

Sekukuni land - Glickman's thesis
Politics in the Rustenburg district

SEKUKUNILAND, UNTIL 1931.

16th January 1934.

Dear Gluckman,

Your thesis has come and I have looked through it with very great interest. Your fresh brain has accomplished the Herculean task which an older one would have shrunk from appalled, of sorting out the apparent chaos of a very wide subject.

You ask me to criticize and make suggestions, but you are so well entrenched with authorities that criticism is fairly ruled out. There are one or two remarks I should like to make:-

Under the heading C Bantu Culture II Material Culture you mention dung used as soap at Mochudi. I can remember among the Baralong, Batlaping and Batsating (the latter a very interesting tribe who "brina" the sun) when they commonly used wood ashes for soap, in fact in John Brown's Sechuana dictionary the word MOLORA means ashes or soap.

Under B Land Tenure II - Hunting, Pastoral and Woods. Towards the end of this section you get on to rain making. For the methods of celebrated rain maker have you ever compared the 1st Book of Kings Chapter XIX? He poured petrol or Paraffin or some such liquid (? from Baku) round an altar and thus produced the fire which burned up the sacrifice. Whichever way you look at it the description is worth reading from the point of view of a doctor dealing with his chief.

Under C Hoecultural Activities IV - Hoeing the Chief's Special Field. Towards the end dealing with first fruits - the Bapedi women used certainly to pluck and carry home and eat green mealies not only from their little scrapas but also from their regular gardens long before the first fruit rites. The scrapas is what you refer to as early marshland gardens, just little strips along the river banks and counted as extras to the regular gardens. Sometimes they were swept away when the river came down in spate.

Under D Pastoral Activities - Towards the end you mention a sacred herd kept by Bomvana Chiefs. With the Bapedi there was much the same. I remember a herd of huge stag-oxen which were looked upon as sacred and only to be used for sacrifice in very special circumstances. They were, however, all shot for East Coast Fever in 1909.

Under E Hunting Activities - A chief might close some part of his territory against hunting prior to the koma school going out, in order to reserve the game there for them to hunt. The Bapedi allowed no one, not even a koma school, to hunt on their old sacred hill Modimolle near their old DSGATE head stad. In reverse of Stayt I remember well that old Chief PASOARU of the BATAU used to reserve certain places for his own particular shooting with his old heavy 10 bore shot gun for I used to get him cartridges. Also Maserumule of the MOLLALE section in Sekukuniland likes to-day (or 2 years ago) to keep to himself a certain valley on the Sekukuniland - Pokwani border. Chief Ntoampi Magakal also had his own hunting corners where he used to hunt with his great dogs. The above were all keen hunters - Sekukuni himself was a bad shot and when he used to hunt and I went out shooting with him I used to keep at a good distance away as he was dangerous.

Organised hunts were carried out to kill game in the season - there were also organized hunts to kill a klipspringer and a red hare to make rain with. I have seen such hunts carried out with my permission on the hill rising just behind my Schoonoord office. Tiger skins go to the chief. I cannot imagine a commoner going about dressed in a tiger skin. Young boys have big hunts after the dassie (rock rabbits) with their 10 foot long thin assegais. The beginning of a hunt is a regular ceremony with the old doctor running out and smelling which way the wind blows and seeing if the signs are propitious, and when we finally started the lecholo the two wings used to dash out jumping into the air as they went. After the hunt, if I was present, all the game belonged to me, but I used to select - say a buck and a few birds

used to select - say a buck and a few birds - and then give all the rest of the bag to the biggest chief or headman present who divided it among the lesser headmen and so through to individuals. We used at one time to shoot or slaughter a lot of stuff and there were was enough for everybody, and the hunts were always happy days of good fellowship.

Towards the end of your thesis Under H II - Tribute: You remember how ^{JOEY?} ~~Joek~~ and Jonathan in Basutoland used to fight and used to be fined by Sir Godfrey ^{LAGDEN} ~~Dagaben~~ - say 250 cattle for doing so. They used to collect the 250 from their people, and not only the 250 but many more besides. Then they used to pay the 250 to Lerothodi, or whoever it was, and stick the outstanding balance themselves.

Under M - The Chief as a Reactionary Influence : You quote Harries as saying that Bapedi chiefs prohibited irrigation in their reserves. The last three words are wrong as regards Bapedi chiefs. The Bapedi chiefs themselves irrigate and encourage irrigation in their reserves which are definitely theirs, e.g. Geluka Location and where their land touches the Ngoaritu. On the Crown and Company farms in Sekukuniland outside these reserves they discourage or do their best to forbid irrigation, as such farms might be taken over by the whites who would evict the native occupiers. This, as an instance, actually occurred on the Company farm Mecklenberg east of the ~~Lube~~ Lulu in Sekukuniland where a native Franz Molumbi opened a furrow from the Mutzi river; a white man then, and not till then, noticed that the farm was irrigable, bought it and evicted the original native furrow opener and the other native inhabitants.

Finally if I have any criticism at all to make it is in the direction of your rather, in some places, to my old and perhaps autocratic mind, over-minimizing the power of a chief and over-emphasizing his amenability to the discipline of his lekgotla. Lestrade was apt to make great play of a Bahurutse chief being fined by his lekgotla. I do not remember any very big chief in history being so fined. The Bahurutse are, I admit, a very old tribe and not one of these little mushrooms. It would I think be a weak chief whom the lekgotla would dare to fine. Who would fine a Chaka or any old lion with guts? I know Lsang Pinane was fined as a young man, not as a chief or regent, for putting a girl in the family way. He was fined heavily and on becoming regent stuck on the same fine to other people for the same offence, to their great annoyance.

Have you gone into the question of whether a chief can select his own lekgotla, and dismiss or cease to use advisers who become too precocious? I can quote instances - Into whose kraal did the fine-cattle of the Bahurutse chief go? Is your thesis going to appear in print, not merely in type? There is much in it that it would do a power of good for all *N.C.'s, Asst. N.C.'s, and Magistrates to read, to say nothing of nearly all, if not all, our Supreme Court Judges. You have dug up and collated authorities which the ordinary Native Affairs man never heard of - some I never heard of. I do think your thesis should be published, especially now with our Parliamentarians facing this question. The last sentence of your thesis gives us hope of more.

N.B. This was typed from the copy of a personal letter, and as the subject is not familiar to the typist it is possible that some of the names and terms have been incorrectly transcribed.

* Native Commissioner.

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