on his way.

5. Louis Trichardt was the leader of the first party of Emigrant Boers to enter the northern part of the Transvaal. See Chapter III below.

6. Trichardt 1938, p. 42.

7. Winter 1913, p. 330; Schloemann 1889, p. 4.

Shortly after Mzilikazi's departure, the Bididi of ongwane were tricked into submission by Mankopane. At this time they were living on their mountain, Bobididi, a natural fortress from which even Mzilikazi was unable to dislodge them. Bobididi is situated on the banks of the Phalala River on the fann Buffelsdoorn 486-LR near Villa Nora. One day a small Langa force appeared at Bobididi, driving a herd of cattle peacefully before them. They pretended to be out courting and to have brought the cattle as bride-price for the girl they were seeking. They were invited onto the mountain, where they asked the chief for snuff. When the chief [Ranare] produced his snuff-pouch he was seized, and in the ensuing chaos the Langa managed to get away with him. The chief was killed along the way, and soon afterwards a strong Langa force appeared on the scene. They demanded that the Bididi, who were now leaderless and unable to offer resistance, descend from their mountain and settle on the plains. The Bididi were subject to the Ndebele of Langa from then until 1890, and heavy tribute was regularly extracted from them.⁸⁾

Some years after this, it could not have been long before 1854, the Langa attacked and scattered the copper miners of Musina. This was done at the instigation of Maruputlane Lamola, who was Mankopane's highest-ranking headman. This was done because of the lack of hospitality of the Musina people towards the envoys of Mankopane, who went there to barter for copper.⁹⁾

8. BMB 1892: 19/ 20, p. 510.

9. van Warmelo 1940, p. 83.

CHAPTER III

THE 1854 MASSACRE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The next major event in Langa Ndebele history was the massacre of Hermanus Potgieter and his party in 1854. It is necessary to give a brief review of the history of White occupation of the Transvaal in order to be able to see this event in its proper context. Wichmann's treatise is a useful source for this purpose.¹⁾

The occupation of the Transvaal was the outcome of the Great Trek, which was caused by the dissatisfaction of the frontier farmers in the Cape with the British administration of the Colony. The first party of emigrant Dutch farmers to leave the Colony was under the leadership of Louis Trichardt. He went as far north as the Soutpansberg Mountains in the Northern Transvaal, where he sojourned from 1836 to 1837. Trichardt was followed by Andries Hendrik Potgieter, who visited him in the Soutpansberg with a commission of eleven men. Potgieter left Trichardt again in August 1836.

It was while Potgieter was on his way back in September 1836, that his camp near the Vaal River was attacked by a force of Mzilikazi's warriors. Potgieter had to postpone his plan to rejoin Trichardt in the north as a result of this. He was compelled to wait for the later parties of emigrants, so that a sufficiently strong force could be mustered to punish Mzilikazi. Two successive expeditions were launched against the latter and the second, under Potgieter's leadership, drove him out.²⁾ Mzilikazi fled across the Limpopo and settled in Zimbabwe.

Potgieter was unable to rejoin Trichardt as a result of the delay forced upon him, and Trichardt finally left the Soutpansberg towards the end of 1837. In this way, White occupation of the Northern Transvaal failed to take root for the time being. However, the defeat of Mzilikazi had an important effect upon the attitude of the Emigrant Boers, particularly upon Potgieter. It was his attitude that all the country previously ruled by Mzilikazi's blade was now subject to the latter's victors.

The period that followed was marked by the efforts of the Boer emigrants to establish a satisfactory form of government. The centre of authority gravitated to Natal when many people decided to go there. It moved to Potchefstroom in the Transvaal when people started returning from Natal, and then to Ohrigstad in the Eastern Transvaal, which was founded by Potgieter in 1845. After this followed a period of strife and division, followed in turn by efforts to establish a strong centralised government. It was due to this division that Potgieter returned to the Soutpansberg, where he established the town of Schoemansdal early in 1848.

1. Wichmann 1941.

2. Wilson 1837, p. 338

The attitude of the Emigrant Boers that the country previously ruled by Mzilikazi was now subject to them by virtue of their victory over Mzilikazi, has already been mentioned. This of course affected their policy towards the Native inhabitants of the Transvaal. Resolutions giving insight into their policy were passed from time to time. In April 1844 a constitution containing 33 articles was adopted at Potchefstroom. The 28th article forbade the unlawful obtaining of Native children. This constitution was re-adopted or re-affirmed in May 1849.³⁾

In January 1851 it was decided that thenceforth the Transvaal would have four Commandants-General, including A H Potgieter for the Soutpansberg region. In December of that year it was decided that Native Affairs would fall under them. In May of the same year the Apprentice Act was adopted, regulating the registration of, and providing protection for, such Native children as were obtained by lawful means.⁴⁾ These children usually were orphans of the various Native wars, and as a rule they were well cared for by their masters. The attitude of the Emigrant Boers towards slavery was re-affirmed in January 1852 when the Sand River Convention was signed. Article four of this convention forbade slavery.

With the establishment of settlements in the southern and eastern parts of the Transvaal, and also Schoemansdal in the north, traffic between these towns took place. The route from Schoemansdal to the southern settlements passed through Makapanspoort, where Potgietersrus is now situated. At the time the capital of Mokopane (Mugombane in Ndebele), chief of a branch of the Kekana of Moletlane, was situated on what is now the farm Pruissen 48-KS, just east of the route. Lekalakala, who was one of Mokopane's headmen, lived near Sefakaulo Hill to the west of the route. The route therefore passed right through Mokopane's territory, although it might not have appeared to do so. This fact probably contributed towards the 1854 massacres. There are indications that trouble had been brewing between the Emigrant Boers and the Kekana for some time.⁵⁾

Twenty-eight members of the Emigrant Boers, including men, women and children, were massacred in late September of 1854. Fourteen of them were killed by the Kekana of chief Mokopane, twelve at Moorddrif on the Mogalakwena River and two at Mokopane's capital on the farm Pruissen 48-KS. The remaining fourteen were massacred by the Langa of Mankopane at the hill Fothane, now known as Moordkoppie.

The group massacred at Fothane consisted of Hermanus Philippus Potgieter, his two sons, his three sons-in-law, and their wives and children. Hermanus Potgieter was a younger brother of Andries Hendrik Potgieter. The second name of the latter, by which he was known, was corrupted by the Langa to *Ntereke*. His younger brother was referred to as Nterekane, which is the diminutive form of Ntereke.

At the time of the massacre the Soutpansberg district, which included the Langa country, was the frontier of White settlement in southern Africa. Many people of doubtful character flocked to this area in addition to many good and upright settlers, and many nationalities were represented. Early written sources suggest that Hermanus Potgieter, in contrast to his highly respected elder brother, did not belong to the better class of settlers. He had been on the frontiers of civilization since his earliest youth, first in the Cape Province and then in the Transvaal. He was a continual source of anxiety to his elder brother. He was an elephant hunter and a man

3. TA, LW 1849-1885, pp. 1-6.

4. TA, LW 1849-1885, pp. 8-11.

5. Preller 1925, pp. 147-150.

of outstanding physical ability, but he had a foul temper.⁶⁾

Various motives are given for the murder of Hermanus Potgieter and his party. One story is that Potgieter came across the youngest brother of the Kekana chief Mokopane where he had killed a buffalo calf while hunting. It is said that Potgieter flew into a temper and berated him for having killed a calf whereas it was proper to kill fullgrown animals only, and thereupon shot him.⁷⁾ Another story is that a young man ridiculed Potgieter's son and that Potgieter lost his temper and shot him.⁸⁾ A third story is that Potgieter aroused the anger of the Ndebele by shooting a big snake in a tree near the headquarters of the Kekana chief Mokopane. It is said that this snake happened to accommodate the spirit of a deceased Kekana chief.⁹⁾ It is also said that Potgieter had for a long time been forcing the Native people into service of various kinds. It is said that he even forced their children into slavery, thus contravening the Apprentice Act.¹⁰⁾

One must conclude from their very number and variety that the stories given above are legendary. They must nevertheless have some basis in fact. It seems as if Hermanus Potgieter did give offence to his assassins in one way or another. But to say that his death was merely the result of personal vengeance on the part of the Ndebele of Langa, does not fit the facts altogether. We must remember that two separate massacres were perpetrated almost simultaneously, and by two separate Ndebele chiefdoms. It seems obvious that the two massacres were committed according to a pre-arranged agreement.

Preller expresses the opinion that these massacres were but a continuation of a general plan of murder and pillage on the part of the Ndebele.¹¹⁾ According to Schloemann, Mankopane's reception of the Emigrant Boers was friendly at first. As time went by friction arose, whereupon Mankopane in conjunction with the neighbouring Kekana chief Mokopane, decided to kill their leaders. They hoped to frighten the emigrant settlers and check their influx.¹²⁾ This seems to sum up the situation correctly. The massacres were committed because the Ndebele of Langa and Kekana felt that the influx of White settlers in their part of the country was becoming a threat to their sovereignty, and they hoped to frighten them away. The harsh acts that Hermanus Potgieter may have committed, can therefore have done no more than trigger the Ndebele into action, and could not have been the sole cause of the massacres.

The stories of how Potgieter and his party were enticed to Fothane Hill where they were killed, also differ to some extent. One story relates that Mokopane sent a messenger called Moledi to Potgieter, telling him that a herd of elephants was roaming about the neighbourhood of Mankopane's village and doing a lot of damage in the fields.¹³⁾ This story is partly confirmed by Kruger, who adds that Mapelaa [Mankopane] also asked Potgieter to inspect the latter's cattle which were in Mankopane's care.¹⁴⁾ Another story holds that Potgieter went to Mankopane because the latter had invited him to come and purchase some ivory.¹⁵⁾ Whatever the truth may be, Potgieter went there and stopped his waggons a short distance from Mankopane's capital at Fothane Hill.

6. Moerschell 1912, p. 55; van Oordt 1898?, pp. 82-83.

7. Orpen n.d., p. 433.

8. van Oordt 1898? p. 82.

9. Vujoen 1928, p. 65.

10. Orpen n.d., pp. 426-427, 433.

11. Preller 1914, p. 460.

12. Schloemann 1889, p. 5.

13. Orpen n.d., p. 434.

14. Kruger 1902, p. 26.

15. Moerschell 1912, p. 56.

The story of the massacre itself is related by Orpen: Mapela [Mankopane] sent a party of men armed with assegais [spears] which were broken off short and concealed under their clothing. Some of these men carried a huge elephant's tusk. When they got two or three hundred yards from the waggons, they put the heavy tusk down on the ground. Potgieter and his party were invited to come and inspect it and were told that the elephant had been killed only a few days before whereas in reality it was an old tusk. Potgieter and his companions hastened to the spot, leaving their rifles at the waggons, and it was while they were stooping over the tusk in great admiration of its size that they were set upon and stabbed. Two were killed there, but Potgieter, though wounded, had strength enough left to make a dash for the waggon. He managed to reach it and lay hands on his rifle, but then he fell down dead with blood pouring from his mouth and nostrils. The man who stabbed him to death was called Kheresa.¹⁶⁾

According to another account Potgieter sent Mankopane a suit of clothes before the tusk was brought. Potgieter and one of his sons were struck down while inspecting the ivory. The other son ran for the waggons and was killed there. The remaining men were surprised and killed some distance from the waggons, and the women and children were tortured before being put to death.¹⁷⁾ It is also said that Potgieter regained consciousness and was skinned alive,¹⁸⁾ and his skin used to prepare a kaross.¹⁹⁾ These last details are denied by present-day spokesmen of the Ndebele of Langa.

One more aspect of the massacres needs to be considered. According to Orpen Mankopane sent a message to Mokopane immediately after the massacre, and then Mokopane set about killing the party at Moorddrif and Pruissen. Although this may well be true, it does not dispose of the argument that the massacres were planned beforehand. This seems to be proved by the fact that a certain Koos Engelbrecht had visited Mokopane on Pruissen four days before the massacre, where he was held prisoner and threatened, but finally released. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the massacres had already been planned and that it was felt that the untimely killing of one person would not achieve the desired effect, but might on the contrary spoil the scheme if his death were to be discovered.²⁰⁾

The place where Hermanus Potgieter and his party were killed, is known as Nterekane. It is near the site of the Kgabagare school. This school was appropriately named after Mankopane, whose praise name was Kgabagare.

Piet Potgieter had succeeded his father Andries Hendrik Potgieter as Commandant-General for the Soutpansberg. He immediately set about collecting a commando when he heard the news of the massacres. He soon had 150 men, but realized that the force would not be strong enough to accomplish the punishment of the Ndebele. Commandant-General M W Pretorius received the report of the massacre on September 25th, and by October 14th had gathered some 334 men, with whom he proceeded northwards to the aid of Potgieter. He joined the latter on October 24th, and the total force then numbered about 500 men.

The siege of the Kekana, who had withdrawn into a huge cavern on the farm Makapansgat 39-KS, then began. The Kekana were finally overcome on December 21st, having lost more than 2 000 members of their tribe. Commandant-General Potgieter was killed during the siege.

16. Orpen n.d., pp. 434-435.

17. Preller 1914, p. 461.

18. Kruger 1902, p. 26.

19. Moerschell 1912, p. 56.

20. Preller 1914, pp. 454 & 460.

According to a Kekana spokesman this flight into the cave was by no means a new experience for the Kekana. They had taken refuge in the cave on at least three occasions before 1854. The reason for this was the following: Chief Mokopane's grandfather Kgaba, who was a younger brother of chief Kgomba of the Kekana of Moletlane (Zebediela), had broken away to establish his own chiefdom. The Kekana rulers at Moletlane were jealous of his independence and asked the Pedi, to whom they were subject, to bring Kgaba's people back to the fold. It seems as if the action took place after Kgaba had been succeeded by Tshumana, and Tshumana by Mokopane.

Mokopane refused to budge and fled into the cave from time to time, where on each occasion many of his people died. It was because of this that Mokopane was nicknamed Setswamadi (the one who bleeds) by the Pedi. Even a gift of twelve girls from Setswamadi to the Pedi chief failed to prevent the Pedi from coming.

The spokesman says that Mokopane (Setswamadi) did not die in the cave in 1854. He says he escaped and returned to his capital where he took poison and died shortly afterwards. He committed suicide because of the heavy losses his people had sustained.

A commando was sent after the Ndebele of Langa immediately after the siege of the cave had been lifted. It was found that they had left Fothane and retreated to a high flat-topped mountain with steep cliffs called Magagamatala. This is near a similar hill called Mosuka and is on the present-day farm Ruigtevley 710-LR. Since the season was far advanced, it was decided to postpone the expedition against Mankopane's Langa. But the commando departed with some 3 300 head of cattle and about 1200 small stock.²¹⁾

Mankopane banished the Lamola clan before he and his people left for Magagamatala. Spokesmen say that Maruputlane Lamola (the same person who was responsible for the destruction of the copper miners of Musina) had informed the White settlers about the massacre of Hermanus Potgieter and his party. For this betrayal Maruputlane, who was the head of the Lamola clan and the highest-ranking headman of the Langa, was enticed to the top of Fothane Hill where he was set upon and killed. His people were banished and fled to Matlala, where they were encountered by Wangemann on 28 May 1867.²²⁾ Their descendants now reside on the Rozenkrans 424-LR in the Seshego area to the north of Fothane.

The great losses inflicted upon the Kekana tended to subdue the Langa Ndebele for a time, but in 1858 they took up their pillaging again. A punitive commando was therefore organised, and on 14 April 1858 Mankopane's stronghold on Magagamatala was attacked. Commandant-General Stephanus Schoeman, who had succeeded Piet Potgieter, led the expedition. He had a force of 325 men at his disposal, of whom 75 were mounted. At Magagamatala it was decided that Commandants S J P Kruger and Barend Vorster would climb the hill from one side with the men on foot, and that Schoeman would attack from the other side with the mounted men.

The attack took place at midnight during the course of a thunderstorm. Kruger was guided in his ascent of the mountain by a man from Matlala. Near the top his path was blocked by a huge rock. He commanded his men to go down and come up again on the other side of the rock. As a result of a misunderstanding in the dark all the men except six, who remained with Kruger, fled down thinking that something had gone wrong on the mountain. Kruger sent one of the six down to call the men back. They returned and on rounding the rock, overcame the Langa guards who

21. Preller 1915, pp. 473-480; Pretorius 1912, pp. 817-818; Massie 1905, pp. 103-104.

22. Wangemann 1868, p. 436. See also Annexure A to Part One.

were stationed there. The rounding of the rock was achieved by making use of a tree growing from a crevice. Guns had to be passed up from hand to hand.

The presence of Kruger's force on the mountain was discovered soon after the guards were overpowered. The Langa tribesmen fled in panic, but in doing so they headed straight for Schoeman's mounted men. They were thus caught between two lines of fire, and they proceeded to flee in all directions. Hundreds of them fell down the 100 metre high cliffs. Equally as many were killed in this way as by bullets. It is said that some 800 of Mankopane's subjects were killed that night. One exaggerated account puts the figure at three to four thousand. Only one of the attackers, a certain Minnaar, was killed. However, many of the attackers sustained injuries. This was mainly due to their being hit by stones that were rolled down by the defenders.²³⁾

Langa spokesmen say that Mankopane's brother Morwakgwadi was killed and that the attackers thought that he was the chief. Another high-ranking man called Sekgorekgore jumped off a cliff and killed himself. Some spokesmen say that Mphunye, the head of the Mamaala lineage, was also killed there, but others deny it. The clash on Magagamatala is known in Langa history as the War of Nterekane because it took place as a consequence of the massacre of Hermanus Potgieter and his party. However, it is also known as the War of Maruputlane because it is associated with Maruputlane's betrayal of the Langa.

Mankopane left and settled on Thutlwane Hill on the farm Kromkloof 744-LR after his defeat on Magagamatala. This brought him into close contact with the Mosooge people, who had gone there when his grandfather Mapela was chief.

On the constitutional front, the Government of the Transvaal Republic introduced a few minor changes. A new constitution was adopted in 1857 and the four posts of Commandant-General were reduced to only one. Stephanus Schoeman, who had succeeded Piet Potgieter, was elected and assumed duty in 1858. He was later succeeded by T Snyman, and in 1863 S J P Kruger was elected Commandant-General for the first time.

Another important event was the appointment in August 1859 of J Albasini as Native Commissioner, the first appointment of this nature to be made. In 1864 A P Duvenhage was also appointed Native Commissioner. In 1857 a proclamation forbidding slavery was published,²⁴⁾ and in 1858 another constitution was adopted, once again embodying a clause forbidding slavery.²⁵⁾ The Sand River Convention is mentioned in a government notice dated 12 and 13 March 1866. It says that this convention should be strictly adhered to, and provision is made that persons having custody of Native orphans would henceforth be regarded as their guardians.²⁶⁾

23. Anon. 1907 (History-Hendrik Bakenberg etc.); Massie 1905, p. 104; Engelbrecht 1920 (Vol I), pp. CXLIX-CLI.

24. TA, LW 1849-1885, pp. 32-34.

25. TA, LW 1849-1885, p. 36.

26. TA, LW 1849-1885, pp. 229-230.

CHAPTER IV

MANKOPANE AND THE BERLIN MISSION

Two missionaries of the Berlin Mission arrived at the capital of the Kopa chief Maleo at Thabontso Hill near Groblersdal on 19 July 1860. They were Merensky and Grutzner, and they founded the mission-station Gerlachshoop there. Four years later, on 10 May 1864, a combined Boer and Swazi force attacked the Kopa and killed Maleo. The Kopa fled to Botshabelo, and the missionaries were left in occupation of a deserted station. Shortly after this the despondent Griltzner and Moschiitz, who were then stationed at Gerlachshoop, were visited by a party of migrant labourers returning from the Cape Province. The party, who were subjects of the Langa chief Mankopane, consisted of 15 mounted men and 130 on foot. They informed the missionaries that their chief wanted a missionary to settle in his country.¹⁾

Mankopane's motive was almost certainly not a desire to become a Christian or to have his people converted. His motive was rather to have a missionary at hand who could act as go-between in his dealings with the White settlers. This had become necessary in view of the 1858 encounter of the Langa with these settlers and the fear of another such encounter.

Mankopane's request was soon followed up. He was visited by Grutzner and Moschutz during October 1864, and an agreement to the effect that a station would be established in his country was reached.²⁾ In the mean time, however, Mankopane had already sent envoys to Mosweswe (Moshesh) in Lesotho and to missionary Moffat at Kuruman to ask for missionaries.³⁾ This gives some indication of Mankopane's anxiousness to have a missionary in his country.

The Paris Mission in Lesotho were quick to react to Mankopane's appeal. They were unable to spare a White missionary, but they sent a Sotho evangelist whose name was Jesaias Seele. The latter arrived in Mankopane's country during November 1864, shortly after Mankopane had come to an agreement with the Berlin Mission.⁴⁾ The result of this was that Mankopane was in an awkward predicament when Grutzner and Moschutz returned to Thutlwane at the end of May 1865. The two missionaries refused to establish a station while Seele was there, feeling that they would be

1. BMB 1865: I, pp. 4-5.

2. BMB I 865: 11. p. 170.

3. BMB 1865: 21, p. 354; 1866: 7, pp. 104-105; J Miss. ev.Paris 39 1864, pp. 286-287.

4. BMB 1866: 6, pp. 83-86.

encroaching on the rights of the Paris Mission if they did.

Seele, on the other hand, was loath to share the field with the Berlin missionaries. According to spokesmen he suggested to Mankopane that it would not do to have two persons milking the same goat, meaning that it would not do to have two missions in the same area. Mankopane did not share this view, but under the circumstances he had no choice but to allow the Berlin missionaries to depart. They did this, and went to Matlala's where a station was founded on 6 June 1865. Moschutz then went to Makapanspoort and founded a station in the area of Lealakala, who was a headman of the Kekana chief Mankopane. This station was founded in December 1865 at the foot of Sefakaulo Hill, where the Kekana capital is now situated.

Langa spokesmen see the departure of the two missionaries in a different light. According to them Mankopane turned a cold shoulder on the missionaries. The following idiom is used in this connection: Matshetlha-a-Malebana. moeng o etet'še mang? (Matshetlha of Malebana, who is the visitor visiting?) The idiom is used to indicate that a person is not welcome.

Moschutz visited Mankopane again on 25 October 1865. The latter's earnest request that a missionary should settle in his country was turned down once again, because the situation had not changed since the previous meeting.⁵⁾

Seele started his work at Mankopane's with great enthusiasm, and he was a conscientious worker. He was treated with courtesy by the Berlin missionaries, and even allowed to preach from the pulpits of the latter. As time went by, however, he became involved in tribal politics and his popularity with Mankopane declined. His position was also weakened by the war between Mosweswe and the Orange Free State Republic during 1865 and 1866, as a result of which Seele was cut off from his parent mission. This war also had the effect that the Paris Mission were unable to consolidate their position in Mankopane's country. It is therefore not surprising that Seele went and complained to the Berlin missionaries.

On 28 January 1867 missionary Beyer returned to the station at headman Lekalakala's after an absence and found Seele waiting for him. The latter complained that Mankopane had killed three men who were suspected of having incited his son Masebe against him. He also complained that Mankopane was preventing the people from going to church and that Mankopane failed to support him. A few days later Mankopane sent two horses for Seele and Beyer, and they went to Mankopane to discuss the matter. Seele would not agree to depart, but Mankopane told him that he would not detain him if he wished to go. Five days later Seele decided to leave. A message was sent to Beyer and he and Moschitz left for Mankopane's where the latter's request for a missionary was obtained in writing.⁶⁾

The stage was now set for the Berlin Mission to enter, and two stations were founded. Missionary Kuhl settled at Thutlwane during April 1867, and Endemann at Malokong during May. The latter place is said to have been near Pudiakgopa Spring in the area of headman Modipane. The infant stations were visited by Wangemann, the Director of the Berlin Mission, during June and July of the same year.⁷⁾

Other important events were taking place while the negotiations between Man-

5. BMB 1866: 7, pp. 105-106.

6. BMB I 867: 20, pp. 326-328.

7. Wangemann 1868, pp. 441-451.

kopane and the missionaries were drawing to a conclusion. These events concerned Mankopane's son Masebe, who had already been designated as Mankopane's successor. It is said that Masebe had slighted his father by taking the meat of game he had shot to his father-in-law. Etiquette required that this meat be brought to Mankopane. A high-ranking councillor of Mankopane called Rakofi used this incident to cause friction between father and son. He suggested to Mankopane that Masebe wanted to kill him, and to Masebe that Mankopane in turn wanted to kill him. The result of this was that Masebe planned a revolt against Mankopane. In this Masebe was supported by evangelist Seele, who, it is said, had also offended Mankopane by interfering with the latter's wives.

Mankopane decided to kill Masebe and his followers and to drive Seele out. Masebe managed to escape, but some of his followers were caught and executed. Seele, who is remembered as Rasara, followed Masebe, taking three of Mankopane's wives with him. Masebe fled to chief Makapan at Mosetlha, where the Rev. Backeberg of the Hermannsburg Mission had founded a station. Masebe tried to talk the Emigrant Boers into sending a commando against Mankopane. This caused Mankopane great anxiety, especially when first he and then a second letter from Schoeman reached him. In these letters Schoeman demanded that Mankopane hand over Masebe's property and cattle.⁸⁾

The marriage of Masebe's sister was a further source of friction between Mankopane and Masebe. According to Wangemann Mankopane told him that he wanted to marry her off to chief Mokopane II of the Kekana. However, Masebe had contrived to get her married to the chief at Mosetlha.⁹⁾ The chief of the Kgatla of Mosetlha did in fact marry a daughter of Mankopane.¹⁰⁾

The matter of this daughter seems to have been a sore point with Mankopane. A Kekana spokesman says that the problem actually started a generation earlier. The heir of the Kekana chief Mokopane I (Setlwarnadi), who had predeceased his father, was a man called Kgabadela. The latter had eloped with a sister of Mankopane, who promptly asked Mokopane to have her sent back. Mokopane refused, and Mankopane took revenge by attacking a headman of Mokopane called Lebelo. The latter's was the Kekana settlement closest to the Langa. After a time things quietened down and the woman decided to go home on a visit. Mankopane then held her and married her off at Mosetlha. A generation later Mankopane decided to marry his daughter to Kgabadela's son Mokopane II. This was to serve as a bond of peace between the two chiefs. It was in this that he was thwarted by Masebe.

In the end Mokopane II married three daughters of Mankopane. The first was Madikana, his second-ranking wife. She was the mother of Mokopane's successor Vaaltyn. The next one was Bokwalakwala, who ranked fifth among Mokopane's wives. The third was mmamolatela (ancillary wife) to the second. The last two were daughters of Masebe's mother Mmantutule, and ranked higher than Madikana. It was a source of grievance to Mankopane that Mokopane ranked the daughters of higher birth below the daughter of lower birth.

The second encounter of the Ndebele of Langa with the Emigrant Boers took place in 1868. It was the outcome of an alliance between the Langa and the Kekana.

8. Wangemann 1868, pp. 447-450; HermMBI 15: 12 1868, p. 235.

9. Wangemann 1868, p. 450.

10. van Wanrelo 1944, p. 7.

The trouble started when Mogemi (also known as Magude), who was regent for the young Mokopane II of the Kekana, refused to pay tribute to the Boers. The latter had required him to contribute 50 head of cattle towards the support of a commando that had gathered in Potgietersrus. The commando was preparing to proceed against the Venda chief Makhado who was causing trouble in the vicinity of Schoemansdal in the Soutpansberg. Mogemi pleaded that he was unable to give so many cattle. Missionary Moschiitz intervened and Paul Kruger agreed to reduce the number to 30, but Mogemi still refused to pay. This took place on 11 June 1867.¹¹⁾

Kruger does not seem to have done an about Mogemi at the time. He must have departed for Schoemansdal soon after. He left Schoemansdal with his commando again on 15 July 1867 when the town was abandoned.¹²⁾ On his way back to the south, Kruger left a small force in Potgietersrus and disbanded his commando.¹³⁾

During September 1867 missionary Endemann experienced a lot of trouble with the inmates of villages near his stat Qn Malokong. They seemed to be very nervous of a possible attack by the Boers.¹⁴⁾ Kruger was again busy collecting a commando during January and February 1868, this time to go against Mogemi. By the middle of February he had already received intelligence that Mankopane was in alliance with Mogemi. Mankopane had attacked the town of Potgietersrus together with Mogemijust after 6 January.¹⁵⁾

Kruger arrived at Sefakaulo Hill near Potgietersrus on 2 March 1868. Mogemi and his people had already taken refuge on the hill. Kruger had just over 30 men with him, but on 9 March his commando of about 350 men arrived. However, this force was not strong enough to drive Mogemi's people off the hill. Nor was it possible to cut them off from water, because there were springs on the hill. In his letters to President M W Pretorius, Kruger pleaded for more men and ammunition. He also pleaded for salted horses and for trade goods with which to purchase slaughter cattle from the farmers so that he could feed his men. He did not have enough horses to send a mounted party out to raid cattle from Mankopane and Mogemi. The finances of the Government must have been in a very poor state at the time, because traders coming to the north refused to accept the Republic's currency. Farmers also refused to accept this currency for cattle, because they could not purchase goods from the traders with it.

Mankopane was busy raiding White farms and outposts in all directions while Kruger was besieging Mogemi. On the night of 17 March, for example, Mankopane attacked the station of missionary Kobolt to the south as well as the farm of a certain Lottering nearby.¹⁶⁾ Reports of raids in other places were also received by Kruger. Kruger knew that he could not achieve much with the force at his disposal. He therefore awaited reinforcements from the south before acting against Mankopane. He eventually decided to leave Mogemi for the time being and to proceed against Mankopane for a while to destroy his crops. However, he was only able to carry out his intention much later.

11. Wangemann 1868, pp. 460-464.

12. Pont 1955, pp. 84-85.

13. Massie 1905, p. 105.

14. BMB 1868: 5, pp. 73-78; 1868: 6, pp. 83-86.

15. BMB 1869: 5, pp. 77-78. This reference is ambiguous and the exact date cannot be pinpointed.

16. BMB 1868: 18, pp. 284-286.

Kruger arrived at Thutlwane on 12 June 1868, and the next day he attacked Mankopane with a force of 500 men. The action lasted for four hours, and the commando took all but the highest point of the mountain. Two of Kruger's men and five of his Native levies were killed. Many of Mankopane's subjects lost their lives, possibly as many as 300. The commando captured 1 900 to 2 000 head of cattle, 300 sheep and goats, and 12 guns. Many more guns were destroyed on the mountain.

The next day being Sunday, no action took place, but on Monday the 15th the mountain was attacked again. For this action the force was divided into two divisions, each attacking from a different direction. Once again the mountain was taken, except for the topmost point, on which Mankopane's headquarters was situated. Another 1 00 sheep and goats were taken, and one of Kruger's Native levies was killed. This action lasted from half-past six in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon.

After this attack Kruger took stock of his position. He found that his ammunition supply was so low that he could not risk another full-scale attack on Mankopane. He also needed bombs, cannons and rockets to deal with those villages that were situated in front of caves from which the villagers were able to defend them. The mountain of Thutlwane had many caves and folds.

The situation being as it was, Kruger decided to withdraw to Potgietersrus with his commando. They burnt outposts in Mankopane's country and reaped or destroyed corn on the way. Kruger intended to return to Thutlwane when the ammunition arrived, but this did not happen. Not much more seems to have been done about Mogemi either. Kruger's official correspondence in connection with the campaign against Mogemi and Mankopane gives us an excellent idea of the problems he had to face.¹⁷⁾

The missionaries at Thutlwane and Malokong left Mankopane's country on 17 February 1868 for the safety of the mission-station at Matlala's mountain. This angered Mankopane. He therefore decided to treat them as Boers and to deal with their property accordingly.¹⁸⁾ They finally returned to their stations on 10 November 1868 and found them in bad shape.¹⁹⁾

The fact that Kruger withdrew from Thutlwane without having conquered it completely, had an important effect on the subsequent peace negotiations. Mankopane boasted that the Boers had been unable to conquer him, and that he had indeed been victorious. The negotiations seem to have begun early in the second half of 1868 but to have ended in failure. However, there was a better spirit between the negotiating parties later in the year.²⁰⁾

Three envoys of Kruger arrived at Mankopane's place on 21 October 1868 to discuss peace. This was done in the presence of missionary Kuhl. An agreement was reached, and a letter to the effect was written to Kruger.²¹⁾ Kruger met representatives of Mankopane and Mogemi in Pretoria on 18 November. He reached an agreement with Mogemi's delegation, but was not prepared to finalise an agreement with Mankopane because the latter was represented by only one man.²²⁾

17. Engelbrecht 1925, pp. 130-143, 148-155.

18. BMB 1869: 5, pp. 68-69.

19. BMB 1870: 7, p. 109.

20. BMB 1870: 8, p. 123.

21. BMB 1870: 9, p. 130.

22. Engelbrecht 1925, pp. 162-163.

Mankopane received a letter on 13 December confirming peace provisionally, but requiring a delegation to meet Kruger in order to discuss indemnity.²³⁾

Missionary Kuhl visited Mankopane on 9 January 1869 and drafted a second letter to Kruger in connection with a permanent peace agreement.²⁴⁾ A further letter from Mankopane, dated 25 March 1869, gives a clear picture of his attitude.²⁵⁾ Mankopane makes it clear that he is not prepared either to pay an indemnity in cattle or to move from his mountain, and he refers to two grievances of his own. He says he is prepared to drop his grievances if Kruger is prepared to drop his two requirements. Mankopane's first grievance concerned his son Masebe and referred to his belief that Kruger was protecting Masebe against him. The second grievance, which refers to Makapanspoort, is obscure.

Representatives of Mankopane met Kruger and Landdros (Magistrate) van Nispen in the home of missionary Moschitz on 6 July 1869. They reached an agreement according to which Mankopane was not required to pay an indemnity. He was presumably not required to leave his mountain fastness and settle on the plains either. The peace agreement was therefore a victory for Mankopane.²⁶⁾

Most of the residents evacuated the town of Potgietersrus during this period of unrest, but 24 families refused to leave. It seems as if they remained until 1870, when a small commando was sent from Pretoria to evacuate them by force. They were removed to Marabastad and elsewhere.²⁷⁾ Fever had struck the residents early in the year, and by April 81 of the 93 White residents were either dead or ill. The town was abandoned by all survivors in May 1870.²⁸⁾

On 20 November 1869 an agreement was signed between Commandant-General S J P Kruger, Landdros R A van Nispen and Commandant D B Snyman on the one hand, and a number of chiefs and headmen of the Soutpansberg on the other. Among the latter were Sebetiela (Moletlane), Molet i, some Venda chiefs, a number of Tsonga headmen, and it seems also the Kekana of Mokopane. It is extremely difficult to make out who the signatories were, but Mankopane's Langa do not seem to have been amongst them. In this agreement the signatories became subject to the Government of the Transvaal Republic and they agreed to pay an annual levy.²⁹⁾

A Government Commission began to survey farms near Mankopane's place towards the end of 1869. This aroused Mankopane's suspicion and he immediately wrote a letter to Kruger. He stated that he did not want the Commission to survey his country and that he would use force to prevent them if they tried to do so.³⁰⁾ The situation appears to have been very grave. According to a missionary further unrest was only prevented by famine and by Mankopane's fear of the Swazi, who were allies of the Government.³¹⁾

Missionary Endemann had trouble with female initiation candidates near his station during June 1869. He prevented them from doing their ceremonial washing

23. BMB 1870: 9, p. 133.

24. BMB 1870: 9, p. 134.

25. Engelbrecht 1925, p. 171.

26. BMB 1870: 7, p. 106; 1870: 9, p. 134.

27. Combrink 1954, p. 24.

28. Theal 1919 (Vol. IV), p. 491.

29. TA, SN123.

30. Engelbrecht 1925, p. 190.

31. BMB 1872: 5/6, p. 80.

at the spring beside the station. He could not bear to have this 'heathen' ritual performed at his spring. The initiation came to an end early in August of that year when the girls were given their age-set name by Mankopane.³²⁾

Trouble arose between Mankopane and regent Mangwati of the Matlala chiefdom towards the end of 1870. It was customary for Mankopane to loan fire-arms and cattle to his subjects, and to one of them he gave a gun and a cow. However, this man committed some wrong and Mankopane required him to return the gun and the cow. This he refused to do and he fled to Mangwati. Mankopane sent messengers to Mangwati to ask for the return of the property but the latter failed to comply. Mankopane thereupon ordered his men to attack some of Mangwati's men and take their guns. Mangwati replied by sending a force to attack two of Mankopane's headmen who lived near the Malokong mission-station. The cattle-herds were overcome and killed and many cattle were captured. The enmity between the two chiefdoms, which began in this way, lasted until Mankopane's death in 1877.³³⁾

The initiation of girls in Mankopane's chiefdom took place again in 1875.³⁴⁾ Men of Mankopane were seen at Makgabeng on 6 March 1875 and again some weeks later. This place, which is to the north of Thutlwane, was the home of headman Monyebodi of the Matlala chiefdom. Mankopane's men had been sent there to raid cattle.³⁵⁾

Masebe returned to Thutlwane towards the end of 1876, having been recalled by his father Mankopane. He seems to have regained his father's favour, because after his return he was once again regarded as the heir.³⁶⁾

Spokesmen say that when Mankopane became chief, he married a woman to produce an heir for the household of his late uncle Selaki, who ranked higher than this own father and would have become chief but for his untimely death. (See Table I.) This woman ranked as a *ngwetsi* (daughter-in-law) of Selaki and therefore fell in the same genealogical generation as Mankopane. It was Mankopane's intention to raise an heir to the chieftainship through her and she eventually gave birth to a son who was named Tokodi. This son was therefore the rightful heir.

However, Mankopane favoured his own highest-ranking son Masebe above Tokodi because of Masebe's stronger personality. But when Masebe fell from favour and left Mankopane's country, Tokodi was again considered for the future chieftainship. It is said that Tokodi proved to be a weakling and that he disobeyed his father. Some say he refused to lead an expedition against Monyebodi for fear of getting killed. It is also said that he interfered with Mankopane's younger wives, but this may simply have been an excuse to get rid of him. Mankopane therefore seems to have recalled Masebe because Tokodi failed to come up to expectation.

When Masebe returned, it was deemed necessary to build his image. Mankopane therefore planned to attack headman Monyebodi at Makgabeng and to appoint Masebe as leader of the attacking party. Monyebodi was a subject of regent Mangwati of the Matlala chiefdom, and in this way Mankopane felt he could deal his old enemy a blow at the same time. Mangwati himself was raided again before the expedition against Monyebodi. This raid took place on 17 December 1876 and Mankopane

32. BMB 1870: 8, pp. 117 & 122.

33. BMB 1872: 9/10, pp. 132-134.

34. BMB 1876: 19/20, p. 336.

35. BMB 1876: 21/22, pp. 354-356.

36. BMB 1877: 21/22, pp. 423-424.

lost seven men to Mangwati's two.³⁷⁾

The story of the attack on Monyebodi is told in various publications of the Berlin Mission Society. The Mission had established a station at Makgabeng and missionary Baumbach was in charge at the time of the attack, which took place on 3 May 1877. Masebe arrived early in the morning with a force of about a thousand men. The attackers remained unnoticed until they reached a point close to the mission-station. They were then noticed by two mission converts, one of whom rushed to the missionary to wake him. The other ran up the mountain to warn the people at Monyebodi's village. Masebe attacked while the latter convert was still warning the villagers. He fired thousands of shots. At the mission-station another convert manned the church bell and rang with all his might to call the converts to prayer. The ringing was so loud that the missionary feared the bell would be shattered.

In the mean time Masebe's force was causing havoc on the mountain. He had divided his force in two, the one attacking the mountain while the other was occupied in plundering the plains below. However, the main attack was not made on Monyebodi's capital but on the village of his Barwa subjects who had settled there not long before the attack. Masebe's force seems to have mistaken this village for the capital.

Masebe's warriors were suddenly shocked by the loud pealing of the church bell while they were busy on the mountain and had set fire to a number of huts and killed a few people. One of them is reported to have shouted as follows: 'Listen, the bell is pealing. The God of the Christians is fighting against us. The bell is cutting our hearts in two. Today we cannot succeed.' This caused panic among the attackers and they fled. The defenders, seeing what had happened, went in pursuit.

Monyebodi's heir, a young man called Mapotha, was killed in this encounter. In all, about twenty of Monyebodi's people died. Masebe, on the other hand, lost about forty men. These included a famous doctor of the Langa, whose medicine to render him invulnerable had failed him. Masebe was nevertheless able to return home as a hero, because he brought a large herd of Monyebodi's cattle back home with him.³⁸⁾

The Kekana chief Mokopane approached Mankopane shortly before the latter's death and tried to persuade him to take part in the persecution of Christians.³⁹⁾ It is doubtful whether Mankopane would have agreed to a full-scale persecution, but in Mokopane's country the station at Lekalakala's had to be abandoned early in 1878.⁴⁰⁾

Mankopane died on 30 May 1877, some four weeks after the attack on Monyebodi. He had become ill at the beginning of the year and had adopted a hostile attitude towards the Mission on being advised that the Mission was responsible for his illness. But on seeing that the medicines prepared for him were of no avail, he called in the help of missionary Schubert who was then stationed at Thutlwane. The latter was able to offer Mankopane a measure of relief, but shortly before his death he turned to the doctors of his own people again.⁴¹⁾

37. BMB 1877: 21/22, pp. 429-430.

38. BMB 1877: 21/22, pp. 426-428; 1878: 11/12, p. 249; 1878: 19/20, pp. 444-446; Grundemann n.d., pp. 24-26.

39. BMB 1878: 19/20, p. 434.

40. BMB 1878: 11/12, p. 248.

41. BMB 1878: 11/12, p. 250.

Mankopane was buried in his cattle-kraal on the mountain of Thutiwane on the day following his death. He was not buried in a sitting position covered in a hide as was the custom, but was stretched out and covered with blankets. This was done because Masebe, who was under missionary influence, insisted on it. Nor were any people killed to accompany Mankopane, as was supposed to have been the custom. After the burial the men brought branches to renew the cattle-kraal, and women from all the villages in the Langa country brought pots of water and sprinkled the cattle-kraal. Mankopane's burial was undertaken jointly by his two sons Masebe and Tokodi.⁴²⁾

The decision in September 1876 to appoint Native Commissioners was an event of importance in the development of the Government's system of Native administration.⁴³⁾ The post of Commandant-General had been abolished in June 1873 because the Transvaal was at peace and nothing in the way of military action was taking place. However, it was necessary to appoint someone to take over the Commandant-General's duties with regard to the administration of the Native inhabitants of the country. J Albasini and A P Duvenhage had already been appointed, and it was therefore only necessary to extend the system to other districts. The Government decided in March 1877 to establish a separate State Department of Native Affairs. The decision was put into effect on 7 April 1877⁴⁴⁾ but five days later, on 12 April 1877, the Transvaal Republic was annexed to Great Britain. The new government retained the Department of Native Affairs and the system of Native Commissioners. The Department and the Commissioners in fact only became firmly established during the annexation period.

42. BMB 1877: 21/22, p. 427.

43. TA, LW 1849-1885, p. 676.

44. TA, LW 1849-1885, p. 681.

CHAPTER V

THE RULE OF MASEBE III 1877 TO 1890

Mankopane left two possible successors when he died. Tokodi, whose circumcision name was Malose, was the rightful heir by virtue of his mother's special status. Masebe was next in line after Tokodi, but Mankopane had already designated him as his successor. The Langa therefore had good reason to fear a bloody succession struggle. The tribal elders wanted to send messengers to the Kekana of Mokopane and Sebetiela to ask their opinion as to who should succeed. But Tokodi cut them short, saying that Mankopane had chosen Masebe as his successor and that he, Tokodi, accepted the decision. A struggle was thus averted and Masebe was proclaimed chief before a tribal gathering on 3 June 1877.¹⁾

Masebe's brother Makhiwibidu fled to the Kekana of Mokopane when Masebe succeeded. He took his cattle with him, and his mother followed. It appears that Makhiwibidu's mother had been regarded as Mankopane's principal wife for a while during Masebe's exile. This temporarily placed Makhiwibidu ahead of Masebe in the chieftainship stakes. He therefore had reason to fear vengeance on Masebe's part.

The fact that the Kekana chief granted sanctuary to Makhiwibidu created enmity between him and Masebe, which was to lead to a number of serious clashes. In contrast to this, however, Masebe made peace with his father's old enemy Mangwati. This was accomplished when Masebe honoured Mangwati by sending messengers to inform him of Mankopane's death. But peace was made with Mangwati alone and not with his subject Monyebodi at akgabeng. The Langa felt that they still had a score to settle with the latter.²⁾

Masebe was visited by Sir Morison Barlow, Bart, during the latter half of September 1877. Sir Morison, who was the Special Commissioner for Waterberg and South Transvaal, wrote a report on his visit. This report is addressed to the Secretary for Native Affairs (Mr H. Shepstone) and is dated 20 September 1877. Masebe acknowledged that he was a subject of the Government of the Transvaal on this occasion. This was the first time that the Ndebele of Langa acknowledged the supremacy of a White government. 'I, Mankopane had not at any stage subjected himself to the previous government.'³⁾

1. BMB 1877: 21/22, pp. 427-428.

2. BMB 1878: 19/20, pp. 452-453; TA, SN 1 no. 43 dated 18 September 1877.

3. TA, SNI no.44; SNIAMinutePaperN.187/79.

The missionaries regarded Masebe's succession as a change for the better. He was friendly towards them, attended church services regularly, wore European clothes and built himself a European-style house. He even forbade his subjects to work in the fields on Sundays. But these innovations alarmed his subjects, who were very much against such departures from tradition. Worst of all was Masebe's refusal to have the rainmaking rituals performed. The Langa experienced a severe drought during the summer of 1877/78 as well as an outbreak of smallpox, which tribesmen blamed on Masebe's conduct. Opposition mounted and some of the discontented seem to have gathered themselves around Tokodi, thereby sealing his fate. Masebe's paternal uncle Serwanya added to the pressures being brought to bear upon Masebe by threatening to leave the tribal area. Masebe's councillors prevailed on him in the end and he turned back to the traditional customs of his people, much to the disappointment of the missionaries.⁴⁾

The events just described, demonstrated to Masebe that Tokodi still posed a threat. He therefore ordered Tokodi to be killed. Tokodi's death was carefully planned. Masebe gave him beer to drink and then sent him on to headman Mabuela, where more beer was waiting. He was set upon and strangled by Masebe's men while on his way to Mabuela's. He died on 26 January 1878. His wife and mother were expelled, and his brother Matlanya fled for his life after surviving an assassination attempt. They all sought refuge with the Kekana chief Mokopane, where they were joined by some of their followers. 5)

Langa spokesmen say that Tokodi was killed before Mankopane's death, and that Mankopane had instructed Masebe to have him killed. Written records show that they are mistaken in this, but their story of how Tokodi was killed, corroborates that given above. After Tokodi's death it was rumoured that his family had reported the matter to the British authorities in Pretoria (the Republic had been annexed to Great Britain), and that a force was on its way to punish Masebe. It was even rumoured that some of the neighbouring chiefdoms were preparing to attack Masebe because of the murder. Masebe lived in fear for some months as a result of these rumours.

According to a Berlin Mission report Captain King, who was the Native Commissioner for the Waterberg District, within which the Langa fell, arrived at Masebe's place on 18 April 1878 to remind him of his obligations to the Crown. Masebe, who was in the grip of fear, promised to co-operate. He also promised to supply 300 levies for the war against Sekhukhune. According to the report Masebe was relieved to hear from King that the authorities did not intend to prosecute him for Tokodi's death. He soon recovered his composure and when he was required to provide the levies, he sent a message to the effect that he was now disinclined to do so.)

The authorities seem to have decided not to launch a full-scale criminal prosecution of Masebe because of the political conditions in the country at the time. They were engaged in a campaign against Sekhukhune and dared not risk having to fight the powerful Langa of Masebe simultaneously. They therefore seem to have decided on a token punishment of Masebe instead.

According to a note dated 25 September 1880, written by Oscar Dahl, the Native Commissioner for Soutpansberg, the case of Tokodi's death had been

4. BMB 1878: 11/12, p. 250.

5. BMB 1879: 19/20, pp. 363-368; TA, SN1A Minute Paper N. 187/179; SN4 N232/80 dated 27 July 1880. See also Annexure A to Part One.

6. BMB 1879: 19/20, pp. 368-369.

brought before Sir Morison Barlow, Bart, in 1878. Dahl Says: 'The case was thoroughly sifted and settled. Matlanya claimed several head of cattle from his brother Masebe which was restored to him but on account of having committed perjury during the trial of the case said cattle was confiscated on behalf of the Government-Masebe was fined for the murder, it not being judicious to drive said case to extremity under the critical case of the country then.' Dahl states that he was present during the whole proceeding but does not give its exact date.⁷⁾

Trouble over Tokodi's death seems to have continued for some time. His brother Matlanya lodged a complaint in a statement dated 27 July 1880. It was this statement that prompted Oscar Dahl to write the note quoted in the previous paragraph. Matlanya went and settled among Masebe's headmen south of the Thwathwe River. He told them that the Government had decided to partition Masebe's territory with the Thwathwe River as the boundary and that he, Matlanya, had been put in charge of the southern part. A number of headmen sided with him and Masebe therefore decided to punish them. He marched against them with a force of between three and four thousand men, but missionary Schubert intervened and thus prevented bloodshed.

Schubert spoke to Matlanya's party and discovered that they did not have a written authorisation from the Government to prove their claims. He then spoke to Masebe and prevented him from attacking. He did so by making it clear that Matlanya's claims were false, and by impressing on Masebe the consequences of an attack not authorised by the Government. The whole matter was settled when Captain King visited Masebe's capital. He told Masebe that Matlanya had been arrested and fined for his false claims. He also assured Masebe that the Government recognised him as chief over the whole of the Langa territory.⁸⁾

Missionaries of the Berlin Mission played a most important part in the life of the Ndebele of Langa, as we have seen. Difficulties sometimes arose because the missionaries opposed such customs as initiation, rainmaking and polygyny, but the missionaries also served the interests of the Langa in many ways. Missionary Kiehl founded the station at Thutlwane, where he was joined by Schubert after a time. Kiehl then left Thutlwane and in March 1879 settled at the station Wallmansthal to the south. Here he continued to play a part in Langa history, as will be seen later. Schubert remained at Thutlwane until the summer of 1881/82 when he moved to Malokong because of a shortage of water at Thutlwane. The latter station became an outpost of Malokong and was never occupied by a missionary again.

The station at Malokong was founded by missionary Endemann. He became ill during 1869 and was joined by missionary Kohler. Endemann left the station at the end of June 1870. Kohler left during 1874, when he was succeeded by Richter. Missionary Kahl took over the station in December 1878, but he left again at the end of 1879. The station then became an outpost of Thutlwane for two years, after which Schubert moved there from Thutlwane. Schubert does not seem to have remained at Malokong for long, because Schlomann took over the station in 1882. Missionary Schlomann was succeeded by missionary Sonntag in 1899, Sonntag by Kranert in 1905, Kranert by Beyer in 1912, and Beyer by Zimmermann in 1922. Missionary Zimmermann was the last missionary at Malokong. This station became an outpost when he settled at Makapanspoort in 1925.

7. TA, SN4 - note by Dahl added to N232/80 dated 27 July 1880.

8. BMB 1879: 19/20, pp. 369-379; TA, SN4no. N232/80.

The work of the missionaries in the Langa country advanced steadily in spite of repeated setbacks. Evangelists were trained, and they were put in charge of outposts that were established at such places at Kgano, Magope, Masenya's and elsewhere. The strict code of the missionaries and their uncompromising attitude towards old established customs led to tribal opposition from time to time, and even to a certain amount of persecution. However, this was never too severe.

An attempt was nevertheless made to establish an opposing church that approved of tribal customs. The opportunity arose when a man who had been converted by the London Missionary Society in Uitenhage in the Cape Province returned to Thutlwane in August 1885. This person propagated a national church. He was welcomed by Masebe and installed at Serupa near Thutlwane. He was soon joined by discontented members of the mission church and was actively supported by Masebe who issued an order that his subjects were to stay away from the missionaries and attend the new church. However, this national church did not last for long.

The main instigators in the establishment of the new national church were two discontented mission converts. One of the reasons for the failure of this church was that Masebe continued to send his children to the missionary for instruction. A second reason was that the expulsion order against one of the mission evangelists was withdrawn by Masebe. This was due to a change of heart on Masebe's part in which the missionary and one of Masebe's wives played a part. A third reason was that the mission church was established right inside Masebe's capital close to his home, whereas the national church was built some distance away. A fourth reason was that one of the main instigators of the opposing church fell ill and died soon after moving from the mission-station to the site of the new church. This was taken to be an unfavourable sign and the other instigator left the tribal area to seek work in the Kimberley diamond fields.⁹⁾

The Ndebele of Langa fell under the control of the Native Commissioner for Waterberg during the annexation period. Captain King was the first commissioner for this district. He resigned in 1879 and was succeeded in January 1880 by Captain F. Williams. The latter died three months later and was in turn succeeded by A. Woolls Sampson. Sir Morison Barlow, the Special Commissioner for Waterberg and Soutpansberg, was transferred to the Swaziland border in January 1880.¹⁰⁾

The Boers took steps to shake off the British yoke towards the end of 1880. P. J. Joubert was elected Commandant-General on 11 December. This was followed by a number of sharp engagements in which Boer commandos achieved memorable successes over British forces. The war was brought to an end with an armistice on 6 March 1881 and the signing of a peace agreement on 23 March.¹¹⁾

Some of Masebe's young men killed a farmer called Barend Harnse of the farm Boekenhoutkloof while the fighting was going on. They took ninety-one of his cattle and some other property. This took place in late January or early February of 1881. It is said that Masebe had been unaware of the murder, but that he promised to return the stolen property when he heard about it.

9. Anon. 1887, pp. 21-28.

10. TA, SNIA no. 31/79; SN3 no. N 154/1880; SN4A no. 106/81; SN 102 no. 759 & 824.

11. TA, SN 103 pp. 4-6, 30-31; UK Blue Books C2892, p.1.

I. Soutpansberg chiefs in Pretoria with Captain Dahl August 1881. Masebe is just behind Dahl's left shoulder. Next to Masebe (hat with long feather in hand) is Thys Kekana, who had accompanied him. (Photo: Transvaal Archives, No. 940)

The promise was obtained through the good offices of missionary Schubert. Masebe also promised to punish the culprits. The authorities did nothing about the murder at the time, except to instruct Masebe to keep the culprits under strict surveillance. The authorities were hampered by the fact that they were on the point of handing the government back to the Boers. The murder of Harmse is said to have been an act of retaliation on the part of Masebe's young men because Harmse had killed one of their number.¹²⁾

The British authorities were approached by various Native chiefs during the fighting between the Boers and the British and asked what they should do, and offers of assistance were made. The attitude of the authorities was that the Boers were rebels, but that the Native chiefs should in no way interfere in the fighting. However, they were told that they were at liberty to defend their lives and property should either be threatened.¹³⁾

As soon as peace was concluded, the Native chiefs were notified that those who wished to do so could meet in Pretoria. They would be told the reasons for ceding the country back to the Boers. They would also be informed about the arrangements for their security and future good government.¹⁴⁾ The meeting took place on 2 August 1881 and the chiefs were addressed by Sir Hercules Robinson. They were not given an opportunity to express their own views, but they were interviewed afterwards by the Secretary for Native Affairs, Mr H C Shepstone. The Convention of Pretoria was signed the next day, and government was handed over on 8 August 1881.¹⁵⁾ The Secretary for Native Affairs was replaced by the Superintendent of Natives and this post was entrusted to Commandant-General P J Joubert. Piet Potgieter was appointed Native Commissioner in the Waterberg District, of which the Langa country formed a part.¹⁶⁾

Masebe's father-in-law Thys Kekana died on 6 November 1882. He was a convert and had exerted a steady influence on Masebe. He had been an important tribal functionary, described by missionaries as Masebe's prime minister. Masebe now started permitting traders to enter his country and sell their wares. These included brandy, of which Masebe became a regular purchaser. Masebe became violent and unpredictable under the influence of alcohol and he ill-treated members of his family. His principal wife, her ancillary wife and Masebe's eldest son Hans fled to the Kekana of Mokopane as a result. Masebe instituted negotiations for their return and one day, in April 1883, messengers from Mokopane came to Masebe and informed him that the wives refused to return and that Hans had gone away. At this Masebe lost his temper and started beating the messengers. He even threw hearth-stones after them as they fled. The messengers managed to escape with their lives, but they left their weapons behind. The Warriors who were sent in pursuit of the messengers failed to catch up with them.

This act of Masebe was a serious breach of etiquette, and he should have made restitution by sending Mokopane a beast to normalise relations. Masebe's pride prevented him from doing this. Mokopane therefore retaliated by firing at some of Masebe's subjects, one of whom was wounded. Masebe then called a tribal gathering, which took place on 1 June 1883. The meeting decided that

12. TA, SN4A no. 83, 90 & NI2/81; SNJ03 p. 25; BMB 1882: 21/22, p. 403.

13. TA, SN 103 - inset after p. 20 (Letter SNA to Oscar Dahl 17 March 1881).

14. TA, SN 103 pp. 125-127; UK Blue Books C2961, pp. 5-6.

15. UK Blue Books C2998, p. 3; C3098, pp. 65, 73-78; TA, photograph no. 940.

16. TA, SN103 p. 160.

the Langa would fight the Kekana and preparations for war, began. The Lemba smiths made spears, lead and powder were distributed to those who had guns, fortifications were strengthened, and the necessary magic was employed to ensure success and keep the enemy out.

Masebe's chieftdom was by far the stronger of the two, and Masebe himself was an able commander. The honours of battle should therefore have gone his way, but this was not always the case. Although the fortunes of war fluctuated, Masebe seems to have encountered more than his fair share of misfortune. According to a Kekana spokesman this was due to the outstanding ability of Moretlwa, their military commander, who was a brother of Mokopane. He was a wily tactician and he used clever ruses to counteract the numerical superiority of Masebe's forces. Moretlwa, who died in 1943, used to relate that Masebe lost 101 men during this war as against the 41 of Mokopane.

Masebe's first expedition against Mokopane took place during July 1883. On this occasion Masebe divided his force into two divisions. One of these attacked and took a certain village, but in doing so they found themselves directly between the Kekana and the other division of the Langa army. They mistook the latter for the enemy and fired at them. The Kekana force was able to get the better of the fight in the chaos that followed, and Masebe's force retired in disarray. Masebe's brother Isaac Potlane was killed in this battle.

On another occasion Masebe's force encamped at Fothane for the night, and proceeded towards the Kekana early the next morning. They were noticed, however, and the Kekana prepared to receive them. Masebe's force was divided into two divisions again. One of them was ordered to cross the Mogalakwena River and attack the villages on the other side. Their crossing was challenged, and it was only achieved after a hard fight. On the other side of the river the Kekana defenders fired at them from secure positions. In the afternoon the Langa division was ordered to return, and at this point the Kekana launched a counterattack. Many of the Langa men were drowned in their haste to recross the river. Others were killed before they could effect a crossing.

Masebe undertook a major offensive against Mokopane in October 1884. His tactics were well thought out and his plans well laid, but misfortune struck him once again. He approached the Kekana villages nearest to the Langa country after dark. He divided his force into a number of divisions and gave each division clear instructions as to what its role was to be. The Langa army settled down for the night close to the Kekana villages and was all set for a dawn attack. But during the night one of Masebe's warriors had a nightmare. He jumped up, fired his gun and shouted the war cry as loud as he could. This alarmed the camp and many of the sleep-dazed warriors fled, thinking that the enemy were in their midst. Others, again, fired at their own comrades. It was only with great effort that order was restored. The dawn attack was made but came as no surprise to the Kekana defenders. They warded off the Langa attack, inflicting heavy losses on Masebe's force. A cold rain started falling at the same time and this added to Masebe's misery.

The war between Masebe and Mokopane continued for some time, but was reduced to sporadic raids on defenceless persons and innocent passers-by. This was brought to an end by President S J P Kruger. He visited the Northern Transvaal in October 1886 and summoned the two chiefs to appear before him. He told them that he did not want to know who was responsible for the war. He ordered them to cease fighting immediately and said that the first one to fire a shot would be severely punished by the Government. Kruger then ordered them

to shake hands, and with that the war came to an end.¹⁷⁾

The State President became Paramount Chief of all the Native inhabitants of the Transvaal by virtue of the provisions of Act No. 4 of 1885. This introduced a new principle into the Native policy of the Government. The Superintendent of Natives was responsible to the President for the administration of the Native inhabitants, and he was assisted by a number of Native Commissioners. The post of Commandant-General and Superintendent of Natives, which had been separated in 1884, were united once again and P J Joubert was appointed to fill the combined post.

The Langa held an initiation course during 1887 and Masebe's son Bakenberg was initiated. The initiation of girls seems to have taken place the next year. Women of the Mosoge lineage were engaged in their initiation rites at a spring near the road between the mission-stations of Matlala and Malokong in August 1888, when a convert of Malokong passed by. He was returning from Matlala by waggon with the mail. The women, who were under the leadership of Masebe's sister Mpyanyane, suddenly rushed at him and accused him of having seen their initiation images. He fled and the women attacked the village of the converts at Malokong, where they did a lot of damage. The women were later fined by Masebe and ordered to pay for the damage they had done.¹⁸⁾

A certain Sekgopejane settled in Masebe's country during 1888 according to a report of the Berlin Mission. He was a subject of the Ndebele chieftainess Maaane, and he had 38 followers with him. He left soon afterwards and went to Mmata. Another report says 22 converts of Mafafane's Ndebele who had arrived as fugitives a year earlier, left Masebe's country in November 1888. They went to Mmata.¹⁹⁾

The two wives of Masebe who had left him in 1883, went and settled at Wallmansthal with Masebe's eldest son Hans. Missionary Kuhl, who had founded the Thutlwane mission-station, was then in charge of Wallmansthal. It was therefore probably no coincidence that Masebe's family went there. Hans' uterine brothers and sisters were there with him. From accounts given by spokesmen, one of whom was Hans' eldest sister, it appears as if the two wives returned to Masebe before the end of the war against Mokopane. This was probably because they were ordered to do so by the authorities. A letter concerning such an order was written in April 1885.²⁰⁾

The women followed a roundabout route across the Phalala River to get to Thutlwane safely. However, they only remained a short while before returning to Wallmansthal. They went to Pretoria afterwards, where the children attended the mission school run by missionary Griinberger. Spokesmen say that the women went and reported to President Kruger that Masebe had expelled them. They told Kruger that Masebe was now favouring his son Bakenberg²¹⁾ for the chieftainship, but that Bakenberg's mother ranked lower than Hans' mother. Spokesmen say that Kruger placed Hans under the care of his servant Maraba, after whom Marabastad in Pretoria was named.

Masebe must have changed his mind about his successor, because after a few years he recalled Hans and married a wife for him. However, Hans' mother, brothers and sisters remained in Pretoria.

Missionary Schlomann visited Masebe on 15 March 1890 and found him in a

17. Schloemann 1895, pp. 251-259; Anon. 1887; BMB 1884: 19/20, pp. 414-421.

18. BMB 1888: 11/12, p. 221; 1888: 21/22, pp. 484-488; 1889: 19/20, pp. 499-503.

19. BMB 1888: 15/16, p. 356; 1889: 17/18, pp. 442-443; 1889: 19/20, p. 488.

20. TA, SN104 no. 335/7.

21. Bakenberg's name is a corruption of that of Missionary Backeberg of Mosetlha, to whom Masebe had fled when he was in disfavour with Mankopane.

pitiful state. He was suffering from *delirium tremens*. On 29 April, when Schlomann visited him again, he found him slightly better. But on Sunday 4 May a messenger came to Schlomann and told him that Hans had sent for him. The messenger told Schlomann that Masebe had shot himself with a revolver but had only wounded himself slightly. Schlomann therefore hastened to Masebe's place with a supply of medicines and bandages. But when he arrived, Masebe was already dead. The bullet had entered above his right ear and had lodged in the back of his head.²²⁾

One of Masebe's wives used to relate that Masebe often woke up at night and screamed. On being asked what the matter was, he would reply: 'I have seen Tokodi'. It therefore appears as if his brother's death had weighed heavily on his conscience.

Masebe was buried in his cattle-kraal at midnight on the day on which he died. He was clothed in the wet hide of a freshly slaughtered bull. His face, which was not covered by the hide, was made to face south-east. This is the direction of the old home in Natal from which the Ndebele of Langa had emigrated.

22. Schloemann 1891, pp. 53-55; BMB 1891: 1/2, p. 29; 1891: 17/18, pp. 396-397.

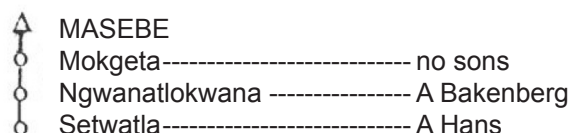
CHAPTER VI

THE PARTITION OF THE LANGA

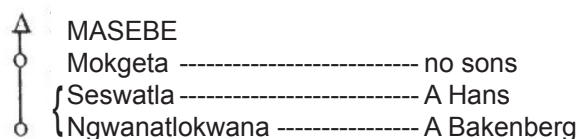
The partition of the Ndebele of Langa was due to the succession dispute that followed Masebe's death. Much of the blame for the partition must be placed on the shoulders of Masebe himself, because he had favoured his two high-ranking sons Hans and Bakenberg in turn. He favoured Bakenberg while Hans and his family were living in exile at Wallmansthal and Pretoria. He recalled Hans shortly before his death and married a wife for him, but this did little to counteract the effect of his having focused attention on Bakenberg for a long time.

The two chiefdoms that resulted from the partition each have their own way of presenting the genealogical data to prove that their chief was Masebe's rightful successor. The point of dispute is the status of one of Masebe's wives, whose name was Seswatla (Salome). She was Hans' mother. Did she rank higher or lower than Bakenberg's mother, Ngwanatlokwana? The problem arose because Masebe's principal wife, Mokgeta, had borne no sons.

According to the Bakenberg account Seswatla, who was a younger sister of Mokgeta visited the latter from time to time. On one of these visits she became pregnant by Masebe and he therefore married her. But when this happened, Masebe had already married Ngwanatlokwana. Seswatla therefore ranked third, whilst Ngwanatlokwana ranked second. This placed Bakenberg before Hans.



According to the account of Hans' supporters, on the other hand, Seswatla did not rank as a wife in her own right. Seswatla had been married into the hut or household of her older sister Mokgeta to produce the son that the latter was unable to produce. She was therefore a Mmamolatela (an ancillary wife) to the principal wife Mokgeta, and Hans' rank was derived from the latter. He therefore ranked higher than Bakenberg. This latter account rings true because where two sisters marry the same man, they are often assigned to the same hut or household. This is particularly true if the older sister is barren or fails to produce sons as in Mokgeta's case.





2. Chief Hans Langa, the first chief of the Mapela branch of the Langa, ruled 1890 to 1905. (From an old photograph.)

3. Mmantutule, founder of the Molaung lineage, and a staunch supporter of Hans. (From an old photograph.)



Masebe's brother Malesela Nkube was a staunch supporter of Hans. The story is told that Hans was at a cattle post when Masebe shot himself. A meeting of Langa councillors was held, and they decided to kill Hans so that Bakenberg could succeed. Malesela Nkube secretly took a part of the tribal supply of ammunition to Hans and warned him as follows: 'On such and such a day we are coming to kill you, but your assailants are not strong.' On the appointed day the assailants arrived at the cattle post and surrounded the settlement. But Hans was not inside, because he had spent the night in the bush. When the assailants discovered this, they heard Hans shouting: 'Here I am, come and get me!' Hans was a good marksman, having been trained in Pretoria. His assailants were therefore afraid to tackle him, and they fled when he fired a shot. They wondered who had given their secret away. Some suspected Malesela Nkube, but no one dared ask him because they were afraid of him.

According to another account Masebe recalled Hans from Pretoria to come and attend initiation. Malesela Nkube warned him not to return, since foul play was intended against him. However, he returned after a time, and he was close at hand when Masebe committed suicide. (Hans was actually initiated in 1882 - see Table II).

Hans' grandmother Mmantutule, who had been Mankopane's principal wife, was another staunch supporter of Hans. It is said that she fearlessly proclaimed that Hans was Masebe's rightful successor. In doing so she opposed Makhwibidu and other men of the ruling Langa clan, whose attitude it was that Bakenberg should succeed because he had been favoured by Masebe. Mmantutule is said to have asked Makhwibidu and the other councillors which of the two sons had the higher rank, upon which they remained silent because they knew full well that Hans had the higher rank. Mmantutule also asked where she, Mankopane's principal wife, was when Masebe designated Bakenberg, because she did not know anything about it. Makhwibidu and the others retorted that she was merely a woman and knew nothing. She then warned Makhwibidu that Hans would kill him.

The story of the Government's action in dividing the Langa into two chiefdoms is related as follows: On a certain day the Langa tribesmen were called to the town of Potgietersrus. Here a certain Government official known to them as Setlhako sa bo-mmetlwana or Setlhako sa lehong (Mr Carved Sandal or Mr Wooden Sandal) caused a long line to be drawn on the ground. The people were all standing on the eastern side of this north-south line. Setlhako then instructed councillor Matopa Langa to station himself on the line and to invite Hans' supporters to cross over to the western side of the line. Bakenberg's supporters were to remain on the eastern side. Matopa's invitation caused a rush towards Hans' side of the line. Setlhako was upset when he saw that most of the people were crossing over to Hans' side, and he tried to stop them. The result of the division was that almost all the Sotho subjects of the Langa supported Hans, whereas the majority of the Langa clansmen supported Bakenberg. In this way the chiefdom that went to Hans comprised a high percentage of people of alien (mainly Sotho) stock and a small percentage of Langa clansmen.

The gathering described above did take place, although the proceedings may not have been exactly as given in the traditional account. The Superintendent of Natives (P J Joubert) addressed a letter to 'Hans Mapela' on 19 May 1890¹ telling him that he would meet Hans' people in Potgietersrus on Tuesday 27 May. ¹⁾

1. TA, SN106 no. 364.

The meeting with Hans took place as arranged, and Hans complained that Bakenberg had usurped his position. The Superintendent then wrote to Bakenberg, instructing him to appear with his councillors. The summons was for Saturday 7 June 1890.²

The Superintendent proceeded further north, and on his return he met Bakenberg with about a hundred sub-chiefs (*onderkapiteins*, probably headmen and councillors) and about 1 300 subjects. The Superintendent explained that the Government wanted to know whom the people wanted as Masebe's successor. About 40 'sub-chiefs' and just over half of the people indicated that they favoured Hans. The Superintendent found it impossible to decide whom the people wanted as their chief. He therefore instructed Native Commissioner P Potgieter to determine the feelings of the Langa tribesmen on the subject. Potgieter drew up two lists which were dated 9 and 11 June 1890 respectively. These lists are of about equal length, and they are said to be partial lists only. It seems as if this method of obtaining a majority vote in favour of one or the other of the two rivals was given up as impracticable.³

The Native Locations Commission was engaged in the delimitation of Masebe's territory at this time, the period given being 10 to 13 June. The decision to recognise both Hans and Bakenberg as chiefs had not yet been taken. The Commission therefore did not determine a boundary dividing Masebe's territory into two parts. However, the decision was taken soon afterwards. It was then decided that Commandant Pretorius and Native Commissioner P Potgieter would determine a dividing line on 15 July, i.e. just before the Native Locations Commission was to begin with the delimitation of Zebediela's location.⁴

It can be seen from the foregoing that not much time elapsed between Masebe's death on 4 May and the decision to divide the Langa into two chiefdoms. On 7 June and for a short while after that, the administration was trying to determine which of the two brothers had the majority support. But on 15 July a meeting was to take place to establish a boundary line dividing Masebe's territory into two parts. The Langa were therefore already divided into two chiefdoms within two months of Masebe's death. Hans became the chief of the southern portion, and Bakenberg the chief of the northern portion. The site of the old capital of Mapela at Fothane Hill fell in the southern portion, and Hans' chiefdom came to be known as *ba ga Mapela* (those of Mapela's place).

The mountain of Thutlwane, on which Masebe's capital had been situated, was excluded when Masebe's location was demarcated. Bakenberg therefore had no choice but to settle away from this mountain and within the boundaries of his portion of Masebe's location. Hans built his capital at the foot of Magope Hill, not far from Mapela's old capital at Fothane. The quarrel between the two brothers continued for a number of years, but the administration held the reins firmly and a fullscale armed conflict was prevented. They were still laying complaints against each other in 1891. The Superintendent of Natives arranged to meet Hans and Native Commissioner P Potgieter in Potgietersrus on 31 January 1891. The meeting was called because of a complaint on the part of Hans in connection with the distribution of Masebe's property.⁵

2. TA, SN106 no. 384 & 393; SNI7 no. SR622/90.

3. TA, SN106 no. 395-397; SNI7 no. 359a/90.

4. TA, SN177 pp. 71-73; SN106 no. 416.

5. TA, SN106 no. 596, 616, 626 & 734.

The farm Drenthe 778-LR was registered in the name of the Superintendent of Natives in trust for chief Hans and his people in 1895.⁶⁾ Letters written by the Superintendent of Natives indicate that attempts were made by the administration to recruit labourers for the Johannesburg gold mines at Mapela in 1896.⁷⁾ A complaint was received by the Superintendent from Bakenberg to the effect that a famine was expected. The Superintendent then instructed the Native Commissioner to suggest ways and means of meeting the situation.⁸⁾ It is a well known fact that the Northern Transvaal experienced a serious famine in 1897, but it is not known how seriously the Langa were affected.

The post of Superintendent of Natives was occupied by P J Joubert from 1881 until 4 September 1896. The posts of Commandant-General and Superintendent of Natives were separated on this date. The superintendency was entrusted to P A Cronje with effect from 9 September 1896. The post of Native Commissioner for Waterberg was occupied by P Potgieter from 1881 until 1899, when Potgieter's assistant G F Grobler took over. Potgietersrus was part of the Waterberg District during all of this period.⁹⁾

The boundaries of the locations of Hans and Bakenberg were altered slightly in 1893 with the full co-operation of both brothers. Letters from the office of the Superintendent of Natives indicate that the boundary separating the two locations was surveyed in 1898. This was the final step in the partition of the Langa.¹⁰⁾

6. Title Deed no. 4581/1895.

7. TA, SN109 no. 311 & 528.

8. TA, SN 110 no. 121.

9. TA, LW 1896, p. 342; SN157; Staatsalmana.k 1899.

10. TA, SN10S - letter dated 18 November 1893; SNJ 11 - letters 149, 391 & 397.

CHAPTER VII

THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

The events of the turn of the century were overshadowed by the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 to 1902. The Government's attention was occupied by the war, and Hans and Bakenberg availed themselves of the opportunity to resume their quarrel. Spokesmen say that the quarrel was brought to an end when the British forces occupied the region and ordered them to stop fighting.

Spokesmen say that levies of Hans and Bakenberg were sent to the north-west to guard the Botswana frontier when the war broke out. On their way back they followed a southerly route. When they reached Peacock's place beyond Magoebasnek (Sefate sa Makgoba) on the road between Potgietersrus and Villa Nora, they fought each other. Bakenberg's levies were under his personal leadership, whereas those of Hans were led by his brother Cornelius. Hans and Bakenberg were summoned to Nylstroom as a result of this. Hans was fined, and Bakenberg ordered to return the waggons he had taken from Hans.

Archival records seem to confirm this story and to place the events in November or December 1899. These records confirm that the two chiefs were summoned and involved in a hearing as a result of their quarrel. It appears as if part of their punishment was that they were required to supply levies to assist the Boer forces in the field. Hans was to supply 600 and Bakenberg 300. The two chiefs were only permitted to return to their people after the levies had been supplied. They returned in March 1900.¹⁾

Hans and Bakenberg had hardly arrived back at their homes when they started fighting again. They sent parties of warriors to carry out raids in each other's territory. Hans attacked and burnt some villages of Bakenberg at Rammu Hill. The ruins of these villages have been described.²⁾ In reply, Bakenberg attacked and burnt some villages of headman Molokomme near Notwane. He also sent his Mabitsi age-set to guard the subterranean grain baskets in the cattle kraals at Rammu Hill. Hans attacked the Mabitsi and other age-sets that came to its assistance. The Mabitsi fell back when their ammunition ran out, whereupon Hans penetrated into Bakenberg's territory and attacked headman Mabusela at Malokong. Bakenberg was now compelled

1. TA, SN112 - letter 961; SN113 - letters 24, 34, 79, 87 & 320.

2. Johnson 1912, pp. 65-68.

to sue for peace. He therefore sent a certain Legakala Langa, father of Ramaraloka, to negotiate with Hans. The latter, who was now able to dictate terms, replied that he wanted his uncles. By this he meant that he wanted certain prominent uncles, who had been foremost in the opposition to his succession, to be delivered to him. Makhwibidu, Raletsekana and Ketesella, and with them Sekgowe Kutumela, went over to Hans. They probably had no choice but to go in view of the predicament of Bakenberg, the chief of their choice. Mmamolla wisely refused to go. Hans then called for five of his father's widows, and they were brought to him by Legakala. He then ordered Makhwibidu, Raletsekana, Ketesella and Sekgowe Kutumela to be shot at Raphaga Hill. As can be expected, Bakenberg went and lodged a complaint with the authorities.³⁾

The two chiefs were again called to Pretoria, where they were to be tried. But with a war being waged, the authorities seem to have been unable to decide how to handle the situation. The two brothers were released in June 1900 without anything having been achieved. The last letter in this connection to leave the Superintendent of Natives was dated 4 June 1900. It was also the last date of any correspondence from the Superintendent, because Pretoria fell to the British forces. The first letter under the new administration, i.e. by J P Marwick, the Superintendent of Native Affairs, was dated 15 October 1900.⁴⁾

Bakenberg had sent to Seleka for ammunition in the mean time, and when this was obtained, the fighting was resumed. Headmen Mosoge and Mabusela of Bakenberg had fled to Matlala, and Bakenberg found that his forces were outnumbered by those of Hans. He therefore left his capital at Baswagadi and fled to Thutlwane. Legakala then crossed over and joined Hans and a force was sent to attack Bakenberg, but without success. The two sides kept at each other with fluctuating fortunes until the British forces entered Pietersburg. The two chiefs were then summoned there and ordered to stop fighting.

Three Boers were killed on the farm Charles Hope 260-KR on 8 May 1901, i.e. about a year before the end of the Anglo-Boer War. The farm is about thirty kilometres south-west of Mapela. The victims were Abraham Ouistoffel Janse, his son Johannes Hermanus Janse, and the latter's cousin Johannes Hermanus Hom. The three had concealed themselves and their cattle from the British forces, as other farmers had also done. Their hide-out was in a remote valley overlooking the Klein Sterkrivier (Mabotho River). It was an excellent hiding place. The valley could not be seen from the upper side, and the lower side was screened by a huge fig bush that stood beside a perennial spring. Anyone wanting to find them would have had to know their hiding place, or stumble upon them by chance. Janse's farm was higher up in the mountains in the area known as the Upper Phalala. This is where most of the farmers of the vicinity were settled. The area was favoured because it was thought to be free of malaria.

Some time before this a man called Ditau, who was of the Molekwa clan residing in headman Mabuela's area, noticed some Boers hiding blankets and clothing in a cave somewhere to the south-west of Mapela. He told his people, and they decided to help themselves to the goods. But they were caught in the act, and some of them were shot. This was reported to chief Hans, and he sent a raiding party out to take revenge. Pone Nyatlo was the leader of the party. This is one of the reasons given for the killing of Janse and his two young kinsmen.

3. TA, SN 113 - letter 474 dated 12 April 1900, letters 476, 477, 483, 484 & 500.

4. TA, SN 113 - letters 581,651,652,666,680,681,693, 697-699 & 701.

According to Mr J J van Rooyen of the farm Nyhoffs Bult 214-KR, whose father had helped bury the three victims, the Langa of Mapela sent a number of raiding expeditions against the farmers of the Upper Phalala. The party responsible for the killing of Janse and the two youths was only one of these. The killing of these three was therefore not an aim in itself. It was simply the result of a general policy of hostility and pillage that Hans assumed towards the Boers. It was therefore an act of war and not a medicine murder as has been suggested. Mr van Rooyen in fact suggests that the raiding party came upon the victims by chance while they were on their way to the Upper Phalala to carry out a raid. Many Boer cattle are said to have been captured and houses burnt during these raids. Some Boers, it is said, went to Mapela after the war to claim their furniture. However, Mapela spokesmen failed to confirm this.

The raiding party appeared unexpectedly on one of the lateral ridges overlooking the valley in which Janse was hiding. The fatal day was 8 May 1901. The three Boers immediately went for their guns and prepared to defend themselves. One of the raiding party, a certain Maarman Lebelo, was well acquainted with Janse, having worked for him before the war. Lebelo was able to set the minds of the three at rest and they eventually put their guns aside. They were seized and put to death painfully as soon as they were off their guard.

The reason for their painful death was that parts of their bodies, notably the male organs, but also a piece of facial skin with beard from the older man and fat and other odd pieces of flesh, were removed for medicine while they were still alive. The belief was held that flesh obtained in this way was more potent than flesh obtained after death. Their arms were also severed above the elbows and taken away. The removal of the arms is proof that the killing was regarded as an act of war. It was the custom of the Langa that a warrior who killed an enemy in battle severed an arm of the fallen enemy and took it along to the chief as proof of his deed, so that he could be rewarded with a beast. It was not uncommon, either, for flesh for medicine-making to be taken from the bodies of fallen enemies.

Janse's small herd-boy fled up the other side of the valley and watched the gruesome killing from a safe distance. He then made his way to the Upper Phalala, where he reported the killing to the Boers. He testified to the shocking nature of the killing when the culprits were finally brought to justice.

Two days after the killing a party of Boers turned up and buried the remains of the three victims at the place where they were killed. Some time afterwards, when someone passed along there again, it was discovered that the graves had been opened and the bodies removed. It was never discovered what had become of the bodies. On being asked about this, spokesmen at Mapela stated that it was not known at the capital who had robbed the graves. Flesh for medicine for the chief had been obtained fresh when the killing took place, and there was no reason why a further expedition should have been sent out to rob the graves. On the other hand, there were many medicine-men amongst the Langa and neighbouring chiefdoms, and White man's flesh was much sought after by them. Any one, or more, of a large number of medicinemen not connected with the chiers village, and perhaps not even with the Langa of Mapela, could therefore have been responsible.

It is related that when the raiding party returned to the chiers village at Magope Hill singing war songs, the inmates were very surprised. On being asked by chief Hans why they were singing war songs, they told him what they had done. It is said that although Hans had sent the party out, he had not envisaged the killing of the

4. Cave on Magope Hill where pots of human flesh and fat were stored. Abraham Nyatlo is holding a small pot in his left hand. Larger pots can just be seen in the darkness beneath the overhanging rock.
(Photo: A.O. Jackson)

Boers. The sole purpose of the expedition had been to capture cattle from the Boers. However, at the trial of the killers six years later, they are said to have pleaded that they were carrying out the chiefs orders when they killed the three. 5)

A White man came to Mapel a towards the end of 1906 or the beginning of 1907 and told the people that he was interested in plants and the use to which tribesmen put them. Hans had already died and had been succeeded by his next-ranking brother, Marcus. The latter gave the White man permission to do research on the use of plants. For a long time the White man kept asking people what this or that plant was used for. One day a spokesmen told him that he did not know what a particular plant was used for, but advised him to approach a certain doctor (medicine-man) for the requisite information. This doctor proved to be a man called Kgano, who was the official rainmaker of the chief. He was also the official keeper of the human flesh and the human fat that was used for rainmaking and other magical purposes. The White man proved to be detective HS Geraty, who had been charged with the task of bringing to justice the persons responsible for the killing of the three Boers in May 190 I.

Spokesmen say that Kgano told the detective all about the killing, and also took him to the cave on Magope Hill where the pots with human flesh and fat were kept. At the time the area in front of the cave was thickly wooded, and it would have been almost impossible for the detective to find if he had not been directed there. The detective found some of the dried arms of the deceased in the cave, and these were later exhibited in court as evidence.

Langa spokesmen were able to give the names of the persons involved in the fatal expedition of May 190 I. Some of the persons listed were important functionaries of the chief's court at Mapela. The following members of the expedition were not charged with murder: Pone Nyatlo (leader of the party), Matsobane Nyatlo, Kgano, Lekolwana Maaka, and Tolwane Seaba. Matolwane Molomo died before the detective appeared on the scene, and it is said that Jim Ragoja died in prison while awaiting trial. Nine persons appeared before the circuit court in Nylstroom.6)

The trial took place on 26 September 1907. The accused, whose names are sadly misspelt in the court records, were the following: Matsaka Fatana, Masekami a Molongwana, Malose Mofomme, Maarman Lebelo, Frans Malose Nong, Paul Mabusela Mpiwa Sekhaulelo, Motedi Mabusela, and Motinti Ma m. They were all found guilty and sentenced to death, but the death sentence was not implemented. The accused were eventually granted amnesty, and all except Frans Malose Nong returned to Mapela in 1913. Spokesmen could not say what had become of Nong.

The release of the prisoners finally wound up the Langa Ndebele share in the history of the turn of the century. The murder of the three Boers in 190 I was also the last act of violence perpetrated by the Langa against the Whites before the commencement of the orderly administration of the twentieth century.

5. Marais 1921, pp. 351-354; S /impsoil] 1917, pp. 125-126.

6. TA, ZtPd 3/149 no. RSC 185T1907.

ANNEXURE A TO PART ONE

LANGA NDEBELE TEXTS

1. Introductory

Three texts are given. The first describes the expulsion of the Lamola clan (see Chapter III); the second describes the death of Tokodi (see Chapter V); and the third tells how chiefly succession is decided (see Chapter X in Part Two).

The texts were recorded by the author. They were dictated on 27 September 1962 by Dennis Langa (no. X50 in the Langa genealogy, Table V). I did not hear him pronounce the *r* that appears in certain nasal compounds (for example *mundrwana*, child), and it therefore does not appear in these texts although it is a feature of the language. Those who are interested in this phenomenon, can refer to Ziervogel 1959, p. 29. The orthography used in these texts is that suggested in Ziervogel 1959 at p. 43.

Very few Langa Ndebele at Mapela still speak this language. It is clearly a tekela Nguni dialect (in which *tis* substituted for *z*, see Ziervogel 1959, p. 13). However, an extensive Sotho influence is also one of its more discernible features (cf. Ziervogel 1959, p. 11). Variations such as the *-e* in *are*, *bare*, *ware*, *yare*, in stead of the *-i* as in *iri*, *inguri*, *kuri*, */iri*, *siri*, *uri*, can be ascribed to this influence.

2. The expulsion of Lamola

'Ndikxota Lamula lo, ndiamukxota.
Ndithanda kuri asuke esitjhabeni saxami.
Une mukxwa umumbi. Uyanditshwenya
ebafateni bami, nje-ke ntomrrulala'
Ebusuku bona lobo induna
Lamula wabulalwa. Lapho bakwaLamula
babalekela kwaMadlala.

Inkxosi Nonkupane nya abe are, 'Lamula
uyanditshwenya ebafateni bami',
ibe ikusithela inguri bandu bangalemugi
kuri usumaela gemukxwa uphi, nganathi
ube usumaelela kuri, 'Lamula unditlaliye'¹⁾
emakxoweni kuri ndibulele
makxowa amanye'.

'I expel this Lamola, I am expelling
him. I want him to depart from my
chiefdom. He has a bad habit. He gtvcs
me trouble with my wives, so I am
going to kill him.' That very night
headman Lamola was killed. Thereupon
those of Lamola fled to Matlala's.

When chief Mankopane said, 'Lamola
is giving me trouble with my wives', it
was to prevent the people from understanding
what he had in mind, for actually
his meaning was, 'Lamola denounced
me to the White men for having
killed some of them'.

1. The word *-tlaliye* comes from the Afrikaans *kla* (complain) from which is derived *aankla* (report). Lamola is accused of having reported *-tlaliye* Mankopane to the Boers.

3. Masebe kills Tokodi

Inkxosi Nonkupane wasumaela
nebakxomana
ware, 'Mundwana lo Tokodi
uyanditshwenya ebafateni kubomane
akhe, nje ndibotani ndinga entani ngaye?
' Mbendulo yabakxomana yare,
'Nina Msuthu. Tina Mandebele asithandi
kubuswa mundwana weMsuthu. Sihlahla
sakhe kubulalwa.'

Nonkupane ware, 'Nje-ke lina baba-
Langa ndita enta mano. Ndabuta Basuthu
bami kuri baente buyalwa. Njenga
nya athanda buyalwa utaya gibo.

Nje kulapha Masibi atamuphatha khona.'
Nje Nonkupane ware kuMasibi, 'Basuthu
bami baente buyalwa, ke wena na-
Tokodi nthanda kuri liyobusela. Kodwake
uteke bangani bakho naye utakhamba
nabakhe. Wena uthumele yena nganti,
wena usuke ndambama selekuhlwile.
Nje-ke umlaele kuri asele buyalwa aka -
kulindeli.'

Masibi walaela Tokodi njalo. Nya Masibi
afika ngobuhlwa wafumana Tokodi
asela buyalwa, nje wafika wasela naye,
Ngemuva kwalapho Masibi ware, 'Asikhambeni
siye ekhaya.' Bamuvumelela,
nje-ke balotjha tindlela. Nje kwasuka
Masibi nganti, nya afika esikxweni wabita
bangani bakhe ware, 'Tokodi uyeta.
Lifanele kummamba limmulale. Ndiakhamba.'

Wavela Tokodi, bammamba, nje barrarulala
Bangani bakhe babaleka, nje
baMasibi bangani nya bafika kuye bare,
'Sihlahla lesa siembile.'

Masibi ware kubangani baTokodi, 'Sumaelani!
Ndimmulele mundu wenu,
nje nkxosi gubani? ' Abanye balotjha
bare, 'Nkxosi guwe papa.' Abanye babalekela
kwaMugombane.

Nonkupane ware, 'Tokodi uyanditshwenya
ebafateni bami', kanthi ube
aente mano ekuri Tokodi abulalwe ngekuri
ube athanda Masibi.

Chief Mankopane spoke to his councillors
saying, 'That child Tokodi troubles
me with the wives, his junior mothers,
now tell me what shall I do with
him? ' The reply of the councillors was,
'His mother is Sotho. We the Ndebele
do not wish to be ruled by the child of
a Sotho person. The way to fix him is
to kill him.'

Mankopane said, 'Now you people of
Langa, I shall make a plan. I have told
my baSotho to brew beer. Since he likes
beer, he will go to it. Then Masebe
will seize him there.'

Now Mankopane said to Masebe, 'My
baSotho have brewed beer, I want you
and Tokodi to go and drink it. But you
must take your friends and Tokodi will
take his. You must send him ahead, and
then follow in the late afternoon. You
must tell him to drink beer, and not
wait for you.'

Masebe told Tokodi so. Masebe then
arrived at dusk and found that Tokodi
had partaken of the beer, and he drank
with him. Af-te that Masebe said, 'Let
us go home.' They agreed with him and
took their leave. Masebe then left and
arrived in the bush and called his friends
and said, 'Tokodi is coming. You must
seize him and kill him. I am going on.'

When Tokodi arrived, they seized him
and killed him. His friends fled and
those of Masebe arrived and said. 'We
have dug that medicine' (i.e. we have
killed him).

Masebe said to Tokodi's friends,
'Speak! I have killed that relative of
yours, now who is the chief? ' Some
made obeisance and said, 'You are the
chief, father.' Others fled to Mokopane.

Mankopane said, 'Tokodi troubles me
with my wives', but this was only an
excuse to have Tokodi killed, because
he himself preferred Masebe.

4. Deciding succession

When a new chief has to be appointed, the ruling clan comes together. The women sit just out of earshot of the men. This text deals with an imaginary situation in which the expected successor is not the natural child of the late chief. When the assistance of the women, who know about these things, is required, the *motseta* addresses them as follows:

'Kulikhuni, tindaba atikhambi kahle.
Nje bomma kelisithushe, muhlomunye
litasibota nnete. BakwaLanga bare
mundwana lo akafanele buxosi. Nje
muhlomunye lina liate kahle.'

Nkxadi ekxolo itare, 'Liri Jeni bakwa-
Langa libalelwe msumaelo. Sika esinye
siri, Jokhwa tiendelelwa yesegati tiwela
gemadonga.' Mtenda uri, 'Unkxadi ufanele
uwate kudlula tina.' Nje nkxadi iri,
'Buxosi bufanele mgede'.

Mandebele are, 'Nanto nkxadi isumaele,
phendulani lina madoda.' Mundwana
wasongwane angare gibo, Phangalalani!
Litukene, lituka bomma wenu.
Khambani liutikhumbula.'

'It is difficult, matters are not proceeding
well. Now mothers please help
us, perhaps you will tell us the truth.
Those of Langa say this child is not fit
for the chieftainship. Now possibly
you know well.'

The great *kgadi* then says, 'You say
you of Langa have been overcome by
the discussion. A certain proverb says,
Those who are guided by females fall
into ditches.' The *motseta* says, 'You
are a *kgadi* (woman of chiefly birth),
you ought to know better than we do.'
The *kgadi* then says, 'The chieftainship
belongs to so-and-so.'

The Ndebele say, 'There it is, the
kgadi has spoken; reply, you men.' The
child of an uncle might say to them,
'Scatter! You have insulted each other,
you insult your mothers. Go and think
about it.'

ANNEXURE B TO PART ONE

PRAISES OF MANKOPANE AND MASEBE III

Three text are given. The first is a praise of Mankopane and the second a praise of Masebe III. These two praises were dictated by Martina Raisibe Mabusela, and were recorded by the author on February 6, 1964.

The third text is a praise of Mankopane, again, recorded on the same day, but dictated to the author in this case by David Kgabagare Langa. David was named after Mankopane and therefore received all his names, and his praise, and (it is believed) his personality as well. He can therefore be expected to have known the praise very well.

Mankopane's nickname dating from his childhood years is Modu'Swa, his initiation (circumcision) name Lesiba (he was the leader of the Madingwana age-set which was circumcised about 1836), the name given him by the royal councillors was Kgabagare, and that given to him by Mapela was Mankopane.

Masebe was the leader of the Matlakana age-set, which was circumcised approximately in 1860. His circumcision name was Madimet. He is, however, often referred to as Matlhaba (the slaughterer).

The praises are expressed in beautiful poetic Sotho, and are a delight to read with understanding.

1. Sereto sa Mankopane

Ke lepa tla Malekana¹⁾
Ke tau nkile ya, patla batho

Kwa Šopeng la Radintho²⁾
Ke seloka batho mokurukuru

A humana batho bantsi
Kwa sopeng la Radintho wa Ramokoka

Ba mpharile ka diretse

1. Praise of Mankopane

I am the overcomer of the Malekana's
I am the lion which at one stage overcame people

At the ruins of Radintho
I am the injector of unrest amongst people

While finding many people
There at the ruins of Radintho of Ramokoka

They smeared me with mud

1. Age-set of Maleya. The latter, who was the ruling Langa chief, was ousted by Mankopane soon after Mankopane was initiated.
2. The chief of the Phalane of Ramokoka who fled the country when Mapela's Langa moved in.

Mangwathi,³⁾ botsa bana ba gago
Ba sehlo ba tlakatlakela Dibeng⁴⁾

Ke nokeng ya ba ga-Mapela
Ge o gatile Moduswa⁵⁾ o gatile legala.

2. Sereto sa Masebe III

Ke setsoma le basadi
O tsoma le bo ngwana Senwa wa Mothokwa⁶⁾
Ba feta ba segela Soga⁷⁾ dinama

Mme morwa Mangato a ntse tseleng.

Thiba di eme Mpedi o mogolo⁸⁾
Mme pholo a gafetse madi sehubeng
Ke Mpedi o hlabane kgogo di Ila⁹⁾

Mme a ba a gakantsa le ba ba tswang metlabong

Go bo Rakumako.¹⁰⁾
Ke Matlhaba¹¹⁾ tse ditshadi morwa Podile
A ke hlabane tse ditona di mpontsa pata¹²⁾

Mme le botse bo Mapiti wa ga Matlala ba
kgore pata
Le re Mongwaga o a feta Tloporo¹³⁾
Tloporo wa bo Semamole¹⁴⁾
Mongwaga o ya Moletsi Tloporo
Ke ngwana wa lapa le legolo.

Mangwathi, tell your children
They should no longer undermine Dibeng
That is at the river of the Mapela people
If you tread on Moduswa you have trodden
on a cinder.

2. Praise of Masebe III

He is the hunter with women
He hunts together with daughter of
Senwa of Mothokwa and others
And on their way they cut meat for Soga

Whilst son of Mangato is sitting by the road.

Stop them and let them halt, big Mpedi
And the ox has driven blood to his chest
He is Mpedi who fought when cocks crowed

And thus also confused those who were
coming from concubines,
From the Rakumako's.
He is Slaughterer of the females, son of Podile
I don't slaughter the males, they show me the road

And then you should tell Mapiti and
others of Matlala to clean the road
And say Mongwaga is passing Tloporo
Tioporo related to Semamole
Mongwaga is going to Moletsi Tloporo
He is the child of the big house.

3. Regent at Matlala's against whom Mankopane had a grudge.
4. River towards Matlala.
5. Childhood nickname of Mankopane.
6. They are said to be Matsutsa.
7. A friend of Masebe.
8. A reference to Masebe.
9. Refers to Masebe's habit of attacking his enemies at dawn. See Chapter V.
10. He had a big village nearby.
11. Another name by which Masebe was known.
12. The word pata is derived from the Afrikaans pad (road) , and seems to have crept into the Sotho vocabulary soon after contact was established.
13. Yet another reference to Masebe.
14. A sister of Masebe.

3. Sereto sa Kgabagare (Mankopane)

Kgabagare 'a go ja meloko ya batho,
Ema o ba letele, o letele ba moloko wa
bagwera ba gago,
Ke bagwera ba Mankirisi.
O ramofagodi 'a kgomo t!ra makgowa

Isita di palet Matlakwe le Mangana

O tsene ka gare o di phasakole.
O tswet e mallega wena Mankopane,

O tswetse batho ba sago t!habanele.

O selamolela Matebele

O mpja ye kwa Marapje 'a e sa loma

Batho ba Marapje ba it habela feta,

E set' e go Joma ya gesu ya ga Podile a
Laka Letebele.

O Modu wa kgwetelle ya Madingwana,

Ge o gatile Moduswa o gatile legala

O gatile legala la matswitswane.

O more-mmutswa a Ralesanyane
O tla re go se but'šwe a se jewe.
Tsoga o khuse noto, e bose e khusiHwe

Wena mmamogolo wa 'khati sa bosego
Le nkgā khwetiane nke le tlotse ka mongetsane
wa kgomo tb makgowa.

Khirikhiri thamaga, mogale, Raletsuku
'a gabo Matsobane

Senkukunku se lla ntsweng se se Hang
pharong tsa maswika.

3. Praise of Kgabagare (Mankopane)

Kgabagare who eats people's relations,
Stop and wait for them, and wait for
relatives of your age group,
They are the age group of Mankirisi.
You are the castrator of the White
man's cattle

Even though they have beaten Matlakwe
and Mangana

You enter and ravage them.

You have given birth to cowards, you
Mankopane,

You have given birth to people who do
not defend you.

You are intervener on behalf of Ndebeles

You are the dog of Marapje which no
longer bites

The people of Marapje are simply being
fearful,

It is now ours which bites, that of Podile
of Laka Letebele.

You are Moduswa hero of the Madingwana
regiment,¹⁾

Tread on Moduswa, and you have trodden
on a cinder

You have trodden on a *matswitswane*²⁾
cinder.

You are a ripe tree of Ralesanyane

If he is not ripe he may not be eaten.

Rise and roast the worm, it is delicious
roasted

You champion³⁾ of nocturnal passion

You send off bad smell as if you varnished
yourself with fat from White man's cattle.

Khirikhiri the spotted animal, the brave,
Raletsuku related to Matsobane

Senkukunku, the shouter from the rocks which
shouts from among the crevices of the rocks.

1. Mankopane was the leader of the Madingwana age-set.

2. Probably species of tree.

3. Sotho text states 'mmamogolo', which literally means mother's elder sister.
Figuratively it means champion.

Se sentsho se, se se mo moriting keng?
 Ke Sediti o robetse le Mmamano,
 O re nna ke nkwe 'e kgwadi bonntswiri
 ya bogana
 E nyaka thamaga 'a mereto

Ke kgwadi yabo ntheme-ka-selepe

Mogoma ga o reme motho
 O re senkukunku se lla ntsweng

Se se Hang mpharong tsa maswika,

Khirikhiri thamaga
 Mogale Raletsuku 'a gabo Matsobane

Senkukunku se lla ntsweng,
 Se se llang pharong tsa maswi.ka

Sebitsa bana sa go bitfa sedumaedi

Sedumaedi se sa bitsa pula,.
 Pula ya bitsa bana ba a swa ba a lora.

Ba fiswa ke letsatsi Mmamano
 Ke mo ba reng se sentsho se se leng mo
 moriting keng?
 Ke Sediti o robetse le Mmamano,
 O re nna ke kgwadi 'abo ntheme-ka-selepe

Mouma ga o reme motho.

What is this black object in the shadows?

It is Sediti sleeping with Mmamano,
 He says I am a spotted leopard *bonnts-
 wiri ya bogana*⁴⁾

Which looking for praiseworthy spotted
 animal

The spotted animal related to 'chop-me-with-
 an-axe'⁵⁾

A hoe does not chop a human being.⁶⁾
 He says senkukunku is shouting from
 the rocks

Which shouts from the crevices in the
 rocks,

Khirikhiri the spotted animal
 The brave man Raletsuku related to
 Matsobane

Senkukunku which shoots from the rocks,
 Which shouts from the crevices in the
 rocks

The summoner of children which summonses
 big rumbling

This rumbling summonses rain,
 The rain in turn summonses children
 who become uneasy and dream.

They burn from the sun, Mmamano
 And thus where it is asked: what is
 this black object in the shadow?

It is Sediti sleeping with Mmamano,
 He says I am the spotted animal related
 to 'chop-me-with-an-axe'

A hoe does not chop a human being.

4. Not clear.

5. Selepe was the head of the Mamaala lineage (see Table VI) and these words are a complimentary reference to him (and to David Kgabagare Langa who dictated the praise, and is descended from him).

6. This is an uncomplimentary reference to Mosoge and his lineage. Mosoge is said to have preferred gardening (hoeing) to governing, and lost the chieftainship for this reason (see Chapter II);

MAPELA SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Transcription of Original Page 57

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAPELA CHIEFS

I. Hans, The First Mapela Chief

Chief Hans, who was the first chief of the Mapela branch of the Ndebele of Langa, built his capital at the foot of Magope Hill after the partition of 1890. He lived there with some of the Langa relatives who had seceded with him or joined him subsequently.¹⁾

Hans married many wives, as became a chief, during that period. His wives finally reached a total of 29. The first five were involved in the determination of the chiefs that followed after Hans, and with a serious dispute in this connection. Their names and issue in the order in which Hans presumably meant them to be ranked, are as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Mallega Maria (daughter of Matopa Langa) | (m) Alfred Sedibu (m) Nkgalabe Johannes (f) Lydia Masempame (f) Salome Mmantutule |
| 2. Raesetsa Makanu (Of the Masasane Letwaba chiefly family) | (m) Nkopo Hendrik (f) St Helena (m) Mpelana Robert (m) Manyenyana |
| 3. NgwanaMogale | -- no issue |
| 4. Matswinya (NgwanaLanga) | (f) Ramadimet a (died as child) |
| 5. Madikana (NgwanaMabusela) | (f) Difela (m) Godwin Motape (m) Hendrik Madikwe (f) Mabina (died as child) (f) Motepana (died as child) |

The dispute concerned the status of the second wife, Raeset Makanu, and it

1. A reconstruction and analysis of this capital is to be found in the next chapter.

had its origin in the early years of Hans' rule. Spokesmen related that Hans took his cart and horses and drove over to the Letwaba chiefdom, which was then being ruled by chieftainess Masasane. He saw Raesetsa Makanu there, and immediately determined to have her. The chieftainess seems to have consented, but the men of the Letwaba capital were absent at the time.

Hans brought the girl back with him and took her to wife. He sent marriage cattle to Masasane to legalise the marriage, but when the cattle arrived, the men of the Letwaba capital were present. They refused to accept the cattle because they were already in possession of a *peeletso* (betrothal beast) for the girl from another man, to whom they were consequently legally bound with regard to the girl. Chief Hans' cattle were therefore returned. It is said that marriage cattle for this girl were not transferred to the Letwaba people during Hans' lifetime.

According to Missionary Schlomann, Hans was a coarse, haughty and violent person. This appraisal was written at the beginning of Hans' rule.²⁾ Spokesmen say that his violent nature found expression in the many beatings that were administered to tribesmen. He often administered the beatings personally. Some people suffered extremely violent punishment and a certain Mathobela is said to have narrowly escaped death. Hans' behaviour is said to have created a certain amount of unrest in his chiefdom.

The story is told that a girl of the Manamela clan caught Hans' fancy. He took her by force, but she managed to escape after a while. He took cattle to her parents and brought her away again, but she ran away for a second time. Her parents then fled with her to Mahlabathini in Chief Bakenberg's area. Hans took his cart and horses and his binoculars and followed them. He spied her while she was on her way to fetch water. He charged in and seized her and then rushed home to Magope. He subsequently left with her for a place beyond the Mokamole River.

Her parents complained to Chief Bakenberg in the mean time, and the latter reported the matter to the authorities. Hans was visited by officials, to whom he said that he had married the girl. But she told them that she had been taken by force and did not want to be married to Hans. The officials then took the girl away with them.

Spokesmen also relate that a certain woman who was a widow of Hans' father Masebe, lived in his capital.³⁾ Hans had inherited her from his father and had taken her to wife, which is said to have been in accordance with tribal custom. Masebe had previously been given a wife by the Hwaduba chief in the Hammanskraal area, that is when he was living there as an exile. He had promised to return the compliment, and the Hwaduba came and asked for the promised girl after Masebe's death. The young daughter of the widow mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph was indicated by Hans, and the Hwaduba envoys went home satisfied. They returned after some time had elapsed to fetch the girl, but found to their dismay that someone had already had relations with her. Hans dismissed the Hwaduba envoys, and they went and reported the matter to Commissioner King. This girl was Masebe's own daughter, and it was believed that Hans had committed incest with her.

2. BMB 1892: 19/20, p. 501.

3. This woman's name is known to me, but I prefer not to reveal her identity to save her descendants any possible humiliation that may arise from being associated with the circumstances I am about to relate.

Hans was taken into custody and taken away towards the end of 1904. The person responsible for his apprehension was Mr King, the Native Commissioner. Spokesmen say that King camped in the courtyard of Hans' capital at Magope for a month or more after Hans' apprehension. King is reported to have told tribesmen that they would never see their chief again and that he, Mr King, would henceforth be their chief. Tribesmen therefore nicknamed him *Kgosi-ke-nna* (I am the chief).

Circumstances and Mr King's statement that the Langa would never see their chief again, strongly suggest that Hans was certified and committed to a sanatorium in Pretoria. He died in custody on 29 November 1905. Spokesmen say that Hans had tried to commit suicide by slashing his throat, but had been discovered and stopped. However, the damage was such that he died some time later. His body was placed in a coffin and sent by rail to Potgietersrus, where the coffin was transferred to a coach and taken to Mapela during the night.

When the body arrived, an argument ensued between Hans' brother Marcus on the one hand and his wives and other relatives on the other. The latter wanted to open the coffin to make sure that Hans' body was in it. They prevailed over Marcus, who was averse to opening the coffin, and the body was viewed. The wound on Hans' throat was clearly visible. Everybody was now satisfied as to the identity of the body, and Hans was buried in the cattle-kraal of his capital at the foot of Magope Hill. A tombstone has since been erected on the site.

The ritual treatment of Hans' widows after his death was an important aspect of the Langa mortuary rites. The first step was to confine the widows to their quarters until after the burial. The *ngaka* (doctor) then entered the women's quarters in the company of a few old women of the capital and treated the women in the order in which they ranked. The *ngaka* prepared black medicines in a clay pot, which the widows were required to smell (to inhale the fumes). A strap of sheep or goat skin about two fingers wide (four centimetres) was then fastened around each woman's head, and a medicinally treated sheep or goat skin draped over the left shoulder and under the right arm.

This mourning dress was worn and the women's hair allowed to grow during the mourning period. The women were also required to walk in line ahead wherever they went together. This appears to have happened regularly when they went down to the river to wash.

The *ngaka* decided when the time was due to end the mourning period. This had to be done before the commencement of the new agricultural season, about in August. On the appointed day the widows' hair was cut and the head strap and the skin shoulder garment removed, and the women allowed to bathe themselves. They were then given medicines by the *ngaka*.

A family beer party followed the formal steps to end the mourning period. Hans' principal wife was responsible for setting the party in motion, but neither she nor her co-wives were permitted to partake. This was also the occasion on which the widows should have been allotted to their levirate husbands. The duty to allot them belonged to the senior *kgadi* (woman of Langa birth), in this case Hans's sister Lea Lebelo.⁴⁾

4. According to her own account, she was ill at the time and could not perform this duty. I do not have any information as to who performed it or whether in fact it was formally performed. The widows could refuse a levir if they so wished.

The importance of relating these mortuary rites at this stage lies in spokesmen's revelations about Raesetsa Makanu's treatment. The first point revealed, is that the *ngaka* who attended the widows in the company of some old women of the capital doctored her, not second, but last. The second point is that whenever the widows walked in line ahead from one place to another, Raeset a Makanu did not walk in line but to the right of it.⁵⁾ The significance of this information is that the responsible old women of the capital, such as the widows of Mankopane and Masebe, deemed that her marriage had not been regularised.

2. The Regency of Marcus

Hans' heir was still a child when Hans died. Hans' uterine brother Marcus, who was next in seniority to Hans, therefore succeeded as regent. He was installed by *Kgosi-ke-nna* (Commissioner King).

The regency of Marcus, which lasted until 1918, was peaceful and constructive. During this period a number of Langa relatives came from Mokopane's country and elsewhere and settled at Mapela. Malesela Nkube, who had been responsible for warning Hans that treachery was being planned against him, was among them. However, the Langa at Mapela did not at any stage form an appreciable percentage of the population of the chiefdom.

The farm Zwartfontein 818-LR was registered in the name of Chief Marcus in trust for the Mapela chiefdom on 8 August 1913.⁶⁾ It had been purchased by the people of Mapela for the sum of £ 2019.

Spokesmen say that a party of Herero fugitives from South West Africa arrived at Mapela during 1914 or thereabouts. Tribesmen refer to them as Matlamma. They remained at Magope for about six months and then went and settled near the Seleka chiefdom on the Phalala River. In actual fact the party had already settled on the Lower Phalala by 1907.⁷⁾

The party is said to have consisted of fourteen men, nine women and a number of children. The leader was known as Solomon Moherero. He died at Seleka many years later, and his death was reported at Mapela. Spokesmen say that seven young Herero men came soon after the arrival of the Herero party to call them back to South West Africa, but that Solomon Moherero refused to return. The young men then elected to remain with Solomon. The Herero are not subject to Mapela any longer.

The great influenza epidemic that caused havoc in South Africa during 1918, also struck at Mapela's. Spokesmen say that many tribesmen died.

3. Chiefs Alfred and Johannes

Marcus relinquished his regency during 1918. Hans' heir, Alfred Sedibu, was old

5. My two most important and to my mind most reliable sources for this information were Lea Lebelo, Hans' eldest sister, and Ramokone Elizabeth Langa (NgwanaMabuela), Hans' ninth wife. Both women were about 93 years old when I spoke to them and their replies indicated that their minds were perfectly clear. Both were members of the same age-set, the Matsara.

6. Deed of Transfer 6601/1913.

7. Anon. 1908.

enough to succeed by then. Spokesmen say that Marcus was expelled by force and fled to Ditlotswane in the Bakenberg area. Only a few of Marcus' descendants now live in the Mapela area.

The rule of Chief Alfred Sedibu Langa was not a happy one. He seems to have been a violent and undisciplined person like his father. Spokesmen say that he ordered many beatings to be administered to tribesmen, including his own relatives. He also misused his position to obtain anything he coveted, whether it be another man's property or wife. Some Langa clansmen therefore left the capital at Magope to settle further away in the Mapela area, while others left Mapela altogether.

Alfred was the elder son of Chief Hans' principal wife. He therefore was the rightful chief. It was his duty to ensure the continuity of the chieftainship by marrying a principal wife to produce a successor. Spokesmen say that cattle were collected from tribesmen in the traditional way to provide the means for this purpose, but that Alfred sold the cattle and spent the money. A principal wife was consequently not married during Alfred's lifetime.

Spokesmen say that Alfred had six wives in all, and that he often ill-treated them. Some were expelled by him, and the remainder deserted. The marriage cattle were returned in most cases, by which act the marriages concerned were terminated.

The Mapela chieftom purchased the farms Bavaria 678-LR, Blinkwater 680-LR and Scirappes 681-LR in 1926 for the sum of £ 12 200. These three farms were registered in the name of the Mapela chieftom on 3 August 1926.⁸⁾ The funds for the purchase of the farms came from the sale of mineral rights on Zwartfontein, where platinum was mined for a time.

The farm Abbotspoort 201-LR was purchased in 1927 for £ 2 520-5-0. The purchase price was not all paid at once and the bond that had been registered against the property was cancelled in 1930 when the final instalment was paid. There was some dissatisfaction in connection with this purchase. It appears as if some £800 which had been collected amongst the Lerumo people and handed to Chief Alfred as a contribution towards the purchase of the farm, could not be accounted for afterwards. The farm was purchased with tribal funds, thus technically excluding the Lerumo people from a privileged right in its use. However, the tribal elders graciously agreed to recognise the rights of the Lerumo people in the farm in cognizance of the £800 they had handed to the chief.

Alfred Sedibu died in 1937 and was succeeded by his uterine brother, Nkgalabe Johannes Langa. It was now the latter's duty, where Alfred had failed, to marry a principal wife and beget a successor. Steps were taken and negotiations entered into for the marriage of Nana, daughter of Selaki Malesela Langa. But she died before the marriage was finalised, and no further steps towards obtaining a principal wife were taken during the lifetime of Chief Johannes.

In 1941 the farms Blinkwater 820-LR, Leyden 804-LR, Overysel 815-LR and Vaalkop 819-LR, which had been purchased by the South African Development Trust, were transferred to Mapela in exchange for the three farms Bavaria, Blinkwater 680-LR and Scirappes. These latter farms are situated beyond Gilead and about fifty kilometres north of Mapela, whereas the former were close to, or adjoined, the Mapela territory as it was at the time. The exchange was obviously undertaken to consolidate the Mapela tribal lands.

8. Deed of Transfer 9458/1926.

Two further farms were purchased during the rule of Chief Johannes. The farm Neckar 183-LR was bought in february 1943 for £ 1 600, and Martinique 171-LR in July of the same year for £ 1 432-15-0. Transfer of the latter farm was effected in July 1944 when an outstanding balance on the purchase price was paid.

Chief Nkgalabe Johannes Langa died in 1957 after twenty years of peaceful and competent rule.

4. Chiefs Godwin and Hendrik

Succession to the chieftainship after the death of Chief Johannes posed a tough problem for the tribal elders. Both the sons of the last principal wife were now dead. Neither of them had married a principal wife, and Johannes had left no sons at all. Such sons as Alfred may have had, appear to have been discounted because the marriages with their mothers had been dissolved before Alfred's death.⁹⁾

There was no doubt at all in anyone's mind about the status of Hans' first wife, Mallega Maria Langa. She had been married for Hans by Masebe shortly before the latter's death, and the cattle for her *bogadi* (marriage payment) had been contributed by tribesmen, which determined her status. She was the principal wife or *mmagose-tshaba* (mother of the chieftainship). She had done her duty in presenting Hans with two sons to secure the Mapela chieftainship for the future.

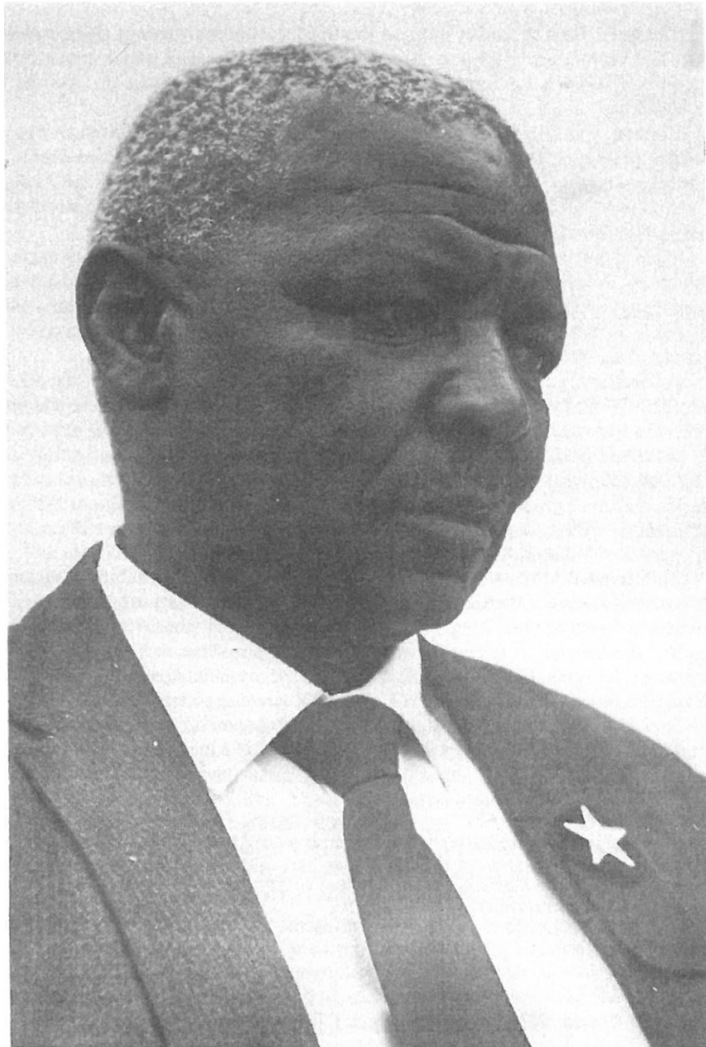
The failure of both Alfred and Johannes to secure the chiefly line by marrying a principal wife and begetting sons in their turn, could not have been foreseen. The failure therefore rather unexpectedly brought the status of Raeset a Mkanu into critical focus. The available information with regard to her position seems to be the following:

- a. She was taken by Hans before he married wife no. 5.¹⁰⁾ Her ranking as no. 2 probably means that she had been taken by Hans before any of his wives except the principal wife.
- b. She was prominently placed in Hans' capital at Magope, which reflects the status of second-ranking wife that she enjoyed during Hans' lifetime.¹¹⁾
- c. Counting against her was the question of her marriage contract - the marriage cattle sent by Hans had been rejected by her people.

The Mapela elders who met to decide on a successor for Johannes must have done some thorough soul-searching. They eventually decided to discount the house of Raesetsa Mkanu in spite of this house having three sons. The decision was clearly not approved of by all the Langa people, and to this day Raeset a Mkanu's house has some prominent supporters. But the weight of opinion seems to have gone against this house.¹²⁾

9. As far as I know, only one son survived Alfred. But the Langa elders do not seem to have seriously considered him as a candidate for the chieftainship. He was not living in the Mapela area during my research.
10. According to Hans' senior sister, Lea Lebelo.
11. See analysis of the Magope settlement in the next chapter.
12. There are two seemingly conflicting sets of information - the rejection of the marriage cattle on the one hand, and the *de facto* status enjoyed by Raeset a Mkanu during Hans' lifetime, on the other. But the key question must be, was there a second bid to legalise the marriage, and if so, when did it take place? If a second bid was made and accepted during Hans' lifetime, it should,,have secured secondranking status for her, even if the cattle were transferred(continued on p. 64)

5. Chief Hendrik M Langa. His rule began in 1958.
(Photo: A.O. Jackson)



The quest for a successor brought the third and fourth wives of Hans under review. The third house had no issue and the fourth had no sons, which brought the fifth wife of Hans up for consideration. She had two sons, Godwin Motape and Hendrik Madikwe.

Godwin, who was the elder of the two, was appointed, but he died after having ruled for a few months only. The tribal elders therefore had to meet and decide on the succession again. They confirmed their earlier stand in regard to Raeset a Makanu's house by discounting it once again and deciding on Goldwin's younger brother, Hendrik Madikwe Langa.

When Hendrik succeeded, the matter of a principal wife was taken up again. After many discussions and lengthy negotiations Atalia Thabant i Langa, daughter of Marula Langa of Mmamolla's lineage, was married with bogadi cattle contributed by tribesmen. In 1968 she already had two daughters. Chief Hendrik was about 60 years old at the time.

Unfortunately for the people of Mapela it does not appear as if the marriage of this tribal wife and the son she bore subsequent to 1968 are going to solve the succession dispute. Certain prominent Langa clansmen have married a rival principal wife and have established her in the space once occupied by Chief Hans' principal wife in the settlement at the foot of Magope Hill. She is said to consort with John Langa, Raesetla Maku's grandson through her eldest son, the late Nkopo Hendrik. The rival principal wife is Rosie Khwini, daughter of Hans' brother Marcus by Mmamoraka, daughter of Tswanka Langa of the Makgwading lineage.

Chief Hendrik's rule has been a good one so far.¹³⁾ It is his habit to consult with a representative gathering of his people when matters of importance arise. He also visits his ward headmen regularly and encourages them where necessary, or admonishes them if they rule their subjects harshly. Opposition to his rule, although still present, is very much in the background. There are indications that clansmen who left the Mapela area during earlier rules are beginning to trickle back.

Chief Hendrik's homestead is at the foot of Fothane Hill near the site of Mapela's and Mankopane's old capital and the site of the 1854 massacre of Hennenus Potgieter and his party.

12. (continued from page 62) after Hans' death. On the other hand, if a bid was made and accepted after Hans' death, it would have legalised the marriage but could not have secured that status for her. She would have been ranked as the last wife to be married. (I am indebted to my colleague Mr F.M. Chuene for his views in this matter.)
13. The time of reference is 1968, that is when the original draft of the Mapela material was written.

CHAPTER IX

THE LANGA CLAN

1. The Magope Homestead

Chief Hans Langa built the homestead at the foot of Magope Hill after the partition of the Langa in 1890. He had spent a night at the home of the Leso people, whose villages stood against Magope Hill, and had determined to build his capital there. A number of Leso households had to be demolished and built elsewhere to make room for the homestead.

Very few of Hans' close relatives settled with him at Magope Hill. Consequently more distant Langa kinsmen, who would under other circumstances have had separate homesteads, were included in this homestead. These relatives did not settle there all at once. Some arrived long after the first had settled. People who had fled to the Kekana chiefdom of Mokopane, notably the Langa of the Motlhase lineage, were prevailed upon to come and settle with Hans at Magope Hill.¹⁾

Hans was joined at Magope by his two uterine brothers Marcus and Cornelius and his half-brothers, Maserunyane and Mangena. He was also joined by eleven paternal uncles (*borangwane*, singular *rangwane*) and eleven other Langa men representing different Langa lineages. The total number of Langa men in the homestead was twentyeight. In addition, there were seven widows of Masebe, three of Mankopane, and one of Masebe's brother Makhwibidu. The homestead also accommodated a number of functionaries, servants, and various other dependants.

The homestead had a total of 106 households, of which two-thirds belonged to the Langa clan. Other homesteads, such as those of Makgwading, Senwa and Lebelo, were situated adjacent to the chief's homestead, thus forming one large composite settlement.²⁾ Other homesteads, again, were situated not far away.

The Magope settlement continued to flourish after the death of Chief Hans in 1905 due to the congenial rule of his brother Marcus. But the occupants began to leave when Alfred became chief in 1918, many settling elsewhere in the Mapela area and others leaving the area altogether. Today there are very few households left in the old homestead at Magope Hill. Nowadays the Langa clansmen seem to be very wary of settling compactly in a large homestead with their chief because of their uni-

1. One spokesman suggested that the Motlhase people actually settled at Mogope after Hans' death.
2. A composite settlement comprising a number of self-contained homesteads (*dikgoro*, singular *kgoro*). See the introductory section of Chapter XIV.

happy experiences during Chief Alfred's rule.

The plan of the Magope homestead has been reconstructed from the few remaining households and the ruins that are still to be seen. This was done mainly with the help of Nyatlo, the *motseta yo mogolo*,³⁾ who was a resident of the homestead and was about fourteen years old when Chief Hans died in 1905. He knew every occupant of the homestead.

Unfortunately there are very few means of checking the correctness of the data and it would be unsound to make detailed conclusions regarding the mode of settlement on this reconstruction alone. The reconstruction has, however, been prompted by the lack of such homesteads in the ruling ward today. A few observations will therefore have to be made.

The homestead of the chief is that portion of the plan in which the separate households are shown and designated with letters and numbers. The letters 'U', 'V' and 'W' refer to different generations as indicated in the abbreviated Langa genealogy (Table V). Numbers refer to positions in the same genealogy in such a way that letter plus number indicate a particular Langa man. Thus for example, W24 refers to Chief Malesela Hans Langa and V24 to his father Masebe. The letters a, b, c, etc., indicate the wives of one man. The letter 'N' indicates Nyatlo households, and the letter 'S' other non-Langa households.

A glance at the plan suggests that the Magope homestead was not a single homestead, but a number of them together. Thus, the Nyatlo and Ma iwaneng divisions appear as if they were separate homesteads. However, this was not the case. These seemingly separate homesteads sacrificed some of the elements of a separate identity and shared these elements with the other divisions. Thus, the whole homestead had only one *kgwadi* (a roof supported by a ring of poles) that served all the divisions as a guard house, court room and so forth. In the same way, the main courtyard of the homestead had a hearth (*sebeso*) for men shared by all the homestead's men. This courtyard also had a hearth for boys, which was shared by all the boys except those of Nyatlo, who had their own. But most convincing of all was the fact that the homestead was a single unit in the mind of the spokesman.

As can be seen from the plan, the homestead consisted of different segments. These segments were called *lesoro* for example *lesoro la Molaung* or *les6r6 la Ma!iwaneng*. The word *lesoro* is said to mean an entrance, for example the entrance to a homestead, to a segment or even to a single household. The term is applied by extension to the segment that is reached by passing through such an entrance. The homestead thus consists of the following segments: Mothase, Segoweng, Ma iwaneng, Molaung, Nyatlo and *mosate*.

A close comparison of the plan and the table of inmates (Table III) will reveal that a few persons seem to have been accommodated out of context. There were households of Langa in Nyatlo's segment, Langa households not of Segoweng in the Segoweng segment, Langa households not of Molaung in the Molaung segment, etc.

The first point to bear in mind is that these people were residents of a single homestead, which rather lessens the importance of their placing in different sub-divisions. The second point is that space for the correct placing of late-comers became increasingly difficult to find, and they had of necessity to be located somewhat out of context.

3. The chief intermediary - this functionary is discussed in Chapter XI. See plan of Magope homestead and table of inmates (Table III).

The third point is that special relationships often existed between women of different generations, which was reflected in the mode of settlement. It can be seen from the homestead plan that some households accommodated more than one woman. Note for example that the numbers V24a, W24s, and W24v are all in a single household. It is the household of V24a Mokgeta, and W24s Madirnabe Setseta and W24v NgwanaMakgoba were also accommodated in it.

One way in which these situations came about was that the wife whose household it was, failed to have children or had only one or two or died without issue, and that a younger sister or other relative was brought into her household to produce children on her behalf. An ancillary wife of this nature is termed *mmamolatela*, from *late/a* (to follow on behalf of). In the household marked W49a and W49b the two women were wives of Marcus Langa, brother of Chief Hans. The first died, and the second was brought in to produce children on her behalf.

Another way in which it came about that more than one woman lived in a household, was through the chief placing his junior wives in the households of the widows of his father and grandfather, and also in that of his principal wife. It would seem as if relationships between the women concerned, determined their placing. A rather obvious case in point is the placing of Madikana (W24d), wife of Chief Hans, in the household of Mmantutule (U24a), widow of Chief Mankopane. Both women were of the Mabusela clan.

Yet another way in which two women arrived in the same household is illustrated by the case of I iobone (U24b), who lived with her son Malesela (V90) and his wife. Malesela was the youngest of the three sons of I iobone, and it was therefore his duty according to custom to remain in his mother's household so that he could look after her in her old age. Such a son is known as *mo'šalalapeng* (he who remains in the household). He brings his wife into the household when he marries.

The size of the homestead is noteworthy. It comprised no less than 106 households. In addition, the chief's homestead was but a part of a larger composite settlement. The size of the capital of the previous generation, namely that of Masebe, was commented on by Schloemann when he referred to the long and winding passages linking some divisions with the chief's courtyard.⁴) Large homesteads are not to be found in the ruling ward any longer, and are uncommon elsewhere in the Mapela area. None approaches anywhere near the size of the Magope homestead.

2. The Langa Lineages

The sub-division of the Langa clan into a number of constituent lineages does not play an important part in the structure of the Mapela chiefdom as a whole. The partition of 1890 disrupted some of the lineages of the Langa when these lineages became divided between the two resultant Langa chiefdoms.

The southern part of the pre-partition Langa area had been occupied by the non-Langa, mainly Sotho, subjects of the Langa. The Langa clansmen had lived in the northern part with Masebe. It was to this predominantly alien southern portion that Hans and his small group of relatives moved in 1890 to form the Mapela chiefdom.

The Langa clansmen therefore formed a very small percentage of the total population of Mapela - about seventeen percent of the population of the chief's ward, and less than three per cent of the Mapela area as a whole. ⁵)

4. Schloemann 1895, p. 252.

5. See Langa genealogy, Table V.

TABLE III: INMATES OF THE MAGOPE HOMESTEAD

| | |
|---|--|
| MOSOGÉ LINEAGE | W49 Marcus and his wives (a-c) |
| V4 Nkuna and his wife Ngwana Dikhoba | W54 Cornelius and his wives a Ngwana Makgoba b Ngwana Langa c Ngwana Masisi |
| MOTLHASE LINEAGE | W57 Judas and his wife Raisibe Langa |
| W18 Segafi and his wife Ngwana Lebelo | W58 Maserunyane and his wife Ngwana Manala |
| W19 Malesela and his wives a Ngwana Tiholo b Ngwana Tlatla | W61 Mangena and his wife |
| W20 Ntwampe and his wife Ngwana Mokhonwana | |
| V21 Manuel and his wife Ngwana Kase | |
| MOSATE LINEAGE | MOLAUNG LINEAGE |
| V24 Masebe's widows a Mokgeta b Ngwana Senwa c Ngwana Hale d Khwini e Ngwana Tihokwe f Ngwana Mello g Makholefele Phokela | U24 Mankopane's widows a Mmantutule Mabusela b Isiobone c Mmamoloko |
| W24 Malesela Hans and his wives a Mallega Maria Langa b Raeset Makanu Letwaba c Matswinya Langa d Madikana Mabusela e Mogotlo Molefe f Mokgaetfi Nkgau g Mokganyelet i Langa h Ramokoni Elizabeth Mabuela i Ramokoni Mphela j Ngwana Hipa k Ngwana Pha m Mokgaetsi Mpyatona n Jack Langa o Leumo Letwaba p Semole Makgoba q Ngwana Mooka r Nompapa Senwa s Madimabe Setseta t Johanna Kola u Ngwana Mokwele v Ngwana Makgoba | V79 Makhwibidu's widow Mmabaleng |
| | V88 Matlhanato and his wife Ngwana Lebelo |
| | V89 Lesibana and his wife Ngwana Mogale |
| | V90 Malesela and his wife Ngwana Kutumela |
| | V95 Tlotloko and his wives a Ngwana Larnoia b Ngwana Mokubelwa c Ngwana Langa |
| | V99 Mabudunyane and his wives a Mgwana Langa b Ngwana Senwa |
| | V100 Makgareet and his wife Ngwana Masisi |
| | V101 Tsu mu and his wives a Ngwana Thulare b Ngwana Seema |
| | V102 Solomon and his wives a Regina Senwa b Ngwana Masipa c Ngwana Kutumela |
| | V103 Malose and his wives a Ngwana Langa b Ngwana Langa |
| | V109 Mmamogau and his wives a Ngwana Hadebe b Ngwana Lebelo |
| | V111 Magata's widow Ngwana Manala |

(Continued next page)

TABLE III (Continued)

SEGOWENG LINEAGE

W117 Ramaraloka and his wives
 a Ngwana Manamela
 b Ngwana Nkwana

MASIWANENG LINEAGE

W122 Raditedu Lesiba and his wives
 a Ngwana Mello
 b Ngwana Makgamatho
 c Ngwana Mello
 W125 Rantlausu and his wife
 Ngwana Mabusela
 W126 Jonas Mapete and his wife
 Ngwana Mello
 W128 Malesela and his wife and
 young brother Matlhanato

MAKGWADING LINEAGE

W132 Matias and his wives
 a Ngwana Mosehlana
 b Ngwana Siku

SENKWELE LINEAGE

V135 Sekwelebeta and his wives
 a Ngwana Tabane
 b Ngwana Thobana
 V138 Matsobane and his wives
 a Esi
 b Ngwana Moetlwa

HEAD INTERMEDIARY

N1 Pone Nyatlo and his wives (a-c)

DEPENDANTS OF MOSATE

S1 Mmamoloko, widow of Nyao
 S2 Jan Maboya and his wife
 S3 Madimo Mokagane and his wife

DEPENDANTS OF V95 TLOTLOKO

S4 Kgwadi Lamola and his wife

S5 Lesiba Lamola and his wife
 S6 Matsobane Nyao and his wife

DEPENDANTS OF MOTLHASE

S7 Pididi Motlatla and his wife

DEPENDANTS OF SEGOWENG

S8 Makgamatho and his wife

DEPENDANTS OF MASIWANENG

S9 Letwaba and his wife
 S10 Letwaba (son of S9) and his wife
 S11 Kgomotsupya Nkwana and his wives (a-b)
 S12 Sewewe Nkwana and his wife
 S13 Tlopo Nkwana and his wife
 S14 Seeta (widow of father of S11)
 S15 Maatlagatla and his wife

DEPENDANTS OF V135 SEKWELEBETA

S16 Nkanyane Letwaba and his wives (a-b)
 S17 Ntsimanyane Molomo and his wives (a-c)

DEPENDANTS OF NI NYATLO

S18 Matsobane Nyao and his wife and mother
 S19 Widow of brother of SJ8
 S20 Malesela Kapu and his wives (a-d)
 S21 Ratana-lapa Makhwia and his wife
 S22 Pulamoka Makhwia and his wives (a-c)
 S23 Motwanyane Makhwia and his wife
 S24 Sekhamane Phogo and his wife

The lineages of the Langa, which are termed *dikgoro* (singular *kgoro*) by the people, originated in different generations, as indicated in Table IV.⁶⁾

TABLE IV

ORIGIN OF LANGA (MAPELA) LINEAGES

| GENERATION R | GENERATION S | GENERATION T | GENERATION U | GENERATION V | GENERATION W | LINEAGES |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|---|--------------|---|
| SERITARITA - | Mosoge Makgenene MAPELA | Selaki Masekamisa - MANKOPANE | | MASEBE III - HANS Matopa Mmamolla Others | | Mosoge Mamaala Motlhase Mosate Matopa Mmamolla Molaung Ntwampe Segoweng Masiwaneng Makgwading Senkwele |
| | ? | Ntwampe MALEYA Makitirnela | | | | |
| | Senkwele | | | | | |

Original Chart from Page 70

TABLE IV

ORIGIN OF LANGA (MAPELA) LINEAGES

| GENERATION R | GENERATION S | GENERATION T | GENERATION U | GENERATION V | GENERATION W | LINEAGES |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| SERITARITA | Mosoge | | | | | Mosoge |
| | Makgenene | | | | | Mamaala |
| | MAPELA | Selaki | | | | Motlhase |
| | | Masekamiša - MANKOPANE | MASEBE III - HANS | | | Mošate |
| | | | Matôpa | | | Matôpa |
| | | | Mmamolla | | | Mmamolla |
| | | | Others | | | Molaung |
| | | Ntwampe | | | | Ntwampe |
| | | MALEYA | | | | Segoweng |
| | | Makitimela | | | | Mašiwane |
| | ? | | | | | Makgwading |
| | Senkwele | | | | | Senkwele |

6. The term *kgoro* (plural, *dikgoro*) denotes a lineage and a homestead.

The lineages of Mosoge and Mamaala are both genealogically senior to the Mapela rulers, and originated in the generation of Mapela, as did the genealogically junior lineages of Makgwading and Senkwele. In the next generation (generation T) the lineage of Motlhase, which is similarly senior to the Mapela rulers, and the junior lineages of Ntwampe, Segoweng and Matiwaneng, originated. The lineages of Matopa, Mmamolla and Molaung, originated in Masebe's generation (generation V).

The origin of the Mosoge and Mamaala lineages has already been discussed and the reasons for their loss of political rank given.⁷⁾ The Motlhase lineage consists of the descendants of Tokodi and his brother Matlanya, who fled to Mokopane when Masebe killed Tokodi.⁸⁾ This lineage originated when Mankopane married a woman to raise the house of his deceased uncle Selaki.⁹⁾ The lower-ranking lineage of Ntwampe originated in the same way when Mankopane married a woman to raise the house of a lower-ranking uncle of that name.

The lineage of Molaung deserves special mention. This lineage is called *kgoro ya mokgekolo* (the old woman's lineage). It seems to be the only one of its kind to have come into existence in the history of the Ndebele of Langa. The lineage was the residue of Mankopane's more immediate Langa relatives (those not already belonging to separate lineages) after Masebe had left with some of them to establish his own capital. The old woman was Masebe's mother Mmantutule, and she was the head of the lineage. It is said that such lineages only come into existence where there is a wife of the deceased chief, such as Mmantutule, who especially deserves to be honoured in this way. They do not happen automatically with each new generation. The Molaung lineage was thus constituted in order to honour Mmantutule.¹⁰⁾

Matopa and Mmamolla were brothers of Masebe. They came and settled at Mapela during the regency of Chief Marcus (1905 to 1918), and were therefore not in the homestead of the chief at Magope. They had their separate homesteads away from the capital.

It has not been possible to establish the origin of the names of all the lineages. Some, such as Mosoge, Matopa, Mmamolla and Ntwampe, were named after their founding ancestors. The name Mamaala has its origin in the expression *nomayala ngenhlabathi* (he who sows with sand) as described in Chapter II.

The names Molaung, Motlhase, Segoweng, Matiwaneng and Makgwading, are connected with the names and praises of the cattle herds of these lineages. They were used to encourage these herds in the cattle race (*mokato*) that formed part of the harvest festival.¹¹⁾ The Molaung cattle were encouraged with a resounding '*Molauwee*', those of Segoweng with '*Segowa-wee*', those of Makgwading with '*Makgwadiwee*', and so forth. The names were used in the same way as a form of greeting or for hailing the residents in the homesteads of these respective lineages.

The short praises of some of the above lineages are as follows:

7. Chapter II.

8. See Chapter V.

9. See Table I in Chapter I.

10. I was told by a Kekana spokesman that the Kekana of Mokopane also have such a lineage. I suggest that these lineages are a special feature of Ndebele social structure and that they differ from the Sotho in this respect.

11. See Jackson in *Ethnological Section* 1969, pp. 240-241, for a description of the harvest festival and the cattle race.

- MOTLHASE: *Bana ba Selaki sa Matshela a ga Podile.*
(Children of Selaki of the Matshela age-set of Podile.)
- MOLAUNG: *Molau wa bana ba Mmantutule.*
(Molau of the children of Mmantutule.)
- NTWAMPE: *Ntwampe a Ramahula a dibateng, dibata di dia mathata.*
(Ntwampe of Ramahula of the place of ferocious animals, the wild animals cause hardships.)
- SEGOWENG: *Segowa-wee sa ba Maleya a dithaga.*
(Segowa of those of Maleya of the dithaga age-set.)
- MASIWANENG: *Bana ba Makitimela a magohu, nyamanyama maetsa.*
(Children of Makitimela of the Magohu age-set, shaking the manes.)
- MAKGWADING: *Makgwadi a Mmasegatana.*
(Makgwadi of Mmasegatana.)
- SENKWELE: *Senkwele sa Ngwana Kgaripana, Senkwele ntlo ya swatlha, godimo ga go wele motho.*
(Senkwele of the child of Kgaripana, Senkwele of the hut of darkness inside, a person does not fall upwards.)

Most of the above lineages were very small in 1905. Such was the case with Mosoge, Motlhase, Ntwampe, Segoweng, Masiwaneng, Makgwading and Senkwele, and also with Matopa and Mmamolla, who had not yet settled at Mapela. One reason for this was the division of some lineages in consequence of the 1890 partition of the Langa. Another was the recent origin of some, notably Matopa and Mmamolla. Mosoge became divided, the majority of its families remaining with the Baken berg chiefdom and only a small number moving to Mapela. Molaung, Segoweng, Masiwaneng, Makgwading and Senkwele became divided in the same way. Only Molaung, Mamaala and mo"sate (the chief's immediate relatives) had more than just a few members.

If these lineages were very small in 1905, the position in most cases is no better today.¹²⁾ The reason for this is partly to be sought in the dispersal of the Langa residents of the capital at Magope Hill between 1918 and 1937, to which reference has been made.

Today the sub-division of the Langa clan into a number of lineages has very little significance in the overall structure of the chiefdom. The only lineages that have retained a clearly manifested separate identity are the two genealogically senior ones of Mosoge and Mamaala. Their heads are vested with the political authority of borametsana (sub-headmen).

Apart from these two lineages, the Langa clansmen are often simply lumped together under the designation of *mosate* nowadays. However, this does not mean that the lineages concerned have been done away with - it merely reflects the reality of their very limited size. The men of the Langa clan are all called bakgomana, which may be translated as 'men of the royalty' or 'men of the ruling clan'.¹³⁾

12. 'Today' refers to 1968, when the original draft of the Mapela material was written.

13. See Langa of Mapela Genealogy (Table V).

Transcription of Original Page 73

TABLE V
 LANGA OF MAPELA GENEALOGY (MALES ONLY)

| GENERATION U | GENERATION V | GENERATION W | GENERATION X | |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|----|
| MOSOGE | —▲Nakedi— | —▲Lesiba Taola— | —▲Lesetsa— | 2 |
| | | | —ΔMalose William— | 3 |
| | —▲ ? — | —▲Madirnetla— | —▲Johannes— | 4 |
| | | Mokale | | |
| | —▲Nkuna— | —▲Malesela— | —ΔMartiens— | 5 |
| | | | —ΔAbram— | |
| MAMAALAM | | —▲Kgwankgwatla— | —▲Semarane— | 6 |
| | | | —▲Frans Matlanato— | 7 |
| | | | —ΔLesibana Abram— | 8 |
| | | | —ΔMadimetsa Samuel— | 9 |
| | | | —ΔMalesela Sello— | 10 |
| | | | —ΔLesiba David— | 11 |
| | | | —▲Madimetsa Daniel— | 12 |
| | | | —ΔMalose— | 13 |
| | —▲Pai— | —▲Boloko— | —ΔMalesela Johannes— | 14 |
| | | | —ΔLesiba Piet— | 15 |
| | | | —ΔLesiba Jan— | 16 |
| MOTLHASE | | | —ΔMalose Lekata— | 17 |
| | | —▲Mapala— | —ΔJoseph Kgathane— | |
| | —▲Tokodi— | —▲Segafi— | —ΔJoel*— | 18 |
| | —▲Matlanya— | —▲Malesela— | —ΔMankopane— | 19 |
| | | —ΔNtwampe*— | | 20 |
| | —▲Manuel— | —ΔMalose*— | | 21 |
| | | —▲Masarane— | —ΔMankopane— | 22 |
| | | —ΔFreddie— | | 23 |

(Continued)

(TABLE V Continued)

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|----|
| MOSATE | ▲ MANKOPANE | | ▲ ALFRED SEDIBU | 24 |
| | | | ▲ NKGALABI JOHANNES | 25 |
| | | | ▲ GODWIN MOTAPE | 26 |
| | | | Δ HENDRIK MADIKWE | 27 |
| | | | Δ Piet Mafetlho | 28 |
| | | | Δ Ephriam Matlhaba | 29 |
| | | | Δ Robert Lekgowa | 30 |
| | | | Δ Tsoukanta Sidney | 31 |
| | | | Δ Pimpa Malosc | 32 |
| | | | Δ Khwasa Frans | 33 |
| | | | Δ Mogotedi | 34 |
| | | | Δ Karel | 35 |
| | | | Δ Piet Masole | 36 |
| | | | Δ Solomon Roya | 37 |
| | | | Δ Mankopane William | 38 |
| | | | Δ Mosimane Frans | 39 |
| | | | Δ Makgoba Joseph | 40 |
| | | | ▲ Matsobane Jacob | 41 |
| | | | Δ Lesiba Johannes | 42 |
| | | | ▲ Sepetle David | 43 |
| | | | ▲ Mokhulwane | 44 |
| | | | ▲ Daniel Mosimane | 45 |
| | | | ▲ Nkopo Hendrick | 46 |
| | | | Δ Mpelana Robert | 47 |
| | | | ▲ Monyenyanne John | 48 |
| | | ▲ MARCUS | ▲ Joshua | 49 |
| | | | Δ Dennis Nyathi | 50 |
| | | | Δ Hans Malesela | 51 |
| | | | Δ Herbert Maleya | 52 |
| | | | Δ Karel | 53 |
| | | ▲ Cornelius | Δ Ephraim Mallou | 54 |
| | | | Δ Letsai Frans | 55 |
| | | | Δ Boy | 56 |
| | | ▲ Judas | Δ Malose | 57 |
| | | ▲ Maserunyane | Δ Marcus | 58 |
| | | | Δ Marcus | 59 |
| | | | Δ Phillip | 60 |
| | | Δ Mangena * | | 61 |
| | | Δ Malose Senwa | | 62 |

(Continued)

(TABLE V Continued)

| | | | | |
|----------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----|
| MATOPA | ▲ Matopa | ▲ Selaki Malesela | ΔTelephone Lesiba | 63 |
| | | | ΔMatlhaba Madimetla | 64 |
| | | | ΔNkaka Hans | 65 |
| | | | ΔNeedle John | 66 |
| | | | ΔVelaphi Marcus | 67 |
| | | | ΔMorwanaka Michael | 68 |
| | | | ΔLepedi Albert | 69 |
| | | | ΔMmamolla* | 70 |
| | | ▲ Piet Nteni | ΔFrans Mahapa | 71 |
| | | | ΔJohannes Malofo | 72 |
| MMAMOLLA | | | ΔDavid Mechanic | 73 |
| | | | ΔSetsai | 74 |
| | | | ΔMatopa | 75 |
| | | ▲ Jim Morwakgwadi | ΔJoshua Mphofora | 76 |
| | | | ΔJohannes Matsobane | 77 |
| | | ▲ Ramaboso Madimetsa | ΔMosamong Madimet | 78 |
| | | | | 79 |
| | ▲ Makhwibidu | | | |
| | ▲ Mmamolla | ▲ Maswiakgomo | ΔAlbert Manthane | 80 |
| | | ▲ Marula | ΔLesiba James | 81 |
| MOLAUNG | | | ΔSamuel Ramaraloka | 82 |
| | | ▲ Matsobane | ΔMalose Ephraim | 83 |
| | | | ΔMmamolla Malcsela | 84 |
| | ▲ Malesela Nkube | ▲ Rabogajana | ΔHans Malesela | 85 |
| | | | ΔMarcus Malcrole | 86 |
| | | ΔDavid | | 87 |
| | ▲ Matlhanato | ΔLelikara | | 88 |
| | ΔLesibana* | | | 89 |
| | ▲ Malesela | ΔHans Lesedi | | 90 |
| | | ΔSenkwele | | 91 |
| | | ΔMankopane | | 92 |
| | | ΔMarula | | 93 |
| | | ΔMatlhanao | | 94 |
| | ▲ Tlotloko | ΔSerwanya* | | 95 |
| | | ▲ Malose | ▲ Mankopane | 96 |
| | | ▲ Malesela | | 97 |
| | | ΔPhilemon* | | 98 |
| | ▲ Mabudunyane | ΔJustinus Lesiba* | | 99 |
| | ▲ Makgareetsa | | | 100 |
| | ▲ Tsumu | ΔMokholwana | | 101 |
| | ▲ Lebese | ▲ Solomon | | 102 |
| | ▲ Malose | ΔMankopane* | | 103 |
| | | ▲ Moretlwa | | 104 |
| | | ΔSekohliwe* | | 105 |
| | | ΔMatopa* | | 106 |
| | | ΔMatlhaba* | | 107 |
| | | ΔAlfred | | 108 |
| | ▲ Mmamogau | ▲ Lesibana | ΔRaditedu | 109 |
| | | ΔLewarawara* | | 110 |
| | ▲ Magata | | | 111 |

(TABLE V Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|---|--------------------|---|----------------------|-----|
| — | ▲ Ntwampe | — | ▲ Malesela | — | ▲ Mankukudu | 112 |
| | | | ▲ Matsobane | — | Δ Roy | 113 |
| | | | | — | Δ David | 114 |
| | | | Δ Lejoni | | | 115 |
| | ▲ Masole | — | Δ Moseabodi | | | 116 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| — | ▲ Legakala | — | ▲ Ramaraloka | — | Δ Mosimane Piet | 117 |
| | | | | — | ▲ Samuel | 118 |
| | | | | — | Δ Ntota* | 119 |
| | ▲ Mpatli | — | Δ Senna* | | | 120 |
| | | | Δ David Legakala | | | 121 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| — | ▲ Maseabodi | — | ▲ Raditedu Lesiba | — | Δ Jacob Lesiba | 122 |
| | | | | — | Δ Kori Johns | 123 |
| | | | | — | Δ Masetlhaba | 124 |
| | | | ▲ Rantlausu | | | 125 |
| | ▲ ? | — | ▲ Jonas Mapete | — | ▲ Malepetleke | 126 |
| | | | | — | Δ Frans Uku | 127 |
| | | | ▲ Malesela | — | Δ Makgomarele | 128 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| — | ▲ Ditlora | — | ▲ Lesiba | — | Δ Mathiba Isaiah | 129 |
| | ▲ Segwana | | | | | 130 |
| — | ▲ Matsherebula | — | ▲ Kgotlopo | — | Δ William Kiba | 131 |
| — | ▲ ? | — | ▲ Matlas | — | ▲ Matsobane | 132 |
| | | | | — | Δ Mokgaditswana Joel | 133 |
| | | | | — | Δ Phokwana Lesiba | 134 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| — | ▲ Sekwelebeta | — | Δ Sampipi Lesibana | | | 135 |
| | | | ▲ Malesela | | | 136 |
| | | | Δ Alfred Nkgalabi | | | 137 |
| — | ▲ Matsobane* | | | | | 138 |
| — | ▲ Tswanka | — | ▲ Malose | — | Δ Nosi Solomon | 139 |
| | | | ▲ Madimetsa | — | Δ Malose Swatla | 140 |
| | | | | — | ▲ Pone | 141 |
| | | | | — | Δ Mphefana | 142 |
| | | | Δ Lesibana Edias | | | 143 |

Note: Symbol ▲ represents males deceased, and symbol Δ males still living July 1967. Horizontal lines indicate descent from left to right, and vertical lines link the sons of a particular man. Names with an asterisk * are those who have left the tribal area.

CHAPTER X

CHIEFLY SUCCESSION

I. The Principal Wife

The Ndebele of Langa, and in particular those of Mapela, have distinct rules to regulate chiefly succession. An important link in the chain of succession is the principal wife, a woman to whom we have already had occasion to refer. She is the wife married by a chief with marriage cattle (*bogadi*) contributed by the chiefdom as a whole on a representative basis.

The principal wife is the highest-ranking wife of a chief. It is her function and duty to give birth to the future chief. The chiefdom as a whole has a special interest in her because members contributed towards her marriage cattle. Through her, they also have a stake in the chiefly succession because her son is the child of their cattle. The succession of the son of a different wife of the chief will normally not be tolerated if the principal wife has a suitable son.¹⁾

The various divisions of the chiefdom contribute towards the marriage cattle (*bogadi*) of the principal wife through their respective heads. Langa clansmen, on the other hand, contribute individually. Those who are unable to contribute, are excused. The cattle that are transferred as *bogadi* to the father of the future principal wife are selected from the cattle thus contributed. The cattle that remain, are kept by the chief.

Spokesmen listed those who contribute in the following order:

- a. The *kgadi e kgolo* - the highest-ranking woman of Langa birth. Her husband actually contributes on her behalf.
- b. The remaining *dikgadi* (women of Langa birth). Here again, their husbands contribute for them.
- c. The younger brothers of the chief.
- d. The uncles of the chief (paternal, classificatory).
- e. All the ward-headmen, and also the heads of the non-Langa clans of the chiefs ward.

The principal wife is known to the people as *mohumagadi* (literally: rich woman; derived meaning: woman of status). However, this term is also used to address any woman to whom one wishes to be particularly polite. The principal wife is also referred to as *setimamol/o* (the fire extinguisher). This is because the fires of the chiefs village are all extinguished and a new fire ceremonially drilled and the fires

1. The role of factions in succession disputes is discussed lower down in this chapter.

rekindled when she comes to live there. The term is used mainly when she is newly wed. She is further known as *mmagosetšhaba* (mother to the chieftdom) or *mmabatho* (mother of the people). These latter names express more clearly her very special meaning to the chieftdom as a whole.

The principal wife may be married either before or after her husband actually succeeds to the chieftainship. Spokesmen say that Maleya would have married a principal wife for Mankopane had the latter not ousted him instead of waiting for him to relinquish the chieftainship.²⁾ Hans's principal wife was married for him by Masebe, and Marcus would have married one for Alfred had he not been compelled to relinquish his regency as soon as he was.³⁾

When the Langa select a principal wife, they take careful stock of her family pedigree. As can be seen from Table VI, Seritarita's principal wife was of the Mabusela clan. Mankopane's wife Mmantutule, who later came to be regarded as the principal wife, also belonged to this clan. Mapela, whose own mother (not a principal wife) was of the Makgoba clan, married two girls of this clan (neither of them principal wife), one of whom was Mankopane's grandmother. Masebe's principal wife and her ancillary wife (mother of Hans) were of the same clan.

All the principal wives selected after Masebe's generation were of the Langa clan. They were all direct descendants of Mankopane, and therefore of the Makgoba maternal forebears of Mankopane. Hans' principal wife was a daughter of Matopa Langa, a son of Mankopane. Her mother was of the Mabusela clan. Nana, the principal wife selected for Johannes, was a granddaughter of Matopa through a different wife, also of the Mabusela clan.

Atalia Thabantsi, Hendrik's principal wife, is a granddaughter of Mmamolla Langa, another son of Mankopane. Mmamolla's wife who was Atalia's grandmother, was a Langa of the Mamaala lineage. This lineage emerged from a wife of Seritarita who was of the Mabusela clan (see Table VI).

Hans' principal wife was the daughter of his *rangwane* (father's younger brother). Nana, the girl selected as principal wife for Johannes, was the daughter of his *malome* (mother's brother). However, her father also stood in a classificatory *rangwane* relationship to Johannes (paternal grandfather's younger brother's son). Marola Langa, father of Atalia Thabantsi, stands in the same *rangwane* relationship to Chief Hendrik as Nana's father did to Johannes.

There are no doubt other important relationships and considerations that are taken into account when selecting a principal wife. For example, in the data given above, we have simply noted that Atalia's grandmother was of Mamaala's lineage. But there may have been a number of important women married into this lineage.

In the final analysis, however, the selection has to be made from girls who are both suitable and available at the time the principal wife is sought. With principal wives now being selected from the Langa clan and there being so few Mapela Langas, the choice cannot be very wide. The girl with the best credentials among those available at the time, is a very likely candidate.

2. Regencies and Supporting Wives

The eldest son of the principal wife should succeed to the chieftainship. How-

2. Mankopane's succession is related in Chapter II.

3. Alfred's succession is related in Chapter VIII.

ever, any one of a number of circumstances may obtain when the ruling chief dies which makes it impossible to follow this rule. The principal wife may be barren or have daughters only. She may die without sons, or the ruling chief may for one reason or another fail to marry a principal wife. The Mapela rulers seem to have remedies for all these possibilities, as we shall see.

If the eldest son of the principal wife is still too young to succeed when the chief dies, the late chief is succeeded by his brother who is next in seniority or his half-brother who is next in rank. This person is then regent during the minority of the heir. Such was the case when Chief Hans died. Alfred Sedibu, the elder son of his principal wife, was too young to succeed. Hans' uterine brother Marcus consequently succeeded in the capacity of regent for Alfred.⁴⁾

If, however, the chief dies while the principal wife is still young but before she has sons, the brother or half-brother of the chief who is next in line of succession should enter into a levirate relationship with her. He should at the same time succeed to the chieftainship in the capacity of regent for the unborn son of the principal wife, who is to be fathered by him. There is no remembered example of this in the history of the Langa rulers. However, the levirate rule is a common feature of the marriage customs of the Mapela people, and the application of the rule to the principal wife would be normal procedure.

It may become apparent that the principal wife is unable to produce a son. In such an event her younger sister or another female relative will be attached to her household to produce the heir on her behalf. This woman is her *mmamolatela* (ancillary wife). Examples of this can be found in Table VI.

Seritarita's principal wife Ngwana Mabusela did not have a son and consequently another Ngwana Mabusela, probably her sister, was attached to her household. The latter bore a son, Makgenene. Another example can be given. Mokgeta MakgOba, the principal wife of Masebe 111, did not have a son. Her sister, Setwatla MakgOba, was therefore attached to her household as ancillary wife. The latter gave birth to Malesela Hans and his brothers and sisters.

If the chief dies before a principal wife has been married, his brother or halfbrother who is next in line of succession succeeds and marries a principal wife on his behalf. This brother is in the position of regent for the unborn son that he must beget on behalf of his late brother. An example of this is to be found in the case of Alfred Sedibu. Alfred failed to marry a principal wife. He was succeeded by his uterine brother Nkgalabe Johannes. The latter entered into negotiations for the marriage of a principal wife on Alfred's behalf. The girl Nana Langa was selected but died prematurely. Johannes also died before the matter could be rectified. Their halfbrother Hendrik Madikwe Langa became chief in 1958 and married Atalia Thabantli Langa as principal wife for the late Alfred. He is in effect regent for her son - the son that he begot on Alfred's behalf.

If a generation goes by after the failure of a principal wife to produce an heir, or if a principal wife was not obtained in the previous generation, then a daughter-in-law (*ngwetsi*) is married as a principal wife for the imaginary son of the chief who failed in this respect. In this event the ruling chief who marries her in order to raise this higher-ranking household (*go tsosa lapa* - to raise the household), is in the position of a regent who must beget the heir for whom he is acting as regent. Examples of

4. See Table VI.

this can also be cited.⁵⁾

Seritarita's principal wife failed to produce an heir. Her ancillary wife did have a son, Makgenene, but he left the chiefdom with his following.⁶⁾ Consequently, when Mapela succeeded, the principal house of Seritarita was not represented in the chiefdom. Mapela therefore took steps to rectify the matter. He married a ngwetsi (daughter-in-law) for this principal house as a principal wife for its imaginary son, and begot the heir. The fact that Mosoge, the heir concerned, did not succeed to the chieftainship when he grew into manhood, in no way diminishes the validity of the steps taken by Mapela.

Another example can be given. Selaki, Mapela's highest-ranking son (genealogically Mosoge does not count as a son of Mapela), died before marrying a principal wife. A generation later Chief Mankopane married a ngwetsi (daughter-in-law) for Selaki as principal wife for Selaki's imaginary son by his imaginary principal wife. The resultant heir was Tokodi who, for reasons that have already been explained, did not succeed either.⁷⁾

Although a chief is born a chief (his position is determined socially by the fact that he is the eldest son of the principal wife), biological paternity may play a part in deciding whether or not he will succeed. This is evident from the formal procedure that is followed when a new chief has to be appointed. The Langa clansmen meet to discuss the matter and the Langa clanswomen gather just out of earshot of the men. The latter know pretty well who is the biological father of whom, and if the men deem it necessary they call the women in and consult them about the biological paternity of a candidate. If it becomes evident that he was fathered by the wrong man he may be turned down (which would almost certainly give rise to a dispute), or the fact could be used against him by an opposing faction.⁸⁾

Information of this nature is, of course, not easy to obtain, which makes it difficult for an outsider to assess the relative importance of biological paternity as against sociological paternity in chiefly succession. There is no doubt, however, that biological paternity is an important consideration.

The levirate and sororate unions described here in connection with the principal wife are a common feature of the marriage customs of the Mapela people, as they are of many other Bantu-speaking chiefdoms. The custom of raising up seed to dead men to give them posterity is also common and is found with the levirate custom as far afield as the Nuer.⁹⁾ Among the Nuer, however, such marriages may be contracted for deceased maternal relatives, which is not the case at Mapela. The Nuer custom also differs from that of Mapela in that the former do not conceive of the bride as being the wife of the imaginary son of the deceased (where the marriage is for the ghost of a deceased father or uncle), but link her with the deceased himself even if he is of the generation previous to that of her vicarious husband.

The Lobedu, by contrast, do conceive of a fictitious son as the legal husband of a woman married to raise up seed to a dead man.¹⁰⁾ The Lobedu custom differs

5. See Table VI.

6. See Chapter II.

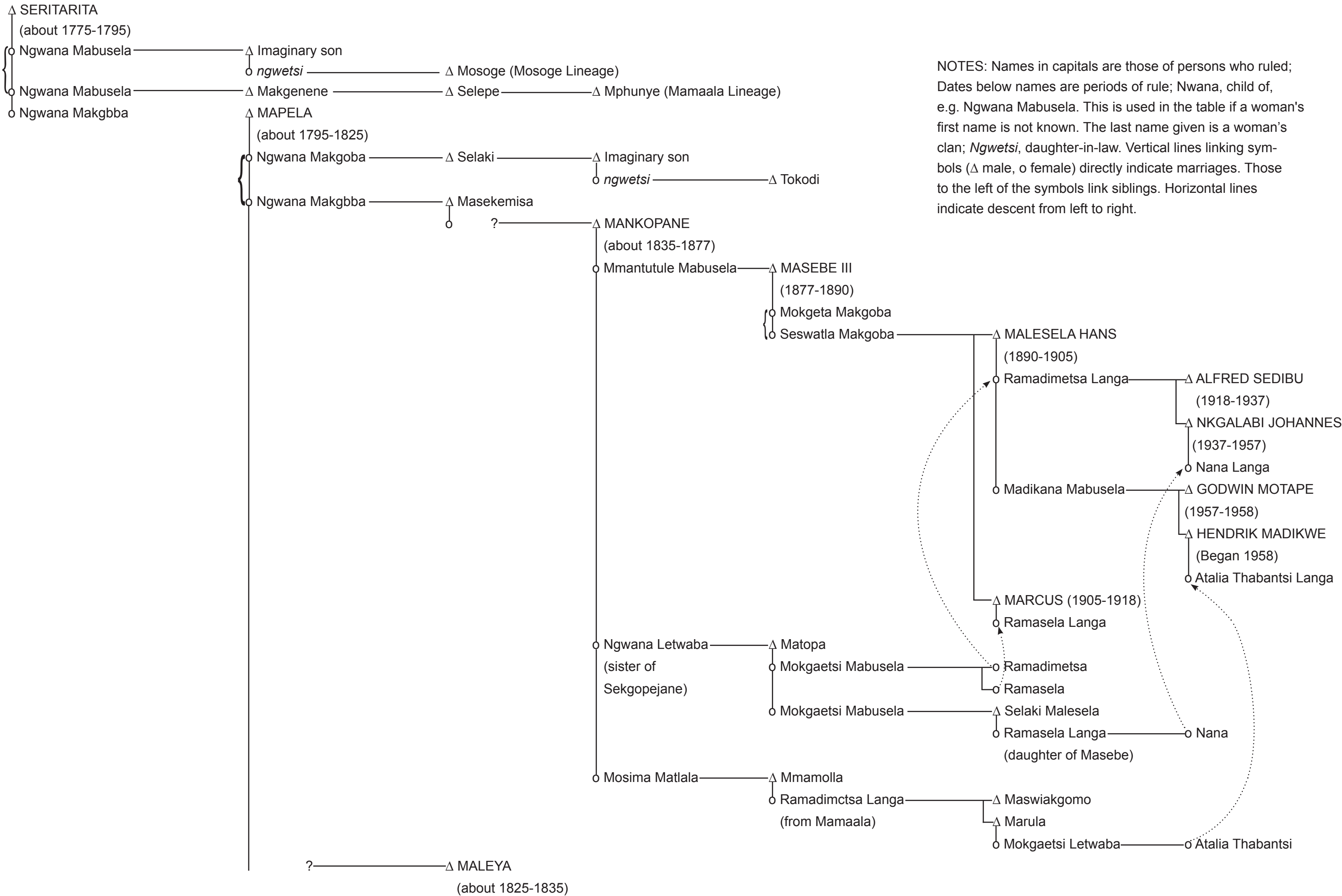
7. See Chapter II.

8. See 'Deciding Succession' in Annexure A to Part One.

9. Evans-Pritchard 1945. He speaks of ghost-marriages.

10. Krige in Gray & Gulliver (Eds) 1964.

TABLE VI
CHIEFS AND PRINCIPAL WIVES



from that of Mapela in that women may contract these marriages on behalf of their deceased male relations, whereas at Mapela men take the initiative.

3. Succession Disputes and Factions

Exceptions to the rules of succession given above cannot be explained in terms of further rules. Their explanation is to be sought in the ever-present possibility of a disputed succession and the factions that inevitably arise in support of either side of the dispute.

It is quite clear from the history of the Ndebele of Langa that the rightful heir in terms of the rules of succession did not always succeed. The chiefly succession was sometimes hotly contested, which is still the case at the present time.

Each contestant has a personal following and he emerges as the leader of a faction. These factions tend to persist long after the contest has been settled. The unsuccessful faction may remain in the chieftdom as a dissatisfied minority. This was a risky thing to do in the past, because successful candidates tended to be quite ruthless about eliminating opposition. But they could remain safely if they gave no sign whatever of their opposition.

The unsuccessful faction could, in the past, leave the chieftdom and seek sanctuary with, or even the military support of, another chieftdom. This option no longer exists to the same degree. Room to settle a large faction would be difficult to find in any chieftdom today, and military intervention of the kind envisaged is forbidden. The unsuccessful faction could also depart and establish a separate chieftdom if it was large and powerful enough. This is the way in which most new chieftdoms came into existence in the past. But this option has also fallen away due, on the one hand, to a lack of open land in which to settle, and, on the other, the tight control of the twentieth century.

Factions may persist through a rule to the next contested succession and they could have done so in the past. The factions align themselves behind the new contestants with a minimum of reshuffling across the line of division. In such an event the factions get new leaders and the issues at stake are not quite the same as a generation earlier. But their existence is still an expression of the old dissatisfactions.¹¹⁾ The faction leaders, who are the contestants for the chieftainship, are invariably the rightful heir and someone who is very close in the line of succession. The latter is usually the son of the household that ranks immediately after that of the rightful heir. Uterine brothers usually stand together. There is no example among the Langa of the sons of one woman having seriously challenged one another over the succession.

A person who is low down in the line of succession has very little chance of recruiting a following large enough to constitute a threat to his superiors. Any attempt in this direction on the part of such a person would in fact have the effect of uniting all those who have prior claims and their supporters against him. His adherents would be completely outnumbered by his opponents from the start.

Whenever the succession is disputed, the contestants and their supporters use the

11. Hans was not the first to appeal to the predominantly alien, mainly Sotho, subjects of the Langa in the south. Tokodi's brother Matlanya had done so a generation earlier. See Chapter V.

genealogical data and manipulate the facts in such a way as to 'prove' that their side is in the right. At the same time, they cast doubt on the legitimacy of the opposing contestant or the legitimacy of his claims to the chieftainship. The two interpretations of the genealogical data concerning the relative ranking of Hans and Bakenberg are an excellent example.¹²⁾

It is interesting to note that the rules of succession are actually stressed during a succession dispute. The rules are treated with the utmost respect, the expressed difference between the parties being the interpretation of the genealogical data. Each party tries to present himself as the legitimate heir and protector of the rules, while the other party is made out to be a usurper and transgressor of the rules. The successful contestant marries a principal wife as described earlier in this chapter when he succeeds. He ensures the future of the chieftainship if he gets an heir, but this also helps to ensure the present - it strengthens his hold.

The personality and personal popularity or otherwise of a contestant are factors of importance. The example of Masebe III and Tokodi can be quoted. Masebe had a strong personality and his popularity was deliberately cultivated by his father, Mankopane. He was sent on a raiding expedition which was successful from the people's point of view. Tokodi, by contrast, did not have a strong personality and Mankopane deliberately undermined his popularity. Tokodi was accused of interfering with Mankopane's wives, but this may simply have been the euphemistic way in which Mankopane made known that he considered Tokodi unsuitable for the chieftainship. Tokodi was also regarded as a coward. As a consequence of all this, Masebe was proclaimed chief after Mankopane's death and Tokodi meekly submitted.¹³⁾

We see then that succession disputes are sometimes stirred up during the lifetime of the ruling chief. During Mankopane's lifetime Masebe was favoured, then fell from favour and went into exile. Tokodi was favoured during Masebe's exile, but then Masebe was recalled and favoured again.¹⁴⁾

During Masebe's rule Bakenberg was favoured and Hans went into exile. Then Hans was recalled and briefly favoured before Masebe's death. Bakenberg's mother was Masebe's favourite wife, and this is probably the reason why Masebe favoured him.¹⁵⁾

It is difficult to understand why Masebe recalled Hans and briefly favoured him. It is possible that Masebe was compelled to face the fact that Hans enjoyed considerable support in the chiefdom. This was particularly true of the Sotho headmen in the south, but he also enjoyed the support of a number of influential members of the ruling Langa clan. It is likely that Masebe assessed the relative strength of the factions supporting Hans and Bakenberg and decided that Hans could not be ignored. Then, again, he may simply have been acknowledging the fact that Hans was the rightful heir, which was reflected in the support he enjoyed.

Factions are a means whereby the people can give expression to their dissatisfaction and bring pressure to bear on the ruling chief. During the first months of the rule of Masebe III, for example, he was very friendly with the Berlin missionaries. He adopted European customs, forbade working on Sundays, and even refused to

12. See Chapter VJ. The genealogical situation at the point of difference must, of course, be amenable to different interpretations, otherwise the opposing faction will be unable to find an argument and present a case.

13. See Chapter V.

14. See Chapter IV.

15. See Chapter V.

have the customary rainmaking rituals performed despite the fact that a drought was being experienced. This aroused opposition and people started to transfer their allegiance to his brother Tokodi. He soon realised his mistake and changed his attitude in the required direction, thereby checking the flow of support to Tokodi. Or, to put it differently, he realised that the policy he stood for was not acceptable to his people and therefore changed it accordingly.¹⁶⁾

A chief inevitably has a policy of some sort, whether there is an opposing faction in his chiefdom or not. He influences the thinking of his people and they influence his thinking. He must keep in touch with the thinking of his people or lose support. In the extreme case, where his policy is altogether unacceptable to his followers, they will transfer their allegiance to the opposing faction and he can expect to be ousted. They will find a leader and create a faction if necessary. This possibility will normally serve to check a chief and keep him in line with the will of his people. In this way the people can to some extent ensure that their chiefs represent their values and aspirations.

Succession disputes were a mechanism whereby weaklings and unpopular contestants could be eliminated. One gains the impression from viewing the history of succession disputes among the Ndebele of Langa that legitimacy according to the rules was not a sufficient condition for ensuring the succession. The possibility of a challenge was always present and had to be met. If the rightful heir was man enough to beat down the challenge, he was worthy to succeed. If not, he deserved to succumb to a better man, and the chiefdom gained by the elimination of a weakling or otherwise undesirable person from its apical leadership position. This increased the chiefdom's chances of survival in the unsafe and unstable era prior to the twentieth century.

In the days before the Langa became subject to White rule, such factions ran their logical course. The successful contestant eliminated opposition, often quite ruthlessly, and established unquestioned rule over the chiefdom. Twentieth century South Africa does not tolerate the ruthless elimination of opposition, and clamps down on civil disorder. Opposition and dissatisfaction now tend to accumulate and endure, and this tends to weaken the chieftainship. The ruthless periodic renewal of the chieftainship, brought about by succession disputes and factions, has been eliminated by the orderly government of the twentieth century.

16. See Chapter V.

CHAPTER XI

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

1. The Chief and his Private Advisers

The chief is at the head of the day-to-day government of the chiefdom. He is assisted by a number of functionaries and by the different councils of the chiefdom.

Closest to the chief are his private advisers. He forms an informal administrative body in conjunction with these persons which is termed *kgosi le bo-monnagabo* (the chief and his brothers). The advisers should be the chiefs younger brothers as the name indicates, or other close relatives such as the younger brothers of his father. In practice, however, this is not the case today.¹⁾ Some of the younger brothers of the chief live too far away to act as advisers on a day-to-day basis. But they do advise the chief when they have an opportunity. Some brothers are away at work in the industrial centres. Others, again, are precluded from serving as advisers because of the dispute concerning the succession of the present chief.²⁾

The result of all this is that the private advisers of the present chief are more distantly related men of the Langa clan than would traditionally have been the case. These men are William Langa, a rather low-ranking half-brother of the chief; Dennis and Karel Langa, sons of the chiefs uncle Marcus; Piet Mo imane Langa of the Segoweng lineage; and Samuel and David Langa of the Mamaala lineage.

The chief is the head of his own ward in addition to being the chief. He is therefore responsible for the internal administration of this ward in addition to the administration of the chiefdom as a whole. However, someone is specially appointed to relieve the chief of the burden imposed by this branch of his responsibilities. This person is known as *nduna ya molate* (headman of the capital). He should by rights be the brother of the chief who is next to him in rank.

The person who occupies the post at present is Robert Lekgowa Langa, who is the third brother in rank after the ruling chief. The two brothers in between have been disregarded on account of the succession dispute already referred to in the one case, and absence from the Mapela area in the other. In practice Robert, who is a keen farmer and spends much of his time tending his irrigation plots, seldom performs his duties. The task therefore falls to Piet Mo imane Langa of the Segoweng lineage, who is one of the chiefs private advisers.

1. Today means 1968, when the original draft of the Mapela material was written.

2. See Chapter VIII.

The personal conduct of the chief has a profound influence on the effectiveness of the administrative machinery of the chiefdom. Many Langa families were induced to come and settle at Mapela during the regency of Marcus (I 905-1918). The chiefdom prospered and was able to purchase a valuable farm. Much of the good work was neutralised during the rule of Alfred that followed (1918-1937). Marcus and his family had to flee from the Mapela area. Many Langa families left and settled outside the Mapela area or just elsewhere in the area where they would not be too close to the chief.

The present rule, which began in 1958, has been quiet and constructive. Opposition seems to have lessened and the machinery of government is functioning smoothly. The present chief makes a point of visiting all his headmen two or three times a year and listening to their complaints. He prevails on them by wise counsel to act in the best interests of their respective subjects. Thus, if a headman is in the habit of imposing excessive fines, the chief will admonish him tactfully. He thus not only gains the respect of the headmen concerned, but also that of their people.

2. The Batseta System

The chiefdom used to have a system of two-way channels of communication between the people and the chief. The functionaries in this system were called *batseta* (singular *motseta*). The verb stem *-tseta* means represent, introduce, act as go-between, etc., and *batseta* therefore means delegates, mediators, messengers, or representatives.³⁾

The *batseta* system was headed by a person known as *motseta yo mogolo* (the great intermediary). He used to have direct access to the chief, and all the wards, subwards and lineages of the chiefdom had to approach him if they wished to see the chief. Similarly, all communications from the chief to the people went through the *motseta yo mogolo*.

All the lineages of the ruling Langa clan except Mamaala had direct access to the *motseta yo mogolo*. A number of non-Langa clans of the chiefs ward also had direct access to this functionary, as did the Masenya and Abbotspoort headmanships. The remaining clans of the chiefs ward, the remaining wards of the chiefdom, and the Mamaala lineage, had indirect access to the *motseta yo mogolo* through one or other of the divisions that had direct access to him.⁴⁾ The *batseta* system did not reflect political rank, whether of the headmen or of anyone else.

The function of *motseta yo mogolo* was vested in the Nyatlo family when the Ndebele of Langa separated in 1890. Prior to that the post was held by the Motlatla family, of whom the Nyatlo were dependants.

The function of *motseta* was thought of as pertaining to a group rather than to an individual. Thus, although the head of a family or lineage was the *motseta* nominally, any member of the family could act in the absence of the head if his services were required.

A petitioner who was subject to a particular sub-headman approached his subheadman first. The latter then took him to the headman. After that the channels given in Table VII were followed. If the petitioner was in Mabus la's ward, for example, the petitioner, his sub-headman and their headman approached the head of the

3. Bothma 1962, pp. 59 & 81.

4. See Table VII.

Senkwele lineage. Their *motseta* at Senkwele's took them to the *motseta* yo mogolo, who in his turn took them all to the chief. A message from the chief to this petitioner followed the same channel in reverse.

The way in which the *batseta* system is conceived, can best be understood by considering the instruction that the chief used to give in connection with the now obsolete harvest festival. The instruction was the following: *boi'la bana ba gago gore ba tsebise bana ba bona gore ba tsheele mabjalwa a mokato* (tell your children to notify their children to bring the beer of the harvest festival).⁵⁾ The word 'children' refers to all those wards and lineages that have a particular man or family as their *motseta*, the latter being the 'parent'. The 'children' of Nyatlo were the lineages of Molaung, Ntwampe, Ma iwaneng, Makgwading and Senkwel and a few other groups. The 'children' of Molaung were Tshokwe, Puka and Malebana; those of Makgwading were Seema. Kekae and Marnaala; and so forth.⁶⁾

The relationship of a *motseta* with his 'children' tended to be paternal, as may be expected. The *motseta* held no political authority over his 'children', yet his influence over them was great. He listened to them whenever they came to him with a matter, and he gave them sound advice. In this way matters were often settled and prevented from going to higher authority. The *batseta* system therefore also sifted matters so that only such matters as deserved the chiefs attention were brought to his notice.

Spokesmen say that there also used to be a *batseta* system for women. Normally women are responsible to their menfolk and depend on them for their representation. But in the olden days when the first-fruits and harvest festivals were still held, an independent system for the women was required. The problem was solved quite simply, because the wives of the male *batseta* served as *batseta* for the women. This confirms what was said above namely that the function pertains to a family or group rather than to an individual.⁷⁾

The *batseta* system has now fallen into disuse. The various wards and the subdivisions of the ruling ward shown in Table VII now simply go to the chiefs homestead where they buttonhole one of the courtiers, who then acts as *motseta*. People may also simply turn up with a letter from the headman addressed to the secretary of the Tribal Authority. In the example given above, the petitioner from one of the sub-headmen's units subject to Mabusela would still have to go to his sub-headman first, who would accompany him to the headman. The latter would give him a letter to the secretary of the Tribal Authority or would accompany him to the capital, where a courtier would be found and would deal with the matter in the manner of a *motseta*.

Although the *batseta* system as such (or rather, the network of channels) has fallen into disuse, the underlying concept of the system is still very much alive and is used all the time.

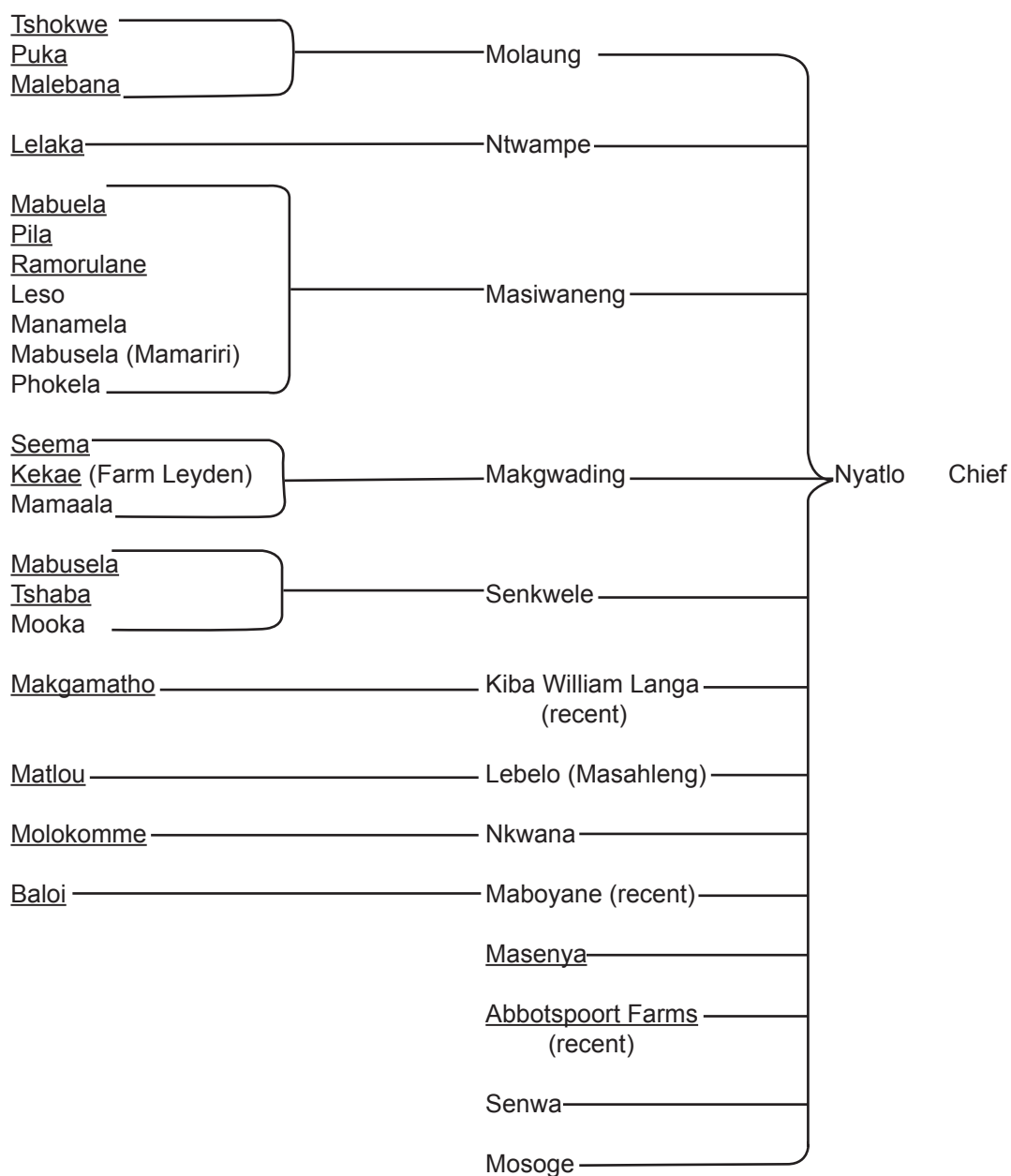
The Mapela chiefdom also has *batseta* for other chiefdoms with which it has dealings. These chiefdoms are the Langa of Bakenberg, the Kekana of Mokopane, the Ma ne, the Matlala, the Molet i and the Seleka. There is a person at Mapela

5. See Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969, where the harvest festival is described.

6. See Table VII.

7. For a description of these festivals, see Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969.

TABLE VII
THE BATSETA SYSTEM



Notes: Names underlined are those of headmanship.

Those not underlined are Langa and non-Langa lineages and families within *mosate*.

who is *motseta* for each of these chiefdoms. Delegations from these chiefdoms approach the Mapela chief through these persons.

In the same way, if a delegation from Mapela visits these chiefdoms it will find a *motseta* for Mapela at each of them. However, there is no such thing as an exchange of diplomatic representatives but rather an identification of indigenous contacts who enjoy the trust and respect of both sides. The *batseta* at Mapela for the various friendly chiefdoms mentioned above, are Mapela people. Similarly, the *batseta* for Mapela at these various chiefdoms are members of these chiefdoms.

3. The Statutory Tribal Authority

A Tribal Authority was established for the Mapela chiefdom in terms of the Black Authorities Act, 1951 (Act 68 of 1951), by Government Notice No. 2612 of 24 December 1954. The Notice determined that the Tribal Authority consist of the chief and not more than sixteen and not less than ten members.

The duties of a Tribal Authority are prescribed in section 4 of the Black Authorities Act. Briefly speaking, they boil down to assisting the chief in carrying out his duties. The duties, powers, privileges and conditions of service of a chief are governed by the provisions of section 12 (civil jurisdiction), section 20 (criminal jurisdiction), and the Third Schedule (offences that may not be tried by a chief of the Black Administration Act 1927 (Act No. 38 of 1927). They are also governed by the provisions of Proclamation No. 1 IO of 1957 in which *inter alia* a list of duties is assigned to chiefs.

The Tribal Authority does not coincide with any of the traditional councils of the chiefdom. At present (1967) the members of the Tribal Authority are the chief, one Langa man (*mokgomana*), three non-Langa men from the chief's ward (*bagotsi ba mollo* - fire kindlers, i.e. commoners who live near the chief's ward), and six headmen or their representatives. It does not coincide with the informal council consisting of the chief and his private advisers (*kgosi le bo-monnagabo*) since headmen and non-Langa persons of the ruling ward are included. Nor does it coincide with the formal council of the chief's ward, nor yet with the representative council of the chiefdom, as we shall see.

The Tribal Authority has not succeeded in replacing any of the traditional councils of the chiefdom. The informal *kgosi le bo-monnagabo* still functions from day to day. The Tribal Authority meets regularly on Mondays and Thursdays and may be specially convened if occasion arises. It therefore cannot replace this informal council by taking over its functions, simply because it does not meet every day. The other councils of the chiefdom have also retained most of their traditional functions, as we shall see.

The Tribal Authority has, however, almost completely taken over the judicial work above the headmanship level. All such cases as come to the chief on appeal from the headmen or because they are beyond the ability or competence of the headmen, are tried by the Tribal Authority. The *nduna ya mo'sate* still settles cases in the same way as any other headman. Similarly, only cases that are beyond his ability or competence and appeals go to the Tribal Authority.

Jurisdiction to try cases is actually vested in the chief and not in the Tribal Authority as such. However, it is the duty of the latter body to assist the chief in exercising his powers. The chief still tries cases as he did traditionally, the difference

being that he now does so in a new context. He is assisted by a formal statutory council, whereas traditionally his assessors were those adult males, including courtiers, who happened to be present when a case came up.

The Tribal Authority is thought by tribesmen to have two functions. The first is judicial as described above, and the second is to deliberate on 'the matters of the Commissioner', i.e. non-traditional matters. Traditional matters are still referred to the traditional councils, and these councils are still convened when the need arises. The Tribal Authority does not include representatives of all the divisions of the chiefdom. If it were to decide on matters of great importance to the chiefdom as a whole without convening a more representative body, dissatisfaction would follow. However, it seems to be the policy of the chief and his advisers to refer any matter of great importance, whether of a traditional nature or not, to the representative council or to a tribal gathering.

The chiefdom has therefore given the Tribal Authority a place as an additional council beside its traditional councils without disrupting the administration. Under these circumstances, the Tribal Authority seems to be functioning satisfactorily.

4. The Traditional Councils

The traditional councils of the chiefdom are as follows:

- a. *Lekgotla la bakgomana le bagot'si ba mollo*. This is a council of Langa men (*bakgomana*) and fire kindlers (*bagodi ba mollo*). The latter are members of non-Langa clans that settled near the chief and acted as his bodyguard and tended the fire in the *kgoro* (courtyard) of the chiefs homestead. The clans concerned are those of Senwa, Lebelo, ikwana, Leso, Phokela, Manamela, and a few others.
- b. *Lekgotla la bakgomana le manduna*. This is the previous council plus all the ward headmen of the chiefdom.
- c. *Pitso*. The name comes from *bitsa* (call), and this council is a meeting to which all the men of the chiefdom are summoned.

The traditional councils deal with such matters as initiation and the marriage of a principal wife. They also deal with non-traditional matters that may be referred to them, such as the implementation of development proposals in the area by the responsible government department.

In the case of initiation, for example, the matter is first discussed by the chief and his private advisers. If it is felt that initiation should take place, the matter will be discussed by the council of the chiefs ward (*lekgotla la bakgomana le bagotsi ba mollo*) and then by the representative council (*lekgotla la bakgomana le manduna*). If it is finally agreed that initiation should take place, a tribal gathering (*pitso*) is convened and the assembled men of the chiefdom notified that initiation will take place in that year.

In the case of the marriage of a principal wife for the chief, the negotiations are a Langa clan affair to begin with. But when it has been decided who the future principal wife is to be, the representative council (*lekgotla la bakgomana le manduna*) is convened and informed accordingly. The approval of the council is sought, because the headmen and tile representatives of the chief's ward are expected to contribute cattle towards the marriage of th.is girl.

The headmen of the Kamola Bloc, the Abbotspoort farms, and Leyden, are too

far away to attend meetings in the Mapela area. Consequently, when matters of importance crop up and the necessary discussions by the various councils have taken place, the chief visits these headmen one by one with a few close courtiers and holds separate meetings. In practice these meetings are held to inform these headmen of the decisions already taken and to convince them that the decisions were the right ones.

5. Local Administration

The high degree of local autonomy enjoyed by the various wards is a marked feature of the political organisation of the Mapela chiefdom. The keynote of the relationship between the headmen's wards and the chief's ward is that the former take their cue from the latter. But once having done that, they are left very much to their own devices. All the wards come together at the beginning and at the end of the initiation rites. But for the rites themselves, each ward is on its own and acts independently of the others.⁸⁾

The same used to be the case when the first-fruits and harvest festivals were still held. The headmen's wards waited for the signal from the chief's ward and then continued on their own. In the case of the first-fruits festival the signal was the receipt from the chief's ward of a piece of pumpkin by each ward. This was added by each ward to its own first-fruits pumpkin.⁹⁾

Each ward still has its own rainmaker and performs its own rainmaking ceremonies. The ward headman also receives beer tribute from his subjects, but must himself render tribute to the chief once a year.¹⁰⁾

Each headman maintains his own court, where cases are tried and ward matters discussed. He is assisted by high-ranking men of his own ward. The *motseta* of the headman's ward is especially important. He should be close to the headman all the time to introduce visitors and manage the affairs of the court generally.

In the case of Mabusela's ward, for example, the headman is assisted by his close relatives. They constitute an informal council known as *kgosi le bana babo* (the chief and his children). He is also assisted by a more formal council, which is convened when the need arises, and includes all the sub-headmen. This council is known as *kgosi le rranduna* (the chief and the headmen). A ward gathering or *pitso*, also referred to as *setlhaba* (the chiefdom), may be convened if necessary. This is usually done when there are important decisions or announcements to be made.

The Seema ward, which has 130 households as against the 418 of Mabusela, has only two councils. They have the informal council which in their case consists of the headman and four of his brothers. It is known as *nduna le bana babo* (the headman and his children). They also have the ward gathering or *pitso*.

It is a standing rule in the chiefdom that the headman should be available in the mornings. This is generally known, and whatever matters there may be, are brought to his court in the mornings. Cases that the headman has no jurisdiction to try, are referred to the chief. So are those he is unable to solve. Cases may also go to the chief from the headman on appeal. Serious crimes over which neither the chief nor the headman has jurisdiction, are reported to the chief for reference to the police.

8. Initiation is discussed in Chapter XIII.

9. For a description of these festivals, see Jackson in *Ethnological Publications* I 969.

10. Tribute is discussed in Chapter XII.

The high degree of autonomy enjoyed by the headmen's wards may be due to the way in which they came into existence. A number of wards became part of the chiefdom during the rule of Chief Mapela. Some, such as Masenya and Seema, joined the chiefdom voluntarily. Others, such as Mabuela, Matlou and Ramorulane, were conquered and incorporated by the Ndebele of Langa. But they were discrete, independent political units before they were incorporated.¹¹⁾

They were permitted to retain much of their independence when they became subjects, and were ruled indirectly through their own heads. In fact, they formed a number of small chiefdoms subject to the paramount chieftaincy of the Langa. This explains why among themselves the members of a headmanship often refer to their headman as *kgosi* (chief) and to their ward as *setshaba* (chiefdom). This is illustrated above, where the names of the councils of Mabusela's ward are given. Those wards that came into existence recently (the farm wards) were given status analogous to that of the older wards. Their members sometimes also refer to their headmen as chiefs.

The sub-headmen (borametsana) also have political authority. They control the homesteads subject to them, settle disputes and hear minor cases of a criminal nature. More important matters go to the headman, and there is an appeal to the headman's court. They are not usually entitled to beer tribute, but must render it to the headman whenever they have a beer party, as must their subjects.¹²⁾

In the days when the first-fruits and harvest festivals were still held, the subheadmen used to continue with their own local festivals after taking their cue from their headmen.¹³⁾

When initiation takes place, the sub-headmen also have their own lodges (*meloto*) if they have enough candidates. If not, they join up with other sub-headmen to form a lodge. Each lodge circumcises separately once the headman's lodge has started doing so. However, all the lodges of a particular ward are located together in a single place of seclusion. The headmanship acts as a unit despite the fact that the sub-headmen have their own separate lodges.¹⁴⁾

The structure as regards sub-headmen's units varies from ward to ward. Some wards do not even have sub-headmen.¹⁵⁾

6. Arable Land and its Acquisition

The administration of arable land used to be left to the ward headmen, but was transferred to the chief during the rule of Chief Marcus (1905-1918). This has tended to harm the territorial character of headmen's wards, because the chief (or those at his side who act for him) often allocate fields out of context. People who are subject to one headman obtain fields in other headmen's wards. This leads to the next step, where people settle closer to their fields and actually live out of context as well.

The administration of arable fields was not an important matter in the distant past when land was plentiful. Fields were readily abandoned in favour of fresh fields in accordance with the practice of shifting cultivation. Inheritance of fields was therefore not an important matter either, and young people simply obtained fresh

11. See Chapter II.

12. See Chapter XII where tribute is discussed.

13. For a description of these festivals, see Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969.

14. Initiation is discussed in Chapter XIII.

15. See Chapter XIV for a description of territorial structure.

land to cultivate when they were ready to do so. No premium was placed on inheriting fields. Such fields were probably ready to be abandoned in any case.

History has placed a limit on the Mapela territory, and medical services have created the first demographic transition (a decrease in the death rate without a concomitant decrease in the birth rate).¹⁶⁾ The resultant population increase per given area has created pressure on land resources, and has had a marked effect on the attitude towards arable land. Shifting cultivation is no longer possible, and people now regard a specific parcel of arable land in a different light. The inheritance of such land is now one of the important ways in which it is acquired.

The administration of arable land has gained importance accordingly and new rules have emerged. The decision of Chief Marcus to assume direct responsibility contrary to age-old usage and the Mapela policy of indirect rule, reflects this enhanced importance.

Fields are normally obtained by men and allocated to their wives. They obtain them in one of two ways. The first is to inherit them from their mothers, and the second is to ask their headman for a field. Two-thirds of the fields reflected in the examples given below, were inherited.

If a woman has only one or two fields, they normally go to her youngest son. He is termed the *mosalalapeng* (he who remains in the household), and it is his special duty to care for his mother in her old age. It is therefore not surprising that he should be provided with the wherewithal to do so, and agricultural fields are essential in this respect. Other sons may inherit fields if the mother has enough. Daughters also inherit occasionally.

Inheritance of fields is a process that may stretch over many years. It may begin long before the mother dies. One or more of her daughters-in-law, especially her youngest son's wife, starts cultivating a field jointly with her mother-in-law. The daughter-in-law's share in the work and in the field increases as the mother-in-law grows older and her strength diminishes.. The former assumes full control of the field upon the latter's death.

The rule obtains that fields allowed to lie fallow for two full seasons are deemed to be without an owner. If a man allows his field to lie fallow for two seasons and someone else cultivates it, he has no claim for its return. It is argued that he was wasting the land by not using it.

Men wanting fields are continually on the look-out for fallow land. A man who identifies such a field, or any other suitable site for a field, reports the fact to his headman. The latter sends him on to the chief, where a courtier is instructed to accompany him to the field. The field is allocated to the applicant if the courtier is satisfied that the application is in order. The field may be in the ward of a different headman, but this fact does not matter to the chief. The latter headman is not even notified of the allocation.

Four families in headman Seema's ward were visited in July 1967 and the following particulars in connection with their fields obtained from them:

16. In addition, inter-tribal wars have been suppressed.

The First Family

Lesibana Seema (deceased)
Mosirna Seema
Ramokone Sethosa

William
Semole Sethosa

Raeseta Lehodi

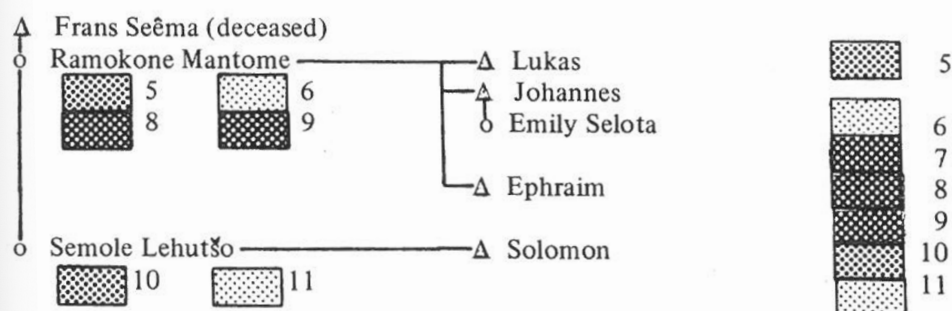
Isaac (deceased)
Frans

The sons of Mosima Seema, first wife of Lesibana Seema, left Mapela before they married. Her fields were consequently left to lie fallow and were eventually allocated to other people. Isaac obtained fields through the headman, but he is now dead. Frans also obtained a field through the headman, but his wife deserted him. These fields are not relected in the accompanying illustration. (See Diagram 2.)

William Seema inherited fields 1 and 2 from his mother Ramokone Sethosa. This was contrary to the custom according to which the youngest son inherits his mother's fields. He was the eldest. He allocated these two fields to his first wife, Semole Sethosa. Fields 3 and 4 were obtained through the headman (headman Seema) and were both allocated to his second wife, Raesega Lehodi.

Three of these fields are within headman Seema's ward. The fourth (no. 1) is just outside the ward boundary. All four are of a heavy black soil neferred to in South Africa as turf), which is considered to be very fertile. Field 4 changes its colour to dark red about half-way along its length, but the soil still has much the same heavy texture. The fields are stituated some distance apart. The black soil is called *seloko*.

The Second Family¹⁷⁾



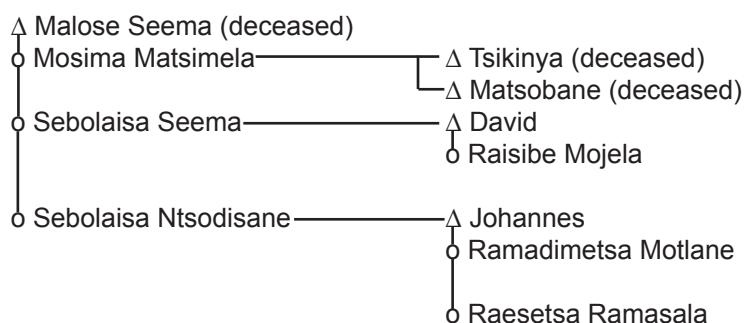
All the fields in this family were inherited, except no. 7 which was obtained through the headman. Lukas inherited field no. 5 from his mother Ramokone Mantome. The latter had four fields, of which no. 6 went to her son Johannes, and no. 8

17. The field notes do not reflect the names of the wives of Lukas, Ephraim and Solomon or give the reasons for their omission. The section on arable land and its acquisition did not form part of the original (1968) draft and this point was therefore not followed up at the time.

and 9 to her youngest son, Ephraim. Solomon inherited the two fields, no. 10 and 11, of his mother Semole Lehutso.

All the inherited fields are within headman Seema's ward. The one that was obtained through the headman (no. 7) is situated just out of Seema's, in headman Tshokwe's ward. Field 5 is a heavy, dark red soil. Of fields 6 and 7, which are both cultivated by Johannes Seema's wife Emily Selota, the first has a light, sandy soil and the second a heavy black soil. Fields 8 and 9 are both of the same heavy black soil, whereas 10 and 11 have a heavy dark red and a lighter, sandier red soil respectively. All the fields of this family are situated apart from one another.

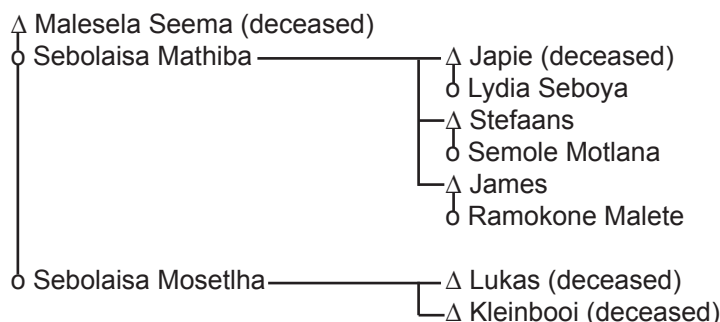
The Third Family



In this family we see that the sons of Molose Seema's first wife are dead and that no particulars regarding their mother's fields are recorded. The second wife, Sebolaisa Seema, had two fields, no. 12 and 13, which were inherited by her son David. The third wife of Malose Seema, namely Sebolaisa Ntsodisane, also had two fields, no. 14 and 15. These were inherited by her son Johannes, who allocated them to his first wife. He approached headman Seema for the two fields, no. 16 and 17, that were allocated to his second wife.

All six these fields are within headman Seema's ward. Two of them, 14 and 16, adjoin each other. The second was probably granted as an extension of the first. The interesting point to note here is that each wife has one field of heavy black soil and one of light sandy soil. Fields 12, 14 and 16 are of the latter kind, and 13, 15 and 17 of the former.

The Fourth Family



Malesela Seema's first wife, Sebolai a Mathiba, had two fields, no. 18 and 20, which were inherited by her eldest son Japie and her youngest son James respectively. The second son, Stefaans, obtained field 19 by permission of the chief. He is the headman of the Seema ward. James obtained field 21 through the chief after approaching the headman.

All four these fields are within headman Seema's ward. Fields 18 and 19, which adjoin each other, are of the heavy black soil already mentioned. Field no. 20 is of a light sandy soil, whereas no. 21 is also black.

A few interesting points emerge from the examples just given and the accompanying illustration of the fields.¹⁸⁾ The fields are of a variety of shapes and sizes.

The people utilise available space, and shape and size are often determined by natural features such as gullies, hills, rock outcrops etc. But, of course, they are perhaps more often limited by adjoining other people's fields. The fields in the examples vary from 3,7 ha for the largest to 0,6 ha for the smallest. The average is 1,44 ha per field.

The Mapela people try to give each wife two fields. This is clearly reflected in the examples given above. Such fields are also situated away from each other, which serves as an insurance against adversity. A hail storm may for example destroy the crop on one of the fields, but is unlikely to destroy both. Cattle may get into one field and destroy the crop, but it is unlikely that both will be destroyed, and so forth.

A further point to be noted is the distinct preference for holding one field in the heavy black soil and the other in the light sandy soil. This is also a form of insurance. It takes account of the different qualities of the soil. The heavy dark soil is very fertile and holds moisture well. It will therefore give a good crop in a relatively dry year, but does not tolerate excessive rain well. Sandy soil, on the other hand, will give a good crop even if the rain is excessive, but not if a drought is experienced.

The preponderance of inherited fields has already been noted - 14 out of 21. The remaining fields were obtained by approaching the headman, who then referred the applicants to the chief for the allocation of fields as explained at the beginning of this section. Two of the 21 fields were not situated within Seema's ward. One was inherited (no. 1) and the other obtained through the headman and the chief (no.7).

7. Recruitment to Office

The basis of recruitment to office of functionaries in the tribal government is hereditary succession. The tendency for offices to pass down from father to eldest son is very strong and may be expressed as a rule. Departures from the rule only occur under exceptional circumstances.

The example may be given of a certain man who was elected to serve as intermediary (*motseta*) for a particular headmanship when he settled in the Mapela area. This happened at the stage when the batseta system as described above was collapsing. This man rendered good service, but his son could not follow in his footsteps. However, when the tribal government was faced with the necessity of appointing a

18. See Diagram 2.

tribal policeman, the son was appointed. It was assumed that since the father had rendered good service as a *motseta*, the son would probably be a good policeman.

Recruitment to a headmanship is by hereditary succession in the lineage that rules the ward. The successor is the eldest son of the principal wife of the previous headman. As a rule, she is the first wife of the headman in order of marriage but this is not always the case. If the headman contracts a preferential marriage, for example with his mother's brother's daughter (his *malome*'s daughter), this woman will be his principal wife whether she was the first to be married or not. Normally she will be the first to be married.

Headmen do not have principal wives in the same way as the chief, that is to say wives for whom their subjects contribute the marriage cattle. Otherwise, the rules of succession are much the same as for the chieftainship. Regencies are not uncommon in the headmen's wards, and women may be married to raise seed for extinct households. Lineages senior to that of the rulers but ranking lower politically may also be found in the wards. The major difference between succession to the chieftainship and succession to a headmanship is the lesser degree of formality applicable in the latter case.

The examples that follow will give some idea where the headmen obtain their principal wives. Mabusela and Mabuela obtained their principal wives from the Langa chiefly family on more than one occasion. The Matlou and Molokomme headmen normally contract preferential marriages with the daughters of their mothers' brothers (*bomalome*) or fathers' brothers (*borangwane*) to obtain their principal wives. The same rule is probably followed by other headmen who were not specifically questioned on this point.

Three headmen stated that they obtained their principal wives from particular families. The Tshaba headmen obtained their principal wives from the Makgoba clan on three occasions. The Pila headmen get their principal wives from the Manyathela family, and the Lelaka headmen used to get their principal wives from the Mosoge lineage of the Langa. The Lelaka headmen now obtain their principal wives from the Ngwet ana family.

It must be pointed out, however, that when a headman marries a wife from the same family as his father did, he is inevitably contracting a preferential marriage of the matrilineal cross-cousin class. The first marriage between a Tshaba headman and a Makgoba girl established this relationship. The Makgoba family became mother's brothers to the Tfuaba headman. The same applies to the other two headmen and their in-laws.

Most of the headmen were visited for the first time between September 1962 and September 1963. At that time, the wards of Mabuela, Tshokwe and the farm Leyden were under regencies for heirs who had not yet attained majority. The Mabusela ward and the Mosoge lineage of the Langa were being ruled by younger brothers of the rightful heirs. The latter were away at work in the European centres. The rightful heir of Mosoge has returned since then and taken up his duties, but not the rightful Mabusela headman.

Sub-headmen also inherit their offices. The same general principles apply to them as are applicable to the headmen.

Each headman has a *motseta* or intermediary. His function is to introduce visitors to the headman's court, carry messages from the headman to his subjects. etc.

In all the old headmanships of the chiefdom this function is passed down from father to eldest son.

Other offices that are or were inherited by the functionary's eldest son are the following: the *ngaka ya marumo* (doctor of the assegais), whose task it was to administer the necessary magic to the age-sets of men, which were the military regiments of the Langa;¹⁹⁾ the *ngaka ya malwetsi* (doctor of diseases) of the chief, an office that was held by the Motlana family but is not held by them any longer; the *molobe* (head of female initiation), an office held by the Manala family; and so forth.

The manner in which the various offices came to be held by certain families is not always known. The reason for this is that some families have held their offices for a very long time.

The Mabusela family became headmen in about 1854 when Lamola, the highestranking headman, was killed and his family expelled.²⁰⁾ At that time the Mabusela's had already performed the function of doctor of the assegais for an unknown number of generations. It was precisely because they were famed army doctors that they were promoted and constituted into a headmanship.

The Motlana family was promoted in the same way more recently when the head of the family was appointed headman on the farm Klipfontein in the Kamola Bloc. The family previously functioned as medical doctors to the chiefs as stated above. This is another case of a loyal functionary being given a new office when the old one ceases.

The manner in which the office of *motseta* was acquired in the first instance is not the same in all the headmen's wards. In a number of cases (Masenya, Matlou, Molokomme, Ramorulane, Pila) the *motseta* family is of the same clan as the headman. In the case of Masenya and Ramorulane it began with two brothers, the elder of whom was the headman while the younger served as *motseta*. After that the two offices devolved separately from the two brothers. Much the same happened in the case of Pila, where an early headman appointed his younger brother's son as *motseta*.

In a number of cases the *motseta* is not of the clan of the headman. Examples are to be found in the wards of Lelaka, Mabuela, Mabusela, Seema, Tshaba and Baloi. In these cases the original *motseta* is said to have been chosen, but the specific reasons for the choice are not remembered. However, in the case of Mabuela's ward the *motseta* family was chosen on account of intermarriage. The original *motseta*, whose name was Molongwane, was related by marriage to the headman.

The *motseta yo mogolo* (principal intermediary) office used to be held by the Motlatla family. The Nyatlo family were dependants of Motlatla and assisted the latter in performing their duties. In 1890, when the Ndebele of Langa divided, Nyatlo supported Hans and settled with him at Magope Hill. Nyatlo consequently became *motseta yo mogolo* to Hans, and members of the Motlatla family who came with Nyatlo became his dependants. The roles of master and dependant between Motlatla and Nyatlo were thus reversed.

The present head of the Nyatlo family inherited the office of *motseta yo mogolo* from his father and performed his tasks for a time. Nyatlo has, however, ceased to act his part due to the current dispute regarding the chiefly succession.

There may be various reasons for electing an office-bearer in the first instance,

19. See Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969 for a description

20. See Oiapter III.

such as being related agnatically or by marriage to the person who elects him to office. However, during any given period or at any given time the persons actually elected to office will be outnumbered by far by the persons who came by their office by being born to it.

CHAPTER XII

TRIBUTE

I. Beer Tribute (Mebego)

The chief is entitled to the beer tribute of his subjects. This tribute is known as *mmebo* (plural: *mebego*), from -bega (to notify). The chief is said to 'eat the notifications' (*go ja mebego*).

In theory, when any subject has a beer party he must notify the chief of the fact by presenting a pot of beer to him. The chief is implicitly notified of the continued loyalty of the subject concerned at the same time. Failure to render the beer tribute is tantamount to rebellion, and no subject would fail to render this tribute unless he was rebellious and was prepared to face the consequences. It is relatively safe nowadays for a person to demonstrate opposition by refusing to render tribute, but in the olden days it would have been suicidal for a single family or a small group to do so. However, it would have been a different matter for a large segment of the chieftdom that felt itself to be strong enough to break with the chieftdom and go its own way.

Although in theory every subject must render beer tribute to the chief, most in fact render it to lesser men. Every headman of the chieftdom receives beer tribute from his subjects (*go ja mebego*). Sub-headmen also receive this tribute in a few cases. Such is the case in the chiefs ward, where the heads of the Mosoge and Lebelo groups are empowered to receive this tribute from their own subjects. The head of Mamaala has been authorised by the chief to receive tribute from some of the households subject to him. According to the terms of the authorisation the head of Mamaala receives this tribute from the Mamaala homesteads beyond the Mamaala capital, whereas those of the Mamaala capital itself render their beer tribute directly to the chief. The sub-headmen on the various farms governed by Mapela on the Phalala River and in the Kamala Bloc are also authorised to receive *mebeg*. In contrast with this, not one of the sub-headmen of Mabusela's ward has been given permission to receive *mebego*.

The headmen and sub-headmen who have permission to receive *mebego* from the homesteads subject to them, do not render this tribute to the chief whenever they have a beer party. This fact creates a default which must be remedied once a year. On this occasion each such headmanship and sub-headman's unit prepares a quantity of beer to be presented to the chief. A headman may present the chief with as much as 200 litres of beer on this occasion. The sub-headmen on the Phalala River and

those in the Kamola Bloc bring their annual tribute beer to headmen Marcus Langa and Motlana respectively, who in turn render an annual beer tribute to the chief.

The rendering of this annual beer tribute is now arranged in such a way that it does not reach the chief all at once, but over an extended period of time. The beer is enjoyed by the chief and his courtiers and visitors. In the olden days, when the harvest festival was still held, this annual rendering of tribute beer was part of the festival. The beer enjoyed during the festival was in fact the annual tribute beer. The harvest festival has not been held since 1919.¹⁾

Although the headmen and the sub-headmen mentioned above are authorised to receive tribute beer from their subjects when they have beer, this is clearly not a right but a privilege. The right or prerogative is that of the chief and the privilege enjoyed by these headmen and sub-headmen is theirs only at the chiefs pleasure.

The chief may, if he wishes, deprive one person of the privilege and give it to another. However, this is not done lightly. To deprive a headman of the privilege is to insult him and his entire following. It would cause a rift between the chief and the ward concerned. This would contradict the chiefs aims in allowing the privilege in the first place. It is a great honour for a headman or sub-headman and all his subjects if the former is vested with the privilege of receiving tribute beer. It tends to reinforce his loyalty and that of his subjects. The privilege is seen as one enjoyed by the entire headmanship or sub-headmanship and not by the head alone.

Those headmanships that were minor chiefdoms before they became subjects of the Langa have a natural desire to render beer tribute to their own heads when they have beer. They rendered this tribute to their own heads before they became subjects, and they were permitted to continue doing so afterwards. This was in line with the Langa policy of indirect rule through their own heads. But these heads, who became headmen of the Langa after joining, were expected to demonstrate their loyalty by rendering a beer tribute to the Langa chief once a year.²⁾

Although political authority and permission to receive beer tribute from beer parties usually go hand in hand, this is not always the case. The example of the head of Mamaala who only receives beer tribute from some of the homesteads subject to him has been mentioned. The sub-headmen of Mabusela who have political authority but do not receive beer tribute have also been mentioned. Sub-headmen generally do not receive beer tribute.

People who are not headmen or sub-headmen may be granted the privilege. The chief may grant it to a high-ranking relative whom he wishes to honour. The privilege was thus granted to Matopa Langa, who received beer tribute resulting from parties not only from his own dependants but also from other families who were settled in the same general vicinity as he. He did not control the latter. Nowadays only a few families render beer tribute to Matopa's successor. The privilege is seldom granted in this way and does not carry political authority with it.

2. Tribute of Returning Workers (*Malotsho*)

All the members of the chiefdom who return to the Mapela area after a spell of work in the White centres are expected to 'greet' (-*lotsha*) the chief by presenting him with a part of their earnings. The term *malotsho* is derived from the verb -*lotsha*.

1. See Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969, pp. 240-241, for a description of the harvest festival.
2. The incorporation of these minor chiefdoms is related in Chapter II.

7. Lebelo women in festive dress carrying beer for a wedding. (Photo: A.O. Jackson)



8. Mosoge women carrying maize from the chiefs tribute fields to his home. (Photo: Dr N.J. van Warmelo)



9. Herbalist Baadjie Tlatla carrying a bundle of moritatlou (*Mundulea sericea*) roots. They were dug outside the tribal area. They are chopped into inch-length pieces which are boiled, the extract being administered, a teaspoonful per day, to patients suffering from bolwet"ši bja mafat/ha (lung disease, e.g. tuberculosis). (Photo: A.O. Jackson)

Returning workers do not all render this tribute to the chief directly. Only those tribesmen who are members of the chiefs ward go directly to the chief. All the other tribesmen go to their respective headmen, who then accompany them to the chief. The sum of tribute money is fixed at R2-25, of which twenty-five cents is retained by the headman while R2-00 is passed on to the chief. Only ward headmen are empowered to retain twenty-five cents of this *malotsho* tribute money.

This form of tribute has its roots in the distant past although it looks as if it developed under modern conditions. In the olden days tribesmen who left the chiefdom to obtain something were expected to greet the chief when they returned and give him a part of their acquisition. Such persons as specialist rainmakers, herbalists, diviners, hunters, and gatherers of fruit and other useful items, rendered tribute in this way.

Very often the nature of the tribute was specified. The skins of lions and leopards, buffalo meat, rhinoceros horns, and elephant tusks, are some of the items specifically reserved for the chief. However, it was normal procedure for the chief to reward the person who brought him any of these specified items.

Opportunities for hunting and gathering have almost disappeared, and virtually nothing of the *malotsho* tribute in its original form has remained.

3. Tribute Fields (*Masemo a Mosate*)

The *masemo a mosate* (singular *tshemo ya mosate*) are fields cultivated by the various wards on behalf of the chief. These fields are quite distinct from, and have nothing to do with, the personal fields of the chiefs wives. At present the following tribute fields are being cultivated for the chief: ³⁾

- a. About 10 ha cultivated by Masenya in the mosate area near the Masenya boundary.
- b. About 8,5 ha cultivated jointly by Tihaba and Puka and adjoining the above field.
- c. About 10 ha cultivated jointly by Mabuela and Ramorulane and situated in the *mosate* area just west of Magope Hill.
- d. About 7 ha cultivated jointly by Mosoge and Molokomme and situated between Fothane Hill and the Kgwana River in the *mo'tate* area.
- e. About 8,5 ha on the farm Blinkwater, cultivated jointly by Makgamatho, Malebana and Molekana.
- f. The Baloi people cultivate a 1,3 ha plot on the irrigation scheme in the Masenya area. This is a recent development.
- g. About 5 ha on the farm Vaalkop cultivated by Pila.
- h. About 4 ha on the farm Leyden cultivated by Kekae.

The Mabusela and *mo'late* wards used to cultivate an extensive field for the chief between Magope Hill and Mamaala's headquarters, but this ceased in about 1958. Shortage of land has also resulted in headmen Matlou, Lelaka and Seema not having fields to cultivate for the chief. They now simply help the other headmen when help is required.

The produce of fields cultivated for the chief on the farms beside the Phalala River goes to headman Marcus Langa. The latter is the son of the present chiefs deceased elder brother. The distance between these farms and the Mapela capital is re-

3. The headmen's wards are listed and discussed in Chapter XIV.

sponsible for this arrangement. Nothing has yet been arranged on the Kamola Bloc farms. This is understandable, since these farms are owned and controlled by the South African Development Trust.

One can reckon from the above that about 54 ha of tribute land, not counting that on the Phalala River, is being cultivated for the chief by his subjects. Some of the headmen no longer have tribute fields to cultivate for the chief. In fact, it appears as if a larger extent of tribute land was cultivated in the past. Some 35,5 ha of the tribute land now being cultivated, is situated within the chiefs ward.

The headmen are notified by the chief when the time comes to plough the fields. Their men then come and do so with their own ploughs and draught animals. After that the women of each ward get together and sow or plant the seed in the respective tribute fields for which they are responsible. The seed is supplied by the chief. The headmen are again notified when the need for hoeing arises, and the women come together in the same way to do the hoeing. The women are finally called upon through their ward headmen to do the reaping. The crop is then reaped and taken to the chief.

Each headman is therefore responsible for the tribute field under his care from the time of ploughing right through to the handing over of the reaped crop to the chief. The only exception is that the chief himself provides the seed.

The disposal of the crop is a matter to be decided by the chief and his councillors. The crop from the tribute fields is intended not only to help the chief to provide for his visitors, but it also serves as a reserve that can be used in times of need. Should a particular ward for example have a crop failure, that ward would be permitted to retain the produce of the tribute field cultivated by it. These fields are mostly not in the areas of the subject wards. It is therefore possible that they may produce a good crop even if the subject ward concerned experiences a crop failure in its area. Crops from the tribute fields of other headmen may also be used to help a ward that has had a crop failure.

It is said that in the olden days the various wards kept and stored the produce of the tribute fields as a matter of course. They only took it to the chief as and when the need arose. This procedure ensured that there would always be sufficient food for the chief and his family. It was most unlikely that an enemy would succeed in destroying all these grain stores at all the places in the chiefdom where they were kept.

Grain used to be stored in large storage baskets buried in pits in the cattle kraals. Only the owners of these kraals knew exactly where the grain baskets were buried.

CHAPTER XIII

INITIATION AND AGE-SETS

1. Introductory

Langa spokesmen say that the custom of circumcision was not originally practised by them. They say that the custom was adopted from the Sotho. It became necessary because intermarriage started taking place between the Langa and the Sotho. Uncircumcised men were despised by the Sotho women.

The Sotho chieftdom that was closest to the Ndebele of Langa during the first few generations of their stay amongst the Sotho was that of Matlala. The Langa were at Thaba Tshweu near the present-day Pietersburg at the time, and the Matlala were at Matlala-thabeng. The distance between the two places was about sixty kilometres. It is reasonable to assume that the Langa learned circumcision from the Matlala people. The fact that the head of an initiation lodge at Mapela is known as *mat/ala*, seems to confirm the assumption.¹⁾ The Moletsi people moved in somewhat later, but may also have had a hand in teaching the Langa circumcision.

The majority by far of the Mapela people are Sotho. Their forebears therefore already practised circumcision when they joined the Langa. Some of them are of Matlala origin, as are for example the people of headmen Masenya and Seema.

Initiation into manhood or womanhood consists of phases that take place in public, as well as phases that are strictly secret and may only be witnessed by persons of the sex concerned who have undergone the rites.²⁾ This chapter does not deal with the latter phases.

2. Boys' Initiation

Initiation may be arranged because a headman has a son who has attained the age of puberty or because he is approached by his subjects and told that they have sons who are ready for initiation. Initiation may also be requested by a Langa man

1. See Krige 1937, footnote p. 346; see also Chapter 1.

2. For Sotho initiation see Lemue 1836; Jacottet 1896/7; Willoughby 1909; Winter 1914; Hoffmann 1915; Thilenius 1915; Roberts 1916; Roberts & Winter 1916; Brown 1921; Endemann 1928; Ramseyer 1928; Junod 1929; Franz 1929; Krige 1931; Eiselen 1932; Kuhn 1937; and Language 1943.

(*mokgomana*). The matter is discussed by the council of the chief's ward (*lekgotla la bakgomana le bagotsi ba mollo*). After that the headmen are called in and the matter discussed by the representative council (*lekgotla la bakgomana le manduna*). A tribal gathering (*pitso*) is called and the people notified if it is felt that initiation should take place.

All the boys of the chiefdom who are to undergo initiation, then come together in the area between the two small hills Radinonyane and Raphaga. Mock battles take place between the novices and the youths who were initiated during the previous course. The novices are said to be practising during this period. When the time for the serious part of the rites comes, the novices are separated into groups according to their headmanships.

It is an outstanding feature of the chiefdom that each ward initiates its novices separately. Each ward of the chiefdom has its own initiation site. There is no stage of initiation during which the wards act in such a way that one can determine a system of precedence. The wards take their cue from the chiefs ward, and from that moment onwards each is on its own. They do not take their cue in any given order.

The boys of the chiefs ward come together at the capital and at one or two other centres, depending on the number of circumcision lodges (*moloto*, plural: *meloto*) to be built for the novices. The number of lodges depends on the number of novices per sub-division of the chiefs ward. Sub-divisions that do not have sufficient novices to justify separate lodges are combined. The chiefs ward may have as many as seven circumcision lodges to cater for the following sub-divisions:

- a. Mosate, Molaung, Ntwampe, Masiwaneng, Makgwading, Nyatlo and Nkwana (i.e. all the Langa except the Mosoge and Mamaala lineages, plus a few dependants).
- b. Mosoge.
- c. Mamaala, Lebelo and Senwa.
- d. Manamela.
- e. Mooka.
- f. Leso and Mabusela³⁾
- g. Phokela.

All the circumcision lodges of the chief's ward are situated in the same locality. There were only two in 1948. The lodges of the headmen are situated elsewhere.

When the boys come together in their respective groups, their heads are shaved smooth except for a small patch on the top of the head. This hair style is known as *tlopo*. They then spend the night singing songs. In the olden days they spent the night in the guard-house. (*kgwadi*) in the courtyard of the chiefs homestead.⁴⁾ An animal is slaughtered for them. This process of eating and singing is called *go bata letswai* (to eat the salt with one's fingers). The beast is killed by means of a single spear thrust by a person who is known to have a good hand for such work. The meat is treated with medicines before being eaten by the novices.

Very early the next morning, at the crack of dawn (*ka makhwibidu a banna*), the boys leave for their place of seclusion. They are kept busy by some men, while

3. This is not a headmanship, but a Mabusela group living within the chiefs ward and referred to as those of Mamariri to distinguish them.
4. See illustration of Chief Hans' homestead at Magope Hill in Chapter IX in which the position of the *kgwadi* is indicated (Diagram I).

others build the lodges. These lodges are branch enclosures in which the novices sleep. After they have been built, the men sit down and elect heads for the various lodges. The head of a lodge is known as *mat/ala*. The person who is chosen to head the lodge of the Langa rulers, that is the first one in the above list, outranks the heads of the other lodges. The lodges are usually situated behind one of the hills or at a place where there is a lot of bush to provide privacy.

Spokesmen say that from the moment that the head *mat/ala* is chosen, the chief does not rule any longer. They say he just sits (*o no dula fela*). He actually withdraws from the administration of the chiefdom.

Cases are now tried by the heads of the lodges, and the *matlala* of the chiefly lodge is virtually the chief. All the tribute that customarily goes to the chief is brought to him during this period. Cases that the ward lodges find too difficult to solve, are brought to him. The same applies in the wards, where the headmen are temporarily replaced by the heads of their initiation lodges.

This state of temporary disequilibrium in the government of the chiefdom continues until the boys return from their places of seclusion. The *matlala* of the chiefly lodge pays his respects to the chief and gives him a full report of the fines imposed. He transfers all the fines to the chief, who may return some to him. Animals that are given in payment of fines are usually slaughtered and eaten at the initiation site and not retained for transfer to the chief.

In each lodge the novices are circumcised strictly in order of rank. The problem of the ranking of individuals in the various wards relative to one another is avoided by having the wards circumcise separately after taking their cue from the chiefs ward. In the same way, the problem of rank within the chiefs ward is avoided to a certain extent. The various divisions have their own lodges in which they circumcise their novices separately from those of the other divisions.

The principles upon which rank are based are genealogical seniority within a lineage, and the order in which different lineages or clans obtained membership of the chiefdom. A lineage may be favoured by a chief and be promoted to higher rank, but it seems as if the rank of unrelated lineages relative to one another does not readily undergo changes.

Circumcision takes place on the very first morning of seclusion when some of the men are still busy building the lodges. The men of the other lodges wait until they see that one or two boys in the chiefly lodge have been circumcised. That is to say, they take their cue from the chiefly lodge and then continue independently. In the chiefly lodge only one boy is circumcised out of order of rank. He is the highest-ranking novice of the Nyatlo family. He precedes the highest-ranking novice of the chiefly family in order to 'test the dangers' for the chiefly family. This is one of the functions that the Nyatlo family has to perform in its capacity as *motseta yo mogolo* (great intermediary) to the chief.⁵⁾

In the olden days the period of seclusion used to last for four months, approximately from March to June. The period is much shorter nowadays and is chosen to coincide with the school holidays. The lodges are set alight at the end of the period when the novices return. The novices may not look back at the burning lodges. The ashes of each lodge are later placed in a circle of upright, flat stones. The ash becomes indistinguishable after a time, but the circles of stones remain for decades as

5. See Chapter XI for a discussion of the *batseta* system.



10. A circle of flat stones containing the ashes of a boys' initiation lodge. This one dates back to 1948, when the Magohu were initiated. (Photo: K. Budack)



11. An old circle of stones. Many such monuments to bygone initiation lodges are to be seen in secluded areas. (Photo: K. Budack)

monuments to the lodges.

It is when the lodges are set on fire that the genealogical seniority of the Mosoge and Mamaala lineages becomes apparent for the first time. The lodge of Mosoge is set alight first, then that of Mamaala, then that of the chiefly family, and finally any other lodges that the chiefs ward may have. If Mosoge does not have a lodge through a lack of novices, then Mamaala ignites first; and if neither have lodges, then the motate lodge is set alight first.

The novices of the whole chiefdom now gather at the chiefs homestead. Some sleep in the cattle-kraal, and others in the courtyard. Early on the morning after their return the chief is notified and indicates an animal to be slaughtered for them. The head of the Mosoge lineage is then called forward to give the novices their ageset name. He proclaims loudly: *le magohu* (you are *magohu*, or whatever the name may be). He repeats this, and a great clamour breaks out.

The giving of the age-set name is a formality, since the names follow a fixed cycle and there is no doubt in anyone's mind as to what the name will be. However, the performance of this function is another indication of the genealogical seniority of the Mosoge lineage. The duty to bestow the age-set name is vested in the head of this group.

The beast presented by the chief is brought into the courtyard after the age-set name has been given. Mosoge then says to the new age-set: *Magohu* (or whatever the name may be), *kgomo ya lena se!* (here is your beast!). They bring the animal down with their bare hands, after which it is killed with a single spear thrust. Meat is cut from the back of one of the hind legs and prepared for the *nama ya mokgalo* (meat of the *mokgalo* tree) ceremony. The functionary who handles the preparations for this observance is the head of the Mabusela ward, who does so in his capacity as doctor of the assegaais.⁶⁾

The meat for the *nama ya mokgalo* ceremony is tied firmly inside a branch of the *mokgalo* tree (*Zizyphus mucronata*), which has many recurved thorns. The young men of the new age-set must now remove the meat without using their hands. Whoever succeeds, takes a bite of the meat and throws the remainder into the air. The outstretched hands of the other members of the age-set are ready to grab the meat before it reaches the ground. The person who gets it, takes a bite and throws it into the air again. This goes on until the meat is finished. The remaining meat of the beast is divided and each *matlala* of the chief's ward gets a portion.

For the next two weeks the members of the new age-set spend much of their time rubbing the dead skin and dirt from their bodies. This is carefully collected, and at the end of the period the members of the new age-set who belong to the chiefs ward gather near Radinonyane Hill. They look for an anthill with a hole that goes straight down, and throw the rubbings from their bodies into it. This stage is referred to as *go lahla diphoro* (to throw away the rubbings, from *fora*: dress or curl the hair, stroke, caress, fondle). The other wards of the chiefdom do this separately. Members of the new age-set belonging to the chiefs ward finally race one another to the capital.

This concludes the initiation rites for boys, and they are accepted in society as adults and may marry.

6. See Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969.

3. Girls' Initiation

The women begin with the initiation rites for the girls as soon as they see the smoke from the burning lodges of the boys. This is the signal for them to get out of the way so as not to be present when the boys return. The women make their appearance for a short while when the men have returned and are in the courtyard. The women inform the men that the latter have been troubling them, and that they now intend to commence with their own initiation. This complaint refers to the fact that the women have had to keep out of the way of the men during the period of male initiation. Girls' initiation takes place during August approximately.

The initiation of girls follows the same lines of division as that of the boys. The various wards act on their own, and the chiefs ward may have up to seven divisions if there are enough novices in each division. The head of each such division is a woman known as *mmamolobe*, who is the female equivalent of the *mat/ala*.

The women are ruled by a man of the Manala clan during the period of initiation. This function is vested in the clan, and is inherited from generation to generation. The man is known as *molobe*, and it is said that he knows everything that goes on in the girls' initiation rites. No part of the rites is kept secret from him.

The *molobe* rules the women in the same way as the head *matlala* does the men. He is the chief temporarily in all matters concerning the women, also in matters between men and women where the woman is the complainant. However, cases are not tried in the normal way. There is a conventional procedure that comes into play when the girls' initiation rites are being performed. There is also a standard fine known to all, namely a goat or R1-00. The women simply go to the household of the guilty party where they sing, clap hands, and play the drums (*go epe/a*). He or she will know what the complaint is and will hasten to pay the fine before the women do any damage. If two women quarrel, they may both be subjected to this treatment.

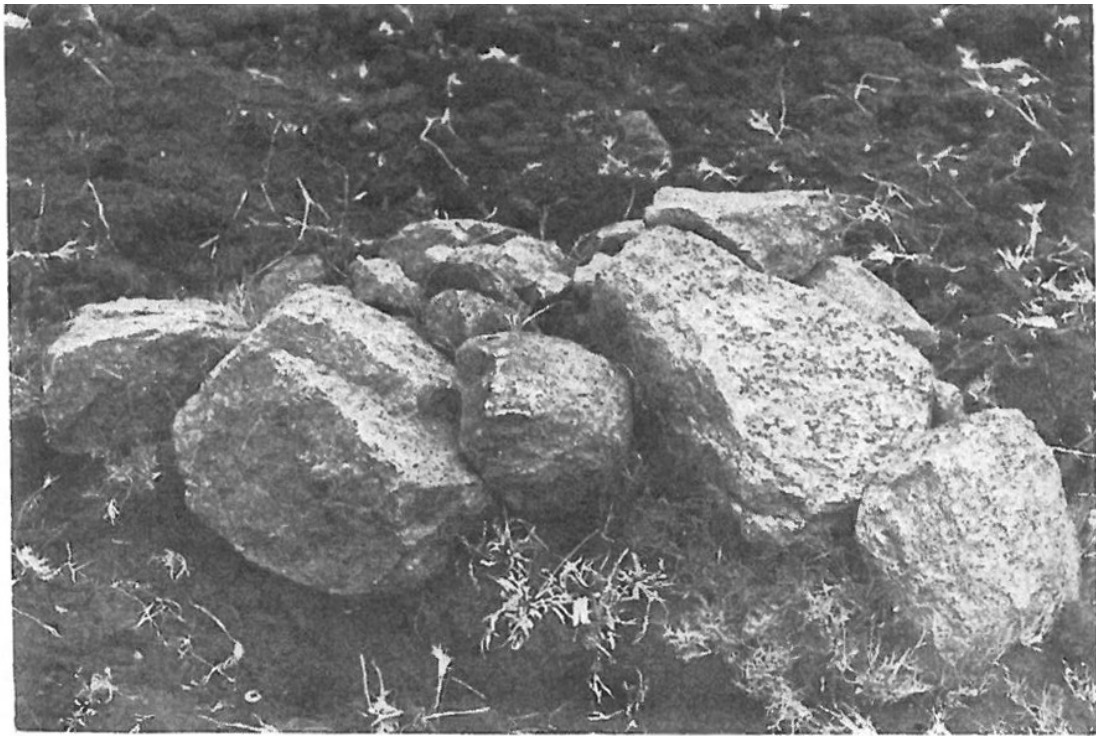
The *molobe* also receives beer tribute during this period. However, the *molobe* reports to the chief at the end of the period in the same manner as the head *mat/a/a* did, and the administration of the chiefdom returns to normal.

The women usually have their initiation rites at a secluded spot near the river. They stack a small cairn of stones near the spot at the end of the period. The women of the Seema ward bring two stones, each about the size of a man's head or slightly bigger. These are placed in the courtyard of the headman's homestead beside similar pairs from previous initiation rites. The stones are not disburbed by anyone, and are left undisturbed as a monument if the headman moves his homestead. These stones are known as *ditlou* (elephants).⁷⁾ Such stones were not observed in any other ward of the chiefdom.

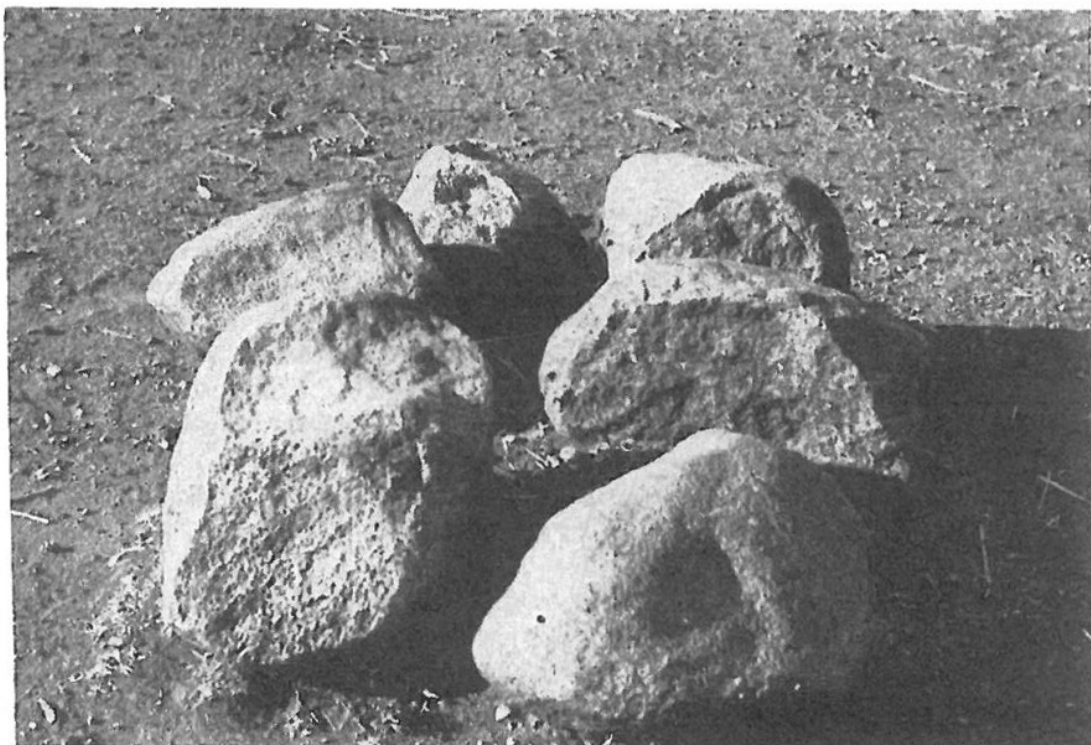
The fact that this difference between the chiefs ward and Seema exists, reflects the freedom of the wards to differ in the details of their local rites. It also reflects their different origins.

Although spokesmen say that female initiation takes place the same year as, and immediately after, male initiation, this is not always the case. The last male initiation took place in 1965, whereas the girls of the same age-set were initiated in 1961. Evidence of departure from the norm may also be found in the reports of the Berlin Mission. Lesiba Bakenberg, the first chief of the Bakenberg chiefdom of the

7. The name *dikgotoboriba*, used by the Nt *habeleng* for these stones, is unknown, at Mapela. See Bothma 1962.



12. A Cairn stacked by girls of the ruling clan after completing their initiation course.
(Photo: K. Budack)



13. Stones placed in pairs in headman Seêma's courtyard to mark the completion of girls' initiation courses.
(Photo: Dr N.J. van Warmelo)

Ndebele of Langa, was initiated in 1887.⁸⁾ But the novices of the girls' initiation attacked the Malokong mission-station in 1888.⁹⁾

In the olden days girls who were close to the age of puberty or who had recently attained puberty were initiated. Nowadays, however, the girls are often much younger when they undergo the rites.

4. Age-Sets (*Mephato*)

The Mapela chiefdom has nine age-sets that follow one another in a fixed cycle.¹⁰⁾ The average period between one initiation and the next, i.e. between the formation of one age-set (*Mphato*, plural: *mephato*) and the next is about seven years. However, the period is never seven years since this number is indicated with the index finger of the right hand and pointing at someone is tantamount to an accusation of witchcraft.¹¹⁾

Mankopane's age-set, the Madingwana, was formed about 1834 to 1836. The year 1836, which seems to be the most likely date in the light of the available evidence, has been assigned to this age-set in Table 11.¹²⁾ The period between the formation of this age-set and the Matlakana, for which spokesmen gave the year 1930, is ninety-four years. There were twelve intervals between age-sets during this period, which means that the average length of the intervals was just under eight years.

However, the intervals have tended to become longer, which is an indication that initiation is on the decline. The interval between the Matlakana (1930) and the Magohu (1948) was eighteen years, and that between the Magohu and the Mabitsi (1965) seventeen years.

If we take the period between Mankopane's age-set (1836) and that of Bakenberg (1887), we have fifty-one years and seven intervals. This gives us just over seven years per interval, which is probably a truer reflection of the traditional circumstances before modern influences began to undermine the custom.

The year 1860 has been assigned to the Matlakana age-set in Table II. This date, which is approximate, was deduced in the following way: Solomon Khwata's biography has been written.¹³⁾ According to this source Khwata, who was an evangelist of the Berlin Missionary Society, was initiated shortly after the Boers attacked Mankopane at Magagamatala (1858). According to Mapela spokesmen Khwata was of the Matlakana age-set. Hence 1860 for this age-set.

There is a reasonable amount of justification for using the age-sets in a chronological table as has been done in Table II so that the unrecorded past can be expressed more exactly in terms of time. However, there is no method of determining with absolute certainty whether the cycle of age-sets was maintained unaltered for the whole period covered by the table. Nor can one say for certain whether the average interval between age-sets of about seven years was the same all along into the distant past.

8. BMB 1888: 21/22, pp. 484-485, 488.

9. BMB 1889: 19/20, pp. 487-488, 496-497, 499-503.

10. See Table II.

11. Bothma 1962, footnote p. 54.

12. Mankopane's succession is described in Chapter II. The circumstances surrounding the formation of his age-set are given.

13. Schloemann I 889.

Every age-set is said to re-establish (*go emiia*) the previous age-set of the same name when it is formed. The meaning becomes clear when seen against the number of age-sets in a cycle (nine), and the time-interval between age-sets (about seven years). Whenever an age-set is formed, almost all the members of the previous age-set of the same name will have died. The few remaining members will be about eighty years old. Of course, if the intervals between age-sets become longer as has been the case in the last four decades, the chances of any members of the previous age-set of the same name surviving when the new one is formed, become increasingly less.

The following age-sets, which are not reflected in Table II, were formed at Mapela after the 1890 partition of the Langa:

| AGE-SET | YEAR | LEADER | CHIEFTAINSHIP |
|---------------|------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Marema | 1893 | Phillip Langa | Hans 1890-1905 |
| 2. Madingwana | 1905 | Charlie Langa | " |
| 3. Matlwana | 1911 | Piet Mafetlho | Marcus 1905-1918 |
| 4. Mangana | 1920 | Hendrik Madikwe | Alfred 1918-1937 |
| 5. Matlakana | 1930 | Solomon Langa | " |
| 6. Magohu | 1948 | Marcus Langa | Johannes 1937-1956 |
| 7. Mabitsi | 1965 | ? | Hendrik since 1958 |

For every men's age-set there is an equivalent women's age-set. The names of the women's age-sets are not all the same as those of the men. Four of them are and five are not. Every age-set also has a praise designation, which is a word or expression in a longer praise of the age-set. Some age-sets are said to have chiefs and others not. This depends on whether the leader of an age-set became chief afterwards or not. The male age-sets, their female equivalents and their praise names are as follows:

| MALE AGE-SET | FEMALE AGE-SET | PRAISE NAME |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Marema | Manosi | Makwa |
| 2. Madingwana | Mabipa | Masikara |
| 3. Matlwana | Matlwana | ? |
| 4. Mangana | Mangana | Mahlookgwadi |
| 5. Matlakana | Mantwa | Matsepe-dikokotla |
| 6. Magohu | Makakatlelo | ? |
| 7. Mabitsi | Mabitsi | Manala |
| 8. Matladi | Matladi | Matshela |
| 9. Malekana | Matsara | Dithaga |

Four of the above age-sets have their praises linked with those of chiefs. The Matladi age-set is linked with Chief Malesela Hans. However, it was also the age-set of Seritarita and Podile before him. The Malekana age-set is linked with both Maleya and Selaki, who were contemporaries. The Madingwana age-set is linked with Mankopane, and the Matlakana with Masebe who was preceded by Mapela in this age-set. The remaining five age-sets are said to have had no chiefs, and this is certainly true of four of them. The fifth, the Mangana, is the age-set of the present chief, Hendrik Madikwe Langa. This age-set is also linked with Masebe II in contradiction of the evidence that

it has no chief.

The highest-ranking son of the ruling Langa clan to undergo initiation at the time, is the leader of the age-set. He is the immediate head of the age-set in the chiefs ward and also of all the members throughout the chiefdom. Similarly, the highest-ranking member of each ward who is a member of the age-set is the head of that ward's section of the age-set. In this way the age-set has a leadership parallel to that of the chiefdom. It has a leader for each headman's ward and an overall leader.

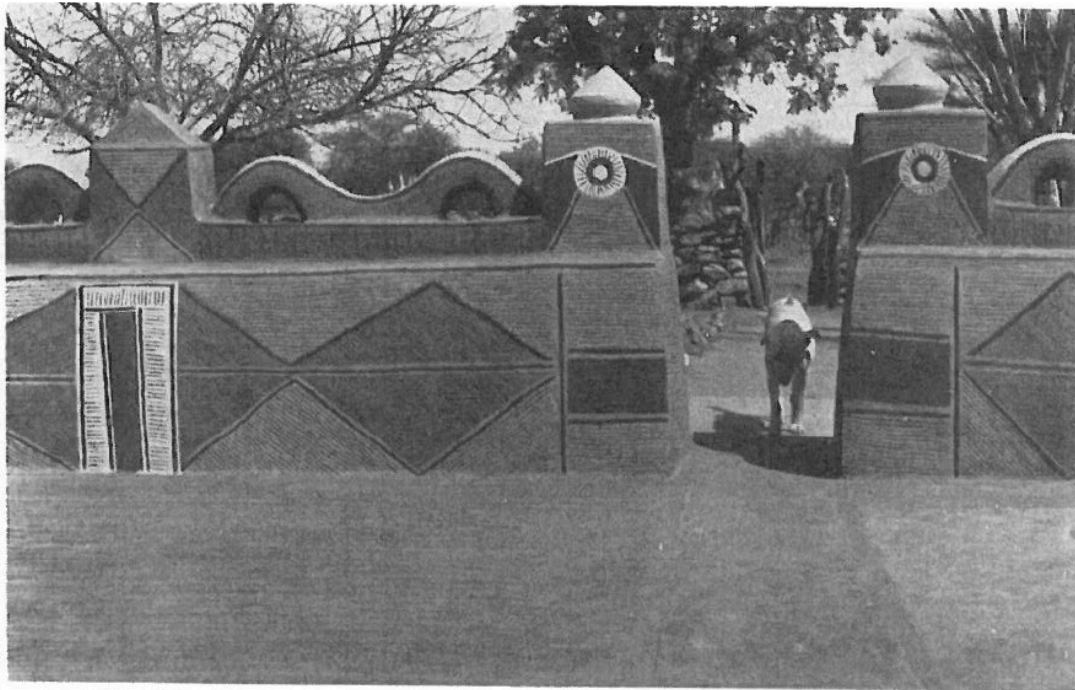
The overall leader of an age-set may be the heir to the chieftainship, in which case he will later become chief. On the other hand, he may not be the heir to the chieftainship. This is why some age-sets are said to have chiefs and others not. Similarly, the leader of a ward section of an age-set may or may not be the heir to the ward headmanship. The leaders are nevertheless always high-ranking in their respective divisions, since the highest-ranking youth available at the time of initiation automatically becomes the leader.

The members of an age-set are expected to obey the orders of their leaders, and may be tried and punished by their leaders if they are disobedient or fail to turn up when called. The members of an age-set have an esprit de corps that cuts across ward loyalties and bridges the apparent disjointedness or segmentary character of the ageset. This was especially true in the past, and it was not unusual for an entire age-set to turn out in the interests of its leader. Such was the case when Mankopane's ageset, the Madingwana, came to his support immediately after being formed in order to oust his uncle Maleya and make him chief.

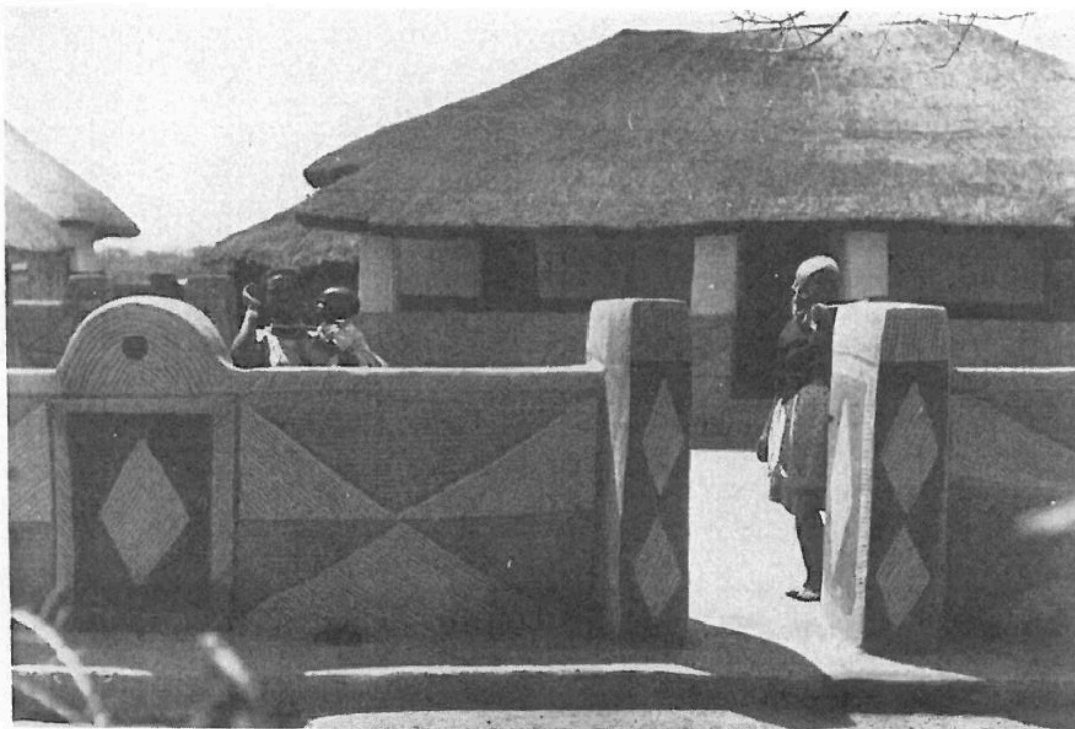
In the olden days age-sets played a much more important part in the life of the chiefdom than today. They were the regiments that were mobilised for defence and aggression. This could be achieved in a very short time by simply sounding the alarm. All the age-sets would of course be mobilised in this way, and not just a single one. The age-sets could also all be called out for communal hunts. However, the chief could also call a specific age-set for a task that he wanted performed. He could call a male or a female age-set, or he could call a particular headman's section of an age-set. Young male age-sets were sent to the European centres to work for fire-arms during Mankopane's rule.

The chief still calls on age-sets or sections of age-sets nowadays if he has tasks to be performed in the interests of the chiefdom. The younger age-sets were making bricks for a clinic building at one time. Members from one headman's ward after another took it in turns to make the bricks. On another occasion the men of the latest age-set from Baloi's ward were called upon to clear the chiefs courtyard of weeds and bushes. In this way the chief is able to get the necessary work done, and he can spread the work in such a way that not too much of a burden is imposed on any one section of the chiefdom. In addition, men or women may be called upon according to the nature of the work.

Age-sets create a different kind of loyalty, establishing a bond that reinforces both the unity of the chiefdom and the power of the chief. The horizontal strata of age-set loyalties are in direct contrast with the vertical or segmentary loyalties of clans and wards. One must remember, however, that age-set activities are essential to the development and maintenance of age-set loyalties. The decline of age-set activities, especially those of a military nature, has inevitably led to a decline in the esprit de corps of age-sets. This has tended to lessen the effectiveness of their horizon ta) integrating role in Mapela society.



14. The front wall of an attractively decorated household seen from within. The circular designs on either entrance pillar are eyes (*mahlo*). The knee-high horizontal line is the strap of a woman's skirt, and the triangles above and below it are the skirts themselves (*mesese*). (Photo: A.O. Jackson)



15. A rectangular house in a traditional enclosure. The double-diamond designs on the entrance pillars are called swallows (*peolwane*). (Photo: A.O. Jackson)

CHAPTER XIV

TERRITORIAL STRUCTURE

1. Introductory

A discussion of territorial structure must necessarily take account of all the entities, from the most insignificant to the largest, that contribute towards making that structure what it is. This discussion must therefore take account of the single households of individual families, the larger homesteads that house a number of such families, the lineages which are non-territorial kinship entities but contribute to the structure under consideration, the sub-headmen's units, and finally, the headmen's wards. These entities will now be introduced in turn.

The household, which is termed *lapa* (plural: *malapa*), is the smallest residential unit of the Mapela chiefdom. It consists of one or more round huts with conical roofs in a small courtyard enclosed by a low wall.¹⁾ The members of the household are, typically, a man and his wife and their unmarried children. One or two other relatives may also be living with the family. The man's widowed mother is often one of them. In the minds of the Mapela people a *lapa* is associated with a woman rather than a man. This is easily understood if account is taken of the fact that the people of Mapela practise polygyny. A polygynist is attached to more than one *lapa*, each of which belongs to a different wife.

The homestead, which is termed *kgoro* (plural: *dikgoro*), consists of a semicircle of adjoining households. The semicircular arrangement is brought about because the courtyards of the individual households are narrower in front than at the back, rather like the segments of an orange. The household entrances open into a circular courtyard (also known as *kgoro*), which is the men's gathering place. This courtyard traditionally contained the cattle enclosure and two hearths, one for men and the other for boys.

In the olden days the courtyard also contained a structure called a *kgwadi*. This was a thatched roof supported by a circle of poles. It was the focal point of the gathering place, where the men met, did their handiwork, and discussed cases. The *kgwadi* served as a guard house in times of war, and housed the boys of the homestead during certain stages of the initiation rites. The *kgwadi* is no longer a feature of Mapela homesteads and is nowhere to be seen in the Mapela area.

1. Rectangular structures are beginning to replace the traditional huts, but the latter still predominate.

Every homestead begins as a single household. Other households are added on either side of the first one. A household standing on its own is therefore an embryonic homestead. Nowadays, a high percentage of the homesteads in the Mapela area are such embryonic units. There is also a high percentage of homesteads consisting of two households. Not very many consist of more than three.

In the olden days it was essential for security reasons for people to settle in large homesteads. Some of these were situated adjacently to form large composite settlements.²⁾ The threat of attack disappeared under White rule, and the bond between kinsmen has become looser. The result of this has been a tendency towards settlement in individual households rather than in the larger homesteads.

The people of Mapela are members of a considerable number of different nonexogamous totemic clans, the names of which they generally bear as family names. The different clan names reflect the diversity of the people's origin, and Mapela presents a microcosm of the surroundings Sotho peoples. Some clans are well represented, whereas others may have very few representatives at Mapela.³⁾

The clans that are well represented in the Mapela area tend to be sub-divided into a number of lineages. The poorly represented clans often comprise single lineages. The defining characteristic of a lineage is that members can trace their origin to a common ancestor or ancestress. The Mapela people trace their descent patrilineally, and they use the term *kgoro* for their partrilineages. The logic for the use of the same term as is applied to a homestead seems to be that a lineage evolves out of a homestead.

The importance of mentioning lineages in the context of territorial structure lies in the fact that lineages often acquire non-lineage dependants. Some of them expand in this way to the point at which they are acknowledged by the tribal government and given political office. The head of the lineage, who is now the head of more than just lineage members on account of his non-lineage dependants, becomes a subheadman.

The Mapela people do not have a specific term for a sub-headman's unit. But the head is known as *ramotsana* (plural: *borametsana*), father of a small village.⁴⁾ The term *rammothwana* from *mmothwana*, the diminutive of *mmotho* (plural: *mebotho*) a hill, is also used sometimes but far greater preference is given to *ramotsana*.

The members of a sub-headman's unit usually live more or less in the same vicinity. However, they do not conceive of themselves as occupying a clearly defined separate territory. The term sub-ward, with its territorial connotation, therefore cannot be applied to them.

The major sub-divisions of the chiefdom may be termed wards. The term in its generally accepted sense implies an entity with distinct boundaries. The Mapela wards do have definite boundaries, which are doctored annually as part of the local rainmaking ceremonies.⁵⁾

2. See Chapter IX for a description of the Magope homestead, which adjoined other homesteads to form a large settlement.
3. See Table IX below for an illustration. The neighbouring Ndebele peoples are of course also represented, as are some others, but to a much lesser extent.
4. It is noteworthy that the term *borametsana* contains two plural nouns, *bora* (fathers) and *metsana* (small villages). The singular *ra* and the plural *metsana* are not used in combination.
5. See Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969 for a description of the rainmaking practices and the doctoring of boundaries.

The people of Mapela do not have a specific term for a ward. They use the term *setlhaba*, the designation for a chiefdom, both for the ward territory and its residents. This name is in keeping with the origin of the older wards of the chiefdom. They were discrete, independent chiefdoms, albeit very small, before they were incorporated by the Langa. This term is now being applied by analogy to the farm wards. The term *mmotho* is never applied to a ward.

A ward headman is known as *nduna* (plural: *manduna*). The wards do not all have sub-headmen.

The Mapela chiefdom comprises twenty wards. One of them is the chief's ward, and the other nineteen are governed by headmen. The Mabuselas are Ndebele who migrated with the Langa from the original home in the south-east. Otherwise, all the subject wards are composed of people foreign to the ruling Langa clan. The chief's ward itself contains a high percentage of non-Langa persons.⁶⁾

Some of the wards consist of small chiefdoms or sections of chiefdoms that were conquered by the Langa and left in occupation of their old settlements. They continued to govern themselves, but subject to the Langa paramountcy. Other wards consist of people who joined the Langa voluntarily as entire groups, and were given areas in which to live and govern themselves subject to the Langa paramountcy. Other wards, again, came into being when farms were acquired by the chiefdom. These farms were occupied by more or less heterogeneous populations, and headmen have been appointed to govern them.

There has been a tendency for members of wards to live slightly interspersed along the outer edges of the wards. But the territorial character of the wards still remains. Where the people live outside their wards, it is known that they are outside and in whose ward they are living. In some cases it appears as if encroachment took place from the demarcated Mapela area onto the adjoining Mapela farms. What actually happened, can best be illustrated by using some of Mabusela's subjects as examples.

The people of sub-headman Maloka were living on the farm Drenthe when it was purchased by Mapela, and they continued to do so afterwards. But the people of Molokomme were also living on the farm, and they acquired headmanship status when it was purchased. Their ward territory was limited to a portion of the farm, the remainder going with the Maloka people to Mabusela's ward because the Malokas had been subjects of Mabusela all along.⁷⁾

Another sub-headman of Mabusela is situated on the farm Overysel, where his households are interspersed with those of headman Malebana. Here again, they were already living on the farm when it was acquired by Mapela. They remained there, but instead of transferring their allegiance to headman Malebana of Overysel, they retained their allegiance to Mabusela and remained on the farm, thus creating a picture of encroachment.

The decision of the chief to take over the allocation of fields from the headmen has been discussed. So has the effect of this innovation, namely that people are now sometimes allocated fields in the wards of headmen other than their own, and that they settle out of context as well to be closer to their fields.⁸⁾

6. See Table VIII. The Mabuselas are Ndebele and they have kinship ties with the Langa. Their ward also has very special ritual ties with the chief and his ward.

7. See Map IV.

8. See Chapter XI.

It would be difficult to determine the exact extent to which people live outside their ward boundaries. However, a sample survey of the ehiers ward and Mabusela's ward shows that about twenty per cent of the former and about ten per cent of the latter do so. The phenomenon is more marked in the wards within the demarcated area, encroachment through pressure of population having taken place outwards onto the farm wards and not the other way around. Very few of the subjects of the farm headmen will therefore be found living in wards other than their own. The wards in the demarcated area consequently house far less strangers than the numbers of their own subjects who live in other wards.

As a rule, the arable fields of the members of a ward fall within the ward boundaries. Exceptions have come about as a result of the administrative ruling mentioned above. Grazing, on the other hand, is communal and ward boundaries do not count.

The ward boundaries are doctored by most of the wards every year during the rainmaking ceremonies. The only wards that do not doctor their boundaries are the chiefs ward and Mabusela's. In the case of the ehiers ward, it is the ward of the rulers and since the boundaries of the chiefdom as a whole are doctored annually, it hardly seems necessary for the boundaries of the chiefs ward as such to be doctored. As for the Mabusela ward, their headman is the person who is responsible for doctoring the boundaries of the chiefdom on behalf of the chief.⁹⁾

There are twelve wards, including the chiefs ward, in the demarcated Mapela area. A further five wards are on adjoining Mapela farms.¹⁰⁾ Two wards are on Mapela farms far from the demarcated area. One ward is on farms owned by the South African Development Trust and is also away from the Mapela headquarters.

A ward headman tenders a beast to the chief when he succeeds to the headmanship. This is not done for a ward regency. The new headman is only officially recognised by the chief when the beast has been given. This act on the part of the new headman brings to light an important difference between a headman and a sub-headman. The latter does not tender a beast to gain recognition, whether to the chief or to his own headman.

The ranking of wards is known with a fair degree of certainty for the wards within the demarcated area, but the ranking of the farm wards relative to one another is uncertain. The outstanding fact about the ranking is that four of the wards are singled out and termed the 'great wards' of the chiefdom. All the wards of the chiefdom are listed in Table VIII as they were ranked by spokesmen. The number of households in each ward is also given.

2. The Chiefs Ward

The chief's ward is generally referred to as mo'sate (the capital). However, the term is also applied in a narrower sense to the homestead or village in which the chief resides. It also used to be applied in a yet narrower sense to that portion of the chiefs homestead in which he and his immediate relatives actually resided.¹¹⁾

Each ward of the chiefdom has its own mo'sate, which is the homestead of the ward headman. A sub-headman's unit similarly has its own mo'sate. The term basically means headquarters or capital. The chiefs ward is thus the headquarters of the chiefdom as a whole. The homestead of the chief is more particularly the headquarters of the chiefdom, and is the capital of the chiefs ward itself at the same time.

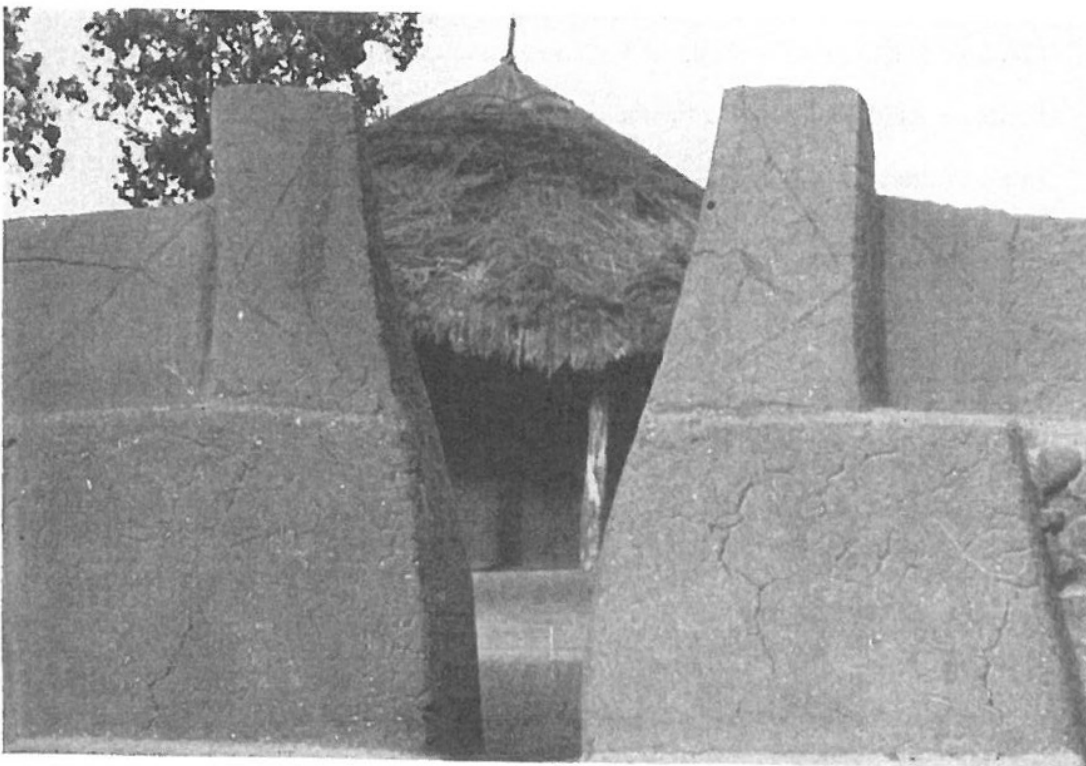
9. See Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969. All the roads and pathways giving access to the chiefdom are doctored annually.

10. See Map II

11. See Diagram 1.



16. A household with a reed enclosure.
(Photo: Dr N.J. van Warmelo)



17. A High stone-and-mortar household enclosure. Note
the shape of the entrance.
(Photo: K. Budack)

TABLE VIII

THE MAPELA HEADMEN'S WARDS

| HEADMEN'S WARDS | HOUSEHOLDS |
|---|------------|
| 1. Chief's ward (sub-divisions given elsewhere) | 540 |
| Four High-Ranking Wards | |
| 2. Mabusela (sub-divisions given elsewhere) | 418 |
| 3. Tshaba (Tshaba 107, Mat hoga 93) | 200 |
| 4. Masenya | 255 |
| 5. Mabuela (Mabuela 170, Laka 30) | 200 |
| Remaining Wards in the Demarcated Area | |
| 6. Seema (Seema 120, Ramasobane 10) | 130 |
| 7. Pila | 145 |
| 8. Ramorulane | 135 |
| 9. Lelaka | 140 |
| 10. Baloi (Baloi 31, Kham bane 56, Shibambo 22, Khoza 63) | 172 |
| 11. Matlou | 120 |
| 12. Tshokwe (Tshokwe 70, Mello 25) | 95 |
| Wards on Adjoining Mapela Fanns | |
| 13. Molokomme | 90 |
| 14. Makgamatho | 181 |
| 15. Molekana | 150 |
| 16. Malebana | 280 |
| 17. Puka | 119 |
| Wards Far From Mapela | |
| 18. Kekae on Leyden (estimated) | 150 |
| 19. Kamala farms (estimated) | 400 |
| 20. Abbotspoort farms (estimated) | 340 |
| | Total 4260 |

Note: At an average of 4,5 persons per household, the figures point to a population of more than 19 000.

The statistical information was gathered in 1967.

The average of 4,5 persons per household is an estimate.

All the members of the chief's ward are addressed by other members of the chiefdom as ba mo'Sate (those of the capital) in spite of their diverse origins. This is perfectly natural, since they all share the attribute of being members of the chief's ward. The fact that many of them are commoners does not enter into the argument. The members of a headman's ward address their own wardsmen who live near the headman, or belong to his sub-division of the ward, in the same way.

The chief's ward comprises some 540 households, which points to a population of about 2400. About 410 of these households are within or just beyond the boundaries of the ward. About 130 are well within the ward boundaries of other headmen. The latter are made up as follows:

- a. The thirty-four households of sub-headman Lebelo are in the south-western corner of the Mapela area.
- b. There are fourteen households subject to sub-headman Mosoge situated to the west of his main settlements.
- c. An estimated eighty households directly subject to the chief are situated to the south-east of the chief's ward on the farms Yaalkop and Zwartfontein and in headman Masenya's area.
- d. Odd households of the chief's ward may be found elsewhere in the Mapela area, but do not amount to many.¹²⁾

A striking feature of the mode of settlement is the high percentage of households situated at the foot of the hills. In the olden days, when inter-tribal wars were still fought, it was necessary to build against the hills. The women and children fled into the hills during an enemy attack, while the men turned out to ward off the attack. This necessity for security does not exist any longer, and people now tend to settle in the plains. The degree to which this has taken place in the chief's ward can be seen from the accompanying map.¹³⁾

The settlements in the chief's ward are mainly around the hills called Magope, Sobosobo, Fothane, Matlhogo and Mamaala, and between the hills south of Mamaala. A few households are settled on flat country along the eastern boundary. More are near the Mogalakwena River to the west. Those subject to sub-headman Mosoge are just north of the Thwathwe River.

The capital of the chiefdom was situated on the eastern side of Magope Hill from 1890 to 1957. Since then it has been on the eastern side of Fothane Hill where the capital was situated from about 1820 until the massacre of Hermanus Potgieter's party in 1854.

The tendency of tribesmen to settle away from the hills has a further explanation which is, however, also connected with the modern feeling of safety from attack. In the olden days relatives were compelled to live together for security purposes, and large homesteads were the rule. Quarrels between relatives were usually settled in the interests of survival, and people did not separate without very good reason. Nowadays the least disagreement may cause a man to leave and settle on his own elsewhere. Young people now prefer to be on their own, away from their relatives, when they marry.

The households of the Langa clan are mainly to be found in four localities, namely at the foot of Magope Hill, Fothane Hill, Matlhogo Hill and Mamaala Hill. The

12. See Maps II and III.

13. See Map III.

tendency towards individualistic settlement has also manifested itself among the members of the ruling Langa clan. Some clansmen have moved closer to their fields. The old capital at Magope has only a small percentage of the households it used to have, and the new capital at Fothane is not anywhere near the size of the old homestead of the chief at Magope. The present chief does not live surrounded by close relatives in a single homestead. The only Langa settlement in which something of the old closeness has been preserved, is that of Mamaala. A few homesteads accommodating three Langa households each, and in one case four, are still to be found, but they are the exception rather than the rule.

The majority of the members of the chiefs ward are ruled directly by the chief. The remainder are ruled by sub-headmen subject to the chief. Two are the heads of the genealogically senior Langa lineages of Mosoge and Mamaala, and a further two are commoners, namely Lebelo and Manamela. The strength of these four sub-headmen's units in terms of households is as follows (three Mosoge and twelve Mamaala households are Langa):

| Sub-headmen | Households |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Mosoge | 36 |
| Mamaala (estimated) | 52 |
| Lebelo | 34 |
| Manamela | 67 |
| Total | 189 |

From the above it can be seen that about 190 or thirty-five per cent of the 540 households of the chiefs ward are controlled by sub-headmen. Two of these subheadmen's units originated under lineages of the Langa clan. They are Mosoge and Mamaala.

The Lebelo were subjects of the neighbouring chiefdom of Mokopane originally, but were settled some distance from the latter in the direction of Mapela. They tended to regard themselves as an independent chiefdom because they were far from their chief. But, on account of the locality of their settlements, they were among the first to be attacked by the Langa when the Langa fought Mokopane. It was thus that a Lebelo section came to join the Langa. They were recognised as a sub-headmanship because they were an integrated group when they became subjects.

Manamela owes his status to the fact that his settlements are some distance from the other settlements of the chief's ward and that he was the first to settle there. Those who settled there later were placed under the jurisdiction of Manamela because the need was felt for someone to control them. Manamela was appointed at the beginning of this century.

There is a certain amount of uncertainty about the status of two of the above sub-headmen. During 1966 or 1967, when William Mosoge returned from employment outside to assume the sub-headmanship to which he was heir, a beast was tendered to Chief Hendrik. The beast was accepted, and by this act the status of Mosoge should be regarded as having changed from sub-headman to headman. If this view is taken, and it seems as if tribesmen are beginning to do so, then it can be argued that Mosoge must outrank all the other headmen of the chiefdom including Mabusela.

This is so because the group is ruled by a lineage of the Langa clan, whereas the

other subject wards are not.

Tribesmen are even more uncertain about the status of Lebelo. Sometimes he is regarded as a headman and at other times as a sub-headman. The doubt regarding his status is probably due to the fact that the Lebelo people are settled far from the chiefs ward. They thus enjoy a measure of independence that places them almost on a par with the wards.¹⁴⁾

An interesting aspect of the settlement of the chief's ward is the great variety of clan names and therefore the great diversity of their origin. This aspect is illustrated in the accompanying table in respect of those households for which the requisite information was obtained.¹⁵⁾

Since the people bearing these clan names are mostly strangers who came from elsewhere, the clans from which they originated are elsewhere in the chiefdom or in surrounding chiefdoms. The Letwaba clan may be taken as an example. There are six households of this clan subject to the chiefs ward, fifteen in the Letwaba sul>-headman's unit of headman Mabusela, eight subject to headman Molekana, two sul>-subject to headman Makgamatho, and a few others scattered amongst the other headmen. They joined the Langa after the latter migrated into the Transvaal, and they originated from the ruling clan of the neighbouring Letwaba Ndebele.

The Letwaba clansmen under mosate, those under Mabusela, and those under other headmen, do not act together for ritual or any other purposes. They comprise separate lineages, and possibly joined the Langa separately. Members of a single clan who live in different wards do not act jointly on any occasion. The very fact that they are in different wards shows that they are in different lineages. Those members who belong to the same ward, on the other hand, usually do act together in family affairs.

3. The Four High-Ranking Wards

The headmen of the various wards are not linked with one another genealogically, and their ranking is therefore not determined by genealogical seniority. Other factors play a part in determining rank, the most important being length of membership. Generally speaking, headmen rank in the order in which their families became part of the chiefdom. Such factors as relationship by marriage to the chief also play a part.

Four of the Mapela wards are generally known as the 'great wards'. Or rather, their headmen are known as the 'great headmen' of the chiefdom. They are Mabusela, Tshaba, Masenya and Mabuela, and will now be discussed in turn.

Mabusela.

Mabusela became a headman in about 1854 when he was promoted after the execution of Maruputlane Lamola, the highest-ranking headman at that time, and the expulsion of his family. The Mabusela people are of Ndebele origin and they migrated with the Langa from the south-east.

The reason for Mabusela's promotion was that his family were important functionaries in the chiefdom at the time. Traditionally, the head of the Mabusela clan was the army doctor or doctor of the assegais or spears (*ngaka ya marumo*) of the

14. See Maps II and III

15. Table IX.

TABLE IX

CLAN NAMES IN THE CHIEF'S WARD

| CLAN NAMES | HOUSEHOLDS |
|--|------------|
| a. Clans with 5 or more households in the ward | |
| Kgadima | 9 |
| Kutumela | 14 |
| Langa | 77 |
| Lebelo | 16 |
| Leso | 9 |
| Letwaba | 6 |
| Mabusela | 6 |
| Makhafola | 10 |
| Makhwia | 8 |
| Manamela | 21 |
| Manyathela | 6 |
| Malaba | 5 |
| Mello | 11 |
| Modisa | 6 |
| Mogasu | 6 |
| Moja | 11 |
| Nyatlo | 5 |
| Sebelebele | 11 |
| Senwa | 6 |
| Sikwana | 6 |
| Sindane | 6 |
| Tlatla | 5 |
| b. 8 clans with 4 households | 32 |
| c. 23 clans with 3 households | 69 |
| d. 16 clans with 2 households | 32 |
| e. 59 clans with 1 household | 59 |
| Total (128 clan names) | 452 |

Average: approximately 3,5 households per clan.

chiefdom. This office has been inherited from father to son down to the present day. The present headman Mabusela bears the family title although most of the content of this special office has fallen away.

The work of ngaka ya marumo consisted of doctoring the warriors twice a year and on special occasions, such as before military expeditions and at the conclusion of the men's initiation rites. He also doctored the tribal boundaries twice a year and on special occasions, such as when an enemy incursion or an epidemic disease was feared. The boundaries of the chiefdom are still doctored once a year, and the warriors are

still doctored at the conclusion of the initiation rites. This functionary is therefore much less active than he used to be.¹⁶⁾

Much of the esteem in which the Mabusela clan is held at Mapela is due to important marriage ties between the Langa and the Mabusela.¹⁷⁾ Marriage ties between these two are of much greater frequency than between the Langa and the ruling clan of any other ward in the chiefdom. The earliest such marriage that is remembered is between Chief Mankopane and his principal wife Mmantutule, who was a daughter of the Mabuselas. The role that Mmantutule played in the history of the chiefdom and the respect with which she is remembered, add importance to this marriage. The next chief, Masebe, was her son.

Another marriage, which proved to be of importance, later, was that of Matopa Langa, a half-brother of Masebe, to Mokgaetti, a daughter of the Mabuselas. This woman had two daughters, Ramadimet"fu and Ramasela, who married Chief Hans Langa and his next-ranking brother Marcus respectively. Ramadimetsa was the principal wife of Hans and the mother of Chief Alfred.

Marriages of Mabusela men to daughters of the Langa also took place. Thus for example, Jacob Malegwana Mabusela, father of the present headman, married a daughter of one of Chief Mankopane's brothers. This woman had no issue and Salome Mokgaeti, a sister of Chief Hans, was given as ancillary wife (*mmamolatela*). The present headman is her son.

Mabusela's ward has the highest population in the demarcated Mapela area (418 households) after the chiefs ward. However, there are only 31 households of the Mabusela clan itself in the ward, which is less than ten per cent. Mabusela was promoted to the post, not on account of the extent of his family, but because of his function of army doctor. The many subjects that are under him were given to him. He was appointed headman over them, or they joined him subsequently. An analysis of the Mabusela ward is given in the next sub-chapter.

Tshaba.

The ward of Tshaba ranks next after that of Mabusela. The reason for Tshaba's high rank seems to be that his section was the first alien section to join the Langa. According to one account the Tshaba people were settled in the country of the Moletsi chiefdom before the latter settled there. Tshaba's section fled and joined the Langa, who had not yet left Thaba Tshweu, when the Moletsi chiefdom moved in.

The people of Tshaba are Tlhaloga and their totem is *kwena*, the crocodile. It is said that their name used to be Manamela. The praise poem of Tshaba, which is part of their identification, is as follows:

Batlhaloga ba ga Mokwena a ga Putsane
Kwena e metsa Matebele ¹⁸⁾
Makubu e be selallo.

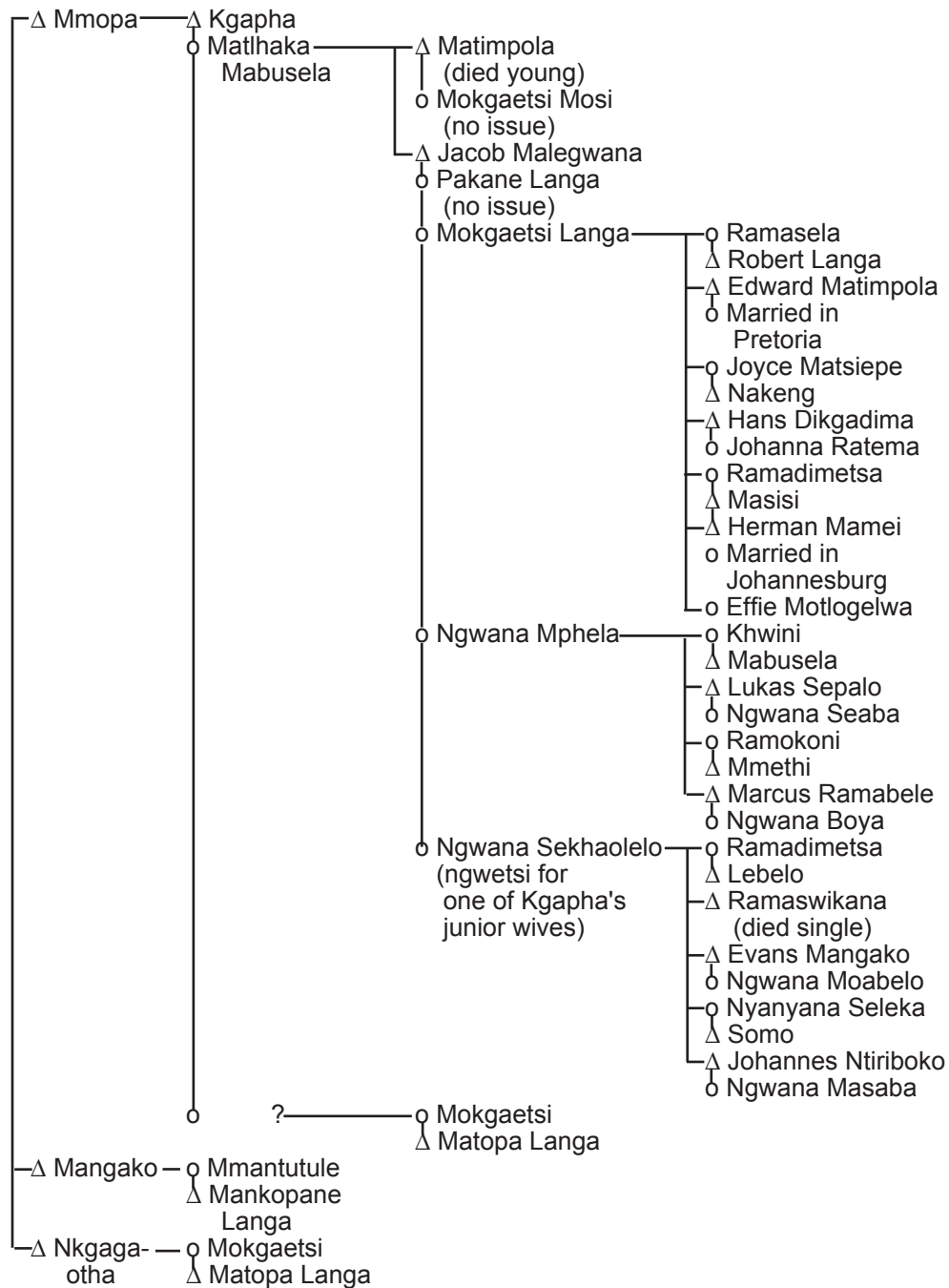
Batlhaloga of Mokwena of Putsane
The crocodile swallows the Ndebeles
The Makubu becomes supper.

16. See Jackson in Ethnological Section 1969 for a description of these functions.

17. See Table X.

18. Makubu seems to be an old Sotho designation for the Langa. It is noteworthy that the place-name Makubung (currently the home of people referred to as ba-Thokwa who are generally known to be Ndebele) is to be found in the Molepo area where the Langa sojourned for a time as related in Chapter I. The Tshaba are of the same stock as the Moletsi, before whom they are said to have fled.

TABLE X
GENEALOGY OF MABUSELA



Note: The symbol Δ represents males and o represents females.
Vertical lines linking symbols directly indicate marriage, those to left link siblings.
Horizontal lines indicate descent. This genealogy is incomplete.

There are no marriage ties between the family of headman Tshaba and the Langa chiefly family. The nearest approach to such a relationship was when the headman married a daughter of the Makgobas, a family that has been related by marriage to the chiefs for a number of generations.

There is one sub-headman's unit under Tshaba, namely that of *ramotsana* Matshoga. Matshoga has a surprisingly high number of subjects, ninety-three households of the 200 of Tshaba. Of these ninety-three, thirty-three are Lemba as in Matshoga himself. The thirty-three Lemba households belong to the following families: Tloubatla 11; Matshoga 10; Sathekge 6; and one each to Koka, Pale, Phakgadi, Rapetswa, Senwamadi and Thubakgale. The Lemba used to be the iron-smiths who made the spears (*assegaïs*) for the Langa warriors. They are also the potters of the chiefdom. One woman under Matshoga still makes pots. The sub-headmanship of Ratema, which is subject to Mabusela, lives in Tshaba's ward.

Although headman Tshaba's area is within the demarcated Mapela area, many of his subjects are on the adjoining Mapela farms Overysel and Zwartfontein. Sub-headman Matlhoga is on Zwartfontein. It appears as if most of Tshaba's subjects on these farms were there before the farms were acquired by Mapela and elected to remain there and retain their allegiance to Tshaba. Headman Tshaba himself is inclined to regard Overysel as part of his territory, although he does not include it when he doctors his boundaries every year.

Masanya.

The ward of Masanya ranks after that of Tshaba. The Masanya people were probably the first after Tshaba to join the Langa. This happened at about the time of the Langa move from Thaba Tshweu to Moumong-wa-Matswake.

The Masanya people are of Matlala origin. They are Koni and their totem is the small bird *tlhantthagane*. Their praise poem, which identifies them as such, is as follows:

| | |
|--|---|
| Mokoni wa 'ntshi-dikgolo | Mokoni with big brows |
| Agee tlhantthagane, Let'soromo! | Hello scaly-feathered finch, Letsoromo! |
| Matshidi mat ea-le-noka Motlhosane. ¹⁹⁾ | Matshidi the travellers along the river Motlhosane. |

The story is told that Masanya separated from the Matlala chiefdom because the latter had two stages of men's initiation, *bodikana* and *komana*, whereas Masanya only had the former. The Matlala people refused to give them a woman to be their principal wife on account of this, so they departed. The skeleton genealogy showing their relationship with Matlala is presented in Table XI.

Masanya spokesmen relate that a certain Matsukutsa was born blind, but could prophesy the future. He prophesied the coming of the White people and the coming of printed books. He also said that the people of Masanya must never cross the Thwathwe River and settle beyond it.

A Masanya headman married a Langa girl on only one occasion. That was when Frans Lesiba Masanya, grandfather of the present headman, married Ramadimetsa, a daughter of Masebe. However, it is said that it is not permitted for a Langa man to marry a Masanya girl. The reason for this is not clear, but it appears as if the prohibition comes from Masanya and not from the Langa.

19. The bird referred to here is *Sporopipes squamifrons*, no. 789 in Roberts. The Motlhosane River runs through the Masanya ward.

Masenya's ward has the third-highest population (255 households) in the demarcated Mapela area. It encroaches on the farm Zwartfontein, leaving only a part of this farm to headman Puka.

Mabuela.

The ward of Mabuela ranks after that of Masenya. The Mabuela people are a remnant of the Phalane of Mokoka who now live in the Pilansberg district. These Phalane were the 'owners of the land', that is to say the original inhabitants of the Mapela area. They were defeated by the Ndebele of Langa and fled, leaving behind the remnant that later became the ward of Mabuela. This happened shortly before Mzilikazi's arrival in the Transvaal, say about 1826. Mabuela's ward, which is situated in the demarcated Mapela area, has about 200 households.

The Mabuela totem is kgomo (domestic cattle). Their praise poem, which helps to indentify them, is as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Agee kgomo, agee nare! | Hello beast, hello buffalo! |
| Morwa segopo sa lenaka | Son of creature with a horn |
| Ge e re 'oo' o tshabele mogotlhong. | When it says 'oo' you must flee to the mimosa-tree. |

Headman Mabuela has one sub-headman, namely Laka, who has thirty households. The Laka people are said to be Phuthing, that is to say their totem is phuthi (the duiker). Some people say that they are related to the rulers of the Seleka chiefdom, but they themselves deny it. There are many other strangers in Mabuela's ward. They do not have their own sub-headmen, but are ruled directly by Mabuela. There are twenty-two Lemba households among them, belonging to the following families: Koka 12; Thubakgale 7; Senwamadi 3. One Lemba woman still makes pots.

Marriage ties have been formed between the rulers of Mabuela and the Langa rulers, and are important. Mogotlha Mabuela married Ramokone Langa, a daughter of Mankopane.²⁰ Mogotlha's grandson Ts'egofats'o married Fejane Langa, a daughter of Chief Hans. The heir, Kgokolo, is a small boy at present and the ward is under the regency of Jacob Mabuela. It is said that this Jacob is in fact not a Mabuela, but that his family were dependants who adopted the name because of intermarriage and their intimate connection with Mabuela. Jacob Mabuela is married to Mokkaetsi Langa, who is classified as a daughter of Mankopane by a Tabane girl.

4. Analysis of Mabusela's Ward

Mabusela's ward has been selected for closer observation for a number of reasons. Firstly, it stands closer to the Ndebele rulers of the chiefdom than any other ward. Secondly, the rulers of the ward are themselves Ndebele. Thirdly, the ward has more sub-headmen (borametsana) than any other ward, and for that reason the nature of a sub-headmanship can best be illustrated by looking at this ward.

The other wards in the demarcated Mapela area, that is to say the old wards of the chiefdom, differ from that of Mabusela in a few respects. Firstly, less than ten per cent of the households in Mabusela's ward belong to the headman's clan, the remainder being members of other clans. In the other old wards, the ruling clan forms a much

20. See Table XII.



a. Shaping



b. Burnishing

-
18. Lemba potter Lea Rapêtswa at work.
(Photo's a., b. & h. Dr N.J. van Warmelo;
c. to g., A.O. Jackson)



c. Stacking (wood)



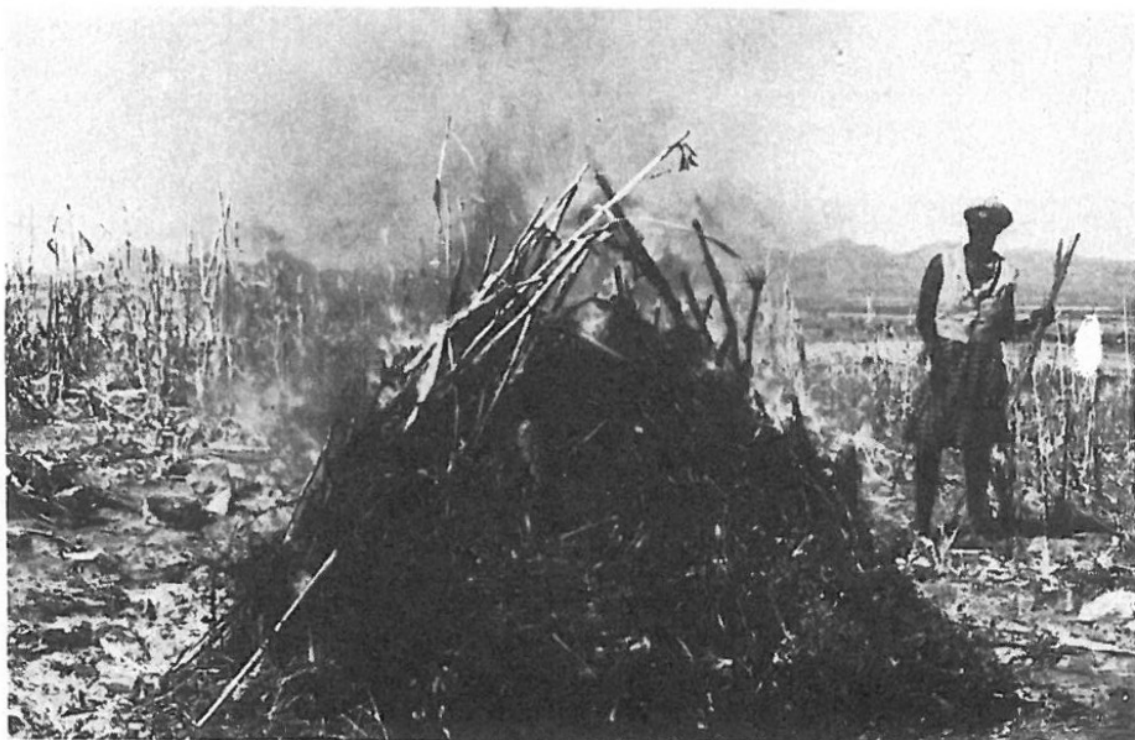
d. Stacking (dry dung)

18. Lemba potter Lea Rapêtswa at work (continued).

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e. Stacking (corn stalks)



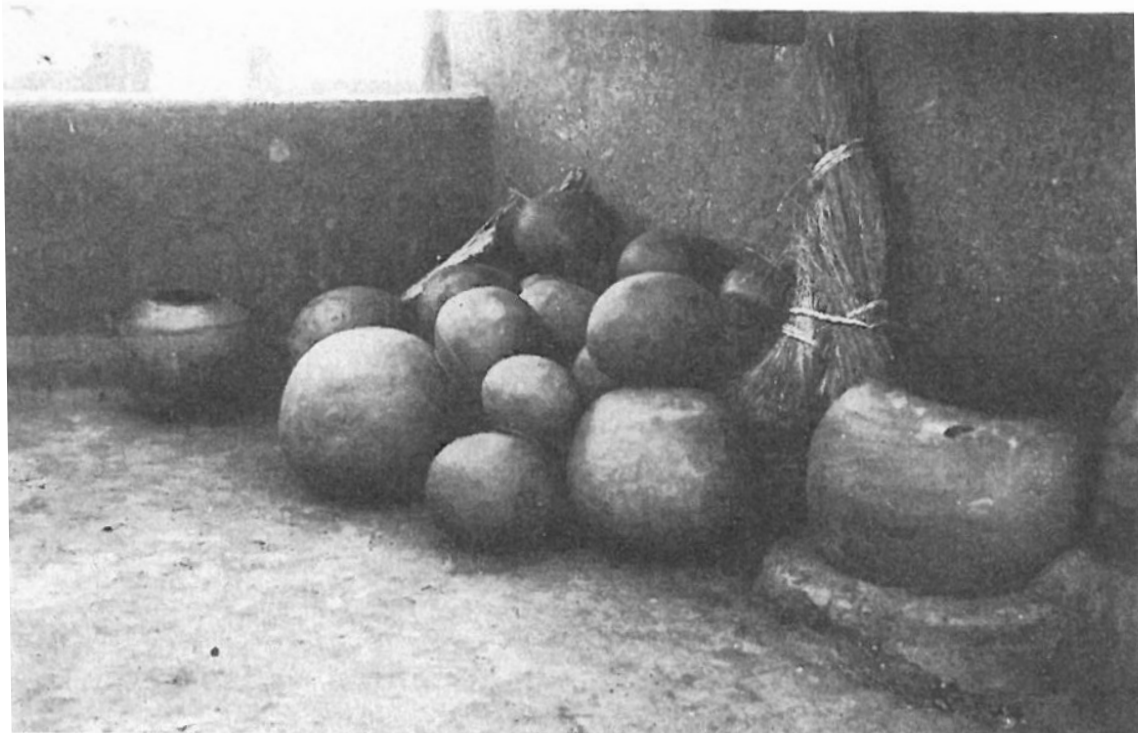
f. Firing

18. Lemba potter Lea Rapêtswa at work (continued).

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g. Tending the fire



h. Ready for sale

18. Lemba potter Lea Rapêtswa at work (concluded).

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19. A display of Lea Rapêtswa's pottery. (Photo A.O Jackson)

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TABLE XI
SKELETON GENEALOGY OF MASENYA

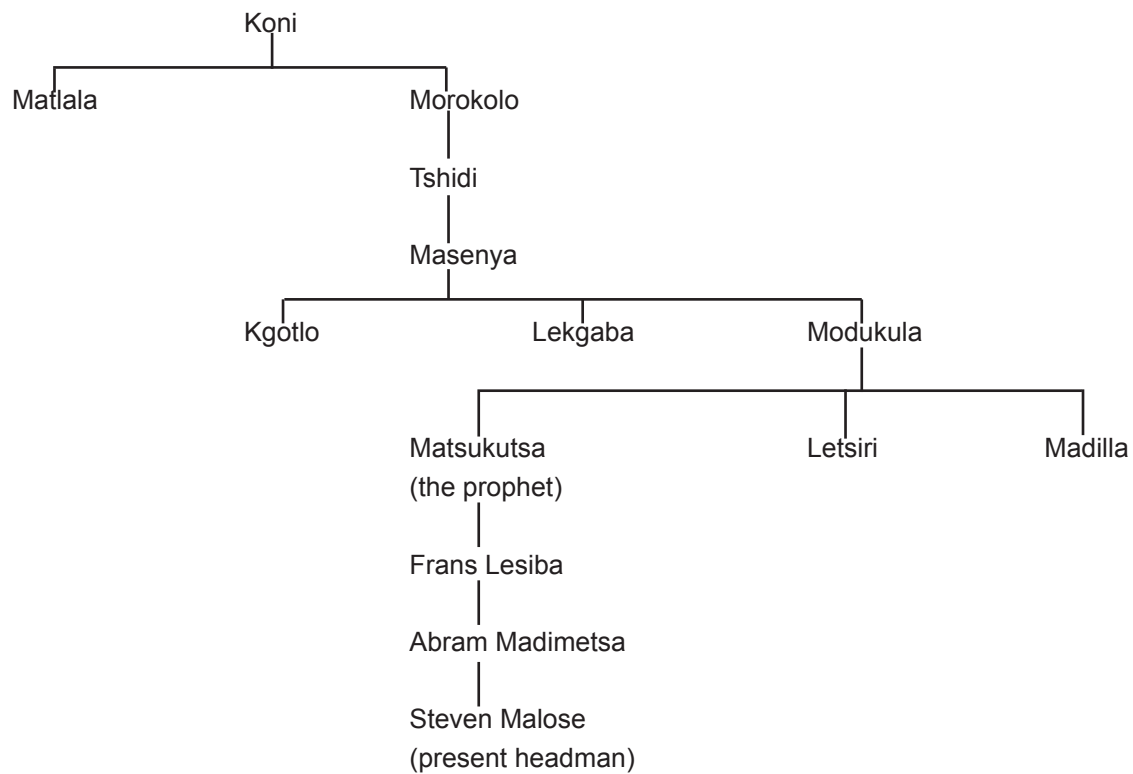
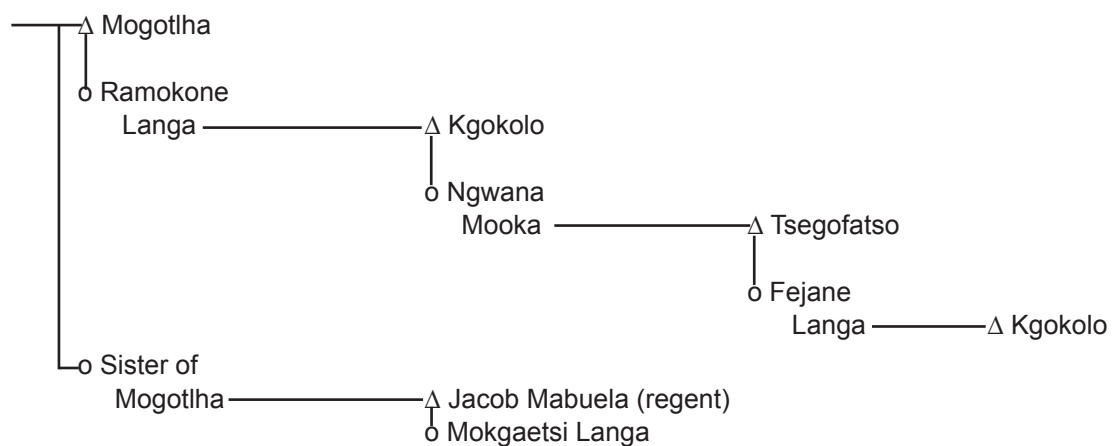


TABLE XII
GENEALOGY OF MABUELA



Note: This genealogy is incomplete.

more substantial proportion of the population, in some cases more than fifty per cent. Secondly, the other old wards have far fewer sub-headmen, probably as a consequence of the smaller proportion of aliens, but also because most of them have a much lower population than Mabusela's. Thirdly, some of the older wards are much more conservative in their mode of settlement than Mabusela's. The people do not settle individually to the same extent as at Mabusela's and large homesteads are still to be found. This is particularly true in the ward of Seema.

A list of sub-headmen of Mabusela's ward is given in Table XIII. The number of households belonging to the sub-headman's clan, the number of households not belonging to his clan, and the total number of households belonging to his sub-headman's unit are given opposite each name. The table presents a good summary of the structure of the ward.

As has been stated above, the head of a sub-headmanship is known as ramotsana (plural: *boramersana*). The members of a sub-headmanship, on the other hand, are simply referred to as the people of so-and-so or the children of so-and-so, the clan name of the head being given. The term ramorsana literally means father of a small village. The term calls to mind the picture of a small lineage consisting of a man and one or two younger brothers, perhaps a patrilineal cousin or two, some married sons, and a few OOfrlineage dependants, all living together in a single village under the control of the first man mentioned, who is the lineage head.

The sub-headmanships of Seretlo, Maloka, Sekhu, Letwaba, Kgabale and Mongatane, have substantial lineages with a varying percentage of non-lineage dependants. Mabuela, Rankapule, Moeti, Ratema, Nong and Ntlhabane, on the other hand, are groups of mixed descent with a ramorsana and no ruling lineage to speak of.

TABLE XIII

SUB-HEADMEN OF MABUSELA'S WARD

| SUB-HEADMANSHIP | RULING CLAN | HOUSEHOLDS DEPENDANT CLANS | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Mabusela (headman) | 31 | 93 | 124 |
| 2. Seretlo | 11 | 41 | 52 |
| 3. Maloka | 7 | 35 | 42 |
| 4. Sekhu | 23 | 7 | 30 |
| 5. Letwaba | 15 | 11 | 26 |
| 6. Ntelebofu | 5 | 16 | 21 |
| 7. Mabuela | 2 | 17 | 19 |
| 8. Rankapule | 2 | 16 | 18 |
| 9. Moeti | 2 | 15 | 17 |
| 10. Ratema | 1 | 14 | 15 |
| 11. Kgabale | 6 | 9 | 15 |
| 12. Nong | 2 | 12 | 14 |
| 13. Ntlhabane | 1 | 13 | 14 |
| 14. Mongatane | 8 | 3 | 11 |
| | | | Total 418 |

A very striking feature of the mode of settlement in Mabusela's ward is the strong tendency towards an individualistic settlement pattern. Single households sometimes grow into homesteads with two or three households. A few homesteads consisting of four households (*malapa*) were observed. Only one larger one, containing six households, was seen. The larger homesteads, those with three or four households, are the older ones as can be seen from the size of their refuse dumps. It is quite obvious, though, that if all the sons who grew up and married had added their households to these homesteads instead of building separately, these homesteads would have been much larger.

The thirty-one households of the Mabusela clan are settled as follows: two homesteads with three households each, two with two households each, and twentyone single-household homesteads. The fifteen households of Letwaba are settled as follows: one homestead of four households, one of three, one of two, and six households standing singly. The twenty-three households of Sekhu, by contrast, are settled as follows: one homestead with six households, one with four, one with three, three with two, and only four households standing singly.

Most of the members of a sub-headman's unit are settled fairly close together and away from other sub-headmen's units. But almost every sub-headman's unit has a few stray members who are settled away from its main area of settlement. Ratema is in Tshaba's ward, and Ntelebofu in Malebana's. The mode of settlement can be seen in the accompanying map. ²¹⁾

Membership of a sub-headman's unit may be acquired by outsiders. This usually happens when there are ties of friendship or kinship between the parties. If the person from elsewhere wishes to settle, he is introduced to the sub-headman. The sub-headman takes the parties to the headman if he is satisfied with the arrangement, and the headman in turn takes them to the chief. If everyone concerned is satisfied, the petitioner pays a sum of money and is granted permission to settle. He becomes a subject of the sub-headman of his friend, that is the sub-headman through whom he obtained permission to settle. He becomes a subject of that sub-headman's headman and of the chief at the same time. The manner of his acquisition of membership of the chiefdom determines his position and his channels of communication.

5. The Seven Remaining Wards of the Demarcated Area

The ranking of the seven remaining wards of the demarcated Mapela area is known with a fair degree of certainty and is, as nearly as could be ascertained, in the order in which they are dealt with below.

Seema.

The Seema people are of Matlala origin. They are Koni, and their totem is the little bird *tlhantlhagane*. Their praise poem has not been recorded. It is not quite certain when they joined the Langa, but it would appear as if this took place during the rule of chief Mapela. According to the Seema people they joined the Langa of their own free will.

An interesting phenomenon to be seen in the courtyard (*kgoro*) of headman Seema is stones placed there in pairs, a pair for each initiation course completed by the girls of the ward. Such stones are also to be found at three other places in the ward, where the courtyards of previous rulers of the ward were. These stones are about the size of a man's head or slightly bigger and are more or less round. They are

21. Map IV.

referred to as elephants (ditlou). The term dikg6t6boriba, used by the Nt°Shabeleng chiefdom for these stones, is quite unknown to the Seema people.²²⁾

A fact worthy of mention is that the people of Seema still live in their traditional homesteads (dikgoro) to a far greater extent than is to be seen in any other ward in the chiefdom. The process of breaking away from family and settling individually has not touched Seema to the same extent as it has other areas in the chiefdom. (The time referred to is 1968.)

The Seema headmanship has some 130 households, most of which are settled close together in the residential area of the ward between the hills. About a dozen households are settled in the plains away from the hills, and ten households under sub-headman Ramasobane, the only sub-headman of the Seema ward, are settled on the farm Zwartfontein some distance from the area of the Seema ward. There are also a few households of other wards, particularly those of Pila and Baloi, which are situated in Seema's area. These strange households are settled in the plains away from Seema's residential area.

Pila.

The people of Pila are Tlokwa from Moletsi and their totem animal is nkwe (the leopard). Their praise poem is as follows:

| | |
|--|--|
| Nkwe ye kgwadi ya mebala | A chequered coloured leopard |
| Mohumane wa Batlokwa | Mohumane of the Batlokwa |
| Bana ba segalakana ²³⁾ sa Moletsi | Children of the <i>segalakana</i> of Moletsi |
| Ba pitsa ya malala e fodile | Of the pot that has cooled down in the night |
| Dingwe di let e le magogo. | Others having slept with the crusts. |
| Kgwadi ahlama re go bone ganong | Chequered animal, open your mouth and let's see your cavity! |
| Ke legano ²⁴ la go met a marena | The cavity that has swallowed the kings |
| Le meditse Moloto le bo-Poopedi | It has swallowed Moloto and the Poopedi's |
| ya Matome. | of Matome. |

It seems as if the people of Pila joined the Langa voluntarily in the time of chief Mapela. There is no tradition of their having joined after being defeated in battle.

They say they broke away from the Komapi people at Moletsi because of a quarrel. The original Komapi and the original Pila, they say, were full brothers. It is said that there is a headmanship of Komapi at Moletti today, and that they were the 'owners of the land', that is to say the original inhabitants, and were there when Moletli arrived.

A curious fact about the Pila ward is that it is shared by headman Pila and headman Baloi. The two headmen act together in doctoring the ward boundary. They nevertheless both rank as full headmen, and one is not subject to the other. Baloi has three sub-headmen living in the wards of other headmen.

The headmanship of Pila has some 145 households.

22. See Bothma 1962 p. 12, and Chapter XIII above.

23. An object of bitter taste.

24. Sometimes spelled *lehano*.

Ramorulane.

The people of Ramorulane say they came from Bopedi originally. They were conquered by the Ndebele of Langa at Senta Hill to the north of Mapela. They think they were subject to the Phalane when they were conquered. However, the Matlou people say that the Ramorulanes were not subject to the Phalane but had a chief of their own, that is to say they were independent. (Matlou is discussed lower down.)

The totem of the Ramorulanes is kwena (the crocodile). Their praise poem is as follows:

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Agee Mokwena, | Hallo Mokwena, |
| Moila letlhaka, | Avoider of reeds, |
| Ramarulana a Mautla, | Ramarulana of Mautla, |
| Morulang ka ya seleng | Morulang I went where-food-could-be obtained |
| Ka ikotlela dirathana. | And fed for myself the small children. |

There are no sub-headmen subject to Ramorulane. The ward has 13 5 households, about half of which have the crocodile totem in common with the ten households forming the ruling clan of Ramorulane. The other half of the population is of heterogeneous origin.

Lelaka.

The people of Lelaka have the totem kwena (crocodile) , and they have the following praise poem:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Mmakgari a Mmankoto | Mmakgari of Mmankoto |
| Ke Lelaka la Bakwena | He is Lelaka of the Bakwena |
| Ke ba ga Makhurumula a Mmakgari | They belong to the Makhurumula of Mmakgori |
| Lentswe la Mathamaga ²⁵⁾ | The rock of the Mathamaga ²⁵⁾ |
| Leswika le mo kgorong ya ga Mmaphuti. | The rock at the kgoro of Mmaphuti. |

The Lelakas know very little about their origin, but state that they have been with the Ndebele of Langa for a very long time. They give the impression that they were already there during the rule of Mapela. There is no indication that they were conquered by the Langa, so they probably joined voluntarily. The ward has 140 households, of which sixteen are of the ruling Lelaka clan. According to spokesmen the ward has only a small percentage of strangers, and these do not live in concentrated, discrete settlements. One can conclude from this that most of the households in the Lelaka ward belong to the totem group of the ward rulers. The ward has no sub-headmen.

It is said that the rulers of Lelaka used to marry the daughters of the Mosoge lineage of the Langa. But this has ceased because very few Mosoge people came to Mapela following the partition of the Langa in 1890 and it has not been possible to maintain the usage.

Headman Lelaka states that headman 'rthokwe, who was placed in the area by one of the Langa chiefs, is a trespasser in his ward territory. He says the same of

25. The name of a circumcision regiment.

Lebelo, who is a sub-headman of the chiefs ward.²⁶⁾

Baloi.

The people of Baloi are Tsonga who joined the Langa fairly recently. This happened at about the time of the Langa partition (1890). Baloi spokesmen recollect that the present headman's father fought for chief Hans in the war against his brother Bakenberg in about 1900.²⁷⁾ They were subject to the Ndebele chief Maraba, where they were under a headman Masenya, before they came to Mapela. They had sojourned there for a short while on their way southwards from the Spelonken. The praise poem recited by the Baloi is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Mukhalanga, Mulodzwi, nhwanyane a nga tekwa, | Mukhalanga, Mulodzwi, (you) girl who are marriageable, |
| Tshamela N'wapfungwe a tiveni le'rikulu | Await Mrs-Hut-rear of the great pool |
| Je'ri nga dlaya; | that can kill; |
| N'wancongi a fela tiva Je'rikulu. | N'wancongi died in the big pool. |

Baloi has three sub-headmen. The first is Manganye, also known as Khambane, who came with his followers from Makotopong in the Pietersburg district. They arrived before 1918, as did Khoza, the second sub-headman. The latter is reported to have come from Bileni in Mozambique originally, but to have stayed at Segodini (Makapansgat) for a time. Shibambo, the third sub-headman, arrived in about 1926 from Maune on the Pietersburg plateau. All three sub-headmen are Tsonga.

Headman Baloi has thirty-one households directly subject to him, fifty-six are subject to sub-headman Khambane, sixty-three to Khoza, and twenty-two to Shibambo, giving the headmanship a total of 172 households.

Whereas Baloi is in the ward that he shares with headman Pila, Kham bane is in hokwa's area near the Mogalakwena river, Khoza is in Matlou's area near the junction of the Motlhosane and the Mogalakwena, and Shibambo is in Masenya's area higher up on the Motlhosane.²⁸⁾

Mention has already been made of the fact that Pila and Baloi doctor the boundaries of the ward they share jointly as if they were a single headmanship, which they are not. We can add to this that only about twenty per cent of the households of Baloi's headmanship are within the ward boundaries and the others dispersed as indicated above, and that the Tsonga are not at home culturally in the Mapela chiefdom. The picture that emerges is one of a headmanship of cultural strangers without a ward territory of their own, living interspersed with the other members of the chiefdom, but governing themselves subject only to the paramountcy of the chief and assisting their local hosts in the magical protection of the territory that they share with them.

Matlou.

The people of Matlou say they are Pedi and that their totem is *kgwadi*, a water bird. Their short, informal praise is as follows:

26. See above in this chapter, where Lebelo is discussed in the context of the chief's ward.

27. See Chapter VII for the events of the turn of the century.

28. See Map II.

Re ba ga Matlou a dithole,
Ge re nyoga noka re re sehlee!
Re Bapedi ba ga Rangako.

We are the Matlou's of the heifers,
When we cross the river we are tawny!
We are Bapedi of Rangako's.

Their longer, more detailed, and more formal, praise poem is as follows: 29)

Re Mapedi maila pitsana ya go khurumelwa,
A e reng ge re tsholelwa re humana bogobe
bja yona bo le botsididi.
Bjale ke tsea sego ke thubele lapeng.
Yare ge ke seno tsea sego ke thubela lapeng,
Mosadi are ge a mpotsisa, kare, ke pholo
e ntsho Ramathubadifala.
Ke thibela ba Makgabeng ditsela, Mahananwa
a sitwa ke go sepela.
Kare ke segodi kwa borwa, hlokotsa dinala.
Mekuru e hlakane le ka diphepane.
Kgomo e ganne go feta polasa.
Bo-Legari monna wa Monareng,
Bo-Nkwabo ba boya ba sikere morwalo.
Mokekolo ³⁰⁾ ge a na le lehufa,
namela ntlo a rota,
Mokgaditswane wa hwa dihwahwa.

We are the Mapedi avoiders of the little
pot that is closed,
It may happen that we are served and
find its³¹⁾ porridge cold.
Then I take the calabash and smash it in
the yard.
Now after I have taken the calabash and
broken it in the yard,
And my wife asks me, I reply, I am the
black ox Mr-smasher-of-pots.
I block the paths for those of Makgabeng,
the Mahananwa also cannot travel.
I said I am a hawk from the south, sharpen
the talons.
The turtle doves have intermingled with
the emerald-spotted doves.
The beast refused to pass the farm.
Legari the man of Monareng,
And Nkwabo, returned shouldering a burden.
If an old woman is jealous,
She climbs on top of a hut and urinates,
And the lizard dies of fits.

The Matlou people live in their present home together with the Phalane before the Ndebele of Langa arrived. They say they used to rule over the Phalane. Matloo's people were overcome and incorporated on the arrival of the Langa.

Spokesmen say that there are many subjects of Matlou working and living on farms owned by Vv hites immediately to the west of Mapela, the side on which Matlou's ward is situated. Matlou has one sub-headman who takes care of his subjects in the vicinity of Groenfontein, outside the Mapela area. The ward has 120 households within the Mapela area, of which seventy-four are of the Matlou clan. The ward has no sub-headmen in the Mapela area.

Tshokwe.

The people of Tsokwe are *dikgomo*, that is to say they have domestic cattle for their totem animal, but they actually avoid *mmutla*, the hare.³² Their praise

29. The Matlou praises were recorded in Potgietersrus in July 1981 (spokesman Samuel Shima). Up to that time I had only a short fragment written by headman Willem Matlou (now deceased), parts of which could not be deciphered.
30. Sic! I was assured that this pronunciation of the word was handed down from father to son. In normal speech they now say *mokekolo*.
31. Refers back to the pot.
32. (This footnote is on the next page.)

poem is as follows:

Tshokwe wa mmamolamu wa Kgathola
Wa thoka sebolaya baloi.

Tshokwe of mother-of-knobkerrie of Kgathola
The knobkerrie that kills sorcerers.

Spokesmen say that the Tshokwe people were Swazi originally and that they first settled with the Molet i chiefdom. From there a section broke away and joined the Langa. It is not known when this took place, but it probably occurred during the rule of chief Mapela.

The ward has ninety-five households in all, of which twenty-five belong to the Tshokwe clan. There is one sub-headman under Tshokwe and his name is Mello. The Mello sub-headmanship is fairly strong, having twenty-three households. The Mello people are said to be Leso and to have the totem *tau* (the lion). They are situated on the farm Vaalkop, outside the boundaries of the ward.

According to headman Lelaka the territory occupied by Tshokwe actually belongs to Lelaka's ward. Tshokwe was placed there by one of the previous chiefs. The two headmen nevertheless mutually exclude each other when they doctor their respective ward boundaries every year.

The rulers of Tshokwe have never married a Langa girl, but chief Masebe married two daughters of the previous headman. The first of these, Kwamapi, died without issue, and the second, Sethabi, took her place as *mmamolatela* (ancillary wife).

6. The Five Wards on Adjoining Mapela Farms

There are five Mapela farms adjoining the demarcated area of the chiefdom. They are Drenthe, Overysel, Zwartfontein, Vaalkop and Blinkwater. Each of these farms is the seat of a headmanship.³³ Two of them were purchased by the chiefdom, and the other three were given in exchange by the South African Development Trust for three Mapela farms situated in the vicinity of Gilead, some distance to the north of Mapela.

These farms were already occupied by members of the chiefdom when the farms became Mapela property. The occupants remained on the farms, and the headmen were appointed. However, some of the occupants did not accept the new headmen but retained their old headmanship allegiances.

The attitude was adopted at the time that the farms had not been obtained only for the occupation of the people already on them, but were also intended to bring a measure of relief for the pressure of population within the demarcated Mapela area. As a result of this, encroachment from the wards within the demarcated area took place onto these farms.

32. Two different words are used: *-bina* (dance, venerate a totem) and *-ila* (avoid).

The phenomenon of having a particular totem and avoiding something else in its stead seems to be not uncommon amongst the Sotho-speaking peoples. The practical reason seems to be to free the meat of the totem animal from the avoidance by transferring the avoidance to some insignificant creature or some other item. Some of the insignificant totems may have originated as avoidance substitutions - in fact *thantlhagane* has been specifically pointed out to me as such a case.

33. See Map II.

Molokomme.

The people of Molokomme are Hurutshe and their totem animal is *phofu*, the eland. Their praise poem is as follows:

Agee tshetlha, Mohurutshe,
Bahurutshe ba dintsi tse dikgolo.
Re bana ba Lemetlsa 'a Marema a Matutumala
Lemetsa ra-seja-moilo nageng
Lemetsu kwa Odi o ja mphokolo.

Hallo, grey one, Mohurutshe,
Bahurutshe of big brows.
We are children of Lemet of Marema ³⁴⁾
of Matutumala
Lemetsa, the one who eats an avoidance in the
veld,
Lemetsa at the Limpopo eats soft porridge.

The Molokomme people came from the Hurutshe country originally, having left there on account of a quarrel. They passed close by the Mangwato country near Moyela and went to a place called Seriting. From there they went on to Marongge (Buffelshoek) in the Rustenburg district, and then to Mamotlololo (Swartkop) north of Thutlwane. They were conquered by the Ndebele of Langa at the last-mentioned place, probably during Mapela's rule.

According to Molokomme spokesmen their ward accommodates no strangers. Other spokesmen say the Molokomme people keep very much to themselves and do not readily intermarry with other people. However, of the ninety households of the Molokomme ward, only four bear that name.

The Molokomme people claim that they were constituted a headmanship when they were conquered and incorporated into the chiefdom. They were already living on the farm Drenthe when it was purchased by the Mapela chiefdom in 1905 and were in fact probably in occupation when the farm was surveyed. However, they were not the only occupants of the farm. The Maloka people, a sub-headman's unit of Mabusela, were also in occupation. The farm was therefore partitioned between the two, Molokomme occupying the northern part and Mabusela's people, in particular Maloka and his subjects, the southern part. The boundary doctored annually by Molokomme shows the line of division between the two. Molokomme's territory therefore comprises only a part of the farm.

Makgamatho.

The ward of Makgamatho has an altogether heterogeneous population. The 181 households, whose home is the farm Blinkwater, belong to seventy-five different clans. Only seven of these households belong to the Makgamatho clan.

The Makgamatho people are Tlokwa who came from a place called Mphakane in chief Ramokgopa's country. No praise poem has been recorded for the Makgamathos.

The Ndebele of Langa found the Makgamatho people and the people of 'Ihaba at Thaba Ishweu when they arrived there. The Makgamathos were subject to the Ishabas at the time. The Makgamathos accompanied the Ndebele of Langa from Thaba Tshweu to their present home.

The present headman's grandfather married a daughter of headman Masenya

34. It is said that Lemet a was their chief before they were conquered and incorporated by the Langa. He was a member of the Marema circumcision regiment.

and was appointed sub-headman (ramotsana) of headman Masenya for the farms Zwartfontein and Vaalkop. He was appointed headman for the farms Blinkwater and Vaalkop during the rule of chief Alfred (1918-1937). Molekana was a sub-headman under Makgamatho for the farm Yaalkop at the time. In 1942 the present headman's father succeeded to the headmanship. The present headman succeeded in 1952. Molekana on Vaalkop was regarded as a sub-headman until the latter date. But since then he has been regarded (grudgingly on the part of Makgamatho) as a fully fledged headman.

In this way Makgamatho's ward sluank to where it now comprises the farm Blinkwater only.

Molekana.

Headman Molekana is situated on the Mapela farm Vaalkop, as has already been mentioned. Little is known of the origin of the Molekana family. They say they are Ndebele who came with the Langa from the East and that they also have t/011 (the elephant) as their totem in common with the Langa. However, their claim to Ndebele origin is not substantiated by the people of the chiefs ward. The Molekana praise poem is as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Molekane wa ga Matlou | Molekane of Matlou |
| Wa ga Senyane saga Maphoko a Tebele | Of Senyane of Maphoko of Tebele |
| 'A bo ntlatlana ke tlhagetse | Related to head-basket I am worn out |
| Ba ola ka nna molora | And they scooped ash into me |
| Dikgolo tsa tla go ora. | The big ones simply came and sat by (the fire). |

Molekana rules over a heterogeneous population of 150 households, eight of which belong to his clan. These households belong to some seventy different clans and only four of them, apart from Molekana's own, are represented by five or more households in the ward. They are Dolo with eight, Letwaba with eight, Moabelo with fifteen, and Maimela with five.

There are many households of the ruling ward living interspersed with Molekana's subjects.

Malebana.

Malebana's ward is the Mapela farm Overysel. He rules over a mixed population of 280 households, a few of which are on the adjoining White-owned farm Witrivier. Malebana enjoys the backing of fifteen households of his own clan.

The Malebana people are Kgatla and have the totem kgabo (the monkey). Their praise poem, which they recited with obvious pride on the day that it was recorded, is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Agee Mokgatla. Se fose Mokgatla ka kobe | Hallo Mokgatla. Do not hurl a sharp object at Mokgatla |
| O tle o bone go fofa ga Mokgatla | So that you may see how Mokgatla springs ³⁵⁾ |
| Go tshela kgabo ana tshwene | It is the monkey or baboon that springs |
| Bakgatla re fenyä Bakwena | Bakgatla we conquer the Bakwena |

35. Lest you see how Mokgatla springs. The meanings is actually this: if you want to see how agile he is, hurl a sharp object at him.

Batho ba ga Makgongwana
 Bakwena ba re fenya ka puo fela
 Ka gore kgabo e fumane Bakwena ba agile
 Ba e nyatsa bonnyane
 Bjale ya senya motse wa Bakwena.
 Agee kgabo. A e namela mooka e je borekhu.

The people of Makgongwana
 The Bakwena conquer us only with talks
 Because the monkey has found the Bakwena
 established
 They underestimated it for its smallness
 And so it broke up the Bakwena settlement.
 Hallo monkey. Let it climb the thorn
 tree³⁶⁾ and eat gum.

Malebana acquired his headmanship through the farm. The farm belonged to the South African Development Trust before it was given to Mapela in an exchange transaction. The head of the Malebana clan had been the farm foreman under the Trust up to that time. He was promoted to headman when the farm was transferred to the chiefdom.

Headman Tshaba, whose area adjoins Malebana to the west, also has a stake in the farm. Many of his subjects live interspersed with those of Malebana. There are also twenty-four households subject to headman Mabusela on the farm. They live interspersed with the other residents of the farm. Three are directly subject to Mabusela, whereas twenty-one comprise the sub-headmanship of Ntelebofu which is subject to Mabusela.

The Malebana people say they are subjects of long standing of the Ndebele of Langa and that they were conquered originally. The fact that their ward has such a large population has not improved their ranking, since rank is not determined by numbers.

Puka.

Headman Puka is on the tribal farm Zwartfontein. He became a headman through the acquisition of the farm by Mapela. Spokesmen say his people have been subject to the Langa for a very long time. He rules over a heterogeneous population consisting of 119 households, only eight of which belong to his clan. The Puka lineage is of Matlala origin and has the totem tlhantlhagane. Their praise poem is as follows:

Mabokela 'a Molautsi
 Se tla bokela le baloi
 Batho ba bo!ego.

Maboketa³⁷⁾ of Molautsi
 He will ward off on behalf of sorcerers also
 The nocturnal people.

About a third of the farm, the south-western part, is occupied by subjects of Masenya. Puka excludes this part of the farm when he doctors his ward boundaries every year.

There are some households subject to the chiefs ward, ten households subject to Mabusela, a few households belonging to other wards, and a sizeable sub-headmanship of Tshaba (the 93 households of Matshoga) on the portion of the farm remaining to him. Puka's ward therefore comprises only a part of the farm Zwartfontein and even this he shares with people not belonging to his ward.

36. Acacia karroo.

37. One who wards off on behalf of another.

7. Wards Away From Mapela

The Mapela chiefdom has subjects on fanns to the west of the demarcated Mapela area. This is the direction in which the Langa sphere of influence stretched the furthest in pre-European times. The Bididi of Songwane and the Seleka on the Phalala river were subject to the Langa at one time.

Kekae.

Headman Kekae is situated on the tribal farm Leyden, some thirty km. west of the present chiefs capital at Fothane. He is responsible for a mixed population of an estimated 150 households. The farm was transferred to the chiefdom by the South African Development Trust in the same exchange transaction as the farms Blinkwater, Yaalkop and Overysel.

Kekae kept in touch with subjects of the chiefdom working on White-owned farms in the vicinity before Leyden was acquired. He was called in and promoted to headman when the fann became Mapela property.

The Kekaes are Pedi and their totem is *noko* (the porcupine). They used to have a substantial village in the Yaalwater area. They were originally noticed by the Langa rulers because of this. The Langa used them as a channel for communicating with farm hands who were subjects of the chiefdom.

The headman of the previous generation had married Violet Nt edi Langa, a sister of chief Alfred. This headman's name was Modisa Kekae. It was during chief Alfred's rule that the headmanship was granted to Kekae.

The Kamola Farms.

Headman Johannes Motlana lives on the farm Klipfontein, about fifty km. west of Fothane. This farm belongs to the South African Development Trust. The Motlana people are Koni and have the totem *tlhantlhagane*. There are eight of their households on Klipfontein. They administer about 100 households on the farm. There are, in addition, seventeen households subject to the neighbouring Bakenberg chiefdom on the farm.

Motlana was promoted to the headmanship on Klipfontein during the rule of chief Alfred. Before that, the Motlana people were subject to headman Seema although they were genealogically senior to that headman.³⁸⁾

One of the probable reasons for the promotion of Motlana was that Motlana men had been *ngaka ya malwetsi* (literally: doctor of diseases) to the Langa chiefs for a number of generations.

The previous headman, Stevens Motlana, married a Langa girl. She was Gloria Mathepana Langa, a daughter of chief Hans by his wife Mokgaet i Mpyatona. However, her sons did not succeed to the headmanship. It is related that Stevens was acting during the minority of his elder brother's son and that he called his people together and publicly handed over the reins of office when the latter attained majority. The Langa girl was not the highest-ranking wife of Stevens either, since she had been married after some of his other wives.

The Mapela chiefdom controls four other fanns of the South African Develop-

38. They lost their political rank to a junior line at some stage, but retained ritual precedence by 'biting the pumpkin' during the first-fruits festival before those who outranked them.

ment Trust in the general vicinity of Klipfontein. This area is generally referred to as the Kamola Bloc because the Kamola (Mokamole) River flows through the area.

The residents of the farm Schilpadkraal are ruled by Hans Motlana, a lowerranking brother of Johannes. The farm has an estimated sixty households. The farm Verdoornsdraai, under Johannes Masisi, has about fifty households, and Olifants--klip under Frans Ratsele also has about fifty. The residents of the farm Eldorado are under Martiens Majadibodu and they count about eighty households. The Majadibodus were relocated there from the Mapela farm Neckar on the Phalala River.

The rulers of these four farms are in effect sub-headmen under Johannes Motlana on Klipfontein, to whom they are obliged to render the annual beer tribute. The heads of these farms are, however, entitled to the beer tribute of their subjects when beer parties are held. Any other arrangement would be impracticable because both Motlana's capital at Klipfontein and the chiefs capital are too far away to receive the tribute from individual beer parties.

The Abbotspoort Farms.

The Mapela chiefdom owns three farms on the Phalala River about 130 km. west of Fothane. These farms are Abbotspoort, Neckar and Martinique. For a time, each of these farms was administered by someone living on the farm. Abbotspoort, which was bought during the rule of chief Alfred, was administered by a member of the Lerumo clan. Moses Lerumo was appointed at the time that the farm was purchased. He was a friend of chief Alfred.

The Lerumo people are Pedi who came from near the Thubitse River and they have the totem noko (the porcupine). They form about a quarter of the farm's population. The remainder are of heterogeneous origin.

The farm Neckar was administered by a member of the Majadibodu clan. There were ten households of these people on the farm in 1963. The remainder of the farm's population was of heterogeneous origin. The Majadibodus are Pedi from Sekhukhuneland.

A number of households from Neckar was recently transferred to the farm Eldorado in the Kamola Bloc. These included the Majadibodu households. It is said that only the more recent settlers on the farm, those who settled after 1947, were relocated. This was due to the proclamation of the farms Abbotspoort, Neckar and Martinique as a betterment area,³⁹⁾ which made it necessary to remove the surplus population.

The farm Martinique was administered by a member of the Mosima clan. The Mosimas form about a quarter of the population of the farm. They are also of Sekhukhuneland origin.

During the rule of chief Johannes one of his lowest-ranking half-brothers, Jacob Matsobane Langa, was appointed as headman over the three farms. The men in charge of the individual farms ranked as sub-headmen under him. The position is still the same today, except that Jacob's family has been replaced by Marcus Langa, the son of the present chiefs elder uterine brother, the late chief Godwin.

The occupants of the farm Olifantsdrift, which is in the same general vicinity as Abbotspoort, elected to become subjects of the Mapela chiefdom. They are said to be Tlokwa and to be administered by a man called Setlatsile. They now form a sub-

39. Government Notice No. 1480 of 14 September 1962.

headman's unit under headman Marcus Langa.

8. Tribesmen in White Rural and Urban Areas

White-owned Farms.

There are many Mapela subjects working on White-owned farms. They have a particular area in which they tend to predominate over farm hands from other chiefdoms. This area is south of a line from Fothane to the Abbotspoort farms. The area takes in the environs of Ellisras and Yaalwater and extends eastwards to Naboomspruit. The chief has a number of persons in this wide area who keep in touch with the Mapela subjects there. Each such person is responsible for the Mapela subjects on a number of farms in the vicinity of the one on which he works. There are more than six such persons. They try cases and notify the chief if a case crops up that is too difficult for them to settle.

These persons are simply referred to as *nduna*, although their rank cannot be compared with that of the true headmen of the chiefdom. The whole system is flexible, because farm hands tend to come and go. Such representatives of the chief are subject to dismissal or may resign from their jobs like any other farm worker, and they may leave the district. However, they know that when they return to Mapela, they revert to the status they had before they became representatives. The basis of recruitment of these representatives is equally flexible, and can hardly be said to have fixed rules. It seems as if such persons simply become apparent or emerge, or present themselves to the chief for appointment. However, it is possible that a representative may be rewarded with a headmanship if a new headmanship is created, which does not occur very often. This was what happened with headman Kekae on the Mapela farm Leyden.

Urban Centres.

The chiefdom has representatives in a number of urban centres. They take care of the interests of their fellow tribesmen and also hear cases. Such representatives are to be found in Germiston, Kempton Park, Benoni, the Iscor Men's Hostel in Pretoria, the Mamelodi township in Pretoria, the Selby Hostel in Johannesburg, and also in nearby Potgietersrus. These people usually present themselves to the chief and request to be recognised as his representatives in the urban areas concerned. The link between the chiefdom and the urban tribesmen may appear to be tenuous, but it must provide the latter with a measure of satisfaction otherwise they would not make use of it.

To view Sources found on the original pages 152-156, visit:

<https://familyhistorytreasures.com/pdf/ndebele1.pdf>

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- Ketesella: ordered to be shot by Hans 43.
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- Lesiba: circumcision name of Mankopane 50.
- Maaka, Lekolwana: not charged with murder of Janse and kinsmen 46.
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- Mofomme, Malose: sentenced for murder of Janse and kinsmen 46.
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- Moherero, Solomon: leader of Matlamma (Herero) fugitives 60.
- Mokgaetši: wife of Matōpa Langa, of Mabusêla clan 129.
- Mokgeta Makgōba: principal wife of Masebe, has no sons 37; two other women accommodated in her household 67, 79, 81.
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- Mokopane: Kekana chief in Makapanspoort, massacres Boers 14-15; flight into cave 16-17, 20; his son Kgabadelo elopes with Mankopane's sister, he refuses to return her 21; his Kekana sign agreement 20 November 1869 24; persecution of Christians 1878 26; Langa consider asking him to arbitrate in succession dispute 28; at war with Masebe 33-34, 35, 60, 65; Lebelo attacked first, group joins Langa 126.
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- Potgieter, Piet: succeeds A.H. Potgieter, killed during siege of Kekana 1854 16; appointed Native Commissioner for Waterberg 33; Native Commissioner, instructed to determine which of Hans or Bakenberg has majority support 40; Commissioner for Waterberg 1881-1899 41.
- Potlane, Isaac: Masebe's brother, killed 34.
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- Rakofi: councillor, causes friction between Masebe and Mankopane 20.
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- Ramokōka: Phalane chief? 50.
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- Rasara: name by which tribesmen remember evangelist Seële 21.
- Richter: missionary at Malokong 30.
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- Robinson, Sir Hercules: addresses chiefs in Pretoria 33.
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- Schlōmann: missionary at Malokong 30; visits Masebe shortly before and after his death by suicide 35-36; mentions long, winding passages in Masebe's capital 67.
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- Sekgopejane: settles in Masebe's country 1888 but soon leaves for Mmata 35.
- Sekgorekgore: high-ranking man, jumps over cliff and dies at Magagamatala 18.
- Sekgowe Kutumela: ordered to be shot by Hans 43.
- Sekhaulelo, Mpiwa: sentenced for murder of Janse and kinsmen 46.
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