

SEMANTIC FIELD ANALYSIS AND THE STRUCTURE OF CULTURE:
A Comparative Study of Sotho and Xhosa.

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PREFACE

Analyses of Sotho and Xhosa seem to concentrate predominantly on morphological, tonological and phonological studies. Semantics seems to be a relatively neglected area in African Languages. It is the view of the writer that attention should now be turned increasingly to semantics. In fact, except perhaps for van Rooy's¹ Venda work semantic field analysis does not seem to have been undertaken in African Languages. This thesis is an attempt to contribute in this particular area of linguistic analysis. In addition to that, the present study is an attempt to explore new dimensions in African language study, namely the application of componential analysis to two African languages, Sesotho and Xhosa.

In general terms, the aim of the present study is to explore the relationship between language and culture. Very little seems to have been done in this particular area in African languages. In this connection the only work that comes to mind is van Rooy's Venda work which has already been referred to above. In that work, van Rooy tries to show the integration of language and culture in the communication of the Christian message as illustrated by the Venda Bible.

Perhaps with the notable exception of Siertsema² there seems to be some scholarly consensus about the relationship between language and culture as the following brief survey will show.

Boas³, the American anthropologist, for example has investigated the interplay of the environment, cultural life and linguistic form. This he has done by comparing Kwakiutl, an American Indian language, with the Eskimo language.

Lotz⁴ shows how the structure of one semantic field, or area of semantically related terms, namely numerals, can shape the goals a particular linguistic community strives for in a major cultural activity such as sports. Conklin⁵ shows how languages may differ not only in their segmentation of a semantic field e.g. colour, but also in the dimensions of semantic fields themselves.

Siertsema, on the other hand, takes a different view from the above views. Only a brief summary of his views will be given here. A fuller exposition will be made in the next chapter when some theoretical issues are considered. He disputes the view that language and culture are related. It must be noted though that he does not speak specifically of culture but of a world view. He examines four "properties" of language and on their basis disputes the language - world view relationship which he eventually dismisses as showing circular reasoning.

Perhaps another scholar that needs to be mentioned is Whorf who admittedly is not writing about semantic fields. His relevance to the present discussion lies in the fact that he also considers the relationship between language and other phenomena, namely thought. He writes,⁶

"We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds - and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way - an agreement that is codified in the patterns of our language".

Whorf's theory has been called the Dissection Theory from the opening line of the quotation that has just been referred to.

Put in a nutshell, what Whorf is saying is that language has a constraining influence on thought or cognition. Or, perhaps put in another way, it is through language that reality is NECESSARILY apprehended. Thought and cognition have to be seen as necessarily dependent on language, at least in certain respects.

Whorf discusses a linguistic - philosophic problem which is not really relevant to a study that addresses itself to semantic fields. In exploring the relationship between language and culture some semantic fields will be analyzed. A lexical analysis of each semantic field will then be done applying some of the insights and techniques of componential analysis. What this means, is that we shall start with vocabulary, analyze it and see through its structure the structured world of culture.

The question may well be asked, why Sotho and Xhosa?

Firstly, the reason for choosing these two languages is for comparison and contrast. Sotho and Xhosa belong to the same language area, traditionally known as the south-eastern zone. As a result, these two languages share certain morphological, syntactic and phonological phenomena. Because the present study is basically semantic one can also add that the choice of the two languages is meant to reveal the extent of semantic similarities and differences between them.

Secondly, the writer is, so to speak, bi-cultural. He is very well acquainted with both Basotho and amaXhosa cultures firstly, because of the circumstances of his birth and secondly, because of his education. The writer is actually Sotho speaking with a Xhosa speaking mother. He also has university training in both Sotho and Xhosa, languages he can speak fluently. All these factors are mentioned here in order to lay some claim to competence in both Sotho and Xhosa.

Basotho and amaXhosa live in slightly distinct worlds despite all linguistic affinities between their languages. They have slightly different perceptions of the same reality. This accounts for the difference in the organization of any selected field, however slight in some cases. This factor seems to be an indication of the fact that the conceptualization of the universe differs from language to language. This is the point that is also made by Hoijer and Lyons.

Hoijer⁷ argues that the "real world" to a large extent depends, perhaps unconsciously, on the language habits of the speakers. He goes on to say that no two languages are so similar as to be considered to represent the same social reality. This naturally goes for Sotho and Xhosa as well. The world in which different peoples live are different and cannot merely be characterized as the same world with only different labels. Lyons⁸ is even more pertinent to the present study,

"Every language is integrated with the culture in which it operates; and its lexical structure reflects those distinctions which are (or have been) important in the culture".

This statement cannot be overemphasized.

While the assumption will be held that language reflects culture, one may hasten to add that not every word in a language does so. For example, there does not seem to be anything particularly cultural about interjectives or about ideophones. In other words, some lexical items are more significant than others in this respect. One should therefore rather speak of lexical items as being a mirror of culture in a selective kind of way. As Hymes⁹ puts it,

"In a particular culture a language serves as a sort of "metalanguage", a cultural way of communicating about much, not all of the culture". (Emphasis added)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. GENERAL REMARKS

Language is not only part of human activity but also a most characteristic feature of human behaviour. Language, and therefore words and their meanings, can be expected to reflect the culture of its speakers and the circumstances in which they live. In general, words and their meanings reflect the extralinguistic situation, among other things the culture of people, their ideas, values, attitudes and belief systems. It is against this background that the present study is presented.

In introducing the present study attention will be paid to the following:

- (a) the thesis that is being put forward
- (b) a consideration of the major concepts of the thesis, namely componential analysis, semantic fields and culture
- (c) Siertsema's views: a major challenge to the thesis
- (d) the motivation for the choice of particular semantic fields.

1.1 The Thesis

The thesis that is being explored is that semantic fields are a mirror or an index of culture. But, it must be added, some semantic fields are more significant than others in this respect. Because the notion of semantic fields will be considered more fully with the other major concepts of this study, only a brief consideration of the notion will be given here. A semantic field is a group of lexical items which are related by virtue of sharing certain features or components.

On the face of there is nothing new in the presupposition that semantic fields are a mirror or an index of culture. Language and

culture are integrated anyway. The objective of this study is to show that the structure of the lexicon as revealed in a semantic field by componential analysis is a kind of mirror of the structure there is in a society and its culture. The present study will set out a full componential analysis of four selected semantic fields in Sotho and Xhosa.

The following will be points of inquiry:

- (a) In what way do semantic fields reflect culture?
- (b) To what extent do they do so?
- (c) To what extent are there differences in the organization of any selected field in Sotho and Xhosa?
- (d) How are the differences accounted for?

Consideration will now be given to the major concepts of the present study. These are semantic fields, componential analysis and culture.

1.2 Semantic Fields

Nida¹ defines a semantic field (also called a semantic domain) as,

"A definable area of cultural experience covered by a set of related terms; the defining features of the domain are represented by the common components of the meanings of the terms in the domain".

This is the view that seems to be held by Lehrer² who also defines a semantic field as a "group of words closely related in meaning, often subsumed under a general term". She is careful to say hers is a beginning working definition. However, in her actual treatment of certain semantic fields, mainly cooking words, she goes beyond the above definition and approximates Nida's.

The above definitions can be summarized by saying a semantic field is a group of words whose meanings share certain semantic features or components. Lexical items which form a particular semantic field can be grouped into subsets on the basis of these semantic components.

Because a semantic component (variously called a semantic marker or a semantic category) forms an integral part of a semantic field insofar as it expresses semantic relations which underly semantic domains, it is necessary to consider this notion briefly.

A semantic component is a feature, a theoretical construct which binds together a given group of lexical items. A given group of lexical items forms such a group by virtue of certain common features which are shared by lexical items in that group. Katz and Fodor, quoted by Fodor³ seem to characterize semantic components clearly (they call them semantic markers) when they say they are,

"the elements in terms of which semantic relations
are expressed in a theory ..."

Nida⁴ draws attention to various kinds of components, namely common, diagnostic and supplementary. The question may well be asked, what is the significance of these distinctions? Perhaps the answer to this question lies in what each of these components stands for and the role each plays in bringing out meaning.

A common component is a semantic component which is common to or shared by lexical items (or most of them) in a semantic field. Of particular interest to the present study are diagnostic components, also called distinctive, contrastive and essential components. According to Nida⁵ diagnostic components serve to distinguish the meaning of one lexical item from another "whether the meanings belong to one word or several".

A supplementary component, on the other hand, is the kind of component which is not required to distinguish the meaning of one lexical item from another in a given set because the component is present in the meaning of the item anyway.

Because the present study will be concerned with an analysis of certain semantic fields, it is essential to give an outline of some of the principles and problems of such an analysis. Such an outline will provide a theoretical framework within which the semantic analysis

offered for Sotho and Xhosa is conducted. That theoretical framework will to a large extent determine the manner in which one looks at language data. Principles will be considered first.

1.2.1 The Principles of Semantic Field Analysis

There seem to be two basic principles of semantic field analysis. The first is that the lexicon of a language forms a system of relations. The second and the most fundamental is that the vocabulary of a language is structured. Consideration will now be given to each of these principles. According to the first principle the words of a language form a network of relationships where one word is related to others in several ways. Indications are there is some concensus on this point. Fillenbaum and Rapoport⁶ regard the lexicon as a system of relations or a set of interrelated systems. This is an idea that is also subscribed to by Lyons⁷ who refers to the notion structuralists have of language as,

"a system of relations (more precisely, a set of interrelated systems), the elements of which - sounds, words etc. - have no validity independently of the relations of equivalence and contrast which hold between them". (Emphasis added)

Trier⁸ as early as 1931 seems to have had the same idea when he spoke of the meaning of words as being specified by their relatedness to and their difference from other relevant words. This idea is reminiscent of the development of the phoneme notion where "contrast" is also crucial to "identity".

The second principle flows from the first and holds that the vocabulary of a language is structured. There is an inventory of words which is available to a speaker and there are distinctions he must make in selecting one word in preference for another. There are, as it were, certain lexical strategies a speaker uses to convey a particular thought or idea. These lexical strategies, it seems, derive from some internal repertoire of terms which one can use in a variety of ways. Field theorists use the metaphor of a mosaic for the idea that

the vocabulary of a language is neatly, or even rigidly, structured. They also argue that words do not only form a network or system of relations but can also be classified into subsets on the basis of their sharing common semantic components.

1.2.2 The Problems Explored by Semantic Field Analysis

The following are some of the problems to which semantic field analysis addresses itself:

- (a) What is the basis for grouping lexical items into fields?
- (b) Where does one draw boundaries between lexical semantic fields?
- (c) What are the various kinds of semantic relation that hold between different lexical items with related meanings?

The point that will be made here is that there are certain factors which make it rather difficult to group words into semantic fields in any manner that could be considered absolute or very accurate.

1.2.2.1 The grouping of lexical items into fields

Two questions arise. Firstly, what lexical items belong to each field? Secondly, can there be any finality about such a grouping? As far as the problem of grouping lexical items into fields is concerned, Lehrer⁹ points out that not all items in a lexical semantic field enjoy equal status. To her it seems useful to distinguish between basic and peripheral words in a field because "the basic words determine the important semantic contrasts in a field". She then goes on to give a list of criteria adapted from Berlin and Kay (1970). However, that list is for determining the basic colour words in a language, although most of the criteria that are listed can perhaps be used for other semantic fields.

The distinction between basic and peripheral words is not so easy to make though and maybe an element of subjectivity is involved in making that distinction. An application of the problem under discussion to the field of motion verbs for example reveals that these verbs fall into two broad categories. There are those which clearly indicate motion, for example Sotho kena (go in), solla (roam, wander)

and hlahlathela (move about indiscriminately) with their Xhosa equivalents ngena, zula and fufuthela. But there are other motion verbs which although indicating motion also have some cultural undertones. Such verbs include Sotho hlwela or Xhosa velela (pay someone a visit, usually a sick person), perhaps an indication of the importance attached to this exercise. Sotho lekola or Xhosa hlola also falls into this category and refers to motion aimed at an inspection of crops in the fields. The problem that arises is which of these two broad categories could be considered basic and which peripheral and the basis on which this can be done.

1.2.2.2 The drawing of boundaries between lexical semantic fields

The problem of the grouping of lexical items into fields is related to the one of drawing boundaries between lexical semantic fields. Where does one draw boundaries between lexical semantic fields? Nida¹⁰ suggests that the assignment of meaning to a particular field or the relating of fields into larger groupings depends on two things. Firstly, on the extent of certain shared features or components and secondly, on the relative importance of these components. The examples quoted in the previous section and showing verbs which clearly indicate motion and those with a cultural bias are also relevant here. Does the latter category belong to the same field as the first or should they be classified in their own separate field? The only component they seem to share with other lexical items is motion. The component they do not share with other items is purposeful motion and broadly speaking, also the cultural content they have.

The drawing of boundaries between lexical semantic fields is made difficult by the fact that different lexical items may have related meanings by virtue of overlapping, inclusion, derivation and contiguity.

1.2.2.3 Overlapping, inclusion, derivation and contiguity

Overlapping, inclusion, derivation and contiguity refer to the various

kinds of semantic relations which pertain to related meanings of different lexical items. It is these kinds of semantic relation which make it rather difficult to group words into semantic fields in any "absolute" manner.

Overlapping is caused, among other things, by polysemy (that is, one word with several meanings) and by the different ways in which various people understand lexical items. It is, of course, also caused by fringe terms which fall equally well into two or more categories. What needs to be emphasized here is that it is the overlapping of meanings, and not of the terms, that is involved. Terms whose meanings overlap are called synonyms. However, synonymy is relative and not absolute. Synonyms are usually substitutable one for the other in certain contexts. Two terms are rarely, if ever, substitutable for each other in any and all contexts. For example, Sotho mahofi and matsoho both mean hands. But when people clap hands by way of applause or giving someone an ovation Basotho say ho opa mahofi and not ho opa matsoho. Or when a call is made to give applause it is simply said mahofi! rather than matsoho! But when people shake hands, ba tshwarana ka MATSOHO and not ba tshwarana ka MAHOFI.

Basically, there are two types of semantic overlap, namely that which involves only emotive supplementary components on the one hand and that which involves diagnostic components on the other. Any two or more lexical items may share the same diagnostic components but differ with regard to emotive or supplementary components. Sotho ntate and papa (father) have the same diagnostic components of [male: direct descent: one ascending generation]. However, papa has an emotive component of affection plus a supplementary one of an intimate level of language.

Many instances of semantic overlap are in fact also instances of inclusion where the meaning of one word is included within the meaning of another. "To see" is for example included in lexical items such as Sotho tadima and Xhosa qwalasela (note, look at fixedly), panya and qhwanyaza (blink, twinkle) or hetla and gxelesha (look back).

But these items are not synonyms. While they share the component of seeing they differ with regard to other components. For example, panya has the component of the rapid movement of the eyelids which is not found in hetla.

The other factor, in addition to overlapping and inclusion which affects meaning is derivation which also has its own problems. Let us consider Xhosa umntu (person). This item has the following derivatives: ubuntu (human nature, kindness) isintu (a human habit) and uluntu (mankind). Corresponding Sotho forms are botho (human nature, kindness) and setho (a human habit) . The main problem here is the determination of semantic domains for these lexical items. Should they be grouped in the same semantic domain or should ubuntu (human nature, kindness) for example fall under the semantic domain of emotion terms?

The last factor to be considered is contiguity. Contiguity refers to maximum similarity among lexical items constituting a semantic domain except for a significant difference in at least one crucial component. The meaning of each item is marked off from other related meanings by at least one important component. For example, Sotho sheba (look at), bona (see), tona (stare) and hetla (look back) share the following components [use of the eyes: animate] but differ with regard to the direction of the eyes.

Overlapping, inclusion, derivation and contiguity are all concerned with various kinds of semantic relationship which different lexical items with related meanings may have. These four factors point to the nature and extent of the relationship among different lexical items and to some inherent problems. These are problems which relate mainly to the grouping of lexical items into fields and the boundaries which mark off one field from another.

The related meanings of different lexical items raise some problems for semantic field analysis. It is in the light of some of the above principles and problems that some selected lexical semantic fields will be examined in the course of this study.

Because this study will apply componential analysis to selected fields it is necessary to examine the procedures and techniques of this type of analysis. Although componential analysis will be considered separately it must perhaps be pointed out that the concepts of lexical semantic field analysis (as outlined above) and componential analysis are mutually dependent. The purpose of considering componential analysis separately is to place this analysis in a clear perspective for greater clarity.

1.3 Componential Analysis

In considering componential analysis attention will be paid to the following:

- (a) its assumptions and insights
- (b) the various steps it follows

1.3.1 Assumptions and insights

According to Uhlenbeck¹¹ componential analysis is a technique that was first introduced by Goodenough and Lounsbury in 1956 and is based on the assumption that the lexical items of a language can be analyzed in terms of semantic components or markers. Bierwisch¹² draws attention to the relevance of componential analysis to the analysis of meanings of words. He asserts that all approaches to the semantic analysis of natural languages is based on the insight that the meanings of lexical items can be analyzed or defined. Such meanings are not unanalysable or indefinable wholes. This is one of the insights of componential analysis and perhaps one of its basic assumptions. Componential analysis is a kind of lexical decomposition where a term is broken down into some features or components which are postulated with the purpose of describing semantic relations between the lexical items of a given language. Componential analysis deduces semantic relationships between terms.

The kind of semantic relationship just referred to can take various forms. On the one hand, there are related meanings of different lexical items. Such related meanings are caused, among other things,

by inclusion, overlapping and contiguity. These are the kinds of relationship which are the concern of this study. On the other hand, there are different meanings of the same lexical items by virtue of derivation, replacement, figurative extension and peripheral clustering. Nida¹³ gives a full exposition of these terms. They will not be considered here because they do not relate directly to the present study.

Apart from focussing on the various semantic relations between lexical items, componential analysis also serves as a pointer to systematic differences between lexical items. This in fact is an insight that flows from the various kinds of semantic relations mentioned above. After all, a complete analysis of any meaning of a lexical item can be made perhaps only on the basis of how such a meaning contrasts with other meanings in the same lexical semantic field. Hence componential analysis reveals new dimensions of linguistic structure.

The connection between lexical items in a network of associations is also revealed by componential analysis. These associations are determined by components. Semantic components which are an essential part of componential analysis help in grouping together lexical items which belong to the same semantic field and separate those which do not. Or stated differently, the organization of lexical items in a field can serve as a basis for determining components.

This section can be concluded by saying that componential analysis points out the various types of semantic relations that are possible with lexical items, the systematic difference between items, and reveals new dimensions of linguistic structure.

1.3.2 The steps of componential analysis

Componential analysis follows certain basic steps which Nida¹⁴ sketches. These are, essentially, the steps which will be followed in the analysis of the lexical semantic fields which are the object of this study.

Firstly, a lexical item is defined or described according to its distinctive features. For example, Sotho koma (initiation song) has the following distinctive features or diagnostic components: sung by boys, at night, for initiation.

The next step is the mapping of semantic space. What is involved here is the enunciation of an overall statement with regard to the relationship between "distinctive features" (isolated in the first step) and the total number of lexical items classified under a particular semantic field. In a given semantic field an attempt is made to show how the lexical items in that field are related to one another and the motivation for their being grouped together. What this means with regard to the present study is the formulating of an overall statement of why, for example, the lexical items in the field of the song vocabulary or of the lexical items for women are grouped together and how each lexical item is related to others in the same semantic field.

Thirdly, there follows the identification of the distinctive features which determine contrasts in meaning. What, for example, distinguishes Xhosa ihenyukazi (prostitute) from iphixi (a woman of low class and with low morals)?

In fact, this step seems to be an extension of the first one where a lexical item is defined according to its distinctive features.

The fourth step involves a clear definition of the referents that are involved, a referent being a nonlinguistic item which is symbolized by a lexical item. For example, the lexical item "boy" refers to someone who by experience and convention is identified as such.

Lastly, the lexical items that are analyzed are limited to those with shared and contrastive features. This step seems to be an answer to the question as to why a given set of lexical items is grouped together in a particular semantic field. Not only do such lexical items share certain features, they can also be contrasted on the basis of certain features which they do not share.

1.4 Towards a consideration of culture

A consideration of culture is necessary because the concept of culture

is central to this study. This study embraces both language and culture in the sense that it aims at showing how the structure of the lexicon as revealed by componential analysis reflects the structure of culture. Consideration has so far been given to linguistic issues (semantic fields and componential analysis). It is now necessary to turn to the other side, as it were, of this study, namely culture because the relevant linguistic issues have to be related to culture.

The consideration of culture will take the following form:

- (a) an examination of some of the views which have been expressed about this concept. The lack of concensus will become apparent.
- (b) a consideration of some of the more important characteristics of culture
- (c) a general application of some of the ideas in (a) and (b) to the data of the present study.

1.4.1 Some views about culture

The concept of culture is controversial and there does not seem to be any concensus about what culture is or is not, for that matter.

This particular section will be devoted to some views about culture from which will emerge the view of culture which will be held for purposes of this study. The various views will be examined in spite of Kroeber's¹⁵ warning that a better understanding of culture does not lie in definitions but in knowing what forms it takes and how it works.

Broadly speaking, there seem to be two divergent schools of thought. On the one hand, there is the school of thought which considers culture as an inventory of items which form its content. On the other hand, there is a school of thought which defines culture primarily in terms of ideas. The following quotation from Tylor¹⁶ is perhaps representative of the first school of thought. He defines culture as, "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society".

The main problem in thinking about culture in terms of an inventory is that such an inventory has to be very extensive in its coverage. The above inventory is not so extensive and not very specific. For example, economics, religion and even education do not seem to be covered by the inventory. It is also not clear what the "other" capabilities and habits acquired by man" actually refers to. A definition such as the one just given has the merit of showing how difficult it is to know what to include and what not to include under culture. There have been variations and modifications of Tylor's views. Anthropologists of his persuasion, for example Boas, Wissler, Benedict and Read¹⁷ maintain that culture is a quality or attribute of human social behaviour and in general terms embraces artifacts and the non-material, for example customs and ideals.

The other school of thought, represented among others by Marett, Redfield and Osgood¹⁸ defines culture primarily in terms of ideas, as Norbeck's¹⁹ summary of their views shows,

"all things are part of the human knowledge of them
and of the mind which knows them".

To advocates of this view culture is an abstraction, a pattern and a configuration of behavioural norms and rules which have been abstracted from the observation of behaviour. These norms and rules exist in the minds of the bearers of culture who transmit them to succeeding generations. It is not clear though what "abstraction" really is in this context.

Culture does consist in ideas, whether or not such ideas find expression in actual behaviour. But to maintain that culture primarily embraces ideas is perhaps to hold a one-sided view of culture. The first view, namely that culture embraces both the material and the non-material (including ideas) seems to be more comprehensive, more convincing and more tenable.

Definitions of culture have undergone some evolution since the beginning of the 20th century. Norbeck²⁰ gives us a glimpse of some of this evolution. From about 1920 to 1950 culture was seen as some form of learned behaviour which was socially transmitted and also as

the concrete product of such behaviour. By the middle of the 20th century this idea of culture was extended, and incorporated the idea that, like other phenomena of our universe, culture has order or pattern. For the last three or four decades the main trend has been to view this order or pattern as composing a system. This system or unit is composed of interrelated parts which are mutually influencing. The view of culture that will be held for purposes of this study incorporates some of the ideas that have been expressed above. From the above, it can be said that culture refers to innumerable aspects of life, among others the social, the religious, the political, the economic, the legal and aesthetics (music, dance and art, among others). When we speak of culture we shall be speaking of an integrated unit which has various interdependent parts. Such an integrated unit or whole is analyzable into certain components which are interrelated. These components fall into three categories, namely ideas, activities and artifacts. Ideas refer, among other things, to thoughts, beliefs and rules which govern the behaviour of individuals e.g. scorn for the uncircumcized among non-literate societies. Activities refer to what people do as opposed to what they believe e.g. punishment for anti-social behaviour or the alleged control of supernatural forces by diviners. Artifacts are, among other things, the man-made products of ideas and activities e.g. the stock-in-trade of diviners (herbs or bones used for divination). Ideas, activities and artifacts which comprise culture have certain characteristics.

1.4.2 The characteristics of culture

The characteristics of culture which will be considered in this section are essentially adapted from Herskovits²¹. These characteristics could be regarded as being universal and therefore applicable to all known cultures. This would include the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa. Only those characteristics considered to be the most important will be examined. Culture is,

(a) learned

- (b) transmitted
- (c) social
- (d) adaptive and dynamic
- (e) integrated
- (f) structured and divided into components.

Before some of these characteristics are applied to the data of the present study a brief exposition of each of them is perhaps necessary.

Culture is not acquired by any genetic hereditary processes but is learned. This learning occurs in the process of one's growing up. Commonly referred to as enculturation it comes about largely through language. After it has been acquired by learning it is then passed on, transmitted, from generation to generation, again largely through language. This transmission tends to be cumulative in the sense that more is added to the components of culture each passing generation. This, incidentally, is also part of the dynamic aspect of culture. It is this transmission, as Murdock²² points out, which ensures the continuity of culture. It may, however, be pointed out that not every aspect of culture can possibly be transmitted. There must be some kind of "loss".

In addition to being learned and transmitted culture is also social in the sense that it is shared in common by members of a society or group.

The adaptive and dynamic aspects of culture relate to cultural behaviours which enable persons to fit into and adjust to their environments e.g. by sacrifice. Culture is mostly integrated. Its components or constituent elements are not just a random assortment but more or less fit together to form a constituent whole. This is in accordance with the view that was mentioned earlier on about culture, namely that it is a consistent whole with interrelated parts which are mutually influencing.

Lastly, culture is structured and divided into components. We adopt the structure suggested by Herskovits who divides culture into,

- (a) material culture and its sanctions, that is technology and economics
- (b) social institutions, that is social organization, education and political structures
- (c) man and the universe: belief systems
- (d) aesthetics: graphic and plastic arts, folklore, music, drama and dance
- (e) language

All these components have to be seen as being unified and integrated.

1.4.3 The relevance of the foregoing to this study

After a consideration of culture and its characteristics the question that needs to be answered is how the outline presented above relates to the present study. What is its relevance to the present study? In an attempt to answer this question it must be pointed out first of all that of the outline presented above it is only the components and the characteristics of culture that will be the major concern of this section. The components of culture will be related to the entire data while the characteristics of culture will be related only to the song vocabulary and lexical items for diviners. Because this section is not concerned with the actual lexical semantic field analysis, data will be referred to in general terms.

In terms of the components of culture suggested above the song vocabulary relates to ideas. Or if Herskovits' model is adopted, songs relate to social institutions and in particular the social organization of Basotho and amaXhosa. It must be added though that songs merely touch an aspect of social organization, namely the performance of social roles according to sex, age and status, including marriage. An idea which operates in this distinction is what Mbiti²⁴ calls a hierarchy of forces. The notion of a hierarchy of forces will be examined when some lexical semantic fields are considered.

Not only does the song vocabulary relate to the component of social organization, it also relates to the aesthetics component and in

particular music and dance. In fact as will be pointed out in the consideration of the song vocabulary it is perhaps more appropriate to call songs "song and dance" performances.

Lexical items for women, marriage, cattle and diviners present some problems. On the face of it, these three categories represent the non-material component of culture. But there is a problem of terminology here. Apart from using the material and the non-material to designate components of culture, reference was also made to the components as being ideas, activities and artifacts, with artifacts corresponding to the non-material component. But if the non-material or artifacts refer, as we have suggested, to man-made products, cattle are not man-made. So are women and diviners also in the present context although one could argue from a biological point of view that they are.

One way out of this "impasse" is to regard lexical items for women, cattle and diviners not as representing referents that are material as such but as being more expressive of certain ideas. In that case, women, cattle and diviners relate essentially to the non-material. Lexical items for women, as will be shown in chapter 2 relate to certain aspects of the social organization of Basotho and amaXhosa cultures, namely various views about marriage and sex. Cattle relating to marriage, it will be shown, show how marriage is legitimized to embrace both marriage itself and the progeny thereof. Lexical items for diviners will show how man tries to manipulate the elements and certain other forces both for his own good and for the good of others and also sometimes for their detriment. In that respect, lexical items for diviners relate to the man and universe component, some of the belief systems of Basotho and amaXhosa.

It seems that the conclusion can be drawn that while lexical items for women, marriage cattle and diviners on the face of it refer to the material component of culture, it is not so much this component as the non-material that is paramount in our context. The concern with the referents for these items is not with the referents per se but with their cultural relevance. They relate to certain

cultural ideas. The other way of looking at this question of course is to argue that in these lexical items one sees the integration and the interrelatedness of the various components of culture, an important aspect of culture.

The other conclusion that can be drawn, it seems, is that the data of the present study relates mainly to the non-material component of culture. In terms of the other designation of components (i.e. ideas, activities and artifacts) this would include ideas and activities. The last observation that needs to be made is that the idea of components of culture relates this particular aspect of culture to one of the characteristics of culture, namely that culture has some form or structure.

Attention can now be turned to the characteristics of culture as outlined above. As with the question of components and their relation to the data of this study, the characteristics of culture will be related to the data in a general kind of way. The reason is the same as that given at the beginning of the section, namely that here we are not concerned with specifics yet. It can be expected that because of the nature and extent of our data not all the characteristics of culture will be covered by the data. It is only some characteristics that will be applicable to the data. Songs will be considered first and then diviners. This will be taken to be adequately illustrative of the issues in question.

There are two main types of song and dance performances namely, recreational and ceremonial both in Sotho and Xhosa. It is mainly the ceremonial songs which seem to have some of the characteristics of culture. The Sotho initiation song for boys, koma for example, is not only sung but is also an educational medium. With it goes some instruction in some of the facts of life, the ideals a man should aspire to and some of the expectations of him. In all this and through all this koma has an enculturative function. Through it some of the aspects of the culture of the Basotho are learned. They are not only learned but also passed on, transmitted, to each passing generation. The same could be said of the other types of ceremonial

song and dance performances. However, both types of song and dance performances have a role to play in society: recreation and the enactment of the various types of ceremonies they indicate. They have a social function in addition to being structured into the two types.

The song and dance performances are performed by various types of people exclusively. There are song and dance performances for boys only, for men only, for girls only, for married women only and for initiates only. The operative factors here are age, sex and status, the last being related both to age and marriage, because marriage is, among other things, a sign of status and is only expected at a certain age. Although there is the above distinction, there is also some integration, a factor that is indicated by what has already been referred to as a hierarchy of forces.

The next illustration of how the characteristics of culture apply are the lexical items for diviners. Diviners have their special methods of going about their trade, for example the use of bones, sacrifice and latterly the use of mirrors. These are some kinds of cultural behaviours which make adaptation to the environment possible. Divining bones makes it possible to know the wishes and the desires of the ancestors. Sacrifice is for propitiating the ancestors and for asking for their benevolence, among other things. All these acts are necessary for good living on earth, so it is thought. In that respect diviners have a social role to play. It is not immediately obvious how the other characteristics of culture apply to the semantic field in question.

To conclude: While culture has various characteristics not all of them apply to any one aspect or component at the same time. From the above two examples, songs and diviners, it appears for example that songs share more of these characteristics than lexical items for diviners. The above was not meant to be a detailed exposition but merely a preliminary attempt to elucidate some theoretical issues relating to culture and to apply them to some of the data.

1.5 Siertsema's views: A major challenge to the thesis

Siertsema's views as outlined in The Bible Translator, 20, 1969 (p. 3 - 21) represent a rather different viewpoint to that of this thesis. The present writer has not been able to trace any reviews of Siertsema's article. That makes it rather difficult to make an in-depth analysis of his views. Consequently, the main concern here will merely be to note the views in question.

Siertsema does not speak of culture specifically. Instead, he speaks of a world view. It is not clear why he does this.

He examines four "universal properties of language" to see how they affect the language - world view relationship. These properties are,

- (a) the arbitrary relation between word form and word meaning
- (b) the polysemy of a word
- (c) the determinative function of context and situation
- (d) the arbitrary nature of syntactic rules.

Consideration will now be given to each of the above "properties".

On the question of the arbitrary relation between word form and word meaning, Siertsema observes that words function as signs in the same way that a red light functions as a sign of danger. There is no "natural" connection or relation between the sign and what it indicates. Whatever connection there is is based on convention. A sign consists of an outward form of the sign and its meaning. The connection is unmotivated and purely conventional. Siertsema then considers three examples, namely compound words, standing phrases and expressions and the so-called "worn-out" metaphors. He uses these examples to show the unmotivatedness of the relation between word form and word meaning.

Compound words, he says, do not derive their meaning (or if they do, do so only partially) from the sum of the meanings of their constituent parts. For example, not all "ear-rings" are rings, a "fountain pen" contains no fountain. Or, to quote another example, not all blue berries are "blueberries". These compound words have settled in the English language and function as conventional word units which are not "motivated" in their relation between form and meaning.

The same is true of standing phrases and expressions such as "pay a visit", "kick the bucket" or "run the risk". As with compounds, such standing expressions function as one-word units and the meaning of the constituting words has no function as such apart from the entire unit. For example, what kind of "bucket" does a person "kick" when he "kicks the bucket"? Or how fast does he run when he "runs a risk"?

Siertsema observes that some of the constituting words in expressions such as the above may still have some content for older people when they come to think of them. However, for each new generation such standing phrases become less and less motivated. This, he says, applies even more to a group of seemingly motivated words, the so-called "worn-out" metaphors, such as the 'hands' of a clock, the 'foot' of a mountain and the 'ear' of a jug. Such expressions were first used or coined to show the similarity between the thing and the body part. But as a metaphor settles down in the language and comes to be generally used the effect of its image gets lost and the new meaning is incorporated in that of the original word. The meaning of the original word is consequently extended and the word becomes more polysemic.

Another factor which to Siertsema militates against the language - world view relationship is the polysemy of a word. A word is a sign that can be used to refer to many different things as any dictionary shows. For example, the word "leaf" can, depending on the context, refer to a leaf of a tree, a sheet of paper or a sheet of metal as in a jewellery factory. Aspects of meaning such as these are arranged differently in different languages.

Thirdly, the determinative function of context and situation. At a certain moment, a word group, phrase, sentence and the wider context plus the situation limit and restrict the many possible interpretations of a word as in the example of "leaf" given above. The influence of context and situation as determinative factors makes all other aspects of the meaning of a word vanish altogether. This means that the

context in which a word is used at a given time excludes all the other meanings of that word if it is capable of having more than one meaning.

Lastly, the arbitrary nature of syntactic rules. Here concern is with sentence structure and the "unmotivated" rules which govern the structure of a sentence. For example, the sentence "John strikes Peter" is normally interpreted in such a way that Peter receives the blow and not John. This, to Siertsema, is based on an established rule without any apparent reason. Because of the arbitrariness of language, Siertsema comes to the conclusion that the connection between language and world view is based on circular reasoning and no linguistic data is adduced to prove the relationship. The argument, he says, goes like this, "People who speak different languages have different world views and mentalities".

"How do you know?"

"Well, because they speak different languages".

To him the presence of a word in a language is no sure indication that that language community is familiar with the thing or the concept the word refers to. Words, he argues¹, may teach us something about the history of language, about culture and the world view but,

"— do not warrant our drawing conclusions from them as to the world view the people have now or had at the time the texts containing these words were written".

Siertsema thinks there is no circular reasoning if the structure of a language and the world view of its speakers are studied independently of each other. But if that is done and similarities are met can conclusions then be drawn from such findings?

He takes as an example the Israelites whose actions and language reveal the idea of "corporate personality". But the language that is relevant to this idea shows some frequent "ungrammatical" transitions from plural to singular and vice versa within one sentence.

Can one then conclude from these two parallels, one linguistic and the other not, that a writer's usage of Hebrew "reflects" this peculiarity of their mentality, their world view? Siertsema poses this question with an obviously negative answer.

The above then are Siertsema's arguments against the language - world view relationship. On the whole, he does not seem to make a strong case for his viewpoint. A main point of disagreement with him is that he fails to reckon seriously with the fact that language is not a system with a logical structure. Nor does it function in any logical way, broadly speaking. Arbitrariness is in the nature of language but does not necessarily destroy the language - world view relationship.

1.6 The motivation for the choice of particular semantic fields

The aim of this section is to justify the choice of the lexical semantic fields which are the object of this study.

The intention is to explore the lexicon of major cultural or social areas in Sotho and Xhosa. These cultural areas are social structure (through songs and to some extent through lexical items for women), "ceremonial" animals (as revealing social structure or transactions) and religion. The justification is then the importance of each of these areas in a total culture. Although the selection of the semantic fields in question might appear to be rather random, these randomly selected areas in a structured culture are all somehow related as the following brief analysis will try to show.

The song vocabulary indicates some aspects of the social structure of Basotho and amaXhosa. As will be pointed out in the actual consideration of songs, it is perhaps more appropriate to speak of song and dance performance because song and dance very often go together and are associated with some occasion of social relevance - circumcision, a wedding, the invocation of rain or some communal work, as the case may be.

Singers or actors may be boys, girls, men or women. An attempt will be made to examine in componential terms lexical items relating to some of these singers or actors, namely women. An analysis of the relevant lexical items will show how the organization of these lexical items, like that of the songs, reveals some aspects of the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa: social institutions, traditional views, ideas, attitudes and beliefs.

In traditional, that is non-literate, Sotho and Xhosa communities the destiny of a woman is regarded to be in marriage, a social institution that is ratified by marriage animals and other animals relating to marriage. In these communities these animals are more or less an equivalent of a marriage certificate and are a sine qua non in marriage. The lexical items for these animals will be considered after lexical items for women. In terms of the relevant cultures the two sets of lexical items are related because both centre very largely on marriage. The social aspect of life and its organization as revealed in the song vocabulary, the vocabulary for women and ceremonial animals impinges significantly on the religious. This is so because life has to be led constantly in accordance with the wishes and desires of some supernatural forces, if calamity is to be averted. That is the background to lexical items for diviners who have to be seen as an expression of a belief in, and a response to, some of these supernatural forces.

It seems then that although the selection of semantic fields for this study appears to be rather random, these fields in a structured culture are all somehow interrelated mainly by virtue of their impinging on some aspects of the social organization of Basotho and amaXhosa.

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CHAPTER 2ABOUT LEXICAL ITEMS FOR WOMEN AND THEIR REFLECTION OF
TRADITIONAL VIEWS, ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS

1. INTRODUCTION

The present chapter will attempt to analyze in componential terms lexical items for women. An attempt will be made to show that the organization of lexical items for women is an indication or rather, an index of the organization of some aspects of the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa. Consequently, this organization reveals some of the beliefs, attitudes and views of Basotho and amaXhosa, for example their attitude towards girls, sex and marriage and also some of their beliefs about these.

Because this thesis tries to relate the structure of the lexicon to the corresponding structure of culture, an attempt will be made,

- (a) to apply componential analysis to lexical items for women
- (b) to sketch their cultural setting
- (c) to develop the kind of relationship reflected in the linguistic material that will be presented in the culture, i.e. the relationship between the structure of the lexicon and the corresponding structure of culture.

Lexical items for women will be examined both in terms of semantic relations among them and also in terms of some of the relevant traditional attitudes, views and beliefs they reflect.

2. LEXICAL ITEMS FOR WOMEN

The following is a list of the relevant lexical items in Sotho and Xhosa:

Sotho	Xhosa	English
Ngwanana, ngwananyana, mosetsana	Intombi, intombazana	girl, young girl, baby girl
Morwetsana	Intombi	a grown-up girl
Thope	Intombi, intokazi	a mature girl
Kgarebe		a more mature girl
Thatohatsi	-	the beloved, a favourite wife
Moqekwa, serethe	-	a second or inferior wife of a polygamist
Lefetwa	UDingwiwe ududelwe nguJambase	a woman who is no longer eligible for marriage
Lethisa	-	"uncircumcized" girl
Nyopa	udlolo	childless married woman
Mothepe	Intombi	girl, spinster
Mosadi	Umfazi	a married woman
Motjhesi	Ikrexekazi	adulterous female
Sethalala	Isinqandamathe	sweetheart
Letekatse	Idikazi	unmarried mother
Sefebe	Isifebe	flirt
Letekatse	Ihenyukazi	prostitute
-	Iphixi	a loose woman of low class
-	Uma buyekwendeni, ibuyakazi	a woman who has been divorced
Mohlolohadi	Umhlolokazi	widow

In the above comparative table gaps indicate the absence of an equivalent term in the language concerned.

3. AN ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL ITEMS FOR WOMEN - PRELIMINARY REMARKS

In analyzing lexical items for women Sotho and Xhosa will be treated simultaneously for comparison and contrast. In doing so the techniques

and procedures of componential analysis will be followed. That having been done, an attempt will then be made to relate the items so analyzed to the relevant cultures.

Sotho does not have a single lexical item for "a woman" in the sense in which English uses that term. What looks like an equivalent term, namely mosadi, is not one really. This term refers exclusively to a married woman, a wife. It is only in semantic extensions that it serves as an archilexeme or "head word" for "woman". Such usage is found in a complimentary utterance like,

Lerato e se e le mosadi o se a rwala emere e boima
 (Lerato has the attributes of a married woman, she
 can now carry a heavy bucket of water on her head)

What approximates an archilexeme for "a woman" in Sotho seems to be the expression motho e motsheadi, a female person.

On the contrary, while Sotho does not have an archilexeme to refer to women in general Xhosa has, namely amabhinga. Translated literally, this term means "those who put something round their bodies", an obvious reference to dresses. Another common term is abasetyhini which is derived from the exclamation tyhini (oh no, or goodness me!). The term means those who are given to exclaiming "tyhini" this being taken to be an exclusive characteristic of Xhosa women.

Although the lexical items listed at the beginning of this chapter refer to the female sex they differ in their actual connotation or reference. The only common diagnostic components they share are [female: human]. Otherwise they differ greatly, and, as will be shown, it is precisely in such differences that their reflection of the structure of culture lies.

The lexical items for women will now be analyzed in terms of their components especially diagnostic components, in order to bring out shared and contrastive features and, on the basis of such components, the various kinds of relationship among the lexical items in question.

3.1 Lexical items for women and their components

There are two ways of specifying components. They can be specified minimally (where just enough features are postulated to separate items in a semantic field from one another) or maximally (where as many other components as possible are postulated). The minimal specification will be adopted because it results in a simpler and shorter characterization of lexical items.

Sotho ngwanana, ngwananyana and mosetsana (girl, young girl, baby girl) with their Xhosa equivalents intombi and intombazana are relatively unmarked in that they can be used to refer to any girl for as long as she is not married. The meaning of these lexical items is in that respect included in such Sotho terms as thope (a mature girl) kgarebe (a more mature girl) lefetwa (a woman who is no longer eligible for marriage) and mothepe (a girl, spinster) with their Xhosa equivalents intombi and intokazi. Xhosa has no equivalent in the form of a lexical item for Sotho lefetwa (a woman who is no longer eligible for marriage). Instead the phrase uDingwe ududelwe nguJambase and whose origin is not clear, is used. Similarly, the meaning of Sotho mosadi and Xhosa umfazi (a married woman) is included in such terms as Sotho thatohatsi (the beloved, a favourite wife), moqekwa or serethe (a second or inferior wife of a polygamist), nyopa (a childless married woman) or mohlolohadi (a widow) with their Xhosa equivalents (see p. 28). In fact, it seems Sotho ngwanana, ngwananyana and mosetsana are archilexemes for unmarried women while Sotho mosadi and Xhosa umfazi are archilexemes for all married women.

Sotho thope and kgarebe share the components [marriagable: not married] but differ with regard to maturity, kgarebe being taken to be more mature than thope. However, this is a rather fine distinction. But if one reckons with this kind of distinction, then these two terms could be regarded as being contiguous. On the other hand, if the distinction relating to maturity is regarded as being too fine to be significant, then there is semantic overlap between these two terms.

Furthermore, if maturity is equated with being a grown-up then thope, kgarebe and morwetsana (a grown-up girl) could be regarded as overlapping in meaning. This would also be true of their Xhosa equivalents intombi and intokazi. These terms both in Sotho and Xhosa have the supplementary components [attractive: beautiful] which are inherently present in the meaning of these terms and which are therefore not necessary to distinguish such meaning from any other in the field under discussion.

Although mothepa has been characterized as "a girl" or "a spinster" the term actually shares the same components with the other terms which have just been considered. Hence Xhosa intombi applies to all of them.

Sotho lethisa (an "uncircumcized" girl), lefetwa (a woman who is no longer eligible for marriage) and motjhesi (an adulterous female) could be regarded as sharing the same components with for example morwetsana, thope, kgarebe and mothepa in that the meaning of the last group of terms is included in that of the first. However, the first group has the additional components [uncircumcized: beyond marriage: adulterous] respectively which makes the two groups contiguous in that respect. But contiguity breaks down when one considers that motjhesi has the additional components of either [married] or [not married]. Lefetwa, on the other hand, differs from the other group of lexical items in that the term has the diagnostic feature [old: beyond the age of being marriagable].

Lefetwa, lethisa and nyopa or Xhosa udlolo (childless married woman) share the common component [socially abnormal]. That seems to be the only significant component that makes these terms relatable to one another. Otherwise, they differ quite significantly in their actual connotation. For example, Sotho nyopa or Xhosa udlolo has the diagnostic components [childless: married].

Sotho sethalala or Xhosa isingandamathe (sweetheart) is an "emotional relational" term whose meaning could easily be included in most of the lexical items under discussion, depending on one's affection for the person being addressed. These terms have an emotive component

of an intimate level of language.

Sotho thatohatsi (the beloved, a favourite wife) and moqekwa or serethe - these terms have no Xhosa equivalents - have a polygamous reference. They refer to different levels of affection with thatohatsi enjoying more of this than moqekwa. These two terms share the following components [married: polygamous: second wife] thatohatsi being a more affectionate term than moqekwa and with the additional component [favourite].

The next set of terms represent socially disapproved behaviour. The terms are letekatse (unmarried mother) sefebe (a flirt) and motjhesi (adulterous female) with their Xhosa equivalents idikazi or inkazana, isifebe and ikrexekazi. To this list can be added Xhosa iHENYUKAZI (prostitute) and iphixi (a woman of low class and with low morals). What relates these terms to one another is the idea of objectionable sexual behaviour, an important diagnostic component. Let us consider some of the other most important components of these lexical items. Sotho letekatse or Xhosa idikazi has the components either [married] or [not married], [adulterous, loose, for gain] all of which are included in the meanings of Xhosa iHENYUKAZI (prostitute), iphixi (a loose woman of low class) and isifebe (flirt). Incidentally, Sotho has no equivalent for Xhosa iphixi. Although these lexical items share most of the components there are some significant differences among them. They are not synonymous.

Sotho letekatse or Xhosa idikazi for example, could also mean a woman who has deserted her husband because of her loose behaviour, an idea which is not necessarily present in the other lexical items. On the other hand, the idea of making profit which is inherent in letekatse and iHENYUKAZI is not necessarily present in sefebe and iphixi.

Lastly, Xhosa umabuyekwendeni or ibuyakazi refers to a woman who is either divorced or in separation with her husband. This is usually as a result of some unbearable behaviour on the part of the one of the spouses. Such a woman may or may not be a mother. Sotho has no equivalent term.

SOTHO LEXICAL ITEMS

<u>Ngwanana/Ngwananyana</u>	<u>Morwetsana</u>	<u>Thope</u>	<u>Kgarebe</u>	<u>Mothepa</u>	<u>Sethalala</u>
+ marriagable	+ marriagable	+ marriagable	+ marriagable	+ marriagable	+ marriagable
+ mature	+ mature	+ mature	+ mature	+ mature	+ mature
- married	- married	- married	- married	- married	- married
- emotional relational	- emotional relational	- emotional relational	- emotional relational	- emotional relational	+ emotional relational
<u>Mosadi</u>		<u>Moqekwa</u>		<u>Thatohatsi</u>	
+ married		+ married		+ married	
+ second wife		+ second wife		+ second wife	
+ polygamous		+ polygamous		+ polygamous	
+ beloved wife		+ beloved wife		+ beloved wife	
<u>Letekatse</u>		<u>Sefebe</u>		<u>Motjhesi</u>	
+ objectionable sexual behaviour		+ objectionable sexual behaviour		+ objectionable sexual behaviour	
+ adulterous		+ adulterous		+ adulterous	
+ mother		+ mother		+ mother	
- married		+ married		+ married	
+ profit-making		- profit-making		- profit-making	
<u>Lefetwa</u>		<u>Lethisa</u>		<u>Nyopa</u>	
- marriagable		+ marriagable		+ marriagable	
- circumcized		+ circumcized		- circumcized	
+ child		+ child		- child	
+ old		- old		- old	
+ socially abnormal		+ socially abnormal		+ socially abnormal	

XHOSA LEXICAL ITEMS

<u>Intombi/Intombazana</u>	<u>Intombi/Intokazi</u>	<u>Isingandamathe</u>	
+ marriagable + mature - married - emotional relational	+ marriagable + mature - married - emotional relational	+ marriagable + mature - married + emotional relational	
<u>Umfazi</u>	<u>Iqadi</u>		
+ married + second wife + polygamous	+ married + second wife + polygamous		
<u>Idikazi</u>	<u>Isifebe</u>	<u>Ihenyukazi</u>	<u>Iphixi</u>
+ objectionable sexual behaviour + adulterous + mother - married + profit-making + low class	+ objectionable sexual behaviour + adulterous + mother + married - profit-making + low class	+ objectionable sexual behaviour + adulterous + mother + married + profit-making + low class	+ objectionable sexual behaviour + adulterous + mother + married + profit-making + low class
<u>Udlolo</u>	<u>UDingiwe ududelwe nguJambase</u>	<u>Ibuyakazi</u>	
+ marriagable - child - old + socially abnormal - divorced	- marriagable + child + old + socially abnormal - divorced	+ marriagable + child - old + socially abnormal + divorced	

The tables appearing on pages 33 and 34 are a summary of the foregoing lexical analysis. The two tables indicate four categories of women. But these categories, as the foregoing analysis tried to show, are not as rigidly separated as they may appear to be at first. There is some fluidity in the two languages, in addition to overlapping, inclusion and contiguity.

The fluidity of the above categories is indicated for example, by sethalala (sweetheart) and thatohatsi (beloved). The first term can refer both to an unmarried woman or to a married one, inasmuch as thatohatsi can do so. But, generally speaking, these are lexical items of affection used mainly of women by men. There is nothing as complimentary and as expressive of a man's appreciation of a woman's beauty as the expression, sethalala se dikoti marameng (a winsome woman with dimples).

Then also there is the Xhosa term inkazana. This word seems to have undergone some change and now has pejorative connotations. Originally (as used in earlier translations of the Xhosa Bible for example) the word seems to have meant "a virgin". It now refers to a mistress, a concubine or to an unmarried woman who loves a married man. Or consider Sotho letekatse and Xhosa idikazi (an unmarried mother, a concubine). While in Sotho this term is not complimentary, in Xhosa it can be both complimentary and derogatory. The complimentary connotation seems to be particularly prevalent amongst amaMpondo where to have an idikazi seems to be socially acceptable.

After the above consideration of lexical items for women in terms of their components and in terms of the structure of this particular semantic field, the question that arises is how this structure reflects the corresponding structure of the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa. Before that question is considered, however, it is necessary to put these items in their general cultural setting.

4. LEXICAL ITEMS FOR WOMEN AND THEIR GENERAL CULTURAL SETTING

Sotho: O tswetse banana feela, hase dikgomo le letlotlo ho wena!

Xhosa: Uzele iintombi zodwa, asizonkomo nabutyebi kuwe!

(Your children are girls only, how numerous your cattle and how great your wealth). This is a very common remark among Basotho and amaXhosa. Its significance lies in the attitude it reveals towards girls. The more girls (daughters) one has the more the cattle and the greater one's wealth becomes. But more than that, this remark shows the attitude that girls are regarded as an investment. This is an investment parents realize in lobola when a girl gets married. Indeed some parents are known to have demanded exorbitant sums of money for lobola. One could almost say one of the main wishes of parents for their daughters is that they should "preserve" themselves for marriage. It is these attitudes and similar ones that lie behind most of the lexical items for women. However, for a fuller appreciation of these items, a few general remarks about marriage need to be made.

4.1 The Institution of Marriage: Traditional Perspectives

Traditional Sotho and Xhosa ideas about marriage have to be seen against traditional African attitudes in general towards this institution. Marriage to African people in general, and to Basotho and amaXhosa in particular, is regarded as a status symbol and as a symbol of maturity. Procreation which is seen as a contribution to the continued survival of society is a necessary concomitant of marriage. Consequently, every member of society is expected to marry at the right time. Marriage and procreation have to be seen as a unity. Without procreation marriage is regarded as being incomplete.

Perhaps it is not surprising that as soon as two people are known to be married one of the first questions they are asked is bana ba bakae or abantwana bangaphi? (How many children do you have?) in Sotho and Xhosa respectively. This is not an unusual question in other cultures as well, notably English. The point that is being made here is that in Sotho and Xhosa (and in traditional African

society in general) such a question has a particular cultural connotation and relevance. Such a question has to be seen in the light of some of the traditional African attitudes towards marriage, among others, marriage for procreation.

But apart from status and procreation, there is yet another dimension to marriage. The corporate nature of African society finds expression in this institution. An individual becomes conscious of his real self, his privileges, his duties and his responsibilities towards himself and towards others only in relation to other people. One's children and one's wife do not "belong" to one alone. This idea seems to be borne out by a remark such as,

Sotho: Ha o na ngwana, ngwana ke wa rona

Xhosa: Akunamtwana umntwana ngowethu.

(You do not have a child, the child is ours)

The birth of a child is something of communal concern.

The realization of status in marriage lies in the fact that this institution is also regarded as a passport to adulthood. In the case of a man he attains full recognition and full legal status in society. He now has the right to take part in any matters that affect the tribe. In the case of a married Mosotho woman there is a change of status from mothepa (a girl, spinster) and kgarebe (a more mature girl) to mosadi (a married woman). But the actual attainment of the status of adulthood comes with the birth of the first child, an indication of the importance that is attached to procreation.

The importance of marriage in African society and culture will have become apparent from the foregoing discussion. One's proper place in that society is partly determined by marriage into which are woven certain attitudes, ideas and beliefs. These attitudes, ideas and beliefs form part of the culture and find expression, as it were, in the members of Sotho and Xhosa cultures particularly in their behaviour. The last question this chapter has to address itself to is: How does the structure of the semantic field for women reflect the structure there is in society and its culture?

5. THE RELATING OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE LEXICON WITH THAT OF CULTURE

Of the three main components of culture namely, ideas, activities and artifacts, lexical items for women seem to address themselves mainly to ideas. It is in these ideas which reflect the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa that the relationship between language and culture will be shown to lie.

Lexical items for women seem to lend themselves to the following structure:

- (a) womanhood as such or being a girl
- (b) married women
- (c) women showing objectionable sexual behaviour
- (d) socially abnormal women.

This is no arbitrary structure for, as will be shown, this structure derives from the manner in which Sotho and Xhosa cultures characterize women. Behind the lexical items for each of the above group lies Basotho and amaXhosa beliefs about the destiny of women, Basotho and amaXhosa attitudes towards sex and marriage.

Consideration will now be given to each of the above groups and the relevant lexical items to show how each group of lexical items reflects aspects of Basotho and amaXhosa cultures.

Sotho lexical items for womanhood as such or being a girl are ngwanana, ngwananyana (girl), morwetsana (grown-up girl, a girl) thope (mature girl) kgarebe (more mature girl), mothepa (girl, virgin, spinster) and sethalala (sweetheart, beloved). Corresponding Xhosa lexical items are, intombi, intombazana (girl), intombi, intokazi (mature girl) and isingandamathe (sweetheart). All these lexical items indicate the various stages in the early development of a girl. These are stages which immediately precede Sotho bosadi and Xhosa ubufazi (marriage), a stage which is regarded as being the destiny of a woman. During the stages implied by these lexical items there is a very sharp focus on a woman as a potential candidate for marriage. That is why great importance is attached to the development of the breasts, a development that is particularly implied in Sotho thope and kgarebe or Xhosa intombi and intokazi.

Lexical items for "pure" womanhood mark off what Basotho and amaXhosa see as the initial stages in the development of a woman, a development that is regarded as leading eventually to marriage.

As soon as a girl is considered to have undergone all the stages indicated by the lexical items under discussion, that is from being a girl to being a mature one, this particular period has to be marked off and the woman prepared for marriage. This is done by letting her undergo the Sotho thojane and Xhosa intonjane ceremony. This ceremony is comparable with circumcision in the case of boys. A woman is prepared for marriage by receiving from elderly women instruction in some of the facts of life: the responsibilities of marriage, sexuality and the dangers of premarital sexual intercourse now that she can conceive.

What Soga¹ says about Xhosa intonjane applies equally to Sotho thojane,

"Ngokuthonjiswa kwentombi bekusithiwa kwenzelwa ukuze ifumane inzala yakwenda. Ibikukuzaliswa kwayo ebuntombini ukuze ikulungele ngoku ukwenda ibengunina wosapho olungabikwa nto".

(The idea of letting a girl undergo intonjane was to enable her to bear children when she gets married. The ceremony marked her fulfilment as a girl so as to be ready for marriage and be mother to a healthy family).

The next group of lexical items, namely for married women, reveals the polygamous character of traditional Sotho and Xhosa marriage. Mosadi or Xhosa umfazi, however, is excluded in the above statement for these terms are merely generic terms for all kinds of married women. Moqekwa and serethe are lexical items for the second wife of a polygamist while thatohatsi refers to the beloved wife of a polygamist. In other words, in a polygamous marriage there are, as it were, various levels of love. Of course thatohatsi can also refer to any beloved person, male or female, perhaps as a semantic extension of the

other meaning which is more cultural. The common meaning of serethe is "a heel", that is the back part of a foot. By analogy this lexical item in the sense of an inferior or second wife has this connotation of occupying a back position, that is an inferior position. Xhosa has no equivalent lexical items. The Xhosa term that approximates the Sotho ones is iqadi which essentially refers to inferior "houses" of a chief. Hence there is the chief iqadi (iqadi lendlu enkulu), the next in seniority (lasekunene) and the most inferior (ixhiba). Lexical items for married women then reflect the structure and nature of the Sotho and Xhosa traditional marriages, namely polygamy with all its gradation of married women within it.

Polygamy in Sotho and Xhosa cultures is no mere indication of sensuality but plays an important cultural role. For one thing it ensures the multiplicity of children and for another it raises the social status of a family and earns it great respect. The larger the family in terms of children the "bigger" the father. Because children glorify a marriage the more there are the greater the glory. Furthermore, polygamy offsets the possibility of a childless marriage and also serves to remove the anxiety and shame of childlessness. But perhaps more important, is the fact that the more productive a persons in terms of children he has by his various wives the greater his contribution to the continued existence of society in general.

Lexical items for women do not only reflect traditional Sotho and Xhosa beliefs about marriage and some of their attitudes to this institution as outlined above, but also reflect their attitude to sex, a concomitant of marriage. This attitude is reflected in the lexical items that have been characterized in the tables on pages 33 and 34 as women showing objectionable sexual behaviour. The attitude to sex ties up with the attitude to marriage in general, an institution every woman should strive for and for which she is expected to prepare accordingly by proper sexual behaviour.

Traditional Basotho and amaXhosa in particular are very sensitive to the abuse of sex. This is perhaps understandable for Basotho

and amaXhosa have a fundamentally religious attitude to sex. Any sexual offence, indeed any abuse of sex, is a sin against Sotho Modimo or Xhosa uThixo (God), Sotho badimo or Xhosa izinyanya (ancestors) because it rocks the smooth relationship in the community and between the community and God and ancestors. Sotho lexical items letekatse (unmarried mother, adulterous wife, prostitute) sefebe (flirt) and motjhesi (adulterous female) and their Xhosa equivalents have to be seen as reflecting aversion to and abhorrence of the abuse of sex. Sex is regarded as belonging exclusively to marriage, and as Mbiti² puts it, is regarded and experienced primarily as a religious dimension of marriage and social life.

If, as has been maintained above, a woman's destiny is regarded as being in marriage it is perhaps understandable why marriage is expected of one at the right time. It is also understandable perhaps why not to marry or get married is abhorred. Such an act not only deprives one of the opportunity of raising a legitimate family but also of the opportunity of contributing to the continued survival of society in general. The existence of a special lexical item, lefetwa, in Sotho and the phrase UDingiwe ududelwe nguJambase in Xhosa is a reflection of the abhorrence of the state of being a spinster. Inasmuch as in Sotho and Xhosa cultures to be a perpetual spinster is not cherished for reasons that have already been given, so is the idea of being childless. This is the idea underlying Sotho nyopa and Xhosa udlolo (childless married woman). These lexical items, that is their very existence may be seen as an expression of the idea that without procreation marriage is regarded as being incomplete, if not abnormal. There is particular concern about this condition of childlessness.

From a biological point of view husband and wife are reproduced in their offspring, an act which ensures that the chain of humanity is not broken, so to speak. This again points to the importance of having children, at least from the point of view of traditional African society. Traditional African society takes such a serious

view of the condition of childlessness that a childless woman is sometimes even called names. However, the strangest thing about this condition is that it does not seem to occur that the fault could be with the man. Nevertheless, a need is felt to take care of this situation. For example, in a polygamous Xhosa marriage, a polygamist usually chooses one of his other wives to stand in for the childless one and bear children for her. AmaXhosa call this ukuvusela inzala or ukuvusela amabele (to raise children for or to raise the breasts for).

It is not only the idea of being a perpetual spinster and of being childless that is regarded as socially abnormal. Likewise, being "uncircumcized" in Sotho and being divorced in Xhosa. Lexical items which point to these ideas are lethisa and ibuyakazi or umabuyekwendeni respectively. Inasmuch as marriage is expected of one at the right time, so is thojane or intonjane, initiation. The significance of this ceremony has already been pointed out. For Basotho (and this distinguishes them from amaXhosa) the initiation of women also includes some form of circumcision. Conformity to this ritual is essential. Otherwise, non-conformists are, among other things, excluded from some of the pleasures (feasts, gatherings) of the initiated. But, above all, non-conformists are derisively referred to as mathisa (the "uncircumcized"). Xhosa ibuyakazi or umabuyekwendeni (divorcee) is also a derisive term. In the context of Xhosa culture this is perhaps understandable. In traditional Sotho and Xhosa communities marriage is initiated by the parents of the two parties concerned, the man's and the woman's. In that respect it is seen as a way of starting a relationship between the families concerned. A woman (for the blame is usually put squarely on her) who breaks her marriage is accordingly considered socially deviant or abnormal. That is the cultural content, so to speak, of ibuyakazi or umabuyekwendeni.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, an attempt has been made to show that lexical items for women lend themselves to a four-fold structure. That structure

has been characterized as "pure" womanhood or the state of being a girl, married women, women showing objectionable sexual behaviour and socially abnormal women. An attempt has also been made to show that this structure is determined by a cultural context. It reflects various views, ideas, attitudes and beliefs traditional Basotho and amaXhosa in particular have about women in general. For example, the various types of women indicated by lexical items for "pure" womanhood reflect some of the ideas that are held about women, namely their destiny in marriage for which they have to be prepared by the performance of relevant ceremonies or rituals. Lexical items for married women especially in Sotho reflect some aspects of traditional marriage, namely polygamy with all the ideas attached to it (for example, status and respect, the multiplicity of children and the consequent contribution to the continued survival of society).

The sanctity of sex and its rightful place in wedlock is indicated negatively by items which have been characterized as showing objectionable sexual behaviour. These lexical items, it was shown, also point to sensitivity to the abuse of sex.

Because a woman is expected through childbearing to contribute to the survival of society one can almost say she has an obligation to marry at the right time. Failure to do so is considered socially abnormal. So is failure to bear children. The existence of special lexical items to indicate these two conditions understandably has a cultural bearing.

It can be said in the light of the above that the structure of the relevant lexicon indicates the corresponding structure of culture. Each of the four categories of women relates those women to relevant aspects of culture, especially the component of ideas in all its structured variety: beliefs about women, polygamy, attitudes to sex and the "obligation" to marry at the right time, among others. The last observation that needs to be made perhaps is that, as far as the semantic field of women is concerned, Sotho and Xhosa are very close.

SOURCE NOTES

1. Soga, T.B. 1974. Intlalo kaXhosa. Lovedale: Lovedale Press, p. 61.
2. Mbiti, J.S. 1969. African Religions and Philosophy. London: Heinemann, p. 140.

CHAPTER 3CEREMONIAL ANIMALS AND CULTURE1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the vocabulary relating to animals which are used ceremonially and to see how the structure of that vocabulary reflects the structure of culture. There are several kinds of ceremonies in Basotho and amaXhosa cultures. There are for example, ceremonies relating to death, marriage, "doctoring" a home or "washing off" some ill-luck. All these and other ceremonies are marked by the slaughter of an animal, usually a beast, so that blood flows and the ancestors are propitiated or appeased.

In view of the several kinds of ceremonies it is not possible to treat them all at once. This chapter will, as a result, confine itself to animals used ceremonially for marriage and circumcision. There is another reason why only these two ceremonies will be treated. There is no generic term for all ceremonial animals. In addition to that, animal terms relating to marriage link the present chapter with the previous one where marriage was seen to be central in the consideration of lexical items for women. Circumcision fits in the same pattern because the birth of children is one of the expected fruits of marriage and at the right time children are expected undergo some initiations so as to qualify for adulthood and so be eligible to marry.

This chapter will,

- (a) analyse relevant cattle terms in terms of their semantic components
- (b) relate these terms to relevant aspects of Basotho and amaXhosa cultures.
- (c) relate the structure of the relevant lexicon to the structure of the corresponding culture.

2. CATTLE TERMS

Cattle terms will be analyzed not only in terms of their components but also in terms of the various kinds of semantic relations amongst them. The following is a list of relevant lexical items (Sotho lexical items will be listed with Xhosa ones for comparison):

Sotho	Xhosa	English
Kgomo ya tebeletso	-	Deposit head of cattle
Kgomo tsa selelekela Leswai	Imvulamlomo (?) Uswazi	Introductory head of cattle a "stick" ox
Pholo ya moqhoba	Ukubonwa kwentombi (?)	Reception ox
Ditswa	-	Bride's maternal uncle's head of cattle
Kgomo ya letswele or Kgomo ya ho anyesa	Inkomo emdaka or yenquthu or kanina or ubuso bentombi	"Compensatory" head of cattle
-	Impothulo	Bridal party's provision
-	Inqakhwe	head of cattle
-	Inkomo yobulunga	
-	Inkomo yoduli	Bridal party's provision head of cattle (This is different from the above)

A few explanatory notes are perhaps necessary before the above lexical items are actually analyzed. The above lexical items (although cattle terms) relate directly to marriage. A generic term for these items is Sotho lehadi and Xhosa ikhazi, roughly translatable as cattle for a marriage ceremony. Gaps indicate the absence of an equivalent term in the language concerned. Although some of the lexical items are characterized simply as Sotho kgomo or Xhosa inkomo in most cases these terms refer to an ox.

3. COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS OF CATTLE TERMS

Attention can now be turned to the components of lexical items for cattle. Kgomo ya tebeletso (deposit head of cattle) has no Xhosa equivalent as the above table shows. It can be said the practice indicated by this lexical item is not found among the amaXhosa. This term has the following components [booking girl for marriage: starting a family relationship: deposit for marriage cattle]. Sotho kgomo tsa selelekela (introductory head of cattle) is a plural and generic term for two types of head of cattle, namely kgomo ya seholoholo or kgomo ya ho tswala (for the bride's father) and kgomo ya ho anyesa or kgomo ya ho tswala (for the bride's mother). The first of these two types has the following components [bull: compensatory: for bride's father: in recognition of his fatherhood] while the second has the following [cow: compensatory: for bride's mother: in recognition of her motherhood].

The presentation of a bull to the bride's father by the bridegroom's family and of a cow to the bride's mother is perhaps an indication of the importance that is attached to sex. The relationship between the two terms in question is complementary and they share the common component of being introductory. This last idea will be developed more fully when these lexical items are related to the relevant aspects of culture in the second part of this chapter. The two terms in question are also related to kgomo ya tebeletso (deposit head of cattle) in that this term or the kind of head of cattle it indicates is also introductory and is also a way of starting a family relationship.

In the above table the Xhosa equivalent for kgomo tsa selelekela (introductory head of cattle) is indicated as imvulamlomo (literally, a mouth - opener). A question mark has been put against this term because it is not quite the equivalent of the Sotho one. Although like the Sotho term its referent is introductory it differs from it in that it has the following components [special negotiating head of cattle: for starting negotiations with prospective bride's party: for "opening party's mouths"].

The Xhosa "equivalents" for Sotho kgomo ya letswele or kgomo ya ho anyesa (for bride's mother), namely inkomo emdaka or inkomo venquthu or inkomo kanina or ubuso bentombi are also problematic because they do not share all the components of the Sotho term of which they could be an equivalent.

The Xhosa equivalents have the following components [cow: demanded by few women: from prospective bridegroom's home: compensatory].

Although the Xhosa "equivalents" are no equivalents as such for Sotho, there is a relationship of inclusion in the terms concerned. In both languages the terms concerned have included as part of their meaning the components [compensatory: cow].

Ubuso bentombi is translatable as a girl's face and seems to be elliptical for inkomo yobuso bentombi (head of cattle for a girl's face) that is to compensate her parents for their "loss" and for her worth as a woman.

Sotho leswai and Xhosa uswazi (a "stick" ox) is [an ox: taken as driving lobola head of cattle - hence stick -: demanded and obligatory].

Perhaps the supplementary component of these terms is that they are extra to whatever number of cattle may be demanded for lobola. The component is regarded as supplementary because it is in fact included in the meaning of these terms and is not necessary to bring out the meaning of these terms. It is understood by the speakers as being inherent in these terms. But although leswai or uswazi is not really related to any of the other terms considered so far, there is a sense in which it could be considered to be related to them. In a sense the referent of this term is also introductory.

Sotho pholo ya moqhoba (reception ox) has the components [ox: for formal reception of bride at her new home that is the in-laws!].

The question mark against what appears as the Xhosa equivalent in the above table shows the difficulty of characterizing this term. As it stands it does not indicate any animal that is used ceremonially although amaXhosa understand it as such. Perhaps the term makes more sense if it is understood as being elliptical for inkomo yokubonwa kwentombi (a head of cattle for the unveiling of the bride's face).

It is characterized by the components [head of cattle: for formal reception of bride at her new home, that is the in-laws': for "unveiling" her face], while the two terms, that is the Sotho and the Xhosa one, share almost all the components, they differ in that Sotho is more specific in that the relevant ceremonial animal is an ox, pholo . Xhosa is not so specific and uses the general term for a head of cattle, inkomo, although this particular term is elliptical. It may also be pointed out that Basotho also use a sheep for this formal reception of the bride. They call it kwae. Ditswa (bride's maternal uncle's head of cattle), with no Xhosa equivalent, are or were five beasts, chosen by the bride's maternal uncle, from amongst lobola cattle, for his possession. Perhaps although part of the marriage negotiations, this term does not seem to be so related to the other terms considered so far. But there is another way of looking at it. The maternal uncle chose the five head of cattle for himself, perhaps as a way of compensating himself for losing his niece to another family. If that explanation is accepted then this term is semantically related to Sotho kgomo ya letswele or kgomo ya ho anyesa and Xhosa inkomo emdaka or inkomo yenguthu or inkomo kanina or ubuso bentombi (compensatory head of cattle for the bride's mother) or even kgomo ya sehohoholo or ya ho tswala for that matter (that is compensatory head of cattle for the bride's father). Emphasis in this comparison is on the common component of compensation. Otherwise, as shown above, these terms differ.

Xhosa impothulo, ingakhwe and inkomo yobulunga have no Sotho equivalents and share the components [head of cattle: driven by bridal party: on leaving for bridegroom's home: part of provision]. Although these lexical items share these components they differ in other components. Impothulo for example has the components [ox: slaughtered: to cater for bride's immediate needs at the bridegroom's home], while ingakhwe has the components [cow: not slaughtered: exclusively for bride: to provide her with milk].

Insofar as these two lexical items have components that are opposites, namely [ox: cow] and [slaughtered: not slaughtered] they could be regarded as being in complementary relationship.

Inkomo yobulunga differs in essential respects from the above two lexical items as some of its components show [cow: not slaughtered: "sacred": for maintenance of bride and her progeny].

Although it shares the components [cow: not slaughtered] with inqakhwe.

Inkomo yobulunga has some supplementary components. These include the idea that the husband has no control over this cow and it is regarded as being so sacred that it cannot be tampered with not even by the law.

Inkomo yoduli (bridal party's head of cattle) is unmarked in the sense that there is no indication whether the term refers to an ox or a cow. However, in general terms in relation to the three lexical items considered above this lexical item stands in a kind of reversive relationship in that its referent is provided by the bridegroom's family and not by the bride's as with the other three lexical items. But this lexical item also stands in a contiguous relationship in that it shares the components of the other terms, generally speaking. One significant difference is that this head of cattle is provided by the bridegroom's family to the bridal party after it has "deposited" the bride at her new home. Basotho, on the other hand, usually slaughter a sheep.

The above lexical items relate directly to marriage. But if the standpoint is maintained that children are an integral part of marriage and that at the right time they have to undergo initiation, then a consideration of lexical items for circumcision head of cattle is necessary. In this particular area there are marked differences between Sotho and Xhosa as the following lexical analysis will show. Sotho lexical items for circumcision head of cattle include the following,

Kgomo ya mohaswa (circumcision head of cattle)

Kgomo ya kgalapa (reciprocal circumcision head of cattle).

Kgomo ya mohaswa has the following components [for circumcision: slaughtered by maternal grandparents: for grandson].

While kgomo ya kgalapa has the following [for circumcision: slaughtered by paternal grandparents: for grandson: reciprocal].

These two lexical items are both complementary and contiguous.

They are complementary in that they involve maternal and paternal grandparents respectively and contiguous in that they differ only in the essential component [maternal grandparents] versus [paternal grandparents]. The above two lexical items seem to be the only ones in Sotho that are applicable to circumcision.

Xhosa lexical items for animals used ceremonially for circumcision on the other hand differ considerably from Sotho ones. In fact with amaXhosa it seems it is predominantly goats and sheep that are slaughtered. The following are the relevant lexical items,

Umngcamo (goat slaughtered before going to circumcision school)

Umdaka (sheep slaughtered at the circumcision school)

Ibhokhwe yokojisa (goat slaughtered on about eighth day at
circumcision school)

Ibhokhwe yokuphuma (goat slaughtered for the newly
initiated).

A componential analysis of the above lexical items reveals the following, Umngcamo is [a goat: slaughtered shortly before initiate goes to circumcision school: eaten by both men and women: not eaten by initiate's mother].

It must be pointed out here although the components reveal a general tendency, according to some informants the goat in question is eaten by men only with women having a special sheep slaughtered for them.

Umdaka, on the other hand, is [a sheep: slaughtered at circumcision school: after about three days at the school .

Ibhokhwe yokojisa shares all the components of umdaka with the only difference that it is slaughtered on about the eighth day at the circumcision school.



Ibhokhwe yokuphuma completes the circumcision cycle and is [a goat: slaughtered for the newly initiated: back at home].

Although there is no generic term both in Sotho and Xhosa for animals used ceremonially for circumcision they all share a component involving their use for "ceremonial" purposes which sets them apart from other animals not so used.

4. THE RELATING OF LEXICAL ITEMS FOR CEREMONIAL ANIMALS TO CULTURE

The lexical items for cattle relating to marriage and for other animals used ceremonially for circumcision show a certain structure. The former group shows some systematic progression from the time just before marriage is contemplated through to the time when it actually takes place. The latter group, especially in the case of Xhosa, also shows some kind of systematic progression from the time just before circumcision itself through to the time when circumcision actually takes place at the circumcision school and the newly circumcized come back home.

In order to relate the lexical items in question to the relevant aspects of culture it is necessary to emphasize the important role ceremonial animals play in the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa. The importance of what Soga¹ says lies precisely in this area,

"Umntu lo wadalwa kunye nenkomo le, ngesizathu
sokuba umntu lo ebefunyanwa ngenkomo le ukuze
abekho".

(a person was created together with a beast because
it is through a beast that he comes into being).

Soga here expresses something for amaXhosa with which a Mosotho would agree as expressing his own people's values.

The significance of the above statement lies in the fact that it shows the relationship between marriage and cattle. For a marriage to be complete lobola had (and still has to be) to be paid in full and in the form of head of cattle, although cash is also accepted these days. Children are only properly conceived of as products of such a

full marriage and come into existence as a result of head of cattle, so to speak. That, in essence, is what lies behind Soga's observation. AmaXhosa even have the saying ubuhle bendoda ziinkomo (a man's beauty is cattle, literally translated), the value of a man does not lie in his physical appearance but in his capacity to produce cattle for his marriage.

After the above introductory remarks this section has to address itself to the question of how the structure of lexical items considered in this chapter reflect the structure of culture. The above lexical items relate to the social aspect of culture and in particular some of the social institutions of Basotho and amaXhosa, namely marriage negotiations and circumcision. The way the relevant lexicon is organized shows the way the corresponding aspects of culture are also organized and structured as will be shown.

In traditional, that is non-literate, Sotho society, it will be remembered, marriage is essentially a matter between the parents of the man (who take the initiative) and the woman's. In the olden days if a girl was considered to be too young for marriage but was fancied by a certain family for their son, such an intention was made known. That was done by depositing a beast in the home of the girl. The purpose of such a head of cattle was to book the girl so that she is not given away to any other family. Kgomo ya tebeletso (deposit head of cattle) served that purpose and has to be seen as a preliminary way of starting a relationship on the part of the two families concerned. It represents some preliminaries in the "structure" of the marriage process and negotiations.

The next step represents some components of the marriage process itself and the various stages in that process. The various stages which are successive are indicated by Sotho dikgomo tsa selelekela (introductory head of cattle), leswai (head of cattle considered as "accompanying" or "driving" the lobola ones), pholo ya moqhoba (reception ox) and ditswa (maternal uncle's head of cattle).

Xhosa customs differ slightly here. AmaXhosa do not seem to have a deposit head of cattle or a bride's maternal uncle's head of cattle. But they do have head of cattle corresponding to the other head of cattle. These are imvulamlo (literally, mouth-opener) for Sotho kgomo tsa selelekela (introductory head of cattle), uswazi for Sotho leswai and inkomo yokubonwa kwentombi for Sotho pholo ya moqhoba (reception ox).

However, we need to consider more closely how these lexical items reflect particular aspects of marriage and therefore of culture because marriage is an aspect of culture.

On the day of marriage the required number of head of cattle, Sotho lehadi and Xhosa ikhazi, are driven to the prospective bride's home with two of these in Sotho being particularly marked off and set aside for the girl's parents. These two have a generic name, dikgomo tsa selelekela (introductory head of cattle) and are meant to introduce formally the prospective bridegroom and his family to the bride's family. Of the two head of cattle one is for the bride's father and is a bull called kgomo ya seholoholo or kgomo ya ho tswala (for giving birth) in recognition of his part in the birth of his daughter. Xhosa has no equivalent lexical item. The other head of cattle is the mother's, kgomo ya letswele (for the breasts) or ya ho anyesa (for suckling), in recognition of her part in giving birth to and nurturing her daughter. AmaXhosa call this particular head of cattle inkomo emdaka or inkomo yenquthu or inkomo kanina or ubuso bentombi. In a sense these two head of cattle are compensatory to the parents of the bride for the "loss" they will experience when their daughter gets married and leaves her home. The above lexical items represent the first step in the marriage process and negotiations, namely the formal introduction of the bridegroom and his family to the bride's family.

The next stage is the formal reception of the bride at her new home (that is, the in-laws'). Basotho mark this stage by slaughtering

an ox, pholo ya moqhoba (reception ox). Sometimes a sheep, kwa, is also slaughtered. AmaXhosa call this head of cattle (it is not clear whether it is a bull, an ox or a cow) ukubonwa kwentombi (literally, the act of seeing the bride) elliptical for inkomo yokubonwa kwentombi. It is noteworthy that while all the other kinds of beasts are referred to simply as kgomo (a head of cattle) which may either be a cow, a bull or an ox, the head of cattle that is slaughtered for the formal reception of the bride is specifically an ox, pholo. It has not been possible to establish the exact reason for this departure.

In recent years in Sotho another kind of a head of cattle, leswai (literally, a stick) has appeared. A probable reason for this is the influence of the contact between Basotho and amaXhosa because the latter seem to have had uswazi since early times. Leswai or uswazi originally seems to have been a head of cattle that was not actually part of the exact number demanded for lobola. It is an extra that is meant to be one which "drives" the lobola cattle. Nowadays, its place seems to have been taken either by some token money in cash or, more commonly, by a bottle of liquor consumed exclusively by marriage negotiators. Lastly, ditswa. These were five head of cattle chosen by the bride's maternal uncle from among the lobola head of cattle for his own possession.

The lexical items which have been considered above represent, as has been shown, a particular phase in the marriage process. This is the phase of the formal negotiation and the formal conclusion of the marriage process. Marriage takes place and the bride and her party leave for the bridegroom's home.

The bridal party's departure for the bridegroom's home represents yet another phase in the marriage process. In Sotho this phase is not attended with as much ceremony as in Xhosa. The bridal party in Sotho is given some provision in the form of meat and other "goodies".

But there is not as much fuss about this as there is in Xhosa. This is yet another area of cultural difference between Basotho and amaXhosa.

Xhosa lexical items for head of cattle driven by the bridal party on leaving for the bridegroom's home are impothulo, inqakhwe and inkomo yobulunga.

After the official welcome of the bridal party by the bridegroom's family by the slaughter of a goat, umthulantabeni, the impothulo head of cattle is slaughtered the following day. Usually an ox, this head of cattle is meant to cater for the bridal party's immediate needs.

The inqakhwe head of cattle, on the other hand, is not slaughtered and is meant to provide the bride with milk. Its purpose is quite specific in that it is meant to cater exclusively for the bride. Inkomo yobulunga, which is always a cow, serves a purpose similar to inqakhwe. Regarded as sacred, this cow and its progeny is meant for the maintenance of the bride, her children and for the general upkeep of her household. The husband has no control at all over this cow. So sacred and "revered" is it that not even the law can tamper with it. It is for this reason that Soga² comments as follows about it and its offspring,

"Isiko lesiXhosa lizikhusela ukuba ziinkomo ezimsulwa kuwo onke amatyala ahlawulwa zezinye iinkomo Zithenga ukwalamana kodwa ezweni apha.

(Xhosa custom protects them because they are cattle which are not affected by all the debts which are payable with other beasts Their sole relationship is to buy relationship in the world).

Its sacredness is also shown by the fact that hairs are occasionally plucked from its tail and made into a kind of necklace for the young wife. Such hairs are meant to be charms to offset calamity, ill-health and, generally, to protect children against misfortune. Its other

function, of course, is to enhance the dignity and worth of the bride and to fill the gap created by the cattle paid to the bride's home for lobola. The above three head of cattle, (impothulo, inqakhwe, inkomo yobulunga) have no parallel in Sotho.

When the bridal party goes back home it is given inkomo yoduli (bridal party's head of cattle). Usually slaughtered, this head of cattle is not part of lobola but is meant to be some kind of provision. Among Basotho usually a sheep is slaughtered. In both cases, however, that rounds off the actual marriage process and at the right time the newly weds are expected to have children. These children in turn are expected to marry and in turn have children. But before they can be considered adults they have to undergo initiation which takes the form of circumcision in the case of boys (and also in the case of women in Sotho although this does not seem to be widely practised these days). In a sense circumcision is not something completely isolated from the marriage process.

In the case of Basotho there are two important head of cattle used for circumcision. These are kgomo ya mohaswa which is slaughtered by the maternal grandparents for their grandson and kgomo ya kgalapa which is reciprocal and is slaughtered by the paternal grandparents. Otherwise the entire ritual is shrouded in secrecy. This is partly why circumcision takes place very far away from a village. This does not seem to be the case in Xhosa. While Basotho on the whole slaughter cattle, amaXhosa seem to slaughter goats mainly. The reason for the difference is not very clear.

Before a boy goes to the circumcision school a goat is slaughtered and eaten both by men and women except the boy's mother. Again the reason for this exclusion is not clear. This goat is called umngcamo. With ceremonial animals used for circumcision there are some variations within the amaXhosa community. This is perhaps understandable because amaXhosa are in fact a combination of various tribes, among

others amaHlubi, amaMpondo, amaMpondomise, abaThembu, amaNgqika and amaGcaleka. For example, for the umngcamo goat some tribes, notably amaHlubi, slaughter a sheep for women while the goat is consumed by men.

After about a week at the circumcision school another goat, ibhokhwe yokojisa, is slaughtered. As far as can be ascertained almost all the Xhosa tribes have this kind of goat. There is yet another ceremonial animal which is also slaughtered at the circumcision school. It is a sheep called umdaka and seems to be particularly common among amaMpondomise. When the newly circumcised come back home from the circumcision school a goat, eyokuphuma (for coming out of the school) is slaughtered. Again there seem to be some variations here. While some Xhosa tribes slaughter goats other slaughter a beast commonly called inkomo yomgidi. That rounds off the circumcision process and sets the stage for marriage.

5. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing a few concluding remarks can be made. The lexical items considered in this chapter show various kinds of semantic relations, for example contiguity, inclusion and complementarity. These lexical items also show the difference, sometimes very marked, in the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa given the same cultural area or aspect, for example marriage and circumcision. There is also some variation in the kinds of animals used ceremonially not only within a given linguistic community but also when the two linguistic communities are compared. Animals used ceremonially for marriage vary from cattle (ox, cow, bull) to small stock (sheep and goats). The structure of the relevant lexicon reflects some cultural features, and in the case of marriage the various phases in the marriage process. These are:

- (a) an introduction which presupposes marriage itself
- (b) the departure of the bridal party for the bridegroom's home
- (c) the various types of cattle that go with the bridal party
- (d) the reception of the bride at her new home

(e) the return of the bridal party home

All these are phases and components of a cultural process.

SOURCE NOTES

1. Soga, T.B. 1974. Intlalo kaXhosa. Lovedale: Lovedale Press, p. 89.
2. Soga, p. 139.

CHAPTER 4DIVINERS: AN EMBODIMENT OF A BELIEF IN AND A RESPONSE TO SUPERNATURAL FORCES1. INTRODUCTION

As with previous chapters, attention will first be given to an analysis of lexical items - in this case, lexical items for diviners. Lexical items for diviners will thereafter be placed in their cultural context to show how the structure of these items reflects the corresponding structure of the cultures of Basotho and amaXhosa.

But what are diviners?

Perhaps Soga¹ has the answer,

"Ngabantu aba ababefunde amayeza, imichiza yokunyanga izifo ngezifo ebantwini. Ebeziindidi ngeendidi, kodwa ke onke engosiyazi ekubekwe kuwo iintonga luluntu olu. Kwaye kungekho kufa naseXhegwini ngaphandle kokubulawa".

(These, that is diviners, were people who had studied medicines, medicines of herbs for remedying various kinds of diseases in people. They were of various kinds, but all of them were omniscient and mankind had full confidence in them and there was no sickness, even on the part of old people, which was not attributed to being bewitched).

Diviners are basically medicine-men and include with doctors and even magicians.

2. LEXICAL ITEMS FOR DIVINERS

A generic term for diviner is Xhosa iggirha or Sotho ngaka. One obvious difference between Xhosa iggirha and Sotho ngaka is, as will be shown, that while Xhosa has specific lexical items for some of the diviners Sotho uses the same lexical item ngaka for all kinds of diviners and qualifies the term according to the particular function of the diviner for example, ngaka ya letolo (a lightning diviner).

Because Sotho has no special lexical items for the various kinds of diviners, Xhosa will be treated first followed by remarks on Sotho diviners.

The following are Xhosa lexical items for diviners (amagqirha),

1. Isanuse (specialist)
2. Amaxukazana (ordinary diviners) subdivided into:
 - (a) aqubulayo (specialist in determining the cause of an illness)
 - (b) ambululayo (revealers)
 - (c) awemilozi (whistlers, ventriloquists)
3. Amatola (army diviners)
4. Awemvula (rain diviners)
5. Amaxhwele (herbalists)

These lexical items share certain common components. They all refer to human beings, amagqirha. They all imply knowledge and power to do what they designate, that is knowledge and power with reference to their referents. This is the knowledge and the power to ward off evil in whatever form. But with regard to all other components they differ as the following analysis will show. The main difference lies in the role of their referents, how they go about their job.

Before a componential analysis of lexical items for diviners is done there is a very important component, ukuthwasa, that needs to be explained first. This is a component that brings out the difference in the various types of diviners and also explains their nature and function. Ukuthwasa is some form of "illness" that one has to go through in the process of being made a diviner. A prospective diviner or novice is called by imishologu (spirits of the ancestors) in a dream to become a diviner. He goes to a river and keeps out of sight for about two weeks. During this time he supposedly communicates with the invisible world of the imishologu. After that spell of about two weeks the novice returns home. But he may not start practising until he has been instructed by an isanuse (specialist diviner).

It is in the above sense that ukuthwasa has to be understood in the lexical field analysis of terms for diviners. It is a term that is rather difficult to translate into English. Although Basotho have the same process, usually called ho kula (to be sick), there does not seem to be any Sotho term approximating the Xhosa one.

3. COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL ITEMS FOR DIVINERS

Isanuse (specialist diviner) has the following diagnostic components,

- [+ specialist
- + divines
- + treats sick persons
- + gives protective treatment
- + "smells out" witches and sorcerers
- + knows wishes of the ancestors
- + can identify enemy which is sending evil omens
- + has knowledge of herbs
- + has all-round knowledge
- + "ukuthwasa"
- + apprentices prospective diviners]

Basotho simply use ngaka for this type of diviner although selaodi (one who divines) is also used. His role is the same as that of the Xhosa counterpart.

With reference to Basotho, Sekese² tells us that in the olden days a person would, on behalf of a sick person, consult a diviner, selaodi (ngaka), who would divine the cause of an ailment and prescribe medicines accordingly or abstinence from certain things, for example certain foods.

How does isanuse compare with ixhwele?

In the first place, unlike isanuse, ixhwele is not a specialist. However, the two terms share the following components,

- [+ treat sick persons
- + provide curative and protective medicines

From the components which these two lexical items share, that is isamuse and ixhwele, it would appear there is some overlapping of functions between the two categories of diviners. Both treat disease and provide curative and protective treatment. Otherwise, they differ to the extent shown above.

For both kinds of diviners Sotho uses ngaka. Both types in Xhosa would include among their functions the protection of people against lightning. The difference between Xhosa and Sotho in this respect seems to be that for Basotho there is a special ngaka for protecting people and their possessions against lightning. But he has no special name. About him Sekese³ has this to say,

"Letolo ha le kene hae, hona mohlang oo, ho bitswa ngaka e tla lokisa motse le batho. Motho le ha e le wa hae, ya neng a le siyo, kapa a etile ha tolo le kena hae, ha a dumellwe ho kena motseng ho eso qetwe ho phekola. Ngaka ha e qeta ho foka, ho bokellwa ba motse kaofela moo ho phatswang". (Emphasis added)

(When lightning has struck a "house", a ngaka is called on the same day to "doctor" the home, its owners and occupants. A person who had been away or had visited some place when lightning struck, is not allowed to enter the premises before the "doctoring" has been done. After the ngaka has thrown some medicine around, all the occupants are gathered at the place where incisions are made).

Attention can now be turned to the other types of diviners.

According to Soga⁴ amaxukazana are ordinary amagqirha from whom come izamuse (specialist diviners) and are divided into,

- (a) aqubulayo (specialists in extracting the cause of an illness)
- (b) ambululayo (revealers)

(c) awemilozi (whistlers, ventriloquists)

If this categorization is accepted amaxukazana then is a generic term or an archilexeme for the above three categories of diviners.

Ukuqubula from which aqubulayo is derived means "to come suddenly upon". Aqubulayo are distinguished by the following components,

- [+ specialist
- + suck or extract alleged cause of ailment from the affected part of patient's body]

The sucking is done directly with the mouth or via some object, for example a reed. Sotho does not seem to have this type of diviner. In any case, even if it does he would simply be referred to as a ngaka. The above components distinguish this particular type of diviner from the two considered so far, namely isanuse (specialist) and ixhwele (herbalist). But the three terms share the following features,

- [+ treatment of sick persons
- + provision of curative and protective medicines]

However, aqubulayo differ from ixhwele (herbalist) in the following components,

- [+ divine cause of sickness
- + "ukuthwasa"]

In that respect, aqubulayo and isanuse share the same components, namely the above.

As with isanuse and ixhwele there is some overlapping of function between aqubulayo and the other two lexical items in so far as they all share the components of treating sick persons and prescribing curative treatment. Another component which they share is the demand of payment in some form or another.

The methods used by aqubulayo are quite interesting and show how they can play on the gullibility of those who consult them. They usually

put wet cowdung in their mouths, then suck from the affected part of a patient's body. They claim to suck out the cause of the physical complaint in the patient. The cause allegedly comes out in the form of strange pieces of meat. The patient will not, of course, have been aware of the presence of cowdung in the diviner's mouth.

The next lexical item to be considered is ambululayo (revealers, producers of charms). Ukambulula from which ambululayo is derived has two rather closely related meanings. It can mean to confiscate one's property completely or to investigate and reveal or produce. The first meaning refers particularly to the property of one convicted of witchcraft and the second to the diviner who by searching and divination finds out where the alleged destructive substance has been secreted by a sorcerer and reveals it.

Ambululayo,

- [+ reveal hidden destructive charms
- + reveal sorcerers' familiars
- + divine
- + "ukuthwasa"]

Sorcerers' familiars may include impundulu (some mysterious bird of ill omen), imfene (baboon) or uthikoloshe (some mysterious creature used by witches). These familiars will be dealt with more fully later when the cultural context of lexical items for diviners is considered. Like the other kinds of diviners they render service for remuneration, provide treatment for protection against cause(s) of misfortune. But unlike ixhwele (herbalist) for example ambululayo divine and undergo ukuthwasa.

The last kind of amaxukazana (ordinary diviners) is awemilozi (whistlers or ventriloquists). This does not seem to be a common type of diviner nowadays. Whistlers are distinguished by the following components,

- [+ divine
- + hear whistles supposed to be voices of ancestors
- + "ukuthwasa"]

One significant feature of whistlers is that when they divine the audience does not have to sit close to them. The reason for this is not immediately obvious. But one suspects the possibility of dishonesty on the part of whistlers with regard to the claims they make about hearing whistles or voices.

The three types of amaxukazana share in common the components of divining, ukuthwasa and providing protective treatment to patients or complainants. There is an extent to which the lexical items aqubulayo, ambululayo and awemilozi could be regarded as being in contiguous relationship. As has already been pointed out they share most of the components in common. Perhaps a significant difference, and this accounts for the contiguous relationship, lies in the functions of these various diviners. This would also include the way they go about their job. Aqubulayo allegedly suck the cause of a physical ailment from the affected part of a patient's body. Ambululayo reveal the cause of an ailment or complaint while awemilozi allegedly divine by hearing or listening to voices which are heard only by them. Sotho does not seem to have these kinds of diviners. However, if there are diviners who perform the function indicated above, Sotho would simply call them ngaka (diviner) or dingaka (diviners).

Xhosa amatola were war diviners. This class of diviners seems to be extinct though. This is not surprising because the purpose for which this class existed, namely to "doctor" soldiers for success in war, is no longer there. There are no large scale wars similar to frontier wars of the 19th century for example.

This class of diviners has the following features,

- [+ "doctor" an army
- + for success in war
- + makes incisions in vicinity of the hearts of soldiers
- + instils courage
- + gives army herbs for speed and victory in war

- + renders enemy impotent
- + attached exclusively to a chief]

Every soldier of an impi (army) was given a small magic stick to point at the enemy.

About this magic stick, Soga⁵ observes,

Ngumthandazo omkhulu ke lo. Lovakala liwalawula lisithi,
"Ze ningababinzi nibenze nto de baniqale"

(This is a great prayer. He - itola - will say,
"Do not charge at the enemy or do them anything until
it starts first"

War casualties were also sent to amatola for treatment.

Like ixhwele (herbalist) an itola cures pain by the use of herbs. But if necessary, itola also cures pain by making incisions in some part of the body and rubbing in a charcoal like powder, umhlabelo. The making of incisions and the rubbing in of this charcoal like powder could be compared medically, and perhaps psychologically as well, with the giving of an injection by a medical practitioner or nurse a patient. However, it must be stressed that war diviners are a distinct class which is primarily concerned with the preparation of an army for success and protection in battle.

Basotho seem to have had a war diviner also. In the olden days Basotho soldiers were, like the amaXhosa ones, "doctored" so as to face the enemy successfully and escape from danger. This was done either by making incisions in the body or by making the army smoke a certain medicinal powder before going to war or by both methods. The diviner who performed these acts was simply called ngaka. There does not seem to be any special name as is evident from Sekese⁶,

"Ba bolaileng batho mohlal ntwal eba ngaka e neng e ba lokisa, ha ba ya ntweng, e ya nne e ba tsubise setlhare lengeteng". (Emphasis added)

(Those who had killed people during the war were "doctored" when going out to war and the ngaka would make them smoke a certain herb from a container).

In terms of its diagnostic components (enumerated above) itola differs considerably from any of the lexical items considered so far. Itola [divines, - ukuthwasa, - treats disease]. He merely protects an army against its adversaries.

Awemvula is elliptical for amagqirha emvula (rainmaking diviners) and have the following components,

- [+ power to invoke rain
- + enlisted by a chief
- + use herbs
- "ukuthwasa"]

This is also a class of its own and is distinct from any of the other lexical items considered so far. Like Xhosa amagqirha emvula Sotho has a similar ngaka. This is the kind of ngaka who also has the power to prevent a hailstorm, ho hlomela sefako.

He is usually given a black sheep, slaughters it, takes some fat from it and smears it together with a black powder, mohlabelo, on some "doctored" small sticks which are placed at "strategic" places to prevent a storm. If the crop which is being protected is subsequently not destroyed by hailstorm, each affected person takes a seroto (a basket-like container) full of some crop to the ngaka.

Basotho and amaXhosa are equally concerned about the welfare of their crop. Basotho have a special ngaka who "doctors" the crop so as to ward off birds, ho di upa. There does not seem to be an equivalent in Xhosa, although amagqirha emvula (rainmaking diviners) are expected to perform that function.

From the above analysis a few conclusions can be made. Sotho, unlike Xhosa, has no special lexical items for the various types of diviners. They are all referred to as ngaka with some accompanying explanation of the particular function or role that a given one performs, for

example ngaka ya letolo (lightning diviner). Of course the same phenomenon is found in Xhosa, for example igqirha lemvula. But in Xhosa it is of very limited applicability, so that as a general rule Xhosa has special lexical items.

There are types of diviners which are found in one linguistic community and not in another. Xhosa, for example, does not seem to have diviners for warding off birds or for the prevention of hailstorm. This does not, however, mean amaXhosa are not concerned with the welfare of their crops. What it probably means is that some of the other diviners perform the functions relating to diviners for warding off birds or for the prevention of hailstorm.

There appears to be an overlapping of functions with the various types of diviners. Except for Xhosa itola (war diviner) and igqirha lemvula (raimaker) and their Sotho equivalents, all the other kinds of diviners seem to be primarily concerned with the alleviation of physical pain and in warding off evil in whatever form. These are the common components with this particular class of diviners. This is probably why Hunter⁷ distinguishes only two types of diviners, namely amagqirha and amaxhwele (herbalists). She sees the difference in the two categories as lying in initiation, that is ukuthwasa rather than in function.

While ukuthwasa is an important diagnostic component Hunter's twofold division does not seem to be entirely justifiable. As has been shown above, in spite of the overlapping of functions there are significant differences in the various kinds of diviners.

Although the term diviner has been used as an archilexeme, to apply this term to all the lexical items considered above seems to be unjustifiable. To divine involves the following, among other things,

- (a) the deduction of whether the cause for a mishap should be ascribed to witchcraft or to the dissatisfaction of the ancestors.
- (b) showing who the witch is
- (c) an indication of protective and curative measures to be taken

(d) an indication of the cause and nature of a physical ailment. If the above features are taken as being essential to divination then it is not quite correct to call all Xhosa amaggirha and Sotho dingaka diviners. Those who "doctor" an army in both Sotho and Xhosa for example, do not fall in the category of those who divine. It is true they protect the army against any eventuality in war. But that does not make them diviners.

In the light of the above arguments it seems to be preferable to speak of medicine-men rather than diviners. Medicine-men would cover all the types discussed above. However, the term "diviner" has been used throughout the foregoing discussion because of the common usage of that term in this context.

A summary of the most important diagnostic components of diviners or medicine men appears on page 73. Because Sotho uses ngaka for all types of medicine-men only Xhosa lexical items have been considered.

Isanuse	Ixhwele	Aqubulayo	Ambululayo	Awemilozi	Itola	Awemvula
+ specialist	+ specialist	+ specialist	+ specialist	+ specialist	+ specialist	+ specialist
+ treats the sick	+ treats the sick	+ treats the sick	+ reveals cause of misfortune	+ hears ancestor's voices	+ treats army	+ invokes rain
+ uses herbs	+ uses herbs	+ use herbs	- use herbs	- use herbs	+ uses herbs	+ use herbs
+ divines	- divines	+ divine	+ divine	+ divine	- divines	- divine
+ ukuthwasa	- ukuthwasa	+ ukuthwasa	+ ukuthwasa	+ ukuthwasa	- ukuthwasa	- ukuthwasa
+ all-round knowledge	- all-round knowledge	- all-round knowledge	- all-round knowledge	- all-round knowledge	- all-round knowledge	- all-round knowledge
+ "smells out" witches	- "smells out" witches	- "smell out" witches	- "smell out" witches	- "smell out" witches	- smells out" witches	- "smell out" witches
+ apprentices prospective diviners	- apprentices prospective diviners	- apprentice prospective diviner	- apprentice prospective diviner	- apprentice prospective diviner	- apprentices prospective diviners	- apprentice prospective diviner
+ attached to chief	+ attached to chief	- attached to chief	- attached to chief	- attached to chief	+ attached to chief	+ attached to chief

In the above summary the component [+ all-round knowledge] actually covers all that can be said about isanuse (specialist).

But for greater clarity the writer has elaborated further on the component in question by adding components such as [+ "smells out" witches] and [+ apprentices prospective diviners].

4. THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF LEXICAL ITEMS FOR DIVINERS

In order to appreciate lexical items for Sotho dingaka and Xhosa amagqirha (diviners or medicine-men) it is necessary to understand the overall context within which they operate. Such a context will also help in a fuller appreciation of their role in African society in general and in Sotho and Xhosa speech communities in particular.

4.1 The Conceptualization of the Universe: the notion of a hierarchy of forces.

For a fuller appreciation of the cultural context in which diviners or medicine-men work it is necessary to understand one fundamental notion, namely the notion of a hierarchy of forces. This notion is, as will be shown, central to an appreciation of the way Basotho and amaXhosa conceptualize the universe. This applies particularly to traditional Basotho and amaXhosa. What is involved here is essentially a belief system.

There is a general belief in a spiritual world and in a hierarchy of forces. Both these phenomena are considered to be above man. However, man has his place somewhere (lower down) in the hierarchy which may be represented as in the following table,

SUPREME BEING (Sotho Modimo, Xhosa Thixo or Qamata)

ANCESTORS

DIVINERS (Medicine-Men)

CHIEFS (Rulers)

ELDERS

YOUNGER MEMBERS

Mbiti⁸ rightly observes that the universe is seen as a spiritual arena where a variety of forces interplay. The entire organization of society, it is believed, is maintained by the spiritual forces which pervade it.

At the top of the hierarchy is the Supreme Being. Next come the ancestors. Thought of as a powerful source, they were originally human but are now in the spirit world. Their benevolence is sought and their wrath is averted by due offerings. Though dead, they are believed to be still with the living, invisible though they are to ordinary mortals.

Because man has a place in the hierarchy of forces he is, as it were, anchored to it. He is anchored to it because his welfare on earth depends very largely on how he relates himself to it and to the spiritual world in general. He has to contend with these forces and relate his life and his activities to it. There is therefore a close relationship between the spiritual world and the physical. The spiritual world, wherever it might be situated (and there is no clear indication of its situation, except that it is somewhere) is very much like a carbon copy of the physical. Like the physical, it has rivers, valleys, forests, mountains and deserts.

This idea partly accounts for the ancient practice among amaXhosa of burying a man with some of his essential belongings (his stick, assegai, shield, pipe and even some food) because it was believed that life was still going to continue, even after death, in the spiritual world.

There is some very close interrelationship between the various components of the hierarchy of forces. Tempels⁹ expresses this idea thus,

"The world of forces is held like a spider's web of which no single thread can be caused to vibrate without shaking the whole network".

The hierarchy of forces can be harnessed and manipulated by witchcraft and magic. It can be disturbed, among other things, by a neglect of obligations. However, it can be restored by performing relevant rites, characterized mainly by the slaughter of an animal, usually a beast, for the propitiation of the ancestors or those in the spirit world. Because ancestors are regarded as having acquired new powers which can help man, an appeal is made to them for help in an hour of need.

Mönnig¹⁰ makes the point that the spirit world is structurally a reflection of the living world, "and may be considered to be a part of the social order, albeit the supernatural and thus superior part of this order". Although Mönnig is writing about Bapedi, what he says of them above applies equally to Basotho and amaXhosa.

The question may be asked: How then do diviners or medicine-men fit into what has been said above? Part of the answer lies in what was said at the beginning of this chapter, namely that an appreciation of the notion of a hierarchy of forces is necessary for an understanding of the role medicine-men play in the cultures of Basotho and amaXhosa. So is an appreciation of some aspects of African ontology.

Basotho and amaXhosa are confronted daily with life and death, good fortune and misfortune and try to seek an explanation for these phenomena which are a mystery to them. Like anybody else, they welcome the good that befalls them. Misfortune, in whatever form, for example death, accident, childlessness and even disease, becomes difficult to accept. The basic problem, as Hoernle¹¹ rightly sees it, is how that which is good can be domesticated and that which is evil warded off.

It is in the light of this problem that certain men emerge and lay claim to the power of controlling the environment, natural and human, in the interests of society. Above all, these men claim the power of warding off evil. Such men are diviners or medicine-men whose place in African society in general, as in Sotho and Xhosa communities

in particular, is best understood in relation to disease and misfortune of all sorts.

4.2 Some Aspects of African Ontology

For a fuller appreciation of the cultural context of diviners or medicine men it is also necessary to consider briefly some aspects of African ontology. Of particular relevance to the present discussion is the notion of "being" as Africans, especially traditional ones, see it. The fundamental notion under which being is conceived is to be found in the idea of the hierarchy of forces discussed above because human beings are an integral part of that hierarchy.

The concept of being, Tempels¹² argues, is bound to the concept of what he calls "force", vital force. Being is that which has force. Force is being and being is force. By "force" or "vital force" Tempels seems to mean life. It is this kind of life, this desire to live and live normally, which partly determines behaviour in the sense that one has to behave accordingly if one is to live "fully" so to speak. The opposite of life is death and both these (or the thought of these) determine one's behaviour. The idea of being or force, that is the idea of maintaining life, Tempels¹³ argues quite forcefully, lies behind the desire for protection from misfortune or from forces which are thought to be bent on annihilating or diminishing one. Hence the idea of consulting diviners or medicine-men. Misfortune in whatever form (illness, suffering, witchcraft, accident, injustice, among other things) is thought to be a diminution of vital force which people such as diviners are supposedly capable of reviving.

The notion of a hierarchy of forces then with the notion of being, seem to provide the cultural context within which diviners or medicine-men operate. In dealing with these notions we are essentially in the realm of ideas. Although this is perhaps obvious, it needs to be stated especially in a consideration of the structure of culture. An attempt now has to be made to relate the structure of the lexicon

relating to diviners more closely to the structure of the corresponding aspects of culture.

5. THE STRUCTURE OF THE LEXICON FOR DIVINERS AND THE CORRESPONDING STRUCTURE OF CULTURE

In a sense the reflection of the structure of culture in the structure of the relevant lexicon has been dealt with, perhaps in general terms, in the two sections preceding the present one. If Herskovits' model of the structure of culture is again adopted, lexical items for medicine men seem to belong to the man and the universe component. This component is about ideas, and in particular belief systems. The interrelationship between the various components of culture is again evident in the lexical items under consideration.

In the introduction to the present study it was pointed out that basically the notion of culture lends itself to a three-fold structure, namely ideas, activities and artifacts. It was also pointed out that in terms of the characteristics of culture these components are both interdependent and interrelated. To illustrate the point that is being made: lexical items for medicine-men, as has been shown above, relate to the conceptualization of the universe and to some aspects of African ontology. All these, needless to say, are ideas. But then some of these ideas find expression in some forms of behaviour, that is in some activities as seen in the various ways in which medicine men go about their job.

Lexical items for diviners or medicine-men lend themselves to a two-fold structure, namely those who divine and those who do not divine. How then does this structure of the lexicon reflect the corresponding structure of culture?

Before an attempt is made to answer this question it is perhaps necessary to look at the components of each of these two categories of diviners or medicine men. Again only Xhosa lexical items are considered because, unlike Sotho, there are specific ones while Sotho merely uses ngaka for all kinds of medicine-men.

Those who are supposed to have the power of divination include isamuse (specialist diviner), amaxukazana (ordinary diviners) who are subdivided into aqubulayo ("sucking diviners), ambululayo (revealers) and awemilozi (whistlers). Those who the present writer does not consider to have the supposed powers of divination include amatola (war medicine-men), amaxhwele (herbalists) and awemvula (rainmakers).

Let us now consider each of the above two categories to see how each category reflects the corresponding structure of culture. Some of the ideas that are relevant here have already been covered above in the consideration of the notion of the conceptualization of the universe and of African ontology. Common to all the lexical items for diviners, as categorized above, is the idea of divination, that is, among other things, finding out whether the cause of a mishap is attributable to ancestors or to witchcraft and prescribing the necessary remedial measures. Such remedial measures include the kind of medicine or magic to be used and the kind of sacrifice that should be made to the supposedly wronged ancestor.

Traditional or non-literate Basotho and amaXhosa do not believe in the "natural" causation of disease. Disease is almost always ascribed to some agency which has sinister intentions, especially witches. We say "almost always" because in some cases disease or illness is sometimes ascribed to the wrath of the ancestors. Perhaps at this point something needs to be said about witches and their alleged powers.

Witchcraft, as Tempels¹⁴ rightly observes, is seen as an agent which rocks the natural order, natural law and human law. Consequently, society has the right to defend itself against witches who are seen as evil doers. They spread destruction and death and bring about the annihilation of being. Interestingly enough, and for a reason that is not easy to establish, in the majority of cases it is women who are regarded as "experts" in witchcraft.

Witches are said to operate under the cover of darkness, an indication

of their sinister operations. They are supposed to be capable of covering any distance, however long, by merely riding on grass brooms. If they do not actually go in person where they want to operate (usually at some homestead) they use their familiars, that is some media or agencies. Such familiars include baboons, impundulu and uthikoloshe.

While Sotho witches also have as their familiars baboons and thokolosi, it does not appear they have anything to approximate the Xhosa impundulu. This kind of familiar is some ill-defined bird of ill-omen which on the instruction of a witch can fly to whatever destination to bewitch. Xhosa uthikoloshe and Sotho thokolosi is said to be some mysterious, short, bearded, hairy and weird human being who lives only at places designated by witches and can also be charged with bewitching.

Witches are supposed to be capable of almost any act which can harm the intended victim. They can cause one's death, one's illness, one's failure in any endeavour. Indeed they are capable of visiting their victims with any kind of misfortune which may include childlessness and even an accident. If one may use Tempel's terminology¹⁵, through their evil actions witches diminish being or vital force. They are some external agents who weaken one through their greater force. However, misfortune can be countered by the use of magic and medicines. It is precisely here that the role of diviners assumes great importance. "Force, the potent life, vital energy", Tempel's¹⁶ says, "are the object of prayers and invocations to God, to the spirits and to the dead, as well as of all that is usually called magic, sorcery or magical remedies". If, as has been maintained above, divination among other things involves finding out the cause of misfortune and whether it can be ascribed to witchcraft or ancestors, it seems it can be said that behind the lexical items for diviners lies the belief in witchcraft and in ancestor spirits. The universe is partly conceived by traditional Basotho and amaXhosa as being partly inhabited by these forces (witches and ancestors). Witches are, however, external to the ordered hierarchy of forces and are not really part of it. They function only to disturb this order of forces.

Lexical items designated above as being for non-diviners, namely amatola (war medicine-men), amaxhwele (herbalists) and awemvula (rainmakers) also relate to the belief systems of traditional Basotho and amaXhosa. Perhaps to a lesser extent than lexical items for diviners, these lexical items also relate to the desire to maintain vital force, life. An army has to succeed against its adversaries in war. Success in this case would mean the continuation of life in the sense that such an army will have been fortified by amatola (war medicine-men) against the possibility of death in battle. If, as has been maintained above, illness is a diminution of being, of life, of vital force it is perhaps understandable why such sickness has to be prevented. Amaxhwele (herbalists) function in this context.

The elements can also diminish or "increase" life. Drought and hailstorm because, among other things, they destroy the crop diminish life. On the other hand, rain (depending on its duration and intensity) can either diminish life or add to it. The elements in the light of the above have to be manipulated accordingly. Hence amagqirha emvula or awemvula (rainmakers).

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a few observations can be made. Lexical items which have been considered in this chapter seem to fall into two categories, namely diviners and non-diviners. It does not seem appropriate or accurate to call all the referents of the lexical items in question diviners. In the majority of cases Xhosa has specific lexical items for medicine-men while Sotho has one lexical item, namely ngaka for all of them.

The component of culture, in terms of its structure, that is relevant to lexical items for medicine-men is that of belief systems. Of particular significance is the idea of man and the universe. To traditional Basotho and amaXhosa in particular the universe is controlled by certain forces which are above man and with which man has

to be in good accord if he is to lead a happy life. These forces include the Supreme Being and ancestors. There are, however, other forces which are bent on destroying man, his being. Such are witches whose evil intentions have to be countered accordingly. Hence the appeal to diviners or medicine-men. Some of these medicine-men of course also interpret the wishes of the ancestors.

Lexical items for medicine-men lend themselves to a structure which in turn reveals the structure of culture. Overall, this structure is the belief systems of Basotho and amaXhosa. These belief systems can be analysed as:

- (a) the conceptualization of the universe: the hierarchy of forces
- (b) African ontology: the nature of being
- (c) belief in witchcraft and magic

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CHAPTER 5SOME ASPECTS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AS REVEALED IN THE SONG VOCABULARY1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to show that behind the structure and the organization of lexical items for songs lies the corresponding structure of some aspects of the social life of Basotho and amaXhosa. With that idea in mind, various kinds of songs will be analyzed,

- (a) to show the various kinds of semantic relationship that relate them to each other
- (b) to show how they reveal some aspects of the structure of Basotho and amaXhosa cultures.

The last point entails, among other things, the strict assignment of social roles according to considerations of age, sex and status. An attempt will be made to justify these considerations. The view will be taken that age, sex and status account for the different kinds of songs, their nature and the purpose for which they are sung. Age, sex and status, it will also be maintained, account for the idea of a hierarchy of forces. This idea will be explored briefly in the course of this chapter.

In the kinds of songs that will be considered there is a very close link between music and dance. It is for this reason that it is perhaps more preferable to speak of song and dance performance. Such performance takes a variety of forms, for example handclapping and the stamping of feet on the ground.

Lastly, the semantic components involved for lexical item in the field of song and dance performances will be examined, and this will entail the plotting of the system of contrasts that is involved.

2. TYPES OF SONGS

On the basis of their function in the cultures of Basotho and amaXhosa,

Sotho and Xhosa songs are of two types,

- (a) ritual or ceremonial songs
- (b) recreational and work or action songs.

In both Sotho and Xhosa there are no special terms or generic terms for these two kinds of songs. They are simply called songs, Sotho dipina and Xhosa ilingoma.

Sotho ritual or ceremonial songs are the following,

- (i) koma (initiation song for boys)
- (ii) mokorotlo (pre-initiation song for boys)
- (iii) kodiya malla (lamentation or dirge)
- (iv) dipina tsa motjhato (wedding songs)

The following are Xhosa ritual or ceremonial songs,

- (i) umguyo (initiation song)
- (ii) umtshilo (post-initiation song)
- (iii) igwija (war song)
- (iv) inqoloqho (rainmaking song)
- (v) intlombe yamagqirha (dance song for medicine-men or diviners)
- (vi) ilingoma zomtshato (wedding songs)

3. A COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS OF RITUAL OR CEREMONIAL SONGS

In this section Sotho and Xhosa songs will be analyzed separately. Such an analysis will, among other things, entail,

- (a) a description of the characteristics of each type of song
- (b) pointing out contrasts between similar types
- (c) postulating semantic components that are necessary to account for the contrasts.

In very broad outline a description of each type of song involves a consideration of,

- (i) the occasion for the song

- (ii) the participants
- (iii) the time of day when it is sung
- (iv) the purpose for which it is sung
- (v) the type of body movement involved

3.1 Sotho Songs

3.1.1 Ceremonial Songs

These are,

- (a) koma
- (b) mokorotlo
- (c) kodiya malla
- (d) dipina tsa motjhatso

As was pointed out on page 86 there is no generic term for these types of songs. They are all called dipina in Sotho and iingoma in Xhosa, that is simply songs. Dipina or iingoma have the following features,

[+ human + melody
 + voice
 + body movement]

The features which bind the four types of ceremonial songs together are,

[+ human
 + voice
 + body movement
 + ceremonial
 + day
 + men
 + boys]

However, in actual detail these songs differ, some differing more than others as the following analysis will show.

Koma (circumcision song for boys) and mokorotlo (pre-circumcision song

for boys) share the following common features,

- [+ circumcision
- + boys
- + didactic]

But the two terms contrast in the following features,

<u>Koma</u>	<u>Mokorotlo</u>
+ night	- night
+ unison	- unison
- deep throated voice	+ deep throated voice
+ secrecy	- secrecy
+ rhythmic jumping	+ rhythmic stamping of feet on the ground
- swinging of the body to and fro	+ swinging of the body to and fro

With kodiyamalla (lamentation or dirge) we have a type which is rather different from the two considered so far. Guma's¹ view that this type of song is for women does not seem to be correct as the following reference will show.

In Mofolo's² Chaka, Chaka, Ndlebe, Malunga and Isanuse are at the grave of Chaka's father. It is a sad occasion. Isanuse has just performed his feats. This particular occasion touches Ndlebe and Malunga very deeply,

"Ndlebe le Malunga ba tlohela mahong, ba bina kodiyamalla,
ba e bina ba hlomohile ho feta ba jereng mofu ho ya
lebitleng". (Emphasis added).

(Ndlebe and Malunga sang kodiyamalla simultaneously with hearts more grieved than those of pall-bearers who were carrying the corpse to the grave).

Ndlebe and Malunga were men, something which seems to cast some doubt

on Guma's view that kodiyamalla is for women only. Perhaps the only justification for Guma's view is the Sotho saying that a man is a sheep and he never cries,

"Monna ke nku ha a ke a lle".

Kodiyamalla has the following features which distinguish it from koma and mokorotlo,

- [+ lament
- body movement
- + men
- + boys
- circumcision
- + night
- secrecy
- + unison]

This type of song shares the component [+ unison] with koma and [- secrecy] with mokorotlo.

Kodiyamalla is a lament over the death of a loved one, over some catastrophe which has befallen one, one's family, one's friends and one's tribe or nation. It contrasts sharply with the other kinds of songs considered so far. For example, with regard to participants there is no distinction based on sex. Furthermore, there is no particular time of day during which it is sung and no particular or characteristic body movement. The absence of body movement is perhaps understandable because this particular type of song is sung on sad occasions.

Guma³ distinguishes five main characteristics of a dirge, namely

- (a) an identification of the chief mourner who acts as leader and introduces the theme of the song. The sense of loss which is an integral part of a dirge is sustained by a repetition of identical words in successive lines.

- (b) a heightening of a sense of loss by the chorus. The chorus does this by repeating the lines of the chief mourner who also acts as leader.
- (c) the reappearance of the leader with the initial line followed by a note of disbelief
- (d) a heightening of admiration for the deceased by the chorus which combines its sentiments with the leader's to create gloom and misery
- (e) the use of archaic and obsolete words such as rare for ntate (father) and hloma for mahana (think).

The following is an example of a dirge,

Leader: Ke mohihi, mosala - suping
 Ha le feletse makobolelo
 Hlafing ke a ya
 Ka tsetsekwane ke a nanya
 Ke hloma a itlela
 Ke hloma a itswela tsholong. (Emphasis added)

(I am a stupid person who remains in ruins.
 When it has completely set,
 To the door I go;
 On tip-toe advance I slowly,
 Supposing him coming
 Supposing him returning from the hunt).

Chorus: Ha eshwa batho, ra sala le mang?
 Ha eshwa batho, ra sala suping
 Ha eshwa batho, ra sala palapaleng

(People died, with whom do we remain?
 People died, we remained in ruins,
 People died, we remained in a bare, open field).

Let us now see how these characteristics are brought out by the above dirge. The leader introduces the theme of the song. He or she is experiencing a sense of loss at being left alone. The last three lines of the chorus are virtually identical and include the adverbs used by the leader at the beginning, for example ra sala suping and ra sala palapaleng. The leader had earlier referred to himself or herself as mosala - suping (one who remains in ruins) and mosala - palapaleng (one who remains in a bare, open field). These observations cover the first two characteristics enumerated above. The leader appears again and starts off with the line he initially started off with, namely,

"Ke mohihi, mosala - suping".

In its first appearance the chorus creates gloom and misery and expresses its admiration for the deceased. Real men have departed and it is only weaklings who are now remaining. One is left with virtually nobody. That covers the third and fourth characteristics.

The last kind of song in this category is the wedding song, pina ya motjhato. Wedding songs have the following diagnostic features,

- [+ wedding
- + young men
- + boys
- + elderly men
- + metaphorical language
- + sarcastic
- + contortions of the body
- + ullulation
- + rhythmic stamping of feet on the ground
- unison
- + day]

Metaphor and sarcasm usually arise from the fact that one of the two parties involved (the bride's or the bridegroom's) refers to the other

as being over-ambitious in thinking of taking a "jewel" from such - and - such a clan. The ullulating is done by elderly women while men stamp their feet on the ground and brandish sticks in the air.

A comparison between wedding songs and the other types of ceremonial songs is represented in the following table,

<u>Dipina tsa motjhato</u>	<u>Koma</u>	<u>Mokorotlo</u>	<u>Kodiyamalla</u>
+ day	+ night	- night	<u>+</u> night
- unison	+ unison	- unison	+ unison
<u>+</u> boys	+ boys	+ boys	<u>+</u> boys
<u>+</u> men	+ men	+ men	<u>+</u> men
+ wedding	+ circumcision	+ circumcision	+ lament
+ contortions of the body	+ rhythmic jumping	+ feet stamping	- body movement
+ ullulation	- ullulation	- ullulation	- ullulation
+ feet stamping	- swinging of body to and fro	+ swinging of body to and fro	- body movement
+ sarcastic	+ didactic	<u>+</u> didactic	- didactic - sarcastic
+ metaphorical	<u>+</u> metaphorical	<u>+</u> metaphorical	<u>+</u> metaphorical
- secrecy	+ secrecy	- secrecy	- secrecy

3.1.2 Recreational and Work Songs

Sotho recreational songs are,

- (a) mokgibo (kneeling dance song for women)
- (b) moqoqopelo or moqokopelo (dance song for young men)
- (c) mohobelo (dance song for men)

The rather subtle difference between "young men" and "men" will be explained when these songs are considered individually. But "men" must throughout be understood as male persons who have been circumcized.

Mokgibo is distinguished by the following semantic components,

- [+ kneeling
- + women
- + entertainment
- + ullulation
- + unison
- + upward and downward movement of the head, hands and shoulders]

The following is an example of a mokgibo dance song,

Leader: Le jwetse Ntate Mashome a tlo ntata bo
 Chorus: Hee, e tlo ntata bo, a tlo ntata
 Leader: Le jwetse Ntate Seiso a tlo ntata bo
 Chorus: Hee, a tlo ntata bo, a tlo ntata

(Leader: Please tell Mr Mashome to come and fetch me
 Chorus: Yes, to come and fetch me, to come and fetch me.
 Leader: Please tell Mr Seiso to come and fetch me
 Chorus: Yes, to come and fetch me, to come and fetch me).

The repetition of the same words by the chorus and the refrain resulting therefrom enhance the melody of the song. As the song hots up some actors start ullulating in a shrill voice. As both leader and chorus sing they kneel on the ground with their heads, hands and shoulders moving upward and downward in keeping with the rhythm of the song. Men do not participate at all.

In comparison with mokgibo, moqogopelo or moqokopelo (dance song for men) has the following features,

- [+ young men
- + entertainment
- + unison
- + stamping of feet on the ground]

The contrast in the two types can be represented as follows,

<u>Mogogopelo</u>	<u>Mokgibo</u>
+ young men	+ women
- ullulation	+ ullulation
- kneeling	+ kneeling
+ stamping of feet on the ground	+ upward and downward movement of the head, hands and shoulders

The young men who are actors in mogogopelo are of the age limit of roughly forty years. This type of song is slightly longer than mokgibo and the leader adds a new line all the way through the song as in the following example,

Leader: Banana ba Majakane
 Chorus: Tshwene mankororo
 Leader: Nth'wena ba sa nyalweng
 Chorus: Tshwene mankororo
 Leader: Ba ja nku dikahare
 Chorus: Tshwene mankororo

(Leader: Children born of Christians
 Chorus: Baboons in the extreme
 Leader: The reason for their not getting married
 Chorus: Baboons in the extreme
 Leader: They eat the insides of sheep
 Chorus: Baboons in the extreme).

The last kind of recreational song, namely mohobelo (dance song for men) has the following semantic features,

[+ men
 + entertainment
 + unison
 + stamping of feet on the ground
 + swaying of the body to and fro rhythmically]

It shares the following features with the other types of songs,

- + entertainment
- + unison

Otherwise, it contrasts with them to the extent shown below,

<u>Mogqopelo</u>	<u>Mokgibo</u>	<u>Mohobelo</u>
+ young men	+ women	+ men
- ullulation	+ ullulation	- ullulation
- kneeling	+ kneeling	- kneeling
+ stamping of feet on the ground	+ upward and downward movement of the head, hands and shoulders	+ stamping of feet on the ground
- swaying of the body to and fro	- swaying of the body to and fro	+ swaying of the body to and fro

3.1.3 Work Songs

Work songs, on the other hand, are rather difficult to analyze the way recreational songs have been analyzed. The reason for this is that there is no special name for any type of work song. In the main, they are sung at the spur of the moment to fit the type of work that is being done at a given moment. Here we have a good example of a lexical gap. Although there are different kinds of work during which work songs may be sung, there are some common semantic features for these songs. These are,

- [+ work
- + men
- + boys
- + unison
- + night
- + rhythmic body movement
- + veiled comment]

There are various kinds of work that may be done, for example road - digging, fencing a homestead, communal harvesting, weeding and threshing

(the separating of mealie grains from cobs or of corn from the stalk).
The components relating to participants, for example

[+ boys
 + men]

may apply to a single work song as in communal harvesting. Alternatively, only one such component, for example [+ men] may apply as in roaddigging, although in some areas women work on the roads these days. Body movement is difficult to characterize as it varies according to the type of work that is being done. The component [+ veiled comment] may be a veiled complaint about the nature of the work that is being done or may be criticism of an employer.

3.2 Xhosa Songs

3.2.1 Ritual or Ceremonial Songs

The following are Xhosa ritual or ceremonial songs,

- (a) Umguyo (circumcision song)
- (b) Umtshilo (post circumcision song)
- (c) Igwija (war song)
- (d) Inqoloqho (rairmaking song)
- (e) Intlombe yamagqirha (dance song for medicine-men or diviners)
- (f) Iingoma zomtshato (wedding songs)

Umguyo (circumcision song and dance performance) has the following diagnostic features,

[+ circumcision (pre-)
 + male persons
 + all night
 + didactic
 + unison
 + rhythmic stamping of feet on the ground]

Umtshilo, on the other hand has the following features,

- [+ post-circumcision
- + the newly circumcized
- + daytime
- unison
- + beating of drums
- + swaying of the body to and fro]

The two types contrast in the following features,

<u>Umguyo</u>	<u>Umtshilo</u>
+ pre-circumcision	+ post circumcison
+ male persons	+ the newly circumcized
- girls	+ girls
+ all night	+ daytime
- beating of drums	+ beating of drums
- contortions of the body	+ contortions of the body

Umtshilo is quite a colourful song and dance performance. The newly circumcized, abakhwetha, are usually completely smeared with white clay, dressed in a kilt of palm leaves that encircles their loins. They cover their faces and hands with a covering of grass, ingcambane. A significant characteristic of umtshilo is the presence of girls whose duty is to beat drums, ingqongqo, so that the dance is performed rhythmically. The song and dance performance itself starts out in the veld at the circumcision school but after the actual circumcision. Once the newly circumcized leave the veld and go to the village elderly women take over the beating of drums from the girls. Sotho has no equivalent song and dance performance. In any case, for Basotho the presence of women in anything that has to do with the circumcision of boys is something that is completely unthought of.

The remaining types of songs, namely igwija (war song), inqoloqho (rainmaking song), intlombe yamaggirha (dance song for diviners or medicine-men) and iingoma zomtshato (wedding songs) are completely

different one from the above in several respects. They also differ from the other two considered so far. Igwija is distinguished by the following semantic features,

- [+ conflict
- + male
- + unison
- + controlled body movement]

Body movement is controlled being confined to occasional brandishing of sticks. As the song hots up, a man may jump out of the advancing group, run this way and that, brandish a stick or whatever other weapon in the air in imitation of an encounter with an enemy in battle. Others then stop singing, urge him on and call him by a special name. He then returns to the group and the song continues.

A supplementary component of igwija is [+ highly emotional] because it is meant to whip up emotion for the obvious purpose of motivating the participants for action. Because this type of song is also sung during faction fights and school riots the component [+ male] seems to be applicable.

Inqologho (rainmaking song) is characterized by the following diagnostic components,

- [+ religious
- + adolescent girls
- + serious drought
- + unison
- + propitiatory ritual
- + swinging of the body to and fro]

This particular type of song and dance performance is performed by adolescent girls during times of serious drought. Girls sing unclothed in the fields, pull out scorched mealie stalks and hold them together. They then dance in the usual direction of rain with the scorched mealie stalks held out. The characteristic religious

feature [+ religious] distinguishes this type of song from all the other ceremonial songs considered above. This song and dance performance is meant to be a kind of plea to the Supreme Being and to ancestors to bless the living with rain. It is also meant to be a propitiatory ritual for vegetational fertility. In fact [+ vegetational fertility] could be considered a supplementary component. The participants + adolescent girls are another feature which sets inqoloqho apart from the other ritual songs. Sotho does not have an equivalent song and dance performance.

The following are the diagnostic features of intlombe yamagqirha (diviners' dance),

- [+ diviners
- + apprentices
- + night
- + initiation
- + communication with ancestors
- + revival of divining power
- + rhythmic handclapping
- + rhythmic movement of the head, hands and shoulders
- + unison]

Performed at night this song and dance performance serves a few functions. It is for the initiation of apprentices into some of the mysteries of medicine-men or diviners. Regarded as a means of communicating with the ancestors, it is also regarded as a means of reviving power on the part of qualified diviners. This is the power to divine the cause of an ailment or of misfortune and to prescribe the necessary protective and curative measures.

What was said about Sotho wedding songs applies equally to Xhosa wedding songs and will therefore not be repeated here. (See page 91-92).

3.2.2 Recreational and Work Songs

Xhosa recreational songs are umtshotsho (for boys and girls) and

intlombe (for young and mature men and women). The following are diagnostic components which apply to umtshotsho,

- [+ boys
- + entertainment
- + all night
- + social censure
- + alternate and rhythmic stamping of feet on the ground
- + sustained rhythmic movement of the part of the body above the waist
- + rhythmic handclapping
- + unison]

The component [+ social censure] arises from the fact that participants usually ridicule any social transgressors and the song focusses on conflict situations between boys and girls as the following song taken from Jafta⁴ illustrates,

Leader: Lakhali'hobe
 Chorus: Hobe
 Likhala kamnandi xa linyiloza
 Leader: Xa ninonke matshawe
 Chorus: Matshawe
 Nizenz'abeLungu ngeenkomo zenu

(Leader: The dove coos
 Chorus: Dove
 It coos pleasantly when it sings
 Leader: And the whole lot of you princes
 Chorus: Princes

 You think you are white men with your cattle)

The girls are here accusing the boys of being reluctant to pay lobola just like white men who are reluctant to sell their cattle and instead charge exorbitant prices. The girls' protest is compared with the cooing of a dove in the first part of the song. In the second part, the girls show their displeasure at the pride and

the selfishness of the boys who, like White men, do not want to part with their cattle.

Intlombe (dance song for young and mature men and women) has the following features,

- [+ young, mature men
- + all night
- + entertainment
- + didactic
- + rhythmic clapping
- + rhythmic contortions of the body]

Intlombe and umtshotsho contrast as follows,

<u>Intlombe</u>	<u>Umtshotsho</u>
+ young, mature men	+ boys
+ didactic	- didactic
- social censure	+ social censure
+ rhythmic contortions of the body	+ rhythmic stamping of feet on the ground
- sustained rhythmic movement of part of the body above the waist	+ sustained rhythmic movement of part of the body above the waist

The didactic nature of intlombe arises from the fact that it concerns itself with matters which relate to adults. These are such matters as moral issues, for example the need for faithfulness in marriage.

Umtshotsho, on the other hand, focusses on social censure. Again Sotho has no equivalent dance song.

With respect to work songs what was said about Sotho work songs (pages 95 - 96) applies equally to Xhosa work songs and will therefore not be repeated here. The following is a very common Xhosa work song for roadworkers and brings out the most important component of work songs, namely [+ veiled comment],

Leader: Yiyo le

Chorus: Yiyo le madoda

Leader: Komile

Chorus: Komile ngaphantsi komhlaba

(Leader: There it is

Chorus: There it is, guys

Leader: It is dry

Chorus: It is dry beneath the soil)

The first part refers to the place where work is to be done and the second, is a commentary on the dryness and therefore the hardness of the place to be dug. In fact the second part could well be a veiled complaint about both the employer and the nature of work in question. Rhythm which is a musical characteristic of work songs depends on the nature of the work that is being done. It may be slow and deliberate as in road-digging or the tempo may increase a little as in weeding.

4. SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

One may perhaps conclude with some general observations on Sotho and Xhosa songs. Ceremonial songs will be considered first. In both Sotho and Xhosa song and dance are closely linked. However, this should not be interpreted to mean every time a MoSotho or UmXhosa sings there is some accompanying performance. Although song and dance are closely linked a distinction needs to be made between the two. Dance seems to take one or more of the following forms,

- (a) the swinging of the body to and fro, sometimes with some accompanying handclapping
- (b) the rhythmic stamping of feet on the ground
- (c) the movement of the head, hands and shoulders up and down in keeping with the rhythm of the song.

However, although there is this distinction between song and dance the close relationship between the two needs to be emphasized. Hence it is perhaps more appropriate to speak of song and dance performances rather than purely songs.

In both Sotho and Xhosa there are songs which relate to circumcision, namely Sotho koma (pre-circumcision), mokorotlo (post-circumcision) and Xhosa umguyo (pre-circumcision) and umtshilo (post-circumcision). Both Sotho and Xhosa have wedding songs. Apart from these similarities Sotho and Xhosa are different. The difference lies mainly in participants, purpose, occasion and the time during which they are sung. That is perhaps why there are ceremonial songs found in one linguistic community and not in the other. For example, Sotho has kodiyamalla (dirge) while Xhosa does not. On the other hand, Xhosa has ingologho (rainmaking song) while Sotho does not. But this does not necessarily mean amaXhosa do not lament their dead or that Basotho are not interested in rain or in the welfare of their crops.

With recreational songs too there are significant differences between Sotho and Xhosa. Sotho has none of the recreational songs that Xhosa has inasmuch as Xhosa has none of the recreational songs that Sotho has. The possible reasons for these differences will be considered in the final conclusion of this chapter.

5. THE SONG VOCABULARY AND THE STRUCTURE OF CULTURE

The first question that will be considered here is how the structure of the lexicon in question as revealed by componential analysis reveals the corresponding structure of culture. It seems that for a better appreciation of the relationship between the structure of the song vocabulary and the structure of culture one has to take cognisance of some of the parameters which emerge from a componential analysis of the terms for songs. These parameters are age, sex and status and have to be seen as an integral part of some aspects of the social organization of Basotho and amaXhosa. If this observation is accepted, it can be assumed, at least as some preliminary conjecture, that there is some relationship between the structure of the terms for songs and the structure of culture.

The particular structure to which terms for songs seem to belong

appears to be social institutions which include social organization. The various components of culture, as pointed out in the introductory chapter, are interrelated so that although the song vocabulary addresses itself to social institutions it can be expected to be related to one or more of the other components of culture.

The structure of ceremonial songs in particular points to the existence of some social institutions in both Sotho and Xhosa. Such institutions are circumcision, the institution of diviners or medicine-men and the institution of marriage (as in wedding songs). The parameters themselves relate to social facts and determine the kind of stratification that is found in Sotho and Xhosa traditional communities, particularly in their social organization. There is a clear assignment of social roles which is based on these parameters as the following discussion will show.

Age, sex and status are in fact interrelated. The example of traditional beer drinking will illustrate this point. Generally speaking, men may not drink with women. Similarly, the uncircumcized may not drink with the circumcized. The writer in fact knows of a few cases of elderly "men" who, unable to stand the strain of social deprivation and isolation, voluntarily submitted themselves to circumcision. A few other examples will also illustrate how this structuring according to age, sex and status in turn reveals the structuring of the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa.

With ceremonial songs for example, Sotho koma is for boys (the male sex) by virtue of their status of being young (that is, age) and that of being uncircumcized. Similarly, Xhosa ingologho is for a certain age group (the adolescent), and a particular sex (girls) by virtue of their adolescent status in the community. The same pattern applies to other song and dance performances. With recreation songs for example, there are in Sotho songs for women in general, songs for young men only and songs for elderly men. In Xhosa there are songs for young boys and girls only and songs for young men and women only.

The next question to be considered is the justification of the parameters of age, sex and status. Such justification, it seems, has to be found in the traditional world view of Basotho and amaXhosa, and in particular in the idea of a hierarchy of forces. Because this idea is explored more fully in the chapter on diviners only a brief mention of it will be made here.

The traditional African in particular believes that the true centre of his world is the concept of life force. This is an impersonal but powerful and profoundly real entity which permeates and pervades all things. With reference to African people in general, Ruch⁵ cites Paván who observes that,

"Like concentric waves, a whole hierarchy of participating forces flows out from God, the apex and the continuous, yet remote source of all participating centres of force, the 'integral force' from which every being and power draws".

God or a Supreme Being is considered to be at the apex of this hierarchy. Below him are ancestors, then come diviners or medicine-men, then rulers, elders and lastly younger members. It is this concept of a hierarchy of forces that accounts for the strong emphasis on age, sex and status. This idea also accounts for the deference, which almost approximates worship, which junior members have for senior or older ones. Each person has a particular role to play and also has a particular place in the hierarchy and one's status varies accordingly. The order in the hierarchy has to be observed and respected. Otherwise, supernatural intervention in the form of some punishment is inevitable, evidence perhaps that social life cannot be separated entirely from the religious.

6. CONCLUSION

Songs then mirror some aspects of the structure of the culture of Basotho and amaXhosa, namely some social stratification based on age, sex and status. Age, sex and status also play a role in some social institutions. For example, with Basotho circumcision involves boys

and men only as participants. And so with other types of institutions too age, sex and status play a role as has been shown above. Songs themselves are structured on the basis of these parameters which, in this context, could be regarded as relating to social facts. The overall structure of both the songs and culture ultimately rests on the concept of a hierarchy of forces.

But if that is the case, why then do Sotho and Xhosa songs differ? It seems that although the concept of a hierarchy of forces is a common factor in songs, and represents a world view, in actual detail there are differences between Basotho and amaXhosa within the same world view. Perhaps the other way of looking at the same question is to say that in spite of whatever common characteristics Basotho and amaXhosa may share they still do not live in identical worlds. The differences are also accounted for by different customs and by different attitudes towards the same phenomena, for example towards circumcision and other social institutions.

SOURCE NOTES

1. Guma, S.M. 1977. The Form, Content and Technique of Traditional Literature in Southern Sotho. Second Edition. Pretoria: van Schaik, p. 109.
2. Mofolo, T. 1962. Chaka. Morija: Morija Sesuto Depot, p. 77.
3. Guma, p. 109.
4. Guma, p. 109 - 110.
5. Jafta, D.N. 1978. A Survey of Xhosa Drama. Unpublished M.A. thesis. Zululand: University of Zululand, p. 52.
6. Ruch, E.A. 1975. Towards a Theory of African Knowledge in Georgiades, D.S. and Delvare, I.G. Philosophy in the African Context. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

CHAPTER 6CONCLUSION

The objective of this study has been to show that the structure of the lexicon as revealed in a semantic field by componential analysis is a kind of mirror of the structure of culture. This objective necessarily entailed an examination of the concept of culture, its meaning, characteristics and components. With particular reference to components of culture which have direct relevance to the structure of culture, it seems that broadly speaking there are three components. These components are ideas, activities and artifacts. Ideas refer to norms which govern behaviour and also to thoughts and beliefs. Activities refer to action as opposed to ideas, and artifacts to man-made products of ideas and activities. This is the characterization of the structure of culture that has formed the basis of this study.

In concluding this study, particular attention will be paid in general terms to the following,

- (a) the points of inquiry raised on p.2
- (b) areas that still need research.

It seems the following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

Firstly, the application of componential analysis to each of the selected fields reveals,

- (a) the nature of semantic relations among the various lexical items in a field, for example contiguity, complementarity, inclusion and overlapping
- (b) the structure of the lexicon relating to each field.

The structure of the lexicon in turn is relatable to the structure of culture because, as has been shown, each semantic field addresses itself to some aspect of culture and its components. Each of the selected fields addresses itself to one or more of the following components of culture,

- (a) social institutions which are an integral part of social organization
- (b) belief systems
- (c) aesthetics, inter alia music and dance.

The various components are interrelated. The song vocabulary for example, as this study has shown, reflects some aspects of the social organization of Basotho and amaXhosa. These aspects include some stratification of society according to considerations of age, sex and status. However, these considerations have some religious undergirding. They are dictated to by a belief in a hierarchy of forces. This idea relates the song vocabulary to the religious component of culture. In addition to that, songs themselves involve music and entail some dance performance, factors which relate them to the aesthetics component.

The song vocabulary thus relates to at least three of the five components Herskovits enumerates. The social, the religious and the aesthetic all meet in songs, and indication of the interrelationship of the various components of culture. The above remarks could be taken as an answer to one of the points of enquiry of this study, namely the manner in which the structure of semantic fields reflects the structure there is in society and its culture.

In addition to the above, another conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that semantic fields function in important respects in a given culture not only to represent or symbolize experience but also to furnish categories and divisions which relate to experience and in terms of which the speakers concerned deal with the universe about them.

This idea seems to be particularly borne out by the semantic field of diviners or medicine men with all that they represent.

The various semantic fields which have been the object of this study depict the belief systems of Basotho and amaXhosa. These belief systems are not only beliefs relating to the supernatural but also embody a variety of traditional views, attitudes, values and customs. All these

are mostly integrated with the totality of culture because they are not just a random assortment but indicate some form of social ordering.

With regard to the data presented in this study it seems in some respects Sotho and Xhosa are close semantically and in other respects not so close. For example, in the case of lexical items for women the two languages seem to be closer than in the case of lexical items for diviners or for songs. However, this statement needs some qualification. The differences in the two languages should not be exaggerated. It is true for example, that Sotho does not have special lexical items for diviners. But this does not mean Sotho does not have persons who perform the role of the various kinds of diviners. What it does mean is that Sotho does not have specific lexical items for these persons but merely has an archilexeme for all such persons.

The differences in the organization of a selected semantic field in Sotho and Xhosa were to be expected. Differences in the organization of a selected semantic field are greater in some cases than in others. For example, with lexical items for women, differences between Sotho and Xhosa are not so great. But in the case of ceremonial animals, diviners and songs differences seem to be rather great. The question that arises is how these differences are to be accounted for. Languages, it seems, segment or categorize semantic fields in different ways, hence different levels of categorization and differences in the dimensions of semantic fields. The differences are also accounted for by the fact that each culture is quite distinct in the organization and arrangement of its component ideas. From this observation one can perhaps say any cultural idea can be understood and appreciated only in relation to the entire culture and setting within which it operates.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that there is a very close interaction between language and thought-patterns. If culture is viewed in the broad sense that has been suggested in this study, both language and thought-patterns can in fact be taken as part of culture.

The way speakers of a language categorize the lexicon, in this case semantic fields, seems to be an index of their mode of thought which with cognition is dependent on language. The writer showed for example that to Basotho and amaXhosa, perhaps to Africans in general, the universe has various supernatural forces which can be manipulated both for the good and for the destruction of mankind. That idea finds expression in lexical items for diviners or medicine-men. The same idea can perhaps be illustrated with other semantic fields as well. One can go further and say that there is a very close interaction between language, thought-patterns and culture. The above are some of the results of this study in general terms.

There are some issues which this study seems to raise, even if indirectly, and which perhaps point to areas that still call for further research. Some of these issues are,

- (a) a more complete specification of semantic components
- (b) the characterization of semantic relations among terms in a given semantic field.

With regard to the first issue this study has assumed that a minimal specification of semantic components is preferable to a maximal one. This assumption raises the question of the validity of one type of specification over the other. Is a minimal specification more revealing than a maximal one? Or should a mean be struck between the two types, and if so, how?

The above assumption has not only been made but has also been made to operate here in the sense that a minimal specification has actually formed the basis of the componential analysis of the data of this study. A few examples will perhaps elucidate some of the questions that are involved in the issue in question.

In lexical items for women for example (see page 33-34), the components [+ local] could be added to motjhesi (adulterous female) and sefebe (flirt), while [- local] could be added to letekatse (prostitute, unmarried mother). Furthermore, the component [+ transitional] could

be added to morwetsana (mature girl), kgarebe (mature girl) and lethisa ("uncircumcized" girl). But all these components have not been added. The question that arises then is whether the omission of these components in anyway impoverishes the specification of the components on page 33 and 34. It seems in any case that there is some element of subjectivity in specifying components.

Another issue to be considered is the characterization of semantic relations among terms in a given semantic field. In the main, such semantic relations in the present study have been characterized in terms of contiguity, complementarity, overlapping and inclusion. This was particularly apparent in lexical items for women and ceremonial cattle. However, it is not clear whether these various kinds of semantic relations express adequately the semantic relations among lexical items with related meanings. It is not clear whether lexical items with related meanings cannot be related semantically in any other way except in terms of contiguity, complementarity, overlapping and inclusion. If the foregoing are real issues this study will at least also have served to point to areas that still need particular attention.

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