

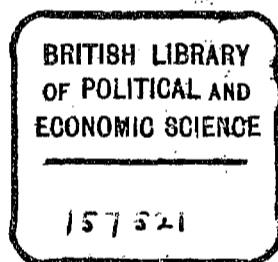
THE TRIBAL SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA:  
A STUDY OF THE BUSHMEN AND THE HOTTENTOTS

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the University of London.

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## INTRODUCTION

By the end of the seventeenth century, when the Dutch settlement at the Cape was already firmly established, and the foundations had thus been laid for the present political dominance of the white man in the country, Africa south of the Kunene, Okavango and Zambesi Rivers was inhabited by a considerable number of different native peoples. On the basis of racial, linguistic and cultural distinctions, these can all be classified into four main stocks, commonly known as the Bushmen, the Hottentots, the Bergdama and the Bantu respectively.

The Bushmen are a short, brownish-yellow people, with certain peculiar and <sup>distractive</sup> ~~distinct~~ racial characteristics; they all speak languages of a uniform, well-defined and easily recognizable type, phonetically remarkable especially for the great prevalence of click consonants; and they practise neither agriculture nor pastoralism, but live in small separate communities which lead a nomadic hunting and collecting existence. The Hottentots are closely allied to them in race and speak languages of a somewhat similar type, although in both respects certain differences are also observable; they are however a predominantly pastoral people, and live in larger groups with a more complex system of social organisation. The Bergdama are racially a true negro people, different in appearance from both the Bushmen and the Hottentots, but they speak the language of the Nama division of Hottentots, to whom they have long been in subjection. Like the Bushmen they live in very small groups and derive their subsistence primarily from hunting and collecting, although some of them also keep goats. The Bantu finally are essentially negroes

who have absorbed a varying amount of Hamitic blood; they speak languages belonging to the great Bantu language family of Central and Southern Africa, and completely different in morphology and phonetics from those of the other South African native peoples; they are also on a higher level of culture, combining hoe-culture with pastoralism as their principal means of subsistence, their communities are on the whole far larger, and their social organisation somewhat more complex.

Of these four stocks of native peoples, the Bushmen and the Hottentots have both declined considerably in strength and numbers as the result of the encroachment upon them first of the Bantu peoples and then of the European settlers. The whole culture of the Hottentots has fallen largely into decay, and the majority of the modern representatives of this stock have even lost their own language and adopted that of the Dutch colonists; while such groups of ~~the~~ Bushmen as still survive appear gradually to be dying out or at least merging with the Bantu. The Bergdama seem to have suffered less in regard to numbers, but in culture they too are undergoing rapid modification. In all three instances the social cohesion of the people has been almost completely broken down; they are relatively negligible in problems of inter-racial relationship as far as present economic or political importance is concerned, while numerically they are so inferior to the whites as to be considered an insignificant minority. The Bantu peoples on the other hand are still vigorous and powerful, and in their economic and political relations with the European inhabitants of the country present one of the most vital problems now confronting European civilisation in South Africa. They greatly outnumber the white population, and appear

to be steadily increasing in numbers, a fact which is giving rise to considerable apprehension on the part of the latter. Their social and political organisation, too, is so superior to those of the other native peoples that they have managed still to preserve much of their original culture and cohesion, and in many cases to offer a strong resistance to the disintegrating effects of contact with European civilisation.

The present study is concerned with those two stocks of native peoples which have suffered most from contact with the Europeans: the Bushmen and the Hottentots. The ethnic relationship between these two peoples, one of the major problems of South African ethnology, I have dealt with in a previous study, in which a preliminary attempt was made to determine how far the Bushmen and the Hottentots must be regarded as allied or distinct in regard to race, language and culture.<sup>1</sup> The general conclusion arrived at was that the Hottentots appear to have originally been a true Bushman people, but that they have since diverged from the normal Bushman type, to a slight extent only in race, but more noticeably in ~~some~~ language, and above all in certain features of culture. In the discussion leading up to this conclusion more attention was paid to race and language than to culture, for the two former aspects have been the subject of most of the controversial literature on the problem. But even in dealing with culture emphasis was laid primarily on features of similarity or difference. The cultures of the two peoples, in other words, were discussed solely from the comparative standpoint.

The following pages have as their theme an entirely different set of problems; and, it must be added at once, have

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1 "A Preliminary Consideration of the Relationship between the Hottentots and the Bushmen", South African Journal of Science, 23 (1926), pp. 833 - 66.

been rendered possible only by the fact that since the paper referred to was written, a number of important new works on both the Bushmen and the Hottentots have been published. I have also had access in London to many of the earlier works which were out of my reach in South Africa. The additional information thus rendered available has been of the utmost assistance in enabling me to deal on a much larger scale with the two main topics which fall within the scope of this study. First the racial history of the two peoples is traced out in some detail, the conclusion previously arrived at being used as a basis for investigating the cause of the divergences now observable between them. This problem was foreshadowed in my earlier paper, but no attempt at all was made there to discuss it. But the present work is also intended above all to give a comprehensive account of the cultures of these peoples: their social life, economic activities, political organisation and law, magico-religious beliefs and practices, art and knowledge. The literature on the subject is voluminous, but there is nothing which can serve as a concise handbook for students of anthropology. The works of earlier travellers with one or two notable exceptions give us nothing beyond general impressions and items of curious information, while the more recent specialised studies, where they do not deal with only one of the many tribes into which both the Bushmen and the Hottentots are divided, concentrate on particular aspects of culture, and thus need to be pieced together and correlated before they can be of service to the general student. It is one of my objects, before myself going out to work among <sup>el</sup> these peoples, to make an attempt to supply this need; for comparative work of this kind is a task for the study rather than the field.

One realises only too well in compiling a work such as this the lack of arrangement and the unequal value of the available materials. On the one hand numerous detailed descriptions are met of one single characteristic of a people or of a ceremony; on the other a bare allusion to some custom or a mere cursory account of a whole tribe. A great deal of patient criticism and selection is therefore inevitably required on the part of one who is trying to reduce the evidence to order. My own acquaintance with the two peoples, more especially with the Hottentots, has perhaps assisted me to preserve details in their correct perspective, and thus to avoid the more egregious of those distorted impressions which a study of purely literary sources is bound to produce. Naturally, too, a work such as this, consisting as it mainly does in a systematic presentation of a large number of first-hand authorities, leaves little scope for originality, except in so far as a critical handling of sources must always depend in the last resort on the personal judgement. I may venture to claim however that in my analysis especially of the social organisation of the Bushmen and of the economic and political life of both the Bushmen and the Hottentots I have perhaps contributed to a better understanding of these aspects of their culture, while the theory of the racial origin of the Hottentots is, I believe, in some of its details new.

A word must be said as to the method adopted in describing the two cultures. I have attempted here to deal with each culture as a connected living whole, as a single dynamic system in which all customs, beliefs and institutions are interconnected and in which each fulfils a specific function. Each culture in other words is regarded as an organic unity which



must be studied separately in its entirety. For this reason it has not been felt necessary to draw frequent attention in the body of the work to the points of resemblance and difference between the culture of the Bushmen and that of the Hottentots. The treatment adopted is not comparative, but purely functional. In the concluding note, however, such features as are also of interest from the comparative standpoint have been rapidly noted, and their ethnological significance briefly commented upon. The division into chapters and sections which I have adopted is modelled in some respects upon that used by Professor Malinowski in his monograph on the Mailu.<sup>1</sup> The fairly systematic division of culture into its main aspects - social organisation, social habits and customs, economics, regulation of public life, religion and magic, art and knowledge - involves, as he says, a deviation from a purely topical presentation of facts, above all, perhaps, from the native forms of thinking and the native classification. But although I have tried to leave all preconceived ideas on one side in discussing the two cultures, and to classify and register facts according to their essentials, some theoretical treatment ~~is~~ is necessarily involved in any description of this sort, and the division adopted appears to me the most suitable for reducing to order the vast mass of detail scattered through the literature.

In the spelling of native words I have simplified slightly the orthographies <sup>used</sup> given by Miss D.F. Bleek in her "Comparative Vocabularies of Bushman Languages" and by Kroenlein in his "Wortschatz der Khoi-khoi" (Nama-German dictionary). Neither of these is strictly accurate from a phonetic point of view, especially in the symbols generally employed for the clicks, but in a work not primarily concerned with linguistics it has seemed best to follow the conventional script. The only symbols which need explanation are: / for the dental click, / for the palatal, ! for the cerebral, and // for the lateral, while x represents the unvoiced velar fricative.

<sup>1</sup> B. Malinowski, "The Natives of Mailu", Trans. R. Soc. S. Austr., 39 (1915), pp. 494 ff.

## THE BUSHMEN.

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### I.

#### EARLY HISTORY.

The Bushmen were long regarded as the earliest human inhabitants of South Africa, and as having occupied the country from times of remote antiquity. This belief was not without foundation. Of the peoples of South Africa of whom there is any definite historical record, the Bushmen are certainly the oldest; the other Native peoples show in their traditions that when they first entered the country they found the Bushmen already spread over the greater part of its surface; while the relics of the Bushmen, such as rock paintings and stone implements, are scattered over a far more extensive area than was occupied by the people themselves within historical times, and frequently occur under conditions which postulate some antiquity.

It has now become fully established, however, that the Bushmen were preceded in the occupation of South Africa by other peoples. Recent archaeological investigation has shown that there existed in the country several different stone age cultures, which were clearly separated in time as well as in characters.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The most useful general account of the prehistoric cultures of South Africa and their northern affinities is by M.C. Burkitt, South Africa's Past in Stone and Paint, Cambridge, 1928, which also contains a good bibliography.

The stone implements and rock art associated with the Bushmen definitely belong only to the most recent of these cultures. The earlier stone cultures must consequently be regarded as previous to the Bushmen. There is moreover a lack of continuity in type between the earlier and the latest stone cultures which precludes the possibility that the latter - and the Bushman stone culture which forms part of them developed in South Africa out of the former. On the other hand, there are found, scattered all over East Africa, especially in Tanganyika Territory, Uganda and Kenya, stone implement industries and in some cases rock paintings so closely resembling those of the Bushmen that they must be regarded as of a common origin. These facts together lead to the conclusion that the stone cultures associated in South Africa with the Bushmen were not indigenous to the country, but constitute an invading element which penetrated into it from the North-East and superceded the pre-existing cultures.

This suggests that the Bushmen themselves came into South Africa from the North-East. As yet no skeletal remains have been found north of the Zambesi River similar to those of the Bushmen, nor are there any peoples living outside South Africa who may be regarded definitely as Bushman in race. Attempts have often been made to trace a connection between the Bushmen and the Pygmy peoples inhabiting the equatorial forests of Africa, more especially in the Congo region. The two groups of peoples certainly have various features in common. Both, for

example, are short in stature, in both the hair is short and woolly, and the skin colour brownish-yellow. But in the shape of the head and especially in the build of the body they differ so markedly as to eliminate any possibility of racial identity. There seems to be no more intimate relationship between the Bushmen and the Pygmies than the fact that phylogenetically both are derived from a small variety of negro, to which main stock they are generally regarded as belonging. But they must be looked upon rather as divergent branches<sup>1</sup> which have specialised along different lines.

At the same time, although the Bushmen as a distinct racial type are now restricted to Africa south of the Zambesi River, traces of their former existence further north are found not only in culture. Physical features reminiscent of them are seen occasionally in various peoples of East-Central Africa, such as the Andorobo, Elgunono and Doko, while between Gallaland on the north and the Zambesi River on the south evidence of their absorption by the Nilotic and Bantu negroes is found in sporadic reversions of their type occurring<sup>2</sup> in almost all the East African peoples. Moreover, the

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1. The points of resemblance between the Bushmen and the Pygmies are fully discussed by F.von Luschan, "Pygmäen und Buschmänner", Zeits.f.Ethn., 46 (1914), 154-176, who is of the opinion that the two are closely connected. The main arguments against this view may be seen in, e.g.H.H.Johnston, The Uganda Protectorate, London, 1902, pp.518 seq., and R.Poch, "Die Stellung der Buschmanrasse unter den ubrigen Menschenrassen" Korr Bl.deuts.Ges. Anthropol. 42(1911), p.75-80. A.C. Haddon, in The Races of Man, Cambridge, 1924, pp 17-18, gives short summaries of the physical characteristics of the two groups, which bring out very clearly the essential points both of resemblance and of difference.
  2. A.C.Haddon, Presidential Address to Section H.Rept. Brit.Assn.(South Africa Meeting), 1905. p.514.

WaSandawe, a settled hunting people living west of the Irangi plateau in Tanganyika Territory, speak a language which in phonology (especially in the occurrence of "click" consonants), syntax and vocabulary has certain by no means insignificant resemblances with the Bushman-Hottentot languages of South Africa, and the Kanjegu of the same region are also said to have a click language.<sup>3</sup> Although there is no apparent similarity in physique between these peoples and the Bushmen, it is not unlikely that the former may originally have been Bushmen who have since become very greatly modified by intermixture with other races.

On the whole, therefore, it would seem that at a very early time the Bushmen occupied the hunting grounds of tropical East Africa, perhaps even to the confines of Abyssinia. That they are no longer to be found in this region may be ascribed to its extensive invasion by later Negro and Hamitic peoples. Harried by the encroachments upon them of these more powerful races, the Bushmen, where they were not exterminated or absorbed, must gradually have passed southwards, keeping along the more open grass lands of the eastern mountainous zone, where they could still preserve their hunting method of life, until, when the written history of South Africa commences, they were roaming all over the territory south of the Zambesi River.

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3. O. Dempwolf, Die Sandawe, Hamburg 1916; F. J. Bagshawe, "The Peoples of the Happy Valley", J. Afr. Soc., 24 (1924/25), 25-33, 117-130, 219-227, 328-337.

## II.

### DISTRIBUTION AND TRIBAL DIVISIONS.

#### General Distribution.

In their occupation of South Africa the Bushmen seem to have extended over almost the whole region from the Zambesi in the north down to the South coast. Their relics, in the form of skeletal remains, culture deposits, pictorial art and even place-names, are found widely scattered over most of this region, especially in the east and the south; and afford indisputable evidence of their former presence in many parts where they are no longer seen. Even well within historical times Bushmen were living in districts from which they have now completely disappeared, or where perhaps only a few individuals still survive. This is the case in Natal, Basutoland, Orange Free State and especially the Cape, in all of which, as recently as the middle of last century, the Bushmen were still fairly numerous.

But the encroachment upon them of later invading peoples gradually ousted them from the more favourable districts which they occupied. First the Hottentots, advancing south along the West coast, drove them from the fertile plains to the mountain fastnesses of the interior. Then the Bantu, coming down the East coast, overcame the fierce resistance of the little people upon whose ancient hunting ground they trespassed. Other Bantu tribes, traversing the

interior of the country came into conflict with the Bushmen in the arid plains north and south of the Orange River and the Vaal and in the rugged mountains to the east. The European settler, in his turn pushing north and east and seeking fresh pastures for his growing herds, waged an equally relentless war against them. Before each successive invader the Bushmen, where they were not exterminated, had eventually to seek refuge in more unfavourable and inaccessible parts.<sup>1</sup>

At the present time they are found living chiefly in the Central and Northern Kalahari Desert and in the northern half of South West Africa. On the north they extend into South-East Angola up to about 15° S. lat., on the east into the Tuli and adjacent districts of Southern Rhodesia, on the south into the region of the Nossop and Molopo Rivers, and on the west to the Etosha Pan in South West Africa. Small isolated remnants are also met with in the vicinity of Lake Chrissie in the Eastern Transvaal, in the coastal province of Mossamedes, South West Angola, and in the Namib desert strip along the coast of South West Africa.

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1. A graphic account of the vain resistance offered by the Bushmen to the peoples encroaching upon them, and of the relentless manner in which they were exterminated, is given by G.W. Stow, The Native Races of South Africa, London 1905, especially in Chaps IX-XII.

Everywhere else the Bushmen have been either exterminated, expelled or incorporated racially by later invaders, although stray individuals may still be seen occasionally in the north-west districts of the Cape and sporadically in Orange Free State and Transvaal. It is only in the Kalahari Desert and the north-eastern parts of South West Africa that they still retain to any degree their original mode of life and organisation. Even here they have all been affected to some extent by racial intermixture with other Native peoples, while in the Eastern and Central Kalahari, as well as in Angola, most of them are also in a state of servitude to the Bantu peoples among whom they live. Large bands of relatively independent Bushmen are now found only in the Western Kalahari and the adjoining districts of South West Africa, especially in the Omaheke, Kaukouveld and Ghansiveld.

#### Tribal Divisions.

The Bushmen are divided into many different groups, each with its own distinctive language or dialect, and with a name. These groups will be spoken of here as tribes. The Bushmen do not appear to have any general or collective names for themselves. Such names, however, have been applied to them by most of the other inhabitants of South Africa. The Hottentots term them all San. The meaning of this word is uncertain, but Hahn interprets it as "aborigines, or settlers proper".<sup>1</sup> The names Sunqua, Saunqua, Sonqua, etc., often met with in the early Colonial records, are merely verbal varia-

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1. T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam: The Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi, London, 1881.



tions of its dual form, Sa(n)qua. The Bantu peoples know the Bushmen by a variety of names, of which the most common are all cognate forms of the same root - baTwa or abaTwa (Zulu-Kosa), baRwa (Suto), Masarwa (Chwana), ovaTwa (Herero), etc. The meaning of this root has not been satisfactorily determined. A common interpretation is "people of the south", but this is not universally accepted. The name Bushmen itself goes back to the earliest Dutch settlers at the Cape, and is found as far back as 1685 in the Colonial records, where it occurs in several variations - Bosjesmans, Bosmanekens, Bosiesmans, etc. It has now become generally adopted in ethnological literature, and there seems no good reason why it should not be retained.

The languages of all the Bushman tribes are of the same general structure, and can be regarded as belonging to one language family. They vary, however, in certain details of phonetics and especially of grammar and vocabulary, which permit of their classification into three main groups. To these the names Southern, Northern and Central Groups respectively have been applied by Miss D.F. Bleek, on account of their relative geographical distribution. These names may also be used as affording a convenient means of grouping the different tribes.<sup>1</sup>

The SOUTHERN GROUP is distributed mainly over the region roughly south of the Tropic of Capricorn.

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1. A more detailed list of the different Bushman tribes and their distribution than is here given will be found in: D.F. Bleek, "The Distribution of Bushman Languages in S. Africa", Festschrift Meinhof (Hamburg, 1927), pp 55-64; cf. also I Schapera, "The Tribal Divisions of the Bushmen", Man, 1927, 47.

Of the tribes included in it the best known, both ethnologically and linguistically, is the /xam-ka!k'e or /khamka !k'e (i.e. /kham people) commonly known as the "Cape Bushmen". They were formerly spread over the greater part of the Cape Colony south of the Orange River, and seem to have been very numerous. They have, however, been almost completely exterminated, and only a few individuals still survive in the north west districts of the Colony, where they are mostly employed as farm hands by Europeans.<sup>1</sup>

A similar fate has overtaken several other tribes of this group. The //n !k'e ("home people"--) of Griqualand West and Gordonias are now also represented by only a few individuals, the majority of whom are farm hands in the Langeberg District.<sup>2</sup> East of them, in Orange Free State and Basutoland, lived other Bushmen, of whose language, folklore and customs some records have been preserved, but who are now apparently quite extinct, and whose tribal name even is unknown.<sup>3</sup> They

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1. The literature on this tribe is considerable, although most of it is fragmentary. The most useful sources are: J. Barrow, Travels in the Interior of South Africa, 2 vols London 1801-1804; T. Hahn, "Die Buschmänner", Globus, 18 (1870), Nos. 5-10; G. Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, Breslau, 1872; W. H. I. Bleek, A Brief Account of Bushman Folklore and Other Texts, London, 1875. L. C. Lloyd, A Short Account of Further Bushman Material Collected; G. W. Stow, The Native Races of South Africa, London, 1905; W. H. I. Bleek and L. C. Lloyd, Specimens of Bushman Folklore, London 1911; D. F. Bleek, The Mantis and his Friends: Bushman Folklore, Cape Town, n.d. (1923).
  2. D. F. Bleek, art. cit. in Festschrift Meinhof, p. 56.
  3. T. Arbousset, Relation d'un Voyage d'Exploration au Nord-Est de la Colonie du Cap de Bonne-Esperance, Paris, 1842; J. M. Orpen, "A Glimpse into the Mythology of the Maluti Bushmen", Cape Monthly Mag., 9 (1874), 1-13, reprinted in Folk-Lore, 30 (1919), 139-156; S. S. Dornan, "Notes on the Bushmen of Basutoland", Trans. S. Afr. Phil. Soc., 18 (1909), 437-450; C. F. Wuras, "An Outline of the Bushman Language", Z. Eingeb. spr., 10 (1920) 81/87.

will be spoken of here, where necessary, as the "Basuto-land Bushmen". Still further east, on the shores of Lake Chrissie, in the Eastern Transvaal, live a few other Bushmen as farm hands, evidently remnants of a tribe that once roamed over the high veld of the Transvaal. They do not seem to have retained their own Bushman name, but use the term baTwa applied to them by the neighbouring amaSwazi, a Bantu tribe, traces of much intercourse with whom is seen both in their appearance and in their speech.<sup>1</sup>

To this group belong also the few Bushmen in the south-east of South West Africa, of whom may be mentioned the /auni in the waterless regions of the Lower Nossop, and the /nu//en (called /nusan by the Nama Hottentots) in the Upper Nossop and Auhoup valleys. Some of these still lead a more or less independent life, but the majority are in the service of interdwelling Bantu, Hottentots and Bastards.<sup>2</sup> Further east, in the south of Bechuanaland Protectorate, other Bushmen of the same group are found in the service of the BeChwana among whom they live. They have no special name for themselves, and are, known simply as Masarwa, which is the Chwana term for all Bushmen.<sup>3</sup>

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1.D.F.Bleek.art.cit. in Festschrift Meinhof. p. 56.  
 2.D.F.Bleek,in Fests.Meinhof, 56-57; Papst,"Die Kalahari-wuste und ihre Bewohner",Mitt.Geogr.Ges.Jena,14 (1895), 48-54; J.F.Herbst, Report on Rietfontein Area (Cape Parliamentary Papers G.53-1908).  
 3.L.Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari,Jena 1907.pp. 650-678.

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The tribes of the NORTHERN GROUP inhabit the greater portion of the Omaheke in the north-east of South West Africa, including part of the Kaukauveld and the Oschimpoloveld. On the east they extend into Bechuanaland Protectorate, and on the north into Angola.

In the south of this region, between Sandfontein and /Gam, are found in the /au //en or //kau //en, called /aukwe by the Central Bushmen, /ausan by the Nama, maKaukau, or simply Kaukau by the neighbouring Bantu and commonly spoken of as the Auen.<sup>1</sup> They are one of the few Bushman tribes still living in relative independence, and appear to have retained their original mode of life and organisation to a considerable extent, although not without a few traces of foreign influence. Their numbers at the present time are estimated at between 500 and 600.

Immediately north of them, and speaking a closely-related language, live the !khu or !kung, commonly called Kung, one of the largest and most independent of the Bushman tribes.<sup>2</sup> They occupy the whole of the

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1. The fullest account of this tribe is by H. Kaufmann "Die /Auin. Ein Beitrag zur Buschmannforschung", Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb., 23 (1910-), 135-160.
  2. H. Werner, "Anthropologische, ethnologische und ethnographische Beobachtungen über die Helium- und Kungbuschleute", Z. Ethn., 38 (1906) 241-265; H. Vedder, "Grundriss einer Grammatik der Buschmannsprache vom Stamm der !Ku-Buschmänner", Z. KolSpr., I (1910/1911), 5-24, 106-117; Ibid., Von den Buschmännern, Barmen 1922; F. Seiner, "Ergebnisse einer Bereisung des Omaheke in den Jahren 1910-1912", Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb., 26 (1913), 225-316; von Zastrow, "Ueber die Buschleute", Z. Ethn., 46 (1914), 1-7; D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola", Archiv f. Anthr., N.F. 21 (1927), 47-56; Ibid., "Bushmen of Central Angola", Bantu Studies, 3. (1928), 105-125.

north-east corner of South West Africa, and extend far north of the Okavango River into Angola to about 15° lat., where they are found near the border of North-west Rhodesia in the east to about 16°E.long. in the west. In Angola, where they live in a state of dependence amongst various Bantu tribes, they are usually known by their Bantu names bakhankala or vankala in the west, baSukwera in the centre, and vaShekeli in the east. Their numbers in South West Africa are estimated at between 500 and 800, so that the tribe as a whole will number about 1000.

To the west and south-west of the Kung are the Hei-//om or Heikum ("tree dwellers"), who are scattered over a large extent of South West Africa, from north of the Etosha Pan and the outskirts of Ovamboland in Grootfontein and Outjo districts to near Rehoboth in the south. <sup>1</sup> This part of the country is pretty fully inhabited by other peoples as well, so that it is possible for only a few of these Bushmen to lead their natural life. Most of them now work on farms; and except among the bands in the vicinity of the Etosha Pan every trace of their original organisation has disappeared completely. Whether free or in service, the majority of them now speak a Nama dialect, and in culture

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1. H. Werner, op. cit.; J. Fourie "Preliminary Notes on Certain Customs of the Hei-//omm Bushmen", J.S.W.Afr. Sci.Soc.I (1925/26) 49-63; Ibid., "The Bushmen of South West Africa", pp.79-105 in The Native Tribes of South West Africa, Cape Town, 1928.

and physical characters also have been influenced to a very great extent by the Nama and the Bergdama; while those groups living along the borders of Ovamboland have been largely influenced by Ovambo culture, and are rapidly being absorbed into the Ovambo through racial intermixture. Werner, however, found some of them speaking a language of their own. The examples he gives of this show that it is closely related to the language of the Kung. Their numbers are estimated by Fourie at between 1000 and 1500.

The CENTRAL GROUP is composed of a good many tribes who inhabit a considerable portion of Bechuanaland Protectorate, especially in the Central and Northern Kalahari. The languages of these tribes are somewhat different from those of the two previous groups, and present many close resemblances to the Hottentot languages.

At Sandfontein in the west, in close proximity to the Auen, by whom they are termed Naron ("insignificant people"), live the //aikwe, one of the best known of the Bushman tribes. They live chiefly in Bechuanaland Protectorate, their territory extending from Sandfontein to Ghansi in the North-East and Okwa in the South-East. Further north and east, as far as Lake Ngami, are the

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1.H.Schins,Deutsch-Sudwest Afrika, Oldenburg. n.d.(1891) pp.388-399; S.Passarge,Die Buschmanner der Kalahari, Berlin 1907; Gentz, "Einige Beitrage zur Kenntnis der sudwestafrikanischen Volkerschaften", Globus, 83 (1903), 297-301; 84 (1903), 156-159; D.F.Bleek,The Naron: A Bushman Tribe of the Central Kalahari, Cambridge, 1928.

closely-related Tsaukwe, Tsonokwe, Amkwe and Iginkwe, all friendly tribes, whose languages the Naron understand and whom they include with themselves in the collective designation K'am-ka Kwe, "Mouth's people".<sup>1</sup>

Beyond them, in the marshy region which extends from Lakes Ngami and Linyati in the south to the OKavango delta at Andara in the north, live the Bugakwe, Garikwe and Gokwe, who all speak the same language and term themselves collectively Tannekwe, "river people".<sup>2</sup> In the plains north and east of these tribes, between the Okavango River and the Kwando, are the Hukwe, called Makwengo by the maMbukushu and Masarwa by the baRotse amongst whom they live. Still further east, between the Lower Kwando and the Zambesi Rivers, and probably extending into North-West Rhodesia, are the Galikwe, often known by their Bantu name maDemassena.<sup>3</sup> In physical characters and certain aspects of their culture these tribes differ somewhat from the Naron and allied tribes, but their languages are of the same type.

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1. S. Passarge, op.cit., p. 24; D.F. Bleek, op.cit., p. 2.  
 2. S. Passarge, "Das Okawangosumpfland und seine Bewohner", Z. Ethn., 37 (1905), 649-716; F. Seiner, "Ergebnisse einer Bereisung des Gebiets zwischen Okavango und Sambesi (Caprivi-Zipfel) in den Jahren 1905 und 1906", Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb., 22 (1911), 1-111; Ibid., "Die Buschmanner des Okavango- und Sambesigebietes der Nordkalahari", Globus, 97 (1910), 341-5, 357-360; Ibid., art. cit. in Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb., 26 (1913)  
 3. Seiner, ut cit.; J.C.B. Statham, With my Wife across Africa by Canoe and Caravan, London 1924, pp. 255-257; J.H. Wilhelm, "Aus dem Wortschatz der !kun- und der Hukwebuschmannsprache", Z. EingebSpr., 12 (1922), 291-304.

South-east of Lake Ngami, in and around the Hainaveld, live the Tserekwe, dukwe and kabakwe.<sup>1</sup> Further east, along the Botletle River and the South-east Okavango basin, are the Ohkwe, often known by their Bantu name as Matete. Closely related to them are the Mahura, who live along the Lower Botletle and Lake Kumadau, extending in the east to the Makarrikari depression.<sup>2</sup> The name these people bear is obviously of Bantu origin. What they term themselves appears to be unknown. Finally, in the Tati district on the eastern border of Bechuanaland Protectorate and extending into the adjacent districts of Southern Rhodesia, are still other Bushmen, whose own name is apparently Hiechware, "people of the open country",<sup>3</sup> but who are commonly known simply as Masarwa, a name which, as has been mentioned, is applied by the beChwana to the Bushmen generally. All these tribes have evidently been long exposed to Bantu influence, and are strongly mixed with Bantu blood. Some of them still lead their natural mode of life, but they are all to some extent subject to their Bantu neighbours, often acting as their huntsmen and cattle herds, as well as paying them a regular tribute.

In addition to the tribes included in these main linguistic groups, there are two other groups of Bushmen of whom mention should be made. In the coastal

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmänner der Kalahari, p. 25; R. Pösch, "Ethnographische und geographische Ergebnisse meiner Kalahari-reisen", Petermanns Mitt., 58 (1912), 15-20 and map.
  2. Passarge, loc. cit.; Pösch, op. cit.
  3. S.S. Dornan, "The Tati Bushmen (Masarwas) and their Language", J. Royal Anthropol. Inst., 47 (1917), 37-112; Ibid., "Tati Bushmen", Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. 12 (1921), 205-208; Ibid., "Bushmen of the Kalahari", Diamond Fields Advertiser, Kimberley, July 7, 14, 21, 1923; Ibid., Pygmies and Bushmen of the Kalahari, London 1925.



province of Mossamedes, South West Angola, a number of Bushmen are found between the Caponda River on the north and the Korocas River on the south.<sup>1</sup> Very little is actually known of them. They are spoken of only by their Bantu names - baKwando, baKwisso, baKubai and BaKorcas - and appear to have been considerably influenced in race and culture by the neighbouring Bantu. Their distribution indicates that they may possibly belong to the Northern Group of Bushmen, but as no information is available about their language this cannot be definitely asserted.

The other group comprises the few isolated inhabitants of the Namib desert strip and of the north bank of the Orange River in South West Africa.<sup>2</sup> Their language is reported to be Nama, and they are sometimes said to be degenerate Hottentots who have lost their cattle and taken to a nomadic hunting and collecting life similar to that of the Bushmen. But the little we know about their customs and social organisation shows that they are true Bushmen, although they have undoubtedly been considerably influenced by the Hottentots. They were divided into several groups, each with its own name. The /geinin in the true Namib desert between Luderitz and Conception Bay, the //obanen in the region round the junction of the Great Fish River

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1. J. Oliviera Ferreira Diniz, Populacoes indigenas de Angola, Coimbra, 1918, pp 477-491.

2. L. Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 98-105; P. Trenk, "Die Buschleute der Namib, ihre Familien- und Rechtsverhältnisse". Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb., 23 (1910), 166-170.

and the Orange River, and the /koma of the Swartrand and Tiras plateau have apparently disappeared completely; the /ganin in the region between Naauwkluft and Grootfontein S. are also almost totally extinct, while the /huinin in the southern extremity of the Huib plateau just north of the Orange River are still represented by a few families. The numbers of the two last groups together are estimated at between 75 and 100. Hahn, writing of these people in 1879, says that they were then still painting on rocks.<sup>1</sup> This may be taken as clear proof that they really are Bushmen, for the Hottentots do not practise this art at all. Their distribution, as well as the information we have of their habits and customs, seems to link them up with the Southern Group, but there is yet no clear evidence in support of this view.

The above classification of the Bushmen into linguistic groups is quite independent of and distinct from considerations of race and culture. All Bushmen are of the same racial stock, and have fundamentally the same culture, just as their languages are fundamentally related. At the same time there are variations both in race and in culture which run counter to the linguistic distinctions.

Broadly speaking, it may be said with regard to racial characters that the Bushmen living south of the Molopo River are purest in type. Those further north have all been perceptibly influenced to a greater

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1. T. Hahn, "Felszeichnungen der Buschmänner", Verh. Berl. Ges. Anthrop., 1879, 307-308.

or less extent by intermixture with other peoples, principally Bantu, but also Hottentots and Bergdama. In the west there is perhaps more Hottentot blood, although in the north-west there is also a good deal of Bantu (Ovambo) and Bergdama blood; but in the east Bantu influence is very strongly marked, especially in the Okavango-Zambesi region.

In culture, again, the Namib Bushmen and those south of the Molopo River form a separate division, the latter characterised especially by a far more elaborate mythology than the other Bushman tribes. The North-Western tribes, again - Auen, Naron and Kung - have certain well-marked features of social organisation and religion not noticed further south; while the Heikum in many aspects of their culture show unmistakeable signs of Hottentot and South-Western Bantu influence. The other Kalahari tribes, especially those to the north-east and in the extreme east, have been considerably affected in material culture and to some extent also in religious beliefs and practices by the Ohwana tribes among whom they live.

These differences are important. At the same time it must be noted that not much is known of the Namib Bushmen, who now live as scattered remnants. The Southern Bushmen are now also almost completely extinct, and the only aspect of their culture which has been at all carefully investigated is their religion and mythology, preserved in the texts collected by Bleek, Lloyd and Orpen. The North-Western tribes, on the other hand, are the most fully studied of all. It

is possible, therefore, that some of the differences apparent between them and other Bushmen may be due simply to lack of the relevant information about the latter. The North-Eastern tribes, again, have not yet been investigated with the thoroughness and detail they deserve, so that here also the possibility remains that further knowledge about them may reveal more features in common with the other Bushmen than are at present observable.

Numbers.

The distribution of the Bushmen over so many distinct political areas, their general inaccessibility, their nomadic life and consequent habit of living in small bands, as well as the fact that they are not always clearly discriminated from the Hottentots, all combine to render difficult any attempt to arrive at a comprehensive figure of their numbers. Of the various estimates previously made, the majority go back some fifteen or twenty years, and offer little safe guidance to present conditions. The only area for which fairly reliable figures of recent date are available is South West Africa, where in 1926 there were stated to be 3600 Bushmen.<sup>1</sup> This figure would therefore include the Auen, Heikum, most of the Kung, a few Naron, the /nu//en and other small tribes on the South-Eastern border, as well as the remnants of the Namib Bushmen. Adopting this figure as a rough guide, it may safely be assumed that

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1. Report on the Administration of South-West Africa for 1926. (Union of S. Africa Parliamentary Bluebook, U.G. 22-127). p. 28.

all the other Bushmen still found in Angola, the Kalahari Desert, and the western districts of Southern Rhodesia, together with the few individuals in the Cape, Griqualand West, and Transvaal, will be at least as numerous, especially when it is remembered that the Kalahari is the central region of the present distribution of the Bushmen. We may, therefore, place the total number of Bushmen still in existence at a conservative minimum of about 7000 to 7500. Any more accurate estimate is impossible with the data at our disposal. They may be far more numerous, but there is no available means of ascertaining this. It is hardly likely, however, judging from even the limited data at our disposal, that they can be less.

That formerly they were certainly far more numerous is unquestionable. The fact that they are now almost completely extinct in many parts where at one time they were found in great numbers is sufficient testimony to the great decrease which they have suffered. This is especially noticeable in the Cape, where, as previously mentioned, the Bushmen were forcibly exterminated at the hands of successive invading peoples. In the case of the European settlers alone we know that during the eighteenth century frequent commandos were sent against the Bushmen in the attempt to end their depredations against stock. The figures available of the relentless destruction that followed make sad reading. In 1774, for example, a commando in the Roggeveld killed 503 Bushmen and took 239 prisoners; while between the years 1785-1795 it is calculated that 2504 were killed and 669 captured. Since these by

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1.G.E.Cory, The Rise of South Africa, Vol.I.(London 1910), pp.18-19.

no means represent the total Bushman population of the Cape at that time, there seems little reason to regard Fritsch's estimate of the numbers of the Bushmen there before these destructive raids as at least 10,000 as being in any way excessive.<sup>1</sup> In Orange Free State and Basutoland, too, where formerly the Bushmen were also very numerous, there are now apparently none save perhaps a few stray individuals.

Even in the case of South West Africa we have definite evidence that they have decreased considerably. The German official estimate for 1913 gave the Bushman population of this territory as 8098,<sup>2</sup> which may be contrasted with the 1926 figure of 3600. Allowing for probable inaccuracies in the two estimates, there does seem to be an undeniable decrease. This may be due largely to the ravages of disease, especially malaria, although other factors also must be considered. The present area of Bushman occupation in the North-West Kalahari is largely fever country, and all observers agree that the Bushmen suffer heavily from this disease, which must therefore be accounted an important factor of decrease. Thus Kaufmann in 1908 put the numbers of the Auen at about 3000, but adds that in the following year more than half the tribe was swept away by malaria.<sup>3</sup> Infanticide, a practice definitely recorded among the North-western tribes, also tends to keep the numbers down; while the disappearance of game and the enforcement against the Bushmen of the game regulations serve

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1. G. Fritsch, *Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's*, p. 395.  
 2. *Die Deutschen Schutzgebiete, 1912/1913*, p. 47. The figures given on the same page for 1912 are 9782, showing a decrease in one year of 1684.  
 3. H. Kaufmann, "Die Auen". p. 136. cf. also p. 159.

the same end by making their mode of subsistence even more precarious than it <sup>was</sup> is at the best of times.

There seems little doubt that the Bushmen are steadily dying out as a race. What forcible extermination at the hands of other peoples has not achieved is being slowly accomplished by disease and racial intermixture. Racially pure Bushmen are already in a minority, and their complete absorption by their neighbours is probably only a matter of time.

### III

#### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: DRESS AND DECORATION.

##### Physical Characteristics.

In appearance there are many features which readily distinguish the Bushmen from all the other inhabitants of South Africa save the Hottentots, and which may therefore be taken as characteristic of them. These distinctive features are best seen in the Bushmen south of the Molepe River, who may be regarded as purest in type. The tribes further north have all been affected to some extent by racial intermixture with other peoples, and tend consequently to vary in certain respects. But they are fundamentally of the same racial stock.

1. The best descriptions of the physical characters of the Bushmen are to be found in: G. Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, 1872, pp. 396-410; R. Virchow, "Buschmänner", Verh. Berl. Ges. Anthropol., 1886, 221-239; H. Werner, "Beobachtungen über die Heikum- und Kungbuschleute", Z. Ethn., 38 (1906), 241-268; S. Passarge, Die Buschmänner der Kalahari, 1907, pp. 11-16; R. Pöch, "Die Stellung der Buschmannrasse unter den übrigen Menschenrassen", Korrbl. deuts. Ges. Anthropol., 42 (1911), 75-80; F. Seiner, "Beobachtungen und Messungen an Buschleute", Z. Ethn. 44, (1912), 275-288; Ibid., "Ergebnisse einer Bereisung der Omaheke", Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb. 26 (1913), 225-316; Ibid., "Beobachtungen an der Bastardbuschleuten der Nordkalahari", Mitt. Anthropol. Ges. Wien, 43 (1913), 311-324; F. von Luschan, "Pygmaen und Buschmänner", Z. Ethn., 46 (1914), 154-176; R. Martin, "Zur Anthropologie der Buschmänner", (with bibliography), pp. 436-490 in Vol. II of E. Kaiser, Die Diamantenwüste Südwestafrikas, Berlin, 1926; L. Schultze, Zur Kenntnis des Körpers der Hottentotten und Buschmänner, Jena 1928, with bibliography.

The most conspicuous feature in the external appearance of the Southern Bushmen is their small stature.<sup>1</sup> Accurate measurements are unfortunately very scanty; but from the few reliable figures available it appears that the average height of the men was not more than about 145 cms., and of the women probably slightly less. North of the Molopo the stature increases perceptibly, and it seems that the further north-east we go the higher does it become. In the North-Western tribes (Naron, Auen, Kung, Heikun) the average for men ranges between 152 and 157 cms., and that for women between 145 and 150 cms. Statures of over 170 cms. occur, but are rare. Of these tribes, the Auen have the lowest averages, while the Kung, who are the most northerly have the highest. In the Eastern Kalahari, the men average 166 cm., the women 157 cms., (Dornan); while among the Hukwe and Galikwe to the north-east of Lake Ngami the stature ranges between 162 and 184 cms., many men of over 170 cms. being seen, and occasionally even a few fully six foot tall (183 cms.)

There is no reason to doubt that the diminutive stature of the Southern Bushmen is a true racial characteristic, and that the increased stature of the Northern tribes is the result of intermixture with other and taller peoples. The differences between the North-Western and the North-Eastern tribes in this respect seem to arise from the fact that the former have absorbed more Hottentot than negro (Bantu and Bergdama) blood,

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1. Tables embodying all the measurements of stature available of the different Bushmen tribes are given by Schultze, op.cit., pp 194-196.



although both elements are observable; while in the Eastern Kalahari and especially in the Okavango-Zambesi region the Bantu element only is present. This conclusion is borne out by several other features, of which the most evident perhaps is skin colouration.

In the Southern Bushmen the skin colour varies from a light yellow to brownish-yellow. In the tribes just north of the Molopo River some families are of the same colour, while others have darker tinges of varying shades - a patently new mixture. The North-Western tribes, again, have a fairly constant reddish-brown colour, though individuals incline more to yellow or to black; while those in the north-east tend on the whole towards reddish-black. In general, therefore, the taller tribes have also a darker skin colour, the North-Eastern tribes, who are the tallest, having also the darkest colour of all.

The skin itself of all the Bushmen is very dry and lean, with little adipose tissue. It readily forms into deep wrinkles, especially on the face, even in fairly young and well-nourished people. There is very little hair on the body, and it is only on the scalp and occasionally on the eye-brows that the growth is at all thick. Rudimentary traces of beard and moustache are sometimes seen in the men, but these rarely grow to any length or thickness. The hair is black in colour, and becomes grey only in very old people. Baldness is extremely rare, even in advanced age. The hair is commonly very short and fine, and is tightly coiled into small spiral knots (not inappropriate-

ly known as "peppercorns") which on the scalp appear to be separated by bare spots. Actually the hair follicles are distributed as in other races. In section the hair presents an elliptical contour.

The head in the Southern Bushmen is small and relatively broad (mesocephalic), and markedly low in the crown (platycephalic). The face is broad and flat, somewhat rectangular in shape, and generally orthognathous or only slightly prognathous. The forehead is low and bulging, the cheek-bones prominent, and the lower jaw relatively broad. The nose is low and very broad, especially at the root. As seen in profile, it is short and concave, but is generally set well back and often seems quite flat. The wings are broad, and the nostrils, which are directed forwards, have a curious splayed-out appearance. The opening of the eye is very narrow and often appears slightly oblique, by reason of the remarkable fullness of the upper eye-lid and the fact that a prominent fold of skin curves round from above the upper lid to the side of the nose and completely covers the inner canthus of the eye. The iris is dark brown in colour, and the small pupil often appears to blend with it. The ear is another specially characteristic feature of the Bushmen. It is fairly short and broad, with very little or no trace of a lobe, and the lower border is, as it were, pressed right into the cheeks. The helix is broad and almost completely rolled in. The lips are rather thin, and the upper lid, seen in profile, slightly convex. The chin is rounded and <sup>retreating</sup> ~~recessive~~. The teeth are generally white and sound

though often worn down considerably in old people.

In the Northern tribes the general shape of the head and face is somewhat similar; but, especially in the most northerly tribes, the head tends to be slightly higher and relatively narrower, the face longer and more oval, and the chin more pointed, prognathism is more often found, while the characteristic ear is less evident.

The body is slim in build, but well proportioned; and in spite of the small stature of the Southern Bushmen there is no suggestion of dwarfishness in their appearance. The limbs are slender, and the muscles on them form firm and well-marked cord-like projections. The arms and legs are rather short in relation to the length of the trunk - in fact, the Bushman arm is the shortest on record, - while the hands and feet are very small and narrow in proportion. The outline of the body is sunken and angular, and all projections are strongly marked. The chest as a rule is fairly well developed, though its appearance is sometimes vitiated by the variable conditions of the abdomen, and especially by the frequent occurrence of a pendulous belly, chiefly in the young, - the result of an unfavourable diet, unrestricted gorging, and the frequent alternation between starvation and plenty. Where the food supply is at all regular this abnormal condition is rarely found. The buttocks are small, but often seem prominent owing to the curious inward curvature of the spine in

the lumbo-sacral region. The penis, even when not in a state of erection, often appears to extend horizontally in a semi-erect condition - a feature which is noticeable also in many of the Bushman paintings of human beings.

The Northern Bushmen are on the whole better developed physically, and have stronger limbs, with arms and legs slightly longer in proportion. In other respects they conform very closely to type.

The female body, like that of the male, is generally slender, the limbs slight, the hands and feet small. In <sup>mature</sup> native women there is often found a strong accumulation of fat on the thighs and especially on the buttocks, a character called steatopygia, which may very occasionally be seen in men also. Strongly-marked steatopygia is not very frequent, however, and is far less common than in Hottentots. In the Northern Bushwomen it seldom occurs. The breasts in young girls are small and conical, with well-marked nipples; after puberty they become somewhat pendulous, and in the older women who have given birth to several children they hang very low and are often in an extremely shrivelled condition. The genital organs are notable for a frequent hypertrophy of the labia minora - the so-called "Hottentot apron" - which are sometimes considerably elongated, and may project as much as 10 cms. beyond the rima pudendi. This appears to be a morphological feature and not artificially produced by manipulation, as has sometimes been suggested. Its occurrence is not restricted to Bushwomen, however, as it is found in the

Hottentots and several other African peoples also.

It will be seen from this description that all the Bushmen are fundamentally of the same physical type, although the Northern tribes vary in certain features from the Southern. It is impossible to draw any clean-cut distinction between the different tribes. There is rather a continual gradation of characters, the type gradually becoming more impure the further north and east we go. The general tendency is for the Northern Bushmen to be taller, often considerably taller, than the Southern Bushmen; they have a darker colour, and better muscular development, relatively narrower and higher heads and faces, and show certain negroid characters in their facial features and bodily build. These divergent tendencies, as already indicated, are the result of racial intermixture with other peoples, especially Bantu negroids; and this process of racial intermixture is still continuing. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most north-easterly tribes, such as the Hukwe and the Galikwe, who have been longest exposed to contact with the Bantu, show on the whole the greatest divergence from the true Bushman type as represented by the tribes south of the Molopo River.

#### Dress and Decoration.

Save where there has been a good deal of contact with European influences, all the Bushmen wear garments made entirely from the skins of animals, usually some kind of buck caught in the chase.<sup>1</sup> Complete nudity is

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1. The fullest descriptions of Bushman dress and decoration are given by: G. Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, pp. 428-430; Passarge, Die Buschmänner der Kalahari, 33-40; Kaufman, "Die Auin", 140-143; Werner, "Beobachtungen über die Heilum- und Kungbuschleute", 255-257; Seiner, "Bereisung des Gebiets zwischen Okavango und Sambesi", 297-298; Dornan, "Pyg-

hardly ever found, though it has been reported on hearsay evidence by Miss Bleek of some of the wilder bands of Auen and Naron. All the clothes are made by the men, who prepare not only their own garments but also those of their wives and children.

The principal garment of the men among all the Bushmen consists in a triangular piece of skin, two ends of which are tied together round the loins, while the third is passed between the legs and knotted on behind. Some of the North-Eastern Bushmen (Tannekwe, Hukwe, Galikwe), who have been in much contact with the Bantu, have adopted the form of loin-cloth worn by the latter, in which a piece of skin is passed between the legs and drawn before and behind through a leather thong tied round the loins. A skin cloak ("kaross") is also worn by most of the men, especially in cold weather, or when on the march. This is tied over the right shoulder by strips of skin attached to two ends, and hangs so as to cover the back, and, if large enough, also the chest, while leaving the arms and shoulder free. It is sometimes worn slung over both shoulders and tied under the chin. The head is usually uncovered, but skin caps are sometimes seen, as well as leather sandals tied round the ankle with thongs.

On the march the men carry a round bag slung

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mies and Bushmen of the Kalahari, 87-90; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 8-10; E. Gretschei, "Die Buschmannsammlung Hanne-  
mann", Jb. Stadt. Mus. V. k. d. Leipzig, 5. (1911/12), 107-110.

on over the right shoulder and hanging on the left hip. In this are carried all sorts of small possessions and food. A longer skin bag, which contains their weapons, fire-sticks, etc., is also hung over the left shoulder. Bark quivers for the arrows are sometimes found as well, more especially among the Southern and Namib Bushmen.

The women wear a hanging apron in front, consisting of a piece of skin, often ornamented with bead or leather tassels, which is attached to a leather belt passing round the loins. A smaller apron, covering only the genitals, is sometimes seen beneath this. The older women also wear a larger apron behind, sometimes hanging from the shoulders, more often tied round the waist, and almost meeting over or under the apron in front. In the North-East a leather loin-cloth drawn through a belt, and similar to that of the men, only somewhat longer, is often seen instead. A large kaross is also worn by the married women. This hangs from the right shoulder, passing under the left arm, and is tied again at the waist, thus forming a convenient pouch, in which are carried the baby as well as supplies for the day, such as ostrich eggshells filled with water, roots and fruit, grass or firewood.

Babies go naked, save for a trifling ornament, till they are about a year old. The boys are then given a tiny belt with a semicircular flap of leather in front, the girls a small apron decorated with leather

tassels and beads. Their mother's kaross, however, continues to be their sole protection from the cold till they are weaned, when about three or four years old. The little girls then receive a tiny kaross hanging from the shoulders, the boys a small lapin-cloth similar to that of the men. They do not wear a cloak of any kind till they are in their teens and are taken out to learn hunting.

All women and children and the younger men also wear ornaments. Chief among these are ostrich eggshell beads, the making of which is one of the oldest Bushmen industries. Such beads, whole and in fragments, and at all stages of making, are found all over South Africa, from the kitchen-maidens on the south coast as far north as the Okavango, where they form a staple article of barter between the Bushmen and their Bantu neighbours. They are made by the women. The ostrich shell is broken into small pieces, which are softened in water and pierced with a small stone or iron borer. They are then threaded on to a strip of sinew and the rough edges chipped off with a horn. Soft bark fibre is next twisted between the beads, making the chain very taut, and the edges are finally rubbed smooth with a soft stone. The beads thus made are used as single chains or worked into more complicated ornaments. Bands of them are worn on the hair, sometimes encircling the whole head, more often tied to the hair on either side, while a long narrow strip of beads may hang down the forehead or on to the



neck behind. Necklaces and bracelets of these beads are also seen, and very long chains of larger beads are fastened three or four times round the waist.

Besides these beads any other ornaments obtainable are worn by the women. These include arm and leg bands, made of leather and bark strips or twisted from the tail hairs of a wildebeest or gnu, as well as grass chains and bracelets, berries, shells, etc. Glass beads and iron or wire bracelets obtained by barter from the neighbouring Bantu peoples and from European traders are also in great demand. The men usually content themselves with leather and <sup>bark</sup> ~~bark~~ bands, which are worn round the arm above the biceps and on the leg below the knee.

There is no special style of hair-dressing. The hair is generally kept in its natural form, although occasionally the whole or part of the scalp is shaved clean. Some women, however, uncurl little clusters of hair and roll them out with fat, so that they hang down a couple of inches, making a fringe round the head; while girls often tie small ornaments, such as beads or shells, into their hair.

Washing is altogether unknown, save among those Bushmen who have been much with Europeans. Generally both young and old rub their face and body with fat, and powder it with buchu (a name applied to various kinds of aromatic shrub). Many women carry small tortoise-shells filled with powdered buchu, and use a bit of soft bird's nest or else a piece of jackal's tail as a puff. The face and body are also often painted, especially before a dance, not only by the younger women

and girls, but occasionally even by the young men. The colours found are chiefly red and black, the former obtained from clay, the latter from charcoal. Both are mixed with fat, and the mixture rubbed on with a finger.

### Bodily Mutilations.

Various forms of bodily mutilation are practised by the Bushmen. Perhaps the best known of these is the removal of the joint of one of the little fingers. This is frequently mentioned by the older writers on the Southern Bushmen as occurring in some men and women, and also in children, but is not universally found.<sup>1</sup> The joint is usually removed during childhood, and the custom appears to be associated with some magical belief. One of Miss Lloyd's informants stated that the joint was cut off with a reed, before a child sucks at all; and is thought to make children live to grow up.<sup>2</sup> Other writers add the information that the operation is only performed on a child when its predecessor has died, and is meant to avert a similar fate.<sup>3</sup> Various other interpretations have been given of the custom, but the one just mentioned appears to be the most probable. This form of mutilation does not seem to occur much in the Northern tribes. It was found, however, by Seiner in a few persons among the Kung; but

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1. E.g. Barrow, Travels in South Africa, vol. I. p. 289; Arbousset, Relation d'un Voyage, etc., p. 493; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore. p. 329. G. Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa, 1827. vol. 1. 433.

2. Lloyd, Bushman Material Collected. p. 17.

3. Arbousset, Thompson, ut. cit.

even here is stated to be exceptional.<sup>1</sup>

Barrow also mentions that in a large band of Bushmen seen by him in the midlands of the Cape all the men had a small piece of wood or porcupine quill inserted through the perforated septum of the nose.<sup>2</sup> This practice is not reported definitely by any of the other writers on the Southern Bushmen, although it is hinted at by Bleek and Lloyd.<sup>3</sup> Hahn, however, speaks of it as occurring in a Bushman tribe in the South-West Kalahari, whom he therefore calls "Nasenstockträger";<sup>4</sup> and recently Pösch has published the photograph of a woman from the waterhole /kang in the Southern Kalahari in which it is seen very clearly.<sup>5</sup>

In the majority of Northern Bushmen at the present time, and especially in the North-Western tribes,<sup>6</sup> the most wide-spread form of mutilation is scarification. Small incisions about an inch long are made in the skin, and ash black or other colouring matter is rubbed into the wounds, producing a slight but noticeable scar. In the women they are mostly made for ornament only, on the face, thighs and buttocks, although among the Kung of Angola they are also made in connection with the puberty ceremony for girls. In the men, some of the cuts may also be ornamental, but many of them are definitely related to social and hunting observances. Thus all Naron, Auen and Kung have a vertical cut or cuts

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1. Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 290.

2. Barrow, *op. cit.*, vol. I. 276.

3. Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 329.

4. T. Hahn, *Globus*, 1870, p. 66.

5. Pösch, *Pet. Mitt.*, 58 (1912), Pl. 5 fig. 2.

6. Passarge, *Die Buschmänner*, 101, 108-109; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 141-2; Werner, "Heikuma- und Kungbuschleute", 245-6; D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola", 51; *Ibid.*, *The Naron*, 10-11.

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between the eyebrows, given to big boys at their puberty ceremonies; other cuts are made to ensure good luck in hunting; while still others are the marks of successful hunters. These will be discussed below in more detail.

The Hiechware (Tati Bushmen) practise, according to Dornan, <sup>1</sup>circumcision of boys and a form of cliterodectomy in girls, both in connection with puberty ceremonies. These mutilations he regards as common to most Bushmen and as being truly Bushman in origin, even going so far as to advance the opinion that the neighbouring Bantu who also practise them have taken them over from the Bushmen. This view cannot be upheld. Actually none of the other Bushmen known to us have either form of mutilation, so that <sup>these</sup> they cannot be regarded as common elements of Bushman culture. It is far more likely that the Hiechware have adopted them from the BeChwaha, to whose influence they have long been exposed, just as they have adopted from them other elements of Bantu culture, both in material objects and in religion.

#### IV.

#### SOCIAL ORGANISATION

##### Tribe and Hunting Band.

All the Bushmen in their native condition lead a nomadic hunting and collecting life, roaming about in search of the game and wild vegetable foods upon which they depend for their existence. The con-

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen of the Kalahari, 158-160.

ditions of their subsistence necessarily prevent them from banding together permanently in any considerable numbers. Wherever they still retain to any marked degree their original mode of life and organisation, they are found scattered over the land in small separate communities. <sup>1</sup> Each such community will be spoken of here as a hunting band. The members of a band share a common life, they see one another constantly, they cooperate in many ways, and they are all as a rule friendly and on fairly intimate terms. Each band also has occasional relations with other neighbouring bands through inter-marriage and trade, and visitors may pass from one to another. On the other hand there are often quarrels between neighbouring bands, which may result in a prolonged state of feud, and even lead directly to warfare.

The various bands among the Heikum are generally referred to among each other by a name which indicates either the locality in which they live, or describes some physical or other characteristic of the band itself or of its locality. The se-khoin, e.g. are the people of the seb or plain; the /gom-khoin the

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1. The social organisation of the Bushmen is one of the least known aspects of their culture, and sadly needs careful and detailed investigation. The most reliable sources of information refer almost exclusively to the North-Western tribes: Passarge, Die Buschmanner der Kalahari; Kaufmann, "Die /Auin"; D.F. Bleek, The Naron; Ibid., "Buschmanner von Angola", and "Bushmen of Central Angola"; L. Fourie, "Certain Customs of the Hei-//om"; Ibid., "The Bushmen of South West Africa". The relevant literature on the other tribes is for the most part fragmentary, although some valuable data on the Namib Bushmen are given by Trenk in his paper "Die Buschleute der Namib". Where no special reference is made to any particular tribe the analysis given above must therefore be regarded as applying especially to the North-Western tribes, who are also the only Bushmen still leading a fairly independent life.

## P R E C I S

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### THE TRIBAL SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA: A STUDY OF THE BUSHMEN AND THE HOTTENTOTS

I. SCHAPER, M.A.

Two main topics are dealt with in this study. First, the physical characters of the Bushmen and the Hottentots are described in some detail, and the racial histories of the two peoples discussed. The Bushmen all belong to one racial group, but the degree of purity varies; the tribes south of the Molopo River appear to be relatively pure, while those further north have all mixed to a varying extent (with Bantu principally), but also with Hottentots and Bergdama. The Hottentots are of the same racial stock as the Bushmen, but vary from the Southern Bushman type in such features as stature and the shape of the head. On the analogy of the Northern Bushmen these differences must be regarded as due to the absorption of alien blood. The most plausible theory perhaps as to the source of this new component is that the Hottentots are a mixture of Bushmen with both Hamites and negroes, or possibly with an earlier mixture of the two latter stocks which had a predominantly Hamitic culture. The small range of variability now found among them, save where there has been much recent intermixture with other peoples, seems to indicate that the original blending which gave rise to them is of very long standing and hence took place before they came into South Africa. It is therefore suggested that they originated as a distinct variety probably in the region of the Great Lakes of East Africa, where the Bushmen are known to have roamed at one time.

In the second place, and above all, a comprehensive study is made of the cultures of the two peoples: their social organisation, social habits and customs, economic activities, regulation of public life, religion and magic, art and knowledge. Each culture is dealt with as a connected living whole, as a single dynamic system in

which all institutions, customs and beliefs are interconnected and in which each fulfills a specific function. Each culture in other words is regarded as an organic unity which must be studied separately in its entirety. For this reason it has not been felt necessary to draw frequent attention in the body of the work to the points of resemblance or difference in culture between the two peoples. The treatment adopted is not comparative, but purely functional. In the final note, however, such features as are also of interest from the comparative standpoint have been rapidly noted, and their ethnological significance briefly commented upon.

A detailed survey shows that while the form of culture is fundamentally the same for all the Bushmen, it is advisable to recognize at least two varieties of this culture. The Namib Bushmen and those south of the Molopo River form a separate division; they have apparently been least affected by exotic influences, and in features such as art, ritual and mythology have developed along distinctive lines. The Northern tribes, on the other hand, have been influenced in technology and to some extent also in social life by contact with other peoples. Their culture has consequently been modified and has deviated somewhat from that of their Southern relatives. The North-Western tribes especially have certain well-marked features of social organization and religion not found further south, while the Heikum, one of these tribes, show unmistakable signs in many aspects of their culture of Hottentot and South-Western Bantu influence. The other Kalahari tribes, particularly in the north-east and in the extreme east, have adopted numerous elements of material culture as well as several items of religious belief and practice from the BeChwana tribes among whom they live.

The outstanding difference in culture between the Bushmer and the Hottentots lies in the fact that the former are hunters and collectors only, while the latter are predominantly a pastoral people, with herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. Associated with this differ-

ence in mode of life, we find that the material culture of the Hottentots is on the whole more advanced than that of the Bushmen, although the two peoples have a few elements in common. The Hottentots are able to smelt iron for the manufacture of their weapons and implements, while the Bushmen were until fairly recently a stone age people, and even now obtain by barter the iron which they have learned to use. The Hottentots again appear never to have possessed the art of painting and engraving on rock, so remarkable a feature in the culture of the Southern Bushmen. In social organisation, habits and customs there is also a distinct difference between the two peoples: the communities of the Hottentots are larger than those of the Bushmen, the social structure more complex, the system of government and law more organised, and the ceremonies connected with the life-history of the individual far more numerous and elaborate. In religion, on the other hand, the similarities are occasionally very striking, especially between the Hottentots and the North-Western Bushmen, although here also there are many important differences in detail. All Bushmen and Hottentots are moon-worshippers; all believe that dead people are transformed into more or less malevolent ghosts; all attach ritual importance to the rain and to water, and practise some kind of rain-making. All further speak of various mythical beings, who appear to be personifications of animistic beliefs and of natural forces; but the ideas of these beings vary considerably, and the cult centring in them is more developed among the Hottentots than among the North-Western Bushmen, while it scarcely exists at all among the Southern Bushmen.

The final impression one gets is that the Hottentot culture on the whole differs so profoundly from that of the Bushmen, especially in the whole social life, that the two must be looked upon as quite distinct. The present similarities in certain aspects of material culture and above all in religion must be attributed not to a common origin, as I formerly held, but to a long process of



mutual influence and borrowing, such as has unquestionably taken place between the North-Western Bushmen and the Nama Hottentots, about whom our information is most detailed. This conclusion is strengthened by the realization that the Hottentots, when they came into South Africa much later than the Bushmen, had already developed their pastoral mode of life, and with it most of the features by which they are now distinguished in culture from the Bushmen. It seems more reasonable therefore to suppose that such resemblances as are now found between the two peoples have most likely arisen in South Africa, where the Bushmen and the Hottentots have for centuries lived in close interaction, than that they have survived in the culture of the Hottentots as part of the original heritage from the Bushman culture.

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people who eat the /gom or omungete nut; the xom-khoin the people who xom or scrape together, the name indicating their method of collecting salt on the Etosha Pan, along whose southern border they live; and so forth.<sup>1</sup> How the bands are named in other tribes is not clearly stated. In the literature they are spoken of as a rule in terms of the locality which they inhabit, but no indication is given whether this is also the name by which they call themselves and are known to their neighbours.

These hunting bands are grouped into what are here called tribes. A tribe consists of a number of neighbouring bands the members of which all speak what they themselves regard as one language. Each tribe has its own distinctive name. In the Southern and Central Groups this usually ends in the word !k'e or kwe respectively, i.e. "people"; but in most cases the meaning of the name itself has not been recorded or can no longer be determined. The few tribal names which can be interpreted seem to refer to some general characteristic of the people themselves or of the country which they inhabit. The //n !k'e, for example, are the "home people"; the /tannekwe the "river people", and the Hiechware the "people of the open country". The Hei-//om (Heikum), again, derive their name from the Hottentot words heis, tree or bush, and //om, to sleep, and are therefore the "tree-sleeping people", i.e. those who sleep under trees; while the term Naron, by which the //aikwe now sometimes speak of themselves,

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1. Fourie, "Customs of the Hei-//om". p. 50.

appears to have been applied to them originally by the Auen and to mean "people who are insignificant".

The tribe is fundamentally a linguistic group. It has no social solidarity, and is of very little importance in regulating social life. There is no tribal organisation among the Bushmen, nothing in the nature of a central authority whose decisions are binding on all the members of the tribe, nor is collective action ever taken in the interests of the tribe as a whole. The tribe in fact is merely a loose aggregate of independent hunting bands which have a common language and name.

The band, and not the tribe, is the real political body among the Bushmen. Each band is autonomous, leading its own life independently of the others. The affairs of the band are as a rule regulated by the skilled hunters and the older, more experienced men in general. In the North-western tribes, however, each band has also a chief. His authority is very slight, and apparently exercised mainly in regulating the movements of the people from place to place, and in leading in war. He does not live differently from the other members of the band, and unless he is a man of strong character no special respect is paid to him.

Each band also acts as a unit in its relations with other bands of the same or of neighbouring tribes, and in such relations is collectively responsible for the actions of any of its members. When differences arise they are confined to the bands

concerned, and not participated in by the rest of the tribe. Occasionally, it is true, a weak band may seek and obtain assistance from a stronger neighbour; such alliances, however, are never of a binding or permanent nature.

The band is also the land-owning group. Each band possesses its own hunting territory, to which it is restricted, and exercises authority over and specific rights within this territory only. The members of the band roam about freely all over their own land, but do not trespass on their neighbours' territory, though single persons and small parties may occasionally pay short visits across the border, mostly for trading purposes. As a result of this territorial segregation it may often happen that the more widely separated bands of a tribe have no personal knowledge of or direct personal contact with each other.

There are no special boundary marks between the areas occupied by different hunting bands. The limits of each area are as a rule defined by various natural landmarks, such as sand dunes, hills, river beds, vleis, springs, or even trees. These are well known to the people themselves and carefully observed. In some cases the areas of different bands are separated by neutral zones, formed by belts of trees, open flats, water courses, etc. Nobody will venture

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1. Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 168; Kaufmann, "Die ~~Auin~~", 148, 156; Passarge, "Die Buschmänner der Kalahari", 31-32; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 303; D.F. Bleek, "The Naron", 4; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 85

into these except during the course of a visit. In particular, however, each hunting territory is defined by the water-holes in it. These constitute the real property of the band. The encampments are always erected near them, all the game on the land around them or drinking at the water may be hunted only by members of the band, and similarly only they may gather "veldkos" (vegetable foods) in the vicinity. The infringement of territorial rights in this respect is one of the main causes of dispute between neighbouring bands and almost invariably leads to bloodshed.

There is unfortunately no reliable information available as to the extent of territory occupied by the band. The only writer to touch on this question is Seiner, who estimates that in the Grootfontein district in the north-east of South West Africa, the average hunting territory covers about 700 sq. kms.<sup>1</sup> This figure, however, cannot be regarded even as approximate, for it is based on what is almost certainly an excessive estimate of the Bushman population in that district.

Size of the Band.

The number of people who make up a band varies from tribe to tribe, and even within the tribe itself, although it is never considerable. Some of the older writers on the Cape Bushmen speak of bands containing from one hundred to one hundred and fifty persons,<sup>2</sup> but groups much smaller in size are also mentioned.

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1. Seiner, loc. cit.  
 2. Barrow, Travels in South Africa, i. 275; Burchell, Travels in Southern Africa, ii. 53.  
 3. Burchell, op. cit., i. 456; Lichtenstein, Travels in South Africa, ii. 48; Sparrman, Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, i. 144.

Certainly, in more recent times the number of families living together seldom exceeded three or four.<sup>1</sup> The remnants of the Namib Bushmen now also live in very small groups of only a few persons,<sup>2</sup> and so do the Hiechware in the Eastern Kalahari, where a band rarely has more than about twenty members.<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere Dornan records that he has seldom seen more than six or seven families together at a time, all told about thirty persons, and this was in a camp at permanent water.<sup>4</sup> The Kung in Angola are similarly found living together in very small bands. The largest group seen by Miss Bleek consisted of sixteen men and fifteen women; everywhere else little parties were ~~seen~~<sup>not</sup> seen of from two to six men, with their wives and families.<sup>5</sup>

In considering these figures it must be remembered that the Cape Bushmen were already being persecuted and dispersed and their organisation disintegrated by their more powerful neighbours at the time when they came under observation, while the Namib Bushmen are now almost extinct and live in very unfavourable country. Whether they were formerly banded together in larger numbers there is no means of telling. The Hiechware and the Angola Kung, again, are the serfs of the interdwelling Bantu, and the conditions under which they live do not therefore permit of their association in large groups.

In the tribes to the North-West who still

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1. D. F. Bleek, The Mantis, viii.  
 2. Trenk, 166; Range, Landeskunde..des Namalandes, 73.  
 3. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 90.  
 4. Dornan, op.cit., 130.  
 5. D. F. Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola". 109.

retain to some degree their own mode of life and organisation the communities are on the whole somewhat larger, although the numbers fluctuate a good deal. In the Kaukaveld, Passarge frequently saw bands of up to thirty persons, and in the Mahuraveld of between twenty and twenty-five persons.<sup>1</sup> Among the Naron, again, Miss Bleek speaks of a camp containing from sixty to eighty persons,<sup>2</sup> while among the Auen, according to Kaufmann, up to thirty families, i.e. about one hundred persons, may be found camping together.<sup>3</sup> Both writers agree, however, in stating that the numbers may at times be considerably less. Müller visited eight camps of Bushmen in the Kaukaveld, and the figures given by him show that in six of them the population ranged between thirty and seventy, while the remaining two had one hundred and fifty and two hundred inhabitants respectively.<sup>4</sup> Seiner, again, states that the bands of the Kung average fifty persons, although he mentions two encampments in the vicinity of Karakuwisa which were considerably larger;<sup>5</sup> while among the /tannekwe he found five encampments of Bugakwe whose population he estimates altogether as two hundred and twenty, eight of /garikwe containing about four hundred and thirty persons altogether, and one of /gokwe with ninety.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmänner der Kalahari, 9, 10.
  2. D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 4.
  3. Kaufmann, "Die /Auin", 136.
  4. Müller "Erkundungsritt in das Kaukaveld", 530. The actual figures are: 150, 40, 70, 70, 200, 30, 50 and 30.
  5. Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 303, 302.
  6. Seiner, "Bereisung... zwischen Okavango und Sambesi", p. 104.

Not too much weight can be laid on the actual figures given, as for the most part they are based on what are obviously rough estimates, not accurate observations. There seems little doubt, however, that among the North-Western tribes the bands are on the whole more considerable in size than in any of the other tribes, and the average of between fifty to sixty persons to a band given by von Francois<sup>1</sup> may be taken as fairly representative, although the numbers may fluctuate a good deal.

Part of the difficulty in obtaining accurate information about the size of the band lies in the fact that the families belonging to it are not always found living together. Within the territory occupied by the band its members roam about freely in search of food, and family groups often separate from the main body to wander about on their own account for a while. Of the Naron, for example, Miss Bleek writes: "I have sometimes seen three or four huts together, sometimes twenty with from sixty to eighty inhabitants. Every few weeks a new hut appears, or a vacant space shows where one has gone", and she adds that "as the village is such a fluctuating quantity, it is difficult to estimate the numbers of a band or tribe"<sup>2</sup> Indeed it seems to be a feature in the life of some of the Northern tribes that during the dry season the families belonging to the <sup>band</sup> ~~band~~ scatter about separately, to come together

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1. v. Francois, Nama und Damara, 234.  
 2. D.F.Bleek, Naron, 4.



again only in the rainy season, when there is an ample supply of water and vegetable food. Among the Auen, e.g. only one or two families may live together in the dry season, while towards the end of and shortly after the rainy season, when the edible plants of the veld are abundant, up to thirty families may join together.<sup>1</sup> It is thus by no means unusual to find several small encampments of members of the same band scattered about over its hunting territory, a fact which may easily mislead casual observers with regard to their numbers.

On the other hand it also appears that at times members of several different bands may come together for a while. Passarge mentions that in 1897, during an outbreak of rinderpest when cattle were dying in great numbers, Bushmen were drawn together from all parts by the abundance of animal food thus provided. At one spot, e.g. he saw between one and two hundred of them, at another about one hundred, and these included both Auen and Naron.<sup>2</sup> In the Kwebe Hills, again, his camp was passed by about one hundred men returning to the Hainaveld from the sand belt. Together with their women and children this group must therefore have numbered from three to four hundred.<sup>3</sup> It is almost certain that these people too must have belonged to different bands and had only come together

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 136, 138; cf. Passarge, Die Buschmanner der Kalahari, 42; Vialls, "Kalahari Masaras", 30.  
 2. Passarge, op. cit., 7.8.  
 3. Passarge, op. cit., 10.

temporarily, although this is not definitely stated. Kaufmann, again, mentions a camp of Auin at Sidonitsaub which in April 1909 contained about 400 men, or, with women and children, about one thousand persons all told. That these belonged to a number of different bands is obvious from the fact that several chiefs were present, but no common supreme chief.<sup>1</sup> Such gatherings are only temporary in nature, and due to some special circumstance. They cannot therefore be regarded as indicative of the normal groupings of the Bushmen.

#### Social Structure of the Band.

Within the band the only division is into families. The family among the Bushmen consists of a man and his wife or wives, together with their dependent children. It is a unit of great importance in their social and economic life. The members of a family usually live together in one hut; the children until they are mature remain under the direct control of their parents; are nourished and are educated by them; husband and wife jointly contribute to the maintenance of their household, and the domestic tasks and industries are apportioned between them according to fixed custom. The family, moreover, also has much freedom of movement, and, as already mentioned, within the territory occupied by the band individual families will often roam about separately for a while.

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1. Kaufmann, *op.cit.*, 138, 155. It may be mentioned here that the figures given by Kaufmann are as a rule far in excess of those given by other writers of about the same time and on the same district (e.g. Muller, German official estimate) and cannot therefore be accepted unreservedly.

The relationship between the different families constituting a band is seldom defined clearly by the various observers. In particular the information available about the kinship organisation of the Bushmen is very inadequate. Miss Bleek has recently published lists of relationship terms for each of the three main linguistic groups.<sup>1</sup> From these it appears that among all the Bushmen, in addition to various descriptive terms of relationship, there are also certain terms which are applied not to individuals but to whole groups of different relatives, while still others are used reciprocally. Relationship terms of the last two kinds, when found in other societies, are usually indicative of a definite organisation of the community on the basis of kinship. Unfortunately the lists given by Miss Bleek appear to be derived from vocabularies rather than from an actual study of kinship itself, and cannot therefore be used with any degree of confidence. In any case they throw little light on the social organisation of the people, as the information given about the rights and duties regulating the conduct towards one another of persons who are related either by consanguinity or through marriage is far from being exhaustive. But they suggest at least that there is much in the social life of the Bushmen which could be revealed by a careful study of the usages connected with kinship.

There is some evidence, however, to show that among the Cape and Namib Bushmen, who, as we have

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1. D. F. Bleek, "Bushman Terms of Relationship", Bantu Studies, 2. (1924), 57-70.

seen, live in very small groups, the members of such a group are as a rule all related either by consanguinity or through marriage. Of the Cape Bushmen, for example, Miss Bleek says elsewhere: "They live in small family groups, and have no chiefs...Three or four huts stand together. In one is the father, in others his married children. At most eight or ten huts of connections were dotted about within a radius of a few miles from the water, but this is an institution of later days...(At marriage) sometimes the young couple build their hut near the bridegroom's father, sometimes near the bride's. They seem to keep the family groups fairly even".<sup>1</sup> The account given by Trenk of the social structure of the band among the Namib Bushmen is not nearly so definite, but on the whole seems to indicate a similar principle of grouping.<sup>2</sup>

So, too, in the case of the Angola Kung, where the groups are also very small. The details given by Miss Bleek bring this out very clearly: "The families living together are nearly always related; in two cases the men were brothers-in-law, in the first the sister of one man was the wife of the other, in the second the wives were half-sisters. A cousin of the wives and an aunt resided with them. At another place I found a father with his second wife and small children, a grown-up son with wife and children, and a grown-up daughter whose

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1.D.F.Bleek, *The Mantis*, viii, ix.

2.Trenk, "Die Buschleute der Namib", 168, 170.

husband was temporarily absent. The next lot were uncle and nephews, then a mother with married daughter, with a nephew and step-son of his mother's. The last lot encountered, the horde on the Mushumbo, consisted of an old man with two sons, several grandsons both in the male and female line, a son-in-law and nephews and great-nephews, mostly brother's descendants. He introduced himself as the 'father' of them all. Chiefs are non-existent, but deference is paid to the patriarch of any small group, though his authority is very limited.<sup>1</sup>

The bands of these Bushmen may therefore be regarded as consisting of small groups of families related by consanguinity or through marriage. Membership of the group is apparently not based on descent traced through either the male or the female line only, since both married sons and married daughters with their spouses and children may belong to the same group. There is no definite statement as to whether marriage between members of the same group is permitted or not. Generally it would seem that a wife is sought outside the group. In the case of the Cape Bushmen the only girl a man may not marry is his own sister. Marriage with first cousins (both ortho-cousins and cross-cousins) is sometimes found, but more often marriage takes place with "someone else", to use Miss Bleek's words.<sup>2</sup> The same applies to the Namib Bushmen.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, among the Angola Kung, "some of the married couples we met were

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1. D.F. Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola", 109.

2. D.F. Bleek, "Relationship Terms", 59.

3. "Buschleute der Namib". 168.

cousins, but the majority were unrelated, as far as they knew. Some young married people stay with the man's family, others with the woman's.<sup>1</sup>

Among the North-Western Bushmen, on the other hand, the bands, which here are also proportionately much larger, definitely tend to be exogamous. Of the Heikum we are told; "Marriage within the group is forbidden and is patrilocal. There are no group restrictions with regard to marriage. As a rule men do not go far for wives, and intermarriage takes place between contiguous groups or between those which are not separated very far from each other. A man may, however, not marry his own sister, his cousins on either side or his brother's or sister's daughter. The same prohibition applies to women."<sup>2</sup> Among the Auen the only absolute prohibition on marriage is between brother and sister, parent and child, but as a rule marriage does not take place between relatives, and if possible also not between members of the same band. Wives are procured from a distance, often even from other tribes.<sup>3</sup> The Kung also marry outside their own band; while of the Aikwe (Naron) Passarge says that if a man wishes to marry he must select a bride from another band - marriage within the band is not permitted.<sup>4</sup> A few cases were.<sup>5</sup>

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1. D.F. Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola", 112.

2. Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.S." 92.

3. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 156.

4. Vedder, Z. KolSpr., I. 8.

5. Passarge, Die Buschmänner, 105.

found by Miss Bleek among the Naron at Sandfontein in which both husband and wife were from one village. The fact, however, that these marriages were regarded as being against the general rule indicates that here, too, the tendency is to insist on marriage outside the band.<sup>1</sup>

After marriage the wife generally goes to live with her husband's people, although the young couple may remain for some time with the wife's parents before finally settling at the husband's home.<sup>2</sup> As a rule therefore marriage is patrilocal. Among the Naron, however, this rule is not always strictly observed, although it is recognised. "Women are said to leave their own home on marriage and to be taken to the husband's home. But in a few months, when the wife has settled down, it is customary for the young people to return to her parents' home and stay there until the first child is about a year old, so that the girl may have her mother's help and advice. Sometimes the son-in-law settles altogether with his wife's people, but not always. In fact the Naron all say that a man must settle at his father's place, though they do not always do so".<sup>3</sup>

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1. D.F.Bleek, The Naron. 34.

2. Kaufmann, loc.cit.; Vedder, loc.cit.; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 93.

3. D.F.Bleek, "Bushman Terms of Relationship", p.66; cf. The Naron, 34.

Passarge indeed goes so far as to assert definitely that the man joins the family of his wife and becomes a member of their band<sup>1</sup> - a fact which he interprets elsewhere as indicating that the Bushmen are a matrilineal people.<sup>2</sup> It is much more probable, however, that he was misled by the custom of temporary matrilocal residence than that the condition he describes is the normal rule. There is no other evidence to support his statement that the Bushmen have matrilineal institutions.

In fact the prevailing rule in these tribes that marriage should be exogamous and patrilocal suggests rather the possibility that the families constituting the band may be related to each other in the male line. The only definite statement to this effect is about the Heikum, of whom we are told that a band consists of the male relatives of the chief with their wives and families.<sup>3</sup> The relationship to one another of the families in the bands of the other North-Western tribes is not indicated by our authorities. It is reasonable, however, to expect that most of them at least will be similarly connected, since as a rule married sons with their wives and children will remain together in the same band as their father, while married daughters will leave it to join the bands of their husbands. Moreover in case of divorce the children remain with their father, and although unweaned children must go with their mother, they can also be claimed later by him if he likes.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 106.  
 2. Ibid., Sud-Afrika, 1908. p. 252.  
 3. Forie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 86.  
 4. D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 34; Kaufmann, 157.



Dornan says that "the Bushmen of the Kalahari are divided into many small clans", but the term "clan", as used by him, applies sometimes to what has here been called a tribe, and sometimes to a hunting band. He also speaks of exogamous "totemic families" and "totemic clans" among the Hiechware and adjoining tribes, but admits that the occurrence here of this "totemism" is the result of Bantu influence<sup>2</sup>. There is no evidence yet that definitely goes to show the existence of totemism among any of the other Bushman peoples. Nor, as far as can be seen at present, is there any real clan organisation among the Bushmen.<sup>3</sup> The bands of the Cape and Namib Bushmen and of the Kung in Angola are certainly not clans, while the little we know of the social structure of the band among the North-Western Bushmen does not in itself justify our regarding them as such. There is also nothing at all to indicate the existence of a clan organisation cutting across the system of grouping into hunting bands. It must again be emphasised, however, that our knowledge of the social organisation of the Bushmen is fragmentary, and that there are many questions relating to the structure of the band about which no adequate information is

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 67.

2. Dornan, op.cit., 161; cf. 68, 128.

3. The clan is commonly defined as "a unilateral exogamous division of a tribe the members of which are held to be related to one another by some common tie, such as *in descent* belief from a common ancestor, common possession of a totem or habitation of a common territory" (Rivers, Social Organization, 19) A patrilineal clan is one of which membership is determined by descent traced through the male line, i.e., a person belongs to the clan of his father and his fellow-clansmen are primarily related to him through his father. A matrilineal clan is one in which descent is similarly traced through the mother.

available. We are nowhere told clearly, e.g. how membership of the band is determined among the North-Western Bushmen. In general it would seem that a man belongs to the band of which his father is a member. But, as already shown, there are a few cases among the Naron where both married sons and married daughters with their respective spouses and children are found living in the same band. It would throw much light upon the structure of the band if we could know whether all these children are regarded as members of the band in which their parents are living, or whether some distinction is made between the children of married sons on the one hand and the children of married daughters on the other. Without further research in the field, however, no definite statement can be made on this point. There is also nothing to indicate that the people who are related or claim to be related in the male line or again those who are related or claim to be related in the female line are specially bound together by ties of a ceremonial, legal or economic nature. Whether further research therefore will show the bands of the North-Western tribes to be clans is problematical. The trend of the available data gives no clear indication either way.

#### Encampments and Dwellings.

Moving about constantly as they do in the search for food, the Bushmen build no permanent homes. More or less fixed villages are found only among the tribes living in the Okavango-Zambesi region, but even

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here there are distinct winter (dry season) and summer (rainy season) quarters. During the dry season the Tannekwe live in the marsh lands of the Okavango basin, where they have small villages surrounded with pallisades, after the style of their Bantu neighbours. In the rainy season, however, these become uninhabitable. The people then move out to villages on the edge of the surrounding plains, where they also have their hunting grounds. The Hukwe on the plains north-east of Lake Ngami live in similar villages during the rainy season, from which they scatter about in family groups in the dry season to hunt and collect.<sup>1</sup>

Everywhere else the encampments of the Bushmen are temporary. The tribes formerly living in the mountainous regions of the South and East often made their homes in caves and rock-shelters, in which relics of their occupation may still be found. Even to-day the Namib Bushmen also during the latter part of the dry season live chiefly in caves or under overhanging rock-shelters on high mountains, from which they have a wide outlook.<sup>2</sup> Most of the Bushmen, however, now live in flat country, where such natural shelters are denied them. Wherever they stay for more than a couple of days, crude bush huts are put up by the women. These are usually erected within walking distance of a water-hole, about an hour or two away. The people never live at the water itself, for fear of frightening away the game,

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1. Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 296-217.

2. Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 166.

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which is most easily shot or trapped when coming to drink.

There is as a rule no fixed form of settlement. All the families drinking at one waterhole may live in one group, or there may be several lots of huts scattered about in different directions. Among the Cape Bushmen, for example, one might find three or four huts standing together, or several huts dotted about irregularly within a radius of a few miles from the water.<sup>1</sup> Among the Heikum and the Kung, however, the camp appears to be laid out on a definite plan. Among the Heikum the family huts are placed at a regular interval apart and arranged in the form of an irregular circle. At or near the middle of the camp is situated a large tree which is reserved as a meeting place for the men, and for ceremonial and other purposes. The hut of the chief is always placed in the East, facing, but at some distance away from the others. Adolescent boys and girls are accommodated within the circle in separate huts, one for each sex, some distance away from each other; while old widows and widowers, and also visitors, live outside the circle of married people.<sup>2</sup> A similar arrangement of the camp among the Kung is just hinted at by Vedder.<sup>3</sup>

Each family within the group occupies its own hut. Where the families are polygynous, the wives

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1. D. F. Bleek, *The Mantis*, viii.

2. Fourie, "Customs of the Hei//om", 51.

3. Vedder, *Z. KolSpr.*, I. 6.

may live together in the same hut, if they get on well; otherwise each will build herself a separate hut. Children sleep with their parents until strong enough to go about by themselves. The bigger boys and young bachelors sometimes share a hut together, but generally they sleep out in the open, under a tree; and only in very wet weather will their mothers build them a hut. Unmarried girls too old to sleep with their parents also share a separate hut. An old widower may live alone, or with a boy; a widow and her little children, where they do not live alone, are generally quartered with the girls.<sup>1</sup>

The huts themselves are somewhat crude, consisting as a rule merely of a semicircular shelter of branches planted into the ground and covered with grass. The description of the Naron hut given by Miss Bleek<sup>2</sup> applies equally to the huts of most of the other Northern and Central tribes:<sup>3</sup> "The women do all the building here. The men may cut a few branches, but their wives plant them in a semicircle, tie the tops together with a thong or bark fibre, put smaller sticks in between them, and thatch the whole with grass, making a cosy little wind screen. In bad weather chunks of wood are often laid on top to keep the grass in place. The size, and the care with which a hut is built, vary with the season: in dry weather a very slight shelter suffices, just a

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1. D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 4-5; Fourie, "Customs of the Hei-//om" 51; Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 138.  
 2. D.F.Bleek, op.cit., 5.  
 3. Kaufmann, loc. cit.; Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 81-82; Werner, "Heikum- und Kungbuschleute", 259; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 298.

little sloping screen, perhaps made by sticking grass in the branches of a bush. As the rainy season approaches a proper semicircular hut is made, from four to five feet high, the opening to leeward of course, and when the rain really comes, the half circle is increased to about a three-quarter circle, often thereby changing the direction of the opening in accordance with the different wind. There is no door; the opening is about four feet high". The whole structure is easily put up, and is abandoned without misgiving. If the next halting place is near, the women carry some of the materials over; if not, new material is always at hand.

Among the Cape Bushmen light portable huts equally simple in make were sometimes seen. A few bent sticks formed the framework, which was covered with mats made of reeds laid side by side and neatly sewn together. The whole structure was hemispherical in shape, about four feet in diameter, and only three feet in height. When the encampment broke up, the mats were rolled together, and used again at the next spot.<sup>1</sup> Somewhat larger huts made in the same way are also found among some of the North-Eastern tribes at the present time, e.g. the Hukwe, and some of the Hiechware, but in general the grass hut is the prevailing type.<sup>2</sup>

The floor in the interior of the hut is usually scooped out a little, making a sort of nest, in which the inmates sleep; this is lightly strewn with dry

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1. Barrow, Travels in South Africa, i.275-6; Stow, Native Races of S.A., 43.  
 2. Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 298; Wilhelm, "Wortschatz...der Hukwebuschmannsprache", 301; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 90.

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grass, which is often changed. In front of each hut is the fireplace, marked by a mound of ashes rising higher daily and sheltering the opening. Here all the cooking is done, save in wet weather, when it is often done inside the hut. At night a second little fire is made in the middle of the hut, or just inside the opening. Round this the inmates sleep, each curled up with knees to breast and covered by the kaross, which thus serves as a cloak by day and a blanket by night. The ashes of this fire are swept up every morning and added to the heap outside. The neighbourhood of the huts is kept fairly clean. Gnawed bones are thrown on a pile, then carried out to the bushes by the women, who also sweep the huts out with a branch, and clean up any mess made by the little children. No dirt is allowed anywhere near the encampment.<sup>1</sup>

## V.

### SOCIAL LIFE.

#### Daily Life and Food.

The life of the Bushmen is one long struggle for food. For their subsistence they rely entirely on the natural products of their environment; their animal food is obtained mainly by hunting, and occasionally fishing, while their vegetable food consists of edible plants, roots and fruits growing wild in the veld. Save where they have been very considerably influenced by other peoples, they practise neither agriculture nor keep domestic animals which can supply them with food in the way of meat or milk.

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1.D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 5; Ibid., The Mantis, vi.

The very mode of their subsistence makes all the Bushmen wanderers. As soon as the edible plants in the vicinity of one water-hole grow scarce, the people move on to another, following the movements of the game and the growth of the plants. In this way a few months are spent at one water-hole, then some months at another, perhaps at even a third or fourth, and it is often a year or more before the first is revisited.

In particular their movements are regulated according to the season and the distribution of the rainfall upon which they are mainly dependent for their food supply. In the Namib Desert and in the Central and Northern Kalahari each band has different winter (dry season) and summer (rainy season) quarters, to which it resorts as the growth of veld supplies or the movements of the game necessitate. The Namib Bushmen roam about the sand dunes of their region during the rainy season and well into the dry season, but as soon as the water and the succulent naras and tsamas fruits found there are ended, they draw back into the mountains, where each band has its permanent water-holes.<sup>1</sup> In the same way the Bushmen in the Central Kalahari roam in the sand belts during the rainy season, and for part of the dry season, even after standing water has disappeared, still manage to live there on succulent melons and roots; but when these also begin to fail are compelled

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1. Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 166, 168.



to turn back to lasting water-holes. Thus in the rainy season the //aikwe, Tsaukwe, /amkwe, /dukwe and Tserekwe all hunt in the wide sand belt which is pierced by the Letyahau bed, keeping to some extent to their respective hunting territories, but apparently also hunting together peacefully in the most central parts of the region. In the dry season, on the other hand, they turn back to the chalk pans of the Ghansiveld and Mahuraveld and to the river courses of the Tauche - Botletle system, where permanent water is to be found.<sup>1</sup> A similar alternation of residence according to the season occurs, as we have already noted, among the /tanekwe and the Hukwe; and may also be noted among the Kung and the Auen in the Omaheke and Kaukaveld.

It is not only in alternation of residence that the change of season makes itself felt. In some cases it also affects the very cohesion of the band itself, for, as already mentioned, both among the Auen and the Central Kalahari tribes the members of the band live together during the rainy season, when there is a more abundant supply of food, but as the dry season comes on the families scatter and wander off in different directions.

From their huts the people go out every day in search of food. The women rise early, light the fire, and prepare the food for the morning meal, which usually consists of "veldkos" (vegetable foods). After

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmanner. 31-32.

having eaten, the men go out hunting or visiting or engage in some other occupation, such as preparing skins, weapons, utensils, etc. The women accompany each other in search of veldkos and go out soon after the men have left. One may see a group of women and little children start off in one direction, then some men in another, then four or five boys together, then girls, small and big, then some more men, and so on. When food is obtainable at no great distance the women are usually back in camp towards mid-day. When they have far to go they may not reach home till late in the afternoon. Immediately after their return they proceed to prepare the food, the younger married women and young girls in the meantime fetching water from the neighbouring water-hole. Food is ready by the time the men arrive in the late afternoon, and the evening meal, the chief meal of the day, is then eaten without delay. Afterwards visits are usually exchanged from hut to hut, the women going to one hut, the men to another, and so on. Only the owners sit in a hut, while the visitors gather round the fire outside. Or, if it is a fine evening, dancing is begun and kept up till late, everybody taking part except the old people and the little children.

The Bushmen will eat almost everything that can be eaten. Of animal foods the favourite is game of all kinds, when it can be obtained, and they are also very fond of hare, spring hare, guinea fowl, korhaan,

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 44. seq; D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 32; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A", 88.

partridge, ostrich and other birds, as well as birds' eggs. Fish are eaten too wherever they can be caught, and among the Bushmen of the Okavango swamps are a staple element of diet. Ant-eaters, ant bears, tortoises, porcupines, bull frogs, snakes and lizards are greatly relished, while among insects, locusts, scorpions, beetles, young bees and honey, termites, flying ants and ants' eggs are also eaten. In fact all kinds of living animals are eaten, with the almost universal exception of the baboon and the hyena - the former "on account of its being so like a man", the latter "because it eats human corpses"

The most important vegetable foods ("veldkos") in the Southern and Central Kalahari are the tsama (Citrullus vulgaris), "uintjes" (Cyperus edulis Dtr.), Grewia berries, and the //noun (Bauhinea esculenta); in the Namib the !naras fruit (Acanthosicyos horrida Welw.) while as one proceeds northwards various fruit-bearing trees appear, such as the wild fig, palm, omungete nut, wild orange, omuande, omuve, etc. In addition numerous other varieties of edible onions, berries, cucumbers, tubers, melons, ground nuts, etc. appear in great profusion during and after the rainy season, when they form the most important part of the daily menu.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Stow, Native Races of S. Africa, 54 seq.; von Francois, Nama und Damara, 234-5; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 659, seq.; Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 44, seq.; Kaufmann, "Die /Auin", 139-140, 144 seq.; Werner, "Heikum- und Kungbuschleute", 253-5; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 114 seq.; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 6-7; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 98 seq.

Much of the food is eaten raw, but the Bushmen know how to prepare and cook it. Each family prepares its own food, but all food is divided, whether animal or vegetable, between everybody present at the encampment. Cooking is done chiefly by the women, assisted by the children: in exceptional cases the men also cook. Fire is everywhere made by drilling a thin hard stick into another, somewhat softer, in which a notch is made. This second stick is held firmly on the ground by one foot, while the drill-stick is twirled rapidly between the hands, with its lower end pressed into the notch, till sparks come. A little dry grass is in readiness to catch the spark, and when this has caught alight, dry wood is gradually added until a good fire has been set going.

Wild cucumbers, nuts, bulbs, and other similar plant foods are baked in hot ashes covered with cinders, and then eaten whole or in the form of soup or porridge after being pounded up in wooden mortars or on a stone and mixed with boiled blood. Ants are baked in a similar manner, and then sifted through a mat of loosely-woven reeds, while locusts are either baked or boiled. Some specially dainty kinds of meat are roasted over the fire on a wooden spit stuck into the ground. Birds, snakes, small antelopes, etc. are prepared by placing them in a hollow made in the ashes with a flat paddle-shaped wooden scoop, and covering them over with live coals. Other kinds of meat again are cooked with water.

The "tame" Bushmen now use any sort of re-

ceptacle, such as a paraffin tin or a paint tin, for cooking purposes; the Auen and Naron in their more primitive condition use wooden pots, made by themselves or obtained by barter; while among the more Northern tribes clay pots obtained by barter from the Ovambo and other Bantu tribes are sometimes found. The actual manufacture of the clay pots by the Bushmen themselves seems to have been restricted to the tribes south of the Molopo. Food is eaten direct from the pot or from plates and bowls made of wood. Wooden spoons are sometimes used by the northern tribes, but generally either the hands or tortoise-shell and ostrich breast-bone spoons are used in eating.

There is not much information available about food taboos, but it is certain that in various tribes certain foods were forbidden to persons at different stages of life. Thus among the Cape Bushmen little children were not allowed to eat the heart of a jackal (on account of its great timidity), certain portions of the ostrich, or the tip of the springbok's tail; a menstruating girl might not eat game killed by the young men, lest she bring them ill luck - she had to eat only game killed by her father; a certain kind of tortoise was not to be eaten by young unmarried men and women, for fear of arousing the wrath of the rain; women were not allowed to eat the flesh of the lynx; the tail of the porcupine was forbidden to certain (unspecified) persons; while all refrained from eating a certain small

portion of the flesh of the hare.<sup>1</sup> The published information relating to these taboos is unfortunately so fragmentary that little can be gathered of the ideas underlying them. Several of them are undoubtedly connected with wider ritual observances, e.g., the taboo imposed on menstruating girls, and again that associated with the rain; but of the others no full explanation is available, although the taboo on the portion of the hare may be linked up with the Bushman myth of the origin of death, in which the hare plays the part of evil messenger.

Among the Naron, again, "It does not seem,"<sup>2</sup> says Miss Bleek, "as if many taboos in the food line still exist. Paauw meat and ostrich eggs are chiefly given to old men as the greatest delicacies. Some say young children, or girls till they have had their first baby, are not to eat steenbok, lest they remain small, but others tell me that all meat is eaten by everyone. Honey touched by a baboon must not be eaten, or you will die." Among the Auen, young girls and boys apparently may not eat game at all, otherwise they will remain thin; while water and food collected by a menstruating woman may be partaken of only by herself and old people - it "makes others weak".<sup>3</sup>

About the Heikum we have more information on the point, thanks to the excellent description<sup>4</sup> given by Fourie of their hunting observances. The meat

1. L.C. Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 23; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, Index, s.v. "Food - not to be eaten".  
 2. D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 7.  
 3. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 140.  
 4. Fourie, "Customs of the Hei-//om", 54-6.

of all animals killed with the bow and arrow is soxa (taboo) and may not be partaken of until it has been tasted by the chief of the band. All parts of the animal are eaten, but certain categories of people may eat only certain prescribed portions of the animal, the rest of the meat being soxa to them. The man who shot the animal receives the ribs and shoulder-blade of one side; the chief takes portions about two finger breadths in size from each quarter, from each side of the back and one rib from each side; the wife of the man who killed the animal is entitled to the superficial covering of meat and fat of the hind quarters, the entrails and the trotters, which she shares with the other women and the young children, and so on. The whole animal is divided in this way between those present at the encampment, and there are specific rules regarding the preparation of each part by the person or persons receiving it. And again the meat of an animal killed by a dog may not be eaten by women or by any men whose wives are menstruating; while in one group of Heikum (the xom-khoïn) the eland is not killed at all, owing to the belief that harm will befall any person who eats its meat.

As narcotics the Bushmen chiefly use tobacco and dagga. All grown-up Bushmen, and even small children, smoke tobacco when they can get it. They do not cultivate it themselves, although among the Auen and the Naron a few men are said to have made slight efforts to grow tobacco and dagga after the manner of their Bantu and Bergdama neighbours.<sup>1</sup> Almost all the tobacco used by

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1. D. F. Bleek, The Naron, 18; Kaufmann, "Die /Auin", 148-149.

the Bushmen is imported through trade or obtained by service with other peoples, and they are always extremely keen to acquire it.

In the north-west their pipes are generally tubes of serpentine or soapstone, some three inches long and rather wider at one end than at the other, which are cut and hollowed out with the iron spear point or with a knife, or even with a small stone drill. The hollow shin bones of small buck are also sometimes used; but nowadays the most prevalent form of pipe is an empty cartridge case. Pipes consisting of the horn of an antelope were largely used by the Cape Bushmen. Near the point of the horn a hole was made, into which was inserted a reed tube, and on top of this was fitted an elongated clay bowl to hold the tobacco. When these pipes were used, some water was put into the horn, the mouth applied to the large orifice of the horn, and the smoke sucked through the water by deep breaths into the lungs. A somewhat similar form of pipe is found among the Heikum and the Kung, but apparently water is not used here in smoking.

Dagga is mixed with tobacco or smoked by itself whenever obtainable. When taken in slight quantities it has no visible ill-effects, but excessive indulgence is most deleterious to the health, and if persisted in sometimes causes mental aberration and frenzy.

Few of the Bushmen know how to make any kind

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1. Stow, Native Races of S. Africa, 52; Sparrman, Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, i. 164 seq.; Werner, "Heikum-und Kungbuschleute", 257.



of liquor themselves, with the exception, perhaps, only of the Namib Bushmen, who brew a kind of mead out of honey, of which they are very fond.<sup>1</sup> They also do not seem in general to trade for it, although they all appreciate alcohol and native beer when it is given to them. The Hiechware are said to be excessively fond of native beer, which they obtain by barter from the beChwana. According to Dornan they contrive to get drunk whenever they can;<sup>2</sup> but drunkenness as a rule is very exceptional among the Bushmen.

Sexual Life and Marriage.

We know very little about the relations between the sexes before marriage. Either the subject is not mentioned at all by our authorities, or it is curtly dismissed in a short sentence. Kaufmann, e.g. reports of the Auen merely that prenuptial intercourse hardly ever seems to occur,<sup>3</sup> while all Miss Bleek has to say in this connection about the Naron is that the women told her "A girl may do as she pleases, but a married woman may not".<sup>4</sup> And again Dornan writes of the Hiechware: "Sexual intercourse by the lovers before marriage, though looked upon as wrong, is very often indulged in".<sup>5</sup> Vague generalisations such as these really tell us nothing concrete about the nature of sexual life before marriage; they simply ignore the many important sociological problems connected with the whole problem of courtship and selection, social attitude towards prenuptial unchastity, legitimacy and marriage.

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1. Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 168.  
 2. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 121.  
 3. Kaufmann, op.cit., 156.  
 4. D.F. Bleek, op.cit., 32.  
 5. Dornan, op.cit., 128.

Similarly Trenk says that the girls among the Namib Bushmen are usually virgins when they enter into marriage, because most of them marry soon after puberty. But that premarital unchastity does actually occur is shown by his statement in another context that the children born to an unmarried woman are taken over and looked after by the man she subsequently marries, although as soon as they grow up they must be returned to their real father.<sup>1</sup> This seems to imply that physiological paternity is acknowledged by these Bushmen, and that marriage is not necessary to legalise the status of children. Both implications are at variance with what is known of other Bushmen, and need to be confirmed. Among the Heikum, for example, abortion is sometimes practised by unmarried women who are pregnant, or, when "illegitimate" (i.e. prenuptial)<sup>2</sup> births occur, the children are usually buried alive. Here therefore marriage would seem to be an essential preliminary to the right to procreate and rear children, and therefore to the foundation of the family.

A family is constituted by a union between one man and one or more women, this union being legalised by marriage. The Cape and the Namib Bushmen are now said to be monogamous,<sup>3</sup> but in the case of the former polygynous<sup>4</sup> marriages also have been recorded by earlier writers.

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1. Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 169, 168.

2. Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 94.

3. D.F. Bleek, *The Mantis*, ix; Trenk, *op.cit.* 168.

4. Barrow, *Travels in South Africa*, i 275; Campbell, *Second Journey into South Africa*, i 30; Stwo, *Native Races of S.A.*, 95.

The more northerly tribes all permit polygny, although the frequency of such marriages varies. Among the Naron at Sandfontein monogamy is the rule, but a second wife is not considered wrong; it is thought better for a man in such a case to marry the younger sister of his first wife, then the two will not quarrel.<sup>1</sup> Further east three or four wives are not infrequent and actually a man often marries the sisters and cousins of his first wife.<sup>2</sup> The Auen at Rietfontein all have only one wife, "because of the scarcity of food", while those at /Gam on the average have two, and sometimes even five wives. The wife first married holds a higher social position than the rest, which may, however, be due merely to her greater age.<sup>3</sup> Among the Heikum, again, each man as a rule has two wives, who are not necessarily related. The second wife is married some time after the first, who is looked upon as the principal wife and exercises a certain amount of authority over her. Each wife has a hut of her own. The husband lives with the principal wife, and visits the second wife only for purposes of cohabitation.<sup>4</sup> Polygynous marriages are also found among the Hiechware and the Kung of Angola,<sup>5</sup> but are here said to be comparatively rare.

The occurrence of such marriages implies a numerical preponderance of women, but unfortunately in

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1. D.F. Bleek, *The Naron*, 34.

2. Passarge, *Die Buschmanner*, 106.

3. Kaufmann, "Die /Auin". 157.

4. Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 92.

5. Dornan, "The Tati Bushmen", 47; D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola". 55.

no instance are figures given to show the proportion of men and women, nor even of monogamous and polygynous marriages, within the band. The motives of polygyny are also not clearly defined. We are told, however, that among the Naron chiefs mostly have two wives,<sup>1</sup> so that here it may be partly associated with rank; while among the Auen, and probably also among the Heikum, the second wife is often not taken until the first is old and past child-bearing. A similar statement is made by Barrow with regard to the Cape Bushmen. In such cases, naturally, only the older men have more than one wife.

The Cape and the Namib Bushmen, as previously mentioned, forbid marriage only between own brother and sister, parent and child; and so do the Angola Kung. Beyond this no special prohibition or injunction appears to exist. Among the Heikum, on the other hand, the range of forbidden relatives is said to be extended to include all cousins and nieces; while in all the North-Western tribes, including the Heikum, there is also a definite tendency towards band exogamy. This means that in general courtship and marriage take place between persons belonging to different bands, and therefore to different localities. As a rule boys and girls are not permitted to marry until they have reached the age of puberty, and have passed through the puberty ceremonies.<sup>2</sup> Marriage usually takes place soon afterwards.

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1. D. F. Bleek, *The Naron*. 37.

2. Passarge, *Die Buschmanner*, 101; Kaufmann, "*Die Auen*", 157, 158; Fourie, "*Bushmen of S.W.A.*", 89, 91.

Among the Naron and the Auen, for example, most persons are married by the time they are twenty, many of them indeed when they are actually several years younger.<sup>1</sup>

From the sketchy descriptions available about the marriage customs of the Bushmen, there does not appear to be any elaborate ceremonial attaching to the process of courtship and marriage. The actual details recorded vary slightly from tribe to tribe, but in the main features there is a considerable degree of uniformity.<sup>2</sup> The initiative lies as a rule in the hands of the prospective bridegroom. When he has found a suitable girl, he either himself or through an intermediary, such as his best friend, has to win the consent of her parents, above all of her mother, to whom he brings gifts in the form of game and vegetable food, blankets, skins, beadwork and so on. This may last for a considerable period, often over a year or so. If no objection is raised to him, and his gifts are accepted, he after a while simply takes the girl to his hut, and the marriage is regarded as settled. As a rule no special ceremony marks this step, but it is usually accompanied by a feast, in which the families and friends of both bride and bridegroom participate. Among the Northern Bushmen, it is obligatory on the bridegroom that he should kill a head of big game and present it either to the bride or to her parents to provide the

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1. Kaufmann, op.cit., 156; D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 33-34.
  2. Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 168; Chapman, Travels in South Africa, 1.258; Passarge, op.cit., 105; Kaufmann, op.cit., 156; Vedder, Z.KoIspr., 1,8; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 124-128; Fourie, op.cit.,

marriage feast. After marriage he also has to present his wife with a full woman's kaross, as well as other articles of clothing, ornaments, etc., while she brings with her all her own property, mainly domestic utensils.

The only Bushmen of whom a definite marriage ceremony has been recorded are the now extinct inhabitants of Basutoland and Orange Free State. Here, the consent of the bridegroom having been obtained and also the approval of her parents, who received some kind of present, a day was fixed for the event. All the neighbours round about were invited to a feast. When they had all begun to make merry, the young man took the opportunity to seize the bride. This was the signal for her relatives to set upon him with their digging-sticks; they gave him a sound thrashing, and a general fight ensued. If the bridegroom managed to keep a tight hold through all this, the issue was decided: he was a married man. If not, he would have to undergo a second ordeal some other time before he could again claim his bride.<sup>1</sup>

Among the North-Western tribes girls taken in war or found trespassing are also often held as wives by their captors.<sup>2</sup> Among the Naron, indeed, marriage is <sup>said to be</sup> nominally by capture. A young man wishing to marry comes with an older man to another village, ostensibly to pay a visit, and sits chatting, without mentioning his purpose. They look out for a good opportunity,

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1. Stow, Native Races of S.A., 96, quoting Miss L.C. Lemue; cf. Arbousset, Relation d'un Voyage, etc., 502; Dornan, "Bushmen of Basutoland", 442.  
2. Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 154; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 33; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 85.

and then carry off the girl to their own village. By this act she is married, whether she likes it or not. It seems, however, that talk about the marriage mostly precedes the capture. "The mother thinks it proper to make a fuss, but if her objections are only for show, the men take no part in the matter, and the girl is led away, probably quite willingly, though etiquette demands some coyness. If, however, the mother really objects, thinks her daughter too young, or does not like the suitor, she rouses the men to action, and the would-be bridegroom and his friend have to depart". During the stay of Miss Bleek at Sandfontein, an attempt at real capture did occur, but the assailants were driven off in this way. On the old days much fighting seems to have been caused by attempted capture; now fear of the white man tames down the affair.

The relation between husband and wife in one of its aspects is sexual. By marriage a man acquires the sole right to sexual intercourse with the woman who becomes his wife; at the same time it is the duty of a married man to avoid sexual relations with women, whether married or unmarried, other than his wife or wives. Marital infidelity appears to be severely condemned by all the Bushmen. Unfortunately almost all the information bearing on this topic relates only to the treatment of women. Among the //aikwe, e.g. adultery on the part of the wife often leads to bloodshed or thrashing,

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L.D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 33-34.

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although on the other hand the husband apparently often enough gives her cause for jealousy<sup>1</sup>; while among the Naron at Sandfontein, if a man catches his wife misconducting herself he tries to kill the other man, and beats the wife, but he generally does not drive her away if she has children.<sup>2</sup> Marital fidelity among the Auen <sup>is said</sup> seems to be fairly well maintained. When adultery does occur, the adulterer is killed, if possible, while the wife is more or less severely beaten, according to the temper of the husband; she is apparently not killed. There seems to exist, however, a form of prostitution, in which a married woman offers herself to different men for gifts, although if this comes to the notice of her husband he will drive her away. Kaufmann finds it difficult to reconcile this with the blood vengeance practised in case of adultery, but adds the explanation given him by the people, that "if a woman is intimate with many men, the husband can hardly wage 'war' with them all!"<sup>3</sup> Among the Namib Bushmen, again, an adulterer can either be killed or made to pay compensation. We are unfortunately not told the conditions under which one alternative rather than the other is exercised, nor in what the compensation consists. The wife is sent away, and the adulterer, if unmarried, is then expected to marry her. If she is pregnant the child must be reared by him, and sent back when grown up to the original husband.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Passarge. Die Buschmanner, 106.
  2. D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 34.
  3. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 156, 157.
  4. TRENK, "Buschleute der Namib", 168.



Besides this sexual relation between husband and wife, there is also the economic relation. The two share the same hut, and take their meals in common. It is the duty of the wife to build the hut, to provide the vegetable food, the firewood and water, and to cook the meals; while it is the duty of the husband to provide the game for himself and his wife, to make her clothes and certain of her utensils. The economic burden of the woman has led some writers to depreciate her status, but on the whole it would seem that the wives are the mates of their husbands, not their servants, and will often take their own way, in spite of the man's wishes. The position of the wife is in fact hardly inferior to that of her husband, who is often enough henpecked by her.

In addition to establishing a special relationship between husband and wife, marriage also involves the formation of further special relationships, especially with the parents-in-law. After marriage, as we have seen, the young couple often remain for some time with the wife's parents before taking up their residence with the husband's group. Among the Kung and the neighbouring tribes to the east, the husband has during this period to hunt for his parents-in-law and supply them in this way with animal food. If he neglects to do this, his wife may be taken away from him.<sup>1</sup> We thus get the creation of an economic relationship between a man and his parents-in-law.

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1. Vedder, Z. KolSpr., 1.8; Chapman, Travels in South Africa, i.258.

Moreover, among almost all the Bushmen, marriage also creates a special pattern of behaviour between a man and his parents-in-law, and in some cases between a woman and her husband's parents. Thus among the Kung the husband has to avoid his mother-in-law, the wife apparently also her father-in-law. The wife's parents do not enter the hut of the young couple, nor again may the husband enter their hut. The game which he kills for his father-in-law he lays down in front of the latter's hut.<sup>1</sup> Similarly among the Naron a man is not supposed to speak to his wife's mother, nor a woman to her husband's father. Actually it seems that sitting near or consorting together is avoided, rather than the actual addressing of the person concerned.<sup>2</sup> So, too, among the Auen, a man avoids the company of his mother-in-law and does not sit together with her. If he approaches a fire in order to sit there, she gets up and goes away; if he wants to speak to her, he must do so from a distance.<sup>3</sup> Among the Heikum, again, a son-in-law neither looks at nor speaks to his wife's mother, nor will he mention her name or enter her hut even in case of sickness or during her absence. When in the absence of his mother-in-law, he wishes to speak to anybody in her hut, he will keep at a distance and depart as soon as he sees her approaching. They never refer to each other by name, but always

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1. Vedder, loc.cit.; cf. Chapman, loc.cit.; D.F. Bleek, Bantu Studies, 2, 63.

2. D.F. Bleek, op. cit., 64; The Naron, 66.

3. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 156.

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as "my son-in-law" or "my mother-in-law". The son-in-law also does not associate with his father-in-law, but avoids him in the same way. Should they meet accidentally they may exchange greetings, but no general conversation will take place, nor will they look each other in the face.<sup>1</sup> A similar avoidance of the parents-in-law among the Cape Bushmen is indicated in a text recorded by Bleek and Lloyd,<sup>2</sup> but no details are given.

The duration of married life varies. Among the Naron one sees couples who have grown up together; on the other hand one hears of cases of desertion on either side. If there are no children, no one worries about it; if there are youngsters, the relations try to bring the parents to reason. Where separation does take place, the children belong to the father; an unweaned child must go with the mother, but the father can claim it later if he likes. People who have separated are not ostracised, and both parties generally marry again. Among the Auen divorce is rare, and only takes place when the wife is too old; she may then be simply sent away. Generally, however, she stays with her husband, who then takes a second wife, younger and more active. The children of a divorced woman remain with their father, and are brought up by his new wife. Among the Namib Bushmen, again, divorce may result only from adultery or barrenness, and is at the discretion of the husband. If he decides to divorce his wife, he

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1. Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 93-94.  
2. D.F. Bleek, Bantu Studies, 2.58.

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brings her back to her parents. The mature children remain with him, while the young ones who have to go with their mother also come to him when grown up. After divorce both parties are at liberty to marry again as soon as they wish.<sup>1</sup>

Marriage is, of course, also dissolved by the death of one of the spouses. As a rule the survivor is permitted to re-marry. Among the Basutoland Bushmen, however, it is said that a widow found it difficult to get a second husband, on account, perhaps, says Arbousset, of the belief of the people that the greater part of the deaths which occurred were due to witchcraft rather than disease. On the other hand great attention was paid to her in the camp, where no piece of game was ever eaten without her having a share. Further north this fear of marriage with the widow is not found. Among the Naron a widow may marry her late husband's brother, but need not do so; she is quite at liberty to marry any other man. If she re-marries - and if young enough most widows do so - her new husband is expected to look after the children; otherwise the duty falls upon their father's brother. An unmarried widow may stay near her late husband's people, or return to her own people, as she pleases. Widows among the Auen may also marry after a time, and, as among the Naron, there is no levirate. We are not told whose duty it is to look after the children of a widow; but a widower's

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1. D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 34; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 157; Trenk "Buschleute der Namib", 168.

children remain with him, and if he marries again are brought up by his new wife. The survivor of a marriage among the Namib Bushmen is not allowed to re-marry until a full season has elapsed since the death of his or her partner. This delay is due to the belief that, for example, a woman who is married by a man immediately after the death of his first wife will also die. A widow returns to her own relatives on the death of her husband, taking with her the unweaned children, who must however later return to their father's relatives. If she marries again the new husband must look after the children until they are old enough. There is no mention of the levirate, but the existence of the sororate is implied in Trenk's statement that a widower is expected to marry an eligible sister of his dead wife.<sup>1</sup>

Birth and Childhood.

A marriage is not regarded as fully consummated until the birth of a child. Among the Namib Bushmen, for example, (as already noted, barrenness) is regarded as one of the main <sup>grounds</sup> ~~reasons~~ for divorce. It is customary among the Naron and the Heikum for a woman to return to her mother's home for her first confinement; about the other tribes there is no definite statement on this point. Pregnant women carry on their normal daily occupations until the last moment, collecting veldkos and water, walking as far as the rest do, and so on, although

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1. Arbousset, op. cit., 504 ; D.F. Bleek, op. cit., 34; Kaufmann, op. cit., 157; Trenk, op. cit., 168.

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they are apparently treated with some consideration in the way of food.

The labour is sometimes conducted in the camp, but generally, as soon as the first symptoms appear, the woman leaves the camp, and the birth takes place in the open, some distance away.<sup>1</sup> Wherever it may occur, a little soft grass is collected, on which the woman rests. Assistance is given by her mother and some other old women. There do not appear to be any special midwives. Men may not be present at delivery; among the Heikum tufts of grass are uprooted and placed upside down in a tree as a warning to them that labour is in progress. Among the Auen the husband of the woman fastens his bowstring round her body; he then goes away and remains in his hut until the birth has taken place. There does not seem to be any determinate symbolic meaning attached to this act, although the explanation given to Kaufmann was that it facilitated the birth. There is no record from any of the other tribes of a similar act in which the husband is ritually linked up with the birth.

During labour the woman sits on the ground with knees upraised and her back supported, and is roughly massaged by the attendant women. For the act of birth itself, which generally is not prolonged, she lies on her side. The umbilical cord is not tied, but cut with a

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1. The principal descriptions of birth are given by: Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 98-99; Kaufmann, "Die /Auin", 158; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 292; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 129; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 30; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 94.

knife; the Auen use the sharp edge of a reed for this purpose, never anything else. A plaster of mud and leaves is put on the baby's abdomen, if there is much bleeding. Before, during and immediately after the birth, the mother may not be washed with water, nor may the child, which is simply wiped off with the soft grass, and put into its mother's kaross. Where birth is difficult, or when, e.g. the woman is ill at the time of delivery, the magician is called in among the Auen. He attempts by means of sucking at the womb and by murmuring spells to lighten the process. This is the only instance on record of any magical assistance being given at birth.

Immediately after the birth of the child, it is simply put into the kaross of its mother, who then returns to the camp. Among the Heikum and the Auen she is now for a week or more relieved of her normal daily duties. Among the Naron, however, she immediately resumes her ordinary avocation. Occasionally harder births occur, and then the woman may be quiet for a few days, if she pulls through; but a really difficult birth means the death of both mother and child, as no method of helping save massage is understood by them. In the event of the mother dying during or shortly after childbirth, some other woman may suckle the child and rear it, if it lives; but more often it is buried alive with its mother, especially among the wilder bands.

In this connection reference may be made to a practice recorded among the Kung by Seiner, but not

reported by any of the other writers on this or other tribes. According to him, there exists a belief that if a child is placed too soon at its mother's breast both will die. Immediately after birth the infant is therefore handed over to another woman to be suckled. Often enough, however, there is no suitable woman in the small band, and so the hungry infant makes futile attempts at several different dry breasts, to be returned finally after several days, strengthless and dying, to the arms of its mother. He attributes the great infant mortality chiefly to this practice, which often results in the infant's not receiving its mother's breast until too late.

Twin births are apparently very rare. Among the Auen and the Heikum one of twins is invariably killed by being buried alive by the mother or one of her attendants immediately after the birth. If the twins are of opposite sexes, it is always the boy who is killed in this way. Among the Kung, again, both are buried alive at birth, for it is believed that they bring ill-luck on the parents. What treatment is adopted in the other tribes is not definitely stated; among the Naron it appears that they are both allowed to live.

The exposure or killing of deformed children does not seem to occur in any of the tribes. Abortion,



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however, is often induced by treading on the body of the pregnant woman. It appears to be practised mainly when she is unmarried; and therefore seems to imply that only married women have the right to bear and rear children.

There appears to be no special ceremony held in connection with birth, although if there is enough food - but only then, - a feast followed by a dance may be given by the parents. The child is usually named shortly after birth. The name is given by the parents in consultation with the grandparents and other relatives, and is generally that of some near relative, boys receiving the name of a grandfather or an uncle, girls that of a grandmother or an aunt. Often there is a squabble about the name between the father's people and the mother's people; whichever party is in force generally succeeds in having its wishes adopted, and the child is named after a member of that side of the family.

Children are nursed by their mothers till they are about three or even four years old. They cannot be weaned sooner, as there is no suitable food; they begin to taste vegetable foods quite soon, but in order to satisfy their hunger must still have recourse to their mother's breast.

This prolonged weaning is responsible for the custom of infanticide found among the North-Western tribes. Sexual intercourse between the parents is not

discontinued until pregnancy is far advanced, and it is resumed shortly after the birth. As no preventive means save abortion are known, pregnancies therefore follow in rapid succession during the course of married life, and it often happens that another child, or even two, may be born while the first is still at the breast. In such a case the new child is, as the natives euphemistically put it, "thrown away". Care is taken that the birth takes place in the bush far away from home, and an attempt is made to force it on by massage. But whether alive or still-born, the infant is buried in the nearest burrow or in a hole in the ground made for the purpose by the old woman who helps the mother. This practice is generally done against the husband's wishes, but the women are adamant in their refusal to rear two children at the same time. They find it impracticable to provide for two children of different ages, but both needing the shelter of their kaross and to be carried on marches, and are determined not to have another child to rear until the first is able to do without their milk and care. In selecting which children shall live, they go merely by the convenient time, not by the health of the infant; several people have been seen with physical defects dating from birth. It follows that only every second or third child is usually weaned, the one or two born in the interval being killed without exception. This practice is not heard of among the Southern or the Namib Bushmen.

In consequence of this practice, as well as of the high mortality among infants caused by the natural hardships and strenuous conditions of life, relatively few children survive, and the families are therefore small. On the average women do not rear more than two or three children, although among the Naron Miss Bleek found one or two middle-aged women who counted up to five children they had reared - the others were never mentioned. The eldest children were already married,<sup>1</sup> the others quite small.

All Bushmen are very fond of their children, who receive love and care without stint. Babies and young children are spoiled, and rarely corrected. The children begin to walk early, but long after a child can toddle it still must ride in its mother's kaross on food-gathering expeditions, giving her an additional burden to carry wherever she goes. When finally old enough to look after themselves, the youngsters go out with other children, trailing after the women or bigger girls. They have no special playthings; infants amuse themselves with sticks and stones and grasshoppers, playing about in the sand; the young boys soon make themselves or are given little bows and wooden arrows, with which they shoot small birds and reptiles.

Both boys and girls go out with their elders on the daily excursions in search of food, even the babies go, riding in their mother's karosses. The day

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1. D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 31. cf. Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 136.

is spent out in the open, in the veld; and here the children receive most of their education. The girls accompany their mothers, from whom they learn to know the plants and animals and their value as food, how to collect vegetable foods, and how to use the different implements and utensils. The bigger boys follow the men out hunting. Towards his eighth or ninth year each boy is provided by his father with a proper bow and arrows, which are, however, not poisoned. With these he is allowed to shoot hares, guinea fowl and other birds, wild cats, small buck, etc. After killing his first steenbok or duiker he is given a few poisoned arrows, and later, when he has become proficient in the use of these, he is taught to stalk and shoot big game. By the time he reaches the age of puberty he has, as a rule, gained a very good knowledge of veldcraft.

In this way the children grow up in intimate contact with Nature, and acquire all the knowledge necessary for hunting and collecting. In the evening they run about near the huts, or play various games, mostly denoting scenes of animal life, or take part in the dances, or sit by the fire, till they feel sleepy and crawl on to the grass in the hut. No one send them to bed.<sup>1</sup>

So the children, during infancy and childhood, remain under the direct control and in the care of their

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 100; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 135; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 18 seq., 31-32; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 89.

parents. Once they are grown up, no one really controls them. The tie between parents and mature children is simply one of respect and love, but there is no lack of family affection. Grandparents, uncles, aunts and other relatives are also respected to some extent, varying according to character. Among the Naron, grandparents, especially on the mother's side, take a great interest in their grandchildren, and often adopt one which has been weaned. The grandmother is often the person who teaches a child to speak. Between two sisters there is usually a close bond of affection, they are generally companions, and help each other with their babies. In certain Cape Bushman tales the wife's unmarried sister is shown staying with her, as helper and nurse of the baby. On the other hand, among the Naron at least, there is a prohibition against a grown-up brother and sister speaking or sitting together. Here, too, as in the case of the mother-in-law, the sitting, and not the speaking, is the important part, for Miss Bleek records having heard a fully grown-up brother and sister address each other, while passing<sup>1</sup> at a good distance.

#### Puberty Ceremonies.

The attainment of adolescence is marked among all the Bushmen by the performance of certain ceremonies, through which the young people have to pass before being admitted to full membership of the group.

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1. D. F. Bleek, "Bushman Terms of Relationship", 59, 66-67; cf. Ibid., The Naron, 32; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 134.

Puberty ceremonies for girls are found in all the Bushman tribes. These ceremonies vary somewhat amongst the different tribes.

Among the Cape Bushmen a girl at the time of her first menstruation was in a state of taboo. She was segregated in a small hut; she was not to walk about freely nor look at the springbok lest they become wild; and when going out she had to look down at the ground. She was not allowed to eat game killed by the young men, but only that which her father had shot; and, above all, she was not to look upon or be approached by men for fear of harm to them. There are several legends describing how men who were looked upon by a girl at this time became fixed in whatever position they then occupied, with whatever they were holding in their hands, etc., and were even changed into stars in the sky or into trees which talked; while girls who were disobedient were transformed into  
<sup>1</sup>  
 frogs.

In the North-Western tribes (Naron, Auen, Kung), the central feature of the girl's puberty ceremony is the eland bull dance, which is held in the girl's honour. As soon as a girl has her first period, neighbours and friends assemble to a big feast given by her parents. By day the girl is kept in a special hut, tended by women only, and no men may come near her; while every night until her period has passed

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1. Bleek, Bushman Texts, 10, 14, 18; Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 10; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folk-lore, 76-77.

the eland bull dance is held. All the men and boys leave the camp, save two old men, who tie elands' horns, or wooden imitations thereof, to their heads, and wait in the bushes. The older women stand in a line, singing and clapping their hands. The girl is brought from her hut, and sits or lies on the ground by them. The younger women then circle round before them, or make a figure of eight. They dance with their arms outstretched before them, and have a peculiar slow, swaying step. As they dance they lift their karosses and aprons to one side, and expose their buttocks, which they waggle from side to side. Then the two "bulls" stamp up, holding their karosses well pulled down over their shoulders, and presenting a hunched-up appearance. They join the line of dancers, sometimes leading it, sometimes in the middle of it, and dance with a jogging step. The song accompanying their movements is full and low in tune, but without words. The motif of this dance clearly is the courtship of the eland bull, and although as seen by Passarge and Miss Bleek it was<sup>1</sup> kept within bounds it can easily become indecent.

The /nu//en hold a similar dance on this occasion, a man with a bird's beak on his head taking<sup>2</sup> the place of the "eland bull".

The puberty ceremony for girls among the Heikum is a much more elaborate affair. As young girls (/kham-

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 101-103; Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 157-158; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 23.

2. D.F. Bleek, loc. cit.

khoidi) approach the age of puberty they are placed in a special hut (/kham-khoidi oms), in which they sleep at night. During the daytime they gather veldkos either by themselves or in company with the married women, who also visit the hut and instruct them in the various matters pertaining to domestic life, teach them to prepare the food, to gather wood, to make the fire, and so on. Men may not enter the hut, nor may the girls speak to or be addressed by any man, whether married or single.

At the onset of her first menstruation, a girl is isolated in a small round hut (/hawa omi, hut for waiting), which is completely closed in except for a small entrance, and which is situated close to the /kham-khoidi oms. In this hut she remains as long as the flow lasts; she may not show herself outside, and above all no man may pass close to the hut or attempt to address her. She is fed by her mother, or, in the absence of the latter, by another married woman, and is not visited by anybody except the person who feeds her. She may be given veldkos, but is not allowed to partake of meat. Every day, too, her hair is smeared by the attendant woman with a mixture of red bark powder and powdered seed.

When the flow has ceased the girl informs her mother or the woman who has been attending her. The latter tells the other married women, and they all prepare for the /hawa-~~f~~nab (menstruation dance). This dance takes place during the day on the central space of the camp. Men may not take part in it, nor even



watch it. The initiate is led out of her hut by two of the women, who cover her whole head and face with a duiker skin kaross, leaving only the eyes visible. Each of the women then takes her by the arm, and they join the line of dancers. The women dance abreast of each other, the feet being thrown out sideways, with an old woman leading. What their movements are intended to represent we are not told. When the dance is about to end, the girl is returned again to her hut by the two women who led her out.

The same procedure is gone through for three or four days in succession. On the last day, after the dancing has ceased, the girl is presented with various trinkets by the women who took part in the ceremony. Then, after she has been returned to her hut, the adolescent boys, who remain in the camp for the occasion, are summoned to pass in Indian file behind her hut. As they pass, each presses his scrotum against her hand, which is passed through a small opening made by her mother in the back of the hut, and she touches it with forefinger and thumb. This is done to protect the boys against swelling of the testicles, which is believed to result from contact, direct or indirect, with a menstruating woman or anything pertaining to her. After all the boys have filed past and returned to their hut, an old woman enters the girl's hut and rubs down her body with a preparation of roots. The girl is now ceremonially taken to fetch first water and then wood, which are brought at a run and placed at the hut of the

old woman who rubbed her down. After these have been deposited the ceremony is over. This fetching of water and wood, together with the cleansing, no doubt symbolises the return of the girl to the normal occupations of daily life.

The girl is now a woman eligible for marriage, she lives in a new hut built for her by her mother, accompanies the married women in their daily occupations, and associates with them. The food collected by her during the four or five days following the ceremony is eaten only by very old women, e.g., the one who rubbed her down. After that any food she gathers is shared with her mother. On subsequent menstrual periods she may not go into the veld to gether veldkos, but must remain in the camp, and is fed by her mother.<sup>1</sup>

In many of its details this ceremony closely resembles the puberty ceremony for girls among the Hottentots. The possibility that it may even have been taken over from the latter cannot be ignored, as the Heikum have unquestionably been influenced to a considerable extent by them. On the other hand, in the seclusion of the girl in a separate hut, the avoidance of contact with men, and in the performance of a special dance, this ceremony also presents features noted in the corresponding ceremonies of other Bushman tribes. The differences apparent between it and the latter may therefore be due simply to the fact that it has been studied and recorded in much fuller detail. Without further study of the other Bushman tribes no definite assertion can be made on this point.

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1. Fourie. "Certain Customs of the Hei-//om Bushmen", 57-59.

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The corresponding ceremony among the Kung in Angola differs in several important respects from those hitherto noted. Each girl, at her first menstruation, is placed in a separate hut, and kept there until the New Moon is seen. A dance is held in her honour on the first nights; both sexes take part in this, but not the girl herself. During this time a row of small parallel cuts, which are all blackened with ashes, is made on her face, or arms, or legs, by her father or a male magician. Miss Bleek is convinced that these cuts are partly for ornament, but that there also appears to be a religious element present, as one woman informant said that //gaua, a supernatural personage, leads this dance, and that the cuts are made in his honour. <sup>1</sup> Both the scarifications and the presence of a supernatural being are foreign to the puberty ceremonies for girls in other Bushman tribes; but, as will be seen shortly, both occur (in somewhat different form) in the puberty ceremonies for boys among the North-Western Bushmen.

In all the ceremonies hitherto noted, girls are required to pass through them individually as soon as they have their first menstrual period. Among the Hiechware of the Eastern Kalahari, however, it appears from the very fragmentary data supplies<sup>d</sup> by Dornan that girls are initiated in groups, and that the central feature of the ceremony is an operation performed on

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1. D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 51; Ibid., "Bushman of Central Angola". 122.

each of them, which consists in the "perforation" of the clitoris with a stone knife, the operators being the older women.<sup>1</sup> If this information be correct, we have here a ceremony in every way distinct from those of the other Bushmen, and one which is almost certainly borrowed from the neighbouring Bechwana, whose puberty ceremonies for girls are of a somewhat similar nature.

Boys are subjected to the ceremony of initiation after reaching the age of puberty, and as soon as they are considered to have become proficient in the pursuit of game, especially big game. Among the North-Western tribes this ceremony is carried out in a secluded spot in the bush, near which no woman may come.<sup>2</sup> Here all the eligible big boys are taken by the old men, with a couple of magicians in charge; and here they remain for about a month, living together in a big hut or enclosure. During the first few days they are roughly handled and half-starved. They may have no fire, and eat no meat, but live only on a little water and on raw roots and berries, which are sprinkled by the magicians with "medicine", i.e., powdered bark. The greater part of this early period is spent in the performance of sacred dances (termed gi, men's dance), which are held all through the day and often continued at night.

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 159.  
 2. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 100-101; Kaufmann, "Die /Auin", 157; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 23-25; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 91-92. D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola"; 51; Ibid., "Bushmen of Central Angola", 122. Passarge says the ceremony takes place during the dry season, i.e. at the coldest time of the year; Fourie, on the other hand, that it is always held during the rainy season, when food is plentiful. The other writers do not mention the time of year.

These dances among the Naron are described as follows by Miss Bleek: "All gather in a circle, clap their hands and sing a weird, solemn tune with the refrain 'honk a honk'. Then they stamp round in a circle waving their arms to another phase of the melody (no words are used); then they stand still and sing the first part again and so on." At this dance the boys often wear ostrich feathers, or the head and beak of the black and white stork, as head ornaments; otherwise there is no special costume. Anyone owning dancing rattles also wears them, as at the ordinary dances.

On one of the nights of this dance, "a supernatural being called Hishe approaches the dancers, circles round them and is driven away by the medicine-men. The older men had seen this being ~~alone~~. One said that it was like a woman in appearance, another that it was not a person at all, but a creature about three feet high with a flat head, red eyes underneath the head, a black body, wings and claws. Some old Auen said two beings came, male and female, looking like lions, but walking upright. They were followed by children like baboons. The male came first and called the others, they danced round and vanished to the east. Apparently the magicians of different times and places got up different bogies. Latterly their invention seems to have failed, for the middle-aged men told me Hishe came to the dance, but only the magicians saw her and drove her away". Similarly, among the Kung in Angola, "the spirit Huwe occasionally

appears and dances with them, sometimes as a youth, sometimes in double form as man and woman. Huwe then retires without any particular demonstration."

As will be shown subsequently, Hishe and Huwe are beings who figure prominently in the religious beliefs of the Naron and Kung respectively, so that, inadequate though <sup>about these ceremonies</sup> our information <sup>is</sup>, there can be little doubt that <sup>they</sup> (~~these ceremonies~~) serve in some way to introduce the initiates to the mysteries of tribal religion.

Among the Heikum, after this dance, which takes place on the fourth day, the bodies of the boys are cleansed with chewed roasted //noun (a staple vegetable food), and they are permitted to move about the camp and to partake of food. As they retire to rest at night their bows and arrows are handed to them by the men in charge. From now onwards each boy is taken separately and required to prove his skill in stalking and killing game with bow and arrow. It is probable that something similar takes place in the other tribes, as well, as these ceremonies certainly have much to do with hunting, but there is no concrete information on this point.

On some day during this month, generally towards the end, the boys who have passed satisfactorily through this test receive the tribal cuts (//gi cuts) between the eyebrows, and, among the //aikwe and Auen, also on the back between the shoulder blades. These consist of from one to three vertical cuts, about half an inch to an inch long, and are made by the magicians.

Among the Naron powdered acid roots are rubbed into the wounds to keep them from closing as they heal, but no colouring matter is applied; among the //aikwe, however, wood ash is rubbed in to make the wounds black. All men in the North-Western tribes<sup>5</sup> have these cuts, which are supposed to make them see well, i.e. to bring them good luck in hunting. After this operation the boys are permitted to return to the camp. They are now regarded as men, they may marry, and they take part in the councils and dances of the men.

The ceremony described above appears to exist only in the North-Western tribes. There is no definite record of any puberty ceremonies for boys among the Southern Bushmen, while their existence among the Namib Bushmen is categorically denied by Trenk.<sup>1</sup> But it may be mentioned here that from information obtained by Orpen from a member of the now extinct tribe of Basuto-land Bushmen it appears that there were certain dances connected with religious beliefs, the secrets of which were known only to the men initiated into them.<sup>2</sup> Campbell also records a dance of these Bushmen which was described to him by an informant: "When the Bushmen dance, Ko (a deity) sometimes comes and informs them where game is to be procured; and when any animals are killed, certain parts of them may only be eaten by particular

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1. Trenk. "Buschleute de Namib". 169.  
 2. Orpen, "Mythology of the Maluti Bushmen", Folk-Lore, 30, 142.

persons. She is a large, white figure, and sheds such a brightness around, that they can hardly see the fire for it; all see and hear her as she dances with them... They cannot feel what she is, but should a man be permitted to touch her, which seldom happens, she breathes hard upon his arm, and this makes him shoot better... After Ko comes up from the ground and dances a short time with them, she disappears and is succeeded by her nymphs, who likewise dance a while with them." <sup>1</sup> The description of this dance at once reminds one of the puberty dances for boys among the North-Western Bushmen, where Huwe or Hishe also comes and dances with them; but there is nothing definite either in Campbell's account or in Orpen's to indicate that the dances referred to by them were in any way connected with puberty ceremonies for boys.

The only other Bushman people among whom the occurrence of a puberty ceremony for boys is definitely recorded are the Hiechware. Here the central feature seems to lie in circumcision. Says Dornan: "The boys are operated on at the age of twelve years, all those of the same age being taken together once a year, as with them puberty comes on at an early age...(Then follows a description of the operation; the foreskin of the boy is seized by the operator, who pulls it forward over the gland as far as it will stretch, and then cuts it off close with one slash of a stone knife.)... They are treated with considerable care for two or three weeks afterwards, and are fed upon meat...They are in-

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1. Campbell, Second Journey into South Africa, ii.31-32.



structed in the traditional lore of the people, the religious observances and into the mysteries of generation. They are carefully informed that the intercourse of uncircumcised people is that of the beasts of the field, that in short it is fornication, as well as a good deal that will not bear to be put into print."

Although, as already mentioned, Dornan regards circumcision as an original Bushman custom, there can be little doubt that the Hiechware have taken it over from the BeChwana among whom they live, for they are the only Bushman people of whom it is recorded, while its absence from other Bushman tribes is explicitly affirmed by all writers.

VI.

ECONOMICS.

Land Tenure.

Each hunting band among the Bushmen, as we have previously noted, claims rights of ownership over a certain stretch of land, and rigorously resents trespass upon it by members of other bands. Within the band land is owned in common. The hunting territory belongs to the whole band, and all the members of the band have an equal right to hunt and collect over any part of it and to use the water in it. As the Bushmen practise neither agriculture nor pastoralism, there is

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 158-160.

no question of cultivation or grazing rights. There exists, however, a certain private ownership of land among the Auen in the sense that when a man burns a patch of veld in order to promote the growth of veldkos on it, he alone has a claim to its products. Others, even people living at the same encampment, may not use the land without his permission.<sup>1</sup> Apart from this, however, there appears to be no restriction upon the free exploitation of the hunting territory of the band by anyone of its members.

#### Hunting.

Once they have passed through the puberty ceremonies, boys and girls participate in the full economic life of the band. All the men are hunters, and spend the greater part of their daily life in pursuing or ensnaring game. Their methods of hunting vary with the nature of the intended prey, and according to the season of the year.<sup>2</sup>

The principal method is by means of pursuit and the use of weapons. During the big rainy season (late summer), when the ground is sodden with moisture, small buck, such as duiker and steenbok, are run down on foot, and killed with the knob-kirri, a short piece of hard wood knobbed at one end, which is also used for

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 155.

2. The fullest descriptions of the hunting life and methods of the Bushmen are given by Stow, Native Races of S. Africa, 80-94; Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 167; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 667-8; Passarge, Die Buschmänner, 45 seqq.; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 144-147; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 94 seqq., D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 15-16; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 99 seq.

knocking down birds and hares. Where bush is scarce, steenbok frequently seek shelter during the day in the numerous anteater holes. Finding a morning spoor leading to these holes, the Bushman, silently as a cat, creeps up to the hole and plants himself before it, leaving a small open space under the left arm, for which the buck charges, when it is pinned and dealt a stunning blow over the head, with the kirri held in the right hand. In this way numbers of these animals are killed. Anteaters, snakes, etc., are caught in their holes by means of a long barbed stick. This is poked down the hole into the animal's flesh, either to drag it out or to hold it down while another man digs it out. In hot dry weather they will even run down an animal such as the gemsbok or wildebeest. After a herd of game has been located, one or more men give trot at a steady chase. The animal is pursued relentlessly, never once being allowed to rest, until it is exhausted and brought to bay, when the hunter comes up and kills it with the knobbed stick or spear. The latter consists of a long wooden shaft with an iron head about six inches long. The head is obtained by barter from the neighbouring Bantu, but the spear itself is made by the Bushmen. For the shaft they pierce the end of a stick, then heat the tang of the spear head in the fire, and insert it, binding the joint tightly with sinew.

Bigger game is hunted with the bow and arrow,

which are used all the year round. The bows are on the average about three feet long, crude and of simple make.<sup>1</sup> The stave consists simply of a piece of bent wood, generally Grewia flava, which is shaped so as to taper to a point at the ends. It is often strengthened with tight bindings of sinew, especially round the ends, to prevent it from splitting. The string is made either of animal sinew or of vegetable fibre twisted together to form a strong cord, and is attached to the stave by a simple knot. The bow is kept permanently strung.

The arrows are complex in structure, and vary considerably in detail, but there is a certain uniformity of type throughout. The most wide-spread form is about two feet long, and consists of an unfeathered reed shaft, a bone or quill foreshaft, and a barbed point of bone or iron. The Northern Kung and Heikum use arrows with feathered wooden shafts and iron points only. Some of the North-Western tribes (Naron, Auen, Kung) also have another type of arrow, with a reversible head of bone. This head is pared down at one end to a sharp point, and rounded off at the other. For safety in carrying, the pointed end, which is also the poisoned end, is turned into the shaft; for shooting, the head is reversed, so that the rounded end is turned in, and the poisoned end projects.

The Bushman arrows are rather fragile, and

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1. Schapera, "Bows and Arrows of the Bushmen", Man, 1927, 72.

can never seriously wound any animal which they strike. For their effect reliance is placed upon the poisons<sup>1</sup> which are dotted or smeared over their points. Several kinds of ingredients are found in the various poison mixtures used. The Namib Bushmen and those of the north-west districts of the Cape use a purely vegetable poison, generally euphorbia juice (Toxicodendron capense). The Southern Bushmen generally and some other tribes, such as the Hiechware and the Kung, use a mixture of animal and vegetable poisons, the ingredients most frequently employed being snake poison and amaryllis juice (Haemanthus toxicaria). Most of the Kalahari Bushmen, again, derive their arrow poison from the grub or chrysalis of a small green beetle (Diamphidia simplex). Every man apparently prepares his own poison.

As a rule the men hunt alone, or a man and a boy together. They find the trail of an animal, and follow it, finally creeping up to the leeward side on hands and knees, using all possible cover, and then raise themselves gently to shoot. Or else they lie in wait for the game on its way to the water, or in the vicinity of a place where it comes to lick salt. The men hide themselves between stones, or dig a hole in the ground, piling up the earth in front and sticking green branches on top to deceive the game. Occasionally, again, several men surround game in a pan, some standing

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1. Schapera, "Bushman Arrow Poisons", Bantu Studies, 2, 1925, 199-24.

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to leeward ready to shoot, while the others drive from windward, approaching from different quarters.

The Cape Bushmen occasionally dressed themselves up in the skin of an animal or in the feathers of the ostrich in order to approach the game unsuspected. In a well-known Bushman rock painting from Herschel reproduced by Stow there is portrayed such a scene, in which the hunter is shown under the feathers of an ostrich, cautiously approaching, with poised arrow, a number of real ostriches who are feeding peacefully close by.<sup>1</sup> Similar disguises are employed by the Namib Bushmen, but appear to be generally unknown among the tribes further north, although the ostrich disguise is reported on hearsay by Kaufmann of the Auen.

Once he has wounded an animal the hunter takes up its trail and follows it leisurely, knowing that he will ultimately reach the corpse, if the poison on the arrow has been at all effective. There is always the great danger, however, that if the buck has run too far, and he takes too long to reach it, hyenas or the vultures may have got there first. Also care must be taken that the animal does not run out of the hunting territory, as it is then as good as lost, or, where the neighbouring band is friendly enough to permit of its being followed over the border, the meat must be shared with the members of that band. When at last he comes up with the buck, the hunter if it is not already dead kills it with the spear or kirri. He then cuts

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1. Stow, Native Races of S. Africa. plate 7. opp. p. 82.

it up, roasts and eats some of the meat, and carries the rest home; or, if near the huts, he may carry the whole buck home. If it is too big to manage, he will light a fire to summon the other members of the band to the spot. Everybody shares in the meat, which is doled out by the hunter, who keeps the skin, sinews, etc., for himself.

In connection with this method of hunting, reference may be made here to various magical usages and beliefs bearing upon it. Charms to ensure good luck in hunting are found among all the Bushmen. Among the North-Western tribes these most commonly take the form of scarifications, which serve to endow the hunter with the qualities of certain animals and enable him to hunt them successfully. The cuts are generally made on the arm, sometimes on the cheeks, occasionally also on the back, chest or belly. A tiny piece of meat is then burned to ashes, and these are rubbed into the wound. The meat is that of an animal whose qualities are specially desirable, e.g. the springbok for swiftness, etc. These cuts are usually made on boys soon after they begin hunting, and are given by old men who are themselves successful hunters. The cuts made between the eyebrows of boys at the puberty ceremonies are also said to have the function of making them "see better"<sup>1</sup> in hunting.

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1. Chapman, Travels in South Africa, i, 56, 76, 81, 159; Werner, "Heikum- und Kungbuschleute", 246; Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 108-9; Vedder. Z. KolSpr., I, 9; D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 50, 51; Ibid., The Naron, 11.

There is no record of similar usages among the Cape Bushmen, although here also a well-developed ritual existed in connection with hunting life. Unfortunately only fragments of this have been preserved. They show that there were certain ritual precautions to be observed before going out on the hunt; and especially during that critical period when game has been wounded but not yet taken. Thus when an animal has been wounded, the flesh of the swift springbok may not be eaten by the hunter; as this would give strength to the movements of the wounded buck; he should rather eat the meat of a slow-moving animal, especially of such as would strengthen the action of the poison. The moon must not be looked at when following the spoor, lest the game run too far - a belief also found among the Naron. The hunter's shadow, again, must not be allowed to fall upon game which lies dying; certain (unspecified) rules have to be observed when an eland has been shot; the bones of the dead animal must be treated in a certain way, and so on. Unfortunate shots are believed to be due to such causes as the children at home playing on a man's bed, etc., and are ascribed to the remissness of wives. Also after the death of a companion it is held that the hunters will be unlucky in springbok hunting, and certain (unspecified) remedial measures<sup>1</sup> are resorted to.

Beliefs of a somewhat similar nature are found among the Heikum. As we have already seen, the meat of an animal killed with the bow and arrow is subject

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1. Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 15, 23; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 270 seqq.



to minutely prescribed rules of division and preparation. Again, a man who shoots an eland or giraffe must, on returning to the camp, sleep under the central tree and avoid sexual intercourse with his wife, otherwise the poison will prove ineffective. Any want of success in the chase is generally attributed to some chance incident; for example, a man who has had bad luck in hunting while his wife has her periods will not hunt again while she is in that condition, and so on.<sup>1</sup>

All such practices and beliefs indicate how the Bushmen, fully aware of the uncertainty attendant upon their efforts, seek to relieve their apprehensions by the aid of the supernatural.

In addition to hunting by pursuit and the use of weapons, the Bushmen also employ various methods of trapping. Pitfalls are often made during the dry season in the path to a water-hole or along river banks, and covered with bushes. In the Central Kalahari these pits are about four metres long and deep, and from three-quarters to one metre wide. They are dug in such a way that a small wall of earth is left standing in the middle, but not reaching to the surface. Large animals in attempting to escape out of the pit jump on to this partition wall, where they remain hopelessly suspended on their belly. Other pits, especially among the Southern Bushmen, often have pointed stakes placed in the middle.

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1. Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 102.

These serve to catch big game animals, such as rhinoceros, which are killed with the spear, and especially those, like zebras and antelopes, which come down in herds to drink at the water. Among the Bushmen of the Namib and of the North-West Cape it was also the custom to throw branches of the euphorbia into water-holes and thus poison the water, so that any animals coming to drink there would perish.

Traps proper are of two kinds. In one a stone or block of wood is placed in such a position that when the animal touches the exposed bait, the stone or block of wood falls down upon it. The other kind consists in snares, which are widespread. They are of various types, but the general principle is that a supple twig or sapling is bent down by means of a cord attached to a bait and ending in a noose. If the animal stirs the bait, the cord is released, the sapling springs back into the air, and the noose catches the throat or leg of the animal, which is carried up with it. In this way are caught not only birds and small quadrupeds, such as hares, wild cats and jackals, but even small buck such as the duiker and steenbok, as well as leopards and ostriches. Snaring is resorted to only during the dry season; in the rainy season it must cease owing to the action of the damp on the cord. This is made from bark fibre, which is shredded by means of a pointed stick, then rolled on the thigh into strands, which are twisted together. Thicker and thinner cords are made according to the game to be trapped.

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1. Alexander records that near the Keisu River in South West Africa, he found the remains of no less than twenty horses lying close to a water-hole which had been poisoned in this way. (Expedition of Discovery, ii.223)

Fishing is also practised wherever possible; indeed among the Bushmen of the Okavango swamps it is even more important as a mode of subsistence than hunting.<sup>1</sup> This is also the work of the men. Among the Cape Bushmen, especially those living along the Orange River, the chief method employed lay in the use of funnel-shaped traps of closely-woven reed, about three feet long and eighteen inches to two feet wide, narrowing towards the mouth. These traps were stretched across the stream in a shallow part, and while some men stood waiting behind them, others waded up stream from a point below and drove the fish before them to the basket traps, where they were then caught and thrown on shore. In the Okavango basin this method is also found; but there is a variety of others as well. Sometimes the fish in the lakes and rivers are speared from flat-bottomed boats, which have probably been adopted from the maMbukushu and maKoba of the same region. Sometimes again small stone dams are built from each bank running out into the river in a slanting direction, leaving a narrow opening in which is placed the basket trap. The fish are either swept into these baskets by the force of the current, or are driven in by the Bushmen themselves. Or again reed fences or stone dams are built straight across the beds of dry courses into which the river

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1. Barrow, Travels in S. Africa, i. 290, 300; Lichtenstein, Travels in South Africa, ii. 44; Alexander, Expedition into the Interior of Africa, i, 237; Passarge, "Das Okawangosumpfland usw." 697-8. Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 296; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 106-109.

overflows at flood time. When the flood has reached its highest level, and the water begins to sink, the retreat of the fish which have been carried along into these courses is cut off, so that they are easily caught.

#### Collecting.

In former times hunting was the chief source of subsistence in Bushman life. But with the decrease of the game in their area and with the enforcement of the game laws, its importance is diminishing, and at the present time the Bushmen depend very largely for the means of existence on the wild vegetable foods of the veld.

Agriculture in any form is altogether unknown to them in their original mode of life. The nearest they have got to it is found in the practice of the North-Western tribes of burning the veld at the end of the dry season.<sup>1</sup> This is done in order that the edible bulbs, roots, etc., should come up better during the approaching rainy season. It is also used as a means of hunting, for the men spread round the fire in a semicircle and drive all the game rushing from it before them in a certain direction where some hunters are lying in wait; and again, the new grass growing soon after the burning attracts the game, which returns to the area. Incidentally the burning serves to kill off snakes, scorpions and other noxious creatures. Men may

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1. Jodtka, "Reise nach dem Okavango", Deuts. KolBl., 13, (1902), 495; Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 147, 156; D.F. Eleek, The Naron, 17

only burn in their own territory; to do so across the border, or to gather wood where others have burned is a great offence. In former times, among the Naron, the chiefs are said to have regulated the burning; nowadays the thing is done in a haphazard manner, and generally passes as an accident.

The collecting of veldkos is done by both men and women; but whereas with the former it is incidental to their hunting, the latter are collectors only, and set out every day usually in company to go over several miles of land. The digging sticks they use are from three to four feet long, and consist of pieces of hard wood, pointed at one end. In the south, where the veld is hard, and in the mountainous regions of the east, these sticks were sometimes tipped with a buck's horn and weighted by means of a perforated stone ball passed over their lower end and wedged in; but in the Kalahari, where there is only sand to cope with, this is never found. The foods gathered are chiefly roots, bulbs, ground nuts, berries, melons and in fact anything that is at all edible, the food naturally varying with the season of the year. At the same time the women also catch all sorts of small animals which they come across - iguanas, tortoises, frogs, locusts, flying ants, etc., - and they gather dry sticks for the evening fire.

Among the Heikum the following ceremony is observed in connection with the collection of veldkos

by the women. It is practised when the fruit of the huin ripens, generally after the onset of the big rainy season in the month of February. On a certain day, appointed by the head of the band, all the women, under the guidance of his wife (gei-khois), set out to collect the first fruit of the huin, the men in the meantime remaining in the camp. The trees from which the fruit is to be gathered are indicated by the gei-khois. On the return of the women to the camp they deposit the bags containing the fruit in front of the hut of the gei-khoib (head of the band). The gei-khois then fills four or five dishes by taking a little from the bag of each woman, and places them under the central tree. Her husband now kindles the sacred fire, and after having applied the roots of certain plants to the fire in order to propitiate it for a plentiful harvest, he takes a handful or two of the fruit and eats it. The fruit is now free and both men and women may eat it. There is no known name for this ceremony, but the first fruit is called lgao-ei-<sup>1</sup>un. This ceremony is not found in any of the other Bushman tribes, but is met with also in slightly different form among the Bergdama. The possibility of borrowing must therefore again be kept in mind; but, whether borrowed or not, the ceremony is of importance as indicating the development of a special ritual in connection with one of the sources of food supply.

A somewhat different ceremony, also connected

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1. Fourie, "Bushman of S.W.A.", 98-99.

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with the collection of veldkos, is held by the Kung. Once a year, when the edible bulbs of the veld are beginning to ripen (i.e., at the beginning of the rainy season), the head of the band, on a morning fixed by him, calls together all the inhabitants of the camp before sunrise. He then takes up some faggots mixed with dry grass and straw, and all squat down in a circle round him. On the ground near the firewood lies a piece of wood, in which is bored a hole. In this hole is placed the freshly-broken twig of the wild fig tree. A lit pipe is handed to the headman. He takes it in both hands, held palm to palm, and twists it about over the wood until the burning content of the pipe falls on to the grass, which becomes kindled into flames. During this performance he repeats the following prayer to Huwe, a supernatural being: "Father, I come to you, I pray to you, please give me food and all things, that I may live." When the fire has burned out, the members of the band scatter to seek the new bulbs, which up till then they might not touch.

These two ceremonies are the only instances on record of a special cult among the Bushmen in connection with the collection of veldkos; but, as will be shown below, in all the Bushman tribes there are numerous other ritual observances, and beliefs, which may be regarded as centring in the sources of food supply, although they are somewhat different in nature from the two just described.

Water must also be fetched every day from the

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1. Vedder, Z. KolSpr., 1, 6-7.

water-hole. This is usually the task of the children, but if the distance is far the women go, and occasionally even the men. The water is stored in ostrich eggshells, which have a hole bored in at one end and are plugged with grass. These are carried about in a net of woven fibre or in skin bags. The stomach of a buck is also sometimes used as a water bottle.

The supply of water is one of the most acute problems which the Bushmen have to face in the Kalahari and Namib Deserts. It affects their mode of life to a very considerable extent, for it not only regulates the migrations of the people but also the very structure of the band, since, as we have seen, in many cases the different families constituting a band live together only in the rainy season, to scatter as soon as the dry season returns. Moreover upon the supply of water depends the growth both of the veldkos and also of the grass upon which the game lives, so that the whole subsistence of the Bushmen is intimately bound up with it; and, as we shall see subsequently, this intimate dependence finds expression in the numerous observances and beliefs which the Bushmen have developed in relation to the sources of water, and especially to the rain. Here, however, we may note how the Bushmen attempt in practice to cope with this urgent problem,

Caches of ostrich eggshells containing water are often buried in the ground for future use, and to steal them is one of the greatest offences in Bushman life. When even these have given out, a substitute is found in various succulent plants, especially the !naras



(Acanthosicyos horrida Welw) and the tsama (Citrullus vulgaris), which contain enough moisture to relieve thirst, and which are still available for the first part of the dry season. In some places water may still be found below the surface, and to obtain this the people make use of an ingenious filter. A hole is made in the sand, and with a reed tube, provided with a filter of grass, they painfully suck out drop by drop the water that has collected below, and store it in the eggshell bottle. But when even this resource fails them, they are compelled to make hurried marches back to the permanent water-holes, to which they cling until the coming of the rainy season again enables them to move out to the sand belts and resume their normal hunting life.<sup>1</sup>

#### Industries and Trade.

Besides their food, which they must find from day to day, the Bushmen have need of little but their weapons and utensils. Their household possessions are few, for they seldom own more than they can carry; and all their industries are essentially domestic.<sup>2</sup>

From wood they make their huts, the staves of their bows and spears, quivers for their arrows, digging, throwing and fire sticks, the long barbed stick used for catching spring hares, etc., poison sticks,

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1. Livingstone, Missionary Travels, 51; Chapman, Travels in South Africa, ii, 297; Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 51, 70-71 and fig.; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 671-3; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 293-4.
  2. The most comprehensive account of Bushman industries is to be found in: Gretschel, "Die Buschmannsammlung Hanne- mann", Jb. Mus. V. k. d. Leipzig, 5 (1911/12), 89-113, plates 23-29, which relates chiefly to the Auen; cf. also Van Rippen, Notes on Some Bushman Implements; Stow, Native Races of S. Africa, 62-80; Passarge, op. cit., 81-94; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 152-153; Schultze, op. cit., 658 seqq.; Werner, "Heikum- und Kungbuschleute", 257; D. F. Bleek, The Naron, 8-18 passim; Fourie, "Bushmen of S. W. A." 103.

on which the arrow poison is gathered in a lump after it has been prepared, the spits (sometimes decorated with burned lines) on which the game is roasted, and scoops for hoeing out the earth loosened with the digging stick. The North-Western tribes also manufacture wooden cooking pots, which are sometimes decorated with burned patterns of simple design, calabashes for keeping fat and other liquids, eating vessels and spoons, as well as pestles and mortars, the latter often provided with a stone bottom, which are used for pounding up dried berries, etc. Wood fibre is twisted into string, from which they prepare their snares and make nets for carrying their belongings.

Reeds provide the Bushmen with arrow shafts and with the tubes for sucking up water, as well as with the material from which they make their fish traps and weave closely-stranded mats for sifting ants' eggs. Reed mats are also occasionally used in the making of their huts.

Ostrich eggshells are converted into bottles for holding water, and are also broken up into very small pieces from which the women make their beads. Tortoise shells are used as spoons and scoops, and are also made into powder boxes for containing buchu. Small drills are made of stone for the manufacture of ostrich eggshell beads, larger ones for the manufacture of soapstone or serpentine pipes; two or three large stones are also used as anvils for working the iron which is obtained by barter, or for the purpose of

grinding berries, and besides these a few smaller stones are to be seen which are used for hammer stones or rubbing stones. The other types of stone implements, which link up the Bushmen with the prehistoric cultures of South Africa, are now almost certainly no longer made; nor, too, are the crude pots of clay formerly used by the Cape Bushmen.

From the skins of animals killed in the chase, again, are made karosses, loin cloths, sandals, caps, leather bags, quivers, tobacco pouches, etc. The sinew is used for making bowstrings, for reinforcing the shafts of the bows and arrows, and as thread for sewing skins, while in some cases it also provides the string for the nets in which personal belongings are carried. The long bones of the ostrich and various kinds of big game are made into knives, awls, pipes, etc. Horns are manufactured into spoons, whistles, small quivers for carrying arrow points during the rainy season, implements for stripping the fibre required for snares, artificial leeches, etc.; while the stomach of large animals, when not required for food, is fashioned into bags for collecting the blood and for carrying water.

In the manufacture of these different utensils, garments and implements, as well as in the collection of food, there is no division of labour within the band save as between the two sexes. Every man is expected to be able to hunt, to make bows and arrows, and to do all the other things that are done by men; and in the

same way every woman is expected to do the work recognised as pertaining to women. Some women, it is true, are cleverer and more industrious than others in making beads, some men better at hunting or at twisting rope and boring pipes, but all know how these things are done, and none devotes his life to any one of them. The only special occupation is that of the magician, who in addition to having religious and magical functions is also the physician; but otherwise even he lives and works as do the rest, getting a few presents for his occasional services.

The division of labour between the sexes is clearly marked. A man hunts and snares game, fishes, collects veldkos as the opportunity arises, while he is out hunting, prepares skins, makes the clothing for himself and his family, makes his own weapons, arrow poison, fire sticks and other implements, twists rope, manufactures the larger wooden vessels and other utensils, makes fire, and occasionally assists the women in fetching wood and water. A woman builds the hut for her family, gathers veldkos and prepares the food, fetches wood and water, maintains the fire, makes her own ornaments, and is also responsible for keeping the camp clean.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Auen the beginnings of specialised labour are found in that certain men work in iron, i.e., make spear heads and other implements out of any pieces of iron they may obtain. The production of raw iron is unknown to all Bushmen, who generally obtain whatever

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 147; Fourie "Bushmen of S.W.A." 88.

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iron they require by barter with the neighbouring Bantu peoples. Among the Kung of Angola a further division of labour was found by Miss Bleek in a group of Rusembu, where only the good shots went hunting, while other men worked in iron, and another appeared to be the trader and honey gatherer.<sup>1</sup> But specialisation of this kind is quite exceptional in Bushman life.

Although the Bushmen are thus able to draw from the resources of their environment almost everything they really need, economically they are no longer self-sufficient. Contact with other peoples has acquainted them with various articles, especially iron and tobacco, which they now covet very greatly, and in order to obtain which they carry on an extensive system of barter. Even within the band itself there is a good deal of barter in such things as meat, veldkos, clothing and utensils. Berries and roots, e.g. are exchanged for tobacco or beads, and so on. Trading visits to other bands are also frequent. But the most common form of barter is with peoples of other races, especially the Bantu.

The Kung of Angola, unlike all the other Bushmen, do not go out into the veld to collect vegetable foods. These are obtained by barter. The younger men hunt, and trade part of the meat and skins obtained for the cereals, maize, potatoes, manioc, etc., of the Bantu among whom they live. Honey and wax are also collected and traded, sometimes with the Bantu for

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1. Kaufmann, op. cit. 153; D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola". 55.

food and tobacco, now and again to Europeans for powder and cartridges. Wax is a good article of trade with Portuguese traders, and the Bushmen are therefore assiduous in collecting it. Besides foodstuffs the Bushmen also obtain from the Bantu pots and baskets, as well as metal wares such as knives, arrow and spear heads, and beads.<sup>1</sup>

The Bushmen of the Okavango swamps, again, trade ostrich eggshell beads, ivory, ostrich feathers, skins and horns with the neighbouring Bantu in return for tobacco and dagga, as well as for iron and iron goods, such as spear heads, hoes, knives, etc.; while the Namib Bushmen exchange similar objects with Hottentots and Europeans for blankets, knives, tobacco, coffee, etc.<sup>2</sup>

Among the North-Western tribes there is a whole system of trade relations between different tribes, extending from the Okavango in the north down almost to the Molopo. In this the Naron and the Auen play the part of intermediaries, obtaining from the tribes further north the objects they desire, and then bartering them again further south as occasion arises. Eggshell beads and tobacco are standard articles in this trade, in the sense that they can always be bartered and may even be said to have a fixed value. From the Naron the Auen get skin garments and bags, for the making of which the former are famous, giving them in return wooden pots, dishes and spoons made by themselves, and metal pots, spear heads, knives, trade beads, etc., which they ob-

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1. D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 52-3; Ibid., "Bushmen of Central Angola", 108.  
 2. Passarge: "Das Okawangosumpfland", 701; Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 166.

tain through the Heikum from the ovaKwangari and maMbuku-shu further north. The Naron further east trade their skins, and formerly also ivory and ostrich feathers, with the BaTawana to the north-east for tobacco and corn. Ostrich eggshells are bartered to the Bantu by all the Bushman tribes. The Koon, at Naosanabis in the south, are known to make them especially well, and their beads are always in great demand, passing through the Naron and the Auen to the Bantu tribes further north and east, who pay highly for them. For a chain of these beads passing round the waist the MaMbukushu, e.g. give a large basket of millet, the BaTawana a large roll of tobacco, the Ovambo an iron spear head, and so on. The Naron also trade their skins to Europeans and BeChwana for tobacco, dagga or trade goods, and the latter, again, they pass on to the Auen.<sup>1</sup>

#### Property and Inheritance.

The economic life of the band, although in effect it approaches a sort of communism, is really based on the notion of private property. The only thing owned in common is the land; and even here, as we have seen, individual rights may occasionally be recognised. All portable property is generally owned by individuals, and theft is severely punished. Huts, which are really of no value, belong to the families occupying them; a man's clothes, weapons, skins, ornaments, utensils, and indeed anything that he makes belong to him alone to do with as

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 118-119; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 152-153; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 37-38.

he pleases, and in the same way anything that a woman makes, e.g. her ornaments, or receives from her husband, e.g. her clothing, is her own property. A man is not free to dispose of the personal property of his wife without her permission.

Food, whether vegetable or animal, and water is also private property, and belongs to the person who has obtained it. Everyone who has food is, however, expected to give to those who have none. Thus a man who shoots a buck or bird will cut it up, and share with the other people present - but the dividing is done by him, and the skin, sinews, etc. belong to him to be done with as he pleases. In the same way all veldkos is also shared by the members of the band. The result is that practically all the food obtained is evenly distributed through the whole camp. But, as we have seen, caches of ostrich eggshells containing water may be stored away, and these belong to the person who hides them, and may not be used without his permission.

Private rights are also recognised over objects found in the veld. A man who finds an ostrich nest with one or two eggs sticks an arrow in the ground close by as a sign of ownership, and waits till the tale of eggs is complete before carrying them off. Should another man take the marked eggs, the first finder follows the spoor to the thief's hut, and demands them back. If they are given up, there is no fighting, but the thief does not escape reproaches for wrong-doing, especially from the neighbours of the finder; while in



case of refusal bloodshed almost inevitably follows. In the same way private rights can be indicated over honey in a nest.

The question of inheritance rarely arises, as most of a man's possessions, especially his weapons and clothing, are buried with him. But during her lifetime a woman will often hand over her ornaments to her daughter; while among the Auen such of a man's belongings as are not buried with him. e.g. utensils and skins, are inherited by his oldest son: the younger sons and daughters get nothing, nor does the widow, but she keeps her own property. Among the Namib Bushmen, however, the widow takes precedence over the eldest son in the matter of inheritance, although after her death he inherits. He also becomes the head of the family after the death of his father, and must care for the widow and give her food. If a married son dies, his widow does not remain with his family, but goes back to her parents with half the inheritance, the other half remaining with his family. Trenk unfortunately does not state in what the inheritance consists.

VII.

REGULATION OF PUBLIC LIFE.

Government and Law.

In spite of the loose composition of the band

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1. Hahn, "Die Buschmanner", 120; Ibid., Trans.S.Afr. Phil.Soc., 1896, xvii. Vialls, "Kalahari Masaras", 32; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 155; D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 36, 16.

2. D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 10, 35; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 159; Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 169.

and the facility with which family groups may wander about separately, the Bushmen are by no means devoid of government and law. Where they are subject to the Bantu or other peoples there is of course not much possibility of an independent political life. In the Okavango marshes, for example, they are in the position of serfs to the Batawana, by whom they are required to pay an annual tribute of skins, ostrich feathers and eggshell beads. The territory occupied by the Batawana is divided into local districts, each under the control of a minor chief (kxosani), to whom all the Bushmen in the district have to pay their tribute, and for whom they often have to perform various services, such as herding his cattle and goats and hunting for him. In the Oachimpoloveld again the Bushmen pay a tribute to the OvaKwangari; in the Southern Kalahari they are the serfs and herdsmen of the BaTlaro and other BeChwana among whom they live, and so too in the North-East Kalahari, where they are subject to the BaMangwato.

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1. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 121-122; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 65-66; D.F. Bleek, in Festschrift Meinhof, 56. In August 1926 the High Commissioner for S. Africa (H.E. the Earl of Athlone), addressing an assembly of BaMangwato at their chief town, Serowe, made the following important declaration with reference to this servitude: "It has been stated that the Masarwa are the slaves of the Mangwato. The Government does not regard them as slaves, but realises that they are a backward people who serve the Mangwato in return for the food and shelter they receive. I understand that for the most part they are contented and that they do not wish to change. But the Government will not allow any tribe to demand compulsory service from another, and wants to encourage the Masarwa to support themselves. Any Masarwa who wish to leave their masters and live independently of them should understand that they are at liberty to do so and that if the Mangwato attempt to retain them against their will the Government will not allow it. It is the duty of the Chiefs and Headmen to help these people to stand on their own feet, and I expect the missionaries and the Chief and his Councillors to join the Government in preventing anything in the nature of compulsory service in Bechuana land". (Report on Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1926-27 Colonial Reports. No. 1379. p. 6.)

But where the Bushmen still are to some extent independent, each band, as we have seen, is a separate political unit and regulates its own affairs. There is no well-developed system of organised government. In the small family groups of the Cape and Namib Bushmen and of the Angola Kung deference is paid to the head of the group, but his authority is very limited; and the common affairs of the group - migrations, joint hunting parties, etc. - appear to be regulated by the skilled hunters and the older, more experienced men in general.

Among the North-Western tribes, on the other hand, where the bands are on the whole more considerable in size, each band has a recognised chief (//exa or //exaba, gao-aob or gei-kohib; the last two words are of Hottentot origin). The office is as a rule hereditary in the male line, descending from father to son, or, failing such, to the nearest male relative. Among the Heikum, however, the eldest sister's eldest son succeeds. This rule of succession is so much at variance with what we know of the other North-Western tribes, and even of the structure of the band among the Heikum themselves, that, if the information be correct, the practice can only be regarded as due to the influence of the neighbouring Ovambo, who are definitely organised on a matrilineal basis. There is no other instance of matrilineal succession among the Bushmen.

No tribute or services are rendered to the

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1.D.F.Bleek, The Mantis, viii; Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 170; D.F.Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola", 109.

chief, nor are there special signs of chieftainship, such as a particular dress or mode of life. We are told, however, that Naron chiefs mostly have two wives, but whether this is associated with their status is not made clear. The main functions of the chief apparently are to direct the movements of the people from place to place and to allocate the work for the day, to order the burning of the veld, and, in particular, to lead in war. Among the Heikum all fire is also regarded as the property of the chief, and in connection with it certain functions are vested in him, the performance of which <sup>is</sup> are of vital importance. The first fire kindled by him in a new encampment is regarded as essential to the welfare of the community, and must never be allowed to die out. From it each family then lights its own fire, for although everybody knows how to use the firesticks the chief is the only person who is able to bring forth from fire the magic properties which bring health and happiness and ward off evil and misfortune. The various beliefs and practices associated with this fire fully demonstrate its importance in the ritual life of the people. At the same time they also reflect the religious significance of the chief, and emphasise the dependence of the community upon him in this aspect of their life. There is no clear evidence for the occurrence of similar usages relating to fire among the other Bushman tribes. On the other hand, the sacred fire is also found among the OvaHerero, OvaMbo and Bergdama, who are close neighbours of the Heikum,

and with the last two of whom there has been considerable racial intermixture. It is probable, therefore, that the sacred fire of the Heikum is a borrowed element of culture; but, whether this is the case or not, the fact that at the present time the chief of the band has certain very important functions in connection with it is a feature in the political life of the people, and cannot be dismissed merely because of its foreign origin. Among the Heikum the chief also, as we have previously noted, plays an important part in the usages relating to game which has been shot with the bow and arrow, as well as in the first-fruits ceremony; while among the Kung he is similarly responsible for the ceremony performed before the edible bulbs of the new season may be gathered. There is no instance of similar religious functions vested in the chief being found in other Bushman tribes, so that such customs cannot be regarded as common elements of Bushman culture.

On the whole the chief appears to be essentially a leader rather than a ruler. His actual authority over the members of the band is very slight, and dependent to a very large extent upon his personality. If, for example, he is a man of strong character, or possesses a gun, he will have a correspondingly greater influence; but the only special authority he possesses is over the member of his own family, and he has no power to enforce his will outside it. He has nothing in the way of judicial

functions, nor does he exercise any organised control over the members of the band. Great freedom of action prevails within the band, and as a rule every adult man can do as he pleases, provided, however, that he does not infringe recognised law and custom. In general the head of each family has control over the movements of his wife or wives and children - and over the latter only while they are small. No one really controls grown-up sons and daughters.<sup>1</sup>

This absence of any organised system of public control does not imply that the Bushmen have no laws. All their institutions, manners and customs serve to regulate the relations between the members of the band, and thus to maintain law and order. The child at birth comes into a world where there already exist definite forms of organisation and behaviour, of ceremonial, of manners and fashions, etc., and as he grows up he falls more or less unconsciously into acting and thinking like those around him, and in this way comes to conform to social norms. There are moreover more or less deliberate means of impressing upon young people the social sentiments necessary for the maintenance of the law and order of the group. The education they receive in the households of their parents and out in the veld, and above all the highly important teachings at the puberty ceremonies for boys, instruct them in tribal lore and tradition, inculcate social norms, and determine

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 154; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 36-37; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 86-88.

their activities accordingly.

There are also various sanctions by which non-fulfilment or the breach of any recognised custom is penalised, and which thus serve as another and more direct means of securing conformance with the pattern of social life. In this category we may place ritual sanctions, where any departure from a prescribed rule of conduct is followed automatically by evil results, without any direct interference on the part of the community. The breaking of a taboo, e.g. is believed to produce serious consequences, such as death or disease, or ill luck in the chase. Thus among the Cape Bushmen, as we have seen, girls who do not observe the restrictions imposed upon them at the time of puberty are believed to change into frogs, while men who are seen by the girls at this time become permanently fixed in whatever position they then occupy, and so on. And again there are the numerous observances and avoidances associated with hunting, which if neglected will result in ill-success, the loss of a wounded animal, etc. All sanctions of this sort may be regarded as legal, in the sense that they operate to maintain the observance of accepted usages and customs.

Other breaches of custom, however, involve the direct intervention of human beings. When disputes arise between the members of a band - among the Naron they are said to be infrequent - there is no appeal to

any supreme authority, for, as we have just noted, there is no such authority, nor are cases of wrong-doing or quarrels referred to the chiefs where these exist. The only remedy is self help. But in so far as self help is the recognised mode of reaction, it must also be regarded as a legal institution. Blood revenge indeed is the chief, if not the only, recognised way of dealing with serious offences committed against a person even by members of the same band.<sup>1</sup>

The principal actions penalised in this way are adultery, theft and homicide. In the case of adultery, as we have already seen, the injured band attempts to kill the adulterer, if he possibly can, while the unfaithful wife is beaten and in some cases divorced. Among the Namib Bushmen the adulterer is sometimes made to pay compensation instead. Unfortunately we are not told under what circumstances this alternative is admitted, nor in what the compensation consists. That the adulterer is not always killed is apparent from the fact that, if a bachelor, he is expected to marry his divorced mistress.

Theft also provokes blood revenge, when the thief refuses to restore the stolen property. Even if he does, he is severely reproached for his deed, and among the Namib Bushmen the victim may take back not

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 155; Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib", 169; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 35-36.



only the stolen property, but also all the thief's possessions.<sup>1</sup> But that blood revenge is actually exercised in case of theft appears from the following incident recorded by Miss Bleek of an Auen man who had a good deal of tobacco, most of which he hid in a tree. Returning later he found the tobacco gone, and human footprints round the tree. He followed the spoor to one of a cluster of huts, where he saw a Bushman sitting at the fire cutting the stolen tobacco. Although he had only a spear with him, he darted up and stabbed the thief to death. The man's wife, intervening, was also stabbed. Then the assailant tried to escape, but was shot in the side by a poisoned arrow from the group round the next fire. He succeeded in reaching his home, but died of the poison a few days later.

Similarly, in the waterless regions of the Namib Desert, men on the hunt often store up supplies of water in ostrich eggshells and also of meat. Another person coming upon this supply may take from it, but must follow the spoor of the owner, tell him about it, and pay him. If this is not done, the owner, when he discovers the loss, will follow the spoor of the thief

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1 (Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 416-425.)

It is said that among the Kung a man who steals in the camp is killed by the others present, who all shoot at him with their arrows. A married woman who steals is also sometimes shot by her own husband. More frequently, however, she is burned alive in a hut; although, if her parents are still living, she may be handed over to them and they all have to leave the camp. Should the father be dead and the mother alive, the woman who stole is still taken and given back to the latter, after the stolen property has been recovered. But, if she is an old offender, the mother is said to give her, through a son, to another person, to be burned to death. These facts, obtained from a single young informant, need however to be confirmed. The deliberate burning to death of people for whatever reason is not reported of any of the other Bushman.

until he finds him, and may then kill him. Here, according to Trenk, homicide for adultery and theft are apparently not regarded as murder, but as punishment; and the relatives of the deceased may not take blood vengeance.

But among all the other Bushmen homicide, whether deliberate or accidental, leads inevitably to blood vengeance, the relatives of the dead man combining to kill the murderer. Among the Auen, a son is obliged to exact blood vengeance on the murderer of his father, a brother for his brother. If the murderer himself is dead, or cannot be got at, the feud extends to his nearest male relative. A son whose father has been killed is obliged to undertake vengeance as soon as he is grown up. His mother impresses this obligation on him during his childhood, and as soon as he has caught his first head of game the obligation must be carried out. He applies to his nearest relatives for help, which is given without question. In the same way, whoever has to fear blood vengeance is supported by his relatives and the members of his band. Not only men, but women also, may become the objects of a blood feud, although as a rule the latter are taken and held as wives by their captors.

We are not told whether the killing of the homicide or his substitute leads to the cessation of the feud, but from an instance quoted by Kaufmann it does not seem to do so. An old Aeun man from Olifantskloof was visiting a brother-in-law at Sidenitsaub. The

host put on a snare, in which he caught a giant bustard. This was found by the guest, who took it out of the snare and began to consume it. While he was doing so, the host came up and pierced him through the body with a spear. The murderer then fled, but was pursued by the relatives of the dead man and killed. Since then a blood feud has existed between these two bands.

Relations between Different Bands.

Each band, as has been shown, has its own particular hunting territory, and in general the members of the band keep within their own bounds. But people of neighbouring bands do occasionally have relations with each other. Intermarriage, e.g. is a rule among the North-Western tribes, where also a newly-married man will often remain for some time in the band of his parents-in-law before returning with his wife to his own band. Visitors may also pass from one band to another on other occasions, especially for trade. Kaufmann describes the way in which such trading visits are conducted among the Auen. A small number of men and women go to the camp of the band with whom they wish to trade, laying down their weapons beforehand. Permission to enter is then given, and the barter begins. He adds that even if two bands are at enmity, as often happens, women will in spite of this go from one to the other in order to trade. This statement needs however to be confirmed.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 151.

Under special circumstances we may also find the members of several different bands assembled together for a while. It has already been mentioned how an outbreak of rinderpest resulting in the death of many cattle drew together Bushmen from all parts and even of different tribes by the abundance of animal food thus provided. And again Passarge mentions that in the Central Kalahari there are also common hunting grounds in which during the rainy season members not only of different bands but also of several different tribes may be found hunting together peacefully, although at other times of the year each band carefully avoids going beyond its own area.

Such visits and gatherings are only temporary, and quite casual in nature. There is nothing in the way of regulated intercourse between neighbouring bands. There are, for example, no common meetings at special times for ceremonial purposes, nor are the different bands of the same tribe commonly organised together for political purposes. Occasionally, however, a weaker band may seek and obtain assistance from a stronger neighbour, but such alliances are never of a binding or permanent nature. Thus the men of several Auen bands united with some Naron to attack another Auen

band; but once the fight was over the alliance was dissolved.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the relations between neighbouring bands are not always friendly. Homicide, trespass, theft, adultery and wife-stealing give rise to quarrels and conflicts which generally assume the form of a blood feud and may even lead to war.<sup>2</sup> Trespass especially is a frequent cause of dispute, as all the Bushmen readily attack those who encroach on their land. This applies not only to other Bushmen, but formerly even to Europeans. In the Cape, for example, "if the white man were a passing hunter and friendly, if he shared his

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1. Passarge was informed by his Naron attendant that in former times (about the middle of the nineteenth century or even earlier) the tribes in the Ghanziveld were political unities, each governed by a chief of its own, to whom the "family" (band) chiefs were subordinate. The Auen had such a chief, who also ruled over the Naron, so that his power extended beyond his own tribe. He was always surrounded by many Bushmen, and the old attendant had seen his arsenal of spears and other weapons. The men had to assemble at the chief's command, he led them in war against their neighbours, received an annual tribute of skins and other objects, and was supreme judge in the disputes which arose between bands on account of trespass or adultery. He could not always secure obedience, and in such cases collected a troop from different bands and with it fell unexpectedly upon the rebels. In this way whole bands were exterminated or dispersed. Passarge finds a confirmation of this report in the fact that still in 1897 there was an "Oberhauptling" of the Auen, who was subject to the BaTawana, and he adds a few other instances of this kind. (Die Buschmanner, 114-116). The value of this information has been severely criticised by Fritsch (Z.Ethn., 38 (1906) 72 seq.) who points out that none of the earlier travellers in this region up to the time of Passarge had discovered anything in the nature of such an extensive political organisation. All our other authorities on the North-Western tribes deny the existence of tribal chiefs of this sort, nor do they record any traditions that such formerly may have occurred. All the evidence thus points against the validity of Passarge's statement. It is, of course, possible that special circumstances may have temporarily united several different bands under the authority of one powerful chief, but organisations of the kind Passarge describes are certainly not a permanent feature of Bushman political life.

2. see next page.

bag with the Bushmen, he was welcomed and could travel through the territory in peace; but when the settlers came in, permanently occupying the land at the springs, and doing great execution among the game, then the Bushmen retaliated by shooting the intruders or killing their stock. Whereupon the white man, unaware of any unfriendly behaviour on his part, dubbed the Bushman an untamable savage and a thief, and did his best to imprison or shoot him. Hence the war of extermination, which has reduced the race of Colonial Bushmen to its present vanishing figure."

Among the Auen, when neighbouring bands are on friendly terms, wounded game may be pursued by the members of the one on to the territory of the other. A portion of the game must however, be given to the owners of the land. Refusal to do so is always dangerous: where the bands are very friendly, it does not necessarily lead to bloodshed - the trespasser is merely driven away, and his weapons and game confiscated; otherwise however he is killed. Women caught trespassing are seized and taken to the camp of the owners of the band. This often leads to war, when the women are

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2 from previous page. Kaufmann, *op.cit.*, 148,154; Trenk, *op.cit.*, 169,170; Zastrow, *Z.Ethn.*, 46, l. Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 303; D.F.Bleek, *Baron*, 40; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 85.

1.D.F.Bleek, *The Mantis*, vii.

violated. And again the killing of a man by the members of another band always results in a state of feud.

It can happen that between two bands there is so strong a blood feud of this nature that a meeting between their members invariably leads to bloodshed. It is probably due to this, says Kaufmann, that among the Auen many bands are so antagonistic that violation of the territorial bounds leads to immediate punishment by death; and he instances the bands at Gam and Rietfontein, between whom there was a long-standing enmity. Among the Kung there is also much enmity between neighbouring bands, especially when, as occasionally happens, an attempt is made to take from a band the land which it occupies, if this is rich in vegetable food. The oppressed band, if the weaker, must move, but the fights are conducted with great bitterness, and the deep enmity aroused extends over generations. And a similar state of feud is reported to have existed between several bands of the Namib Bushmen, where, in 1907, the people of Buntveldschuhhorn led an attack on those living at Aurus. Feud is also frequent between bands belonging to tribes of different speech, e.g. the Auen and the Naron, or the Auen and the !ginkwe. This does not extend to the whole tribe, but only to the bands concerned. The Naron at Sandfontein, in the same way, were also hostile to the /nu//en, to the south as well as the Auen to the north; trespass

and wife-stealing led to many fights between them.

Fights between opposing bands are therefore by no means unusual, but the extent of each campaign seems to be small.<sup>1</sup> The chiefs have general command in war, but their authority is scarcely greater than in peace, where, as we have seen, it is slight. The older men with experience naturally have an influence corresponding to their knowledge and ability. Every man and youth takes part in a campaign, the weapons used being the ordinary hunting bow and arrow, and also the spear. The magician also fights, but without any special authority or functions. We have no eye-witness account of any such campaign, but Kaufmann gives a description, obtained from a "trustworthy Kafir informant", which may ~~probably give~~<sup>afford</sup> some indication of their nature. Among the Auen there is no formal declaration of war, but when a man wears a cap of ~~antelope~~<sup>ardwolf</sup> skin then he is on the warpath. Several friendly villages came together and decided to attack another village. The war caps were put on, and after sunset a march was made in the direction of the enemy village. In the neighbourhood of the latter a halt was made, and without lighting a fire, although it was the cold time of the year, they waited until the morning. After sunrise, when it was somewhat warmer, the village was surrounded and attacked from all sides, the spear being chiefly used. There was loud shouting and calling, but no

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1. Kaufmann "Die Auen", 154; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 85.



special war cry; and in general everybody fought as he pleased.

If possible, all men are killed, and also boys, for fear of the blood feud. Women are never killed intentionally, but it not infrequently happens that when one group overwhelms another the women and girls are made captive and taken in marriage. All objects that can be used are also taken but the huts are not worth burning. Among the Heikum it is said that under no circumstances will the victors deprive the vanquished of their territory or even occupy it, lest harm and disaster should overtake them; but among the Kung, as already mentioned, disputes over the possession of land are among the prime causes of war. What happens to the land of the defeated group in other tribes is not stated. The campaign is brought to an end among the Auen by agreement, unarmed negotiators passing freely between the two groups, and an indemnity is paid to the victors in the shape of women, material objects and food. There is no information relating to peace-making in other tribes, and even Kaufman's statement about the Auen needs confirmation.

### VIII.

#### RELIGION AND MAGIC.

##### Death and Burial.

In the social customs and economic life of the Bushmen we have noted incidentally various usages and beliefs, connected especially with puberty ceremonies and food, which point to the existence of some conception of supernatural agencies, and indicate how

intimate a part of social behaviour religion really is. The customs and beliefs associated with death afford a further insight into the religion of the Bushmen, for we meet here with their ideas of a future state as well as of spiritual beings.

The origin of death is recorded in the fable of the Moon and the Hare, which occurs with some variation among all the Bushman and Hottentot tribes, as well as among various Bantu peoples. The Moon instructs the Hare to deliver the following message to Mankind: "As I die and return again, so shall man die and return again". The hare repeats the message wrongly; man shall die and not return again. The Moon curses the Hare and cleaves its lip; but ever since then death has existed on earth.

There is not much information regarding the Bushman beliefs as to the actual causes of death. The Cape Bushmen apparently recognised that deaths may occur purely by accident, such as a wound from a poisoned arrow, the bite of a lion or a leopard, starvation, etc. On the other hand there is a strong belief that sorcerers may bewitch and thus kill a person, while the breach of certain prescribed rules of conduct connected especially with the rain will also result in death. The Auen make a distinction between people who have died a "good death", i.e., easily and without great preceding pains, and those who die in great agony. The former are regarded as dying a natural death, the latter as bewitched and possessed. With the Hiechware again no

death is ever the result of natural causes. It is brought about by witchcraft or the malevolent power of enemies. "It is strange," says Dornan, "how the old and decrepit people, who must know that their time in this world will be short, cling tenaciously to this belief. It is useless to argue with them upon the question. They will tell you that they know of many people who died by the powerful medicine of their enemies". It is a well-known feature of primitive peoples that they are not satisfied with what we call natural causes of death, and that whenever a death occurs there is a belief that some sorcerer or some supernatural agency has been the cause of it. That such a belief also exists among the Bushmen is obvious from the statements given above,<sup>1</sup> but more detailed information on this question is very desirable, especially as to the extent to which purely natural causes are recognised.

If death comes to a Bushman in normal times he is buried with all his possessions not far from his hut, generally in the posture in which he sleeps, i.e. on one side, with the knees drawn up against the breast. This is the posture desired both north and south, and often met with in excavations of Bushman graves. Everywhere, however, Bushmen are also found buried in all sorts of other postures - evidently time and means for a proper burial have not always been forthcoming. In some cases, too, burial is impossible or even refused. The Auen, e.g. bury only those people

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1. Bleek, Bushman Texts, 14, 16, 19; Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 15, 16, 21, 22; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 393 seqq., Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 158; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 144.

who have died "good deaths"; the others are usually abandoned before they die, and the whole camp wanders in the bush. There is also the well-authenticated fact that old people are sometimes deliberately abandoned. When drought and scarcity force the Bushmen to a long hurried march, some old man or woman may be too feeble to go with them. They then make a screen of bushes all round the old person, provide a good supply of firewood and a little food and water if possible, and go on. Should game and water be found within a couple of days' march, some young fellow is sent hurrying back with supplies. Otherwise they do not come near the place again, knowing that the end must have come and hyenas dealt with the remains. This abandonment of the aged has often been characterised as an inhuman trait in the Bushmen; but when the life of the whole band depends upon rapid movement it is difficult to see how they could act otherwise. Anyone who falls out and dies on such a march will have to go unburied too, and probably<sup>1</sup> the same fate overtakes those killed in war.

Where burial takes place it follows almost immediately after the death. The descriptions available of the actual funeral ceremonies of the Bushmen are far from being exhaustive, and naturally vary somewhat in detail, but a certain degree of uniformity may be noted. The information relating to the Southern tribes is fragmentary. Skeletons of these Bushmen are found

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1. Hahn, *Die Buschmanner*", 122; Passarge, *Die Buschmanner*, 110-111; D.F. Bleek, *The Naron*, 35; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 95, as well as some of the older writers, e.g. Kicherer.

buried both in caves and in graves out in the open, but of the customs associated with burial we have little record. The fullest description is that given by Arbousset of the Basutoland Bushmen. He states that a dead person first has his head anointed with red powder (buchu) mixed with melted fat. The corpse is then rudely perfumed (grossierement parfumée), and laid on its side in an oblong grave, to which all the relatives and friends hasten to make their lamentations. They come even from the neighbouring villages to see and examine the body, which is then taken out of the grave; and everybody redoubles his cries and his lamentations. At last they throw into the grave the hut of the dead person, and burn it above him. The grave is then filled with earth to the level of the ground, but no heap of stones is piled above it. The funeral over, the band leaves the place for a year or two, during which the dead person is never spoken of but with veneration and tears.

Several details in this account - the anointing, perfuming and examination of the body, as well as the burning of the hut - are not met with in the descriptions of other independent observers, who usually remark merely that the corpse is buried with all its possessions and the place then deserted. On the other hand it is certain that many of the Southern Bushmen heaped stones on the graves of their dead. This custom may have originated merely from the desire to protect the

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1. Arbousset, Relation d'un Voyage, etc. 503-504.

bodies from the ravages of hyenas and other wild beasts. It has, however, sometimes been given a religious significance from the fact, recorded by several of the older observers, that passing natives would always add a branch or stone to the heap. It is unfortunately not always easy to gather whether the natives referred to were Bushmen or Hottentots. The latter certainly have various practices and beliefs connected with these grave heaps, but there is no fully reliable evidence of anything similar among the Southern Bushmen.<sup>1</sup>

In excavated graves the corpse is sometimes found lying on its left side, with one or two large flat stones placed directly upon it. The interest attaching to these "burial stones" lies in the fact that in a few cases, in association with cave burials along the South coast, they have been found with figures of human beings painted upon them in the typical Bushman style. It would be unprofitable to speculate upon the significance of this custom, as there is no record of any Bushmen having explained it to our authorities; but what it was related to some definite belief can hardly be doubted.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Campbell, Missionary Travels in S. Africa, 440; Barrow, Travels in South Africa, i, 289; Fritsch, Drei Jahre in Sudafrica, 242. The account given by Hahn ("Die Buschmanner", 141) is obviously based upon Arbousset; that in Stow, Native Races, 126-129 upon Arbousset, Campbell and Sparrman. The English translation of Arbousset (p. 365) renders "grossierement parfumees" as "coarsely emblamed", and as this is repeated in Stow may have given rise to some misconception.
  2. Fritsch, loc. cit.; Haughton, Trans. R. Soc. S. Afr., 13, 105-106; FitzSimons, S. Afr. J. Sci., 20, 501, 541.

The Namib Bushmen bury a dead person in his kaross. The thickened sap of a certain small bush (dawes) is also placed in his hand, so that "his soul, when it reaches the 'evil spirit', may not do harm to other people, and will find rich food in its other existence." At the funeral a fire is lit at the grave, round which is then held a dance accompanied by a funeral song; and all the women must weep for a day. A funeral feast follows, in which honey beer plays no small part. A widow as a sign of mourning cuts a round spot out of the hair over her forehead, a widower a parting directly over the middle of the head. How long the mourning lasts is not clearly stated, but, as we have already noted, a full season must elapse<sup>1</sup> before the surviving partner may re-marry.

Among the Naron, when death occurs, the body is tied with rope for purposes of transport, the knees being bent up against the chest. On the same day a deep hole is dug where the soil is not hard. Two or three men carry the body there, and lower it down by the ropes so that it lies on the left side facing the east. Why this position is customary they do not know. The dead are buried in all their clothes, and all their possessions are placed in the grave, or if too long, as in the case of a bow or spear, are hung on a bush close by. Then the grave is filled in and bushes or stones are thrown on top to keep the animals off. All

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1. Trenk. "Buschleute der Namib", 169.

the village is present, and the women weep. Next day a near relative burns buchu on the grave and says "tabete", goodbye. All then move to another locality and leave the spot for a couple of years. After the funeral there are no further mourning rites.<sup>1</sup>

Passarge's description for the //aikwe further east is essentially in agreement with the above, but contains one or two other details. He states that as soon as a person has died those present raise a short very distinct cry which lets the whole camp know of the death. The corpse, wrapped up in its kaross, is laid near the fire, while the women howl and weep over it. (~~If this fact about the fire is correctly reported it is possible that we may have here an explanation of what Arboussset means by "coarsely fumigated"~~). The burial takes place as soon as possible after death. If this occurs at night, then on the following day; if in the morning, then on the same day. The grave is a round hole, about one metre broad and two deep, and is made with the hands and digging stick. A man jumps in receives the corpse, and places it in a crouching position, with the arms crossed on the chest, and the hands laid on the shoulders. The dead man is buried in his kaross and ornaments, and with all his weapons and utensils. The grave is then closed, a hedge made round it, and the spot abandoned. No one sleeps in the vicinity, owing to fear of the ghost, hence the place is left and avoided.<sup>2</sup>

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1. D. F. Bleek, The Naron, 35.

2. Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 109-110.



The burial customs of the Auen are in every respect similar with those of the Naron, as described by Miss Bleek. The Kung bind the corpse in a similar fashion, and bury it lying on one side, but facing no special direction. The grave, which is round, narrow and shallow, is dug preferably under a termite hill, but if there is none in the vicinity any other suitable spot is chosen. There are no special funeral ceremonies, according to Vedder. The grave is never revisited by the relatives. If their way leads past it, they go round in a tangent.<sup>1</sup>

The Bushmen of the Eastern Kalahari, according to Dornan, likewise often bury dead people in the termite ant-hills that are so common all over the country. A hole is excavated in which the body is placed in a contracted position. The grave is then surrounded with a fence of thorn bushes to protect it from the jackals and hyenas. The "tame" Bushmen now also bury their dead in much the same manner as do the heathen Bechwana. A round hole three or four feet deep is excavated, in the side of which there is a recess. The corpse is placed in this recess, either sitting or lying on the left side, with the knees doubled up to the chin. The grave, as a rule, is near to the place where the dead person lived. Sometimes they do not take the trouble to excavate a grave, but use an ant-hill or the cleft of a rock. Here also there is apparently no fixed orientation of the corpse, for when Dornan asked his informants if they placed it with the face to the east, some said they did, others said they did not.

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 158; Vedder, Z. KolSpr., I. 8.

When a man is buried, his weapons are placed in the grave with him, together with some meat and occasionally a little water, while a woman is buried with a few ostrich eggshells, some berries and meat. As a rule the dead person's ornaments are also added, though amongst the tame Bushmen these may be removed. "This however is not often done, as they dislike touching or interfering in any way with a corpse, owing to the fear of bad luck". After the funeral they usually indulge in a funeral feast, then desert the locality and never mention the dead person's name afterwards. "That they are much affected by death is certain, for they often weep loudly at such times, especially if the deceased be a person of some importance, and bitterly lament his departure from amongst them". Signs of mourning are infrequent. Sometimes they paint their faces with white and black stripes as a sign that they have had a death in their encampment; and Dornan adds that he has heard of their painting the whole body with red and white stripes, but has never himself seen any thus decorated.<sup>1</sup>

#### Spirits of the Dead.

All the accounts given above are admittedly inadequate. They agree however in stating that the dead person is buried in a contracted position with all his possessions, and in implying the absence of any elaborate and prolonged funeral ceremony and rites of mourning. No attempt, however, appears to have been

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1. Dornan. Pygmies and Bushmen, 124-146.

made to ascertain what explanation the Bushmen themselves have to offer for burying the dead person with all his possessions. All the descriptions of the funeral ceremonies of the Bushmen point also to a vague fear of the dead person, expressed most forcibly in the fact that after the funeral the place is abandoned and perhaps never revisited. What belief underlies this fear, and what the Bushmen hold to be the fate of the dead, are not always easy to determine. Stow mentions the belief, reported to him of some of the Southern Bushmen, that at some undefined spot on the banks of the Orange River there is a place called 'too'ga (?/ku!ga), to which after death they will all go; and that to ensure a safe journey there they all cut off the joint of the little finger of one hand. "This they consider is a guarantee that they will be able to arrive there without difficulty, and that upon their arrival they will be feasted with locusts and honey, while those who have neglected this rite will have to travel there upon their heads, beset the entire distance with all kinds of imaginary obstacles and difficulties; and even after all their labour on arriving at the desired destination they will have nothing but flies to live upon." This belief that after a time the dead arise and go to a land where there is an abundance of good food is likewise recorded by Campbell and by Miss Currie, neither of whom, however, is a specially trustworthy informant. The Bushman informants of Dr. Bleek also spoke of "the place to which the Bushmen go after death", but unfortunately the details which they gave have not

yet been published. We are unable, therefore, to tell if their ideas of a future life were in any way similar to those reported by Stow and the other writers.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, these Bushmen also had a variety of interesting beliefs linking up death with the phenomena of Nature. The stars, they said, know the time at which a Bushman dies, and the fall of one announces, to those who are not aware of it, that something bad has happened. When, after this, a "hammerkop" (Scopus umbretta, the "lightning bird" of other South African tribes) flies, calling out, over the Bushmen, the people know that someone belonging to them has died. When rain is accompanied by lightning, girls who are out in the open become killed by the lightning and are converted into stars, while those who are taken away by the rain become beautiful water-flowers, which will not allow themselves to be plucked and disappear when approached. Such flowers must be let alone. Hence the rule that young unmarried women and girls must hide themselves from the rain. The Moon, again, is hollow (in its first quarter) because it is carrying people who are dead. The human heart is believed to fall down after death in the form of a shooting star; the hair of a dead person is changed into clouds, while his gall appears again as a green colour in the sky, and so forth. Dead persons may also come in their own forms as apparitions to their relatives and friends, even in waking <sup>life</sup> ~~like~~. There seems, however, to be no evil

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1. Stow, Native Races, 129; Campbell, Second Journey in S. Africa, i.29. Currie, "Bushmen of Namaqualand", 117; Bleek, Bushman Texts, 19.

portent in this; nor, indeed, does there appear to be any noticeable fear of dead persons on the whole, although we are told that the names of those who are dead must not be uttered by children at night.<sup>1</sup>

The Namib Bushmen, on the other hand, seem to fear dead people greatly, and, as we have seen, the thickened sap with which they are buried is meant to conciliate their souls. Trenk says they believe only in an "evil spirit", which they fear, but he throws no light on the nature of this spirit. He adds, however, that according to them, the souls of the dead fly about in the air and also speak to people, yet remain unseen, except by children, to whom they often show themselves in ghostlike animal forms of oxen, horses, or gemsboks. The first two species of animals hint at some foreign influence, probably Hottentot or European, or at least to the fact that the belief has been recently acquired, but in the absence of fuller information this cannot be definitely asserted.<sup>2</sup>

Of the tribes further north our information is somewhat more precise. Kaufmann, as we have seen, maintains that the Auen distinguish between those who die "good deaths" and those who die "bad deaths", and he adds that the latter are feared also after death. This distinction is not found among the Naron at Sandfontein, but is also reported by Fourie of the partly-disorganised Auen and Aikwe (Naron) groups of the Gobabis

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1. Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 21, 25; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 365-371, 389-401.

2. Trenk "Buschleute der Namib", 168.

district. He says they believe in a "good being" named !khutse and a "bad being" named Gaua. People who die a "good death" are said to go to !khutse and those dying a bad death to Gaua. The former have a good time and live in plenty; the latter, on the other hand, often suffer hunger and distress. A deceased person is believed to move about in the form of a ghost at night. "Buchu is accordingly sprinkled over the grave to make the spirit of the departed happy so that it may not return at night to molest others; further, water is poured over or left at the grave in order that the spirit may not interfere with the rain, and the bow, quiver and arrows of the deceased placed at the graveside to obviate the necessity of his ghost returning to look for them". These usages are no doubt part of the funeral ceremony, but the context in which they are described does not make this clear.<sup>1</sup>

The word Gaua, or more properly, //gaua or //gauwa, which Fourie interprets as a "bad being" or "Satan", is, according to Miss Bleek, also used by the Auen and the Naron in the sense of "a person who has died". Her male informants said that all people who die become //gauwa, and the magicians can see them. The women, however, affirmed that only men who have been cut between the eyebrows (at the puberty ceremonies) become //gauwa, and only such men see them, though women sometimes hear them. "They evidently mean ghosts", comments Miss Bleek, "and have much the same vague fear of them as European peasants have. The ghosts walk at night and

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1. Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 104.

people are afraid of them, but do not expect real harm from them. If seen, the apparitions resemble people."<sup>1</sup>

The same word was given three meanings by some Kung youths from near Lake Ngami - "dream,ghost, spirit". It is met with again among the Angola Kung, by whom it is sometimes used for "ghost", sometimes more impersonally. Miss Bleek was told by one of her female informants that when a person dies there rises from the grave the ghost - //gaua - which can be seen by magicians. This woman claimed to be a magician, and said that she and her co-workers could conjure up //gaua by dancing and singing. In what form he appeared and whether she looked on the apparition as the spirit of the departed, or as some other spirit, she did not say. Another woman's death was described in these words: "She died, became a ghost, people saw the ghost, it went away and stayed in the bush".<sup>2</sup>

The word //gauwa among the North-Western tribes is, however, as we shall presently find, not restricted to the ghosts of dead persons. It is also used for a wider spiritual conception, and thus links up the beliefs concerning death with other aspects of religious belief.

In the Eastern Kalahari we meet again with the mention of an after-world. Some of Dornan's informants said that after death the spirit of the deceased takes a long journey, and finally arrives at a certain place where he joins his fathers who have gone

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1. D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 26.

2. D.F.Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 54; "Bushmen of Central Angola", 123, 124.

before him. They did not know the whereabouts of this place, but said that it is warm and has plenty of game. Other informants, however, asserted that the spirits of the dead remain about the places where burials have taken place. Hence the Bushmen avoid these localities as much as possible, and if they have occasion to pass them "give them as wide a berth as possible, and often throw a small pebble on the grave, muttering at the same time some words to the spirit to ensure good luck. This is to appease the spirit lest he might resent the intrusion. Any Bushman in the hunting field if he comes suddenly on a grave either of one of his own people or other native, will avoid stepping over it if he possibly can, and will throw a small stone on it as above. All these observances indicate that they believe the spirit remains active about the place, and they do not want to offend it."

It will be seen that their beliefs coincide to some extent with those of the Southern Bushmen, and that the practice of throwing a small stone on the grave in order to appease the spirit of the dead person is here definitely asserted. Unfortunately it is not always possible to determine how far Dornan has recorded what are actually his own observations, for much in his book has obviously been inspired by the accounts of earlier writers. What he has to say here must therefore also be received with caution, and cannot without further inquiry be accepted as an independent confirmation.

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 147-148.



It appears on the whole that among all the Bushmen people are believed to continue their existence after death, sometimes in their own form, sometimes in another form, and may even manifest themselves to the living. There is also a vague ill-defined fear of the dead person's haunting the living, but it would seem that as a rule no great harm is expected from this. Another fact that emerges very prominently is the apparent absence of any organised cult of the dead - there seems to be nothing in the way of ancestor-worship, nor of any other form of religious practice in which the spirits of the dead are regularly invoked or propitiated. The only specific mention there is of dead people being prayed to refers to the Cape Bushmen. One of Miss Lloyd's informants stated that his father asked a certain dead magician for rain, which speedily followed; while another mentioned a prayer addressed by his mother to a dead magician who had power over game in order that her husband's hunting might prove more fortunate. The details given in both cases are too scanty to afford much basis for speculation, but can hardly be interpreted as implying more than that in certain cases dead magicians would be asked to make use of the special powers they had possessed in life and apparently still retained, just as they would be approached if still alive. The main conclusion to be drawn, in fact, is that these Bushmen do not regard dead people as wholly severed from the world of the living. There is certainly nothing here to warrant the assumption of any regular organised worship of the dead.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 21, 22.

Worship of Heavenly Bodies.

Religious cult among the Bushmen centres largely in the worship of the Heavenly Bodies, and especially of the Moon. All the Bushmen of whose religion we have more than fragmentary accounts are said to pray to the Moon, with the exception of the Hiechware, who have long been exposed to Bantu influence; and all, as we have seen, connect it with the origin of death.

Prayers directed to the Moon by the Cape Bushmen have been recorded in the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd. One account indicates that when the New Moon first appears every man prays to it. Unfortunately the details given are far too scanty to throw further light upon the nature of the worship. It may be noted here, however, that Orpen mentions having seen Bushmen throw sand in the air and shout out on seeing the crescent moon when it first appeared. In the mythology of these people the Moon is represented now as the shoe of the Mantis, which he threw into the sky to give him light, now as a man gradually sliced down to almost complete extinction by the sun. But that it is more than merely a mythological character to them is shown not only by the prayers, but also by various special observances relating to it. The Moon is not to be laughed at, lest it become angry and go into the sky (i.e. become eclipsed). A Bushman child for the same reason is warned by his father not to look at the Moon as it rises behind the mountain, for fear of arousing its anger and causing it to become obscured. Above all

the Moon may not be looked at when game has been shot, lest the wounded animal be lost.

Prayers are also found addressed to the Sun and the Stars. Abundance of food is attributed to them, and the prayers, like those addressed to the Moon, ask for success in hunting and collecting and say, in effect, "send food, that we may live and not die". The star Canopus, e.g., is looked upon as carrying "Bushman rice" (ants' larvae), and when it first appears burning sticks are pointed towards it and moved up and down quickly. After this the women go out early to seek for "Bushman rice". Prayers are also addressed to it for success in hunting. In the mythology these bodies are held to have once been animals or people, in some cases people who had been transformed on breaking some taboo. Many of the stars and constellations bear names which they apparently owe, as Dr. Bleek points out, only to the fact that they are seen at certain times when the animals, or other objects, whose names they bear, come into season or are most abundant. This would suggest the close connection between them and the food supply. "Of course," he adds, "when such names as steinbok, hartebeest, eland anteater, lion, tortoise, etc., had once become attached to certain stars or constellations, fancy might step in and try to discover the shapes of those animals (or other objects) in the configuration of the stars; whilst, at the same time, mythological personification would begin its work, and make the heavens the theatre of numberless poetically-conceived histories" - in which, as the texts collected

by him show, Bushman mythology is extremely rich.<sup>1</sup>

The details published by Dr. Bleek and Miss Lloyd are too fragmentary to enable us to determine anything more about the nature of the worship of these heavenly bodies; but that such worship did actually exist is evident from the facts recorded above.

There is no record of similar prayers among the Namib Bushmen, but then no information at all is available about their ideas relating to the heavenly bodies. Among the tribes further north we meet again with moon worship. Both Naron and Auen still worship the Moon. They regard it as an old man, the Sun as a young girl; and these bodies are husband and wife. First the Moon pursues the Sun across the sky, later the Sun follows the Moon. They go down to their houses below the horizon in the west, then fly back at night across the earth to their houses in the east. They can be heard passing, but are not seen. The New Moon, when it appears, is invoked by the magicians, two of whom, man and woman, sit on the ground together, hold their hands out, palm upwards, to it, and say: "Give us rain that we may live". This worship of the Moon has penetrated also into modern ideas, for most of them think, since the Moon is in the sky and the God (!khuba) the white man and Nama speak of is also in the sky, that God is the Moon. Their ancestors used also to pray to certain stars, particularly to the morning star and the Southern Cross; but these prayers, says Miss Bleek,

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1. Bleek, "Resemblances in Bushman and Australian Mythology", Cape Monthly Mag., Feb. 1874, 101-102; Ibid., Bushman Texts, 7, 9-12, 15; Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 7, 8, 22; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 51-53, 83, 339-341, et passim; Orpen, Folk-lore, 30, 145.

are memories of long ago, whereas the moon worship is  
continued to-day by young as well as old.<sup>1</sup>

A prayer to the New Moon for food, given by a Kung youth from near Lake Ngami, is also recorded in the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd. Other prayers to the New Moon are found among the Kung in Angola. Miss Bleek describes a dance seen by her, in which the women and girls stood in a group on one side singing and clapping their hands, while the men were in an irregular group on the other side, singing too, but not clapping. They held their hands out forwards and sideways, and wriggled their whole bodies, moving a few steps forwards from time to time. At first they did not form a line or circle, afterwards they formed a sort of half-circle, but did not move round. Only the manner of wriggling seemed to matter. The song accompanying this dance was a repetition of the following words:-

New Moon, come out, give water to us,  
New Moon, thunder down water to us,  
New Moon, shake down water for us."

Here also, as among the Naron and Auen, the Moon is therefore regarded as the raingiver and is prayed to as such - and rain, it must be remembered, makes the plants grow which feed the buck, hence it provides both vegetable and animal food. The New Moon is said to be

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1. D.F.Bleek., The Naron, 26-27.

either a child or a man, while the Full Moon is a woman. This distinction Miss Bleek interprets in the light of the difference presented in form by these two aspects of the Moon. In Naron and in Nama the masculine and feminine endings are given to the same roots to indicate respectively strong, tall, slender things or weak, short, round things. So here the New Moon may be called a man, because of its slenderness, the Full Moon a woman because of its round shape. The Moon is also held to be the elder sister, the Sun the younger; but apparently there are no special beliefs or practices relating to the latter, although one of Miss Bleek's informants said: "We sing to the Sun and the Stars as well as the Moon". No prayers to the former, however,<sup>1</sup> are recorded.

The only other Bushmen of whose ideas relating to the heavenly bodies we have information are the Hiechware. Dornan states that he was unable to discover among them any special ceremonies connected with the sun and the moon, but that they certainly do reverence these bodies, although seeming to dread them more than anything else. They think they must keep on good terms with the sun and the moon if they are to be successful in hunting or anything else they undertake. He could not, however discover any prayers or other worship directed to these bodies. How far the absence of moon worship must be attributed to the fact that these Bushmen have long been exposed to Bantu influence

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1. Bleek and Lãoyd, Bushman Folklore, 414-415; D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 53; Ibid., "Bushmen of Central Angola", 119-120, 122, 124.

is difficult to say. In view of the comparative evidence afforded by the other Bushman tribes, however, as well as the fact that the Hiechware have certainly been considerably influenced by the Bechwana, this seems the most reasonable suggestion; although, as already noted, Dornan cannot be regarded as too reliable an authority.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence on the whole shows quite definitely that worship of the heavenly bodies exists among the Bushmen, and especially of the Moon. In all the instances noted, the New Moon is prayed to; in the case of the Cape Bushmen the details are not available, but among the Naron, Auen and Angola Kung, there is a special ceremony, at which it is invoked for rain. There is nothing to indicate that the Moon is conceived as a supreme deity, or that it forms the object of any elaborate cult. At the same time the prayers and ceremonies noted clearly constitute an act of worship. They must, therefore, be regarded as part of the Bushman religion. The prayers and usages relating to the sun and stars among the Cape Bushmen suggest a wider sidereal worship, which the scanty details from the Northern tribes would seem to bear out; but the worship of the Moon seems to be far more prominent.

#### Supernatural Beings.

In other aspects of religion and mythology there appears to be a good deal of variation in details

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 163.

among the different Bushman tribes, which closer analysis shows, however, to be of fundamentally the same nature. All the Bushmen believe in supernatural beings of some sort, which seem to be personifications of natural phenomena. They are neither good nor evil, but bring harm and good at different times. The rain, e.g. brings water and makes food grow, but may also destroy with storms and terrible lightning.

The rain is not worshipped, but is acknowledged by the Cape Bushmen as a supernatural personage, and so is the wind. These Bushmen have a variety of beliefs and usages connected with the rain (!khwa, also = "water") It is thought of most commonly as an animal which lives in a water-hole, and they believe that wherever this animal goes, rain will fall. One of the principal methods of rain-making, therefore, is for the rain-magicians to drag the animal over as large a tract of country as they can, in order that the rain should extend as far as possible. Certain serpents and snakes found near a water-hole are believed to be kept in store by the rain, and for fear of arousing its wrath may not be eaten by young unmarried men and women; nor may frogs be killed, lest drought ensue. When the rain is angry with any one, people may be carried off in a whirlwind, and various transformations effected. Young women are particularly exposed to danger from the rain, and to avoid this must observe various rules of conduct. They must propitiate the water-hole by



means of buchu and tto(aromatic shrubs); they must hide themselves from the rain; they must not snap their fingers at people, nor may they be ~~spoken~~ to against their wish, lest the anger of the rain be aroused. There are several legends describing how disobedient girls were punished, together with those around them, by the angry rain, or were taken up by his agency in a whirlwind and transformed into various objects - great snakes, frogs, stars, water-flowers, etc. Certain magicians have power over the rain, and can cause it to come or stay away, as they please. These powers remain with them even after death, and just as in life they are asked for rain, so when they are dead they may also be entreated for it. Other magicians have a similar power over the wind (!khwe), and are protected by it. The howling of the wind is believed to forebode evil; it tells the beasts of prey where to find people, and when it blows strongly they can approach the huts unheard. In the mythology the wind is represented as having formerly been a man, which now wears the form of a bird.<sup>1</sup>

The most prominent figure in the mythology of the Cape Bushmen, however, is the Mantis, round whom a whole circle of myths has been formed. Besides his own proper name, /kaggen, he possesses several others, and so also does his wife, whose most usual name, however, is /huntu!katt-!katten, the dassie or rock

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1. Bleek, Bushman Texts, 17; Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 9, 20-21, 25; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folk-lore, 193-199, 393-397, et passim.

rabbit. They have three children, a daughter, of whom there is no further mention, a son, !gaunu - ts'axau (!gaunu is the name of a certain star, and ts'axau means "eye"), who in one of the tales is killed by baboons, and restored to life again by the Mantis, and another son /kaggen-Opwa, the young Mantis, who also figures in one of the tales, where his likeness to his father is commented upon. Besides his own children, the Mantis has an adopted daughter, !xo, the Porcupine. Her real father is a monster named //khwai-hemm, the All-devourer, but she does not dare to live with him for fear of being herself eaten. She is married to /kwammanga, a mythical person not identified with any animal, but seen in the rainbow. They have two children, /kwammanga-Opwa, "young /kwammanga", who is brave and quiet like his father, and /ni, the Ichneumon, who plays an important part in Bushman mythology, particularly in advising and assisting his grandfather, the Mantis, and in chiding him for his misdeeds. All these, the Bushmen say, were once men and women, people of the early race, which preceded the Bushmen, but now they are animals.

In their myths the Mantis is gifted with supernatural powers, yet often shows great foolishness; he is sometimes mischievous, sometimes kind, and at all times human. He can transform himself into various other animal forms, is sometimes killed, but always comes to life again. He also has creative powers. One myth relates that the Bushmen were formerly springboks, and were changed by him into men; another that he gave places their names; while certain game animals are under

his special protection. He can also bring people back to life again. But he is never prayed to, although, as we have seen, there are prayers to the Moon, who is his creation. Nor is there any evidence of observances specially connected with him, apart from the mention of a "curious charm" made from the foot of the hartebeest and used by women for their children as a protection against him.<sup>1</sup>

In Orange Free State and Basutoland the Bushmen there also had tales about the Mantis, differing slightly from those of the Cape. He seems, however, to have been here the object of a definite cult as well. According to Arbousset, it was believed that 'Kaang (i.e., /kaggen), or, as he was also termed, 'Kue-'akeng-'teng, "the man (i.e., the master) of all things", causes life and death and gives or refuses rain. All the animals have special marks which he has put upon them; deficiency of game is attributed to him, and he is invoked in prayer for success in the chase. He is also worshipped in times of famine and before going to war, when the mo'koma, or "dance of blood" is performed all through the night. This dance Orpen's informant, Qing, described as follows: "Cagn (i.e., /kaggen) gave us the song of this dance, and told us to dance it, and people would die from it, and he would give charms to

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1. Bleek, Bushman Texts, 6-9; Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 5-7; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 1-37; D.F. Bleek, The Mantis and his Friends.

raise them again, It is a circular dance of men and women, following each other, and it is danced all night. Some fall down, some become as if mad and sick, blood runs from the nose of others whose charms are weak, and they eat charm medicine, in which is burnt snake powder. When a man is sick, this dance is danced round him, and the dancers put both hands under their armpits, and press their hands on him, and when he coughs the initiated put out their hands and receive what has injured him - secret things. The initiated who know secret things are Qognqe; the sick person is hang cãi."

Cagn, said Qing, was the first being and made all things - the sky, the moon, stars, wind, mountains and animals. The Bushmen prayed to him. On being asked how, Qing answered, in a low, imploring tone: "O Cagn! O Cagn! are we not your children, do you not see our hunger? give us food" - "and he gives us both hands full". To the further question, where Cagn was, he responded, "We don't know, but the elands do. Have you not hunted and heard his cry, when the elands suddenly start and run to his call? Where he is, the elands are in drove like cattle."

Cagn's wife was Coti. When asked where she came from, Qing said, "I don't know, perhaps with those who brought the Sun; but you are now asking the secrets that are not spoken of." These secrets he himself did not know - "only the initiated men of that dance know these things". Cagn also had two sons, Cogaz and Gowi. Together with him and Cogaz, there was another great

"chief", Qwangciqutshaa. All three had great power, but it was Cagn who gave orders through the other two. Of all of these personages various tales were given by Qing. One of them, describing how Cogaz was killed by baboons and restored to life again by Cagn, is almost identical with the similar story among the Cape Bushmen of /kaggen and !gaunu-ts'axau. In all these tales Cagn appears as a human being, but with supernatural powers. He can change himself into different forms, is then sometimes killed and eaten by animals or people, but always comes to life again. He possesses various magical charms, the strongest of which is his tooth; and the birds are his messengers and report to him what is going on. Occasionally he gets into trouble, from which he is extricated by Cogaz, just as in the Cape Bushmen stories /kaggen is aided by /kwammanga.

Another name for the Mantis among these Bushmen, according to Arbousset, is 'ngo. This may explain the following quotation from Campbell: - "They had a name which they gave to God, who is above them, and another to God who is under them. The former is a male, the latter a female. The male God they call Goba, the female Ko; and her attendants are called Gauna". Ko ('ngo), as we have already seen, comes sometimes to the people while they are dancing, and informs them where game is to be procured; while if she breathes<sup>1</sup> upon a man's arm this makes him shoot better.

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1. Campbell, Second Journey into South Africa, 32-33; Arbousset, Relation d'un Voyage, etc., 501, 505-506; Orpen, "Mythology of the Maluti Bushmen", Folk-lore, 30, 139-156.

From these accounts we may gather that the Mantis among the Basutoland Bushmen is specially concerned with the sources of food supply, and that special dances with which he is associated are held in connection with this. These dances, according to Orpen's informant, are in some way concerned with initiation; although, from the description of the healing processes employed, it is probable that the "initiated men" referred to are the magicians, who are also the physicians in all Bushman tribes. The Mantis is also prayed to for food, and the origin of all things ascribed to him. The tales recorded by Orpen show that the Mantis here has much the same mythological character as among the Cape Bushmen. Among the latter, however, the Mantis is not prayed to, although, as in Basutoland, he is said to have made certain bucks and to protect them.

Further north there are no particular beliefs about the Mantis. Some Kung youths from near Lake Ngami, however, repeated to Miss Lloyd several tales about /xwe, a little personage not identified with any animal, who plays tricks and transforms himself into a variety of things. /xwe also has some dealings with the Moon and the Hare, outstanding figures of Bushman lore. He seems to have much in common with the Mantis of the Cape Bushmen; but there is no further mention of him in the other branches of the Kung or in any of the other North-Western tribes.<sup>1</sup>

Vedder, who studied the Kung at Tsumeb, much further west, does not mention /xwe, but speaks of Huwu

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1. Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 404-413.

or Hu'e, whom he calls a "good spirit". They attribute to this being the creation and maintenance of all things, and, as we have already seen, have a special ceremony once a year, at the time when the edible bulbs of the veld are beginning to ripen, in which they pray to him for food. Another prayer, which may be addressed to Hu'e by anyone, and is used in case of illness, also has a fixed formula: "Why is my son ill? Please make him well again, that he may live".<sup>1</sup>

The Kung youths from Lake Ngami only once mentioned Hu'e or Huwe. They began the tale of the Moon and the Hare with the words, Huwe made all things; and in explanation said, Huwe made all things to eat (i.e. all animals that are eaten), and Huwe is a man. Huwe is also spoken of by the Kung of Angola. Here, as we have seen, he occasionally appears at the boys' puberty ceremony and dances with them, sometimes as a youth, sometimes in double form as man and woman. In the prayer to the New Moon, the name Huwe may also sometimes be substituted for //nwa-se "little New Moon", but apart from this substitution there is no worship of Huwe. He is also said to appear to people in dreams.<sup>2</sup>

Among the Naron and Auen at Sandfontein a few men mentioned Huwu or Huwuba, but they did not know much about him - he was "captain" of the men in the north,

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1. Vedder, Z.KolSpr., I, 6-7.

2. D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 54; "Bushmen of Central Angola", 122, 123.

the MaKoba and others. They also said he was the brother of Hishe. Hishe with them has much the same character as Huwe further north. He is the protector of the game and hunting; he dwells in the east; he once, when trees and animals were people, bade them assume their present forms; he also instituted marriage and the mode of life of the Bushmen, Hottentots and Europeans; and he appears at the boys' puberty ceremonies in various guises, sometimes in both male and female forms. From a casual reference by Miss Bleek it appears that the magicians "worked" with Hishe, but unfortunately no light is thrown upon the meaning of this, unless it refers to the fact that the magicians brought him in at the puberty ceremonies.

From the Hottentots these people were beginning to borrow the idea of !khuba or !xuba (cf. Campbell's "Goba"). This is the Hottentot word for "master, lord", and has been used by some missionaries for "God". The Naron and Auen were vague as to the nature of !khuba. The old men did not know of him; the middle-aged men said Hishe was !khuba; while some of the younger people said he was the sky, others that he dwelt in the sky; they prayed to him to let them live long and make them well when ill. Women who when young had been kidnapped as slaves by Nama chiefs were fluent on the subject of !khuba; the others had evidently picked up the word without attaching any clear meaning to it, beyond that it was some sort of deity and that it was "good to pray to it". The word !khuba (given by him in its vocative form !khutse) was also found



among the partly disorganised Auen and Naron of the Gobaobis district by Fourie, who translated it "God".<sup>1</sup>

Huwe appears again among the Bushmen of the Eastern Kalahari. They believe, according to Dornan, in a spirit which they variously call Dzimo, Thora and Huwe. Dzimo is a corruption of the Chwana word Modimo, generally rendered "God", and is, says Dornan, "largely used by the tame Bushmen with the same signification". Thora and Huwe are the regular Bushman words. Huwe is here spoken of as the good spirit who wards off disease. gives plenty, and protects the Bushmen from danger. When any danger threatens, they will call upon Huwe, Dornan records having once heard some Bushmen of the Sansokwe River singing over and over again the words Huwe ka hume ie ie, Huwe come to our aid ie ie. more often, however, they speak of Thora. They say he made all things, but they are not sure where he dwells, or if he is a person. Dornan states that they look upon him as the Great One, who is over all things, who sends rain and game, plenty of food and good luck in hunting. They often use Thora to ensure success in hunting, e.g. when they have killed an animal they will praise Thora for bringing it under their arrows. This statement Dornan seems to have derived from Chapman, who records that once when some Bushmen were with him and he had killed a rhinoceros they threw some dust

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1. D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 24-26; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 104.

on its tail and spat in its eyes before they touched it, muttering meanwhile "some gibberish" to Thora, while on another occasion, when he had killed some elephants, a similar performance was enacted by his Bushman attendants.

The distinction between Thora and Huwe is not quite clear from Dornan's account. In one place he seems to imply that the two words refer to the same conception. Elsewhere, however, he remarks: "Huwe seems an inferior kind of spirit to Thora, for at times the latter is invoked to come to his aid as if the former were not powerful enough to defend himself and his children. Some Bushmen near the Tuli River sang the following words, in an agitated and melancholy tone of voice: 'Thora ba Huwe i-e i-e, Thora come to the help of Huwe i-e i-e' ad lib". From their attributes, however, it would seem that the two conceptions Huwe and Thora are substantially the same. In all probability the name Huwe has drifted in from the west, which would explain why it is sometimes substituted for Thora, sometimes found<sup>1</sup> alongside it.

In addition to this being variously named Hishe, Huwe or Thora, all the Northern Bushmen also speak of //gauwa (//gaua, Gaua, etc.). This word, as we have already seen, is used by the North-Western Bushmen for "a person who has died". It is, however, also used with

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 148-150; Chapman, Travels in South Africa, i 56, 81. The translation given by Dornan of the song in which Thora is asked to come to the aid of Huwe cannot be relied upon. In another place he renders the same words: "God leave (us) alone ie ie"! (J. Roy. Anthropol. Inst., 47, 53).

a much wider application. Among the Naron and Auen at Sandfontein the wind is called //gauwa when it is strong and howls. One of the Naron tales recorded by Miss Bleek speaks of the wind as a man going about, and of //gauwa as bird accompanying him. "//gauwa says: 'I make the wind and thus go'". Some of the people seemed to believe in a supreme //gauwa, a being who lives in the east near Hishe, to whose house the ghosts repair by day. They said he was Hishe's younger brother, while other said //gauwa was Hishe. Miss Bleek affirms that no ideas of good or bad qualities are connected with either of these beings, nor are they prayed to. Fourie, however, speaks of Gaua among the Auen and Naron of Gobabis as a "bad being" or "Satan", to whom people dying a "bad death" are said to go, while those dying a "good death" go to !khutse (!khuba). "About the nature of these beings," he adds, "they have no idea, nor are their lives and activities influenced to any extent by them". But he records a tale in which the knowledge of magic by the Bushmen is ascribed to Gaua, who initiated one of them "on the other side" into the use of the small magic quiver (cf. Magicians and Magic).<sup>1</sup>

Vedder, again, says of the Kung of Tsumeb that they believe in //gaua, who is opposed to Huwe, and from whom they expect only evil and against whom they protect themselves by means of amulets. The Kung of Angola ascribe thunder and lightning to //gaua. They say "//gaua thunders", and when anyone is struck by lightning, a frequent occurrence, the death is related

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1.D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 26,46; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 104

in the words: "//gaua took him or her". Two aunts of Miss Bleek's informant who had been killed by lightning were said to sit in the sky as stars. All stars are called //gaua's fires; there do not seem to be any separate names for them. //gaua also leads the people at a girl's puberty dance, and she is cicatricised for him. Again, it was said by the same informant, a female magician, that the Bushmen are //gaua's children. He is a male being who comes in from the forest, where his dwelling is a hole in the ground, and magicians can see it from afar. But people do not pray to him. This was also stated by a male informant, who said //gaua was Ndzambi (the Mbunda word for deity, used by the missionaries for "God"); but "We pray to moon, sun and stars,"<sup>1</sup> he added, "but not to //gaua".

In the Eastern Kalahari, according to Dornan, Huwe and sometimes Thora is engaged in a contest with the evil spirit variously known as Gaua, Khauna or Gauna. He is the destroyer, the one who sends bad luck and disease, and is ever on the look-out to injure people. The Bushmen also invoke the aid of Thora to defeat the attempts of Khauna to injure them. This demon sends the thunder-storm and the lightning, of which the people are very much afraid. They will mutter to themselves, "Khauna ka rue ie ie", Khauna leave us alone. They look upon the lightning as the offspring of Khauna, nor will they kill the lightning bird or "hammerkop" (*Scopus umbretta*) or rob its nest if they can help it. "Once in the company

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1. Vedder, Z. KolSpr., I, 6, 7; D.F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 54; "Bushmen of Central Angola", 123-124.

of a Bushman," says Dornan, "I wanted to shoot one of these birds, but he said it would be bad, and that Khauna would not like it, so I desisted". If a person is struck dead with lightning, he is supposed to have got in the way of the lightning bird when trying to rob its nest. "The religion of the Bushmen," concludes Dornan, "is thus a kind of dualism in which two powers, one good, Thora or Huwe", and one bad, Khauna, are engaged in a struggle for the mastery."<sup>1</sup>

The word //gauwa, finally, crops up again among the Bushmen of the Orange Free State, where, as we have seen, Campbell mentions that the spirits attendant upon Ko (the Mantis) are called Gauna, and that after Ko has disappeared from the dance in which she was taking part, "her numphs" also come and dance for a while. Nothing further is said about them.

The problem now arises as to the nature of these beings. The information relating to them is sometimes vague, sometimes inconsistent, and at all times obviously inadequate. No interpretation of their nature can therefore be regarded as fully reliable until it has been confirmed by a much more careful and detailed study in the field of the beliefs and usages connected with them. Moreover, as we shall see subsequently, the conception of //gaua also figures prominently among the Hottentots and Bergdama, whose religious beliefs and practices in general offer other features of resemblance with those of the

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1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 150, 153, 167-8.

Bushmen. A comparison of the Bushman ideas on the one hand and those of the Hottentots and Bergdama on the other may thus succeed in throwing further light upon the problem, the final consideration of which may therefore be delayed until the religions of these people have also been passed in review.

Certain points arise, however, which may at once be dealt with. The notions of !khuba among the Auen and the Naron and of Dzimbo among the Hiechware may be set aside in the attempt to ascertain the real nature of Bushman religious conceptions. They have obviously been introduced recently from foreign sources. So, too, must those interpretations which oppose Hishe, Huwe, or Thora as the "good being" or "God" with //gaua as the "evil being" or "Satan". Miss Bleek, our most reliable authority, insists that the Bushmen do not connect good or evil qualities with either of these beings "No Bushman I have spoken to," she says, "ascribed to either //gaua or to Huwe any characteristics which might be called 'good' or 'bad', although," she adds, "many Bushmen of the South West Protectorate are in touch with Hottentots who have been taught by the missionaries to use the former name for the Devil". This will explain the occurrence of such ideas found by Fourie among the partly-disorganised Auen and Naron of Gobabis, and by Vedder (himself a missionary) among the Kung at Tsumeb, while Dornan (also a missionary) is as we have already had occasion to point out, not too trustworthy an informant, and all his interpretations must be received with caution.

Miss Bleek's own impression, which on the

evidence available seems the most justifiable, is that both these beings are personifications of natural powers, which may be either beneficent or the reverse.<sup>1</sup> Huwe or Hishe is the forest, or the growth of the forest. "From his appearing at the boys' initiation rites, which certainly have much to do with hunting, and from his general likeness to Hishe, the protector of the game among Naron and //kau//en", she writes, "I should say Huwe is the spirit of the bush or of the growth of the trees and grasses on which the game feeds, and thus the protector of the game and the giver of good and bad luck to the hunter". The name Hishe itself may be derived from hi, tree or bush. Among the Naron and Auen this being is apparently not prayed to; but the Kung at Tsumeb, as we have seen, call on him as "father" to give them food, when the wild bulbs are ripening, and also pray to him in case of illness. The Kung of Angola do not pray to him either, save when his name is substituted for that of the Moon. "As water is needed to make green things grow," thinks Miss Bleek, "so the giver of water and the protector of woods may easily be confused." Huwe or Hishe again has creative powers, such as may well be ascribed to the spirit of growth and of the bush. This interpretation also provides a likely explanation for the attributes of Thora among the Bushmen of the Eastern<sup>1</sup> Kalahari.

It is possible also to find a connection on some points between Huwe and the conception of the Mantis among the Southern Bushmen. Among the Cape Bushmen, it is true, the Mantis is primarily a mythological character, the central figure of an elaborate series of myths connect-

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1.D.F.Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 123,124.

ed with him and his "family". He is not worshipped, nor is he associated with boys' puberty dances, which, as already noted, apparently do not occur among these Bushmen. On the other hand, he has creative powers, like Huwe, and is also said to have made certain bucks and to protect them. The resemblance between Huwe and the Mantis is much more noticeable among the Bushmen of Basutoland. Here also the Mantis is the central figure of many myths; but at the same time he is prayed to for food, he has creative powers and is specially associated with the game, and he appears in certain dances connected with "initiation", although there is nothing to suggest that these dances are in any way linked up with puberty rites. The elaborate mythological character of the Mantis among the Southern Bushmen and his association with so many other figures in these myths precludes an absolute identification of him and Huwe. The resemblance in other respects, however, seems on the whole sufficiently striking to warrant our connecting the two.

//Gaua, again, according to Miss Bleek, is the personification of the wind and the rain.<sup>1</sup> This all his attributes seem to show. //gaua is primarily the spirit who sends the lightning and the rain and makes the wind blow. //gaua thunders, //gaua lightns, say the Angola Kung, while among the Auen and Naron a howling wind is called //gaua. So, too, in the Eastern Kalahari //gaua is essentially the being who sends the rain and the storm.

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I.D.F. Bleek, loc. cit.



In all this //gaua resembles the conception of the rain held by the Cape Bushmen. Among the latter the rain is definitely personified; it appears in their myths as a supernatural personage, usually in the form of a water animal, and here it is said, the rain thunders, the rain lightens. Among them, again, the wind is sometimes spoken of as a bird. Similarly, among the Naron //gaua is sometimes a bird which makes the wind, while in the Eastern Kalahari the "hammerkop" is the lightning bird and intimately associated with //gaua. Nor, among any of these Bushmen, is there definite evidence that the rain or the wind is worshipped, although they all pray to the New Moon for rain. Among the Cape Bushmen, however, the rain can be controlled by magicians, while among the Angola Kung the magicians can conjure up //gaua by singing and dancing.

Since the rain not only brings water and makes food grow, and thus directly affects the welfare of the people, but also destroys with storms and terrible lightning, it is no wonder perhaps that under missionary influence the notion of evil may become attached to //gaua.

The word //gaua, however, is also used for the ghost of a dead person. "The breath of a person being akin to the wind," says Miss Bleek, "his spirit would have the like name." There is nothing improbable in this explanation, although it postulates a certain amount of reasoning from like to like, which involves the three-fold comparison of wind, breath and spirit. It is possible, however, that the connection between //gaua and

death may be more intimate. The Angola Kung, when anyone is killed by lightning, say "//gaua took him", and two aunts of Miss Bleek's informant who had been killed by lightning are said to sit in the sky as stars, which are looked upon as //gaua's fires. The Cape Bushmen also believe that people who are killed by lightning are changed into stars; but here there is even a further connection between rain and death. When the rain is angry with anyone, people may be carried off in a whirlwind and various transformations effected; the howling of the wind forebodes evil; and there are numerous observances which have to be kept to avoid angering the rain, and thereby provoking death. Again, the flight over a camp of the Scopus umbretta, which among the Eastern Kalahari Bushmen is the "lightning bird", here announces the death of someone. There seems no doubt therefore that death in many cases is due to the agency of the rain: //gaua took him, say the Angola Kung, while the Cape Bushmen speak of the rain or the wind carrying a person off. It is possible therefore that this belief in rain as a cause of death may provide an alternative explanation why the word //gaua is used among the North-Western Bushmen for the ghost of a dead person. The vague fear which the Bushmen have of ghosts will again favour the tendency to ascribe evil qualities to //gaua under missionary influence.

Among the Angola Kung, finally, //gaua also presides at a girl's puberty dance. "Why he does so," says Miss Bleek, "is not clear, unless he is also the life-

giving spirit". We have unfortunately no information as to whether there are here any special usages to be observed by girls towards the rain and water; , but among the Cape Bushmen, as we have seen, young unmarried women and girls are particularly exposed to danger from the rain, and in order to avoid this must observe various rules of conduct. From one or two casual references it would seem that the danger is particularly great at the girl's puberty seclusion, but the details given are far too fragmentary to throw much light upon this. Among the Hottentots, however, as we shall see, girls at the time of menstruation must specially avoid contact with cold water; and the customs there observed in connection with water may also provide an explanation for the Bushman customs.

#### Magic and Magicians.

In all the Bushman tribes people are found who deal in the mysterious or supernatural, who are regarded as endowed with supernatural powers, or who are able to control, either for social purposes or for their own ends, the spiritual forces upon which the social welfare depends. There is no English word which adequately describes them, but such persons may be loosely called magicians.

Among the Cape Bushmen these magicians, who might be of either sex, were called !gixa (plural, ?giten) There is unfortunately no information available as to how they acquired their powers, nor have we any clear description of the part they played in the life of the com-

munity. A few details may, however, be gathered from the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd. Some magicians were rainmakers, who went out to catch the rain bull and lead it over the land bringing rain. Others again, had special powers over particular game animals, such as the springbok or the ostrich. Some magicians were able to assume and go about in the form of animals such as the lion, springbok, jackal or a little bird; others, even when asleep, knew what was going about at night, and took care of the people, defending them from evil magicians. For some magicians could cause illness by shooting with invisible arrows, and the sick man would die, even though doctored; while some were said to eat the flesh of the dead. When a magician died, an earthquake took place, and his heart fell, as a shooting star, out of the sky into a water-hole. His powers, however, he continued to possess even after death, for there are mentioned several occasions on which a dead rainmaker was asked to send rain or a game magician to give success in hunting. These beliefs, fragmentary as they are, show definitely that the magicians were held to possess supernatural powers, which they might use for good or for evil, but, apart perhaps from the making of rain, there is nothing to link up them with any cult or public ceremony, or to indicate that they ever played<sup>1</sup> the part of priest.

Among the Naron and Auen, however, the magicians, as we have seen, function at the puberty ceremonies. They introduce Hishe into the dances, and make the cuts between

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1. Bleek, Bushman Texts, 18; Lloyd, Further Bushman Material Collected, 22.

the eyebrows of the boys. Among the Naron they are also the priests, who pray to the New Moon for rain; while among the Auen they make rain by sprinkling on the ground a kind of red earth, which they fetch from afar and carry with them. The magicians, both male and female, are also the doctors of the community. The millipede, said to belong to Hishe, is only touched by them. They dry it and use it powdered as medicine.

Naron magicians (tsho k'au or /nu K'au) do not dress or live differently from the rest of the community. "No one would know them apart," says Miss Bleek, "nor do they seem to have much influence to-day". The Auen seem to have far more magicians than the Naron, by whom they are looked up to in magic matters. Here, according to Kaufmann, the magicians (tsho k'au, /nu k'au or !geixa) have their skulls shaved clean, and also carry a few ornaments which may not be worn by other people. The magic art in both tribes is learned by apprenticeship. During the month of the puberty ceremony one or two boys are taught their trade by the old magicians. At the next ceremony they return and are taught more; and boys who have been with a magician for many years can when they become older succeed their master.<sup>1</sup>

Magicians among the Kung are of two kinds. In South West Africa both are called in especially for illness. The /u-k'au, who sucks out the disease from the body of the patient, is "an evil person, who speaks to no one and always looks black"; while the /uek'au is the ordinary worker in magic and the poison-mixer; he also

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1. D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 28; Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 159.

prepares medicines from herbs and roots by cooking. In Angola, again, the !num-k'au officiates at puberty dances, makes scarifications, sees spirits, and also conjures up //gaua, while the tsho-k'au heals the sick by singing, dancing and extracting the evil from the patient's body by sucking, for which service he receives a present. Apparently both men and women can become magicians of either kind, if taught by an older practitioner. There is no ceremony of initiation for them, nor do they wear a special dress of any kind.<sup>1</sup>

It will be noticed that both terms which distinguish the two classes of magician among the Kung are also found among the Naron and the Auen for magicians. This would suggest that there is a similar division of functions in these tribes also, but neither Miss Bleek nor Kaufmann definitely states this.

The origin of magic among the Naron and the Auen is said by Fourie to be attributed to //gaua, and he gives the following myth in confirmation: "The Bushman Tji-tji is said to have been initiated by Gaua 'on the other side' into the use of the small magic quiver. Tji-tji had killed a gemsbok. Gaua arrived on the scene and said: 'I have come to you; you need not be afraid; both of us can sleep here'. After having consumed the animal and slept Tji-tji remarked to Gaua, 'Give me that stuff (//ai).' The latter replied, 'If I give you the //ai, what will you pay me?' Tji-tji answered, 'I will give you the horns'. Gaua then took the horns, made the little arrows out of them, invested them with //ai and before departing taught Tji-tji the //ai dance. From that

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1. Vedder, Z. KolSpr., I. 8-9; D. F. Bleek, "Buschmanner von Angola", 55; ibid., "Bushmen of Central Angola", 124.

time the Bushmen have known how to use magic."<sup>1</sup>

The small magic quiver and arrows to which reference is here made are no doubt the miniature weapons found among all the North-Western tribes. In a set seen by the writer the bow, made of a piece of bone, was barely 10 cms. long, and the arrows, for which sharp thorns were used, were small in proportion. Similar arrows described by other writers consisted of a stalk of grass about 6 cms. long and a point of bone or hard wood about 4 cms. long. This point is sharpened at the end which is inserted into the grass stalk, while the protruding point is blunted.

The range of these arrows is of course very limited, and different suggestions have been put forward as to their use. They are certainly not merely children's toys, as these miniature bows and arrows are used only by men, who carry them concealed about their persons. From various descriptions it appears that in some cases these arrows are definitely poisoned, and consequently among German writers the name "Bushman revolver" has become applied to these miniature sets. It is claimed that they are used as real weapons, and that the poison on the arrow is strong enough to bring about the death of anybody struck by it. On the other hand Miss Bleek says that among the Naron they are not poisoned, but are used by magicians who quarrel among themselves to settle their differences. "A medicine-man wishing to destroy another, comes up close and shoots at the opponent's kaross with one of these arrows, blunt end foremost. The missile falls harmlessly to the ground,

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1. Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 104.

but the victim dies of the magic."<sup>1</sup> This statement is supported by the report of a case tried at Windhoek in 1912, where it was maintained, inter alia, that a poisoned arrow of this kind had been used against the accused. In the evidence, however, it was stated by several witnesses that these arrows are not poisoned but are used for "witchcraft", and "if they are shot in the direction of an enemy, be he 100 kilos, or more away, witchcraft will bring about his death."<sup>2</sup> The myth recorded by Fourie also lends support to the idea that these arrows are used for magical purposes. It is possible also that something similar is implied by the statement, mentioned above, that among the Cape Bushmen magicians caused illness by shooting with invisible arrows, but it should be noted that no such weapons as those above mentioned have yet been found among them.

Apart from the special magic practised by the magicians and associated with them, there are among all the Bushmen various usages and beliefs of a nature which may be generally termed magical, and which are apparently common property. The hunting observances which have already been described fall under this category. So, too, does <sup>i</sup>divination. Among the Cape Bushmen this occurs chiefly in the form of beliefs in the efficacy of omens, of which there are a great number with diverse significations. They say they feel in their bodies that certain things are going to happen. There is a kind of beating of the flesh which tells them things. Those who are stupid

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1. D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 28; Schapera, "Bows and Arrows of the Bushmen", 116-7 and references.
  2. Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany. (And.9146), 1918. p. 172.



do not understand these teachings and disobey them, with the result that they get into trouble, are killed by a lion, and so on. The beatings tell those who understand them which way not to go, and which arrow it is better not to use, and also warn them, when many people are coming. They inform the hunter when game is close at hand, tell people where they can find the person of whom they are in search, i.e., which way they must go, and  
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 so on.

In the more northerly tribes is found the use of pieces of wood, leather or bone as divining bones or dice. These are usually four in number, and roughly triangular in shape, two of them being broad, the other two longer and thinner. The former are called male, the latter female. In the Eastern Kalahari they are usually each marked in a special way and named, but not further west. These bones may be owned and used by anyone, not only magicians. They are used in a very crude manner: the inquirer goes on throwing them on to his kaross until he gets a favourable answer. Such bones are frequently found among the Northern and Central Kalahari, and occasionally among those dwelling on the southern borders of the Kalahari, but are unknown to the Cape Bushmen and those of Griqualand West. Dornan maintains that they are original elements in the culture of the Bushmen, from whom they have been taken over by the Bantu. All the evidence, however, points in the other direction, for among the Bantu the use of divining bones of several different types is not only widespread, but also developed

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1. Bleek, Bushman Texts, 17-18; Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 330-39.

into an elaborate system of interpretation, while the way the Bushmen handle them shows that they do not know much about them. Moreover it is found that the frequency of their use by the Bushmen coincides with the amount to which any tribe has been exposed to Bantu influence.<sup>1</sup>

Other minor beliefs and practices of the Bushmen are mentioned by writers on particular tribes, but consideration of them must be omitted in a general survey such as this. It may be noted, however, that among the Northern tribes amulets are often worn to ward off disease and other evils, while among all the Bushmen charms of various kinds are also carried to ensure good luck. Bad dreams are also regarded as evil omens, and precautions taken to counteract them. Among the Cape Bushmen, for instance, when a woman had a bad dream, she banished it by plunging a stone into the fire, at the same time saying a spell. If she did not do this the dream would accompany her when she went out to seek ants' larvae and prevent her from finding any. The Naron, in the same way, when they have had bad dreams put a bit of burning charcoal on the ground and pour water on it, then the bad dream flies away with the steam. Or, when a man is ill and Hishe sends bad dreams, after the sun has risen he takes a burning stick, plants it in the ground between his knees,<sup>2</sup> burns buchu and snuffs it, and recovers.

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1. Werner, "Heikum- und Kungbushcleute", 256; Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 159; Dornan, "Divination and Divining Bones", S.Afr.J.Sci., 20, 505-507; Ibid., Pygmies and Bushmen, 155-158; D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 28-29.

2. Bleek and Lloyd, Bushman Folklore, 365; D.F.Bleek, The Naron, 29.

IX.

ART AND KNOWLEDGE.

Dances and Music.

Dancing and games of various kinds enter very largely into the lives of the Bushmen. Of these the dance takes the first place among their social recreations. Some dances are definitely of a ritual character, being held only on ceremonial occasions, e.g., the eland bull dance at a girl's puberty ceremony, the /gi dance at the boys' puberty ceremony, and the "dance of blood" among the Bushmen of Basutoland. On the other hand dancing is often indulged in purely for pleasure, and may take place any pleasant moonlit night, when the people have had enough to eat and there are enough of them to make it festive. All the young people and adults take part, and they may dance half the night or go right on till morning. On these occasions both men and women sometimes paint their bodies in various colours, and they often tie round their legs strings of dry cocoons, which give out a peculiar rattling sound while they are dancing.

The dances are on the whole fairly simple in character and are all of more or less the same nature. The dancers, who are generally men only, go round and round in a circle in single file, stamping rather than dancing; the women form the band and stand at one side, clapping their hands and singing, while the men dance as well as sing. In some dances the men pay attention to the women and girls, who sometimes step out and dance beside them; in others they imitate various animals and

go through the actions characteristic of them. Among the Southern Bushmen animal disguises were often worn, and grand masquerade dances held in which each dancer impersonated some animal and acted his or her part accordingly. It is not unlikely that such dances were also of a ritual character, but of their function and relation to the social life generally very little is known.<sup>1</sup>

Games are often played in the evenings too, by grown-up people as well as by children. A favourite game of the women is a ball game which is almost a dance. The players stand in a line clapping their hands and singing a wordless tune, as they do in dancing. One player dances about opposite the others with a melon or round tuber in her hand. At the end of the tune she throws the ball to the player at the right hand of the line, who dances out to catch it, and herself dances back to the left end, where she starts singing and clapping. The next player does the same, and the game goes on till all have had several turns. Sometimes, again, they play at the capture of brides by young men, as among the Naron, or at games based on animal experiences, as among the Heikum. Children's games among the Naron and Auen have such motives as a snake lying in wait for and capturing its prey at a water-hole; a struggle for the ownership of cattle; a man bartering goods from a trader; cock ostriches fighting with elephants who have come to drink at a water-hole; and a fight between two opposing

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1. Stow, Native Races, 111-124; Werner, "Heikum- und Kungbuschleute", 249-53; Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 103-105; Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 150-151; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 22, Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 95-97.

groups, who pretend to shoot each other. Men's games, again, have mostly a competitive character. In one, each player has a thin stick, which he flings forcibly on to the ground in such a manner as to make it rise into the air and shoot away from him. Each strives to make his stick go farthest. In another a thin short stick, with two or three feathers tied to its upper end and weighted at the lower end by means of a large berry or bean, is flung into the air and kept going by catching it on a stick in its descent and flinging it up again.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the children's games have songs or refrains attached to them, in which the words are occasionally obsolete. All the dances also are accompanied by singing, many of them having their own special tune, but here the tunes are often sung without words. Other songs, again, go with the playing of musical instruments. The tunes are very short, and generally repeated without variation, so that the effect is rather monotonous. "All Bushmen sing", says Miss Bleek, "but their tunes are not easy for a European to distinguish, much less write down." And, referring to the dance tunes, she adds, "The time is perfect, but no two in a chorus seem to hit the same note, though the general burden of the tune is kept up. That is to say, they all go up together, but not from or to the same note, and all go down together, each hitting any note they please."

Musical instruments are seldom used to accompany the dances, although several different kinds are

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1. Stow, op.cit., 97-102; Kaufmann, op.cit., 149-150; D.F.Bleek, op. cit., 18-21; Fourie, op.cit., 97-98.

found. Many of them are variations of the musical bow. The best known of these, the !goura, was the favourite instrument in the south. It consists of an ordinary bow, in which one end of the string, instead of being fastened to the stave itself, is attached to a flexible piece of quill which is spliced to the end of the stave. This quill is held against the lips, and made to vibrate by strong expirations and inspirations of the breath, producing the effect of a stringed wind instrument. Another form of the musical bow, commonly known as the !gubo, has a gourd or tortoise-shell attached to the stave of the bow to serve as a sounding-box. The instrument is played by picking at the string with a small piece of wood or bone. A development of this sometimes seen consists in playing it like a primitive sort of violin, with a small bow for the string. This mode of playing probably was adopted from a European source, as the use of a bow after the manner of a violin bow is not characteristic of South African native music, although it is well known further north. Neither the !goura nor the !gubo seems to occur among the Northern Bushmen, where the only form of musical bow is the hunting bow itself. One end of this is held between the teeth by the performer, who picks on the string with a small piece of wood or bone, varying the note by running his fingers up and down the string. Stow describes and figures other forms of the musical bow found among the Southern Bushmen, which have all been developed out of the simple form.

Among other musical instruments, found mainly among the Southern Bushmen, was a kind of reed flute or

pipe, used with certain of the dances. These pipes were made of reeds cut to different sizes and lengths, so as to obtain a variety of notes. They were played by several performers at the same time, each with a different note to his pipe, and the effect lay in harmonising them. The 'rommelpot' (!koa) was also sometimes used to accompany the dance. This was a drum or tambour made by stretching a piece of skin tightly over the mouth of a clay pot, a wooden calabash or a big tortoise-shell. The 'ramakie', a sort of guitar made out of a hollowed piece of wood, with a calabash or rough touch-board at one end, over which are drawn several strings, was, like the musical bow, used by soloists, sometimes alone, sometimes accompanying songs, but never with dances.

#### Decorative and Pictorial Art.

Decorative art among the Bushmen is limited mainly to seriated incisions of crude pattern found on the pottery of the Cape Bushmen, and to simple chevron patterns incised by the North-Western tribes upon the ostrich eggshells used for storing water and upon their stone pipes. Skin bags ornamented with similar patterns are also known, as well as wooden utensils, sticks, etc., decorated with line designs burned upon them. The art as a whole is very poorly developed, and of little apparent merit, and is not often met with.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the whole culture of the Bushmen, however, was their pictorial

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1. Stow, Native Races, 102-111; Passarge, Die Buschmanner, 95-98; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 21-22; Balfour, "The Goura - A Stringed Wind Musical Instrument of the Bushmen and Hottentots", J.R.A.I., 32, 156-76.

art, consisting of paintings and engravings executed on rock surfaces. The practice of this art has now almost completely died out, a necessary consequence of the virtual extermination of the artists themselves. Its study now belongs to the province of archaeology, for, save in a few rare instances, it has proved impossible so far to find any living people who could interpret the designs or throw any light on the social aspects of the art. The paintings and engravings remain as a very valuable record of an art that now seems to be lost; but they are proving a most important link in the chain of evidence connecting the Bushmen with the stone age cultures not only of South Africa but of East and North Africa and South West Europe as well.

Their distribution in South Africa extends from the Brandberg Mountains in South West Africa to the upper reaches of the Tugela River in Natal, from the Humansdorp district on the south coast to the Zambesi in the north. They are found especially over the greater part of the Cape, Griqualand West, Basutoland, Orange Free State, Transvaal and Southern Rhodesia, but occur also in parts of South West Africa, British Bechuanaland and Natal. This distribution no longer coincides with that of the Bushmen themselves. It is impossible therefore to say whether all the tribes possessed the artistic talent or not. The Bushmen south of the Molopo River certainly painted down to a very recent date, and so, according to Hahn, did the Huini and Obanen just north of the Orange River. The rocks in the North-



West may be evidence that the ancestors of the Auen and the Kung also did so, but the present people certainly do not, and have not even any traditions relating to the art. In the Kalahari itself, where most of the surviving Bushmen now live, the absence of suitable rock material precludes the practice of the art. It is perhaps no wonder therefore that the tribes found there have not the faintest recollections of it. Dornan, however, states that the Bushmen living along the Sansokwe River, in the extreme Eastern Kalahari, were still painting a few years ago.

The paintings are most frequently found on the walls of caves and rock shelters, occasionally on isolated rocks out in the open, and in a few rare instances, as we have noted, on small loose slabs of stone associated with cave burials. The engravings, on the other hand, occur as a rule on outstanding or outlying patches of rock out in the open. The mode of occurrence of these two forms of the art seems to have been determined by the nature of the rock surface available. Where the stone was soft or porous and provided large plane surfaces, paintings were generally made; where it was hard, and there was little prospect of the paints taking a good hold, engraving prevailed. This explains to some extent why paintings are mostly found in the caves and rock shelters which have been produced by the effects of erosion on relatively soft shales or sandstones, while engravings are seen on the exposed surfaces of such hard rocks as quartzite, diorite, basalt, diabase and phyllite.

The technical processes employed in the execution of the designs were fairly simple. As canvas the rock surface in its natural state was employed; broad plane surfaces were preferred, but where these were not at hand no trouble seems to have been taken either to polish the rough surface of the rock or to level it down in any way.

The only implements used in making the engravings were small pieces of hard stone with a fairly serviceable point. With these the artist would laboriously chip away at the rock surface until his design was completed. Some of the engravings consist of only an outline drawing produced by more or less rough pointing and punching, giving the design an appearance known as "pocked". The pocking is usually very shallow, but in some of the figures is completely filled in, so that the engraving consists in a design uniformly pocked over the surface. We also get a continuous grooved outline combined with a shallow pocked body, and in the best specimens the rock surface surrounding the designs has been chipped away, leaving a sort of bas-relief in which shading is often skilfully introduced. Some of the engravings in this style are very beautifully done, and it is indeed astonishing to find to what a degree of excellence the artists could attain, considering the material disadvantages under which they worked.

The paintings are on the whole superior to and more elaborate than the engravings, and offered more

scope for freedom of expression. Several different colours were used, the most common being red, black, yellow, white and brown. These were derived chiefly from mineral ores - red and brown from haematite, yellow from iron pyrites, white from zinc oxide, while black was obtained from burned wood. The mineral ores were carefully ground or pounded to a powder, which was then mixed with bone-marrow or animal fat. The outline of the design was first drawn with a burned stick, and the paint then smeared on, after being moistened with water or saliva, by means of a brush of feathers or specially prepared tendons.

Various technical styles are also observable in the paintings, chiefly as regards the use of colour. Paintings in which only the outline of the design are coloured are reported from Southern Rhodesia, but are not known elsewhere. As a rule the whole design is coloured in, though sometimes the outline is coloured differently from the body. The design is often coloured a uniform monochrome, and presents, as it were, a silhouette of the object represented, with no apparent trace of shading. Other designs are in polychrome. Sometimes the colours are sharply separated and seem to have been used to demarcate the various features of the object represented. Thus in the case of the eland we frequently find the horns and hoofs coloured black, the head and back in ochre, while the neck, belly and legs are in white. In other cases the colours are skillfully blended into one another, producing an effect

of modelling. The best specimens of the art are in this style. It seems, nevertheless, that in the cruder forms, at any rate, the artist laid more stress on the drawing itself than on the colouring. We often find, for instance, that the various limbs of an animal are in different colours, and examples are known where a leopard or lion has been painted a deep red, which cannot be put down to the absence of the natural colour, as in the same scene there are other designs coloured yellow.

The recent investigations of Burkitt have shown that the paintings and engravings are not all of the same age, but that a chronological sequence can be seen in style and technique. Moreover, different styles of art exist in different geographical areas, and these different styles are sometimes found associated with different stone implement industries. Burkitt was able to demarcate three such regional groups of art - the Southern Rhodesia group, the Central group, occurring in the central districts of the Union of South Africa north and west of the great mountain systems, and the Southern group, chiefly south and east of the mountain systems.

In Southern Rhodesia there are three distinct series of paintings, which when found in superposition always occur in the same order. The oldest series are usually coloured a uniform flat red or yellow, occasionally found in outline only, and the figures are nicely drawn. Certain paintings in a dark brownish red are slightly more modern, and the style perhaps more developed

but they belong to the same series. The middle series are all in dark claret, and quite different from anything before, not only in colour but in style. There is a certain angularity about the figures; the paintings have clean, sharp outlines; the curves and angles of horns and bodies are well and finely drawn, and the style is vigorous and attractive. Finally we get paintings in earthy yellow, white and the beginnings of polychrome. The style of art is quite different and much less attractive, the animal figures heavier, the bodies less shapely and the legs stiffer.

In the Central group the paintings are much more varied, and seem more modern than those of Southern Rhodesia. They are distinguished by wonderful developments of polychrome and the frequent occurrence of elaborate scenes of battles, dances, etc., such as are not found in Southern Rhodesia. Superposition is of much less importance, but it was noted that wherever paintings comparable in colour and style to the 'dark claret' series of Southern Rhodesia occurred, in superposition with any other colours or styles they were always undermost and therefore oldest. The rock engravings, which are most frequently met with in the central districts of the Orange Free State and the adjoining northern parts of Cape Province which lie immediately to the west, also belong to this art group. Its distribution coincides with that of the Upper Smithfield Culture of the Later Stone Age of South Africa, and the paintings and engravings are always found associated with industries of this culture.

The Southern art group, again, is invariably associated with the Wilton Culture of the South African Later Stone Age, which, like the Upper Smithfield Culture, is clearly of Bushman origin. The paintings here are totally dissimilar from and far inferior to those of the Central group. There are no polychromes. The figures for the most part are executed in a uniform bright red, almost vermilion, colour, and the rock background itself is also frequently reddened and smudgy as well. The animals are poorly drawn, the figures of human beings often large and angular, and the human hand is represented again and again, a feature never found in the Central group and not noted in Southern Rhodesia.

The objects represented in these paintings and engravings are for the most part animals and human beings, though inanimate objects also figure occasionally, such as weapons, clothes, shields, trees, etc. Representations of animals hunted as big game - elephant, rhino, hippo, giraffe, wilde-beest, many varieties of antelope, especially the eland, lion, ostrich, and others - all figure very prominently, either singly or in groups, and the fidelity with which they are often drawn testifies not only to the Bushman's skill as an artist, but also to his intimate familiarity with and acute observation of the habits and peculiarities of the animals upon which he depended for his subsistence. Exceedingly interesting are the bigger group scenes. Domestic occupations, hunting scenes, cattle raids, tribal fights, dances, even incidents in mythology, all are represented here in the most realistic manner and with a wealth of action.

These pictures of scenes and events in Bushman life history, painted by the native artists upon the walls of the caves and rock shelters which they so often dwelt in, are invaluable as a record of the conditions under which the old Bushmen lived, and they both illustrate and supplement the descriptions given of these people by certain observers.

#### Knowledge of Disease and Doctoring.

The Bushmen in their own environment and leading their own mode of life seem on the whole to be a healthy and hardy people. Those communities in the north which have not been much in contact with civilisation are said to be remarkably free from infectious, contagious and other diseases. Except during the heavy rainy seasons, when malaria becomes unduly prevalent, the incidence of disease is very small amongst them. Malaria, however, carries off many victims, for the Bushmen do not seem able to withstand it better than other peoples. Kaufmann records that during 1908-1909 the mortality caused by it was especially high, whole villages dying out, so that the numbers of the Auen were reduced to less than half. Seiner another trustworthy observer, states that among the Kung fully 20% of the deaths that occur, especially of children, may be attributed to it. Smallpox, typhoid dysentery and phthisis are also mentioned as occurring, the

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1. Tongue, Bushman Paintings; Moszeik, Die Malereien der Buschmanner; Zelizko, Felsgravierungen der sudafrikanischen Buschmanner; Schapera, "Some Stylistic Affinities of Bushman Art"; Burkitt, South Africa's Past in Stone and Paint, chaps, 7-9 and bibliography.

latter being promoted by excessive indulgence in tobacco and dagga smoking. Where contact with other peoples is frequent, syphilis is often found, as well as measles, influenza, whooping-cough, scarlet fever and other European diseases. European clothing and dwellings have had a bad effect upon the Bushmen. They are particularly susceptible to changed conditions of life, climate and food, and when imprisoned, as many of them are in South West Africa for cattle-stealing or breaking the game laws, they rapidly decline in strength and die in great numbers, however kindly treated by the gaol authorities.<sup>1</sup>

[Sickness in most instances is attributed to the non-observance of customary practices on the part of the affected person or to evil magic exercised by other persons. Treatment is administered by relatives or friends, or in cases of acute and prolonged illness by a doctor who is well versed in magical practices, and who is paid for his services. In cases of the latter kind the most widespread method employed is massage, leading up to the extraction of foreign bodies believed to have been introduced into the patient and thus causing his illness. When the doctor feels that the foreign body has been brought near enough to the surface by his treatment, he sucks the part affected, and then, with a retching sound, spits out the object which he is supposed to have sucked from the patient's body. Stones, pieces of bark, small bones, etc., are thus ex-

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1. Kaufmann, "Die Auin", 159, 136; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke", 293; Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen, 139-144; D.F. Bleek, The Naron, 29-30; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A." 95.



tracted from the affected part of the patient, who in consequence is cured. Suggestion no doubt plays a great part here.

Herbs and roots of various kinds are extensively employed in other illnesses. Sometimes they are burned to ashes and rubbed into incisions made in the patient's body, sometimes they are boiled and given as a decoction. How far they actually have curative effects is difficult to say, as no study appears to have been made of the pharmacological properties of the plants used, nor, save in a few instances, have they even been identified. Burns, open sores, headaches, etc., are treated by rubbing medicated ointments on the part affected. Chapman describes another method of treatment undergone by himself. "Having a frightful headache from the heat of the sun, I resort to my usual Bushman remedy at the expense of having my forehead ornamented with blisters, dotted all over it the next morning. April (his guide) has a root which he puts into the fire, and brands me all over the forehead, heating it again and again. It is the heat of the fire that gives relief, not the root, nor any of his genuflections over me." Surgical procedure seems to be limited to incisions into the skin, but Vedder notes that cupping is also employed among the Kung. Incisions are made in the patient's skin and covered with the horn of an animal, through which the blood is then sucked out.

The existence of specific antidotes for arrow

poisoning is reported by several of the older writers, but their statements lack confirmation. The effects of such a wound, as far as can be ascertained, are almost invariably fatal. The Naron also have an antidote for snake poison, the effects of which they try to counteract by tying the snake skin round the bite. Kaufmann, however, records that among the Auen the magician makes out of the black mamba, which he alone may eat, an antidote which is supposed to act against all snake bites except that of the mamba itself. He dries and powders the lungs, gall and liver, as well as the poison in the fangs, and mixes this powder with the fat of the snake. The salve thus made is rubbed into the wound, which is first sucked out. At the same time several deep cuts are made in the upper arm, from which blood is allowed to stream freely. There is nothing in Kaufmann's account to indicate whether this information is based on personal observation or merely on hearsay evidence, so that it must be received with caution. Chapman, a careful observer whose hunting expeditions brought him into frequent and close contact with the Bushmen in the North-West Kalahari, describes another kind of antidote, with which he himself saw the Bushmen cure themselves of snake bite. This is a creeping tendrilous plant, called "eokam" by the Bushmen, but unfortunately not identified. About eight or ten of its seeds, either eaten or taken as a decoction, act as an emetic. The dose is repeated about three times, when the patient is cured. "They also tattoo and scarify their bodies, and make an incision near the wound, which they

suck with some of the root, chewed, in their mouths. This is evidently to prevent the poison acting upon the gums in case of bleeding. The sucking out of the poison is not necessary, but is done by way of precaution. Bushmen having a bit of this root on their necks laugh at snake-bites."

Other writers mention that "doctors" sometimes render themselves immune to the effects of snake and scorpion poison. One of these animals is killed, and its poison, diluted with water and urine, is rubbed in small quantities into small cuts made in the skin, or the poison sacs are pulped and boiled, and then swallowed in small doses. Schinz records an experiment made by himself on a Bushman doctor claiming this immunity. He selected twelve scorpions and placed them, by means of forceps, on different parts of the man's body - hands, legs, arms, mouth and testicles. Almost all of them stung the flesh deeply once or twice, in every instance causing a large drop of white matter to appear; then they crawled about leisurely, but made no further attempts at stinging. "The old man maintained that he felt no pain, and I have no reason to distrust him, as he would hardly have allowed himself to be stung by scorpions on the most susceptible parts of his body, merely to satisfy my curiosity, if the poison would have had any effects on him; even a full hour after our attempt the spots where he had been stung showed not the slightest change." This experiment seems, therefore, to show that there is some foundation to the claim of immunity. The inoculation was apparently made

in this case during the apprenticeship of the "doctor", under the direction of his master. Our main authorities on the Bushman do not mention this practice at all, but I have myself spoken to several detribalised Bushmen and Hottentots in Little Namaqualand who claimed a similar immunity. Unfortunately I made no further inquiry into the matter, beyond ascertaining the means of immunisation.<sup>1</sup>

Knowledge of Times and Seasons, etc.

In their system of time-reckoning the Bushmen make use chiefly of meteorological elements, based on recurrent changes in wind and weather, and of astronomical elements, based on observations of the sun, stars and moon. Their larger divisions of time are the seasons, which, owing to their effect on the food supply and on the movements of the people, assume a pronounced importance in Bushman life. The division of the seasons is established by the rainfall. The Cape Bushmen distinguished four seasons, which are rendered by Bleek and Lloyd in the English equivalents of spring, summer, autumn and winter, but the exact meaning of the native terms is not given. The Naron have three seasons; spring, when the birds mate and the first flowers come, from about August to October; summer, when it is hot and the rain falls, or is expected, about November to March; and winter, or the cold time, from April to July. The Kung of Angola also have three seasons: the cold dry time from about April to September, the first rains from then to about

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1. Kaufmann, loc. cit.; D.F. Bleek, loc. cit.; Fourie loc. cit.; Chapman, Travels in South Africa, ii 74, 182; Schinz, Deutsch-Sudwest-Afrika, 340-1, 395-396; Vedder, Z. KolSpr., I, 7. Schapera, "Bushman Arrow Poisons", 212-213.

November, and the real rainy season from about December to March or April. The Auen, Kung and Heikun, on the other hand, distinguish four seasons; the cold dry season (winter), the small or first rainy season (early spring), the hot, dry season (spring and early summer), and the big or second rainy season (late summer). When all the seasons have passed, a year is finished; but there is no clear conception of the year as a period of time, nor do they reckon in years. Mothers can tell in which season their babies were born, and for three or four years know how many seasons ago it was, but after that they get confused. No person, therefore, for instance, knows his positive age, although his comparative age as regards the other members of the family is always well distinguished.

The Naron observes the sun enough to know that it makes a shorter path in winter than in summer, but apparently the stars foretell the coming of the seasons better. When the Pleiades rise just before dawn, the cold is due; when they come before midnight, spring is at hand. Besides the Pleiades the Naron also have names for the Southern Cross, <sup>Orion</sup> ~~Iron~~, the Milky Way and the Great Bear; and they know when each constellation will rise and set in different seasons.

The other Northern Bushmen apparently take no special interest in the stars. The Kung of Angola, for instance, as we have seen, speak of all the stars as //gaua's

fires, and have no separate names for any of them. The Cape Bushmen, on the other hand, were close observers of the movements of the stars and constellations, and had names for a great many of them. Thus Achernar is the Star-digging-stick's stone or the Digging-stick's stone of Canopus; the pointers to the Southern Cross are Male Lions; Alpha, Beta and Gamma Crucis are Lionesses;; Aldebaran is a Male Hartebeest; Alpha Orion a Female Hartebeest; Procyon a Male Eland; Castor and Pollux are Eland's Wives; Magellan's Clouds a Steinbok; Orion's Sword a Male Tortoise (hung upon a stick); Orion's Belt is Three Female Tortoises (hung upon a stick) etc., etc. As these names indicate, there is a good deal of folklore centring in the stars, and indeed a considerable part of the vast collections of Cape Bushman lore made by Bleek and Lloyd relate to the heavenly bodies, which are regarded as once having been men or animals before becoming transformed into their present state. In one tale, for instance, it is related that a girl of the ancient rade (preceding the Bushmen) wished for a little light, so that the people might see to return home by night. She therefore threw wood-ashes into the sky, and these became the Milky Way. In another, again, it is told how a girl, at the time of her puberty seclusion, saw some people eating together at a rock-rabbit's house made of branches. As a result they and the house, fixed by her looks, became stars in the sky, where they are now to be seen as the Corona Australia.

For shorter lengths of time the Bushmen go by the Moon, but they make no attempt to reckon how many

moons there are in the year or in a season. They observe the phases of the Moon closely, but seem to have no division of time into anything corresponding to weeks, although they readily pick up the European system of weeks when working for white people, and will come regularly on the seventh day for tobacco, etc. Otherwise, in their intercourse with white people, the wage, if not given daily, is demanded at the New Moon.

The day is apparently divided according to the position of the sun, but no names have been recorded for any fixed divisions of the day.

The notion of time is also used to indicate distance, for which there are no special units. Generally distance is reckoned by the time it takes to reach the place. If, for instance, a Bushman is asked how far a certain water-hole is, he points to the part of the sky which the sun will have reached by the time one gets to that water-hole; or, if it is far, he says "one night on the way", or "two", etc., or again, if asked the length of a journey, he will name the places at which he slept or will sleep, touching a finger to his lips for each, then holds up the fingers saying, "So many nights" (not days).

In counting they use only the numerals one and two quite freely. Three they sometimes use, taking the Nama word for it, although they are more apt to speak of "two and one" than "three". For anything above three they generally make use of the word "many", although by the Northern Bushmen Nama or Bantu numerals may some-

times be substituted. These higher numerals, however, are evidently picked up from their neighbours by ear, and repeated without much consideration of their value, as, says Miss Bleek, a child of three will count in imitation of its seniors, varying the sequence of the numerals each time. In some cases, both among the Cape Bushmen and several of the North-Western tribes, such formations are also found as  $4 = 2 + 2$ ,  $5 = 2 + 2 + 1$ , and so on up to 10. The numeral system of the Bushmen is thus essentially binary in principle. Occasionally, however, modifications occur suggestive of a quinary system. Thus in Naron the words for "four" mean "two fingers and two fingers", but "five" = "hand" (sometimes, however,  $2 + 2 + 1$  fingers), "ten" = "both hands", "fifteen" = "both hands, one foot"; and the same system occurs in Auen. As these words indicate, the Bushmen count larger numbers on their fingers. In counting, they begin with the little finger of the left hand, touching each finger in turn on the lips, then counting in the same manner from the thumb of the right hand. As a rule nothing that they want to count exceeds ten, indeed hardly ever reaches that numeral.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bleek, Bushman Texts, 10-11; Kaufmann, "Die Auen", 160; D.F. Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola", 110; Ibid., The Naron, 38-39; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.", 99.



## HOTTENTOTS.

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### I.

#### RACIAL HISTORY.

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By the time when European contact with South Africa was first established, the Bushmen in the Cape were already being encroached upon by the Hottentots. The nature of the relationship between these two peoples has given rise to much discussion. They are unquestionably allied in race, and indeed in appearance and bodily characters resemble each other so closely as to have often been confused. There are certain features, such as stature and shape of the head, in which the Hottentots are found to differ somewhat from the Cape Bushmen; but, as we have already noted, similar differences exist even between the Northern Bushmen and those of the Cape.

The two peoples also have much in common in language. Their speech has the same phonetic basis, characterised especially by the occurrence of "click" consonants; many roots in the Hottentot languages are found with the same meanings in various Bushman languages; while in grammatical processes and categories there is also a fundamental correspondence, more particularly between the Hottentot and the Central Bushman languages. At the same time, the Hottentot languages have certain grammatical features, such as sex-gender, sex-denoting particles, and a dual number, which do not occur in any of the Bushman languages save Naron.

In culture the differences are more readily

apparent. While the Bushmen are hunters and collectors only, the Hottentots in addition are a pastoral people, with herds of long-horned, straight-backed cattle and flocks of fat-tailed, hairy sheep. They were also able to smelt iron for the manufacture of their implements and weapons, while the Bushmen, as we have seen, never learned to do so, but obtain whatever iron they use by barter with their more advanced neighbours. The Hottentot again never appear to have possessed the art of painting and engraving on rock, which is so remarkable a feature in the culture of the Southern Bushmen; but then, it should be remembered, there is no direct evidence either that the Northern Bushmen ever possessed this art. In social organisation, habits and customs there are likewise many far-reaching differences, but at the same time, as we shall see, the similarities in some respects are by no means insignificant. In religion, on the other hand, the similarities are occasionally very striking, although here again there are also important differences of detail.

All these points, both of resemblance and of difference, will be analysed below and discussed more in detail. It must here be mentioned, however, that the common elements indicated are on the whole significant enough to warrant the conclusion that the Hottentots are basically of the same racial stock as the Bushmen, and that the languages of both peoples belong to the same language-family, while it is possible also that their cultures were at one time essentially alike. The Hottentots, in other words, appear to have originally been a Bushman people. The

differences now observable indicate, however, that they have diverged from the true Bushman type - to a slight extent only in race, but more noticeably in language, and above all in certain aspects of culture.<sup>1</sup>

These divergencies are generally attributed to the influence of some Hamitic admixture. In support of this view may be adduced the fact that the grammatical peculiarities which now separate the Hottentot languages from those of the Bushmen are also characteristic of the Hamitic language-family, while the cattle and sheep of the Hottentots are similar in breed to those of Equatorial and North-East Africa, which were originally introduced by the Hamites. It seems, therefore, that certain at least of the more important features which now distinguish the Hottentots from the Bushmen have been derived from some Hamitic source.

On the basis of this view, it is held by some writers that the Hottentots are a cross between early Hamitic-speaking pastoral invaders of South West Africa and their Bushman forerunners. These invaders seem never to have been a numerous people, and are said to have largely recruited their female element from the Bushman tribes which they displaced, so that their type underwent a progressive change, until at last they had acquired many of the physical characters and a large element of the languages of the

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1. For a discussion of the evidence on which this conclusion is based see I. Schapera, "A Preliminary Consideration of the Relationship between the Hottentots and the Bushmen". S.Afr. J.Sci., 23 (1926), 833-866.

<sup>1</sup>  
 Bushmen. According to this theory, the mixture of Hamites and Bushmen which produced the Hottentots would have taken place in South Africa. Against this having occurred to a large extent may be urged not only the relatively late appearance of the Hottentots in South Africa, but also the small variability in their physical characters, and the absence of evidence for such intermixture on a large scale in historic times. On the other hand the existence in Tanganyika Territory of Sandawe, a click language which has numerous root and grammatical affinities with the Hottentot languages, and which like them appears to owe its origin to a mixture of Bushman and Hamitic languages suggests that the blending which gave rise to the Hottentots is more likely to have taken place in East Africa. This is supported by the fact that the pastoral habits of the Hottentots, with all the customs and traditions connected with this mode of life, were already developed before their ancestors came south.

The most plausible theory of the racial origin of the Hottentots may therefore be that they have spring out of a mixture of the Old Bushman

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1. This view is most clearly expressed by F. von Luschan, The Racial Affinities of the Hottentots, London, 1907 (reprinted from Addresses and Papers delivered at the Joint Meeting of the British and South African Associations, 1905, vol. 3.): Ibid., "Hamitische Typen" in Weinhof, Die Sprachen der Hamiten, Hamburg, 1912, pp. 252-253; cf. also F. Stuhlmann, Handwerk und Industrie in Ostafrika, Hamburg 1910. pp. 140-141, 147.

population of East Africa with an early immigration there of Hamites, who gave them their cattle and those peculiarities of language by which they are distinguished from the modern Bushmen. So far as the slight indications of their legendary history go, they seem to have come originally from somewhere in the region of North-West Tanganyika, and to have wandered with their cattle and sheep between Lakes Tanganyika and Nyassa and then, perhaps as the result of pressure from behind, across the high plateau of Central Africa, with their faces always towards the setting sun, until they came upon the "great waters" (i.e., the Atlantic), when they turned south and moved slowly onwards down the west coast of the continent.<sup>1</sup> How long they had been in possession of the coast regions in the southwest of Cape Colony before the Portuguese first saw them in the neighbourhood of Saldanha Bay and later on at Mossel Bay, at the end of the fifteenth century, we have no means of knowing. The few facts that lead us to judge that they had not been in the south for many centuries are based on our knowledge of their movements on the eastern frontier, where in the early eighteenth century their advance guard, formed by a tribe known as the Gonaqua, came into contact with the Bantu peoples, who by that time were slowly pushing westwards along the southern coast of South Africa.

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1. Stow, The Native Races of South Africa, 1905, pp. 267-268; A.W. Hoernle, "South-West Africa as a primitive Culture Area", S. Afr. Geog. J., 6 (1923), p. 23.

## II

DISTRIBUTION AND TRIBAL  
DIVISIONS.General Distribution -

The early Dutch settlers at the Cape found the Hottentots thinly scattered in small loosely-organised groups all along the western and southern coasts of the country. Later expeditions inland revealed their existence beyond the Orange River to the north and north-east, and as far as the Kei River in the east. In their occupation of South Africa the Hottentots therefore extended formerly over almost the whole of the western half of the country. At the present time they are found chiefly in South West Africa, the north-west districts of the Cape, and parts of Orange Free State. Their former distribution further south and south-east is, however, not only abundantly testified by actual historical record, but is also reflected in the numerous half-breeds who have sprung up all over the Cape as a result of Hottentot intermixture with European settlers and imported slaves. Moreover place-names of Hottentot origin occur widely spread over many districts where the Hottentots themselves are now hardly ever seen. This is the case especially in the eastern parts of the Cape, now largely occupied by Bantu peoples, where many of the rivers, mountains and other natural features of the country have Hottentot names; while the fact that the South-East (Zulu-Xosa) Bantu languages have incor-

corporated several of the clicks as well as many Hottentot roots indicates that intimate intercourse between the two peoples must have lasted for some time before the Hottentots finally disappeared from these parts.

#### Tribal Divisions.

The Hottentots were originally divided into numerous separate groups, each with its own distinctive name. They all, however, apparently owed to the common name Khoi-khoi (men of men, i.e., men par excellence, people of pure race), by which they distinguished themselves from other peoples. The origin of the name Hottentots, by which they are now universally known and often term themselves, has given rise to much speculation, and there is no single accepted view. It is generally assumed, however, that the word is derived from the term Hüttentüt ("stammerer" or "stutterer"), which was applied to them by the early Dutch settlers on account of the peculiar clicks which gave their speech its distinctive character.

Both in culture and in physical characters these different groups of Hottentots present a good deal of homogeneity. It is impossible, therefore, to draw any clean-cut line of distinction between them based on either of these factors. Their languages, on the other hand, although all very closely related, fall into four separate dialectical groups. It is customary, therefore, to group the Hottentots themselves into four main divisions, corresponding to these linguistic distinctions. These four divisions are

known respectively as the Colonial Hottentots, the Eastern Hottentots, the Korana and the Naman.

The Colonial Hottentots were the people found by the first European settlers in the vicinity of Table Bay. They probably lived over the greater part of what is now the Western Province of the Cape, and seem to have been fairly numerous. The old Cape Records and the reports of early travellers have preserved for us the names of several of their tribal groups. In and about the Cape Peninsula were the Goringhaiqua or Goringhaikona and the Kora or Gorachouqua; further north along the coast from the neighbourhood of Table Bay to Saldanha Bay roamed the Kochoqua, who at the time when the Dutch settlement was founded (1652) were the strongest of the local groups; beyond them and extending to the Olifant's River were the Little Grigriqua, bordering on the southernmost group of the Naman. To the east of the Kochoqua, again, were found the Chainouqua; further east and south, in what is now the district of Caledon, were the Hessequa, to the north-east of whom, probably in the present district of Worcester, lived the Hancumqua and adjoining them, a few lesser groups. Then came the Attaqua, extending from Mossel Bay to near the present village of George, and beyond them, finally, were the Outeniqua, whose name still survives in the Outeniqua mountains.

It is estimated by Theal, on the basis of the early records, that about the time when the Dutch



settlement at the Cape was planted, these different groups together must have numbered from 45,000 to 50,000 persons. The intimate and prolonged contact into which they now came with European culture ultimately resulted, however, in their almost complete disappearance as entities. Disease and wars with the settlers led to a rapid decline in the numbers of the Hottentots, but even more effective in destroying their original status was the very considerable amount of miscegenation that from the first years of the settlement began to take place between them and the white settlers and imported East Indian slaves. It is questionable whether at the present time a single pure-blooded individual of this division can still be met with, and naturally all semblance of their original culture has long since vanished.

A few of the groups, resenting the intrusion of the Europeans, early began to trek away inland from the vicinity of the settlement. One of these groups, the Kora, which moved away towards the end of the seventeenth century, <sup>is</sup> are said to have formed the nucleus of the present Korana division. Another group, the Grigriqua or Chariguriqua, after receiving a considerable infiltration of white blood, moved to the north about the middle of the eighteenth century, and established itself at the Kamiesberg in Little Namaqualand under Adam Kok. Here it was gradually joined by other half-breed Hottentots, or "Bastaards", a name by which these people now began to call themselves. From the Kamiesberg they moved on to Pella on the Lower Orange, and then to the Middle Orange valley,

where they were found in 1813 by the missionary John Cambell, who induced them to resume their old but almost forgotten and now mutilated name of Griqua. In the years that followed the Griqua, under a succession of able leaders, played an important part in the political history of South Africa, but all their power has now declined, although they still survive as a strong community.<sup>1</sup>

The line of division between the colonial and the Eastern Hottentots is not easy to draw. From the records of the early travellers it appears, however, that the groups which can be regarded as belonging to the latter included, amongst others, the Inqua, probably in the present district of Aberdeen, the Damaqua, between the Gamtoos and Swartkops Rivers, and the Gonaqua, at first apparently an insignificant tribe, who, by the middle of the eighteenth century had become the most powerful group of Hottentots in the east, and extended from the Sunday River to the Great Fish River. Very little is actually known about these people, especially as regards their social habits and customs.

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1. There is a considerable literature on the Colonial Hottentots. The most useful original sources are: Graevenbroeck, Schediasma Promontorii Bonae Spei, ms. (1685), published in a Dutch translation by van Oordt as "Uit den Ouden Tijd", in Het Zuid-Afrikaansche Tijdschrift, 1886, January, pp. 360-372, Feb., pp. 1-48; P. Kolb, Caput Bonae Spei Hodiernum, Nuremberg, 1719 (English translation by Medley, 1731), the ethnological chapters of which have recently been edited by Germann and published separately as Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung, Leipzig, 1922 (this is the edition here used); G. Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, 1872, pp. 265-342. On the early history of the Griqua see Stow, The Native Races of South Africa, pp. 316-403.

They are said to have differed slightly in appearance from the Colonial Hottentots, probably as a result of intermixture with the neighbouring Bantu, and their language was also different in some respects. They have now apparently all been exterminated or absorbed by other races. They were the first Hottentots to come into contact with the Bantu invaders along the south coast, and it is largely as a result of both conflict and intermixture with these more powerful neighbours that they have become so completely effaced.<sup>1</sup>

The Korana, as already noted, are traditionally the descendants of the Kora or Gorachouqua, who, originally resident at the Cape Peninsula, began to draw away inland from the European settlement towards the end of the seventeenth century. Their history for the last two centuries has been one of continual strife with the Europeans on the one hand, and later with the Bantu as well. During the early half of the eighteenth century they gradually moved north-eastwards towards the Middle Orange, and by the end of the century they had been forced across the river to seek refuge round the junction of the Vaal and the Harts. They were found in 1813 by Campbell in the neighbourhood of Kuruman and Old Lithakao, and later on settled at Bethanie, under the influence of the Berlin Mission. For a time they managed to preserve their original status, and by about 1850 are said to have numbered some 20,000. But by 1870 their tribal unity had also

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1. A summary of the early literature relating to these tribes is given by J. Hewitt, "Notes relating to the Aboriginal Tribes of the Eastern Province", S. Afr. J. Sci., 17, (1920), pp. 304 sqq., especially 308-315.

become completely destroyed, chiefly as the result of disastrous fights with the neighbouring BaSuto. They have since declined considerably in numbers, and no semblance of their original organisation now survives. They have intermixed freely with the Bantu and with half-breeds, and although it is said that a number of racially pure individuals are still to be found, the majority of the present Korana have certainly a good deal of foreign blood in them.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth and best-known division of the Hottentots are the Naman, known more usually as the Namaqua (a word probably derived from the dual masculine form, Namakha, of the root Nama). They were classified by the early Dutch settlers into two main groups: the Little Namaqua, living south of the Orange River in what is now Little Namaqualand, and the Great Namaqua, living immediately north of the Orange River in the southern parts of what is now South West Africa. Both these groups at times visited the settlement at Table Bay, and in the early days the area over which they wandered seems to have been very wide. But the Great Namaqua were always the most northerly group of Hottentots, and probably formed the rear-guard of their invasion of South Africa. Early in historical times they were settled definitely in the country north of the Orange River, where for a considerable time they held undisputed sway.

They were sub-divided into seven tribal

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1. Fritsch, op.cit., pp. 366-376; Stow, op.cit., pp. 267-315.

groups, with one or two minor offshoots, which were all traditionally descended from one line of ancestors. These groups were the Gei-//khauan (often known by their Dutch name Rooi Natie), the survivors of which are now resident at Hoachanas; the !Gami /nun (Bondelswarts) in the district of Warmbad, just north of the Orange River; the //Haboben (Veldschoendragers), round Koes and Hasuur; the !Khara Gei Khoin (Simon Coppers or Franzmanns), formerly found along the Auob River at Gokhas, but now living in British Bechuanaland south-east of Rietfontein S.; the //Khau /Goan (Swartboois), who lived at Rehoboth till about 1870, when they moved first to Ameib, and then to Fransfontein, in the southern part of the Kaokoveld, where they are now found; the //O Gein (Groot Doode), who formerly roamed about the upper courses of the Fish River, but ceased to exist about fifty years ago, as a result of wars against the ovaHerero and tribal quarrels; and the /aunin or !naranin (Topnaars), some of whom live round Zesfontein, in the Kaokoveld, and the others at Walvis Bay.

At the present time there are also found in South West Africa besides the remnants of the various Great Namaqua groups, members of several other groups of Hottentots, who came in from south of the Orange River in the early part of the nineteenth century, when there was a general movement of the Hottentot peoples away from the European settlements. These incoming groups were the remnants of different tribes,

mostly of Little Namaqua stock, who had, however, before their migration received a considerable infiltration of white blood. A great many of the men also spoke Dutch, and the general culture had in many ways been influenced by contact with the Dutch and other colonists. These groups are collectively called Orlams by the indigenous people. The origin of this name is uncertain. The chief of them are the //aixa //ain, or Afrikaners, in the south-east corner of Warmbad, along the northern banks of the Orange River; the /hobesen, or Witboois, between Hoornkrans and Gibeon; the !aman or Bethanie Hottentots, round Bethanie; the /hei /khauan or Berseba Hottentots, round Berseba; and the Gei /khauan, or Amraal Hottentots, round Gobabis.

Other Hottentots of Little Namaqua stock are still found in fairly considerable numbers in Little Namaqualand, south of the Orange River. But their tribal cohesion and culture has been completely destroyed by contact with the Europeans, and they have also absorbed a good deal of white blood. A few of the older people still know their own language, but the great majority now speak only Afrikaans, which is the regular medium of intercourse even amongst themselves.

In South West Africa also the whole culture and power of the Naman has been hopelessly broken down. The history of all the tribes for the last century and a half has been one of incessant strife - first among themselves owing to the dislocation caused

by the groups coming in from south of the Orange River; next with the OvaHerero, advancing on them from the north; and last with the Germans, who finally broke down the tribal cohesion completely, except in the case of the Berseba Hottentots, who remained loyal to their contract with the Germans, and never fought against them. All the groups have further a great deal of mixed blood, brought into them first by their own relatives from the south, and then by mixture with the Germans and other Europeans.

Numbers -

These factors make it difficult to state accurately the present numbers of the Hottentots. In South West Africa, according to the latest figures available (1926), there are 15,376 people classified as "Hottentots". No attempt appears to have

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1. The main sources of information on the habits and customs of the Naman are: J.H.Wikar, "Bericht..über seine Reisen am Oranje 1778 bis 1779", published by E.Moritz, "Die ältesten Reiseberichte über Deutsch-Südwestafrika", Mitt.deuts.Schutzgeb., 31 (1918), 61-93; T.Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", Globus, 12 (1867); Ibid., Tsunif-//Goam, The Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi, London, 1881; Fritsch, op.cit., 343-365; J.Olpp, Angra Pequena und Gross Namaland, 1884; H.von Francois, Nama und Damara, Magdedeburg, n.d. (1896), esp. pp.77-100, 202-233; J.Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", Z.verg.Rechtwiss., 15 (1902) 337-360; C.Wandres, "Die Khoi-Khoi oder Nama", in S.R. Steinmetz, Rechtsverhältnisse von eingeborenen Völkern, 1903, pp.313-325; Ibid., "Ueber das Recht der Naman und Bergdaman", Z.KolPol., II (1909), 657-686; I.Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, Jena, 1907, pp.170-549; A.W.Hoernle, "Certain Rites of Transition and the Concept-ion of Inau among the Hottentots", Harvard African Studies, 2 (1918), 65-82; Ibid., "The Expression of the Social Value of Water among the Naman of South-west Africa", S.Afr.J.Sci., 20 (1923), 514-526; Ibid., "The Social Organization of the Nama Hottentots of South-west Africa", Amer.Anthrop., 27 (1925), 1-24; H.Vedder, "The Nama", in The Native Tribes of South West Africa, Cape Town, 1928. pp. 109-152.

been made to discriminate pure-blooded people from those of mixed blood, or to arrive at an accurate estimate of the numbers belonging to each of the groups, but the figure may be taken as on the whole fairly reliable. In the census reports of the Union, on the other hand, all the Hottentots are merged with half-breeds, Malays, etc., under the general heading "Mixed and Other Coloured". Consequently no idea at all can be formed as to their present numbers, although there are undoubtedly still a considerable number of people, especially in Little Namaqualand, who from the racial standpoint can certainly be regarded as Hottentots. The latest population returns for what is now the Union in which the official classification "Hottentots" still appears are those of the 1904 census, which give the number of "Hottentots" in the Cape as 85,892, and of "Korannas" as 1,138, while the number of "Hottentots" in Orange Free State is given as 2,785. By this time, however, the term "Hottentot" signified little more than half-breed, and few of the people included under it were pure-blooded, although the number in whom Hottentot blood was strongly marked was officially estimated at 56,000.

Like the Bushmen, the Hottentots must be regarded as a disappearing people. In the early days in the Cape, and more recently in Orange Free State and South West Africa, disease and war helped to diminish their numbers. But by far the most important factor of all has been miscegenation, which has taken



place on a very extensive scale between them and the European settlers and other peoples. A large proportion of Hottentot blood is to be found in the people still spoken of in the Cape as "Hottentots", as well as in the various communities of recognised half-breeds, such as the Griqua, the Rehoboth Bastards, and the Komaggas Bastards; but Hottentots of pure blood are now in a marked minority, and there is no reason to doubt that they too will ultimately become absorbed into the "coloured" peoples of South Africa. Their native culture, where it has not been completely displaced, has, at least, been considerably affected by the intrusion of European civilisation, and, except in South West Africa, their own language is also steadily giving way to Afrikaans.

### III.

#### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: DRESS AND DECORATION.

##### Physical Characteristics. -

The Hottentots resemble the Southern Bushmen very closely in appearance. It is only in stature and shape of the head that significant differences between the two peoples can be detected. Amongst themselves the Hottentots vary but slightly in physical characters, save of course where there has been much recent intermixture with other racial groups. Among the Korana, for instance, who have absorbed a good deal of Bantu blood, one may often notice individuals who differ from the normal Hottentot type in being of a

darker complexion and in having a greater development of hair on the head and face, coarser features and broader noses. But in pure-blooded Hottentots the physical type is on the whole fairly uniform in all the divisions. The following description may, therefore, be regarded as a general survey of those characters which can be looked upon as common to all people of the normal Hottentot type.<sup>1</sup>

In stature they are mostly of medium height. The fullest series of measurements are those given by Schultze for the Naman. He found that in 73 men the mean height was 1624.mm., although the individual statures ranged from a minimum of 1505 mm. to a maximum of 1765 mm.; while in the women the mean was 1497 mm., with a minimum of 1355 mm. and a maximum of 1625 mm. The measurements recorded by other writers and of other groups of Hottentots correspond fairly closely with these figures. The Hottentots thus appear to be appreciably taller than the Cape Bushmen, but only slightly taller than the North-Western Bushmen; while, on the other hand, they are on the whole somewhat smaller than the North-Eastern Bushmen.

Their skin-colour is predominantly a light brownish-yellow, somewhat lighter in some cases than

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1. The most exhaustive analysis of the physical characters of the Hottentots is found in the recent work of L. Schultze, Zur Kenntnis des Körpers der Hottentotten und Buschmänner, Jena, 1928, especially pp.147-186. Of the earlier works the more important are G.Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, 1872, pp.271-291, and passim, and E.Fischer, Die Rehobother Bastards, Jena, 1913, especially pp.57-134 passim.

even in the Cape Bushmen. The skin itself is dry and on the whole has little adipose tissue; it also displays the same propensity to fold as in the case of the Bushmen. In young people it is drawn smoothly over the muscles and bones, and has a certain pleasing and taut appearance. But in adults, and in particular in women who have borne children, its appearance is completely changed: the skin of the abdomen becomes flabby, and deep wrinkles readily form there, on the chest and on the face. There is little hair on the body; the armpits, pubes and other parts are very sparsely covered with it, while the beard and moustache in men are only feebly developed. The hair is black and short, and has the same "peppercorn" formation which characterises the Bushmen. It rarely turns grey before about the sixtieth year; but baldness is rare, even in extreme old age.

The head on the whole is long, narrow and low - appreciably longer than in the Cape Bushmen, and slightly narrower and higher as well. This is best illustrated in the figures given by Schultze. Of the 73 Hottentot (Nama) men measured by him, the mean maximum length of the head was 192 mm., the breadth 140 mm., and the height 116 mm., while in the 14 Bushmen (mostly from the southern Kalahari) whose measurements he also records the corresponding dimensions were 187 mm., 142 mm., and 113 mm. The mean cephalic index of the Hottentots was 72.9 (max., 78.5, min., 67.1), and that of the Bushmen 75.8 (max., 78.2, min., 72.9); and whereas 57% of the Bushmen were mesocephalic, the remaining 43% being dolicocephalic,

only 15% of the Hottentots were mesocephalic, the remaining 85% being dolicocephalic and hyperdolicocephalic. The length-height (altitudinal) index was the same in both cases, 60.3 (orthocephalic); but the lower height of the Bushman head is here neutralised by its smaller length. In the breadth-height index, on the other hand, the difference in the shape of the head is again apparent. The average in Hottentots is 82.8, that in Bushmen 79.5. It was found by Schultze that the form of the head in the Hottentots tends to alter in that, with higher stature, the head on the whole becomes longer and not broader (i.e., more dolicocephalic), and also higher (i.e., more orthocephalic). It will be noticed that the variations in shape of the Hottentot head as a whole from that of the Bushmen lie in the same direction. They may therefore possibly be correlated with the increased stature of the Hottentots as compared with the Bushmen.

The face in the Hottentots is low and flat, but slightly longer and narrower in proportion than that of the Bushmen, and somewhat different in appearance. The forehead is low and narrow, but the cheek-bones are high and prominent, and with the relatively narrower lower jaw and pointed, retreating chin give a triangular outline to the face. The nose is short and extremely broad, although slightly narrower in proportion than the Bushman nose; the nasal index is 100, while that of the Bushmen is 115. Both, however, are markedly platyrrhine. The bridge is very

low, the nostrils wide and directed forwards. The eyes, especially in young people, have the same peculiar fold of the upper eyelid and very narrow opening which characterise the eyes of the Bushmen. The iris is also dark brown. The ear is somewhat larger than in Bushmen, and while it does not display the same well-marked peculiarities as the Southern Bushman ear, is, on the whole, strongly reminiscent of it, especially in shape and in the well-rolled helix. There is generally a moderate lobe, although occasionally the ear is lobeless, as in the Bushmen. The lips are thin, the mucous membrane averted, and there is the same convexity of the upper lip as in the Bushmen. The lips project considerably, the lower slightly beyond the upper, giving the mouth a snout-like appearance, which may also be noticed in some of the Bushmen. This projection of the lips easily conveys the impression of great prognathism, owing to the flatness of the nose and the retreating chin; but actually the degree of prognathism is slight, although greater than in the Cape Bushmen.

In build there is also a great similarity between Hottentots and Bushmen. The bodies of the Hottentots are slender, and the limbs very slight; good muscular development is rare, the muscles generally being thin and cord-like. The legs are rather long in proportion to the trunk, while the arms, again, are short; the hands and feet are small and narrow, like

those of the Bushmen. The hips project but little, and the protuberant belly seen in the southern Bushmen does not occur so frequently, although it is also often found in children. The buttocks are small, but may appear prominent owing to the strong inclination of the pelvis and the hollow back, features already noted in the Bushmen as well. The horizontal position of the penis found in pure Bushmen is occasionally seen in the Hottentots also, but is comparatively rare. The breasts of the girls, like those of the Bushman girls, are proportionately small and conical, with projecting nipples; but in mature women they become quite limp, and hang flat against the body. Steatopygia is far more common and usually more pronounced than in Bushwomen; it is found in the women of all the Hottentot tribes, though it tends to disappear where there is any great degree of intermixture with other peoples. Elongation of the labia minora is also very often found as a morphological feature. Although this cannot be regarded as a racial peculiarity, the fact is noteworthy that it occurs far more frequently in Hottentot and Bushwomen than in the women of any of the other South African peoples.

The physical characters of the Hottentots and the Bushmen are so much alike and so distinct from those of the other inhabitants of South Africa, that we cannot but look upon these two peoples as very closely allied in race. Both the Cape Bushmen and the Hottentots have a brownish-yellow skin colour, black, spiral, sparsely-distributed hair, low heads and

faces, broad flat noses with low bridges, widely-separated eyes with narrow openings and a strong development of the upper lid, steatopygia, and elongation of the labia minora. The Hottentots, however, are taller, their heads are larger in length and in height and prevalently dolicocephalic, their faces slightly longer and more prognathous, and their noses slightly narrower, while steatopygia is also more common. Now it has already been shown that the more northerly Bushmen are taller and darker than the Cape Bushmen, and that their heads tend to be longer and higher and proportionately narrower, while they also have some degree of prognathism. These divergencies, as we have seen, are obviously the result of racial intermixture with other peoples, chiefly of negroid (Bantu) stock. In the Hottentots the difference from the Cape Bushmen in stature and the shape of the head are of the same nature as those found in the Northern Bushmen. On the other hand, they have the same skin colour as the Cape Bushmen, and certain peculiarities, such as steatopygia, which are more pronounced in them than even in the Bushmen, and which seldom occur in the Northern Bushmen.

In view of the comparative evidence afforded by the Northern Bushmen, it seems that we must look upon the Hottentots also as Bushmen who have been influenced in physical characters by mixture with some other racial group. The prevalent theory, as already mentioned, is that this other group was of the light-

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skinned Hamitic stock. Shruballs, however, working upon skeletal material alone, maintains that this theory is untenable, and that the new element in the composition of the Hottentots must have been of Bantu stock. "The appearance of the Hottentot skulls", he says, "in no way suggests any marked intermediate characters between those of Bushmen and of any more Hamitic race, while in the features in which they differ from the Bush crania they certainly resemble negroes...When the distribution of the various cranial and facial indices is compared it may be seen that the Hottentot in almost every case is intermediate between the Bushmen and the Bantu negroes....It can be shown that while the Hottentot measurements are in some respects intermediate between those of Bushmen and of Hamites, they are more nearly intermediate between the Bushmen and the Bantu, and where they show this least they resemble the Sudanese negro more than the Hamite".<sup>1</sup>

The fact that the Northern Bushmen, who have unquestionably been affected by racial intermixture with the Bantu, tend to diverge from the Cape Bushmen in the same cranial features as do the Hottentots might seem to support this view. On the other hand, these Northern Bushmen have also acquired a darker skin colour, while the Hottentots are as light in colour as the Cape Bushmen; and again, as von Luschan has shown, occasionally one finds facial features in the Hottentots which are strongly reminiscent of the Hamitic type, and can only be regarded as reversions to it.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, although such evidence cannot

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1. F.C. Shruballs, "The Pygmy and Negro Races of Africa", Lancet, 1908 (Jan-June), p.985.

2. F. von Luschan, "Hamitsche Typen" in C. Meinhof, Die Sprachen der Hamiten, pp.252-253.



be adduced as conclusive in a discussion of purely racial origins, it is surely not without some bearing upon this question that the languages of the Hottentots present affinities to those of the Hamitic language-family, and that their cattle and sheep are of the breed associated with Hamitic culture.

The craniological evidence is opposed to any conclusion that the Hottentots are a true Bushman-Hamitic cross without a negro element; but the other factors noted suggest that some Hamitic element at least must have entered into the composition of the Hottentots. In this connection it may be mentioned that the Bantu themselves are negroes who have been affected to some extent by Hamitic admixture, and consequently the resemblances in cranial characters between the Hottentots and the Northern Bushmen need not necessarily argue against the presence of Hamitic blood in the former. It seems reasonable, therefore, to assume that the Hottentots may represent a mixture of the Bushmen with both Hamites and negroes, or perhaps with an earlier mixture of the two latter stocks which had a predominantly Hamitic culture. The fact that the Hottentots vary but slightly amongst themselves suggests that this intermixture which gave rise to them is of very long standing, and hence probably originated before they came into South Africa.

#### Dress and Decoration.

With the advent of European civilisation, as we have noted, much of the original Hottentot culture has disappeared. Their clothing, for instance, has been

almost everywhere completely replaced by European garments, and it is rarely, if at all, that the old native dress can still be seen. But from the descriptions of the earlier writers, it is possible to obtain a fairly clear picture of what the Hottentots wore before European clothing became so widely adopted as now to be their universal dress.<sup>1</sup>

The clothing of both men and women formerly consisted principally of front and rear aprons of skin, which depended from a leather thong tied round the waist. The front apron of the men was a small piece of jackal or wild cat skin, shaped somewhat like a pouch, with the fur turned outwards, which barely sufficed to cover the genitals; while from behind hung a large triangular piece of dried skin, with the broad part downwards, which they would draw under them when they sat down. A simple little skin pouch was also tied to the waist girdle to hold a few personal possessions, such as the pipe and tobacco. The women wore a large triangular rear apron, two ends of which were tied in front, while the third, hanging down behind, fully covered the buttocks and reached down to the knees. From the knot in front depended another apron, not quite so big, the lower part of which was cut into long thin strips to form a fringe and was

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1. The fullest descriptions of the Hottentot dress are those given by: Kolb, Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung, 84-96; Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, 309-313, 357-358, 373; Von Francois, Nama und Damara, 205-207; Schinz, Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika (Oldenburg, 1891), 83-86; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 233-252 passim, 207-211 (decoration).

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variously decorated with shells, beads and other trinkets. Beneath this a smaller apron, not ornamented, was sometimes worn as well; it served more strictly the ends of modesty, and was drawn between the legs when the woman sat down. A leather strap or sometimes a long string of perforated ostrich eggshell beads was also passed round the waist above the aprons, and on this girdle were tied tortoise-shell boxes containing powdered buchu.

The upper part of the body was generally left bare, but in wet or cold weather it was covered by the kaross, which was worn by both men and women. It was made by preference of sheepskins or of several jackal or wild cat skins sewn together with sinews, and was tied with a strap across the breasts so as to hang over the shoulders. In winter the hairy side was turned in, in summer it faced outwards.

Nowadays all the men have European coats and trousers; only the women, more conservative, sometimes still wear their old skin apron under a cotton or woollen petticoat and print dress.

Sandals of thick skin, which were tied round the ankle with thongs, were put on for long marches. The women also wore at all times a pointed skin cap, and to this day Hottentot women always keep their heads covered, although now they prefer to use large coloured kerchiefs, which have become one of the most current articles of trade with them. The men

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generally went with their heads uncovered, although in wet or cold weather a sheepskin cap might be worn with the hairy side inwards. Nowadays the broad felt hat is largely worn.

The style of ornament has equally changed. Both men and women still carry small leather pouches hung round the neck, and containing the knife, pipe, tobacco, money, etc., as well as little horns, tortoise-shells and other odds and ends as finery or as charms. But formerly armlets of ivory and copper were found among the men, while the women wore iron and copper rings and armlets, as well as necklaces of ostrich-egg-shell beads, teeth or shells, and frequently sewed strips of raw hide round their legs in the form of rings, which, when dry, rattled against each other and made a noise when they moved. Copper trinkets and rings were also worn in the ears by people of both sexes, or were attached freely to the knots of their hair. All these have now given place to glass beads, glass or wire bangles, and similar objects obtained from European traders.

Washing in water was rarely met with, and was certainly by no means customary. The toilet was performed with moist cow-dung, which was rubbed plentifully all over the body, allowed to dry slightly, and then rolled off in lumps with the palm of the hand. To give the skin suppleness it was also generally rubbed with fat, kept in small receptacles of horn

covered with leather and often carried about on the person. The women especially would smear the whole body with it, the men at least the face, scalp, hands and arms. Both men and women also freely used buchu, a sweet-smelling powder ground by the women from various plants. It was kept in small tortoise-shell boxes, made by closing with resin the opening at the back of the shell as well as the two openings at the sides, so that a vessel with only one opening, that for the head, remained. The men powdered mainly the neck and the armpits, the women the whole body. In Kolb's time the women would on festive occasions paint red spots on the forehead, cheek and chin; and even to-day among the Naman the girls still paint various patterns on their faces with a mixture of fat and the powder ground from a soft red stone (?haematite). There was no special style of dressing the hair, although occasionally part of the scalp was shaved clean and the remaining knots of hair decorated with all sorts of small trinkets.

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Bodily Mutilations.

Circumcision, as in the case of the Bushmen, was altogether unknown to the Hottentots. Kolb and

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 55 seq.; Campbell, Missionary Travels in S. Africa, 1815, p.430; Fritsch, op.cit., 332-334; J. Olpp, "Aus dem Sagenschatz der Nama-Khoi-Khoi", Mitt. Geogr. Ges. Jena, 6 (1888), 44-46. A summary discussion of much of the relevant literature is given by L. Walk, "Initiationszeremonien und pubertätsriten der südafrikanischen Stämme", Anthropos, 23 (1928), pp.881-885.

several other early writers on the Colonial Hottentots state, however, that at or before puberty the left testicle of every boy was excised. It is difficult to decide how much truth there is in this statement, although Kolb gives a minute description of the rite and claims to have repeatedly made a personal examination of the victims themselves. Later writers all emphatically deny the existence of this practice, especially Fritsch, perhaps the most careful observer of the bodily characters of the Colonial Hottentots. He maintains that Kolb may have been deceived by the well-known fact that in both Hottentots and Bushmen the scrotum is often drawn up close to and just under the root of the penis, and appears to contain only one testicle, the other not having descended into the scrotal sac. Certainly in more recent times the custom of excision, if it ever did exist (and one is inclined to believe that the older writers may be trusted in this respect), has completely disappeared; and it has never been reported of the Naman.

Finger mutilation, already noticed in the Bushmen, was also common to all the Hottentots, especially among women. It consisted in the removal of one or two joints of the little finger, and sometimes of the first joint of the next finger as well. The reason for this custom is doubtful. It has been variously looked upon as a sign of mourning, or especially in the case of children, as designed to be magically protective. Kolb asserts that the custom was

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confined to those women who had married more than once, a fresh joint being cut off before every fresh marriage. There is, however, ample evidence to show that it was also practised on children, even on small babies. The data available are not sufficient to enable us to determine the underlying motive with accuracy; the corresponding custom among the Bushmen seems to be practised as a protective means on infants whose immediate predecessors have died, and this may also have been the meaning of the Hottentot custom in some cases, although it is probable that the motive varied in different tribes.

Scarification seems also to have been employed, both among the Colonial Hottentots and the Naman, in connection with a large variety of ceremonies - boys' puberty rites, hunting rites, re-marriage, healing of disease, etc. It consisted in a number of small cuts made by the presiding person on the chest of the individual concerned, and the wounds were rubbed with ashes, producing slight permanent scars. The different occasions on which it was practised will be discussed more fully below. The perforation of the nasal septum and of the lobe of the ear for the reception of ornaments is also found, the latter especially being very common.

IV

SOCIAL ORGANISATION.

The Tribe -

The only Hottentot people whose social organisation is at all well known are the Naman of South West Africa, of whom a special study from this point of view has been made by Mrs. A.W. Hoernle. The valuable description given by her is supplemented in several respects by the observations of earlier writers, so that it is possible to arrive at a fairly clear conception of the social structure of this division. The original organisation of the other Hottentot peoples has long since been totally obliterated, and the information bearing upon it is too fragmentary to provide much material for discussion. As far as can be gathered, however, they appear to have had essentially the same system of social grouping as the Naman.

In the case of the latter also the old tribal system has been almost wholly destroyed. At the present time some of their tribes are already extinct, i.e., the tribal unity has been completely broken down, although one may still come across individuals claiming to belong to one particular tribe or another. Most of the Naman, in fact, are now scattered all over South-West Africa in the service of Europeans, and have no longer any tribal allegiance.

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1. A.W. Hoernle, "The Social Organization of the Nama Hottentots", Amer. Anthropol., 27 (1925), 1-24. Except where otherwise stated this is the principal authority for the facts recorded below.
  2. Olpp. Angra Pequena, 23 ff; Kohler, in Z. verg. Rechtswiss., 15 (1902), 337-360; Wandres, in Steinmetz Rechtsverhältnisse von eingeborenen Völkern, 1903, 315-325; Ibid. in Z. Kolpol., II (1909), 657-686.



for it was the deliberate policy of the German government to break up the tribes. But even where a small remnant of the people still hold together under the leadership of a man whom they regard as headman or chief, much of the old system of grouping has ceased to exist. The following analysis therefore relates very largely to conditions of the past.

The nomadic pastoral life of the Naman and the unsuitable climatic conditions under which they dwell have resulted in their distribution over the country in small scattered communities. Although it appears from the traditions of the people that they all originally belonged to the one Nama tribe, they have long since become separated into a number of distinct and autonomous groups. The indigenous Naman, or "Great Namaqua", of South West Africa were divided within historical times into seven main groups, with one or two later offshoots, while the "Orlams" or Little Namaqua coming in from south of the Orange River were similarly divided into five main groups<sup>1</sup>. Each of these groups, ihaus, or "tribes", as they are generally referred to, has its own distinctive name, but they all speak the same language, with slight dialectical variations, and they all bear the common name of Nama. The meaning of this word is uncertain, but according to tradition it is the name of a remote ancestor from whom these tribes have all sprung.

The names of the different tribes, in the case of the Great Namaqua, appear to be derived from

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1.A.W.Hoernle, op.cit., 4.7.

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some characteristic feature associated with the people, and are in many cases exactly translated by the Dutch names by which the tribes are now chiefly known. Thus the //O Gein or Groot Doode are the "great dead"; the //Haboben, or Veldschoendragers, are called after a kind of sandal worn by the people (Dutch veldschoen, Nama //habob or //hawob); while the /Aunin, or Topnaars, are the "people of the point", a reference to the fact that they inhabit the sea coast, the extreme point of occupation of the Naman. The name !NARANIN, by which this last tribe is also sometimes known, is derived from the !naras melon, which forms the most important part of their subsistence.

In the case of the Orlams the native names are taken mostly from the name of the supposed first ancestor of the people, e.g., /Khauan from the personal name /Khauab, which is not now thought of as having any special meaning. There were two branches of these people, the older or the big (gei) branch, and the light-coloured branch (hei); hence the tribal names Gei /Khauan and /Hei /Khauan. The Witboois, on the other hand, have a Hottentot nickname, /Howesen, from /howe or /hobe, lazy, which they do not like at all. The Dutch names for these tribes are taken partly from the chief settlements of the people, e.g., Bethany, Berseba and partly from their chief leaders, Afrikaner, Amraal, Witbooi.

Traditionally all the Great Namaqua tribes are descended from one line of ancestors, the Gei//Khauan,

!Gami /mn, //Haboben, !Khara Gei Khoin and //Khau /Goan each having been founded by one of five brothers, while the //O Gein and /Aunin are later offshoots from the Gei //Khauan. The latter, whose founder was the eldest of the five brothers, are acknowledged by all the others to be the senior tribe among them. In spite of this claim to a common ancestry, however, the tribes have for a long time been independent of one another; although, according to Hahn, the chief of the Gei //Khauan received an annual tribute from the rest of the tribes up to as late as 1863.<sup>1</sup> Each tribe has its acknowledged chief, gao-aob, and also an acknowledged claim to certain large permanent fountains or pools in river beds. Before the coming of the Orlams and of the white man, the boundaries between the different tribes were not defined in any clear manner. Different waterholes or fountains in the country were always thought of as belonging to certain specific tribes, who used to wander about from fountain to fountain, seeking pasture for their stock. Other people could use the water too, but one tribe had a prior claim to it, established by habit, and had the right to expect that any other group intending to camp there for a long time would ask permission to do so.

The tribes do not seem to have ever been at all large. The number of people in each ranged apparently from several hundreds to a couple of thousands.

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1. T. Hahn, Tsuni //Goam. p. 97.

It is difficult to obtain any trustworthy figures, owing to the great disruption that has taken place in the tribal organisation of the people, but Palgrave's estimate, made at a time when conditions were less disturbed, may be taken as a useful guide to the relative size of the tribes in 1876. The Gei //Khauan then numbered approximately 2500, the /Aunin 750, the //O Gein 800, //Khau /Goan 1000, //Haboben 1800, !Khara Gei Khoin 800, !Gami /Nun 2000, Afrikaners 800, Witboois 2500, Bethany Hottentots 2000, Berseba Hottentots 700, and the Amraal Hottentots 600.<sup>1</sup> In 1923, however, of the still surviving Nama tribes the Gei //Khauan numbered only 100 and the //Khau /Goan 200, while on the other hand the Berseba Hottentots, who had avoided conflict with the Germans, were able to claim over 3000 adherents.

The Clan.

Each tribe was composed of a number of patrilineal clans (!Hau inati, lit., things within the tribe), i.e., groups of people claiming to be related in the male line.<sup>2</sup> One of these clans claimed seniority, and the chieftainship of the whole tribe was hereditary in this senior clan and inherited in the male line, from father to son. In the case of

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1. W.C. Palgrave, Report of...Mission to Damaraland and Great Namaqualand in 1876 (Cape Town, 1877), p. 94; quoted by Mrs. Hoernle, op.cit., 7.  
 2. A.W. Hoernle, op.cit., 9-16; Olpp, op.cit., 23; Kohler, op.cit., 338-339.

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the //Khou /Goan (Swartbooi) tribe the names of ten clans have been preserved, in the case of the Gei //Khauan (Rooi Nati) of fifteen, and in that of the /Hobesen (Witboois) of seven. It appears from the clan names of the Gei //Khauan that there must formerly have been several more clans in this tribe, so that on the whole the size of a clan cannot have been considerable. No actual figures are available, however.

Each clan named itself eponymously from its first known ancestor, or from the ancestor under whom it first claimed independence. In some cases tribal traditions have been preserved in which the various clans in the tribe are shown to have been related to one another in the past. The legend of the Swartboois, for instance, is that they separated from the Rooi Nati under the leadership of the /Garin family, and that the three brothers of this family became the ancestors of the three chief clans of the tribe - the /Gari Gein or big /Garin, the /Gari !Nagaman or "next" /Garin, and the /Gari /Karin or little /Garin, these names being those of the three brothers respectively. <sup>1</sup> When the tribe was

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1. It is the Hottentot custom for all the sons of a woman to be called by her 'great name' (gei khou /ons), while all the daughters are similarly called after the gei khou /ons of their father. Hence all the sons of a woman named /Garis will be called /Garib, and all the daughters of a man named //Khouab will be called //Khouas. They are distinguished from one another by the use of special adjectives, the eldest son being called the big one (geib), hence /Gari geib, the second the next one (!nagaman), hence /Gari !nagamab, the third the dark one (/nub) or the light one (/heib) or the tall one (gaxub), and so on, while the youngest will be called the young one (/ami) or the little one (/karib), hence Gari /-karib. The same distinctions are made in the case of the daughters.

first formed the chieftainship was vested in the /Gari Gein clan, but it has now passed to the second clan, the !Gari !Nagaman, as the senior clan has become almost extinct, and is represented to-day by only two or three people. Two of the other clans of this tribe are formed by people who were incorporated from the //O Gein tribe after the latter had broken up; and a similar instance of the inclusion of members of a different tribe is found in the case of the /Aunin living at Walvis Bay, who completely defeated another Nama people known as the /Namaxin and incorporated its remnants into their own clans. It would appear, therefore, that the different clans in a tribe are by no means always related, and even where they do claim a common descent it is no longer possible to trace this relationship genealogically.

The various family groups which go together to form a clan are also called ihau !nati. These family groups to-day have Dutch, or at any rate European surnames. Some of the clans have only one family surname. That of the /Gari !nagaman, for example, is Swartbooi, and that of the !Neisi ein, another of the Swartbooi clans, is Beukes. Other clans have several of these surnames, e.g., those of the !Gurusin clan of the same tribe are Swartbooi, Gertze, Richter and Van der Bijl, and little genealogical connection can now be traced between the different family groups bearing these names. Members of the same clan, however, all considered themselves blood relatives, and were bound together by various common rules and observances.

Marriage within the clan, however, was strongly forbidden, so that a man had to seek his wife in another. The children belonged to the clan of their father. Apart from thus restricting marriage and regulating descent, and with it inheritance and succession, the clan seems to have functioned mainly as a political unit. There is no record of any ceremonial observances or taboos specially connected with the clan organisation, nor was there anything in the nature of totemism among the Hottentots. The members of a clan all tended to live together, and membership of a clan guaranteed a person a strong measure of protection. He could always count on the support of his fellow-clansmen, especially in the case of blood feud. Early last century the vendetta system was still in force among the Naman, even between clans of the same tribe, and the chief of the tribe was unable to prevent two clans from carrying out blood vengeance on each other, or to force them to accept compensation.

The clan was thus the strongest unit ever attained by the Naman. Time and again a powerful clan would go off on its own, asserting its independence of the others, and clan loyalty was always stronger than tribal loyalty. The chief of the tribe was little more than primus inter pares. He was acknowledged to be the head of the senior clan, and if a person of fine character was accorded a great deal of respect; but the heads of the other clans acted as his council, and he could not do much without their co-operation. The whole conduct of affairs in the tribe was - and still is - the concern of the older men.

The clan structure of the Swartboois as analysed by Mrs. Hoernle shows the whole mechanism by which clans and tribes were formed among the Naman. A large and flourishing family would very often have its own favourite pasturing grounds, and be so large as to exclude members of other families or clans. In course of time they would become sufficient unto themselves, and the headman begin to play the part of a chief. They would arrange migrations to suit themselves independently of the other members of the tribe, and ultimately be acknowledged as independent. As the families increased descendants of different brothers would group themselves more closely and form clans and even sub-clans. In this way a new tribe would gradually develop from a clan or part of a clan of the parent tribe.

Encampments and Dwellings.

Small as the tribes were, their members were yet too numerous to remain together for long at any one spot. As a rule they were scattered over the country in smaller groups, each group consisting of a clan of the tribe, or even of some part of a clan. The older members of the clan, however, would always stay on at the headquarters of the tribal chief; and in this encampment the relative position of the different clans was strictly regulated by custom. In the old days the encampment was in the form of a great circle.<sup>1</sup> The whole was enclosed with a

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1. A.W. Hoernle, *op. cit.*, 15-17 *passim*. For the Colonial Hottentots, cf. Kolb, *Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung*, 109 and *passim*; Fritsch, *Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's*, 316 *seq.*



great fence of thorn, in which were two gateways, one to the north, the other to the south. Within this fence and round the circumference were the huts of the people, each hut facing inwards to the centre. The huts of the chief and the members of his clan stood in the western portion of the circle, facing east, and on either side of them were ranged in fixed order the huts of the other clans, the members of each clan living close together. The great open space in the centre served as a fold for the stock at night. Special enclosures were made for the calves and the lambs, but there was no enclosures for the cattle and sheep, which just lay in front of their owner's hut till driven out to pasture in the morning.

The old camping order of the clans has long since been given up, but the order of camping of the families within the clan is still maintained in many instances. In any settlement of Hottentots may be found the huts of a number of men called by the same name and belonging to the same family group. These huts are ranged in order of seniority. The oldest brother with his wife, children and dependants dwells furthest to the right, the youngest brother furthest to the left, as we stand, facing outwards, at the doorway of any hut. Near each of the brothers are grouped his immediate dependents, the married sons on the right, the oldest furthest to the right, the youngest nearest to the hut of the father, while on the left is any married daughter not yet removed to her husband's people and any widowed sister come home

to live with him. Other dependants of various kinds are also grouped to the left of the man's hut, chief of whom are the igan or servants.

The huts themselves (omi) are much superior to those of the Bushmen, and well adapted to the nomadic life of the people.<sup>1</sup> They provide an airy shelter from the wind and the sun, are light in weight, simple in material and structure, and can easily be taken down, packed up and rebuilt. The skeleton is a frame of long light pieces of supple undressed wood. Twenty to sixty of these, according to the size of the hut, are planted vertically in holes dug into the ground in a circle of three to five yards diameter. The upper ends of the sticks are then bent inward, and tied together in the centre, until the framework is complete. The whole frame thus approximates to a hemisphere, which varies in height, but averages about two and a half yards. Its erection is the work of the men. Withes are then twisted round the structure, and fastened on outside. Over these are tied layers of rush mats constructed by the women from reed grass, usually Cyperus sp. The stalks of reed are bored through and sewn together with bark thread. The finished mats are laid round and directly over the skeleton. Long mats are placed edgewise on the ground and tied to the framework of sticks, other mats are placed higher up and tied in a similar

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1. The most complete description of the Hottentot hut is given by Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, 227-232; cf. also Von Francois, *Nama und Damara*, 208-210; Kolb, *op.cit.*, 106-108.

manner, and one or two additional mats form the roofing. The hut when complete is of beehive shape. It is cool in the summer, when the rushes contract in the heat and allow the air to play freely through the hut; perfectly dry in the rain, when the rushes swell and grip closely to one another, while a lining of prepared skins makes it snug and warm in the winter. When the camp is shifted, the structure is taken down; the mats are rolled up and the wooden poles tied into bundles. They are then transported to the site of the next encampment on the backs of oxen, some of which are specially trained to carry packs.

The main entrance to the hut is usually opposed to the direction of the wind, and on the other side is left a smaller opening. The main opening may be closed by means of a piece of rush matting which just fits into it, and is attached to a cross-pole situated about three feet from the ground. This door can be rolled up and fastened or let down. The position of the door is easily changed from one side to another, according to the direction of the wind, by shifting the mats of the hut. The floor of the hut is smeared over with a mixture of cow-dung and blood, which is often renewed, and is covered with skins. In the centre a depression is made as a hearth for the fire, and round this are stretched the mats or skins on which the inmates sleep. To the right of the rear opening is erected a frame of four poles with a net spread over them. On and under this frame are placed all sorts of household possessions.

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Family and kinship.-

Each family has its own hut, where the children remain with their parents till marriage. Occasionally a number of young girls share a hut together, also even at times a number of boys, but this is not general. It is much more usual for the members of a family to remain together until a new household is formed by the marriage of a son or daughter. The family in a strict sense thus comprises a man, his wife, and their unmarried children.<sup>1</sup> All the Hottentot tribes formerly permitted polygyny, which, however, was not practised to any great extent. More than two wives were seldom found. Each wife had her own hut, in which she lived with her children, while the husband stayed as a rule in the hut of his first wife. Nowadays the people are ostensibly monogamists. After marriage the husband usually stays for some time with his wife's parents before returning with her to his own group. Marriage is thus partial, but in exceptional cases, if there is good reason for it, the wife will remain with her own people, the husband joining them permanently.

Each family has its own herd of cattle, sheep and goats and in moving with them in search of water and grass will often act independently of the rest. Nowadays it is largely the desire for social intercourse that induces the people to form a camp, although in the old days the need of protection against enemies must also have been a powerful motive.

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1. Kohler, *op.cit.*, 345 ff; Wandres, in Steinmetz, *op.cit.* 315 f; von Francois, *op.cit.*, 212 seq.

From the way in which related families still tend to camp together it will be seen that kinship is a factor of great importance in the social life of the Hottentots. The relationship system of the people, as may be expected from the fact that they have a clan organisation, is of the type usually known as classificatory, i.e., terms of relationship are applied by a man not only to the members of his family, but also, according to certain rules, to classes of people who stand in a definite relation to his parents, and behind this linguistic usage there is almost always a set of mutual obligations between the man and all those to whom he applies these terms.

The primary terms of relationship are naturally those of the immediate family circle. Children address their parents directly by the term ii (com.sing.), the feminine form is being applied to the mother, the masculine form ip to the father. When speaking of their parents, but never in direct address, they use the term //gun (from //ga, to be fertile): //gub (masc.sing.) for the father, //gus (fem.sing.) for the mother. A more familiar term for father is tatab, and for mother mamas. Parents again speak to or of their children by the term /goan or oan (from /oa, to bear.) A son is oab or /goab, a daughter oas or /goas. Brothers and sisters use for each other the term igan; and here the relative ages of the person speaking and

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1.A.W.Hoernle, op.cit., 17-23. The list of relationship terms given by Schultze, op.cit., 299-302, differs slightly from the above, and is not so complete.

and of the person or persons spoken to or of are carefully distinguished. An older brother is !gab geib (big brother), an older sister !gas geis; a younger brother is !gab /kami (young brother) or !gasab, and a younger sister !gas /kams.

The application of these terms is also extended to more distant relatives. Thus mamas is applied also to the mother's sisters, those older than the mother being called mama geis, those younger mama /kams or mamaros (dimin.). In the same way tatab is also applied to the father's brothers, again with the proper modifications for relative age. The term mamas is further applied to the wives of the father's brothers, and the term tatab to the husbands of the mother's sisters, and to the sons of the father's father's brothers. The children of all these people are called by the same term !gan used for own brother or sister, with the proper modifications for sex and relative age. The term ean or /goan, finally, is applied by a man also to the children of his brother (i.e. to those who call him tatab, father), and similarly by a woman also to the children of her sister.

On the other hand, certain other kinds of relatives are called by new and distinctive terms, which are not used within the immediate family circle. For all persons, male and female, of all generations above those of father and mother, one term is used, //naon

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(i.e., the tip of an arrow so that it refers, as it were, to the beginning of the family). The form //naob (masc.sing.) is used for me - father's father, mother's father, their brothers, fathers and father's fathers; the form //naos (fem.sing.) for women - father's mother, mother's mother, their sisters, and the father's father's sisters. Conversely the children of any person called /goan are spoken of as /nurin (masc., //nurib; fem., //nuris). This term is therefore the reciprocal for //naon.

The father's sister nowadays is called mugis (from the Dutch "moeke", little mother), but the old term was eis geis, big mother, or táras, or gei táras, the great respected one. Her husband is now called omeb (from Dutch "oom", uncle), also, through courtesy, tatab; there does not appear to be a distinctive term for him. The father's sister, again, has no special term for her brother's children, but uses a descriptive term - !gab oan (Brother's child) or tarap oan, with the proper modifications according to the sex of the person referred to. Occasionally, however, she will refer to her brother's son as /uip, a term which is used for relatives-in-law generally.

The mother's brother is nowadays also called omeb, but formerly was //naob or //naosab; and his wife is now mugis, formerly //naos. He in turn applies to his sister's children the term //nurin.

This term, which as we have already seen is also the term used for grandchildren, is further applied to cross-cousins, i.e., to the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister; the masc.form //nuribto to the sons, the fem. form //nuris to the daughters. Sometimes, however, a man will address the daughter of his mother's brother or father's sister by the term tarás, wife, and conversely a woman will address the son of her mother's brother or her father's sister by the term aob, husband.

The term aob is also applied by a woman, not only to her husband, but to his brother, and to the husband of her sister; while the term tarás, is further applied by a man to his brother's wife, and to his wife's sisters, as well as to his own wife. The general term for relatives-in-law, however, is /uin or ina khoin (from the verbs /ui and ina, to become related by marriage). Thus a man applies the term /uip (masc.) to his wife's father, wife's brother, sister's husband, and daughter's husband, while a woman applies it to her husband's father and to her brother's son. The term /uis (fem.) again, is applied by a man to his wife's mother and to his son's wife, and by a woman to her husband's mother, husband's sister, brother's wife and son's wife.

These linguistic usages are in many cases correlated with specific rules and observances regulating the conduct with regard to one another of a person and all those to whom he applies any term of



relationship, the nature of these rules and observances varying according to the nature of the relationship. To take only some of the more immediately striking instances, we find that the use of the term gei taras, great respected one, for the father's sister, is correlated with the fact that great deference is due to a woman on the part of her brother's children. The occasional use of the terms aob, husband, and taras, wife, between cross-cousins of opposite sexes implies that marriage is possible between them, and this is actually found to be the case; while on the other hand the use of the term igan, brother or sister, between ortho-cousins rules out the idea of marriage and implies a type of behaviour between them different from that between cross-cousins. The careful manner, again, in which these kinship terms distinguish the relative ages of the person speaking and the person referred to reflects the extreme regard for age which runs right through the social life of the Hottentots. The type of behaviour which is expected of one person of another is thus often directly indicated by the kinship term in use between them. The terms of relationship, in other words, also often express actual social relationships. These play a great part in the whole moral regulation of the lives of the people, and will be discussed in some detail in the following section, when the social life of the Hottentots is considered.

Family Servants.

The families of the more wealthy Naman frequently have attached to them a few people in the capacity of servants or dependants. These servants are mostly Bergdama, a people of negro stock which has long been in subjection to the Hottentots, but sometimes also include Bushmen or Herero, or even impoverished Naman. Many of them were taken or picked up in the old days as small children, after one of the numerous wars between the native peoples of South West Africa when families were scattered and children left helpless on the veld. They were then brought up in the family of their rescuer, performing various menial services, and in general considering themselves members of the family. Here and there such people still offer their services voluntarily in return for their subsistence, or are saved through pity from starvation and adopted.

They are to be regarded as servants rather than as slaves. Often, no doubt, they are harshly treated, but they are never bought or sold, and are free to marry as they will, although they generally remain attached to the same family for long periods. The men are entrusted with the care of the flocks, or accompany their masters on the hunt, and in the old days also to war, and in general must be ready for any kind of service. The women attend to domestic matters, clean the hut, fetch the wood and water, maintain the fire, and so on, and also milk the cattle, when the mistress or daughter of the house does not herself do so.

These family servants, !gan, !gati, !gagu, are to be distinguished from the !gaisan, who hire themselves to a person for an arranged payment, which they receive, in the form of young lambs, at the time of lambing season. The time of service is generally not specified, and usually they remain with their employer for life, although they cannot be kept from departing when they wish. Their children are free, but usually also remain as servants in the same family.<sup>1</sup>

V.

SOCIAL HABITS AND CUSTOMS

Mode of Life and Subsistence.

The Hottentots in their independent condition derived their food supply from their cattle, sheep and goats, from the game which they hunted, and from the smaller animals and wild plants which they gathered in the veld. In recent years most of them have lost their herds, partly through purchase by other peoples, partly as a result of the wars through which they have passed; and in some cases they have taken to living round mission stations, where they practise agriculture in a small way by growing wheat, millet, maize, pumpkins, beans and so forth.

None of the independent Hottentots, however, ever cultivated the soil. They were dependent in the first place upon their flocks and herds for

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1.A.W.Hoernle, op. cit., 17; Olpp, Angra Pequena, 24; Kohler, op. cit., 340-341; Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten" 304; Fritsch, op.cit., 364.

their well-being. Their life in consequence was nomadic.<sup>1</sup> They were always compelled to seek out pasture lands where they could find grass for their animals and sufficient water for their own wants and those of their herds. They, therefore, moved up and down the country in certain definite areas, following the grass and the water. Grass as a rule was more easily found than water, and hence we see the different tribes laying stress on the possession of waterholes, and otherwise taking little care to define their boundaries more closely. Their main encampments were situated along river banks or in the neighbourhood of springs and deep pools, and always in parts where grass grew most abundantly.

Even to-day the more independent Nama families still lead a nomadic pastoral life. As long as there is sufficient water and pasture, a number of different families may camp together; but when the available supply does not suffice, the people prefer to separate and wander away in small groups. In normal years their wanderings in their pasture grounds are regulated for time and direction by the experience acquired in the course of many years. In dry years movement is more urgent and necessary, and more families than usual then trek away to new pasture lands. The change of residence as a rule does not go very far, for the rights of neighbouring tribes

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1. Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, 253-4; *Ibid.*, *Südwestafrika*, 208; A.W. Hoernle, "South-West Africa as a Primitive Culture Area." 24.

have to be respected; but within the tribal lands movement is usually unrestricted. The men fill their water-bags, made from the stomachs of cattle or antelope, put together the last portions of vegetable foods and dried meat, and then, with the help of their wives and children, take down their huts, roll up the mats, and tie the poles into bundles, which are fastened with straps on the backs of pack-oxen. Other oxen bear the household possessions and utensils, others again are ridden by the women and those too weak to go on foot, and the caravan sets forth. The adolescent children drive the calves and small stock slowly before them, so that the animals can pasture by the way and the lambs keep up with them. The drivers of small stock, therefore, break up in the morning before their elders. The horned cattle are driven too fast on the march to feed for any length of time, and hence are turned loose when a halt is made at night. The women as they go along seek edible roots and berries, and the men supervise matters in general; and so they roam on till a suitable spot for the new encampment has been found. As long as sufficient water and grass are to be had, the people will remain camped in the most desolate spot imaginable; but when the need arises they will move on again. Their encampments are never permanent.

The principal occupation of the people is to look after their flocks and herds. Even this is light, and employs only the younger members of the

family or the servants. The men spend most of their time in hunting or in visiting their traps and snares. When not pressed by hunger, however, they will remain about the huts, perhaps occupying themselves in the manufacture of weapons and utensils, or else sit chatting to one another, with the inevitable pipe passing round among them. The women go out seeking edible plants in the veld, or busy themselves at home with such domestic tasks as the weaving of mats and the working of skins. In this way the day is spent somewhat leisurely. Only with the sinking of the sun and the arrival of the herds from pasture does the camp liven up. Somewhere, perhaps, there is a feast needing to be celebrated, and dancing and music help to make it joyful; or, after the evening fire has been lit, the food prepared and eaten, the older people assemble round one of the fires to smoke and talk about the cattle or hunting, tell narratives of personal adventure, and so on, the younger men try their strength in wrestling matches, while the young women look on and applaud the successful competitors, and the younger children amuse themselves with games of various sorts, until the night is advanced and they gradually all turn in to sleep.

In the summer, after good rains, milk is abundant, and the people then live almost entirely upon it. The fresh milk, either warm from the cow or

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1. The fullest account of Hottentot foods is given by Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, 184-206; cf. Kolb, *op.cit.*, 96 seq.; Fritsch, *op.cit.*, 325-6; Schinz, *op.cit.*, 91-93; v. Francois, *op.cit.*, 210-212.

cooled down, is mixed with some vegetable substance, such as the green leaves of the ebony wood, which are chewed and spat into it, or the sap of an acacia; and the thick sour milk thus produced forms the staple article of diet to the Hottentots. It is kept in beautifully simple vessels carved from wood, and is carried about in soft skin bags. Some of it is also converted into butter. The milk is poured into a calabash, the narrow opening of which is closed with a cork. Occasionally the freshly-cut thick roots of a certain plant (? Pertulaca sp.) are put in with the milk to increase the yield of butter. The calabash is rolled to and fro on some skins, in full sunlight or near the fire; and after about three hours of this rolling it is gently shaken, so that the butter which has formed can gather on the surface. The remaining liquid is then run off and drunk, and the butter heaped up in a wooden pail. It is partaken of either fresh or fried with various edible plants. Some of it is also used for greasing the skin. The children live chiefly on fresh goat's milk, which is also much used by adults, in order to save as much as possible of the cow's milk for making butter.

In winter, when owing to the lack of adequate pasture milk is scarce and it is a hard struggle to find food for themselves, the men go out hunting or set traps and snares, and in this way obtain the bulk of their meat supply. Even the wealthy people seldom

slaughter their stock merely for food, save on ceremonial occasions, when a feast has to be provided. The animals hunted for food formerly included all sorts of buck (gemsbuck, springbok, steenbok, eland, hartebeest, wildebeest, etc.), as well as the elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, giraffe, zebra, ostrich and even beasts of prey such as the wild cat, leopard, hyena and jackal. Nowadays, with the disappearance from the country of most of these game animals, and with the enforcement of the game regulations, hunting naturally plays a far less important part in the subsistence of the people than it did in the old days, but it is still used as a means of obtaining food whenever possible.

There is hardly a single portion of the animal not eaten. Even the skin, when it is not required for other purposes, is roasted in the fire, so that the hair may burn away, and is then cut into strips, which are beaten soft with stones and cooked in water, or preferably milk. All meat is as a rule prepared: sometimes it is cooked in water in wooden (formerly clay) pots, sometimes roasted on spits over the fire, or it may be baked in hot ashes. Fire was formerly made by friction, by the same twirling method as used by the Bushmen; nowadays matches or the tinder-box are generally employed. When not eaten immediately, or when plenty of game has been caught



and all of it cannot be taken home, the meat is cut into thin strips, which are salted and dried in the air. In this condition it will last for a considerable time, and can also be eaten raw; indeed the Boer method of making 'biltong' is probably derived from this old Hottentot practice. Meat broth is not specially esteemed, but the fat of the animal, either raw or as dripping, is highly appreciated, and is sometimes drunk warm as a separate dish.

In addition to the game obtained by hunting, all sorts of smaller animals are eaten in case of necessity. There is hardly any form of animal life which does not provide food for impoverished Hottentots; hares, rock rabbits, birds of all kinds, porcupines, tortoises, mice, lizards, even insects such as caterpillars, beetles, locusts, termites and other ants all help to keep off starvation, while on the sea-coast the people eat the meat of seals and penguins, as well as penguin eggs, sea-gulls, mussels and snails. Fish are also caught wherever possible, and in the case of the coastal Hottentots and those living along the Orange and Great Fish Rivers in South West Africa often form an important part of the menu.

Vegetable food is obtained from plants growing wild in the veld. Of these a great variety are eaten. Some are taken raw, others baked in ashes, others again are beaten to pulp, then dried in the sun and brewed with milk. For example, "uintjies" (Cyperus sp) are usually baked in hot ashes; the

leaves of Mesembrianthemum edule are fried in butter; the seeds of Bauhinea burkeana are also baked, while its roots are often eaten raw. Ant-heaps are broken open, their stores ransacked, and large quantities of grass-seed carried off to be boiled in milk, making a very agreeable dish. Fruits such as the !naras (Acanthosicyos horrida Welw.) and tsamas (Citrullus and Cucumis sp.) are preferred most of all, on account of both the water content of the flesh and the food value of the kernel. The Topnaars in the vicinity of Walvis Bay still live for a considerable part of the year almost exclusively on the !naras, and hence are often known by the tribal name of !Naranin.

All the food obtained is generally shared in common. If game is brought home, the whole camp gathers about the hut of the possessor till all the meat is consumed, and so too with everything else. Even to-day in South West Africa if a Hottentot has anything to eat, e.g., a piece of bread or meat, he is bound by old custom to share it with anyone who comes up to him. Failure to do so will expose him to the greatest contempt. The communal meal, as we shall see, is one of the outstanding features in the ceremonial life of the people; while in ordinary life their hospitality is so generous and far-reaching that their economic system has been termed by several writers a sort of communism.

There is as a rule no fixed time for eating. Only the morning meal, taken after the cows have been milked and driven out to pasture, has a special name, sobos. The time and place of the other meals are

regulated according to circumstance; in camp by the arrival of the herds from pasture, on the march by outspans, on the hunt by a successful shot, and so on. The preparation of meals is the task of the women, and generally each woman prepares the food for her family on the fire in the hut. Normally both men and women now eat together, but there are certain communal meals in which there is a strict separation of the sexes or in which only members of one sex may take part. According to Kolb, however, men and women among the Colonial Hottentots always ate apart, all the people of each sex eating together. This separation of the sexes at meals he attributes to the fear that one of the women might be menstruating and would thus contaminate any men associating with her or coming near her.<sup>1</sup> There is evidence also that among the Naman the men at least formerly ate together, and apart from their wives.<sup>2</sup>

There is little information as to the existence of food taboos among the Hottentots in more recent times. The only well-authenticated instance is in the case of the hare, which in all the tribes might be eaten only by women and children, and was strictly forbidden to men and to youths who had passed through the puberty rites.<sup>3</sup> This taboo was apparently associated with the myth connecting the hare with the origin of death, which we have already met with among the Bushmen. Even this restriction, however, seems

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 102-103.  
 2. v. infra, "Boys' and Puberty Ceremonies" p. 342  
 3. Cf. Anderson, Lake Ngami, 328-9; Wikar, op.cit. 118-9; Olpp, "Aus den Sagenschatz der Khoi-Khoi", 46-47.

now to have lapsed. The older writers on the Colonial Hottentots, such as Graevenbroeck and Kolb, mention several other food taboos in addition to that on the hare. Thus, according to Graevenbroeck, wild pigs, hyenas, lions and other carnivorous animals were regarded as impure and not fit to be eaten. It was also deemed unlawful to taste butter and eggs, while only children were permitted to nourish themselves upon sheep's milk, which was looked upon as dangerous to adults.<sup>1</sup> Kolb, again, states that pig's flesh and fish without scales were forbidden by custom to both sexes; that the men only might not eat the hare or the rock-rabbit, or drink the milk of sheep, while the women, on the other hand, were forbidden the pure blood of beasts and the flesh of the mole.<sup>2</sup>

As narcotics the Hottentots formerly used infusions of various legumes and herbs. Even to-day the capsules of the Ectadium virgatum R.Mey. and the seeds of the Acacia hebecclada D.C. are still roasted, ground down and brewed with water. But increasing familiarity with the tea and especially the coffee introduced by Europeans has caused the old native brews to fall into general disuse, except perhaps in the case of illness. The Naman also sometimes still make a kind of mead out of wild honey. The honey is diluted with water, and then brewed with the help of various roots or fleshy stems, one of which is

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1. Graevenbroeck, op.cit. 364.  
 2. Kolb, op.cit. 96-97.

Pachypodium namaquensis, producing fermentation.

Nowadays, however, European alcoholic liquors find far too ready a market amongst them, and excessive drinking is by no means unusual.

Tobacco, which they did not cultivate themselves, the Hottentots soon learned to appreciate, when it was introduced amongst them by the Bantu and by Europeans. It has now come to be almost indispensable to them. Practically all men and women, and even the children, make use of it. Occasionally it is chewed, but far more generally it is smoked. The men often make their own pipes out of serpentine, which they cut with a knife into hollow tubes shaped somewhat like a cigar; or else they use the marrow bone of a medium-sized mammal. The mouth edge of the pipe is thickly stuffed with grass, so that the ashes of the tobacco should not be swallowed; and in company the pipe is passed round from person to person, each taking several deep inhalations before handing it on to his neighbour. Dagga was formerly also used to a considerable extent, and indeed according to Kolb the smoking of dagga was a frequent, even an essential, accompaniment to some of the ceremonies. Nowadays it is much less easy to obtain, for owing to its highly injurious effects when taken in excessive quantities its cultivation and sale have been restricted by the Government. The Colonial Hottentots used to smoke it in horn water-pipes similar to those of the Cape Bushmen.

Sexual Life and Marriage.

The sexual life of the Hottentots is no longer so strictly regulated as it seems to have been in the old days. There is now apparently great freedom of intercourse tolerated before and also practised after marriage. Formerly pre-marital unchastity was severely condemned among the Naman, and even penalised. A girl who had gone wrong was thrashed by her parents, or with their consent, in the presence of her love, who then received a similar punishment. These beatings were administered under the direction of the head of the camp, and hence received the stamp of publicity and recognised usage.<sup>1</sup> Nowadays, the restrictions on pre-marital intercourse are more loosely observed, and the lovers are apparently not punished. Indeed, according to Schultze, boys and girls often have sexual intercourse while they are still playing children's games, and no special notice of this is taken by their elders.<sup>2</sup> Should pregnancy follow, however, the father of the child is expected to marry the mother. Even if he does not do so, he is responsible for the sustenance of the child while it is being weaned, and has to provide the mother with some cattle or money for this purpose. If he refuses he is taken before the tribal council and compelled to do so, and may even be flogged. The

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1. Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 298, 319, cf. Hahn, "Der Nama-Hottentotten", 322.  
 2. Schultze, op. cit., 309.

payments cease when the child has been weaned.

It then belongs to the father, and may be taken away by him. Pre-marital children are said to have the same rights of inheritance from their father as those born in wedlock.<sup>1</sup>

Rape is severely penalised. If the victim is a child, the violator, according to Wandres, suffers the death penalty; if she is a virgin, or even a girl who had been previously deflowered, he is thrashed and all his property confiscated; while if she is a married woman her husband has the right to kill him without any fear of retaliation. Incest between either parents and children, brother and sister, or even the children of brothers and sisters, is punished by death.<sup>2</sup>

The occurrence of homosexuality among the Hottentots is denied by both Wandres and Fritsch.<sup>3</sup> Kurt Falk, however, maintains that it is fairly common, among both men and women, and especially among young married women. There exists among the Naman a practice whereby two individuals either of the same or of opposite sex will enter into a specially close bond of association, soregus, with each other. This is initiated by one of the parties drinking from a bowl of water (or nowadays often coffee), and then handing the rest of the liquid to the other to drink, with the words: sore-//gamsa ure, take the sore water,

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1. Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", 348; Vedder, "The Nama", 144, 145; Wandres, "Ueber das Recht der Naman", 669.  
2. Wandres, loc.cit. Intercourse between direct cousins, here stated to be treated as a form of incest, is now apparently no longer condemned, as at the present time they may even marry while marriage between cross-cousins was always permitted. (cf. below, p 163 )  
3. Wandres, loc.cit.; Fritsch, in F. Karsch-Haack, Das gleichgeschlechtliche Leben der Naturvölker (1911). p. 133.

or sore-//gamsa are, drink the sore water. As a rule the relationship thus entered upon primarily implies deep friendship and mutual assistance, especially in economic matters.<sup>1</sup> But, according to Falk, it is also used as a means of establishing a homosexual relationship, especially by boys. The usual form of homosexual practice is mutual masturbation among both men and women (oa /huru or simply /huru in the case of men, /goe-ugu in the case of women); predication between men and the use of an artificial penis between women is also found, but more rarely. Falk mentions also three cases known to him of men who were confirmed sexual inverts. Unfortunately he gives no concrete data as to the public attitude either towards such men or towards homosexuality in general, but as far as can be gathered from his short account homosexual practices are regarded somewhat as a matter of custom.<sup>2</sup> How far this is the correct view cannot be affirmed, as no other writer has any positive information on the subject.

Solitary masturbation (gui-guisen, to make oneself stiff) is also found; and, according to Fritsch, it is so frequent among girls as almost to deserve the name of national custom (Landessitte). No special secret is made of it, he says, and the people even speak of it in tales and legends as if it were quite an ordinary occurrence.<sup>3</sup> He goes so far

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1.v. infra, s.v. "Property". p. 411

2. Falk, "Homosexualität bei den Eingeborenen in Südwest-Afrika", *Geschlecht und Gesellschaft*, 13 (1925/26), 209-210.

3. Fritsch, *Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrikas*, 351; cf. Falk, *op.cit.*, 211.



as to venture the suggestion, often advanced also by other writers, that the elongation of the labia minora found in many Hottentot women may be due to this practice,<sup>1</sup> but, as we have already noted, there is little doubt that this hypertrophy is a purely physiological condition.

Wandres mentions also that occasional cases of bestiality are found, which, if they come to the notice of the tribal council, result in "exemplary punishment".<sup>2</sup> He does not specify the nature of this punishment.

Normally a girl is not regarded as marriageable until she has reached the age of puberty and passed through the puberty ceremonies, nor was a boy in the old days permitted to marry before he had been initiated (a custom which has now fallen into abeyance). Marriage, as we have seen, was not permitted between members of the same clan, nor was a man supposed to marry a woman of the same 'great name' (gei khol /ons) as himself, even though she might come from a tribe different from his own. Such a woman would be regarded as a mother, if much older, or as a daughter, if younger, than himself. Nowadays this prohibition has ceased to be observed; and we also find that marriage with any first cousin is permitted, even with direct cousins, although on the other hand the older

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1. Fritsch, op. cit., 283.  
2. Wandres, loc. cit.

people are resisting the marriages of first cousins at all, whether direct or cross cousins. Marriage with the latter was formerly permitted, both with the father's sister's daughter and with the mother's brother's daughter, although in some of the Nama tribes (e.g., //Haboben, Gei //Khauan, //Khau /Goan) marriage with the mother's brother's daughter is said to have been far more usual than marriage with the father's sister's daughter. It does not seem, however, that marriage with the cross-cousins was specially enjoined. Marriage with the direct cousins, on the other hand, was strictly prohibited.<sup>1</sup>

There is no single account of the marriage customs of the Hottentots which can be regarded as exhaustive. The description which follows, having been pieced together from the more or less incomplete reports of a number of different observers, must therefore be looked upon only as approximately correct, although the details cited are all vouched for by reliable witnesses.<sup>2</sup>

As a rule there is free choice with regard to marriage. The initiative usually lies in the hands of the boy. When he has found a suitable girl, he seeks to obtain her formal consent. He will hand her a little stick; if she takes this, breaks it in two, and throws one of the pieces at his breast,

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1. A. W. Hoernle, "The Social Organisation of the Nama", 21.  
 2. Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 322; v. Francois, Nama und Damara, 214; Olpp, Angra Pequena, 26 sq.; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", 343-345; Wandres, "Die Khoi-Khoi oder Naman", 318-319; Schultze, op. cit., 297-299; Vedder, "The Nama", 134-135.

it is a sign that she is willing to marry him. The two now enter into a state of betrothal, which imposes upon them various mutual avoidances. They are not supposed to meet or speak to each other, and may communicate only through an intermediary. This period of betrothal may be of considerable duration, and it is often several months or even a year and longer before the marriage actually takes place. In the meantime the necessary negotiations will be going on between their parents, the boy's people taking the lead. After the young couple have come to an understanding, two or three old women from the boy's family go to the mother of the girl, and ask for her consent. This by custom she is required to withhold. After some time, during which the boy will occasionally bring small gifts to his future parents-in-law, the proposal is renewed, the girl's father also being approached this time. Finally, after a more or less prolonged show of reluctance on the part of the girl's parents, their consent is at last obtained, and the day for the marriage ceremony is fixed.

In connection with this custom of wooing, reference may be made here to the employment of love magic among the Naman. A man wishing to win the favour of a girl will pound up a certain charm known as Duba (a white substance of the size of a fowl's egg, generally found in ant heaps), and mix it with

tobacco, which he then puts into a pipe. If the girl smokes this mixture, she will fall in love with the man who offered her the pipe.<sup>1</sup> Or he will secretly smear the mouthpiece of a pipe with some of the contents of a medicine-box, smoke the pipe and then pass it on to the girl whose love he wishes to arouse.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand magical means are also employed to separate lovers. Of these one of the most effective is found in the legs of the locust. A girl who is to be alienated from her love is asked, as often happens in the normal course of daily life, to grind to powder a heap of dried buchu roots; but among the roots a locust leg has been secretly concealed. When the girl, having finished her task, rubs her buchu-stained hands in her armpits as usual, she unwittingly rubs in the magical means which kills her love. In other cases locust legs are pushed into the interior of a bone pipe, which is then handed round as usual. If care is taken that both lovers smoke of it, the magic will prove effective. In another instance quoted by Schultz, the parents of the girl consulted a magician, who smeared a small stick with some of the contents of his medicine-box, broke the stick, and threw the pieces apart, at the same time uttering the words: "The two who love each other must separate".<sup>3</sup>

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1.Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 90.  
 2.Schultze, op.cit., 319-320.  
 3.Schultze, op.cit., 297-298.

The marriage is celebrated by a great feast at the home of the girl's parents. On the day of the ceremony, the bridegroom has to present a cow to his mother-in-law, in token of the fact that she brought up his bride and carried the latter while still a child in the aba skin on her back (hence the cow is termed aba-gomas). A similar presentation is made to his mother by the bride. The bridegroom and his people also have to provide the cows which are slaughtered for the marriage feast. Oxen may not be used for this purpose, lest the marriage prove unhappy and quarrelsome, while the use of female animals will make it fruitful. On the morning of the ceremony, the cows are driven in festive procession by the relatives of the bridegroom to the home of the bride's parents. Here they are slaughtered. While the meat is being prepared, the bridegroom is fetched from his own home by two of his companions, who play on the reed pipes. All three dance up to the hut which has been newly erected for the bride, near that of her parents, and in which she is waiting with some young girl attendants. Arrived there, the men dance round the hut for a while. Then the bridegroom's companions place themselves before the entrance of the hut, so that he can get in only with difficulty and by the exercise of force. As soon as he gets through and the young girls have left the hut, the mat door is lowered and secured to the

ground with a stone, as a sign that entrance is forbidden. The marriage is then consummated, with the knowledge of the whole camp, but without arousing any special notice. The guests meanwhile sing, pipe and dance, and this continues all through the evening and night, the festivities only being interrupted for the great communal meal in which everybody takes part. Before the appearance of the morning star, the husband returns to his old home, where he has to stay the whole day without even seeing his wife; and only after the third or fourth day is he allowed to remain permanently with her.

The ceremonies of courtship and marriage just described are those noticed among the Naman within fairly recent times, and in most details are apparently still practised by them where they have not been christianised. A much earlier account by Wikar of the marriage customs of the Little Namaqua contains several features not noted above; and as he is on the whole a reliable and accurate observer, his description deserves to be quoted as complementary<sup>1</sup> to that just given.

He states that a boy who is courting a girl with the intention of marriage does not ask her directly for her consent, but oua's or "seeks" her in the following manner. If he is not ashamed and if his intentions are serious, he comes at night into the hut of her parents while the fire is still burning, and carefully notes the place where the girl goes to sleep.

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1. Wikar. op.cit. 100-102.

When the family all lie down to sleep and the fire is dead, he then goes to lie by the side of the girl. She, if not in too much of a hurry to have him, gets up and goes to lie in another part of the hut. The boy however remains sleeping on her skin bed until daybreak, when without speaking a word he gets up and goes away. The following night he appears again. If he finds that the girl's bed is still in the same spot he can regard this as a sign that his courtship is favoured. Even if the girl continues to get up and go away for several nights in succession when he lies down next to her, this is merely to test his steadfastness; he must only persevere, and all will go well. When at last she remains with him, he does not get up till broad daylight, and on the bed behind him he leaves lying a waistband of shell beads for his mother-in-law as a gift for the use of the bed. Then, still without speaking a word, he changes karosses with the girl, who also gives him buchu with which to powder his head and rub his armpits. Then he goes away.

The official marriage feast is celebrated the same day. The bridegroom must provide a sheep or a cow, which is slaughtered for the bride. The four legs of the animal are bound together, and in this position it lies for an hour or more. Meanwhile all the married women of the camp come

together, and the bride is placed in their midst. She is lectured by them on her duties as a married woman, and they also, as Wikar quaintly puts it, "praise men who seek wives, since to-day they have enough to eat". The animal is then slaughtered by a magician (tovenaar), who must be a male. A special portion of the meat is given to him, but he is the only male person who may eat of the animal. Not even the bridegroom may partake of it, nor any children or unmarried girls. The gall-bladder of the slaughtered animal is then blown up and tied to the head of the girl; the fat strewn with buchu by the women, and this the girl must wear round her neck; while the sinews are threaded through ostrich egg-shell beads, which she must wear round her legs.

In the meantime the bridegroom, desirous of winning his laurels that day as a hunter, is off early into the veld with his spear, bow and arrows. His quarry provides material for a general feast, which is followed by dancing and festivity. To the mother of his bride he must present two milch cows, or, if he is poor, one will do; while to her father he must also give several head of cattle. In return, however, he receives almost as many - probably in the form of dowry to the wife, who also brings with her into the marriage her own hut.

The important feature of this account, apart from the circumstantial description of the wooing, is the clear evidence it provides for the holding of a special meal in which only the bride and previous-ly married women may take part. Meals of



this sort, by means of which persons entering upon a new stage of life are aggregated into the group of persons already in that stage, play an important part in almost all Hottentot ceremonies relating to social life. Except in the present instance, however, there is no definite statement that such a meal accompanies marriage, although, as we shall see, its existence as an essential part of the marriage ceremony is hinted at in the careful analysis given by Mrs. Hoernle of the transition rites (rites de passage) of the Hottentots.

In the case of the Colonial Hottentots, all trace of the marriage ceremonies has naturally long since disappeared. For information about them we have to rely for the most part upon seventeenth and eighteenth century accounts, which as a rule leave much to be desired. The two most useful sources of this kind are Graevenbroeck and Kolb, whose descriptions again introduce several new features.

According to Kolb, the boy, when he has picked on the girl he wishes to marry, approaches his father, who then acts as his intermediary with her parents. If they are favourably inclined - and here again there is first a show of reluctance - the boy then for the first time directly asks the girl for her consent. If she says yes, all is well; if not, the two sleep together on the following night, when the girl struggles to retain her virginity. If

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1. Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 2-3; Kolb, op.cit., 70-73.

she is successful, the suitor must depart; but if, as generally happens, she becomes tired and gives in to him, the marriage is settled, whether she is willing or not. It is not unlikely that in this episode we really have something similar to the wooing described by Wikar, but Kelb's short description of it is more romantic than exhaustive, so that the resemblance cannot be stressed.

For the actual marriage ceremony, according to Graevenbroeck, a couple of sheep or even a cow are slaughtered. While the meal is being cooked, the bride is handed over to an old woman, who instructs her in the duties of married life, teaches her how to keep her husband and to love him, and in what the secrets of wedlock consist. Then the old woman smears the gall of the slaughtered animal over the feet of the bride, and ties its bladder to the roof of the hut where all this is taking place. The magician who has slaughtered the animal then comes up to the young couple, who are naked or at most dressed in a loin-cloth, smears their bodies from head to foot with fat, and powders them both with buchu. He next ties round their necks the twisted pericardium of the slaughtered animal, and finally admonishes them to live in mutual love and faith, wishes them a numerous offspring, and so forth. All then feast on the remains of the animal, the men and the women eating apart. The bride, however, must remain fasting till the following morning. The feast

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is followed by dancing which is kept up till late, and then the bride and bridegroom are left alone in the hut and the marriage consummated. If the marriage is celebrated more handsomely, the bridegroom on the next day brings the bride to his own home, accompanied by relatives of both and friends. Here she is welcomed with a new drinking bout, and a feast, and the young couple are again admonished and given good wishes. Everybody then returns to his normal occupation.

Kolb's description differs somewhat from the above. When the arrangements for the marriage have been concluded, he says, the bridegroom, accompanied by his father, drives one, two or three fat oxen, according to his means, to the hut or camp of the bride, where her parents and friends are assembled together. The oxen are here slaughtered, the people smear themselves with the fat of the animals and powder themselves with buchu, while the women in addition paint their faces with red powder. The men and the women then seat themselves in two rings, each sex by itself; the bride crouches in the centre of the women's ring, the bridegroom in the centre of the men's ring. The medicine-man of the camp now goes to the men's ring, and as soon as he reaches the bridegroom says a few words to him, and then urinates over him from head to foot; this he also does to the bride, as soon as he enters the ring of women. This performance he repeats twice again. The words accompanying it wish the young

couple good fortune in their married life, and express the hope that they will be blessed in the coming year with a son who will grow up strong and big and be a good hunter and a valiant man.

In the meantime the meat of the slaughtered animals has been cooking. When it is ready, everybody joins in the feast, the men and the women, however, eating apart. The only exception is in the case of the bridegroom, who eats sitting together with the women, but out of a separate pot and of meat which has been specially set aside for him. After the feast dagga is smoked, a pipe being passed round out of which every person inhales a few times before handing it on. This smoking bout, which soon degenerates into a noisy and drunken orgy, owing to the nature of the herb, is kept up till late at night when they are all tired and stupefied, and turn in to sleep. The bridegroom now sleeps for the first time with his wife. The festivities are continued on the following day, as long as there is still anything to eat. Dancing, according to Kolb, never takes place at the marriage ceremony, but on this point he is contradicted by most of the other writers.

As will have been noted, the descriptions given above vary somewhat in certain details. They all agree, however, in stating that the marriage is celebrated by a special ceremony at the home of the wife's people, and is accompanied by a feast and general rejoicing. With the conclusion of this ceremony, which stamps the seal of public approval

upon the marriage contract, the young couple are legally married. Henceforth they form a separate household in the community, live in their own hut, have their own herd of cattle, sheep and goats, and in general play the part of full adult members of society.

Among the Naman, however, the husband continues to live with his wife at the home of her parents for at least a year after the marriage, and not till then, or until his first child has been born, is he at liberty to return with his family to his own people's camp and there establish his independent household. Before departing he has again to present his mother-in-law with a good milch cow, this time in token of his release. As long as he remains with his parents-in-law he has to perform all sorts of heavy tasks for them, and to accompany his father-in-law in the hunting field as well as to war. Sometimes, as we have already mentioned, the husband may remain permanently with his wife's people. As a rule, however, this matrilocal residence is only temporary, and nowadays the period of its duration is often shortened to only a few weeks or even days. On the return of the man to his own people, his mother is required to slaughter an animal as a sign of welcome to his wife, who then reciprocates this gesture. Neglect on the part of the mother-in-law to do so is regarded as implying unfriendliness towards the young wife.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 18; Wandres, "Die Khoi-Khoi oder Naman", 318; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", 343-344; v. Francois, Nama und Damara, 214; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 297, 518; A.W. Hoernle, Richterveld, 16.

The status of the wife in Hottentot society is far from being that of an inferior. Although as a rule she plays a subordinate role in matters pertaining to tribal life, and in public always walks several paces behind her husband, yet her position in the household is supreme and the education of the children is wholly in her hands. She is regarded as the mistress of the hut, which she brings with her at marriage, and of all its contents. She even has the right under circumstances to forbid her husband to enter it. She has her own property in cattle, some given to her by her parents while she was still a child, others when she was married, and her husband will not venture to sell or slaughter an animal belonging to her without her consent or in her absence. Even if he intends to barter his own stock he usually first consults her and during his absence she also controls the pasturing of the herds. She supervises or herself does the milking which provides the household with most of its food, and controls all the provisions, allotting to each his food according to <sup>u</sup>status and age and suffering no contradiction. Her husband may not even take a mouthful of milk without first asking her permission, and should he do so, says Hahn, his nearest female relatives will put a fine on him, consisting in cows and sheep,<sup>1</sup> which are to be added to the stock of his wife.

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 19; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 299; Schinz, Deutsch-Sudwest-Afrika, 82; Wandres, "Ueber Rechtbewusstsein...der Hottentotten", 279; Report on the Natives of South West Africa and their Treatment by Germany (Cd. 9146), 75; Olpp, Angra Pequena, 25-26.

All the Hottentot tribes formerly permitted polygyny. Apparently, however, it was practised only to a slight extent, and as a rule only the more powerful and wealthy men had more than one wife. In any case the number of wives seldom exceeded two or three. Each wife had her own hut, in which she lived with her children, and had also her own property. The first wife, however, was the chief wife and took unlimited precedence. Her hut was regarded as the chief hut of the family, visiting friends off-saddled in front of it, and in it the husband received his guests. Her children were better clothed than and given preference to those of the other wives, and received appreciably more of the paternal inheritance.<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays the Hottentots are ostensibly monogamists. But where there are no children to the marriage or only daughters, the custom is still sometimes exercised by which the husband enters into the sore relationship with a girl, who becomes his concubine. This sore relationship in no way debars the girl from subsequently marrying another man, if she wishes to, but her marriage results in the ending of all intimacy. The children born of this relationship remain with their natural father, and have the same rights of inheritance as the children of a properly-married woman. To the wife of the man the existence of this relationship is a matter of great mortification, as it reflects upon her own barrenness, and consequently greatly reduces her prestige. Often, as a result of her jealousy, the girl dare not come

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1. Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", 342; Wandres, "Die Khoi-Khoi", 317; Hahn, "Die Nama Hottentotten", 332.

into the camp of the men<sup>a</sup>, but has to be visited by him at her own home. Olpp states also that many men, when they are absent from home, will be unfaithful to their wives and may even keep regular concubines in distant kraals. Honourable women, who feel their position outraged, may in such a case leave their husbands, and return with the hut and household property to their parents, until the husband humbly comes to seek pardon.<sup>1</sup>

Infidelity of the husband is not recognised as a ground for divorce, nor is adultery on the part of the wife. In the old days, according to Kolb, the Colonial Hottentots regarded the latter as a capital offence, which was punished by death without further question and without the least regard for the status of the adulterer. The Naman also, according to Kohler, would kill the adulterer if caught red-handed. Otherwise the matter had to be referred to the tribal council, who would fine the adulterer and perhaps also order him to be thrashed. It seems, however, that in more recent times at least the injured husband could altogether overlook the offence, if he wished. Vedder even goes so far as to say that adultery, though regarded as improper, is not subject to punishment.<sup>2</sup>

And Wikar, as far back as 1778, described what almost seems to have been a form of wife exchange

1. Von Francois, op.cit., 212, 214; cf. Schultze, op.cit., 319; Report on the Natives of South West Africa, 75; Olpp. loc.cit.  
 2. Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", 354; Kolb, op.cit., 71; Wandres, "Ueber das Recht der Naman", 669; Vedder, "The Nama", 144.



among the Little Namaqua. A married man, he says, will come at night to the hut of another, and lie down next to the latter's wife; whereupon the husband gets up to make room for him, and goes to sleep in another part of the hut. The following night this process is reversed, but, as Wikar delightfully adds, if the wife of the man who first began it is ugly, the affair is soon ended ("maar is de vrouw van diegeene die 't spel eerst begonnen heeft leelijk, dan wil 't tog niet braaf lukken met deeze handel")! This form of intercourse is naturally of quite a different order from adultery, for although it is an encroachment upon the husband's sexual prerogative over his wife, it takes place with his full agreement, and he himself obtains a reciprocal liberty. It appears from Wikar's description that the relationship is formally agreed upon by the two husbands, for he speaks of it as being accompanied by slaughtering and rejoicing, but it is not clear whether we have here anything in the nature of the sore relationship.<sup>1</sup>

In any case it is a good illustration of the freedom of sexual life among the Hottentots. A similar instance is mentioned by Alexander: "If a Hottentot has been out hunting, and on his return finds his place occupied, he sits down at the door of his hut, and the paramour handing him out a bit of tobacco, the injured man contentedly smokes it till the other chooses to retire."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Wikar, op.cit., 103.

2. Alexander, "Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa, I, 196.

The only ground for divorce is ill-treatment, which has to be proved to the satisfaction of the tribal council, in whose hands the decision lies. A wife who deserts her husband is forced to return to him, and similarly a husband who abandons his wife is requested to return to her. Should he refuse or neglect to do so, his property is taken from him and handed over to the wife.<sup>1</sup>

Marriage, in addition to establishing the household with all its accompanying social, economic and legal functions, also creates social observances of a special type with regard to the relations-in-law. A man not only lives, as we have seen, with his parents-in-law for some time after his marriage, during which he has to render them various services. He also has to treat his wife's mother with the greatest deference. They are said to be 'shy', sou, of each other, and the man may never look at her when addressing her. In the presence of his wife's brothers also he has to be restrained: he may not, e.g., be quarrelsome, nor may he beat his children and cause them to cry. To his wife's sisters, however, he behaves, according to Mrs. Hoernle, much as he does to his wife, and even at the present day sexual intercourse with them is common, if they are unmarried or widowed. There used in the past to be a special form of address between all relatives-in-law, the formal "you" being applied to the mother-in-law, to

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1. Kohler, op.cit., 345, 354.

the brothers of a man's wife, and to her father, but this is not found nowadays. A woman again is said to have considered her husband's younger brothers as her husbands, and used in the old days to be inherited by one of them. Even now it is customary that after the death of a man his brother takes the widow into his hut, unless she already has big sons and is sufficiently well to do to manage her household without further assistance.<sup>1</sup>

The survivor of a marriage, whether man or woman, is not permitted to re-marry until at least a full year has elapsed since the death of the other partner. At the new marriage ceremony, whether a widower marries a young woman, a widow a young man, or even a widow a widower, great ritual precautions are necessary, and an elaborate ceremonial is performed. The details of this custom have been carefully recorded by Mrs. Hoernle.<sup>2</sup>

Following upon the regular marriage feast, she says, a special re-marriage feast is held. For this a special animal is killed, if possible a sheep, otherwise a goat. The bride and bridegroom enter the new hut which has been specially built for them, seat themselves on a skin on the floor, and await proceedings. They are now in the peculiar state known to the Hottentots as !nau, during which they

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1. A.W. Hoernle, "The Social Organisation of the Nama Hottentots", 23; Schultze, op.cit., 301 sq.; Kohler, op.cit., 345.
  2. A.W. Hoernle, "Certain Rites of Transition and the Conception of !nau among the Hottentots", Harvard African Studies, 2 (1918), 75-77.

are not only themselves in an extremely precarious condition, but are also a source of danger to all other people who have not undergone the same ceremony. Great harm might easily come to them, so that the people of their clan (sic) see to it that no one dangerous enters the hut; still less would anyone who had not himself undergone the ceremony dare to intrude there.

The special animal which has been slaughtered is brought into the hut and skinned there by the old woman who is attending on the couple. She must herself be an old widow who has been re-married, and must further be no relative of either bride or bridegroom. No portion of the animal must leave the hut. A deep hole is made near the hearth fire, which has also become inau, and into this hole are thrown the contents of the stomach and the small intestines. Any blood that may be spilled during the skinning must also drop into the hole, which is then filled up and must not be interfered with. The skin of the animal is given to the old woman for her own use; no one else would dare to use it. Once skinned, the animal is cut up, and every scrap of it is then cooked, the heart, liver and other internal organs together with the blood in one pot, the flesh in one or more other pots.

While the meat is cooking, the actual ceremony takes place. The old woman takes a knife (formerly a sharp piece of quartz would always have been used), and cuts both husband and wife first

in front, two large gashes in the groin, one on each side, and afterwards behind, two gashes in the sacral region. With a small horn she then cups blood from these cuts, mixes it together, and adds some of the blood of the slaughtered animal. Next she scrapes some dirt from her arm and mixes it with the blood. Finally she rubs the mixture into all the cuts, and bumps the two people together so that their blood mingles. They are then considered duly initiated into the ranks of the twice-wed.

After this ceremony the guests coming in to greet the couple give them beads or bracelets or other similar small gifts. The meat of the animal is now ready, and may be eaten of by anyone who has previously undergone a similar ceremony. Pregnant or menstruating women, however, and their husbands may not come into the hut, otherwise the efficacy of the cutting is lost. If any unqualified person were to eat of the meat he would die.

Until the wounds are healed, the couple remain inau, and may not touch either water or the pots, nor go among the animals. The old woman remains to cook for them outside the hut. When at last the cuts have healed, the man and wife are ceremonially cleansed by the old woman. She smears a mixture of moist cow dung and inaop (red mineral powder mixed with fat) all over their bodies, allows it to dry slightly, and then with the palm of her hand rolls it off in handfuls. A complete change of clothing must

also be made, and the old woman alone is at liberty to use the old sets. Next the couple are re-introduced to the ordinary tasks of daily life. The wife ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> taken to milk a cow, the old woman supporting her arm while she does so. Then a visit is made to the water-hole, where the wife is sprinkled with water and her arms and legs rubbed with mud by the old woman, who also fills her water-pot for her. The wife is also re-introduced to cooking. Some meat is cooked on the fire in the hut, which has not been used for this purpose since the day of the ceremony; the old woman supports the wife's arm while she stirs the contents of the pot, and then helps her to lift the pot from the fire. Then she removes the fire and lights a fresh one. Finally the wife goes to gather wood, again with the assistance of the old woman. From now on she is again free to pursue these normal tasks of her daily life. The husband has to be reintroduced to the cattle kraal as well as to water. The night before this happens, some branches of the tamarisk and acacia trees are soaked in water. This water is taken next morning, and with it he sprinkles the cattle and sheep. After that, he also is free to go about his duties as usual.

This ceremony is a typical example of the many "transition rites" found in Hottentot life, and its details can best be comprehended against the background of the elements common to all these ceremonies.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The description which follows is taken almost verbatim from the analysis given by Mrs. Hoernle in her important paper "The Conception of Inau", pp. 67-69. These transition rites are also referred to, under the name of "andersmachen" (i.e., alteration) by Kolb, op. cit., pp. 55 seqq; and by Wikar, op. cit., 93-94; but their accounts are far less comprehensive.

All periods of crisis in the life of a Hottentot involve his separation from his usual surroundings, his preparation for a new group in society, and, finally, his reception into this group. A person in such a crisis is exposed to danger on every side; he must retire from contact with other people, and take special care of himself. But he is also a danger to other people, and more especially to the animals and other living things on which the community depends for its livelihood. Hence he is secluded, and must abstain scrupulously from his usual tasks.

Such a person is said to be *!nau*. It is essential that he be initiated, as it were, with the least possible delay into that group of his people which already possesses the new characteristic which he has acquired, in order that he may have a normal place in the community once more. Since however a *!nau* person may work untold mischief on anyone dealing with him, who might also become *!nau*, only persons who have passed through all the stresses and strains of human life, and no longer fear anything, are qualified to deal with him. None but very old men, and women past the age of child-bearing, satisfy this condition; they alone can be called upon to restore the *!nau* person to the community. But not any old man or old woman will do; it must be one who has the same characteristic as the *!nau* person. Only a widowed person can safely deal with one *!nau* by the recent loss of husband or wife. Only one who has had a given disease and been cured of it is fit to officiate for a sufferer from that disease, and

preferably someone is selected for this task who, besides the other necessary qualifications, has had an extremely bad attack of the disease - the worse the better.

Seclusion or separation of some kind occurs in all cases, but the method of "initiation" varies according as the crisis is one of two kinds. In childbirth, marriage, puberty or bereavement rites, the new status has simply to be recognised, acknowledged, and the necessary steps taken to protect both the individual and society by receiving the man or woman into the new group to which he or she now belongs. This is done by the preparation of a sacramental meal in which only persons duly qualified are allowed to share. In the other group of crises, a stage preliminary to the sacramental meal is necessary. The *inau* person has first to be identified with the new group by injecting some of the 'essence' of that group into him. This is done by making incisions in some part of his body, the part varying with the crisis, and injecting a concoction of which one part is invariably some of the grease and dirt scraped from the body of the officiating person. This is the practice in re-marriage, in the puberty ceremonies of the boys, in the reception into the rank of the hunters, in the treatment of diseases which are regarded as *inau*, etc.

Now follows a period, more or less prolonged, of complete seclusion. During this time certain other things also become *inau* in relation to the *inau* person. First of all there is the fire in the hut in which he is secluded. This fire must never be



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allowed to go out, nor must the ashes be removed until the day comes for the purification of the hut and the renewal of the fire. During all this time nothing must be cooked at the fire, nor must anyone come near it who might increase the peril in which the Inau person finds himself. Thus pregnant or menstruating women are always excluded. All these precautions seem to show that it is the patient's safety that is bound up with the fire. The Inau fire must be respected, not because other people may suffer from the breach of the regulations, but because the patient will suffer therefrom. Raw meat and cold water, again, are sources of great danger to a Inau person, and must be kept away from him. It does not seem as if the water itself ever becomes Inau, but every Inau person has to be carefully protected from it, and reintroduced to it with much ceremony once the period of seclusion is over. The clothing and utensils of the Inau person also become Inau, but these are a source of danger to others than himself,-- theirs is the peril if they inadvertently make use of these things before he finally discards them and gives them to the person taking care of him.

The period of seclusion is brought to a close by a renunciation of all that represents the old life. The individual, as Mrs. Hoernle expresses it, must be reborn. There is first a special cleansing of the Inau person's body by the individual officiating. Then a totally new set of clothing is put on. The old clothes should be used only by the officiating person or someone else of the same group, though the tendency nowadays is to keep most of them for rough use. At the same time the hut is

thoroughly purified, and what might be called an 'expiatory' meal is eaten. For this meal but one animal is killed, and of it none but the 'nau person and persons who can no longer become : nau may partake. Finally there is the careful re-introduction to all the familiar daily tasks which have so long been laid aside, and so life begins again with all the solidarity of the new group behind its new member.<sup>1</sup>

#### Birth.

The ideas of the Hottentots regarding the causes of conception do not appear to have been investigated. The fact that in cases of premarital pregnancy the lover of the girl is expected to marry her, and in any case has a claim to the child, seems to indicate that physiological paternity is recognised. But there is no direct information that the Hottentots

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1. It will be noticed from this description that the conception of 'nau also applies to the ordinary marriage ceremonies. Unfortunately the data on which Mrs. Hoernle bases her statement have not yet been published. It is possible, however, to find confirmation for it in some of the details recorded by earlier observers, fragmentary although their accounts appear when considered in the light of the analysis given above. Thus Wikar, as we have noted, explicitly mentions the sacramental meal in which only the bride and previously-married women may take part; and indeed in his remarks generally on these 'transition rites' (andersmaken, as he terms them), he emphasises the fact that a meal is held in which only the patient and those who have previously undergone the same rite may participate. The statement by both Graevenbroeck and Kolb that men and women eat apart at the marriage feast perhaps also points in the same direction, although this is by no means certain from their descriptions. Graevenbroeck further mentions the ceremonial cleansing of the young couple, and Kolb's description of the urination may possibly also be interpreted in this light. None of the accounts, however, even hints at any period of seclusion, nor at anything which can be regarded as a reintroduction of the young couple to the normal tasks of daily life.

are acquainted with the connection between sexual intercourse and conception. In their mythology we meet with a few instances in which women have conceived without having connection with a man. Thus it is told that on one occasion, when some young girls had gone out to fetch firewood, one of them took a kind of sweet juicy grass, chewed it and swallowed the juice. As a result she became pregnant, and was delivered of a son, who was Heitsi Eibib, one of the outstanding personalities in Hottentot religion and myth.<sup>1</sup> An instance of this sort, however, owing to its mythological character, can hardly be interpreted as reflecting the normal beliefs of the Hottentots regarding the cause of conception.

On the whole there seems to be a general desire among the people to have children. A barren woman, as we have seen, is looked down upon, and may even have to suffer the mortification of seeing her husband take a concubine. There are also various indications of rites specially designed to secure the birth of children. Graevenbroeck and Kolb, in their descriptions of the marriage ceremony among the Colonial Hottentots, both state that the person officiating publicly expresses the wish that the young couple will have offspring; and similarly the slaughter of female animals only for the Nama marriage feast is interpreted as due to the desire that the

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 69. Another myth of the same kind relates that Heitsi Eibib was borne as a young bull by a cow which became pregnant through eating grass (Hahn, op.cit., 68. The original Nama text is given in Meinhof, Lehrbuch der Nama-Sprache, 177).

marriage may prove fruitful. Wikar, again, mentions that a barren woman will have recourse to a magician who strokes her on the abdomen with pieces of horn and wood, and also smears her there with the contents of his medicine-horn. Moreover an ewe heavy with lamb is slaughtered, and the woman must carry the amnion of this unborn lamb on her back, like a child. Also, according to Schinz, women during confinement must eat only goat's flesh, in order to promote their fertility.<sup>1</sup> As a rule boys are preferred to girls, since they increase the military strength of the tribe and help to defend its herds, as well as to augment them on raiding expeditions.<sup>2</sup> There is no record, however, of any observances or food specially designed to secure the birth of male children, although, as we have seen, the husband of a woman who has only borne daughters may take a concubine.

Women who do not want children achieve their aim mainly by abortion, which is not infrequently practised. The principal abortifacient is the inspissated urine and faeces of the rock rabbit or dassie (Hyrax capensis) gathered from the clefts and crevices it inhabits. A decoction of this, boiled and strained, is taken in large doses, if necessary for several days in succession. A certain thorn bush (Sarcocaulon sp.), pounded whole and boiled, is also used, while still another method is to keep binding the abdomen tightly round with leather straps until delivery is forced on.<sup>3</sup> No reasons are stated for

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1. Wikar, op. cit., 104; Schinz, *Deutsch-Sudwest-Afrika*, 97.  
 2. v. Francois, *Nama und Damara*, 214; Olpp, *Angra Pequena*, 27; Schultze, "*Sudwestafrika*", 206-207.  
 3. Schultze, op. cit., 320; Laidler, "The Magic Medicine of the Hottentots. *S. Afr. J. Sci.*, 25 (1928), 443, 445, 446; Wandres "Ueber das Licht der Naman". 668.

this custom, although presumably it is practised chiefly in case of illegitimate pregnancy. According to Wandres, both the woman and anybody assisting her to procure abortion are, if discovered, brought before the tribal council and punished by thrashing, while at least five sheep or goats are claimed as court fees. The usual number of lashes for such an offence is forty, of which the woman's lover can, if he wishes, take over <sup>1</sup>twenty. The same punishment was given to a pregnant woman if the women massaging her found on her abdomen the striations of an old, secret <sup>2</sup>delivery. Contraceptives are apparently unknown.

The first symptoms of pregnancy, according to Hottentot ideas, are usually not the cessation of menstruation, but the onset of sickness, vomiting, lack of appetite, etc., providing that the woman does not normally suffer from these complaints. From the time that a woman feels herself pregnant, she is carefully massaged on the abdomen two or three times a week, for an hour to an hour and a half at a time, by two of the old women of the camp, who take note of the growth and position of the foetus. According to Schultze they distinguish between the left occipito-anterior and the right occipito-anterior foetal positions, the latter in its most frequent variation. They recognise other positions as abnormal, but make no attempt to correct them, either before or during birth. Schinz, however, affirms that the midwife at birth will press and turn the foetus until it assumes a normal position in the womb. Conception, according to their ideas, takes place in the bladder,

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1. Wandres, loc.cit. cf. Kohler, op.cit. 355.  
2. Schultze, op.cit. 319.

where a second bladder is formed in which the embryo is then enclosed. The uterus is only an appendix to the embryo, and goes to pieces with the outpouring of the after-waters and the blood, to form anew at the next pregnancy. The foetus is not regarded as alive until the seventh month. Gestation is recognised to extend over nine months, and its progress is carefully measured. The calculation starts on the new moon after the manifestation of the first signs, when a cut is made in one of the poles of the hut. Every successive new moon is similarly marked, until the ninth cut has been made, when preparations for the delivery are commenced.<sup>1</sup>

Of the social customs relating to pregnancy, we have little information. According to Vedder, the husband, as soon as the first symptoms of pregnancy become visible, must devote a special attention to his wife, and is obliged especially to appease her wishes for special food, in order not to endanger the new life.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately he does not mention in what this special food consists. Schultze, on the other hand, states that the expectant mother does not have to follow any special diet, only care must be taken that she does not suffer from constipation, as this will make the birth more difficult. A pregnant woman, however, may not be present when an animal is being slaughtered, otherwise her child will be born

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 215-217; *ibid.*, "Sudwestafrika" 206-207; Schinz, op.cit. 97.  
 2. Bedder, "The Nama". 135.

with a slit throat, nor may she reach with upstretched arms to the roof of the hut, lest the child become fatally tied up in the navel cord.<sup>1</sup> It is also believed that if a woman during pregnancy drinks the blood or eats the flesh of the lion or leopard, her child will have the characteristics of these animals - ferocity, swiftness and strength. Hahn records an instance in which a woman whom he reproached for cruelty attributed her temper to the fact that her mother once drank panther (sic) blood, in order to get ferocious children.<sup>2</sup> Pregnant women must also, as we have seen, refrain from entering the hut in which a Inau person is secluded, lest they increase the peril in which the Inau person finds himself. The beating of a pregnant woman, even by her husband, is regarded as brutality, and if abortion follows, the culprit is given fifty lashes.<sup>3</sup> There is no information available as to the time when sexual intercourse ceases between a husband and his pregnant wife, nor is there anything to indicate that the woman interrupts her normal occupations before the day of birth.

Birth-giving among the Naman is, in normal circumstances, a carefully-prepared event.<sup>4</sup> Towards the end of her pregnancy the woman as a rule goes back to the home of her mother, and even where this

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1. Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, 216.
  2. Hahn, *Tsuni Goam*, 85.
  3. Wandres, "Ueber das Recht der Naman", 668.
  4. Schultze, *op.cit.* 217-223; Schinz, *op.cit.*, 97; v. Francois, *op.cit.* 214-215.

is not the case her mother is usually summoned to be present at the birth. The birth itself takes place in the woman's hut, from which, during labour, all men are excluded. An old woman well versed in the art of midwifery is called in to supervise. For her services she receives a fee of two goats, if the child be a boy, and only one, if it is a girl - a notable expression of the superior value attached to boys. The mother of the pregnant woman and a few of her female relatives are present to lend assistance. As soon as the first sharp pains commence, the labouring woman turns on her left side, where she is kept in a half-erect, half-lying position, her shoulders and back supported against the knee of one of the other women, her head bent forward on to the breast and her legs sharply bent. It would mean death to the child if she were to lie on her back or with legs outstretched. Delivery is effected with the aid of the midwife, who manipulates the foetus until it has safely emerged from the womb. The umbilical cord is tied half-way with a thread of sinew or inner bark of the acacia, and cut through above this by the midwife. The part attached to the baby is left until it gradually comes away by itself. No special significance seems to attach to the umbilical cord, nor to the placenta, which, however, is buried in the ground.

The new-born child may not be washed with water. It is cleaned with a dry skin, rubbed all over



with fat, and then laid on the ground, wrapped in another skin. A salve of fat and powder made of burned ostrich eggshell is always kept at hand, and with this the baby is streaked on the forehead, temples and nose. The fontanelles also are thickly smeared with it, to prevent the entry of disease. Among the Hottentots of Little Namaqualand the milk of the mother's breast is not regarded as fit for the child until about the third day after birth. Till then the child is given goat or cow's milk, unless another woman can be found, already weaning her own child, who is able to give it her breast. Failing the latter resource the artificially-fed child, when at last put to its mother's breast, is often already too weak to suck with success. Schultze, who records this custom, offers no explanation for it. It will be remembered that a similar usage was noted among the Kung Bushmen by Seiner, the underlying belief being that if the child were placed too soon at its mother's breast, both would die. Whether this is also the Hottentot belief cannot, of course, be said.

Immediately after the birth the mother is covered as warmly as possible, so that she perspires. Under this cover she must remain for several days, and only the skin on which she is lying is occasionally changed. It is not till the seventh, or even the tenth, day that she is able to resume her normal occupations. During this period of seclusion she must carefully refrain from touching cold water.

Schultze records that on one occasion, when a woman who had just given birth was bleeding profusely and had even fainted several times, a white woman who was present wished to apply to her a cloth soaked in cold water. Thereupon the other Hottentot women immediately left the hut, holding the white woman responsible for the death of the patient, which they expected would inevitably follow as a result of her contact with the water. Hahn mentions also that at a child's birth a fire is made in the hut with a fire-drill. The use of steel, flint or matches for this purpose is not permitted. This fire is to be maintained until the navel of the child has healed, and the umbilical cord has fallen off; and nothing may be cooked or roasted on it. If these points are not strictly observed, the child will die. The end of the seclusion period is marked by a feast, provided by the father.

Of the ceremonies accompanying the end of the seclusion and the resumption of her ordinary tasks by the mother we have only fragmentary details. Both in Walvis Bay and in Fransfontein Mrs. Hoernle was told that babies are taken into the first rain-storm which occurs after they are in a position to be removed from the hut, i.e., after the navel cord has fallen off. In Walvis Bay, among the Topnaars, the baby is taken out and turned over and over in the rain by the mother or the grandmother, so that it will

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1. Hahn, op. cit. 77.

know the rain and not be frightened of it. According to a Dutch informant, the baby is taken out by one of the women who has been present at the birth, and is laid on a piece of skin in the rain. The old woman jumps over the child and back again; then lifts it up, tosses it this way and that in the rain, and says: "I toss you in the rain". This is done "so that the rain will not hurt the baby"; it is the baby's introduction to the source of water. It seems also that the mother is ceremonially reintroduced to water in the same way as in the remarriage ceremony, except that here it is the older women who have looked after her during her confinement who free her from all her restrictions.<sup>1</sup>

Kolb's description of the birth customs among the Colonial Hottentots agrees in the main with that given above for the Naman, but contains a few additional details. When the time for delivery is at hand, the patient is assisted by two or three of her near female relations, as well as by the midwife of the kraal, who is specially summoned. As soon as the latter enters the hut, the husband must leave it, and may not enter again until the birth is over. Should he do so, he becomes "unclean", and must purify himself by slaughtering a sheep for a special cleansing meal in which the other men of the kraal take part.

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1. A.W.Hoernle, "The social value of water among the Naman", 524, 525-526.

If the birth goes easily, all is well. When, however, it is unusually protracted, the women make a decoction of finely-cut tobacco and cow's milk, or, where the latter is not available, sheep's milk; strain it, and allow the milk to cool. It is then handed to the labouring woman to drink. It is believed that this decoction increases the pains and thus leads to a speedy delivery, or else causes strong vomiting which at the same time expels the child. The new-born infant may not be cleaned with water, which they say is unhealthy. Instead it is rubbed all over with moist cow-dung; when this has fallen off, the child is washed in the juice of the Hottentot fig (Mesembryanthemum edule) which will make it nimble and fleet of foot; then smeared all over with freshly-melted sheep fat or butter, and finally powdered all over <sup>with</sup> the buchu.

The after-birth is buried in a hole in the ground, together with the blood which flows from the woman. This is all collected on the skin on which she has lain from the beginning, and on which she must continue to lie as long as the blood flows from her. When the flow ceases, and the woman can or may arise, the skin is wrapped up, together with the blood etc., which is on it, and is buried, so that no sorcerer may get at it and use it to work evil magic. The umbilical cord is bound with a piece of sheep's sinew till it falls off; there is no mention of any special usage connected with it.

Before meeting again after the birth, both husband and wife must rub their bodies down anew with cow-dung, smear themselves with fat, and powder themselves with buchu. When the husband then enters the hut, he must first smoke a pipe of dagga, and not till the effects of this have worn off may he speak to his wife and again sleep in his hut.

Graevenbroeck adds the information that the woman, after the birth, must remain in her hut for at least eight days. When this period of seclusion is over, she is ceremonially washed from tip to toe in warm water, if it is winter, or in cold water, if it is summer. Only then is she allowed to leave the hut. During this washing men may not be present. A feast is then held, in which blood relatives and friends participate.<sup>2</sup>

The birth of the first child, according to Kolb, is celebrated far more lavishly than are subsequent births, especially if it is a boy, when all the inhabitants of the Kraal join in the feast.

The descriptions given above are almost certainly inadequate. But they contain sufficient detail to show that the ritual accompanying birth has at least some of the elements found in the other Hottentot rites de passage. The seclusion of the mother, her avoidance of cold water, and the observances relating to the fire during the period of seclusion,

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 64-66. Cf. P. Germann, "Bilder aus der sexuellen Ethnologie der Hottentotten", *Geschlecht und Gesellschaft*, 12, 324-326.  
2. Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 2.

the fact that her husband becomes unclean if he enters the hut, and finally her ceremonial reintroduction to the use of water, as well as the first introduction of the baby to the source of water - all these, as we have seen, are essential details in all ceremonies associated with the conception of Inau. From Mrs. Hoernle's general analysis of these ceremonies we should expect to find also a sacramental meal in which only the new mother and other women who have borne children take part; but although mention is made of a feast to celebrate the birth, in none of the descriptions available of the birth ceremonies is there any record of this special meal. Wikar, however, specifically mentions it in his general account of the occasions on which women alone may take part in the andersmaken feasts.<sup>1</sup> He gives no description of the birth customs. Mrs. Hoernle's own data on the birth ceremonial have unfortunately not yet been published.

Children born with a caul are credited with prophetic powers.<sup>2</sup> Misshapen or deformed children, however, especially if they were girls, were, according to some writers on the Colonial Hottentots, buried alive in the hole of some animal, or exposed, lest they should bring ill luck on the community; while the death of the mother in childbed usually also meant the burial with her of her living baby, unless some other woman could be found to suckle it.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Wikar, op.cit., 94.  
 2. Schulze, op.cit., 220.  
 3. Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 365; Fritsch, op.cit., 334.

Twin births among the Naman are to-day regarded as unlucky, but the children are not killed, nor are there any special ceremonies connected with them. Often the mother cannot rear them both, but one of the mothers-in-law or a sister helps her.<sup>1</sup> There is evidence enough in the literature relating to the Colonial Hottentots, however, to show the former existence in this division of special usages connected with twins. Graevenbroeck remarks simply that if a woman bears twins, one of them, especially if a girl, is either exposed as a prey to wild animals or on a bush, or even buried alive, the reason given for this custom being the inability of the mother to rear them both. Kolb, however, gives a detailed description of the manner in which twin births were greeted. If the twins are boys, he says, the parents observe an andersmachen or feast by killing two fat oxen for the entertainment of the whole kraal, who all rejoice at the birth as a great blessing. But if the twins are girls there is little or no rejoicing, and only a couple of sheep at the most are slaughtered. Often enough, in such a case, the parents will refuse to rear both children, and pleading either poverty or the scarcity of the mother's milk will do away with the worse-featured of the two by burying her alive or exposing her on the bough of a tree or among the bushes. Similarly, if the twins are of opposite sexes the girls will be exposed or buried alive, while great rejoicings are made for the boy.<sup>2</sup> In this connection it may be noted that the motive assigned

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 223, private information from Mrs. Hoernle.  
 2. Kolb, op.cit., 66-68; Graevenbroeck, op.cit.; cf. Fritsch, loc.cit; Ten Rhyne "Account of Cape of Good Hope". 842.

by Kolb to the custom of excising one testicle is the fear of the women that if they were to have intercourse with a man who had not had this operation performed upon him they would bear twins. There is nothing in Kolb's account, however, to show that the father of twins has to undergo any special treatment at the birth, as one might expect if his explanation of the excision custom were correct. Most other writers state that the operation was performed in order to increase the swiftness of the man in running.<sup>1</sup>

A child is often suckled by its mother till three or four years old. When going about her daily occupations she carries it with her on her back, aba's it, in a lambskin passed through her arms and knotted over the breast. Kolb and Hahn even state that, when the baby is hungry, its mother will not trouble to take it down, but simply pushes up her breast over her shoulder so that the baby can suckle while still on her back. To wean the baby the mother rubs her nipples with the bitter juice of the aloe. If the flow of milk does not cease, she is milked several times directly into the hot ashes of the hearth fire; and as the milk evaporates there, so also will it dry up on her. Should another child be born before the first is weaned, the latter is handed over to another woman, generally a near relative of the mother's. The custom of infanticide practised among the North-western Bushmen under similar circumstances is not found among the Hottentots.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Kolb, op.cit.58; cf. Ten Rhyne, loc.cit., Wikar, 98-99.  
 2. Kolb, op.cit., 76; Schniz, op.cit., 97-98; Schultze, op.cit., 222, 299; Hahn "Die Nama Hottentotten", 332.



There is no record of any special naming ceremony among the Hottentots, apart from Graevenbroeck's statement that at the feast which marks the end of the mother's seclusion period her husband publicly asks her what name she has conferred upon the child. In general he agrees with her, while all the other people present, as Graevenbroeck naively puts it, praise her ingenuity, greet the child by its name, and then, after wishing both it and the parents good luck, celebrate the feast. Kolb says that the child's name is decided by the mother immediately after the birth, unless she is too weak to do so, when the child is named by its father. The names chosen, he adds, are those of cattle, sheep and goats.<sup>1</sup>

We have already noted, however, that among the Naman, and probably this applies to all the other Hottentots as well, all sons take the name of their mother, and all daughters the name of their father, as their chief or 'great' name, gei khoi /ons. If the father's name, e.g. is gomarib, and that of the mother //khunibes (-b and -s are the masc. and fem. sex-endings respectively), a son will be called //khunibeb and a daughter gomaris. To this name the son, when he is grown, adds another: the great name of his father, modified by the infixing of the syllable ma before the final gender suffix. His name now will be, in the example given, //khunibeb-gomarimab. The use of this additional name is less customary with women, but, if found, follows the same principle; hence, gomaris-  
//khunibemas.

As a result of this system of naming, all own

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1. Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 2; Kolb, 68-69.

brothers will have the same name, and all own sisters will have the same name. The difficulty this involves is evaded, as we have seen, by the use of special adjectives indicating the relative order of birth. The eldest son, e.g. will be called //khunibeb geib, the second son //khunibeb inagamab, the youngest //khunibeb /karib, and so on, and similarly in the case of the daughters. Additional distinctions are made by means of nicknames, of which there is a great variety. Some refer to physical characteristics, others reflect some historical circumstances connected with the person, others again, are purely derisive. In any case, however, the confusion is great, as all the brothers' daughters will have the same great name, and so too will all the sisters' sons; while later generations will carry the name even further.

In addition to this great name derived from that of its father or of its mother, as the case may be, each child has also a baby name or pet name given it by its mother according to fancy. This name, however, may be used by none but the parents, and by them only until the child comes of age. Even a husband may not use his wife's baby name, but must call her by the baby name of their eldest son, and similarly a woman calls her husband by the eldest daughter's baby name.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 19-20; Schultze, op.cit. 303-308; A.W. Hoernle, Richterveld, 14-15.

Childhood and Family Life.

From the moment when it can stand on its feet the child, although still dependent on its mother, gradually learns to fend for itself in its environment. Hottentot children grow rather slowly, probably, says Schultze, because of the scanty nourishment. In poorer families they are shown by the mother how to dig out roots and bulbs for themselves; they learn to catch mice, lizards and similar small animals, which they roast on the fire; seek out wild honey, and so on. In the more wealthy families each child is allotted a special cow for his own use, which he may milk for himself in the morning and evening; and during the day, when the cattle are at pasture, he is fed upon this milk. The little boys early begin to herd the goats, every boy being specially entrusted with a number, whose milk he may use. It is not long before he is able to catch a beast with great dexterity out of the running herd, sit behind or under it, and milk it into his mouth. The little girls remain always with their mother, and gradually learn to assist her in the household tasks; to see that a standing supply of firewood is maintained, to prepare the food and the ointments for the body, to make the reed mats and keep the hut in repair, and so on.

Among themselves the children play games of various kinds. In some they imitate the doings of their elders, catch mice, for example, and put them into a small kraal, then castrate all the males with the exception of one, which is kept as the ram of the

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 300; Ibid., "Sudwestafrika", 207; Schinz, op. cit., 98.

herd. They prepare small bows and arrows for themselves, with which they hunt small animals such as lizards, mice and birds; make clay figures of human beings, cattle and other animals which they burn in the fire; and compete with each other in throwing sticks to a distance, concealing stones in their hands, and so on.

Children of about the same age, both boys and girls, who grow up together in the same place, regard one another as "mates" (/gui //han) for the rest of their lives. Often enough they do not address each other by name, but use the intimate terms aotse (voc. of aob, man or husband) and axaise (voc. of xais, woman or wife). As children they play together in bands, usually closely organised for a year or more. They elect for themselves a "captain", who chooses his "lieutenant"; both have younger boys as their personal servants. They direct all the games and other activities, and even settle the love disputes of the others. Disobedience of their orders or such misbehaviour as sexual intercourse is punished with a fine of tobacco or food, often enough a fairly severe penalty when food is none too plentiful. The adults are content to leave in their hands the regulation of their coevals, and thereby strengthen this system of self-government of the young. In later life the close bond between age-mates remains unbroken, and indeed the whole spirit of their relations is one of deep friendship and mutual obligation throughout life.

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 308-315; cf. A.W. Hoernle, "The Social Value of Water among the Naman", 522-523.

In social life generally age carries prestige, and differences in status are often marked to some extent by relative age. Every junior is expected to be of service to his elders. In company, according to Olpp, only coevals may sit and discuss together; and when once a person has taken up the word, he may not be interrupted before he has had his say.<sup>1</sup>

In family life also respect for age is inculcated in every way. The children, as we have seen, remain in the same hut as their parents till marriage, and are thus directly dependent upon them both morally and for the means of subsistence. The authority of the parents makes itself felt at all stages of life, and they must be treated with affection and regard. This is seen especially in old age. Although, as we shall subsequently notice, old people might under special circumstances, be abandoned to their fate, as is also the case among the Bushmen, yet normally the grandparents are regarded with deference; they are spared all possible work, and everyone in the family has the duty of being helpful to them. The terms ti //naob, "my grandfather" or ti //naosa, "my grandmother", are used as expressions of extreme respect, not only to one's own grandparents, but also to old people who are in no way related to the family.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Olpp, Angra Pequena, 23.  
 2. Schultze, op.cit., 300.

Among brothers and sisters the same regard is noticed for relative age. We have already seen how in the kraal their huts are ranged in definite order of seniority, and the mere fact that there is this tendency for brothers to live together is an indication of the strength of family feeling. Of a number of brothers the eldest always has the honoured place and the first voice in any debate; in family affairs his opinion carries authority. Only elders may address their juniors directly by name. They themselves must be spoken to by special terms: ousis in the case of the eldest sister, siros or sisiros in the case of all others older than the speaker; abudib for the eldest brother, and budirob for the others.

Between brothers and sisters, however, there is a strong taboo in later life, although as children they may run about together. A sister is a táras, i.e., a person to be respected, not to be spoken to or of lightly; and her brother is said to be shy, sou, in her presence. He must never speak to her directly; if he wishes to communicate with her, he must ask another person to address her in his name, or in the absence of anybody he says aloud, so that she can hear, "I wish that somebody will tell my sister that I wish to have a drink of milk", or whatever it is he wishes to communicate to her. He must never be alone with her in the

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1.A.W.Hoernle, "The Social Organisation of the Nama Hottentots", 21; Schultze, op.cit., 301. The term ousis is derived from the Dutch ou, old, and sussie, sister; the form siros or sisiros is formed with the Nama diminutive particle ro. Abudib and budirob are similarly derived from the Dutch broetie, brother.

hut, and he must never speak about her except in the most respectful terms. The eldest sister, especially, is his gei táras his great respected one. The highest oath a man can take is to swear by her; ti gas ao nu, as true as my sister is alive. If he should abuse this oath, she can walk into his flock and take his finest cows and sheep. A sister can also generally be relied upon to stop any fight in which her brother is taking part. Even at the present time a man will not sleep in his sister's hut when he visits her as a married woman. One of the most offensive curses in Hottentot life, which will cause even the quietest man to fly into a passion, is sa igasa xae, commit incest with your sister.

This attitude towards the sister is also obligatory on all the men to whom she applies the relationship term igab, brother, even if they are not her own brothers. Should one of these men use bad language in her presence, she can demand a sheep from him with which to purify herself of the pollution. Similarly a man must treat with respect all the women whom he calls "sister". It would in the old days have been a most heinous offence for a man to have married a woman who stood in this relationship to him. "It is an indication", says Mrs. Hoernle, "of the complete transformation of the organisation of the people that has taken place owing to Christianisation and European influence, that the marriage of direct cousins<sup>1</sup> is now relatively frequent."

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1. A. W. Hoernle, *op. cit.*, 22; Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 20-21; v. Francois, *op. cit.*, 212; Schultze, *op. cit.*, 320.

Quite different is the behaviour of a man to those women of his own generation whom he calls //nuris. They are his companions, his playmates; and all is possible with them, free speech and horse play. Even sexual intercourse would not have been considered wrong. It was frequently one of these women that a man married in the old days.

The relationship between brother and sister also affects the relations of children with their father's sister and mother's brother respectively. The relation of a woman to her brother's children is one of great restraint; and, just as the father himself has to behave with much circumspection towards her, so his children have to treat her with the greatest deference and respect. To them also she is taras or gei taras. On the other hand the relation of a man to his sister's children is one of the greatest indulgence and good will. A boy can do almost anything at his maternal uncle's home without being blamed for it. He can take, without asking, any of the specially fine animals among his uncle's herds, and the uncle has no redress but to take ugly misformed animals from his nephew's herds. This exchange, //nuri //gab, is still practised by the Naman to-day. It extends over all aspects of portable property - karosses, utensils, implements and so on, as well as live stock - and always the nephew has the privilege of

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l.A.W.Hoernle, loc. cit.



helping himself to some fine specimen of any object in his uncle's possession, while the latter may only lay hands on poor specimens, such as broken pots, tattered karosses, and other damaged objects. In no case is the exercise of this mutual exploitation regarded as abuse, however far it is carried by one party or the other.<sup>1</sup>

### Girls' Puberty Ceremonies

The attainment of puberty in the case of both boys and girls was marked among the Hottentots by the performance of special rites. The boys' puberty ceremonies seem now to have completely lapsed; those of the girls, on the other hand, are even to-day carefully observed among the Naman. They were noted as far back as 1778 by Wikar,<sup>2</sup> and are mentioned by a number of subsequent writers,<sup>3</sup> but the first comprehensive account of them is contained in the recent descriptions given by Mrs. Hoernle.<sup>4</sup> Her observations

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1. A.W. Hoernle, op.cit., 22-23; Olpp, Angra Pequena, 25; Wandres, "Die Khoi-Khoi", 315-6; Schultze, op.cit., 303.
  2. Wikar, op.cit. 99-100.
  3. Alexander, Expedition..into the Interior of Africa, I, 169; Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 307; Schinz, Deutsch-Sudwest-Afrika, 97; v. Francois, Nama und Damara, 213; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 295-297; Vedder, "The Nama", 136.
  4. A.W. Hoernle, "The Conception of Inau, etc." 70-74; Ibid., "Social Value of Water among the Naman", 523-524.

in most cases corroborate the more or less isolated details previously published, and show that in their main outline at least these rites have undergone hardly any significant change in the course of the last century and a half.

As soon as a girl has her first period, when she is said to kharu, which generally happens between the ages of thirteen and fifteen, she at once tells either her girl friends or some older female relation. Through this intermediary her mother is informed. The latter then gets her married sisters and her brothers' wives to make a little mat enclosure, kharu oms, inside at the back of the family hut, on the left hand side. This enclosure is a screened-off segment, measuring part of the hut; and it always has its own little opening leading out behind the hut. While it is being got ready, the mother goes to fetch a woman who, though now past child-bearing, has been renowned for her former fertility. This woman takes the girl on her back (whence she is known by the name of aba taras), carries her into the kharu oms, and cares for her while she is there. Should the period come on in the veld far from home, the girl's companions will on no account let her walk, lest all the roots and berries in her path scorch up, but will do their best to carry her home on their backs, taking turn and turn about.

Once in the kharu oms, the girl must lie quite still, wrapped closely in her sheepskin kaross. The wind must on no account blow on her, nor must she be exposed to the sun. She may not leave her little hut except at night, and then it must be by the back

opening, with one woman behind her and one in front to screen her from view. All the time she is thus secluded she must be careful not to touch cold water on any pretence whatever, nor may she speak above a whisper. It is said that if she talks aloud she will be a chatterbox and muddle in all sorts of affairs later, and will get a bad name among the people. The hearth fire in the outer hut has now also become inau, and nothing at all may be cooked at it, nor may any pregnant or menstruating or sterile woman come and sit by it, lest dire misfortune befall the girl.

No man or boy, again, will come near her, for fear of dread consequences to himself. It is believed that should anyone infringe these or any of the other inau injunctions during this time, some sort of sexual disease would beset him; and this could only be prevented from proving fatal if he were able to persuade the aba taras (the old woman officiating) to inoculate him with her 'essence' and so free him.

The girl, however, is visited by her older girl friends, who grind sweet-smelling leaves and bark into powder for her, and with this powder, or buchu, she is copiously covered. The time of her seclusion is variously reported as from two or three days to a month. Some girls who had recently passed through the rites said that they had been secluded for a fortnight; and Mrs. Hoernle is inclined to think that most probably the time was longer in days gone by, for one of the chief things required of the girl while she is in her little hut is that she should get fat, with a smoothly shining skin.

Immediately she is in the hut, her relations

commence slaughtering animals to provide in her honour the feast known as kharu /ap, "menstruation killing". All her nearer relatives contribute to this killing, even her older married brothers, if she has any. Everything slaughtered must be female, and above all a heifer must be provided. The entrails, pluck, etc., of these animals must on no account be eaten by any relative, either maternal or paternal, of the girl. The visiting friends enjoy them. This kharu /ap is the great feast for the women, all who have already passed through the puberty rites being able to take part in it. The only exceptions to this rule are that no menstruating woman may eat of the meat, "lest the girl's period never stop", and no pregnant woman "lest the girl's period stop never to return". No man or boy either was formerly supposed to take any part at all in this feast, but nowadays, owing to the extreme poverty of the people, males are allowed to share the meat of all but one of the first animals killed. The women cook and eat the meat outside the hut, while the aba taras takes her share, which must always be part of the outer flesh, inside. The girl and her friends remain in the kharu oms, drinking plenty of milk and eating all the meat they can. As the time of her seclusion draws to a close, the feasting takes on bigger proportions, regulated always of course by the relatives. The young people of the kraal begin practising the reed dance, and the girl's friends, both male and female,

play and dance round the hut in which she is confined. Then, at last, the day before she is to come out, a long series of purification rites takes place.

First, during the day, the aba taras enters the girl's enclosure, and cleanses her of all her axa /uip, child dirt. This is very thoroughly done with melted butter and wet cow-dung, every inch of the girl's body being well scoured. The aba taras smears the salve all over the body of the girl, and after allowing it to dry slightly rolls it off again with the palm of her hand. She then collects it carefully, and hides it in an ant heap or animal's hole when no one is looking. The girl is now given a complete set of new clothing, the old woman carrying off the discarded one. In former days it was at this time that the girl changed her maiden's apron for the full woman's dress; and hence these puberty rites are sometimes referred to as the broekkaross-slagt, from the Dutch term broekkaross (lit., breeches-kaross) applied to the woman's rear apron. Next the girl is led into the outer hut by the aba taras, with whom she prepares tea or coffee, but formerly an ewe was specially slaughtered for the occasion. This cooking is the first done on the fire since the girl entered the kharu oms. The aba taras must hold her hand as she takes the pot, and aid her with everything she does. Soot from the pot is put on her forehead, and together the old woman and she eat a piece of meat prepared apart from the rest. So she is made free to cook and prepare a

meal once more.<sup>1</sup> Then the aba taras takes the fire, ashes and all, and dumps it far from the house. She next sprinkles fresh sand on the hearth, and lays a new fire, which must not be lit from another, as is usually done when a fire goes out, but with flint or matches; originally no doubt the firesticks would have been used. The fire thus lit is no longer !nau.

The girl is now ready to receive visitors as an oaxais, a young marriageable woman. All her relatives and friends pour in, each with some present of beads, or earrings, or other finery. A great deal of this is lent only, and is returned later. The girl shines with clean, well-greased skin, she is scented all over with the buchu, she and her friends have ground, her face is painted in various curious patterns with red and white mineral powder mixed with fat, and her body is loaded with presents. Then the young boys, even up to sixteen years of age and more, come into the hut from which they have hitherto been excluded, and go up to the newly-made oaxais. She takes her "powder puff" full of buchu, and with it rubs each of them on his scrotum. This ensures fertility and is a protection against sexual diseases. This rite seems to be dying out, and nowadays is accounted for by the saying that until the boys have been rubbed in this way it is too dangerous for them to eat any of the meat prepared for the girl. The younger boys

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1. The description of this part of the ceremony is based upon the version given by Mrs. Hoernle in her more recent account ("Social Value of Water" p.524). In the earlier version ("Conception of !nau", p.72) she states that the fleansing of the girl and the change of clothing is made in front of the !nau fire, i.e., in the outer hut, and goes on to say: "Meanwhile a ewe has been slaughtered, and one of the hind legs is given to the aba taras. This she must now cook on the fire in the house. When the meat is cooked,"

especially go in eagerly, so that they may join in the feast.

The feasting reaches its climax this day. Female animals, both ewes and heifers, are killed, cooked and eaten, and everybody, men and women, boys and girls alike, joins in this "feast of rejoicing". Hahn states that when the relatives appear for this final feast, the girl's nearest male relative (usually the eldest unmarried cousin) takes the fat of one of the heifers, hangs it over her head, and wishes that she may be as fruitful as a young cow and have many children. The other friends repeat the wish.<sup>1</sup>

Towards evening the girl's friends enter the hut to fetch her out, and for the last time she must leave it by the special door which has been made for her at the back. Her friends surround her, and for a time try to keep her from the view of the youths, for she is very shy. The youths now start the reed dance, forming the inner ring, while the girls, with the oaxais in their midst, dance round them in an outer ring. Every now and then there is a change of partners, and gradually the youths get to the side of the girl and choose her as a partner, till in the end her shyness has all gone. During the dancing she throws buchu over the men and boys as she sees them; this is supposed to bring good luck. The dancing often

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(Contd.) it is eaten by the aba taras and other women who, like her, are past child-bearing. No one else touches it."

1. Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 307, quoted by Mrs. Hoernle. Cf. Wikar, op.cit., 100.

lasts through the night, and when it is over the final round of rites begins, reintroducing the girl to her daily tasks, "freeing her, as it were", says Mrs. Hoernle, "from the spell under which she has hung".

Early on the following morning she is led out of her hut by the aba taras, accompanied by her boy and girl friends. She is conducted round the kraal, and as she goes along picks up earth from the cattle folds and strews it about, plucks twigs and blossoms from the various trees and bushes she passes by and also scatters buchu as she goes. Every male thing too she touches, be it ram, calf or man, as well as the milking vessels in the huts. The explanation given for this was that such a young girl brings fertility to all she touches, and that the day after she had come out of her hut it was sure to rain and there would be plenty in the land.<sup>1</sup> Next she milks a cow, if possible a young cow calving for the first time, the aba taras supporting her arm while she does so. This milk is inau to be drunk only by the old woman herself or others of her age. Once this milking has taken place, the girl can resume her milking duties with impunity.

Similarly she is reintroduced to all her other daily tasks by the aba taras. They gather wood together, collect roots and berries together in the veld, and so on. Finally, towards evening, when the usual

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1. Cf. also Alexander, loc. cit.; A.W. Hoernle, Richter-veld, 17.



time comes for getting the household supply of water, they go together, accompanied by all the old women of the kraal, to the waterhole. Here the aba taras takes wet mud from the water and rubs it on the girl's legs, then with a branch in her hand splashes water over the girl. Finally both of them take hold of the branch and strike the water. The aba taras then fills the girl's water pot and her own, puts the former on the girl's head, and the procession returns home. The girl is now free to use water whenever she likes, except when she has her period. In addition to this rite of reintroduction to water there is, according to Hahn, another rite to be performed before the girl is finally free from the restrictions imposed upon her. She must run about quite naked in the first thunderstorm that comes on after her festival, so that the rain pours down and washes her whole body. The belief is that this causes her to be fruitful and have many children. He states that he has on three occasions witnessed this running in the rain, when the roaring of the thunder was deafening and the whole sky appeared to be one continual flash of lightning.<sup>1</sup>

With these final rites of reintegration the ceremony is at an end. The girl is able once more to take part in the life of the community, only now she is regarded as ready for marriage. During her subsequent periods, however, she is again !nau, and

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 87 (also quoted by Mrs. Hoernle); cf. Schinz, loc. cit.

although there is apparently no feasting or special seclusion, she must observe the same injunctions as when she first menstruates. Thus she may not enter the cattle fold, let alone milk; it is believed that if she does milk a cow, its milk will turn to blood. Similarly if she cooks a meal those who eat it, especially men, will be very ill. Above all she must avoid cold water, for, as Mrs. Hoernle points out, there is this great difference between most things a menstruating woman is forbidden to do, and the touching of cold water: cold water she can never harm, it will always harm her, if she uses it when she should not, whereas it is she who pollutes other things that she touches and makes them !nau. Mrs. Hoernle records an instance of a woman dying suddenly, whose death was unhesitatingly attributed to the fact that she had her period, yet started to do her mistress's washing in cold water. Other women again, who had been working for white people, said that they were now sickly and never bore any children, because they had been made to work with cold water when they should not have done so.<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays the Naman find it very inconvenient to have their women incapacitated so often and unable to attend to their daily tasks, and, Mrs. Hoernle goes on to say, they have discovered that for most women it is quite safe to do these tasks, except that they must not touch cold water. It is only certain women who are said to be !khai !na, forbidden or dangerous,

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1. A. W. Hoernle, "Social Value of Water", 524-525.

who cannot do these things; and a sure way of finding out is to take a woman along the seashore when first she menstruates. The sea, as the greatest accumulation of cold water, is very dangerous for people in an unstable condition. If the woman is lkhai ina, it will rush in towards her, and she will have to take great care not to be drawn in. The woman to whom this happens must not dare to do anything during her period, for she would be a danger to all who touched her food, or the milk she had milked.<sup>1</sup>

A similar discrimination is implied in Vedder's account of the girls' puberty rites among the inland Naman. During her seclusion, he says, the girl is given fresh cow's milk to drink. This milk must come from a cow that has its first calf. If the cow does not die during the days of the menstruation, or if it does not get ill, the girl is harmless. But if it should die this is proof that the girl possesses special powers, and she dare not drink milk again from the herd during her period, lest she imperil the animals. The menstrual blood of such a girl, he adds, is looked upon as an effective poison, which, when dry, is rubbed from her clothes and mixed with hated peoples' food in order to kill them. The blood of a harmless girl, on the other hand, is used as<sup>2</sup> medicine for sexual diseases amongst men.

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1. A. W. Hoernle "Social Value of Water", 524-525.  
2. Vedder, "The Nama", 136.

Of the puberty rites for girls among the other Hottentot peoples we have no adequate description. Barrow states, however, that although by his time many of the ancient usages of the Colonial and Eastern Hottentots had ceased to exist, "one custom still remained, which seemed to be pretty generally observed; this was that of shaving the heads of young girls as soon as the first symptoms of maturity began to appear; at the same time all the ornaments worn on the neck, legs and arms are removed, and the body for once in their life clean washed and scoured; and, during the continuance of the periodical symptoms, they are restricted to a milk diet, and not suffered to mix in the company of men".<sup>1</sup> Kolb, writing nearly a century earlier of the Colonial Hottentots, makes no mention at all of any special usages connected with a girl's first period, but refers several times to the fact that menstruating women were to avoid the company of men. A husband, for example, might not have sexual intercourse with his wife during her periods, or even eat with her, otherwise he would become unclean and have to purify himself by slaughtering an ox for a sacramental meal in which he took part with the other men of the kraal. Indeed any man who touched a menstruating woman or anything belonging to her, or ate together with her or even came near her, was regarded as "extremely defiled", and obliged

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1. Barrow, Travels in S. Africa, 2nd. ed., I, 114.

to purify himself before he could again mix freely with other men. It is to fear of such contamination, as we have seen, that Kolb ascribes the habitual separation of men and women at meals.<sup>1</sup> Le Vaillant, again, states that among the Gonaqua a menstruating woman would ~~be~~ isolate herself at some distance from the rest of the community until her period was over, when, purified by bathing, she could again mix with the people.<sup>2</sup> These descriptions are obviously incomplete, but they serve to show that the conception of inau or taboo attaching to a menstruating woman among the Naman existed also, to some degree at least, among the other Hottentot peoples.

#### Boys' Puberty Ceremonies.

Although the Hottentots no longer observe any special rites connected with the attainment of maturity by boys, there is evidence enough in the literature that such rites existed in the past. Like the other Hottentot transition rites, they involved, among the Naman at least, a period of seclusion, with all its accompanying ceremonial restrictions and final reintroduction to the incidents of ordinary life. But they also embodied a definite course of instruction, in which certain customary usages and laws peculiarly applicable to men were impressed upon the initiates. These rites seem to have been essentially of an individual character, in that as a rule only one boy at a time was subjected

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1. Kolb, 102-103 et passim; cf. (English translation), The Present State of the Cape of Good Hope, I, 147, 206-207.

2. Le Vallant, Voyage dans...l'Afrique, II, 41.

to them. On occasion perhaps three or four boys might be found undergoing them simultaneously, but this was by no means regular or necessary. In this respect among others, therefore, the Hottentot puberty rites for boys differed fundamentally from those of the North-Western Bushmen, where, as we have seen, there must always be a group of boys being initiated together.

No man was allowed to marry until he had passed through these rites. They served directly to initiate him into the ranks of mature men, and above all conferred on him the privilege of habitually associating, eating and smoking with these men. Boys who had not undergone the rites ate only with the women, and were looked down upon as milksops. It is upon this aspect of the rites that Kolb lays emphasis in his description of them as they existed among the Colonial Hottentots. Until, he says, the boy is initiated, which is generally about his eighteenth year, he must remain under the direct control of his mother and associate with the women at meals; he may not even eat with his father, let alone set himself up as a man. When at last his father, or the men as a whole, resolve to admit him into their company, all the inhabitants of the kraal assemble in the open space in the middle, where the men sit down in a circle. The novice, smeared all over with fat and soot, squats down beyond them. The oldest man present then asks the other men if they are willing to admit the boy to their ranks; on receiving their acquiescence, he steps up to the boy and informs

him that henceforth he is freed from submission to his mother and that he must no longer associate with the women. Then the old man urinates freely over the boy, at the same time wishing him good fortune, fertility, a ripe old age, and similar blessings. This done the men all feast on a sheep provided by the friends of the boy, and the latter now joins them. He is thus confirmed in the privilege of associating, eating and drinking with the men, and leaves behind him the reproach of being a milksop. The word kutsire, by which uninitiated boys are derided as being attached to women's company, is equally offensive when hurled at a mature man. He may not rest under it, but his case is examined by the men, and if the accusation is upheld, he is excluded from their company until he has purified himself by slaughtering a sheep. This the men eat, while he himself receives only the fat and the entrails, which he must cook with the animal's blood and consume.<sup>1</sup>

The urination which figures so conspicuously in Kolb's description of this and other ceremonies has been seized upon by many later writers as an instance of romantic falsification. But although there is much in his description of the Colonial Hottentots which is not altogether above suspicion, he is confirmed on this particular point by other reliable authorities. Wikar, for instance, in describing the boys' puberty ceremonies among the Little Namaqua, says that when a young Hottentot is "made a man", he is first cleansed with water to do away with his

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 59-60.

"child" or "goatherd dirt", next rubbed all over with fat, then urinated upon by the old men for three days in succession, after which he is cleansed with the blood of an animal specially killed for the purpose, and finally is again smeared with fat, while at the same time all his cattle are sprinkled with liquid fat.<sup>1</sup> In another context Wikar states that the boy also has to provide a special meal in which only he and previously initiated men may take part.<sup>2</sup> This is the sacramental meal which accompanies all these transition rites. Hahn also testifies emphatically from his own observations among the Naman that a youth on being initiated is sprinkled with urine by the magician (zauberdoctor); but unfortunately he gives no further details at all about the ceremony.<sup>3</sup>

The fullest account we have of the puberty rites for boys among the Naman is given by Olpp.<sup>4</sup> He states that there is no special time at which the rites have to be performed. An adolescent youth of any age can be subjected to them, the occasion apparently being determined primarily by his father and by the latter's ability to provide the necessary cattle for slaughter and milking. The boy is then placed under the care of an old man specially selected for this purpose, who has naturally himself

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1. Wikar, op.cit., 103-104.  
 2. Wikar, op.cit. 94.  
 3. Hahn, "Beitrage zur Kunde der Hottentotten", 9.  
 4. Olpp, "Aus dem Sagenschatz der Nama-Khoi-Khoi", 44-47.



long previously undergone the rites. The latter at once proceeds to erect a small mat enclosure inside a bigger hut. In this he stays together with the boy as long as the period of seclusion lasts. The first act on the part of the boy is to clean himself by washing off all the ochre with which he has previously been smeared. Then one of the animals provided for slaughter is killed by the old man, cooked, and the meat shared between him and the boy. Campbell states that the fat of this animal is tied on the head and round the neck of the boy, where it must be worn until it rots and falls away.<sup>1</sup> This however is not mentioned by Olpp. The meal over, the old man blows (blast) on the upper part of the boy's body, and then immediately commences to instruct him in the rules of behaviour proper to a mature man.

These rules Olpp renders in the form of the following precepts: "You may not light and smoke your pipe at the camp of strangers or with people whom you do not really know. You may not sit together at a fire and smoke with people, if you know that they have stolen cattle and cooked the meat on that fire. You may not eat the meat of hare or jackal, or light your pipe at a fire on which jackal meat has been cooked. Only in case of utmost necessity may you eat zebra or dassie meat. You may also not eat the meat of those animals which do not chew the cud and have not

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1. Campbell, Travels in S. Africa, 430.

cloven hooves. You must not catch a goat by the leg and steal its milk. You may not touch a carcass. You must not murder, steal or lie, fornicate or commit adultery. You must respect age. Otherwise you will become ill". It is possible that in recording these rules of observance Olpp was to some extent influenced by Old Testament ideas, as in the reference to animals which do not chew the cud and whose hooves are not cloven. There is no other mention of such a food taboo among the Hottentots. At the same time there is no doubt that the instruction of the initiate included moral rules of this nature, and Hahn corroborates at least some of those mentioned by Olpp by his statement that boys when they become of age are told not to lie or steal, and not to ill-treat the other sex or commit rape.<sup>1</sup>

These precepts are impressed upon the boy every day over a period of one or two months. During the whole of this time the boy is allowed to drink only cow's milk, of which he must consume great quantities daily; should he taste any other food, all that is past of the ceremony must be repeated. At the end of this seclusion, another animal is slaughtered and its meat eaten by the boy and his teacher. All the meat left over from this meal must be burned, together with the bones, horns and claws.

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 18.

Then the old man makes horizontal several cuts, 4-6 cm. long, on the breast of the boy, and rubs ashes into the wounds, so that a permanent blue scar is produced.<sup>1</sup> This operation over, the boy is taken by his teacher, accompanied by another of the old men as witness, to the river or water-hole. Here the boy kneels down and touches the water with his mouth, and then the old man hits the water with a stick, so that it splashes up in the face of the boy. The object of this rite, according to Olpp, is to frighten and splash away the evil heart of the boy ; but there seems little doubt that it merely represents the ceremonial reintroduction of the boy to water, just as in all the other rites of this nature the person who is undergoing the rite must be reintroduced to water. Campbell's version of the rite is that the entrails of the animal which has been killed at the beginning of the ceremony are dried and pounded to powder, which is mixed with water and then rubbed all over the boy. The latter is then in the presence of the whole kraal declared to be a man.

With this rite the initiation is brought to an end. The boy is now a doro-aob, a man allowed to sit at the fire and eat in the company of the other men of the camp. As such he is bound to observe

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<sup>1</sup> Campbell (loc.cit.) states however that this scarification is made at the beginning of the seclusion, which lasts for eight days. From Mrs. Hoernle's general analysis of the Hottentot transition rites (cf. p.305), it would seem that this is the more correct view, and that the period of seclusion actually lasts only until the wound have healed. In all probability Olpp has confused the order of the rites.

various usages with regard to eating. Some of these have already been noted in Olpp's list of precepts, but he adds a few others. If it happens, for example, that while the meat for the "doro" men is on the fire, a dog unexpectedly snatches a piece from it, then all the meat becomes impure, and another animal must be slaughtered. Again, a pot in which hare's flesh has previously been cooked must first be cleaned out with fire before it can be used by the men, and in any case it must not be used if an entirely new pot can be obtained. Any man who violates these prohibitions, and, for example, eats hare's flesh, whether because of necessity and excessive hunger or simply without noticing, may not again eat with the other "doro" men until he has been purified. He may not even light his pipe at a fire at which "doro" meat is being cooked, but is forced to fetch a light from another place, if he has no matches. For this rite of purification a friend must give him a young lamb, which he slaughters himself. The blood of this lamb is then boiled and handed to him by his friend; if he cannot drink it all, the remainder must be buried in the ground. Next he washes himself with the contents of the stomach, and then he and his friend consume the flesh of the lamb. After this meal he may once more eat together with the men. Anybody who sins for the third time in breaking these taboos, states Olpp, is cast altogether out of the company of the "doro" men, but he gives no indication as to the future lot of this man.

Anderson also mentions the taboo on hare's flesh and adds it is forbidden even to come into contact with a fire on which a hare has been cooked. If a man breaks the rule, he is not infrequently banished from the kraal, but on the payment of a fine<sup>1</sup> may be re-admitted to the community.

It will be noticed that among both the Colonial Hottentots and the Naman the essential feature of the boys' initiation rites seems to be the fact that it gives the boy the privilege and right of henceforth associating intimately with the mature men of the community. This privilege is apparently one of some significance, for we find that whoever violates any of the customary norms of conduct is not permitted to mix again freely in the company of the men until he has been purified. This exclusion is no doubt due to the ritual impurity in which the man finds himself, and which will make it dangerous for him to associate with the others. At the same time it indicates that the "doro" men form a distinct social group within the community; and Kolb's general statement that men and women among the Colonial Hottentots habitually ate apart is of some value in this connection, as lending support to the idea that there was in Hottentot life a well-defined alignment of the community with the men on the one side and the women and children, including uninitiated boys, on the other.

It is worth noting also that these rites are fundamentally different from the corresponding ones among the Bushmen. In both cases, it is true, we have

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1. Anderson, Lake Ngami, 328-329; cf. Wikar, 118.

seclusion, and the form of bodily mutilation is scarification; but even the nature of the scarification, as Mrs. Hoernle's general analysis of the Hottentot rites shows, is markedly different, while the place of seclusion also differs. The Bushman boys are initiated in groups, the rites of initiation are intimately connected with hunting, and they also serve to introduce the initiates to the mysteries of the tribal religious concepts. The Hottentot boys, on the other hand, are initiated individually, and the rites have apparently no connection with either hunting or religious mysteries. The moral rules and the food restrictions impressed upon the boys cannot be regarded in the same light as the revelation of Hishe or Huwe, to the Bushman boys. The Hottentots also believe in spiritual beings, somewhat similar in nature, as we shall see, to those of the Bushmen, but there is nothing at all to indicate that these beings are revealed to the boys at initiation.

The Hottentot puberty rites for girls also differ considerably from those of all the Bushmen except the Heikum. In the case of the latter the general resemblance to the Hottentot rites is so marked - the powdering of the boys' scrota by the girl is especially noteworthy in this context - that one is inclined definitely to postulate Hottentot influence here. In the case of the other North-western Bushman tribes, the central feature of the girls' puberty ceremony is the eland bull dance, which is not found among the Hottentots, while on the other hand the

elaborate inau restrictions and reintroduction rites present among the latter have not been reported at all of the Bushmen. The seclusion ritual among the Cape Bushmen, and the beliefs connecting young maidens with the dangerous properties of rain and water, seem more in line with the Hottentot ceremonies, but the data bearing upon the Bushman rites and beliefs is too fragmentary to justify any definite assertion of similarity.

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VI.

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Land Tenure.

The extension of European settlement and control in South Africa, and the resultant breakdown of the tribal organisation of the Hottentots, has had as one of its first consequences the fact that independent tribal possession of land among the latter has long ceased to exist. At the present time, as we have already noted, the vast majority of the Hottentots are scattered far and wide over the country, without any definite tribal allegiance at all, still less with any definite tribal territory. It is only quite recently that reserves have for the first time been set aside in south-west Africa for the remnants of certain tribes, such as the Herseba Hottentots, the Bondelswarts and the Swartboois.<sup>1</sup> But the system of land tenure prevailing here can hardly be regarded as identical with that which existed when the tribes were still independent and living under their own culture. In the first place these reserves are under the control of the European administration, and then also the Hottentots have changed profoundly in many of their habits and ideas, as a result of long intercourse with the Europeans, and some have even taken in a small way to agriculture. It is necessary therefore to refer to the descriptions of the earlier writers in order to learn what were the laws and customs of the Hottentots regarding the tenure of land before they were so greatly

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1. Official Year Book of the Union of S. Africa. No.8. (1910-1925). p. 992.

affected by the influence of white civilisation. Unfortunately the information bearing upon this subject is somewhat fragmentary.

The Hottentots in their original mode of life derived the bulk of their subsistence partially from their flocks and herds, partially from the chase. Land therefore was of value to them chiefly as pasture and hunting ground. It is clear from the accounts of the early Dutch and other travellers that every Hottentot tribe in the Cape had its own territory, into which strangers might not intrude for hunting or pasture without the permission of the tribe. There is, however, no concrete information as to the demarcation and control of these territories. The reading of history shows that the Hottentot tribes moved about freely over the country in search of pasture, and the boundaries between the different tribes, as far as can be ascertained, do not seem to have been at all clearly defined. It appears rather that in the early days of the Cape Settlement the different tribes were situated far apart, each tribe forming certain centres round which it migrated, and that all the land where its members were accustomed to graze their herds or to live was claimed as its territory. But the right to this land existed only as long as no stronger community disputed it. From the earliest historical times fights for pasture lands are recorded as occurring among the Hottentots, the inevitable result being that a dispossessed tribe would have to move on to new lands. In any case the pasturing of their cattle in a country so subject to long droughts as

South Africa undoubtedly occasioned continual and sometimes even extensive movements, so that anything in the nature of rigidly-defined tribal areas probably did not exist.<sup>1</sup>

In South-West Africa, where grass is more easily found than water, stress was laid particularly on the possession of water-holes, and little care was otherwise taken to define the boundaries between the different tribes more clearly. Different fountains or pools in the country were always thought of as belonging to certain specific tribes. This did not mean, Mrs. Hoernle points out, that other people could not use the water, but that one tribe had a prior claim to it, established by habit, and had the right to expect that members of any other tribe intending to camp there for long time would ask permission to do so. She cites in this connection an old document in which the chief of the Rooi Natie complains that the Berseba Hottentots have taken possession of one of his water-holes. He gives them permission to stay, but states specifically that this does not mean that he gives over the fountain to them. "The water is my water," he says again and again.<sup>2</sup>

With the coming of the Orlams from the south and the pressure of the ovaHerero advancing from the north, territorial disputes in Great Namaqualand became more frequent, and increasing emphasis was laid on the

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1. cf. Stow, Native Races of S. Africa, 238 seq. Molsbergen, Reizen in de Kaap in de Hollandse Tijd, vols 1 & 2.

2. A. W. Hoernle, "The Social Organisation of the Naman". 6. The document referred to is published in Berichte der Rheinischen Mission, 1854. p. 155.

recognition of tribal boundaries. Intrusion was not readily allowed, but, on the contrary, deeply resented. If a tribe wished to move into the territory of another, application had first to be made to the chief of this neighbouring tribe. If the two were on friendly terms, permission might be given without charge; but if relations were not too good, a tribute was generally demanded as acknowledgment of the resident tribe's ownership and supremacy over the area. And so we see, for instance, that the Orlams, when they penetrated north of the Orange River found that the indigenous Nama tribes would tolerate their presence only on condition that they recognised the jurisdiction of the chief in whose territory they settled, and that as an outward mark of submission they paid him an annual tribute of cattle or horses in return for the right to live and to graze their stock on his lands. The effect of this restriction may easily be imagined. No sooner had the newcomers settled down and become accustomed to their surroundings than they refused to pay any more tribute. In the inevitable wars that followed the Nama were no match for their better-armed and more experienced adversaries. Before very many years had passed the order of things was reversed, and the Orlams were dominant, while almost all the indigenous tribes either were absorbed or retained their lands on the same terms of tribute and vassalage which they had formerly exacted.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Report on the Natives of S.W.A (Ed. 9146), 70, 75-76; A.W. Hoernle, op.cit. 4.

How jealous was the regard for boundary and territorial rights in these days may be seen from the following incident. In 1889 the //Hobesen chief, Hendrik Witbooi, rather went out of his way while travelling from Keetmanshoep to Gibeon, and passed with his men over a corner of the lands claimed by the Bondelswarts of Warmbad. Whereupon Willem Christian, chief of the Bondelswarts, wrote him a strong letter of protest. "Such circumstances," says Willem, "are likely to cause dissatisfaction"; and if the "dear captain" required anything in his area it was only right first to apply for permission to enter, and to await the reply before doing anything. This would have avoided "misunderstandings"; "for it is beyond my comprehension that one chief should enter another chief's area without notifying him and making a request".<sup>1</sup>

On the whole therefore it would seem that although every Hottentot tribe had a claim, established by long exploitation, over a certain stretch of territory, other tribes might seek and obtain permission not only to pass through this territory, but even to make use of, its water and pastures, on condition that the prior rights of the resident tribe were recognised and acknowledged. Permission might of course be refused, and sometimes was, when war would probably result if encroachment nevertheless took place. But the extensive wanderings of the different Colonial Hottentot tribes in the early days of the Cape settlement imply that here, at least, little objection was raised as a rule to intrusion, so long as sufficient grass and water

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1. Report on the Natives of S.W.A. 76.

was available for all.

Of the sentiments of the Hottentots towards their land we have little information. Mrs. Hoernle, in one of her recent papers, maintains that even to-day the old tribal land is still closely connected in the minds of the people with their ancestors. The ghosts of the //naon, the ancestors, haunt any old locality occupied by the tribe, and anybody visiting such a place must protect himself against them and propitiate them if he is to escape. "Thus ten years ago," says Mrs. Hoernle, "I visited, with a native guide, a spot which had long been deserted by the Topnaars. It was a long day's journey up and down great sand dunes, and both I and my guide caught bad colds. The next day my guide's wife came to see me, shaking her head wisely. 'I knew I should find you ill', she said, 'and I have been scolding my husband, who should have known better. When you got to Wortel you should have gone straight to the water, and put a stripe of wet clay on your legs and on your forehead, and then you should have said:

Ti //Naoxan !Hutse (My ancestors' territory),  
!Gaise !Khoi !oa te re (Run nicely to meet me),  
elbe mutse (I see you first).

Then all would have been well.'" "The important thing here," continues Mrs. Hoernle, "is that one begs the goodwill of the spirits, claims relationship with them, and enters once more into possession of the old tribal territory by contact with its waters".

A similar ceremony takes place when a Nama goes visiting relatives in another tribe. The head of the kraal visited must take wet clay and soot from the

pot, and put a broad stripe on the visitor's forehead, so that he may be able to 'eat nicely and drink nicely'. "Here it would seem that the stranger is given the protection of the society into which he has entered, and is free from danger that might otherwise beset him in a strange place. The preceding example shows perhaps what the danger is, namely, the hostile Hei / Nun (ghosts of dead people), and this example makes a little clearer the nature of the protection sought when one is visiting an old locality of the tribe. One identifies oneself with the place and its spirits, and so gets protection and support instead of hostility".<sup>1</sup>

From the facts just noted one would almost have expected to find the fear of hostile ancestral spirits acting both as a guarantee of possession to the resident tribe and as a sort of supernatural restraint to encroachment upon the territory of another. There is unfortunately no other record of such usages to be observed when visiting a strange place, or linking up the occupation of land with supernatural agencies. Whether similar usages did exist among the Colonial Hottentots, but have escaped observation, or whether, in the case of the Naman, and especially of the Orlams, European ideas had completely overshadowed them in practice, cannot now be determined. Certainly the great freedom with which the Hottentots appear to have wandered from place to place, from their own territory into that of another tribe, does not argue in favour

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1.A.W.Hoernle, "The Social Value of water among the Naman".  
519-520.

of any pronounced dread of the ghosts haunting such places, nor does the undoubted fact that disputes over the possession of land were frequent among them.

All the land claimed by a tribe was the communal property of that tribe. It could under no circumstances become the property of an individual, nor was it the property of the chief; and it was generally regarded as inalienable. In the early Cape Records several instances occur of land having been 'sold' to the colonists by Hottentot chiefs. It is more than probable that such 'sales' were looked upon by the natives themselves not as alienation but as the granting of usufruct, and the 'purchase money' as analogous to tribute paid for this use. Even in more recent times, when the concepts of sale and purchase had become generally familiar to the Hottentots, the alienation of land to other tribes or peoples was extremely rare. The chief had no right to dispose of any portion of the land without first obtaining the consent of the families under his rule, and the purchase money had to be divided equally amongst them.<sup>1</sup>

Every member of the tribe had a personal right to the use of its land, water and grazing for himself, his family and his stock. He could move freely over the tribal land, and erect his huts wherever he pleased, without restriction or interference by the chief or anybody else. These rights, however, were merely those of usufruct, and in no case implied full ownership to the exclusion of others.<sup>2</sup> The only in-

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1. Wandres, "Ueber das Recht der Naman", 675, 684; Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 75-76; Vedder, "The Naman", 144.

2. Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 76; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 197.



stance recorded of recognised private ownership of land or its resources occurs even to-day in the Nara bushveld of the Kuiseb regions behind Walvis Bay. Here every family among the Topnaars has an hereditary claim to certain Nara bushes and their fruit. Trespass by other members of the tribe is reported to the chief and dealt with by him; but if the thief is a Bergdama or a Bushman he is traced and simply shot down. If the chief does take any notice at all of the latter case, he never sides with the party of the thief.<sup>3</sup>

In the other tribes there seem to have been no individual rights of this nature. In certain respects, however, there was a limitation to unrestricted exploitation of the land and its resources by any member of the tribe. Hunting rights over the tribal land, for example, were common to all, but the game was regarded as the herds of the chief. Anybody who shot big game was therefore expected to give him the head and the four lower legs of the animal, while of small game he received portions of the meat. Refusal to yield him this tribute was punished. Pasture lands, again, were also common to all, but the chief could order certain grazing grounds to be vacated in order that they might be rested. His consent was also necessary if the inhabitants of any kraal wished to burn the veld shortly before the rainy season, so that when the first rains fell new juicy grass might spring up. Such regulations, of course, do not involve interference with recognised personal rights but are to be regarded rather as the

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3. Schultze, *op. cit.*, 197, 318.

exercise of control vested in the chieftainship.<sup>1</sup>

In other directions we find recognition given to the prior claims of an individual. If a man dug a well or opened a spring, it was regarded as under his special authority, and, after inspection by the chief, was named after him. Every passer-by and new comer had to have his permission before using the water, but it was equally his duty to see that no stranger or his stock was denied access to it. Any man again who found a swarm of wild bees in the cleft of a rock or in the hollow of a tree could acquire rights of ownership over their honey by breaking a few twigs and laying them in front of the hive. Anybody else ignoring this sign and taking away the honey was regarded as a thief and had to recompense the owner. But here also the chief of the tribe or the head of the kraal exercised some measure of control. If the swarm was still young, it might not be molested, under penalty of punishment, and the owner was also punished if by extracting all the honey he caused the swarm to wander away elsewhere. Moreover he was expected to give several good combs of the honey to the chief or the kraal head.<sup>2</sup> The nature of the individual rights casually acquired in this way should not be confused with the nature of those to the !nara bushes noted above, which are based on heredity and which are equally shared by all the members of the tribe.

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1. Wandres, op.cit. 675-676; Report on the Natives of S.W.A. 76.

2. Wandres, loc. cit.

Live-stock.

The unsettled nomadic life of the Hottentots is occasioned primarily by the ever-present need of grass and water for their live-stock. Their domestic animals, upon whose milk and flesh they depend so largely for their subsistence, are cattle, sheep and goats. The cattle seem originally to have been of the large, straight-backed, long-horned type (Bos aegyptiacus) still found among the native peoples in the Horn of East Africa. They have, however, become considerably modified through mixture with other breeds, especially those introduced from western and Northern Europe by the Dutch and other white settlers, and the original type can no longer be clearly distinguished. The sheep were fat-tailed, with scraggy hair rather than wool, but here, as well as in the case of the goat, the type now also shows mingled characteristics, owing to intermixture with other breeds.<sup>1</sup>

It is a point of some interest, on which Johnston comments, that the Hottentot root word for cattle, goma-, may possibly be derived from the southern Bantu -komo, while biri-, for goat, may be the early Bantu buri, budi, and even the root gu- for sheep can be traced to a Bantu source. From this he argues that "obviously the goat first, then the ox and the sheep, were brought to them from the north by Bantu or Nilotic negroes."<sup>2</sup> This is certainly true of the goat, which

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1. Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, 255-256, 263; v. Francois, *Nama und Damara*, 257, 264, sqq., 266.

2. H. H. Johnston, "Man and Nature in S.W. Africa", Nature, 77 (1908), 386.

was not originally owned by the Hottentots and only acquired by them quite late from the Bantu tribes with whom they came in contact.<sup>1</sup> We know, however, that within historical times at least the Hottentots at the Cape had cattle and sheep long before they came into contact with the Bantu. All their traditions, moreover, indicate that their pastoral mode of life was developed before their ancestors came south. Whether they acquired their domestic animals from the Bantu in East Africa is a more debatable question. In the absence of definite historical evidence, the argument from philological resemblances may seem plausible. It must be remembered however that cattle and sheep as domestic animals were introduced into Africa by the Hamites, from whom even the Bantu got them;<sup>2</sup> and the undoubted Hamitic affinities of the Hottentot languages would therefore incline one to look for a direct Hamitic influence in respect to the domestic animals also. A more careful historical study of the domestic animals of Africa than has yet been made is however necessary before this question can finally be settled. Any conclusions advanced without adequate historical support can only be regarded as hypothetical.

In the early days of the European settlement at the Cape the Hottentots were extremely rich in cattle.

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1. It may be noted in this connection that the usual Hottentot name for the BeChwana is Birina, i.e. goat people, and that in the 18th. century there was already a regular trade between the Bantu and the Naman (cf. below. p 406 )

2. cf. Adametz, *Herkunft und Wanderungen der Hamiten*, erschlossen aus ihren Haustierrassen, 1920.

Van Riebeeck, the founder of the Dutch settlement, states, for example, that at times the land around Table Bay was as thickly covered with cattle as with grass, an exaggeration which must have had at least some substantial basis. And in 1661 the Nama chief Akembie, living along the Olifant's River, was described as having no less than 4000 head of cattle and 3000 sheep in his kraals.<sup>1</sup> In the course of time the tribes bordering on the Dutch settlement gradually lost their herds through barter with the Europeans, but even in the first decades of the nineteenth century herds comprising hundreds of cattle and sheep were by no means a rarity. Ultimately, however, with the steady expansion of the Europeans, the Hottentots in the Cape became dispossessed of both their cattle and their land, and their pastoral life was perforce abandoned for one of service with white farmers. In South West Africa the Hottentots remained a predominantly pastoral people until after the rebellions against the Germans, when the tribes were no longer allowed to keep "great stock", i.e. horned cattle, and only a limited number of sheep and goats. Here also the great majority of the people are now servants in the employ of Europeans and no longer live independently with their herds. The old pastoral life has fallen more and more into decay, and at the present time is still practised by only a small proportion of the Naman.

Every family among the independent Hottentots usually has its own cattle, sheep and goats. There are

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1. Molsbergen, Reizen in de Kaap in de Hollandse, Tijd, I.56.

no common herds, although as a rule the families living together will pasture their animals in common. Everybody knows the animals he possesses, so that confusion is hardly likely to occur. The tendency noted by schultze for a man to collect animals of the same colour, even bartering stock with others towards this end, probably renders discrimination still easier. schultze mentions also that cattle are marked in special ways by cutting perforating or lopping the ears, but he does not state whether each owner has a distinctive mark of this sort. Nowadays each ox and cow is generally given a name of Dutch origin, to which it often answers; formerly cattle were designated rather according to their colour or physical development. schultze records nineteen ~~such~~ <sup>(of this kind)</sup> different terms in use among the Naman for horned cattle, six for goats, and three for sheep.<sup>1</sup>

Cattle may be acquired in several different ways. Every child in a wealthy family may have some animals set aside for it soon after birth, and a portion is usually given <sup>at</sup> after marriage, both to sons and to daughters, while a man's herds are also divided after his death among his heirs. Cattle may further be acquired by means of barter with such objects as milk pots and weapons, and in recent times also European trade goods. Wandres mentions the case of a wealthy cattle-owner known to him among the Bondelswarts, who laid the foundations of his prosperity by

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 264-267.

the manufacture of wooden milk-pails which he bartered for cattle. We know also that cattle-raiding, both among the Hottentots themselves and on other peoples, such as the OvaHerero, was a common practice in the past, but we have no definite record as to how cattle obtained in this way were divided.

Service with Europeans in order to obtain the means of purchasing cattle was common already in Kolb's time, and is possibly the principal method employed nowadays. Another common method, in use among the Hottentots themselves, is the herding of somebody else's cattle, in return for part of the increase. A wealthy cattle-owner will place some of his stock under the care of an impoverished tribesman, allowing him to use the milk for his own nourishment, and to claim half the increase. With good management a herdsman can in a few years acquire quite a respectable herd of his own in this way. Even young boys will hire their services to cattle-owners, receiving at first an annual payment of one or more sheep or goats, according to the size of the herds under their care, and acquiring later the right to half of the increase. A good herdsman usually remains with his master for life, even although he has accumulated some stock of his own. This is looked after by his children or his relatives, while he himself becomes the chief herdsman of his master.<sup>1</sup>

The milk of their cows is the staple article of diet with the Hottentots. The milking is done by

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1. Wandres: "Ueber das Recht der Naman"m 677-678; Tindall, Great Namaqualand, 42; Kolb; Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung, 78-79.

the women and girls, and only exceptionally by the men. In this respect the Hottentots differ fundamentally from the great majority of the cattle-keeping Bantu tribes, among whom milking is essentially the task of the men, and where the women have very little to do with the cattle, and may even be ritually prohibited from all contact with them. The milk secretion of the cows is periodical, and dependent upon calving and the needs of the calf. The flow ceases when the calf is able to fend for itself; the cow then "becomes dry", as the Hottentots put it. In times of good pasture some cows may continue to yield milk up to shortly before the next calving; in dry years, on the other hand, many of them occasionally yield so little milk that the calf hungers, and milking for domestic purposes is naturally out of the question. At milking, which is done early in the morning and again when the cows have returned in the evening from pasture, the calves are first allowed to drink for a while. Then the woman comes up with her wooden pail, drives away the calf, and milks, after first binding together the hind legs of the cow to keep it still. All the cows are milked at one sitting. If the cow refuses to give milk, as may happen when its calf has died prematurely, it is induced to do so either by the substitution of another calf sewn up in the skin of the dead one or by stuffing the skin, or else somebody stands behind it and blows hard into its vulva.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Schultze, *op. cit.*, 257-258; v. Francois, *op. cit.*, 258; Kolb, *op. cit.*, 79-80.



The herding of the cattle is simplified to some extent by the fact that permanent water is found at only a few spots, known to both men and cattle, and both also know where water is to be found after good rains. These spots usually serve as the sites for the encampment. The oxen, which are only occasionally required for riding or for draught, need no special care in herding. They take their drink at the water, then go out to graze in the veld and rove at large, returning about every other day or two to drink. If wanted for work they can then easily be secured. If not, they rest in the camp during the remainder of the day, and then in the cool of the night proceed to the veld as before. The cows are driven to pasture every morning after milking, and left to graze unattended, till the attraction of the young calves brings them home to the kraal of their own accord at night. Old cows who no longer calve are kept for slaughter, and allowed to graze in the same way as the oxen. They go further into the veld than the mother animals, and there find better grass and pasture longer. The calves are placed at night, after drinking, in a special enclosure of thorn bushes or stone, open to the sky, while their mothers sleep freely in the vicinity. In the early morning they are again allowed to drink, and are then driven out into the veld in a different direction from the cows. They remain here under the continuous watch of the herd-boys, who drive them back again to the kraal in the evening. Only when a calf grows really thin is it allowed to accompany its mother in the veld.

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 79; v. Francois, op.cit., 257-8; Riddale, Scenes and Adventures in Great Namaqualand, 83-84; Schultze, op.cit., 258-260.

Occasionally, if the pasture round the settlement is poor, the cattle are driven far into the veld under the care of a few herdsmen, who keep outlying cattle-posts for weeks and even months. A wealthy cattle-owner may have several of these cattle-posts, which either he or his chief herdsman inspects from time to time by personal visits.<sup>1</sup> As a rule, however, each family remains and moves with its own herds, sometimes even acting independently of the rest in the search for water and grass. It may be noted here that herdsmen often carry as charms pieces of the wood of a certain shrub called lahib. If cattle have gone astray they burn one of these pieces in the fire, believing that this will keep the animals safe until they can be found the next morning, and will prevent their being destroyed by wild beasts.<sup>2</sup>

No attempt is made to control the breeding of the cattle. The bull is at all times allowed free access to the herd, in the veld and at water. The months at the end of the second rainy season, March and April, when the pasture is at its best, are the favourite time for jumping, and the bull then follows close on the heels of the cows. At the beginning of the dry season it separates from the herd and roves in the veld

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 261; Wandres, op. cit. 678.

2. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 82.

till the next rains, only coming to the fountain when there is not enough water elsewhere. Its movements are apparently quite unrestricted.<sup>1</sup>

The proportion of bulls is nowhere indicated, but is almost certainly quite small, as a large number of oxen are required for domestic purposes. The young bulls are gelded when their horns are just beginning to show. The method employed by the Colonial Hottentots, according to Kolb, was to bind the scrotum closely and tightly so as to cut off communication with the spermatic vessels, and allow the calf to run in that condition till the testicles rotted off.<sup>2</sup> Schultze was unable to ascertain the method of gelding employed by the Naman. He mentions, however, that according to his informants the successful castration (Kastrierung) of a number of calves was formerly celebrated by a feast consisting of the meat of a specially slaughtered calf cooked together with the pounded testicles of the castrated animals.<sup>3</sup> A similar feast was noted among the colonial Hottentots by Jan Hartogh in 1807.<sup>4</sup>

The young oxen are trained to carry burdens or to be ridden. The pack oxen are used for carrying the mats and poles of the huts, together with the few household utensils, which are bound securely on them with long thongs of hide. The riding oxen are guided by a bridle of raw hide, attached to a piece of wood

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 260, 257.

2. Kolb, op.cit., 79.

3. Schultze, op.cit., 262.

4. Molsbergen, Reizen in de Kaap in de Hollandse Tijd, II. 9.

or leather passed through the cartilage of the nose and serving as a bit. Instead of a saddle a sheepskin is thrown over the back of the animal and fastened by a thong drawn tight round the body. No stirrups are used, but both men and women ride the animals with ease, being accustomed to do so from childhood. One can travel comfortably and securely in this way for a great distance and over rugged mountains, provided one is not in too much of a hurry. Kolb relates also that special oxen were taught to guard and keep the sheep together while they were grazing; such an ox, he says, is strictly obedient to the voice of its master, and flies round the pasture ground to bring back within proper limits those of the flocks that are straying off. No stranger is allowed to come within range of the pasture ground; the ox drives off the intruder and gives the robber a rude reception. The Hottentot oxen, he continues, are even taught to combat in a body, like a regiment of elephants, against the enemies of the nation - a statement the accuracy of which is amply testified by other observers. Nowadays the oxen are generally employed for the far more prosaic task of drawing wagons, and have been almost entirely superseded by the horse for riding.

The goats and sheep, like the calves, are herded by day in the veld, and kept at night in the

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1. Schultze, 253-254; Kolb, op.cit., 82-83; cf. Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Sud-Afrika's, 323; Barros, Da Asia, quoted in Colvin, The Romance of S.Africa, 20.

kraal. Single goats or small flocks need no care, and easily accustom themselves to return to their own accord at night. Bigger flocks are put under the care of a herd-boy, who guards them from danger and theft, and sees to it that they do not spread too widely over the veld. He has also to collect them during the midday heat under some trees or a rock, where they may rest in the shade. The lambs while still small remain continuously in a special kraal, and are allowed to go to their mothers only before the morning and evening milking. The bigger lambs, which are weaned by rubbing the udders of the mother with dung, go with the flock, and so do the rams.

The goat is nowadays the chief source of milk supply to the poorer Hottentots, and is also the principal slaughter animal. In both respects it has quite superseded the sheep, which is of little importance now in Hottentot life. Its milk is rarely used, and its wool is valued only in the skin, which is largely used for making karosses. Its meat, however, is preferred to that of the goat, the fat of the tail being particularly relished.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note, that the goat is never used in ceremonial meals, if it can possibly be avoided. This in all probability is due to the fact that it is not one of the original domestic animals of the Hottentots.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 262-264.

2. A. W. Hoernle, "The Conception of !Nau", 73.

The value placed upon their domestic animals by the Hottentots is reflected in the ceremonial life of the people. We have already noted, for example, how in the re-marriage ceremonies the bridegroom, after his seclusion, must sprinkle the cattle and sheep with water before he is again allowed to go among them as usual, how menstruating and other women in the condition of inau must abstain from milking, and afterwards be carefully reintroduced to it, and how girls passing through the puberty ceremonies are conducted round the kraal in order to touch the male animals and confer potency upon them. In all these and similar rites we see the expression of the belief that the well-being of the stock depends upon healthy conditions being maintained in the community. Any breach with the traditions of the past, any toleration of slackness in carrying out the regulations established for all contingencies in the life of the people, is bound to affect the stock adversely. Great care then is taken to keep all pollution from the cattle kraal, and the animals are included in any lustrations or other purification ceremonies that take place. We have also noted the use of female cattle and sheep in the important sacramental meals of the people, and there are in addition, as we shall see, certain occasions on which such animals are sacrificed directly to the tribal deities.

Kolb describes two ceremonies among the colonial Hottentots specially connected with the stock. The

one takes place when the sheep are seized with distemper. As soon as the outbreak is noted, one of the old men of the community is specially selected to slaughter a healthy sheep every day for three days in succession. The meat of this animal is eaten by the old men, the young men are given the blood and the entrails, and the women feed upon the broth. After the meal each group apart spends the rest of the day and the following night in singing and dancing. "These are acts of atonement for their offences against Gounja, and which they trust will render Gounja propitious to them and their cattle." If the distemper ceases among the sheep after this ceremony, the people become wild with joy, believing that Gounja (? //Gaunab) is pleased with their offerings. But if it does not immediately cease, they either lay the blame upon the sacrificer or suppose that their offerings were not good enough. Another old man is then selected and the ceremony is repeated in the same way, fatter sheep being slaughtered. Or else it is imagined that the sheep have caught the distemper from some ill quality of the pasture; and if this opinion prevails the settlement is immediately removed elsewhere.

The other ceremony consists in driving the sheep at certain times through the smoke of a fire. Early on the day determined upon, the women milk the cows and bring the milk to the men, who must drink it all. The women themselves may not drink of the milk, nor even spill any drop of it, lest the whole procedure

prove ineffective. When the milk has all been consumed, some of the men go to bring the sheep together to the place where the rite is to be performed, while others busy themselves in preparing the fire. This is made in the open, and thickly covered with green branches, so that a dense cloud of smoke is produced. When the sheep have come up, a number of men range themselves closely in a long row on both sides of the fire. The sheep are then driven through this lane. As soon as one has been forced through, the rest follow, jumping over the fire and passing through the smoke. Great jubilation is raised when everything has passed off successfully, for it is believed that now all will be well. The explanation which Kolb claims to have received was that this custom originated in the fear that predatory animals, especially wild dogs, would come among the flocks and work havoc. To prevent this occurring, said his informant, the sheep are driven through the smoke, for as long as its smell clings to them the dogs will keep away. Long experience had taught the ancestors of the people that this measure effectively protected the sheep, and it was therefore still kept up among them.<sup>1</sup>

This particular ceremony does not appear to have been recorded by any other writer, and it is difficult to decide how far Kolb's description can be relied upon. The annual rain ceremony of the Naman, as we shall see, offers certain points of resemblance to it; but as there are also considerable differences of detail the two ceremonies cannot be connected, unless

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 61-62.



we assume that the greater part of Kolb's description is either erroneous or, a criticism sometimes but not always justifiably advanced against him, fictitious.

In addition to cattle and sheep the Hottentots have from the earliest historical times also kept dogs. These are described by Schinz as of medium size, with short hair, long snouts and drooping ears, and apparently allied in race to the pariah dogs of the Near East. They are useful about the house and protect the cattle from wild beasts. They are easily familiarised with the herds by means of milk. They are also employed in the chase, especially against the jackal and hyena. They do not seem to be specially valued, however, and are never cared for properly.<sup>1</sup>

From the Europeans the Hottentots have acquired the horse, which has now almost wholly superseded the ox for riding purposes. Fairly early and in their old wars and raiding expeditions the horse already played an important role, and nowadays it is still largely used in hunting. Many of the horses, like the oxen, are allowed to range freely in the veld, where they generally keep to some favourite pasture ground. The fountain at the encampment is usually however the only place where they can drink for many miles around, and if wanted at any time they are easily caught when coming here every other day or so for water. Or, should they not come to the fountain, as sometimes happens after rains have fallen and they can drink in the veld, their

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1. Schinz, *Deutsch-Süd-west-Afrika*, 90; Schultze, *op. cit.*, 268.

resort is generally known, and one man mounted can drive the troop home to the encampment. Mares in foal are carefully guarded, and usually kept at night in the kraal, as a protection against the leopard and other wild beasts.

#### Hunting and Fishing.

As the Hottentots rely upon their <sup>herds</sup> herds mainly for milk, cattle are seldom slaughtered for food, save on festive and ceremonial occasions, although all that die a natural death are eaten. The greater part of their meat supply the people obtain by hunting and fishing, which are still practised to a considerable extent. Hunting by pursuit has now taken on a European colour, owing to the introduction of firearms and the horse. In former days it was carried on mainly with the bow and arrow and with the spear. Of these weapons the bow took a secondary place. Like that of the Bushmen it was crudely made from a single piece of elastic wood, generally Grewia flava, and strung with a cord twisted from antelope sinew. The arrows in general were similar to those of the Bushmen. The type most commonly found had a thin triangular point of iron, fitted in a notch in the end of a short bone fore-shaft, which again was inserted into a main shaft of reed, some eighteen inches long and feathered at the butt. They were often coated with poison, usually prepared from the condensed milk sap of the Toxicodendron capense.

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 267; Ridsdale, op. cit., 84.

and were carried in quivers made from the hollow bark of the Aloe dichotoma or from ox or antelope hide. The principal weapon, however, was the spear. This had a narrow pointed iron blade, about six inches long, and fixed by means of a tang to a long wooden shaft tapering to a point at the butt. The kirri or throwing stick, a short straight club knobbed at the end, was also generally used.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the latter these weapons have been completely superseded by European fire-arms. It is interesting to note, however, that among the Naman of to-day bows and arrows are still used by the children as toys, and that the arrow, apart from its general similarity to that of the Bushmen,<sup>2</sup> is also characterised by the same sort of feathering.

The methods of hunting employed by the Hottentots, as described by the older writers, seem on the whole to have been the same as those of the Bushmen. The Hottentot hunters are praised highly for their skill in stalking game, and are said to have been so light-footed that they could outrun the fleetest animals. The game was chased in the heat of the sun, when the hot sand burned its foot pads and wore it out, till at last it was an easy mark for the arrows of the hunter. Or, again, the solitary hunter would proceed to a spot

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1. Kolb, op.cit. 125-127; le Vaillant, Voyage dans l'Afrique, 11.48-51; Barrow, op.cit. i. 149.  
2. Schinz, op.cit, 88; Schultze, op.cit. 102.

whence he could survey the country around him. Should anything be sufficiently near, he looked for a covert of shrubs, trees, or the sandy bed of a river, taking care, if possible, to keep to leeward, lest the animal should scent him and decamp. Along this covert he stealthily crept, often on hands and knees, till opposite the game; then quietly raising his head he would take deliberate aim and shoot his poisoned arrow. As the wounded animal ran off he leisurely followed, showing a remarkable skill in reading and distinguishing its tracks; and when he finally came up it was an easy task to finish off his quarry with the spear.

Big game, such as elephants, giraffe and rhinoceros, were often directly attacked in the open. These animals, as well as elands and quaggas, were hunted by large parties of men armed with spears; and when the wounded beast turned upon its assailant, other spears were hurled against it from behind; as it faced about to ward off the new danger, a renewed attack was made upon it from the rear, so that it was constantly kept at bay, until, exhausted by its wounds, it fell helpless to the ground. Or when wild animals had raided the herds and the flocks, all the men of the village would unite together in a drive-hunt, dividing themselves into bands to discover the haunts of the animal they wished to destroy. On finding its retreat they formed a circle around it, closing in till they came within bow-shot; then, after wounding the animal with their arrow, they were able to come up and despatch it with the spear.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Kolb, op. cit. 127-128; Wikar, op. cit., 107 et passim

Even at the present time, when guns and the horse have made hunting far easier, the Hottentot still shows a considerable amount of real ability in the pursuit. In stalking down game his intimate knowledge of their habits is readily evident. With considerable caution he will approach the oryx antelope, and then patiently wait till in the mid-day heat it goes to lie down in the shade of a bush. quietly he steals towards it, and once within range he makes no mistake with his bullet. Sometimes he finds the nest of an ostrich, and knowing that before long the bird will return, he conceals himself in the nearest bush, fires as it passes or when it has settled on the nest, and thus secures a double prize. He will patiently lie in ambush in the same way near a water-hole for big antelopes or zebras, or outside their holes for the smaller burrowing animals. Under cover of his flocks the herdsman steals up to the steenbok, innocently pasturing with the sheep and the goats, and kills it with a dexterous stone-throw; or with the aid of his dogs he runs down the oryx and the klipspringer. Drive-hunts are employed to root out the hares, which are knocked down with the kirri. Where he possesses a horse, the hunter takes his gun and rides out in the veld, where whatever first offers - ostrich, zebra, eland or smaller antelope - is closely pursued till near enough to be shot. Sometimes large hunting parties are organised, when nearly all the men of a village leave in their wagons with plenty of ammunition and their hunting horses, trusting to the success of the expedition for subsistence while away. Large sections of the country are partially invested, animals of all descriptions brought within a comparatively limited

space, and great quantities shot. The flesh is then cut up into thin slices, sprinkled with salt, and dried in the shade and wind; and after several weeks have been passed in the veld, the huntsmen return with their wagons loaded with the dried flesh of the quagga, zebra and various kinds of antelope, which afford subsistence to the whole village for a considerable time.<sup>1</sup>

Stone traps and snares, nooses and catches of many kinds are also made use of to waylay game. On some occasions, in former days, whole valleys were enclosed, and large numbers of men combined to drive a herd of game from the heights into the valley below, which was staked and bushed across its whole breadth. At intervals the fence was broken, and here deep pitfalls were made. Since the fence was too high for the animals to jump, they were obliged to make for the gaps, and there they tumbled into the pits. Similar pitfalls were dug for elephants, rhinoceros, zebras, elands and other big game in the paths to water-holes or along the banks of rivers. These pits were about six or eight feet deep, and some four feet in diameter. A sharp pointed stake was planted in the centre, the pointed extremity being on a level with the ground that surrounded the excavation, of which the surface was lightly covered and spread over with leaves intermingled with sand. As the hole was too small, the animal only fell in with its fore-feet, which caused the stake to enter its throat or its breast; it was thus unable to get away, for the more it struggled the

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1. Ridsdale, op. cit. 87-89; Schultze, op. cit., 288-292.

more it became fixed. The hunters then coming up killed it with their spears, or mounting upon its neck they knocked it down with stones or opened a vein with their knives to make it bleed to death. Running nooses similar to those of the Bushmen are still employed to catch small antelope, such as the klipspringer, duiker and steenbok, as well as hares and rock-rabbits, while heavy falling traps of stone secure the jackal and hyena. Still more finely constructed are the falling traps for catching porcupines and small mammals. They are so made that the animal in attempting to get at the bait disturbs a horizontal peg; a small vertical peg is thereby set free which, falling away, releases an uppermost peg fixed between the stone slab and the support; the stone falls down with force, and buries<sup>1</sup> the animal beneath its weight.

Fishing was also practised wherever it was possible, especially by the impoverished Hottentots. As tackle they used hooks of animals' teeth or of bone, nets knotted of bark fibre, basket traps of reed, and a pointed stick that answered the purposes of a spear. At a later period their hooks were made of iron, and their lines twisted of animal sinews or catgut. They had no boats, but they were fearless swimmers and boldly threw themselves into the sea to reach a neighbouring rock, whence they fished with hook and line or harpooned the fish with their long wooden spears attached to a line. In rivers, creeks or

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 292-295; Kolb, op. cit., 128; Wikar, op. cit. 112.

inlets they waded into the water to some distance from the bank, and when they saw a fish swimming within their reach pierced it with their pointed stick. Sometimes weirs were made in favourable situations along the shore, enclosing considerable spaces which were left nearly dry at low tide. In a similar way baskets were sometimes stretched across a stream in a shallow part. Men would stand behind these, while others waded up the stream from a point below, driving the fish before them towards the basket traps, where the men standing behind would then catch them and throw them on the shore.<sup>1</sup>

As in the case of the Bushmen, hunting among the Hottentots is bound up with a variety of social usages and special observances. We have already noted that among the Naman, for example, the chief claims a part of every animal secured in the chase, a tribute sanctioned to him by the belief that the game are his herds. But even the remainder of the flesh cannot be appropriated for himself by the hunter: if game is brought home the whole camp collects about the house of the possessor till all the meat is consumed. This sharing of food, however, is not restricted to game; it is, as we have observed, a custom running all through Hottentot life.

More interesting perhaps are the usages specifically connected with hunting by pursuit, and reflecting the danger and above all the uncertainty with which this method is accompanied. If a man goes

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 129-130; A.W. Hoernle, "S.W. Africa as a Primitive Culture Area", 25.



out hunting, says Hahn, his wife will kindle a fire. She may not do anything else but watch the fire and keep it alive, for should it go out her husband will have no luck. If she does not like to make a fire, then she must get water and commence throwing it about, and when she is tired her servant must continue to do so, for if this be neglected the husband will return empty-handed.<sup>1</sup> Schultze mentions also an old-time regulation that the night before hunting the elephant every hunter had to refrain from sexual intercourse. Should a man violate this rule, the elephant would point him out with its trunk and pile up earth against him; the culprit was then no longer allowed to take part in the hunt.<sup>2</sup> Men out hunting, again, may not mention the name of the baboon, otherwise they will find nothing. The lion and the jackal, similarly, must be referred to not by their proper names, but by circumlocutions, the former as gei-igab, big brother, and the latter as /gai-hetomab, he-who-may-not-be-called. Anybody killing a baboon or a lion must afterwards slaughter a sheep or a goat, and hang the lowest cartilage from the spine of this animal round his neck with a strap and carry it on his back, otherwise he will suffer from lumbago! Anybody, again, who has killed a dassie must hang its skull on one of the poles in his hut, so that he may soon kill another. The hare is pursued and killed, but its meat, as we have seen, was

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 77.

2. Schultze, op.cit., 269.

formerly not eaten by men. If a hare, crosses a hunter's path, he will immediately return home; but if it runs in the same direction as he is proceeding, the omen is good. So too if a certain kind of chameleon creeps on a hunter or his weapons, or on anything belonging to him, where he is resting on the road, he is believed to be assured of success.<sup>1</sup>

These usages and beliefs almost certainly represent only a fragment of Hottentot hunting observances and lore. In them we can see how in hunting by pursuit, where the elements of chance and danger are always present, elements which are beyond rational control based on experience and technical efficiency, there ritual observances and beliefs bring confidence to the hunter and assure him of good results or protect him from ill-luck, enable him, that is, to maintain mental stability under conditions which would otherwise demoralise him by despair, anxiety and fear. It is suggestive by way of contrast that, both here and among the Bushmen, in the methods of trapping and snaring, where the pursuit is certain, reliable and well under the control of rational methods and technological processes, there are apparently no accompanying usages and beliefs of this nature.

Another custom mentioned by Olpp is that whoever has killed an elephant, rhinoceros or hippopotamus must slaughter a sheep or a goat; only the hunter may eat of this meat, while anybody else present may eat of the meat of the fallen animal.<sup>2</sup> This observance,

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1. Olpp, "Aus dem Sagenschatz der Nama-Khoi-Khoi", 41-42; Hahn, op.cit., 84; schultze, op.cit., 283.

2. Olpp, loc. cit.

as recorded by him, seems to be the remnant of what was formerly an extremely important ceremony in Hottentot life - the reception of a man into the ranks of the hunters. A reliable description of this ceremony is contained in the account given of the Naman by Wikar, who was himself able to take part in it. He relates that once, when he and some Naman had killed a rhinoceros, one of the young men present asked to become the "master killer" (baas doodmaker) of the animal, although in reality he had had nothing to do with its actual death. His wish granted, the young men took his spear, and plunged it into the dead beast, until it was covered with blood. Then he stood aside and directed how the best meat should be cut off for him for the coming sacramental meal (andersmaken). The rhinoceros was slit open, the entrails extracted and thrown over his head. The meat was then cut up and brought to the fire, the reserved portions being appropriated by the "master killer", and the festivities began. When the meat was sufficiently cooked, it was shared out by the initiate to everybody present who had previously gone through the same ceremony. Nobody else was allowed to take part in the meal. The fire used for cooking the meat could not be taken away and used at other places, nor could anybody even light his pipe with it; and when the cooking was <sup>all</sup> well over it was completely extinguished. The sinews of the rhinoceros were given to the initiate, and carefully kept by him until he was able to get a sheep and complete the ceremony. Now also his face was smeared all over with

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1. Wikar, op.cit. 109-110.

pot black, which was then wiped away in a few places, leaving his features "prettily ornamented" with cross-like designs.

Later on, when they came to a neighbouring village, the initiate obtained a sheep by barter. Then all the spears of the other men entitled to take part in the meal were held close together in a bundle, and on this he broke the leg of the sheep. The animal was then slaughtered, the spears heaped up against a bush, and the entrails of the sheep hung over all their points. Next the initiate lay down on his back, and a stripe was drawn over his stomach from the navel to the breast-bone. Along this line from thirty to forty small cuts were made close together in a row, the blood flowing out. "If the knife is blunt", Wikar adds realistically, "they must cut two or three times on the same spot, then indeed he makes a wry face, but this doesn't help." Once through this operation the initiate was a full-fledged hunter; "he had merited his laurels", as Wikar puts it, and was allowed by way of token to twist the sinews of the rhinoceros through beads and shells and wear them as a bracelet on his arm. The slaughtered sheep was then completely eaten, skin and all, but the bones and other inedible parts were burned or buried, to keep the dogs or children from getting at them. With this meal the ceremony was over. From now on the initiate might "eat with" on all similar occasions.

This ceremony, Wikar continues, is performed in the same way whenever an elephant, hippopotamus or

buffalo is killed. It is a fixed rule among the Naman that when they go hunting the man who first touches the animal with his spear, if only to scratch it, is regarded as the "master killer", even although another man may deal the actual death-wound. He can then go through the ceremony himself, or must hand over the privilege to one of his good friends. In another context Wikar states that the ceremony is held only when a man has killed a beast of prey or other noxious animal, such as the rhinoceros, hippopotamus, buffalo or snake, and also the baboon, which is held to be the prototype of man("dat is de oude tijden zijn mens by haar"). It does not take place on the killing of a giraffe, "wild horse" (wilde peerde, wildebeest), hartebeest, etc., since these animals are not very harmful or dangerous, and it is therefore no great merit to slay them.<sup>1</sup>

A somewhat similar ceremony was held among the Colonial Hottentots, but the description given of it by Kolb differs from the above, and is therefore worth recording. The skill and dexterity displayed in the chase by a single huntsman, he says,<sup>2</sup> was considered the highest act of heroism, and the man who had succeeded in killing an elephant, rhinoceros or other big game animal was honoured by the whole village with marks of respect and was an object of universal admiration. On returning to his home he was subjected to

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1. Wikar, op.cit., 94.

2. Kolb, op.cit., 128-129.

the customary andersmachen rite. Proceeding to the public place where the people were assembled to receive him, he seated himself on a mat in the centre of the circle that formed about him. One of the old men then rose, and urinated all over him, "at the same time muttering some words whose meaning I was never able to understand or to learn". The dagga pipe was next lighted and circulated as usual, but the hunter received only the ashes that remained, which were strewn over his body by the old man. From now on he enjoyed great honour, and could wear on his head the bladder of the animal he had slain, as a proof of his agility and heroism.

The ceremony over, he retired to his hut, where he remained secluded for three days, during which time he was fed with the best meat and the finest provisions that could be procured. During this time also he was forbidden all intercourse with his wife. The latter had to leave the kraal every morning when the herds were driven out to pasture, and might not return again till they came back in the evening. Outside the kraal she might not eat anything at all, and even when back in it had to live only upon such meagre fare as she was able to lay hands upon. At the end of the third day, when the hunter was supposed to have recovered his former vigour and strength, his wife was reinstated in the hut; he slaughtered a fat sheep, called all his neighbours to the feast, and thereafter could again live with her.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Kolb, op.cit.128-219.

Kolb's description of this ceremony gives no indication that it was an initiation rite, but implies rather that it was performed whenever the occasion was offered by the killing of a big game animal. There is no reason, however, to suppose that this is contradictory to Wikar's account, from which it would appear that the first time a man killed such an animal, or obtained the privilege of being regarded as the "master killer", afforded the opportunity for receiving him into the ranks of the hunters, signalled by the scarification, while on subsequent occasions the ceremony was merely repeated without the operation. The other discrepancies between the two versions it is more charitable to ascribe to differences in tribal custom. The point cannot be definitely settled, as no other first-hand observers appear to have recorded the ceremony with sufficient wealth of detail to provide material for comparison.

Even the descriptions given above seem inadequate when considered in the light of Mrs. Hoernle's general analysis of the Hottentot rites de passage. That these hunting ceremonies fall into this category is evident from the holding of the sacramental meal, the usages relating to the fire and to the meat, the scarification and the smearing of the face recorded by Wikar, as well as the seclusion mentioned by Kolb. Now that hunting of this description has ceased to be possible, owing largely to the extermination of most of

the big game animals, the rites seem completely to have lapsed, and it is hardly likely that further information about them can still be obtained. A casual remark by Mrs. Hoernle implies that they really constituted the boys' puberty ceremony.<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered, however, from the descriptions given above of the boys' puberty ceremony that none of the authorities there makes any mention of hunting; Wikar explicitly separates the two ceremonies in his general sketch of the occasions on which the sacramental meal is held,<sup>2</sup> as does Mrs. Hoernle herself in a similar analysis;<sup>3</sup> and so too Kolb describes them in different contexts, and even, as we have seen, speaks as if the hunting rites were usually undergone by married men only. On the evidence at present available, therefore, there seems no good reason for connecting the two.

#### Industries and Trade.

Few aspects of Hottentot life have been recorded in less detail than the economic activities directed towards the production of objects of use and trade. The great majority of the writers merely enumerate and describe the various implements and utensils noticed by them, although the technological

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1. "I found it extremely difficult to get trustworthy information about the puberty ceremonies of the boys, which seem completely to have lapsed since big game hunting ceased to be possible, and with it the necessary test of manly prowess which it offered." (Conception of !Nau, p.70).
  2. Wikar, op.cit., 94.
  3. A.W.Hoernle, op.cit., 68; cf. above p. 305



processes involved are dealt with to some extent by Kolb and more fully still by Schultze. But the social side of the industries - forms of work, economic motives, division of labour, and so on - has received hardly any attention at all. It is difficult therefore to give an adequate picture of the industrial activities of the Hottentots. This difficulty is increased by the fact that ever since contact with Europeans was established there has been a gradual substitution of European goods for native products, until at the present time the productive work of the Hottentots, where it is still carried on, has to a considerable extent acquired a new character.

The main economic unit in Hottentot life, as far as one can judge, is the family. Each family not only has its own herds and flocks, thus providing for the greater part of its subsistence, but in a large degree also manufactures the objects required for its domestic purposes. The construction of the huts, the making of whose mats is still an important native craft, has already been described. The other forms of industry may be grouped under the main headings of skin-dressing, netting, pottery, wood-carving, stone and metal-work.

Before the Europeans came into the country, the skins of domestic animals and game provided the sole material for the clothing of the Hottentots, as well as for a number of other objects. Nowadays, except perhaps in a few remote places, clothing is almost entirely of European pattern and materials, but

skins are still used for other purposes. Among the Colonial Hottentots, it would appear from Kolb's account, the preparation of skins was mainly the work of the men. Skins used for making clothing, karosses, etc., were dressed by the craftsman repeatedly rubbing into the fleshy side as much fat as possible, and then beating them hard with the kirri, until they became quite tough and smooth; or they were alternately rubbed with cow-dung and fat, and then carefully dried in the sun. They were then sewn together with sinews, generally taken from the back of an ox, the pointed leg-bone of a bird being used as an awl. Ox-hides were either used for lining the hut or cut into thongs with which objects were bound on the backs of pack-oxen. To loosen the hair the fresh skin was sprinkled with ashes and water, then rolled up and exposed for a day or two to the heat of the sun, and after depilation it was rendered supple by being rubbed in with fat. Finally, if required for thongs, it was pegged out on the ground and cut up into long strips of about the same width by means of a sharp iron blade.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Naman skins are dressed and worked into clothing, bags, straps and other objects by both men and women. The tanning of leather is largely the work of the women, and involves a good deal of labour. The fresh skin is stretched out to dry, with the hairy side upwards; when it has hardened, it is softened

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1. Kolb, Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung, 110-112.

again with the juice of succulent plants, which are pounded upon its inner side; the superfluous liquid is poured off, and the skin rolled up so as not to dry prematurely. Then the woman kneels on the roll, spreading out flat before her only as much of the skin as she can work at the moment, and after strewing the fleshy side with sandstone powder she rubs it hard with a stone. When all the flesh particles have been scraped off in this way, the skin is again allowed to dry slightly, is then kneaded and wrung out, and is rubbed on the outside with fat. Next it is tanned with the pounded inner bark of the acacia, then rolled up together with the pads of fibre and steeped in red lye made from the bark of the same tree, is afterwards again allowed to dry slightly, and is then spread out and lightly covered with sand. Finally one man takes it at the tail end, another at the head, women and children at the sides, and together they stretch and pull it smooth. It is then dried in the sun, and is now permanently soft and water-tight, and beautifully red on the inside.

Skins prepared in this way are used for a variety of purposes. Those of the calf, goat, sheep, springbok and duiker are laid as rugs on the floor of the hut, either singly, or a number cut and sewn together, while karosses are sewn from the skins of the sheep, jackal, dassie or lynx. Others are cut up and used for making the small bags which hold personal belongings. Formerly also the rear apron of the girls

was made exclusively from sheepskins similarly prepared, and the front apron of the boys cut from any such soft skin, while fur caps were made from the back skin of the aardwolf (Proteles cristatus).

Where the removal of the hair is desired, the fresh skin, crumpled together and wrapped in a tanned skin, is exposed to the heat of the sun by day and placed at night near the fire in the hut. After three or four days of this treatment the skin stinks, and the hair can easily be pulled out. The hide is then rolled up, and the craftsman, in this case a man, stands upon it and works it up and down with his feet until it is soft and almost dry. The fleshy side is then rubbed in with fat.

Sheep or goat skins treated in this way were formerly used for making the front apron of the women. Others are still converted into bags for holding discarded odds and ends which may later be useful: two skins are fitted and sewn together all round the edges, except for a small opening left at one side and just big enough to admit the hand. Others again are made into pillows, by cutting two skins into squares of the same size, which are then sewn together round three of the edges, the interior next filled in with feathers or hair, and the remaining side finally closed up. Ox or gemsbok hides similarly treated are cut in ever-narrowing spirals from the edges inwards into long strips. These are either used as binding *into ropes for securing oxen. In the latter case the wet newly-cut strip is suspended from the branch of a tree, twisted* ~~trongs, or twisted~~ round lightly and weighted down by means of a heavy stone attached to the lower end. It is then continuously twisted in alternate directions

by means of a stick inserted just above the fastening to the stone, until at the end of four or five days the rope is permanently round, hard and supple. It is then cut up into the lengths desired. Lashes for whips are made in the same way, and plaited together.

In other cases the skin of the animal is not specially treated, but is simply converted into bags of various kinds, such as knapsacks for carrying objects needed on the march, and smaller bags for buchu roots, herbs, tobacco, and so on. An interesting bag of this kind is that used for holding milk or water. A freshly-killed goat, calf, gemsbok or steenbok is cut open all along one side, from the left fore-leg right up to the shoulder. Through this opening the whole body is shelled from the skin, head and legs having first been cut off. Then all the openings are sewn up, with the exception of that for the right fore-leg, which serves as a spout for pouring the liquid in and out, and has a stone cork which can easily be tied fast. The fresh skin is turned inside out, the inner side cleaned of all particles of flesh and fat, and then it is dried. The hairs remain on the inner side of the bag.<sup>1</sup>

The thread with which skin objects are sewn together is generally animal sinew, and so formerly was the bow-string. Strings of varying thickness are also made from the bark fibre of the

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1. Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 233-241.

Acacia horrida Willd. The branches of the tree are chopped off by the men, freed of all twigs and thorns, and rapidly passed through the hot ashes of a fire; then the bark is loosened at one end by hammering, and the whole pulled off in strips with the hands. Next the women separate the innermost white layer of fibre from the rest of the bark, and after letting it dry soak the mass in lukewarm milk or water, then suck it and chew it in small lumps. A length of prepared fibre is then taken and twisted between the palm of the right hand and the naked thigh, the end of the fibre being held in the left hand. This done the process is repeated with other lengths of fibre, the lengths being joined up as occasion arises, until sufficient has been made. The resulting string is strong and even, comparing very well with the machine-made article. It is used as thread for sewing together the reed mats for the huts, as well as for making the snares required by the hunter. From it also are knotted net bags, used in the hut for holding various odds and ends, and serving on the march as a rucksack for the skin blankets. Baskets, sieves and fish traps woven from reed and flexible twigs are mentioned by some writers, but no description is given of the way in which they are manufactured.

The art of making pottery, formerly found among all the Hottentots, was lost soon after the Europeans came among them, although as late as the early

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 241-244.

and inside it, till it was baked through and hard. Each family as a rule possessed several such pots, for water and milk, and for cooking.<sup>1</sup>

Besides these pots the Hottentots also made wooden milk bowls and pails, dishes and eating vessels. These are now largely replaced among the Naman by European hardware, but the craft is still kept up among the more independent families. There is no detailed description of the process of manufacture. Apparently the utensils are fashioned entirely by cutting and boring, no fire or other hot object being employed. All wood-carving is done by the men. The block of wood is shaped and smoothed on the outside with a knife, and then hollowed out inside, partly by boring and partly by cutting, by means of a semi-circular iron blade fixed in a wooden haft. Some of the milk-pails in shape closely resemble the earthenware pots, even having ears of the same style for suspension. Wooden spoons, pestles and mortars, Inara drills, walking sticks and kirris are also made, and within recent times the more expert craftsmen, aided by new and better tools, have also begun to make tables, chairs and bed-posts for their household furniture.<sup>2</sup>

Spoons and buchu powder boxes are made by the women from tortoise shells, while the men cut the horns of animals into receptacles for fat, for odd substances used for medicinal and magical purposes,

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 116-117.

2. Schultze, op. cit., 244-246; Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 335; Olpp, Angra Pequena, 27.

years of last century earthenware vessels made by themselves were still noted among the Naman. From the descriptions available of these pots, as well as from specimens which have been found or preserved, it seems that in shape and manner of construction they are generally similar to those formerly found among the Cape Bushmen. The most common form is that of a large-bellied urn with a narrow rounded base, small mouth, and two ears through which a cord can be passed in order to suspend it. Other pots of the same style are quite cylindrical, with almost flat bases, while in others the base is slightly rounded and larger than the rest of the pot. They are often ornamented round the neck with rows of dots or short broad lines, apparently produced by incising. They are unglazed and generally somewhat thick, although a few have been found rather thin and evenly built throughout.

Kolb states that each family among the Colonial Hottentots made its own pots, which were modelled by hand by the women. The clay was obtained from termite heaps, cleared of sand and gravel, and kneaded together with the ants' eggs mixed in it. A lump was then placed on a smooth flat stone and modelled into the shape desired. Next it was carefully smoothed inside and outside by hand, and exposed to the sun for a couple of days. When perfectly dry, it was finally put in a hole in the ground and burned by a fire around

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1. Schönland, "On some Hottentot and Bushman Pottery in the Collection of the Albany Museum", 25-32, plate II; Schultze, *op.cit.*, 246 and fig.



and for gunpowder, as well as into trumpets used for signalling in war. Formerly also the tusks of elephants were cut with a knife into rings used as armlets. The manufacture of stone implements does not appear to have been practised at all by the Hottentots, at least within historical times. Whether they did so at one time we have no means of telling, but in the light of our present knowledge there is no good reason for assuming that, as in the case of the Bushmen, it is an art which they have lost. The only work which they do in stone is the cutting and boring of serpentine into pipes by means of a knife. We know also that they formerly used sharp flakes of quartz for making cuts on a person's body in some of their ceremonies, but there is nothing to indicate that these flakes were worked in any special way. Unworked stones are used to support the cooking pot over the fire, and a hand mill is formed by a thin flat stone serving as a hearth on which roots, coffee beans, buchu herbs, mineral substances, etc., are ground down to powder with a flat stone.

What renders it unlikely that the Hottentots ever were a stone age people is the fact that at the time when they came into contact with Europeans, they already possessed the art of working in metal. The heads of their arrows and spears, their cutting instruments and other tools they fashioned from iron, while copper was worked into ornaments; and they were able to smelt the ore for themselves. The mode

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 247-248; Hahn, Tsuni Goan, 22.

of smelting iron, according to Kolb, was as follows: A small mound of earth was heaped up, hollowed at the top, and a narrow channel dug vertically down the middle. A shallow basin was made in the side of the mound, and connected by a hole to the vertical channel. Next a fire was lit in the hole at the top, and when the earth around it was deemed well heated the ore was inserted. A large fire was then made on top of the ore, and supplied from time to time with additional fuel, until the iron melted and ran into the basin at the side. When cool it was taken out and broken up with stones. It was finally beaten into shape, after heating, by means of a stone hammer.<sup>1</sup>

How far this description can be relied upon is open to doubt. Kolb states that the same method of smelting was employed for copper ore, but in this, at least, he is contradicted by a more reliable authority. Roos and Marais describe the process as they witnessed it among the Namam. A crucible of clay containing the ore was placed on a fire made on a hearth of cow-dung, about one foot in diameter and six inches high. Two bellows of goatskin with perforated gemsbok horn nozzles were inserted under the hearth, and by means of them the fire was kept glowing till the copper had smelted. The liquid ore was then poured into finger-long moulds of cow-dung, and in this way small copper bars of a standard shape made.

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 117-118.

These were beaten on a flat stone anvil with a stone hammer into rings and other objects.<sup>1</sup>

This method of smelting ore is common throughout Africa. The description is therefore probably more nearly accurate than that given by Kolb. It must also be noted, however, that it is about fifty years later in time, and refers to the Naman, who were by then in close contact with Bantu peoples. The possibility of borrowing thus cannot be eliminated, especially as we are told that the Great Namaqua obtained most of their copper from the Little Namaqua to the south, and the Bechwana to the east. And Wikar states that the Naman preferred not to work their own metal, but hired Herero smiths to come and work iron and copper into beads for them, paying them ~~a~~<sup>2</sup> few as a daily wage. Certainly in the eighteenth century the Naman only worked metal in very small quantities, obtaining almost all their iron and copper implements and ornaments by barter from the OvaHerero and Bechwana. Among the Colonial Hottentots also the production of these metals was so limited even in the seventeenth century that the Dutch from the first did an active trade with them in iron and copper goods. Since then the ease with which European metal wares, superior to those of native production, could be acquired, has caused the old native craft of smelting ore to disappear completely. At the present time the raw material,

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1. Roos and Marais, "Rapport aan den..Heere Rijk Tulbagh", 57.  
2. Wikar, op. cit., 97.

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in the form of iron, wire, copper and more rarely tin, is all obtained from the Europeans. It is then fashioned by the men into such ornaments as arm-bands, rings and ear-rings, which are often decorated with incised rows of dots or lines of zig-zag, chevron or fishbone pattern.<sup>1</sup>

In these industrial occupations, as well as in the other economic activities, there appears to be no fixed division of labour, save as between the two sexes, and most of the work is for purely domestic purposes. The husband supervises the herding and pasturing of the cattle and the movements of the family from place to place, although where a number of families live together both activities may be regulated by the men in common. The men also hunt, here again either singly or in company. They do all the work in wood and in metal, make their own powder-horns and pipes, etc. The women complete the huts, after the men have erected the framework, milk the cattle, seek edible roots and berries in the veld, prepare the food, see to firewood and water, and look after the huts. They also make the reed mats for the huts, were formerly the potters, grind buchu and mineral powder, and so on. The preparation of skins is the work of both men and women: the former also make the skin bags, thongs and lashes, while the latter cut and sew most of the clothing, karosses and skin for the floor.

To what extent specialisation enters into these various pursuits it is difficult to say. Smithing, an occupation usually associated with specialised activity

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 248-251

does not appear to have been confined to definite practitioners; at least, there is no record of special smiths among the Hottentots. And there is no mention either of people devoting themselves exclusively to other forms of industry. Olpp indeed states that the Hottentots have little respect for industrial activity as a whole, and that an artisan in their eyes is like a slave (khowob). The people are primarily herdsmen, and cattle is the main objective in their lives.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time it is certain that some persons are better craftsmen than others, and that they can dispose of their products by barter. We have already noted an instance of this in Wandres' Bondelswart friend, who accumulated a respectable herd of cattle in exchange for the milk-pails he made. In other cases, as we have seen, weapons and milk-pots may be bartered for cattle, and even beasts of one colour exchanged for those of another. There appears therefore to be a good deal of internal trade among the Naman, but we have little concrete information as to the nature and extent of this trade. Kolb noted it among the colonial Hottentots also. An impoverished man, he says, will make an extra set of weapons and exchange them with a wealthy cattle-owner for two or three head of cattle. Tobacco, dagga, beads and similar objects obtained in the service of Europeans are also bartered for cattle, and as a last resort there is a certain root called kanna, used as a stimulant, which is always in demand and can *readily* be disposed of.<sup>2</sup> All this trading, however, is merely

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1.Olpp, Angra Pequena, 27.

2.Kolb, op.cit., 119-120.

incidental to the ordinary activities of the people. It appears almost certain that craftsmen devoting themselves exclusively to the continuous manufacture of special objects for barter do not exist among the Hottentots.

There was also a certain amount of trading between the Naman and the Bantu tribes to their north and east. In the eighteenth century the Naman living along the lower reaches of the Orange River are described as receiving annual trading visits from the Bechwana. The latter crossed over the intervening desert tracts during the rainy season, bringing with them such things as tobacco, ivory spoons and armllets, copper beads, rings and bracelets, iron beads, axes, adzes and barbed spears, and beautiful skin karosses, which they exchanged for cattle. The regular price for a good milch cow, for example, was eight spears, an axe, an adze, a bag of tobacco and a bag of dagga, while for a bull or an ox<sup>1</sup> the same objects, but only five spears, were given. Similarly the Naman further north bartered cattle with the OvaHerero for iron beads and weapons, and with the Bergdama for copper rings and beads;<sup>2</sup> while in more recent times they exchanged blankets, knives, tobacco, coffee, etc., with the Namib Bushmen for ostrich<sup>3</sup> feathers, ostrich eggs, horns and skins. Nowhere is any mention made, however, of regular traders among the Naman themselves.

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1. Rees and Marais, op. cit., 53; Wikar, op. cit., 121.  
 2. Wikar, op. cit., 97; W. van Reenen, "Journaal gehouden op de landtocht...naar de Groote Rivier, etc.", 147.  
 3. Trenk, "Buschleutē der Namib", 166.

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From the time of their first contact with the Europeans trading relations between the two peoples were also developed. The ships calling at Table Bay were ever in need of fresh meat, and this they obtained from the Hottentots in the form of cattle and sheep, giving them in return chiefly copper, iron and tobacco, but also liquor and other objects. In the early years of the Dutch settlement, e.g. a cow could be obtained for 3 lbs. of copper, plate and some tobacco, a sheep for 1 lb. of copper plate and tobacco, and a lamb for  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of copper wire and tobacco. In time indiscriminate barter for copper, trinkets and tobacco had so impoverished the local groups of Hottentots that there was little cattle to be had, and as a supply of meat was absolutely necessary to the settlement, especially for the ships calling at the Bay, exploring parties were regularly sent inland to barter with more distant tribes. In the long run, in spite of abortive cattle-raids on European farmers, the herds of the Hottentots steadily decreased, and this, together with other significant factors, completely broke down the tribal organisation of those groups who had not saved themselves by withdrawing into the interior. It was only by entering into the service of the whites that these detribalised Hottentots were able to secure a livelihood.<sup>1</sup>

The general effect of contact with the Europeans on the material culture of the Hottentots may rapidly be glanced at. First there was the substitution

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1. Schultze, op. cit., 325 seqq; Hodgson, "The Hottentots in S. Africa to 1828; a Problem in Labour and Administration", S. Afr. J. Sci., 21 (1924), 594-621 passim; E. A. Walker, A History of S. Africa, 38, 40, 43, et passim.

of European goods for native products. The white man brought with him new articles of various kinds, many of which appealed to the Hottentot. At first personal ornaments, such as beads, copper and other trinkets, and tobacco were most in demand, but gradually the skin clothing of the people was replaced by European garments, the implements and weapons made by smithing were superseded by imported metal goods, guns and ammunition, the clay pots and wooden utensils to a large extent by the iron pots and tin mugs of the trader. In all these respects the great majority of the surviving Hottentots have adopted elements of European culture, to a more or less considerable extent. In a number of cases also they have acquired wagons and horses, and the range of their household possessions has been extended to include tables, chairs and rough wooden beds. Their mode of life has also been altered. The majority of Hottentots now live as servants in the employ of Europeans, others have taken to agriculture in a small, and on the whole insignificant way. Even the remainder, who still lead a purely pastoral life, as a rule have very few cattle, while most of their handicrafts have suffered, and some have completely disappeared. The wares of European culture are now to be seen in every Hottentot hut. Only the latter still survives relatively unmodified, save where occasionally old sacking has replaced the far more attractive reed mats.

#### Property and Inheritance.

Several writers, in discussing the economic



life of the Hottentots, have applied the term "communism" in a rather loose manner to the way in which goods are used by this people.<sup>1</sup> The concrete facts which they themselves record show that this term is inaccurate. Communism, in the sense of all men having equal, free and unconditional access to all goods and privileges, does not exist among the Hottentots. The only thing perhaps which may rightly be spoken of as communal property is the land, since all the members of the tribe enjoy equal customary rights with regard to it. But even here, as we have seen, there are limitations to the unconditional exploitation of the land and its resources, and recognition is given to certain individual and family rights.

All other forms of property - huts, livestock, weapons, utensils and other objects of common use - are privately owned. This is emphasised by Kohler's informant, Von Burgsdorff, who says that although an apparently pure communism is observable in the life of the Naman, actually this is not found. Everybody has his own property, which he seeks to increase and improve, and - preferably unobserved by others - to use for himself.<sup>2</sup> And the various ways of acquiring cattle as well as the internal trade which we have noted all point clearly to the existence of private property rights. These rights, moreover, are adequately protected. Theft, the furtive or forcible removal of goods belonging to another, is

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1. E.g. v. Francois, Nama und Damara, 222.

2. Kohler, Das Recht der Hottentotten", 349.

regarded as a serious offence, punishable by severe fines and ostracism, even by flogging, while an incorrigible thief would formerly be killed.<sup>1</sup> The payment of debts, again, is held to be an obligation of honour. If a man is unable to satisfy his creditors, a trustee is appointed to take over and divide his assets among them. He is allowed to keep a few cows and goats, whose milk he may use for the maintenance of himself and his family, but he may not slaughter these animals, for he is regarded as holding them in trust for the creditors.<sup>2</sup>

With all this strict regard for private property rights, greed is far from being a characteristic of the Hottentots. They not only share to the utmost with their fellows, but are also very hospitable to strangers, traits favourably commented upon by many observers.<sup>3</sup> A man in possession of food shares, and is expected to share, it freely with others, and greediness in this respect renders him an object of public scorn. Objects of common use are also readily given away temporarily, and in the majority of cases even permanently. To take a goat from a man's herds for food, even in his absence and without his permission, is not unlawful, provided he is informed of the deed; on the other hand the taking of an animal in order to sell it is pro-

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 136-137; Schultze, 318; Wandres, "Ueber das Rechtsbewusstsein... der Naman", 275; Report on the Natives of S.W.S. 74.
  2. Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 76; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", 351-352.
  3. e.g. Kolb, op.cit., 135, Tindall, Great Namaqualand, 40; Hahn, "Die Nama.Hottentotten", 305; v.Francois, op.cit., 232; Schultze, op.cit., 318; Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 75.

hibited. This is a general custom arising out of the conditions of the country where for long distances food is unobtainable, and it is based on the idea of reciprocity. No Hottentot need leave a stranger's hut or camp hungry, especially if of the same tribe; he is welcome, even in the owner's absence, to help himself to whatever there is. It is customs such as these which have given rise to the use of the term "communism" in regard to the property laws of the Hottentots. It should by now be evident, however, that underlying the undoubtedly far-reaching liberality of the people there is always a clear recognition of private property rights. The Hottentot shares his food with others because he has the right to dispose of it, not because they have an equally legitimate claim to it; and this applies still more to livestock and objects of material culture.

This point is borne out by the special reciprocal relationship, soregus, to which reference has already been made. This relationship, also known as magus, to give one another, must be ceremonially entered upon between the two persons concerned, and implies, as we have seen, mutual assistance and obligation in all aspects of life; they may refuse each other nothing. In practice this applies especially to property, where each may demand or take from the other whatever he pleases, and may not be refused.

Tindall gives a description of this custom which illustrates rather drastically its full implications in regard to property. "It is usual among them (the

Naman) to carry on a kind of 'maatschappy' or partnership. Two men, living perhaps three or four hundred miles apart, 'make mates', the understanding is that each may take from the other whatever he pleases. They profess to believe that this is a very profitable kind of arrangement, and it is difficult to persuade them of the contrary. The following instance will illustrate the extent to which this 'magu' or 'give-each-other' system proceeds. A poor man at Nisbet Bath had, by diligence, obtained a horse and gun, he had a good hat, a very decent suit of clothes, a warm overcoat, and his wife had a tolerably respectable wardrobe. One fine morning a mate, with whom he had in an evil hour entered into partnership, turned up from the borders of Damaraland, and claimed as his right, horse, gun, hat, clothes, coat, and all his wife's apparel, except her undress, and with these he departed with true native sang froid, leaving the other his tattered garments and riddled hat, which had been so repeatedly patched, that it was almost impossible to discern the original stuff. The probable sequel to this affair would be that the man would return his mate's visit, who would either manage to avoid him or get all his valuable cattle out of the way; and yet not the least suspicion would be awakened that there was any villainy or dishonesty in the matter."

Wikaer, who was himself a party to such a compact, speaks of it in far more generous terms. "An old

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1. Tindall, Great Namaqualand, 40-41.

father and captain of the Bushmen named Ougaa", he says, "came to me this evening and proposed to take me on as his bond-brother (oplightbroer), to which I was agreeable, but I said that I had no cattle to give him. He replied, however, that tobacco would do just as well as cattle from me; if I got cattle during his lifetime then we could give them to one another, if not he would still be my brother and never leave me in the lurch but would help and be faithful to me. And this was indeed the case, for I must acknowledge before God and man that he was to me not merely as a brother but even as a father in all my sorrow, distress, hunger and bodily danger. According to Hottentot practice, I might now refuse him nothing for which he asked me and which I had, I must help him and stand beside him in everything, and so too must he act towards me." <sup>1</sup>

The information relating to this custom is on the whole too fragmentary to enable one to determine its full function in Hottentot life. That it is not limited to exchange of goods is shown by the fact that it easily lends itself, as we have seen, to homosexual practices, where the two persons are of the same sex, and possibly even to wife-exchange, if Wikar's description of the latter can be regarded as another illustration of the usages associated with the soregus. But nowhere is any analysis made of the respective social situations of the two persons concerned, of the circumstances under which the compact is entered upon, of the extent to

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1. Wikar, *op.cit.*, 85-86.

which it is found, and of all its implications. In the absence of such an analysis, and even of the full concrete data on which it can be based, speculation as to the real meaning of the custom can only be tentative. Tindall's description may possibly furnish one of the underlying motives, in the sense that the compact may be regarded as a means of ensuring protection and hospitality when one is visiting a distant locality; but there are obviously many other motives inducing people to enter into such a relationship, and it is a custom well worth studying in more detail than has yet been done. As far as the present discussion regarding property is concerned, it must be noted that the very fact that such a system of exchange and exploitation as is implied in the compact must be ceremonially initiated between two special individuals is sufficient argument against the existence of communism among the Hottentots.

Somewhat akin to the soregus, from the economic point of view, is the //nuri //gab, the exchange of goods between a man and his sister's son. Here, however, as we have seen, the material advantages are all in favour of the nephew. This economic relationship is based directly on a kinship status, and therefore allows us to see the exchange of goods in its wider social setting, as part of a general scheme of behaviour. The privileged position which the nephew has in regard to his mother's brother is due to the respect which a man must show towards his sister; and the uneven economic reciprocity between the two former can be regarded

as one form of expressing the nature of the ties connecting them. Here again this relationship, with the special rights of exploitation which it confers in regard to property, is an argument against the existence of communism.

It is hardly necessary to stress any further the fact that the economic life of the Hottentots is really based upon the notion of private property. The problem that now arises is whether property belongs to individuals or to the family as a whole. Wandres categorically states that an individual owns nothing but his owns, soul or breath. All objects of common use - clothes, weapons, implements and utensils - as well as the hut and the livestock are the collective property of the family. The individual has only the usufruct of, e.g., his clothes and his weapons, and has not the right to dispose of them or of anything else without the consent or knowledge of the rest of the family.<sup>1</sup> Vedder repeats this assertion in terms that are somewhat confusing; "Generally speaking we may say that the individual possesses nothing but is the usufructuary of what the family possesses. This even includes clothes and things for daily use. Under personal property one understands the possession of cattle. A child even may receive one or *(from his father & he uses their milk. He has the right to milk such goats more goats)* without permission, and their progeny are his property. Where natural conditions make it possible every person - man, wife, child - possesses a few goats,

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1. Wandres, "Ueber des Recht der *Naffman*", 682-683.

sheep or even cattle. When these are to be sold it becomes manifest that this personal property continues to be regarded as family property, because in such cases the whole family and not the individual decides whether there should be a sale or not.<sup>1</sup>

These statements imply that a distinction must be made between ~~rights of~~ usufruct on the one hand and rights of disposal on the other. There is no doubt that individuals may have exclusive ~~rights of~~ usufruct over certain objects. This is evident from Vedder's statement about livestock, and almost certainly applies also to objects of personal use, such as clothing and weapons. It is clear also, from facts previously noted that property such as livestock may be acquired by individuals through their own efforts, as well as by inheritance. We thus get the situation that individuals can acquire objects and have the sole right to use them, but apparently cannot dispose of them freely. The customs of soregus and //nuri//gab are difficult to reconcile with this latter condition, and so too is the fact, which Wandres himself mentions, that an individual can during his lifetime specify how his possessions are to be distributed after his death. But, assuming that there is some measure of truth in the statement that family control is exercised, the question that must be answered is whether this control implies a complete negation of individual ownership. The Hottentot conception of ownership has unfortunately nowhere been

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1. Vedder, "The Nama", 144.



clearly defined, and in an argument which is essentially one of native conceptions it is obviously dangerous to apply European legal conceptions. But there seems no good reason why the ~~rights of~~ usufruct enjoyed by an individual should not be regarded as a form of ownership, since these rights appear to be vested exclusively in him. The control exercised by the family over the disposal of these objects can equally well be regarded as designed to guard against their reckless dispersal and hence its own impoverishment, and in no way interferes with the actual rights of possession enjoyed by the individual. In this connexion it may be noted that Wandres mentions also that the chief has as little property as any other man, but has guardianship rights over the property of the individual families. It is his duty to see that his subjects do not dissipate or otherwise squander the family properties which make up the wealth of the tribe.<sup>1</sup> In what way he does this Wandres does not specify, and the statement is not confirmed by other observers.

The customary rules of inheritance, by which a dead man's goods are distributed among his heirs, also indicate the existence of individual property rights. Unfortunately not even a single concrete example of inheritance has been recorded. It is difficult therefore to determine accurately what goods are distributed in this way, and therefore what goods may be regarded as individual possessions. The livestock obviously form

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1. Wandres, *op.cit.*, 683.

the major part of the estate, but mention is also made of "the rest of the property" and of "inanimate objects", which however are not described. The old writers on the Colonial Hottentots state quite definitely that the hut of a deceased person was left standing with all the belongings, and that the camp was moved. In such cases, therefore, the hut, together with its furnishings, could not have been inherited. Nowadays this practice is no longer observed, so that these objects fall within the category of inheritable possessions. There does not appear to be any destruction or burial of a man's goods with him at death, a custom which we have noted among the Bushmen, so that there are no goods of which it can definitely be said that they are not inherited. Concrete information on this point is greatly desirable.

There is some discrepancy between the different accounts of the general laws of inheritance. Among the Colonial Hottentots, according to Kolb, only males could inherit property; failing sons, the nearest male relative of the dead man was the heir, never a daughter. Normally the whole estate, and by this is meant primarily the livestock, passed into the possession of the eldest son, who now became the head of the family. The younger brothers remained dependent upon his good will, unless indeed their father during his lifetime had given them a few head of cattle for themselves, and thus enabled them to become independent. Otherwise they were expected to stay with the heir and to help him manage and keep together, if possible even to increase,

the wealth which he had inherited. He might, if he wished, give each of them some cattle, but he was not bound to do so, or else he could allow them to go into the service of Europeans, and thus be freed of his immediate control. The heir had also to support his mother and the other wives of his father, but his sisters were placed under his exclusive control and might not marry without his permission.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Naman, also, according to most writers, the eldest son is the principal heir. He becomes the head of the family, and has the duty of supporting his mother as long as she lives, if she does not marry again. He also controls the marriages of his sisters. Any gifts made during courtship come to him; in return he has the duty of providing the marriage feast, but he is compensated for this by the temporary service rendered him by the newly-married husband. He also inherits a greater portion of his father's estate than do the other children. In particular he acquires all the livestock, with the exception of those animals which had previously been specially allocated by the father during his lifetime to other sons and daughters. These animals with their increase pass at the division of the estate into the full possession of the children for whom they had been set aside. The rest of the property - presumably the material objects - is divided equally between all the children, brothers and sisters alike, under the supervision of the chief. The widow,

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 141-142; cf. Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Sud-Afrika's, 335.

however retains all the objects brought by her into the marriage (this would therefore include the hut), as well as everything, including cattle, which her husband may have given her during his lifetime. Here it will be noticed that all the children, both sons and daughters, participate to some extent in the inheritance, and that the concept of individual possession is fully illustrated in both the distribution of the goods and the retention by the widow and minor heirs of property acquired by them from the dead man during his lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

Wandres, and following him Vedder, specifies more minutely, and also somewhat differently, the Nama laws of inheritance. If a man dies, his wife and all his children, sons and daughters, are heirs in equal portions. The estate may not be divided as long as the widow is alive, unless she wishes to return to her own people. The inheritance is then distributed by the chief, and the widow receives her portion, together with that of the youngest child, whom she takes with her. If the wife dies before her husband, her property is inherited by him and the children, i.e., it remains in the family. When both the parents are dead, the estate is divided ~~up~~ by the chief, who is compensated from it for his task, which is often by no means a sinecure. The estate is divided equally amongst the children, sons and daughters alike, the eldest son being regarded as the trustee, under the supervision of the father's eldest

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1. Schinz, op.cit, 100; v. Francois, op. cit., 216-217; Kohler, op.cit., 344,347.

living brother. Children born to a woman before marriage normally pass into the possession of their real father, and therefore do not inherit from her husband if she subsequently marries another man. The illegitimate children of a man, on the other hand, are entitled to the same share of his estate as his other children. Children born to a woman in adultery can also inherit from her husband, if he pardons her and adopts them.

If the children are still minors, their nearest male relative or the grandparents on either side act as their guardians and as the trustees of the stock. The rights of the guardian cannot be interfered with by the chief or the council, but as he is always closely watched by the other relatives he cannot easily appropriate anything in an illegal manner. When a childless couple die, the estate goes to their parents, those of the husband having first claim. When the parents are also dead, the chief divides the estate among the more remote relatives of the deceased, the following order of preference being observed: husband's eldest sister's children, husband's brothers, Husband's sisters, wife's sisters, husband's brothers' children, children of the husband's remaining sisters, wife's sisters' children. The brothers of the dead wife, Wandres remarks, do not inherit, as according to the ideas of the Naman, they belong to another family. A portion of the estate is also claimed by the chief, in return for his supervision.

These traditional laws of inheritance can only be departed from if a man during his lifetime stipulates that after his death certain of his goods are to

be given to his sore- companion, friends, more remote relatives, etc. This voluntary testament (gus) must be made orally before witnesses, and is usually abided by conscientiously, although the chief has to see that the nearer relatives do not suffer by it.<sup>1</sup>

It is doubtful to what extent this formulation of the laws of inheritance can be relied upon. It is certainly more elaborate than that given by any other writer, and should therefore probably be regarded as more accurate. But the statement that all the children inherit in equal shares does seem at variance with the honoured position of the oldest brother among the Naman, and the other writers, as we have seen, all state that the eldest son is the principal heir. The information about oral wills, again, also stands in need of confirmation. Here the lack of definite case-histories of inheritance once more makes itself felt, as concrete examples would have enabled one to deal with the discrepancies in the different statements of the laws of inheritance. The general trend of the information is to show that a man's eldest son is his principal heir, and that the other children inherit to only a minor degree. Apparently also both men and women can acquire property in this way, and the possessions inherited are held individually.

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1. Wandres, op. cit., 683-685; Vedder, op.cit., 145.

## VII.

REGULATION OF PUBLIC LIFE.Political Institutions.

The political organisation of the Hottentots in recent times shows to a considerable extent the signs of Dutch influence. For information as to their original form of government we must therefore refer mainly to the accounts of the earlier writers. Here again our principal authority is Kolb, who describes the political institutions of the Colonial Hottentots more fully and explicitly than does any other observer.<sup>1</sup>

He states that at the head of every tribe there was a chief, kouqui,<sup>2</sup> whose office was hereditary in the male line. The normal heir to the chieftainship was the eldest son of the ruling chief. Failing a son, the office passes to the nearest male relative, such as a brother or a brother's son, but never to a daughter. The new chief at his accession had to pledge himself before an assembly of the "captains" of the tribe to preserve all the old laws and traditions of the people, and not to interfere with any established rights and prerogatives. He had also to slaughter a couple of sheep or an ox as a feast for the captains. Only these men and himself ate of the meat, while the broth was given to their wives. On the following day or on some other suitable occasion a similar feast was provided by his wife for the wives of the captains. This

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1. Kolb, *Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung*, 42-44; cf. Fritsch, *Die Eingeborenen Süd Afrika's*, 321-322.
  2. The more usual rendering of this title in the official records, is khoegue.

time the meat was eaten by the women, and the broth given to their husbands. There is no other record of any installation ceremony connected with the chieftainship, so that the accuracy of Kolb's statements in this respect cannot be vouched for.

The functions of the chief were apparently purely political. He led the army in war, he conducted the negotiations of peace, and he presided over the tribal council. The latter was the real governing body of the tribe. It consisted of the "captains" or headmen of all the different local groups constituting the tribe, and was summoned by the chief to his residence whenever any matter of public importance arose. It dealt with all such questions as peace and war, disputes between different kraals, and relations with neighbouring tribes or with the European settlers. In this council the authority of the chief was dependent mainly upon his personality. His normal duties were to direct and sum up the deliberations of its members, who sat around him in a circle. If he was a man of strong character, he could succeed in imposing his will upon the others; otherwise his opinion might be disregarded, and he had to abide by the decision of the majority.

When not occupied with tribal affairs of this nature, the chief was concerned merely with the government of his own local group or the kraal where he resided. In this respect he played the part of an ordinary kraal headman. Every large Hottentot kraal or settlement had its own recognised headman or "captain" (usually spoken of in the early Cape Records by the



Dutch title kapitein), whose status was hereditary in the same way as that of the chief. The ceremonies of accession, as described by Kolb, were also similar to those of the chief, except that the headman had to make his pledge before the adult men of the kraal, and to provide the feast for them. All these men constituted a loosely-organised council over which he presided. They acted in the first instance as a court of justice. They met to settle disputes of right and property between the inhabitants of the kraal, and tried and punished criminal offences committed within their jurisdiction. The verdict arrived at was pronounced by the headman, and where the death penalty was imposed his was the first hand to smite down the culprit. There was no appeal from their decision or sentence to the main tribal council. They also dealt with all matters affecting the common interests of the kraal, such as removal to new pasture grounds and public feasts and sacrificial offerings. The role of the headman in this council was similar to that of the chief in the tribal council, and the degree of his authority was determined by his strength of character. In time of war he also had the command, under the chief of the tribe, of the troops supplied from his kraal.

Neither the chief nor the headman had special insignia or other marks of office, except that their karosses were made of leopard or wild cat skins; but the Dutch, when they entered into alliances with the

Hottentot tribes, presented to the former a crown of copper, and to each of the latter a copper-headed cane, which henceforth were regarded as distinguishing badges of authority. The chief was not entitled to the personal services of his subjects, nor, says Kolb, did he receive anything in the nature of tribute or public revenue. It appears, however, from the report of an expedition made to the Inqua in 1689 under the leadership of Ensign Schrijver, that in this tribe at least there was a regulation that anyone killing game in the chase might not eat of it until he had made a present to the chief. In ignorance of this custom one of Schrijver's party shot a bird and cooked it, whereupon the chief expressed displeasure and refused to carry on any more barter with the Dutch travellers. As soon as Schrijver was made aware of the circumstance and of the tribal usage, he sent the chief a present of beads, which was received as ample atonement for the mistake.<sup>1</sup> There is apparently no other record of a similar prerogative of the chief's, so that one cannot say whether the usage just described existed in the other Colonial Hottentot tribes as well. Kolb, as we have just noted, says that no tribute at all was paid to the chief. He lived, like any ordinary tribesman, upon the milk of his cattle, and there is nothing to indicate that he was necessarily more wealthy than anybody else. He might be accorded a good deal of respect, but there is no

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1. Molesbergen, Reizen in Zuid-Afrika, III. p. 111.

record of any special etiquette or ceremonial observed towards him.

Kolb's description, inadequate though it is from many points of view, shows clearly that the local groups among the Colonial Hottentots were to a large extent autonomous, although the important affairs of the tribe as a whole were regulated by their head<sup>e</sup>man in council. Some light is thrown upon this by Mrs. Hoernle's analysis of the social organisation of the Naman. It will be remembered that every Hottentot tribe as a rule was scattered over the country in smaller groups, each group consisting of a clan or of some part of a clan. The chief of the tribe was the head of the senior clan, and if a man of fine character could command a good deal of respect; but the heads of the other clans acted<sup>e</sup> as his council, and he could not do much without their co-operation. The bonds which held together the clans to form a tribe were never very strong, and often enough a powerful clan would assert its independence of the others, and in time become recognised as a separate tribe, with its own headmen as chief. In all probability the "captains" referred to by Kolb were such headmen of clans of the tribe, and, as we shall see later, in actual fact the different local divisions of the Colonial Hottentot tribes were only loosely connected together and would often act independently of one another. The practice of the Dutch settlers in treating these headmen or "captains" as more or less autonomous petty rulers naturally tended to accentuate the feeling of independence.

At the same time it also gave the "captain" a more prominent position as an individual than he really seems to have occupied in native life.

As Kolb's description also brings out, the whole conduct of public affairs was the concern of the adult men generally, and, as appears from the descriptions of other writers, of the older men in particular. The chief, by virtue of his hereditary status, was the recognised head of the community, but his authority was circumscribed and precarious, and he could not act without consulting his council. It seems indeed that in most cases he must be looked upon as the political representative rather than as the actual ruler of the tribe. There is nothing in the literature to indicate that he had any other special functions. Neither Kolb nor any other writer records any important religious or magical ceremonies which the chief had to perform on behalf of the tribe, any definite prohibitions or obligations regulating the relations between him and his subjects, or any ritual performances or taboos to which he was specially subjected. The sacred character often associated with the chieftainship in primitive society does not appear to have existed among the Hottentots.

The political organisation of the Naman was in all probability originally the same as that of their southern relatives. But by the beginning of the nineteenth century, from which time onwards most of the relevant literature dates, the old form of government among the Orlams was being slowly modified into a

crude imitation of the system developed by the Dutch at the Cape. The influence of these incoming groups, and to some extent also of the missionaries, gradually affected the form of political institutions in the other Nama tribes as well. The system of tribal control found among them within recent years, although based upon the old native system, can therefore by no means be regarded as representing that system in its original form. It is nevertheless of considerable interest as illustrating the grafting of European elements upon Hottentot organisation, and as it is an integral part of the tribal life it cannot be ignored. The information bearing upon it is also more detailed and accurate than that relating to the Colonial Hottentots, and serves to supplement it in several respects.<sup>1</sup>

Every Nama tribe has its own hereditary chief, gao-aob, more commonly known nowadays by his Dutch title kapitein. His official insignia, also a sign of Dutch influence, is the gao-heib, a long wooden staff with an iron or brass knob at one end. The successor to the office, under normal circumstances is the eldest son of the last chief, and as such he is usually

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1. The principal sources are; Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, 101-103; von Francois, *Nama und Damara*, 218-221; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten", 357-359; Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 72-74, 76 and passim; cf. also Tindall, *Great Namaqualand*, 33-34; Olpp, *Angra Pequena*, 24; Wandres, "Die Khoi-khoi", 322-324; Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, 321; Vedder, "The Nama", 142.

accepted without question by the tribe.<sup>1</sup> If he is a minor his father's brother or some other near relative in the male line acts as regent, although one instance is recorded, in the case of the Gei //Khaun, of a woman reigning on behalf of her young brother until he came of age.<sup>2</sup> Women, however, never succeed to the chieftainship. Failing a son, the late chief's eldest surviving brother or brother's son becomes chief. A chief has the right during his lifetime, owing to advancing old age, ill-health, or any other good reason, to abdicate in favour of his heir. This however is an entirely personal right which he cannot be compelled to exercise against his will. There is no mention of any special ceremonies observed at the accession of a new chief.

The chief, although hereditary and as such commanding great respect and influence, is bound to act in terms of the advice and resolutions of his councillors. Every tribe has a definite tribal council,

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1. Tindall (op.cit., 42) and, following him, Fritsch (Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, 365) state that the heir to the chieftainship is usually the youngest son. This is inaccurate. The notorious Jonker Afrikaner, who on account of his personal qualities was designated by his father Jager to succeed to the chieftainship of the Afrikaners (//Aixa //ain), was not the oldest son, and therefore in Hottentot eyes he was not entitled to become chief. The smaller part of the tribe supported him, but the majority did not, and in consequence the tribe was split up, the various families settling down in different places, while Jonker with his adherents later moved into South West Africa (Cf. C.Frey, "Jonker Afrikaner and his Time", J.S.W.A.Sci.Soc., I, p.19).
  2. Vedder, op.cit., 115. Cf. Hahn (Tsuni-Goam, p.19); "If a chief died, it often happened that his energetic wife became the gau-tas (contracted from gautaras), the ruling woman - i.e., the queen of the tribe - in place of the son who was not yet of age."

Raad, consisting of the chief ex-officio and of members elected at a mass meeting of the married men of the tribe. There is no information available as to the methods of election. The number of these elected councillors, Raden, varies from tribe to tribe. The Bethany Hottentots had twelve of them, the Swartboois nine, and the Witboois from fifteen to twenty. From their midst are appointed the senior officials of the tribe, such as the sub-chief (Onderkapitein), magistrate (magistraat), war commandant, chief field cornet (hoof Feldkornet), and later, as Christians, the elders of the church (Ouderlings). In addition to this formal council, the older members of the tribe, qualified by age and experience, have the right to be consulted on all important public affairs, and they can act as assessors at the deliberations of the councillors. The chief cannot disregard their opinions, otherwise internal dissensions and even tribal disruption may ensue.<sup>1</sup> They serve to give more emphasis to the popular voice in determining public policy.

The council is the tribal executive. It makes wars and treaties, rules and regulations for the public conduct, and deals with the internal and economic affairs of the tribe, as well as with inter-tribal relations. In its proceedings the vote of the chief is generally of no greater weight or value than that of any one of the elected councillors, although his expressed

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1. Cf. the illustrations given of this by von Francois, op. cit. 97, 218.

opinion bears great influence and probably ensures a majority for him in most cases, while if he is a man of strong character he may even succeed in dominating the others. The council is also the main court of justice. Civil litigants and criminals, who are usually dealt with by the magistrate or the sub-chiefs acting as the chief's deputies, can resort to it as a final court of appeal. Cases of serious import or serious charges involving possibly a sentence of capital punishment are generally dealt with by it as a court of first instance. In such cases an appeal lies to the chief in person, who has the right to exercise his prerogative of mercy. No capital punishment can legally be executed before he has expressly given his sanction.

In large tribes each outlying village or kraal is governed by a sub-chief (onderkapitein) appointed as deputy of the chief of the whole tribe by the chief-in-council. Often enough this sub-chief is one of the nearer relatives in the male line of the chief. He has his own local councillors, court and officials, and can deal with all matters arising within his jurisdiction. There is always an appeal from his court to the main tribal council, although as a rule the chief never deals with such an appeal without first referring it back to him for report.

Apart from the fact that the chief is generally the wealthiest man in the tribe, he is not distinguished in any special way from his subjects. At most his hut is somewhat bigger, and at communal meals he receives the best portion of meat, viz. the hind



quarters.<sup>1</sup> Shaw, writing in 1821, says also that the chief claims a part of every animal secured in hunting; moreover, on the death of his wife, every adult man has to give him a cow, which, however, is returned after a certain number of years. The chief also keeps a large quantity of milk at the door of his hut, which he distributes to the poor and the needy.<sup>2</sup> None of these statements have been confirmed by later writers, with the exception of the tribute of game, which, as we have seen, is also mentioned by Wandres. Kohler's informant, on the other hand, explicitly denies that such a tribute is paid, and this would seem to be confirmed, at least as far as more recent times are concerned, by the statements of several other writers that the chief receives no tribute from his subjects. Nor does he levy any taxes, although in case of war or other extensive undertakings, collections might be held or requisitions made, to which every tribesman has to contribute according to his means. The fines levied in criminal cases, however, go as a rule to the chief. He can also accept a share of the damages awarded in a civil dispute, but there is no obligation on the successful litigant to pay. It is regarded merely as a voluntary gift for the trouble taken, and the same is probably true in those cases mentioned by Wandres, where the chief regulates inheritance. In co-operation with his council the chief can also impose orders upon his

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1. Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 305.

2. B. Shaw, in Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, 1821, pp. lxxvi-lxxvii; cf. Idem, Memorials of S. Africa, 1840, 42.

people, which as a rule are implicitly obeyed. He can, e.g., cause certain grazing grounds to be vacated, in order that they may be rested. He has also the right to use the labour of the people for public purposes, such as mending roads, building schools or churches, opening up water and furrows, and so on. All adult males further are liable to be called out for military duty at any time.

It may be added that, according to Hahn, a Hottentot chief is expected "to have an open house and an open hand", and the worst that can be said of a chief is that he is gei //are, i.e., "greatly-left-handed or stingy". "It happens sometimes", Hahn even says "that another man is made chief, who is expected to be more liberal".<sup>1</sup> There is no instance on record of such a ~~disposal~~<sup>deposition</sup> having taken place, and the statement seems contradictory to the genuine respect attached by the Hottentots to the hereditary rights of the chief. "Our chiefs are not made," they say, "they are given by God." And Eduard Lambert, when on the death of his brother Andries the German authorities wished him to act as chief of the Gei-Khaffan, the rightful heir, <sup>Nannasse</sup> ~~Nannasse~~ Lambert, being several hundred miles away, is said to have declined the proposal at first, with the words:<sup>2</sup>  
 "One has to be a Chief even before you are born".

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1.Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 17; cf. Wandres, "Die Khoi-khoi", 322.

2.Report on the Natives of S.W.Africa, 72, 81.

The implication in Hahn's statement that the chief has the special economic function of providing for his poorer subjects, is not borne out by any other writer, apart from Shaw's remark about the milk, but it is a point that does not seem to have been specially investigated.

As will have been noticed, the salient feature in the old political system of the Hottentots has been preserved in the modified system evolved by the Naman under European influence, viz., the fact that the conduct of public affairs, including the administration of justice, lay in the hands of the older men generally and that the chief had no distinctive authority. The principal modifications are the substitution of a limited elected council for the informal council of clan headsmen, and the appointment of various public officials with special functions corresponding to their Dutch titles. This differentiation in governmental functions does not appear to have existed at all in purely native conditions.

It must also be mentioned that to some of the Orlam chiefs, whose military powers had made them feared and respected throughout the country, the temptation to become autocrats was very strong, and few could resist it. They generally contrived therefore either to act quite independently of the council, which they treated as a mere advisory body, or, as in the case of Hendrik Witbooi, chief of the /Hobesen, they dispensed with elections altogether and nominated their own councils and officials, thus ensuring that their own trusty friends and supporters were placed in

power. Hendrik Witbooi was a warrior chief of outstanding ability and enterprise, to whom democratic government was very irksome and distasteful. At the height of his power he styled himself the "Lord of the Water and the Head Chief of Great Namaqualand", letters addressed to him as "King of Namaqualand" received immediate and gracious attention; and to his death he was a firm believer in the "divine right of kings", claiming that he owed responsibility to no one except "God the Father in Heaven".<sup>1</sup>

The following "Proclamation", published by him in the early days of 1891, is of some interest, because it gives an idea of the system of government existing among all the Nama tribes at the time of the German annexation of South West Africa. The only difference was that while Hendrik Witbooi was an autocrat to a certain extent, the other chiefs, like Willem Christian of the Bondelswarts and Simon Kooper of the Franzmann Hottentots, relied more on popular approval and the support of their councillors than on their royal prerogatives.

Hoornekranz,  
3rd. January, 1891.

Beloved Community of Hoornekranz,

To-day I make fresh appointments for the New Year. I have caused certain alterations to be made in the Civil and Church laws. I have also appointed new officials according to the times and the promptings of the Lord. Therefore have I appointed younger men, like children who are being trained and when the time is accomplished, they will be taken into full membership. For this reason I have relieved some of the older officials and have substituted young men in full authority of the laws, in order that they may publicly perform their authorised duties. I have however re-appointed some of the old

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1. Some illuminating examples of his correspondence are published by von Francois, op. cit., 126 seq., 219-220; Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 83 sqq., 96; Kreft, "The Diary of Hendrik Witbooi", 55-61 passim.

officials as well, so that they may train and teach the younger team. I have also appointed two additional elders. The names of those appointed will be read to the community, and are as follows:-

Then follows a list of the names and of the offices to which they have been appointed. These posts were all honorary, and carried no salaries or emoluments. The seven chief appointments are those of sub-chief, magistrate, war commandant, chief field cornet, and three senior councillors. The remainder (there are thirty in all) include the "overseer of the whole village", a "second magistrate", second, third and fourth field cornets, elders, junior councillors, messengers of the court and of the elders, a "corporal" and a "second corporal". The "corporal", in spite of his humble designation, was really the quartermaster-general in the field!<sup>1</sup>

#### Law and Justice.

The political institutions of the Hottentots must be regarded from one aspect as a means of welding the tribe into an integral unity, and thus giving it the cohesion and solidarity which enable it to present a united front to the outside world in defence and in aggression. They serve also to maintain law and order within the tribe. Through its agencies of government the activities of the community are organised, and the harmonious co-operation in public affairs which this produces secures the orderly functioning of communal life. Various other mechanisms contribute towards the

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1. Quoted in Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 73. A similar list of officials for 1888, differing slightly from the above, is appended to a letter quoted by von Francois, op. cit., 220.

achievement of the same end. Throughout our discussion of the social and economic life of the people we have noted the existence of numerous observances, conventions and rules. These regulate all the normal relations between persons, as in marriage with its conditions and implications, the status of husband and wife and of their respective families, kinship, exogamy, descent and succession, chieftainship, the exercise of power, economic activities and co-operation, and between persons and objects, as in property and inheritance. All the manners and customs of the Hottentots, therefore, their moral and religious precepts, their fashions, conventional standards of etiquette and rules of social intercourse, make for law and order in the community. They determine the personal relations between people, and their existence is the basis of uniformity and cohesion in social and economic life.

These rules are not formulated in any legal code. Some of them have come into being as decisions of the tribal council in judicial trials, while in more recent times others have even been deliberately enacted, as for example in the case of the various proclamations issued by such chiefs as Hendrik Witbooi. Legislation of the latter type, however, does not appear to have occurred in the original conditions of Hottentot life. The laws of the Hottentots are to a very considerable extent inherent in the social organisation and usages of the people. They have developed as a result of the more or less unconscious adjustment of personal relations, as a product of economic

activities, and so on, and have become accepted as norms or standards of life and conduct which are binding as such on the community. Their existence, in other words, is derived from the authority of tradition and precedents.

The orderly functioning of communal life demands that all members of the community must conform to these rules or norms of conduct. The individual, that is, must be adapted to social needs and standards. This involves the operation of social control, a process found everywhere in society. Here again we meet with the existence of moulding forces similar in function to those already noted among the Bushmen. The Hottentot child at birth comes into a society where there are already established manners and customs, definite forms of behaviour and organisation. In the household of his parents, where he remains until marriage, in his relations with other people, especially with his kindred, and in the company of his coevals the rules of social behaviour are impressed upon him. He falls more or less unconsciously into acting and thinking as is expected of him, and in this way comes to conform to the existing social pattern. Moreover, first under the direct guidance of his mother, and later in tending the flocks and in hunting, he is initiated into the economic life of his people, while a girl gradually learns to perform the household duties proper to her sex. At puberty, above all, he receives a definite course of instruction which conveys to him the type of behaviour expected of him as a man. Later, as an adult,

he may attend and even participate in the conduct of judicial trials, and in this way have the methods of procedure, the traditions and the usages of his people brought home clearly to him. Throughout his life his activities and sentiments are thus being directed and moulded into conformity with the social norms making for the law and order of the community.

The non-fulfilment or breach of any recognised norms of behaviour is punished by sanctions of various kinds, which consequently must also be regarded as means of ensuring observance of the social standards. Some of these sanctions are of a purely ritual nature. Foremost in this category are those underlying the whole conception of Inau. Here we have an elaborate series of observances and avoidances, pertaining to all the critical stages of life, whose infringement is followed automatically by death, sexual disease, diminished fertility or some similar evil result. There are also various usages connected with hunting, which according as they are observed or violated, bring good or ill fortune respectively. The rites performed at visiting old tribal localities, and other rites to be noticed later in connection with the ghosts of dead people, must in the same way be observed in order to avoid the sickness and even death which may be caused by these ghosts. In all these cases departure from a prescribed line of conduct leads automatically to evil consequences, without any direct interference on the part of the community.

Sometimes compliance with the social standards



of behaviour is secured through unorganised social pressure. Selfishness in regard to food, for example, exposes a man to scorn, a form of chastisement to which the Hottentots, like many other primitive peoples, are said to be sensitive; similarly stealing is regarded as a disgrace, and the thief, apart from other punishment, is cut by everyone and becomes almost an outcast. Other types of norm, again, are sanctioned by the organised reaction of the community acting as a whole or through its authorities or certain groups or individuals. Thus, as we have seen, a man who violates certain prohibitions is expelled from the company of "doro" men, and may not again eat together with them until he has been purified. In other cases the blood feud comes into operation, or again the culprit may be tried and punished by the judicial authorities of the community, i.e., by the tribal council. This last type of procedure has been developed among the Hottentots to a far greater extent than among the Bushmen, where indeed it cannot be said to exist at all.

Personal disputes or grievances of a minor character were settled among the Colonial Hottentots<sup>1</sup> by the two parties themselves, either in verbal argument or more often by means of a hand-to-hand fight. No one took any heed of such quarrels except the women, who in order to prevent their resulting in serious hurt or even manslaughter would intervene between the two

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1. Kolb, Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung, 136-139, 46; Fritsch, op. cit. 322.

men and ask them to stop. It was regarded as a serious disgrace if the men ignored this request and still continued to fight.<sup>1</sup> In more serious cases the matter was referred to a court consisting of the "captain" and all the adult men of the kraal, with the exception of those directly affected by the dispute. As soon as any complaint was made to the "captain", say about the disputed possession of cattle, he summoned all the men to a convenient open space outside the kraal, where they all sat round in a circle. The plaintiff and the defendant, together with their witnesses, were then given full hearing, each party conducting his own case. The councillors then thoroughly examined the statements on both sides, and after discussion the decision was reached by the vote of the majority. The verdict was pronounced by the headman, and the party in whose favour it went obtained full possession of the disputed property. In cases of assault and bodily hurt the same procedure was followed, and damages awarded in cattle, in proportion to the injury received.

Offences such as murder, manslaughter, treason, theft, incest, adultery and sodomy, which were regarded as crimes punishable by death, were also tried before this council. As soon as a man was known or suspected to have committed such an offence, every member of the kraal considered it a duty to arrest him at the first opportunity, unless he succeeded in making his escape. Once captured he was safely held until the council

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1. Some light perhaps is thrown upon this statement by the fact that among the Naman a woman can generally be relied upon to stop any fight in which her brother, either own or classificatory, is taking part. The sanction here is the respect due to a sister by her brother (v. above. p. 328 )

assembled, which was always as soon as possible. The councillors sat in a circle, and the accused was placed in the centre, where he could hear all that was said and himself be heard by everybody around. The accuser then stated the case, and produced all his proofs, supported by witnesses. The prison in return offered all means of defence the case would suggest, advancing any contradictory evidence at his command, and his answer was listened to with undivided attention. The matter was then thoroughly discussed by the councillors, the verdict being arrived at by the decision of the majority. If the accused was acquitted, a few head of cattle from the herds of his accusers were adjudged to him as compensation. But if he was found guilty, and the headman, in whose hands the final sentence lay, pronounced in favour of death, the sentence was immediately executed. The headman, as chief executioner, rushed towards the criminal and felled him to the ground with a heavy blow of the kirri; all the other men then attacked him with violence until he was beaten to death.<sup>1</sup> No distinction was made in the execution of this sentence according to the status, wealth, age or sex of the criminal; the headman himself, if found guilty of such a crime, would be dealt with in the same way. The body of the criminal, however, was buried with all the customary formalities observed in normal deaths; his property was inherited as usual by his heirs, and no stigma attached to them

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1. An eye-witness account of such an execution in which four men were beaten to death, is quoted by Molsbergen, *op.cit.*, I, 172-173.

as a result of his crime and his fate. There is good reason for supposing that this corporal punishment was not necessarily carried to extremes, but could be made more or less severe, according to the nature of the case and the decision of the council.

There was no appeal from the verdict of the kraal council, either in civil disputes or in crimes. The main tribal council, consisting of the chief and the kraal headmen, dealt only with disputes between different kraals. It was summoned by the chief on receipt of any complaint, and its proceedings were conducted along the same lines as those of the kraal council.

The description given above can hardly be regarded as exhaustive or even as entirely trustworthy. Its interest lies mainly in the comparison it affords with the conduct of trials among the Naman, about whose legal usages we have more adequate and reliable information.<sup>1</sup> The local kraal councils can deal with civil disputes and minor offences, and impose corporal punishments or fines; but there is always an appeal from their judgments to the full tribal council, to which all cases of importance are also referred as a court of first instance. No special distinction is made in procedure between civil and criminal cases. The judges in all important trials are the elected councillors of the tribe. The eldest of these councillors

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1. The fullest accounts are given by Wandres, "Weber Rechtsbewusstsein und Recht...d.Hottentotte", 270-276; Vedder, "The Nama", 142-144; Kohler, "Das Recht.d. Hottentotten", 352-357; cf. also Hahn, "Die Nama Hottentotten", 306, von Francois, "Nama und Damara, 221; Wandres, "Die Khoi-Khoi", 324-25; Report on the Natives of S.W.A, 73-76 passim.

presides over the proceedings; the others are his assessors (nu-aogu), and can take part freely in the examination of the litigants or accused and of the witnesses. One of them also acts as public prosecutor, another as advocate for the defence (gowaba-aob), intercessor). The post of councillor, as we have seen, is honorary and carries no salary, but certain court fees are levied in trials. The complainant must deliver a couple of fat goats in advance in order to have his case heard, and these provide food for the judges as long as the court sits. The defendant also may be required to contribute a similar fee, even before the verdict is arrived at.

The initiative in any legal proceedings lies in the hands of the complainant. Self-help is not permitted. He must first lodge his grievance with the official known as the magistrate. The latter then summons the councillors, who assemble together on the day fixed for the hearing. The court meets as a rule in the open, under the shade of some tree, where all squat in a circle. The litigants or accused and the witnesses are then summoned by the public messenger, who carries with him a long stick as sign of his function. With this, on entering the hut of the defendant, he knocks three times on the ground, without speaking a word. Then he goes away as silently as he came. The defendant now knows that his presence is required. If he refuses to appear, which in fact seldom happens, or fails to send an acceptable excuse in time, several strong men are sent to take and bring him by force. For defying the summons he then receives a

special flogging. If he is accused of some crime, and is suspected of meditating flight, he is brought before the court with a riem round his neck and his hands tied behind his back. Witnesses who are summoned are obliged to appear, and if they do not are fetched and punished in the same way as the defendant. The latter must stand or kneel in the centre of the court circle, but if a woman is permitted to sit. The complainant stands or squats near by till he is called upon to speak, and the summoned witnesses must all remain within a reasonable distance.

The magistrate now states the case to the council. The chairman next calls on the complainant to speak, then on the defendant and on all the witnesses one after the other. One witness as a rule is sufficient, but more are desirable. No hearsay evidence is allowed; only what the witness has himself seen and heard is admitted as valid. False testimony is severely condemned, and the perjurer is punished according to the mischief he causes. Examination and cross-examination are conducted by the councillors. They rarely employ direct questions, but prefer to arrive at their point by circumlocutions. When they have probed the matter to their satisfaction, or when the accused has either confessed or been reduced to helpless silence by all the cross-questioning, both parties, together with the witnesses, have to withdraw to a distance. The case is then discussed among themselves by the councillors, and judgment is arrived at unanimously, if possible. Only

in cases where there is no consensus of opinion is the matter referred to the chief, whose casting vote settles the question finally. The verdict, which opens with the words: "In the name of the chief's law", is pronounced by the chairman, and is forthwith executed. Sentences of death are carried out by the official executioner, who is appointed from time to time by the council, and by his assistant; if corporal punishment has been decided upon, the nou-aob, "hitting-man", gets into action; while any fines levied are collected by the magistrate. The costs of the action, in the form of goats paid as court fees, always fall on the losing party. If this is the defendant, he must also replace the goats delivered at the beginning of the case by the complainant.

No torture is employed in legal trials, nor are there any oaths or ordeals. Wandres describes, however, what he terms a sort of duel by warrant, which was sometimes resorted to in the past. This duel, higu, could take place with or without weapons. When the councillors were unable to secure harmony between the litigants, the oldest of them took some sand in the palm of each hand, which he held out before the two men, or else he poured a little sand on to their shoulders. If the challenge was accepted, the sand was brushed away; but if one of the men refused it he was branded as a coward and held to be in the wrong. Where both accepted the challenge, the councillors formed a ring around them. They then attacked each other with their <sup>fists</sup> ~~elms~~, kicked, wrestled and bit, until one of them was overpowered. Reconciliation followed. The victor slaughtered a fat sheep, which was eaten by him and his

opponent, with the councillors as guests. Before the feast the two men shook hands in a friendly manner, and as sign of their reconciliation they ate together out of one dish. Finally there followed a general shaking of hands. The duel with weapons was of a more serious nature, and might even result in death. Its most usual cause was a dispute over a woman. If reconciliation could not be brought about by the councillors, the two men left the court in a rage, and fought with their, kirris or spears until one of them was stretched senseless, perhaps even dead, on the ground. The victor was not punished, and in some cases indeed he also inherited the property of his unfortunate opponent.<sup>1</sup>

Another resort sometimes employed was divination. If the council was unable to decide the guilt of a person, the diviner, ku aob, was called in for assistance. He had with him two small strips of leather, kura, one with a copper bead, the other with an iron bead, attached to the end. The former was regarded as male, the latter as female. These leather strips the diviner beat on the flat of his hand or on the ground, at the same time invoking the oracle with the words: mi, mi, amae, mi, homits gao, ota mi ais ina khau tsi! Tell, speak, tell the truth, if you lie, then I will burn you in the fire!" Then he jerked the

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1. Wandres, op. cit., 272-273; cf. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 105-106.



strips from his hand into the circle which the council with the litigants or the accused had formed about him. The ends to which the beads were attached had to point towards the culprit. Wandres explains the working of this method by the firm belief which the Nama even at the present time have in this oracle. The diviner, a skilled reader of men, carefully observes the litigants or the accused while busy with his strips. The real culprit, like all the others, believes in the efficacy of the oracle, and therefore cannot hide his apprehensions, with the result that the diviner can readily recognise his man, and with a twist of his hand divert the strips towards him.

The main penal sanctions among the Naman are flogging, fines and death. A sentence of death can nowadays only be passed by the European administration and its duly-constituted law-courts, to which all cases involving it must be referred. Punishment in the native courts is therefore confined to flogging and to fines payable as a rule in goats. There are no fixed rules for the degree of punishment, but certain pragmatic principles are observed. Offences against the community are more severely punished than those against individuals. Accidental misdeeds are not regarded as crimes; but unsuccessful attempts meet with punishment, while self-defence, although not sufficient ground for acquittal, produces amelioration of the sentence. In-

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1. Wandres, op.cit., 273.

corrigible offenders are expelled and their property confiscated; they could even be killed. The confirmed cattle thief has to expect harder punishment at every conviction, until ultimately, in the old days, the death sentence was decided upon; nowadays the matter is then referred to the law courts of the Europeans.

Theft as a rule is punished by flogging, administered with the sjambok, and the thief must also make two-fold restitution. Sexual crimes, such as incest, adultery and rape, are, as we have seen, punished by fines, flogging, confiscation of property or even by death, according to the nature and circumstances of the offence. A man who insults or slanders the chief or a councillor is flogged till he becomes unconscious; if he slanders a dead man he is fined one or two head of small stock, and if the offence is repeated he receives fifty lashes and must pay a fine in cattle. The infliction of mild bodily injuries meets with a fine, and the culprit must in addition support the victim and his family until the former is well again; if the injured man is himself the cause of the strife, the man who beat him goes free. In severe bodily injuries leading to death, it is specially investigated if the wounds were deliberately caused or not. In the latter case all the culprit's property is given to the relatives of the deceased, and he receives a severe flogging as well, unless his relatives ransom him by paying a heavy fine. In the former case he was sentenced to death. The death sentence was also imposed for high

treason, deliberate murder and incorrigible stealing. Incorrigible thieves were stoned or beaten to death, but a murderer was killed in the same way as he had caused the death of his victim. If by shooting, then he was also shot; if by stabbing, then he was stabbed; if by beating, then he was also beaten to death, and so on. Wandres states also that a witch-doctor who by his magic had caused the death of a man was killed and his body burned, but this lacks confirmation. Attempted homicide punished by a flogging of from a hundred to a hundred and fifty lashes, unless the intended victim is the chief, when in former days the culprit was sentenced to death.

In the infliction of these punishments, the poorer members of the tribe, the servants and other inferiors usually come off worst. This is a point made by several reliable observers, and emphasised by Vedder, when he says: "Since South West has become a colony, and a mandated territory, confidence in their own jurisdiction has decreased even where it has been left in their hands. They do not regard their own judges as impartial enough to administer justice to the complainant or accused. This is no wonder! As a result of their close cohabitation it is very difficult for a judge to administer justice quite regardless of the person and his property".<sup>1</sup> The more wealthy and influential people on the whole are treated less severely, and formerly they could even escape the death sentence for murder by a payment of cattle to the chief. But the

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1. Vedder, op. cit., 143.

possible shielding of murderers in this way always exposed them to the blood feud. If through favouritism or for political reasons a murderer was acquitted by the council, the nearest relative of the victim had the right to take the law into his own hands and to kill the murderer.

Blood vengeance (//kharab) for the death of a near relative was a sacred duty to the Hottentots. A son avenged for the death of his father, a brother his brother, and if there was no son to take vengeance for the death of a woman her husband was obliged to do so. Killing in such a case was no crime, and neither the chief nor the council had the right to intervene and punish the avenger for his act. The case is cited of the well-known traveller and explorer Charles John Anderson, who about 1861 shot an Afrikaner Hottentot in self-defence, so he alleged, near Windhoek. Anderson reported the matter to the chief Jonker Afrikaner, and as a result he was brought before the chief and tribal council for trial. The council, after hearing the evidence, was satisfied, rightly or wrongly, that Anderson had exceeded his rights and had gone too far. But, in view of the fact that he was a European and a British subject, the chief was reluctant to punish him. So, "I release you," said Jonker, "but", he added, "according to our law the brother of Hartebeest will kill you and must kill you, so flee for your life".<sup>1</sup>

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1. Report on the Natives of S.W.A., 74.

In all probability the blood feud was formerly very extensively practised, especially in connection with the clan organisation. We know from accounts left to us by travellers among the Naman in the early part of last century that at that time the vendetta was still in full force among them, and the chief was unable in the interests of the tribe as a whole to prevent two clans from carrying out vengeance one on the other, or to force them to accept compensation. Alexander gives an account of such a vendetta among the Bondelswarts when he was travelling among them in 1836, and in the Rhenish Mission Record for 1856 there is an account of another vendetta at Bethany among the !Aman Hottentots.<sup>1</sup> According to Wandres the feud ceased when revenge for the death had been taken, but other accounts imply that it was kept up as a continuous vendetta. Hahn states that in case of accidental death the relatives of the deceased would demand compensation in cattle. The murderer also had to slaughter a cow for a purification meal to which he invited his relatives and friends and those of the deceased. He himself was not allowed to eat of the meat, which was consumed by the guests, but was smeared with the blood as a sign of expiation. The matter was then regarded as ended. Von Burgsdorff, on the other hand, says that the blood feud was exercised even when the death was accidental, and that the deed could in no way be compounded. Deliberate murder always provoked blood vengeance. The nearest male relative

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1. A. W. Hoernle, "The Social Organisation of the Nama", 16, quoting Alexander, op. cit., 1, 187, cf. 211; and Berichte der Rheinischen Mission, 1856, 274.

of the dead man had to seek out the murderer and kill him. If the murderer himself could not be got at, any of his clansmen, preferably a close relative could be killed in his stead. If the avenger fell in the fight, his next relative had to carry on the feud; while if there were no relative to avenge the murdered man, his clansmen would feel it an obligation to do so.<sup>1</sup> The formal trial and punishment of a murderer by the tribal Council is probably an institution of later days, but we have not enough information about the blood feud to determine the exact relation between the two forms of dealing with homicide.

#### Relations with Other Tribes.

It has already been shown, in the course of our discussion of the social organisation and economic life of the Hottentots, that their nomadic pastoral life, conditioned by the need of grass and water for their herds, compelled them to live and move in compact, often widely-separated communities. As soon as any group became so large that permanent cohesion and common movement proved impossible or even inconvenient, a swarm was of necessity thrown off, which moved to a distance in order to acquire a new pasture of sufficient extent for its use. In this way, for example, the members of a Nama tribe would become scattered over the country in smaller groups, each consisting of a clan or of some part of a clan. Such an off-shoot might continue to

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1. Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 306; Von Burgsdorff, in Kehler, loc. cit.; Wandres, op.cit., 276.

regard itself at first as part of the parent tribe, but as it gradually increased in numbers and strength it would tend to claim independence and ultimately win acknowledgment as a separate tribe.

Thus, as we have seen, the seven principal tribes of the Naman are all traditionally descended from one line of ancestors, although in spite of this claim to a common ancestry the tribes have for a long time been independent of one another. But in 1836 the //Haboben were still part of the people owing obedience to the !Gami /nun chief, while as late as 1855 the chief of the Gei //Khauan expected the //Khau /goan to obey his orders concerning migrations etc., although they did not always do so.<sup>1</sup> The Gei //Khauan are acknowledged by all the others to be the senior tribe among them in line of descent. This acknowledgment, according to Hahn, formerly took the form of a tribute sent annually to the chief of this tribe by all the other Nama chiefs. In 1856, even the Korana chief Pofadder came to do homage to the Gei //Khauan chief Oasib, acknowledging that his tribe, the "Springboks", were a branch of the Gei //Khauan. The last tribute of this kind, which consisted generally in a heifer, buchu, spears, copper or iron beads, and milk pails,<sup>2</sup> was paid in 1863.

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1. A. W. Hoernle, "Social Organisation of the Nama", 5, quoting Alexander, op. cit., 187, 197, and Berichte der Rheinischer Mission, 1855, 18.

2. Hahn, Tsuru Goam, 97.

The official records of the Cape and the accounts of the early Dutch travellers show the existence among the Colonial Hottentots of the same tendency for groups to branch off and arrogate to themselves the title of separate tribes. Many of the tribes, at the time when they first came in contact with the Dutch, consisted of several distinct divisions, more or less loosely connected together, although all tending to become independent in course of time. Of the local groups found by the Dutch in the immediate vicinity of Table Bay, all, whether Goringhaiqua or Korachouqua, were originally members of one tribe, of which Gogosoa was regarded as the principal chief. This whole tribe, again, seems at one time to have been dependent on the Kochoqua, from whom it subsequently broke away, as was also the case with the Chariguriqua. The Kochoqua themselves in 1652 were found divided into two distinct branches, the senior under a chief named Oedaso, who considered himself paramount, and the other under Gonnema.<sup>1</sup>

In the same way the Afrikaners (//Aixa //ain), an Orlam tribe, are said to be an old branch of the present !Aman or Bethany Hottentots (Amaqua or Chamaqua of the Cape Records), who formerly lived between the Berg and Olifants Rivers in Cape Colony. The !Aman again are a branch of the /Khuaan (Chauqua of the Cape Records), who lived originally in what is now the dis-

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1. Stow, Native Races of S. Africa, 241-243; cf. Molsbergen, op.cit., I passim; Theal, History of S. Africa before 1795, vol. II, passim.



trict of Worcester in the Cape. The Amraal Hottentots (Gei /Khauan) and the Berseba Hottentots (Hei/Khauan) are also derived from this tribe, as their names indicate.<sup>1</sup> It appears from the early records that the greater number of the Colonial Hottentot tribes were more or less connected with the /Khauan, and acknowledged that tribe as paramount over them. Its principal branch in the middle of the seventeenth century was the Chainoqua, whose chief Soesoa or Sousa visited the Dutch settlement in 1660. Of his reception there by the other Hottentots Stow says, paraphrasing the official records: "Sousa was held in such awe by those of other clans that neither Oedasoia nor any of his subjects dared come to trade so long as he remained near the fort. They made way for him, and waited upon him with presents of many cattle, to show the respect they owed to the highest king. That his authority was not merely nominal was shown by the fact of his interference in a quarrel between Choro, the chief of the 'Kora-chouqua, and Gonnema, the captain of a branch of the Cochoqua. They had parted in anger, the former having cunningly taken away the wife of the latter. War was imminent between them, until Sousa, the paramount chief, interfered, and threatened to degrade the one who was in the wrong. Such an acknowledgment of his supremacy by the chiefs of the other tribes would make it seem highly probable that the one over which he ruled represented the main trunk of the Hottentot race, from which all the

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goam, 96-97, 19.

others have been offshoots."<sup>1</sup>

The early Dutch records throw some light on the political inter-relations of the Colonial Hottentot tribes. The headmen or "captains" of divisions not long formed recognised the supremacy in rank of the head of the community from which they had branched off, and acknowledged him as their paramount chief, but unless he happened to be a man of stronger character than the others he exercised no real power over them. The petty chiefs, or heads of the local groups or clans, were commonly jealous of each other, and only united their strength in case of extreme danger to all, while on occasion they might even fight amongst themselves. There appear to have been constant jealousies and quarrels between them and between the tribes, with occasional raids upon each other's cattle and eloping with one another's wives. "This latter amusement," says Stow, perhaps exaggerating somewhat, but having a real foundation for his remark, "seems to have been a common occurrence among them, and thus became an endless cause of turmoil and inter-tribal feuds."<sup>2</sup> Often the weaker tribes were reduced to great poverty and distress. New combinations would then be formed, and the victors of one year frequently became the vanquished of the next; but the bonds of cohesion were frail and even a slight shock was usually sufficient to break up the alliance - an event repeatedly noted in the relations of the Hottentots with the early Dutch settlers.

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1. Stow, op. cit., 243-244; cf. Molsbergen, op. cit., 1 40-41.

2. Stow, op. cit., 241.

The same capricious and unstable element runs through the history of the Nama tribes and their relations towards one another. On the one hand, one finds a good deal of intermarriage taking place between those tribes which happen to be near one another, and a great deal of visiting between the members of families so connected is always going on. Yet, on the other hand, there has never been sufficient feeling of solidarity between the tribes for the Nama to organise themselves against a common enemy even when the danger was exceedingly great. Always one tribe has been played off against the others by all other peoples with whom they have come in conflict. There are many instances in their history in which two tribes have made an agreement with one another for some common object, but always such agreements have come to naught. There is even an interesting document, signed by most of the Nama and Orlam chiefs agreeing to sink all differences and to unite against their common enemy, the ovaHerero, but the agreement was never actually put into practice. Even the bonds which held the clans together to form a tribe were never very strong, still less was <sup>there</sup> any possibility for the tribes to be welded together to form a nation.

Visitors as a rule can pass freely from one tribe to another. Such visits were common amongst the Hottentots themselves, even in the early days, especially between families related by marriage. There is no men-

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1. A.W.Hoernle, op. cit., 24.

tion of any distinctive ceremonial reception accorded to these native visitors, apart from the special rite, recorded by Mrs. Hoernle, which serves to protect the stranger from the hostile ghosts of the place.<sup>1</sup> Organised trading visits from one Hottentot tribe to another do not appear to have occurred to any extent, if at all. But, as we have seen, both Bantu peoples and Bergdama would come to trade with the Naman, while from the beginnings of the European settlement white traders have moved freely among the Hottentots. No objection seems to have been raised as a rule to strangers coming in this way into the lands of the tribe. Only when misunderstandings arose or quarrels were provoked through high-handed treatment would trouble ensue. This happened in 1497, when Vasco da Gama, the first European to meet with the Hottentots, came into conflict with them in St. Helena Bay, and again in 1510, when Francisco d'Alemlida, late viceroy of Portuguese India, was killed with sixty-four of his men in a skirmish with the Hottentots of Table Bay. But on the whole the earliest travellers who, prompted by motives of trade or by curiosity, pushed on to previously unknown tribes, speak of friendly and even cordial reception.

In one instance at least there is a record of special usages governing the reception of strangers in more recent times. The missionary Hugo Hahn, who in 1844, visited Oasib, the Gei //Khaan chief, writes as

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1. cf. above p. 358-9.

follows: "I was received very cordially, and was also given a sheep for slaughter. There has existed in this tribe for some years a sort of police who see to it that every convenience is afforded to strangers, - Nama, Bastards or Europeans. When the traveller descends and outspans, special functionaries take his horse or his oxen, remove the saddle, give the animals water, lead them to pasture and at night bring them into safety from the lions. They take care that he receives enough milk, often also meat, as well as water and wood, and that he is not troubled by the children or other people. He is given a special mat hut, roomy and clean, in which he can rest. If he is alone, one of the men must sleep with him, who keeps the fire going or performs any other necessary services. For me a special sleeping place was prepared, as they know our aversion to lice. When the traveller wishes to depart, he informs one of the attendants, who tells the chief, and at the time indicated his ox or his horse is ready for him, even if it is in the middle of the night. No one thinks of demanding or giving payment. Probably," he goes on to say, "this is a renewal of some good old custom, as I do not know of its like in any of the other tribes." <sup>1</sup> Theophilus Hahn also speaks very highly of the great hospitality to strangers, but adds that if the guest does not ingratiate himself sufficiently, it may well happen that, once they have passed the boundaries of the tribe, his escort, be-

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1. C. Hugo Hahn, Tagebuch, 28 September, 1844, published in Moritz, "Die ältesten Reiseberichte über D.S.W.A.", Mitt.deuts. Schutzgeb., 29, 191.

lieving that they have now shifted the odium for the deed, may allow their avarice to come to the fore, and will plunder all his goods.<sup>1</sup> It is evident, however, that the Hottentots in general are friendly to strangers, and willingly allow them to pass through the land, even if permission has not first been obtained. There is none of that rigid insistence on territorial exclusiveness which has made the Bushmen fight shy of any intrusion upon their lands.

Where, however, parties of strangers entering the land wish to make use of it for pasturing their herds or for hunting, permission must first be obtained from the chief. This, as we have seen, is often given freely, while on the other hand a tribute may sometimes be demanded, as the Orlams found when they came to Great Namaqualand. At times permission may even be refused altogether, especially if there is not enough water or pasture for all. If encroachment nevertheless takes place, it leads almost inevitably to war. Quarrels over intrusions of this sort are recorded among the Hottentots from the earliest historical times, and are said to have been the most frequent cause of war between neighbouring tribes. Cattle-lifting, especially when the herds have been allowed whether by accident or design to stray over the border, deliberate damaging of another tribe's pasture by setting fire to the grass, and the abduction of women are mentioned also as common causes of dispute. Reprisals were sure to follow, and

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1. Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 305-306; cf. Fritsch, op.cit., 362.

when the one side sought to defend its possessions actual fighting took place. Some of the Colonial Hottentot tribes, as a result of such grievances, were almost perpetually at feud with each other, and many are the little wars between them which figure in the early Cape Records.

These wars do not seem to have been attended with much loss of life.<sup>1</sup> The weapons employed were the same as those used in hunting - the spear, bow and arrow, and the kirri. Before commencing hostilities the injured side might send messengers to their opponents, stating the wrongs of which they complained and demanding adequate satisfaction. If this was refused, all the men of the tribe, under the leadership of their chief, would meet at some appointed place, and proceed without further delay into the enemy's territory. As a rule, however, they preferred to attack by surprise, in order not to allow their opponents time enough to drive their cattle into security. They seized upon all the men, women and cattle that came in their way, and then retired with their booty before they could be attacked. Often enough they would swoop down upon the kraals, as in one of many similar recorded instances where a band of Little Namaqua and Grigiqua attacked a Kochoqua kraal near Saldanha Bay, killed the chief and as many of the men as they could get hold of, and carried off

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1. Theal, History of S.A. before 1795, vol. II passim; Kolb, op.cit., 142-148; Fritsch, op.cit., 323-4. Stow, op.cit. chaps. 14-16 passim.

women, children and cattle as booty.

If the enemy was prepared to receive them, both sides would first shoot at one another from a distance with their arrows, and then as the one showed signs of weakening the other would close up and the battle resolve itself into a disorder of hand-to-hand fights with the kirri and the spear. Sometimes the fighting-oxen would accompany the men, and when the chief thought the moment opportune, the beasts, goaded to fury, would be driven into the weakest ranks of the enemy, and in the havoc that ensued victory was assured.

One such battle as a rule ended the war. As soon as victory was obtained, the conquerors withdrew with their booty, and the defeated enemy, on coming together again, would send messengers to negotiate for peace and to make any necessary concessions. After the foundation of the Dutch settlement, the practice developed of requesting its commander to mediate in such cases, which for reasons of policy he was always willing to do; but Graevenbroeck describes a peace-making ceremony which he says was observed in fixed form among the Hottentots themselves. When peace was desired, the two sides came together at their boundary, and after they had agreed upon terms an ox was slaughtered with spears, and the corpse left a prey to wild animals. They then expressed the wish that whoever might break the compact should come to all possible harm, the fate implied being that he might perish pierced through just like the ox, and become the



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food of Vultures and wild beasts.<sup>1</sup>

The burning of huts or other destruction of property does not seem to have been usual in these wars. Nor as a rule were the dead dismembered or despoiled. They were left untouched where they fell, and the victors, after having buried their own fallen warriors, withdrew and permitted the vanquished also to bury their dead. At times, however, when excited by lust of plunder or in a spirit of revenge, the Hottentots could be savage and ferocious. They gave no quarter to their enemy, and mercilessly slaughtered all the prisoners that fell into their hands. Wikar states that among the tribes along the Orange River, the belly of a captive was ripped open while he was still alive, and his entrails were pulled out by hand. Sometimes, if the captive refused to beg for mercy, his genital organs were cut off and he was slapped with them on the mouth. An instance of this occurred while Wikar was travelling among these tribes, in a war between the "Kamingous" (probably the !Gami /nun) and the "Nanningais" (a group which cannot be identified). In a battle which lasted two days, thirteen of the Nanningais were killed with arrows, and about twenty severely wounded. They captured one of the Kamingou men, and in malicious revenge for the loss they had suffered treated him in the way just mentioned.<sup>2</sup> This is the only instance on record of abnormal cruelty to captives in purely Hottentot wars. It may be noted, however, that in 1850, in a war between the Afrikaners

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1. Graevenbrceck, "Oit den ouden Tijd", 369.  
 2. Wikar, op.cit., 93.

and the OvaHerero, a terrible massacre took place at Okahandja, in which many Herero men were slain, and numbers of their women were crippled by having their feet chopped off in order to obtain the copper rings<sup>1</sup> which they wore round their legs. But Jonker Afrikaner, the leader of the victorious Hottentots on this occasion, was an Orlam/|chief notorious for his ferocity. In none of the early records of inter-tribal wars among the Colonial Hottentots do we meet with instances of savagery comparable to|this.

Firearms and the horse naturally made a tremendous difference to Hottentot methods of fighting. In their wars amongst themselves, against the OvaHerero and later against the Germans, the Naman were able to conduct campaigns which often were protracted over several months or even a year or more. Their strength lay in guerilla warfare, to which the nature of their country readily lent itself.<sup>2</sup> Its vast surfaces, waterless wastes and difficult, rocky hills hindered pursuit by the enemy, and afforded safe refuge to the natives, familiar with every detail of their environment. The cattle which they drove with them afforded a standing subsistence, water could be found in remote spots or on rocky heights known only to the native herd or hunter, and an open kraal of bushes was ample shelter at night.

In attack the experience gained in hunting could readily be applied. "To the Hottentot," says Schultze,

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1. Vedder, op.cit. 119.

2. The fullest discussion of Nama methods of fighting are given by von Francois, op.cit., 132, 286, chaps 4-5 passim; Schultze, op.cit., 336-339.

"our troops are a form of game, which he hunts all the more confidently if he knows their habits from previous fights. While our soldiers are ever learning anew at the cost of many lives the Hottentot employs his old tactics. He lies in wait for the enemy at a waterhole, as formerly he awaited the zebra at the vlei; he fires upon a passing column from his rocky retreats, as he ambushed the springboks wandering in herds; he stalks round a weak patrol as round the gemsbok at dawn, and he surrounds a transport as he beats up the hares in an encircling drive to knock them down with the kirri."<sup>1</sup> They preferred above all to lay ambushes, especially in the vicinity of water-holes, since the enemy both needed the water and usually came to it weary. As a rule difficult spots were chosen to fight in, which afforded good cover and facilities for retreat, if necessary; or else the flat tops of high hills were occupied, whose last ascent was almost vertical. The leading ranks of the enemy were allowed to pass by or to approach very closely, and then a general volley was poured into their midst. Their natural colour allowed the Hottentots to make use of every possible cover, and rendered it difficult for the approaching enemy to discover the position they occupied. Signals were often given on pipes cut from the horn of the springbok. It was one of the duties of the sub-chief to ascertain if any post or water-hole which was being approached was occupied by the enemy. He rode round it reconnoitring, while his men lay hidden

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 337.

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near by, until a loud drawn-out note caused them to emerge. Short successive blasts, to be answered by the men lying opposite or to the side, were generally the pre-arranged signal for attack.

Their raiding expeditions, as illustrated in the many successful descents made by Hendrik Witbooi on the ovaHerero, were carried out with great skill and remarkable swiftness. He issued directions for the undertaking proposed only on the evening before he planned to set out. Then by forced marches he covered in two days the hundred miles or so which lay between him and Herero territory, after causing deliberately false reports as to the object of his expedition to be circulated among the OvaHerero. With overwhelming force he fell at dawn on their scattered villages, swept through a number of cattle posts, whose herdsmen were defenceless before his superior might, and drove away the cattle. This he did with remarkable adroitness, considering the great quantities which he lifted. One of his men would give a penetrating whistle, whereupon the cattle were surrounded and driven sharply in a certain direction. One or two horsemen then placed themselves at the head of the herds and conducted them *route well known to them; then joined by several more horsemen* without rest along a bulk of the men on foot, the cattle were escorted in forced marches by the most direct route to Hoornkranz, the headquarters of the tribe. The bulk of the horsemen remained behind to keep back the OvaHerero who in the meanwhile had gathered together. In regulating these retirements Hendrik was a real

master, and he seldom made a mistake. If there was a biggish village in the vicinity he would keep its inhabitants engaged until he knew that the stolen cattle had been driven far ahead, then he disappeared as swiftly as he had descended, and he always flung obstacles in the way of pursuit.

In retreat small parties were often posted at various spots to check the advance of the enemy; or, if the country was flat, the grass was set on fire, and the men disappeared behind the clouds of smoke. There was no orderly withdrawal. After a defeat the troops would scatter apart, to come together again later in small bands. The appointed place of assembly was not directly in line with the scene of battle, but to the side, sometimes even to the rear of the enemy. Their knowledge of the place and their colour, as well as their swiftness on horse or on foot, enabled them to find security; sometimes they even hid in the immediate vicinity, and they always, if possible, fled over stony ground, so as to avoid leaving tracks. At best the enemy might see in the distance horsemen and those on foot scattered over a wide surface between bushes and rocks; almost immediately afterwards all were disappeared, and effective pursuit was seldom possible.

Of the special usages connected with warfare, only a few isolated facts have been recorded. These almost all relate to what may loosely be termed war

magic. "If a party goes out on warlike expeditions", says Hahn, "a crow's head is burned and pounded and loaded into a gun. The gun is fired into the air, and they believe that as this powdered heart is blown into the air, in the same manner the enemies will fly and become faint-hearted, and they will disperse like timid crows." Elsewhere he mentions that the Korana have certain roots which they use as amulets. If a commando goes out, every man will put such roots into his pockets and into the pouch where he carries his bullets, believing that the arrows or bullets of the enemy will then have no effect, whereas his own will invariably prove destructive.<sup>1</sup> Schultze mentions another practice, which almost seems to be a fragment of what may have been a developed ceremonial performed preparatory to a war-like expedition. To steel himself to his bloody work, he says, any man who has not yet killed an enemy must drink the blood of a slaughtered animal before going out against the foe.<sup>2</sup>

Omens enter very largely into the life of the warrior. Sudden ringing of the ears or the flying of an insect into one's mouth is a sign of misfortune. A halo round the moon signifies that somewhere a decisive battle has been fought and the cattle of the vanquished driven off.<sup>3</sup> The eclipse of the moon is always considered a bad omen. Hunting parties, or an expedition

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1. Hahn, Tsuni Goa, 90, 82.  
 2. Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 339.  
 3. Schultze, loc. cit.

of war, will certainly return home. //Gaunabi ge dahe ha, they say, "we are overpowered by //Gauna"; and they commence to cry aloud, torob ni ha, //o ge ni, "war is approaching, we are going to die".<sup>1</sup> Dreams are usually regarded as of great import, and the faculty of seeing in them the future or events that are taking place at a great distance has driven many Hottentot leaders into taking a decisive step. Hendrik Witbooi, perhaps the greatest of the Nama warrior chiefs, was particularly susceptible to influences of this sort. He is said to have first received the idea of making himself the dominant native chief in South West Africa - which he strenuously strove to convert into reality - through a vision in which he saw all the Hottentot tribes united into one nation under his leadership, fighting against and annihilating the Herero.<sup>2</sup>

One other practice is mentioned by Hahn, which hints at something similar to the rites formerly observed in connection with big game hunting. "Bravery was highly esteemed, and girls used to meet the victorious heroes who returned to the kraals laden with booty, singing their praise. Such heroes had then to undergo a ceremony. The priest or !galaob cut certain marks on the chest of the brave man with a flint (sic) stone, and he received then on such an occasion a cognomen as Xama-!ganteb, Lion-killer, //Otsatamab, The One who cannot die, Aegu //ob, Destroyer of heroes, etc".

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 89.

2. Schultze, loc.cit.; Krefz, "The Diary of Hendrik Witbooi," J.S.W.Afr. Sci. Soc., II, 52.

3. Hahn, op.cit., 23-24.

Names of places and rivers up to this day, he adds, tell us of battles once fought, such as !Khami and !Khams, Battlefield, !Kho-//ca-tes, "You cannot catch me"; !Kho-toas, the last one caught; !Kxixas, peace; and !Huritamas, I am afraid".

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 23-24.



## VIII

## RELIGION AND MAGIC.

Death, Burial and Mourning.

In dealing with the social, economic and political life of the Hottentots, we have had occasion to describe in various connections ceremonies and beliefs of a ritual character. For example, all the observances and avoidances centring in the conception of Inau, as well as the rites and beliefs developed round hunting and war, really form part of the magico-religious or sacred aspect of Hottentot life. But they are so intimately associated with more profane activities that to discuss them separately would have been to divorce them from their proper context in native life, and thus to overlook their real significance. The beliefs and usages relating to death, on the other hand, lead more directly to a consideration of religion, since this supreme and final crisis in human life is one of the most important sources for the Hottentot conceptions of supernatural agencies.

The coming of death into the world is related by the Hottentots in a myth which varies but slightly from that told by the Bushmen. The Moon, it is said, once sent the louse to Men, saying, "Go to Men, and tell them, 'As I die and dying live, so you shall also die and dying live'." The louse started with the message, but on its way was overtaken by the hare, who asked: "On what errand are you bound?" The louse

repeated to him the message of the Moon. Then the hare said, "As you are an awkward runner, let me take the message," With these words he ran off, and when he reached Men, he said: "I am sent by the Moon to tell you, 'As I die and dying perish, in the same manner you shall also die and come wholly to an end'." Then he returned to the Moon, and told him what he had said to Men. The Moon angrily reproached him, saying, "Did you dare to tell the people a thing I did not say?", and taking up a piece of wood he struck the hare on the lip. Since that day the hare's lip is slit. There are several other variants of this myth, but in all of them the hare plays the part of the fateful messenger who distorts the promise of immortality sent to mankind by the Moon. Its flesh as a result is forbidden to men. "We are now angry with the hare," say the old Hottentots, "because he brought such a bad message, and therefore we dislike to eat his flesh."<sup>1</sup>

Death itself is attributed in many cases to the influence of the evil being //Gaunab, "whose greatest aim is to harm people and to destroy them", or to the /Hei /nun, ghosts of the dead, who chase living people or come to them in dreams and try to drag them off to the grave. The !gei aogu or magicians can also use their

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1. Native texts of the myth are published in Meinhof, Lehrbuch der Nama-Sprache, 170-171, and Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 448-449; translated versions in Wikar, op.cit., 118-119; Bleek, Reynard the Fox in S. Africa, 69-73; Kleinschmidt, ap. Moritz, "Die ältesten Reiseberichte über D.S.W.A.", Mitt, deuts. Schutzgeb., 28, 253.

power for evil, and thus cause people to sicken and die.<sup>1</sup>  
 The malice of ghosts or evil magicians seems in fact  
 to be by far the most common cause of death in Hottentot  
 eyes. Mrs. Hoernle even says definitely that "the Naman  
 considered that all sickness was caused either by //Gauab.  
 or the /Hei /nun. or by persons somehow in contact with  
 them, the witchcraft practitioners."<sup>2</sup> Sometimes, how-  
 ever, death will also follow automatically on the viola-  
 tion of certain ritual observances or avoidances, and  
 in such cases is apparently not linked up in any way  
 with supernatural beings or their human agents. Cold  
 water, for example, must be strictly avoided by a men-  
 struating woman or anybody else in the condition of Inau.  
 Commenting upon this regulation, Mrs. Hoernle says: "I  
 have had many instances which were given to me of  
 people who actually have died because they were obliged  
 to touch water when they should not have done so, and  
 their absolute belief in the danger is quite sufficient  
 to cause death in many instances."<sup>3</sup> It is obvious from  
 these beliefs that the Hottentots do not always consider  
 natural causes alone to be sufficient explanation for  
 death. At the same time one gets the impression that  
 such causes are not entirely disregarded, as for example  
 in the case of wounds, burns, falls, starvation, etc.,  
 which are known to cause death or disablement in a

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1. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, 85-86; A.W. Hoernle, "Social Value of Water among the Naman", 517-521 passim.
  2. Hoernle, op. cit., 520-521; cf. Hahn, op. cit., 87.
  3. Hoernle, "S.W.A. as a Primitive Culture Area", 27.

natural way. But no attempt appears to have been made to investigate in any detail how far and in what kinds of death purely natural causes may be admitted as sufficient explanation in themselves.

Dead people are as a rule disposed of by burial. The only other mode of disposal mentioned is exposure, which takes place only in a few special cases. Among the Colonial Hottentots, for instance, one of twins might be buried alive, or else placed on some exposed spot or in bushes to be destroyed by the elements or by wild animals.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, according to Hahn, "a man who is killed as a criminal, or who is slain according to the rules of the vendetta, or a slave killed by the master, or enemies killed in battle - all are left to the animals of the desert to be feasted upon, so that they will be entirely annihilated".<sup>2</sup> Such people who are devoured by vultures or hyenas are called //gauna //ora khoïn, i.e. people who died the //gauna death.

There is also the well-authenticated usage, found among the Hottentots as well as among the Bushmen, of abandoning elderly people to their fate. Kolb describes this practice rather more fully than do other writers. When old people become helpless or decrepit, he says, their eldest son or nearest relation applies to the people of the kraal for permission, which is never

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1. v. above. p. 320

2. Hahn, loc.cit.

refused, to relieve himself of the burden and to deliver the suffering old person from the miserable condition to which he is reduced. The son kills an ox or a few sheep to regale the men of the kraal, who take leave of their old neighbour. Then, on the appointed day, the old man or woman is placed on a riding ox, and, accompanied by a numerous escort is conducted to a small hut specially built for this purpose at some distance from the kraal. Here he is left alone, with a small quantity of provisions placed by his side, to die ultimately of starvation or to be devoured by wild beasts.<sup>1</sup> This account may not be quite accurate in all its details, but there is ample evidence to show that the exposure of old people in this way was common and widespread among all the Hottentots.<sup>2</sup> Hahn, inquiring into the reason for the practice, was told by the Naman that it was sometimes done by very poor people who had not food enough to support their aged parents. "But sometimes," he adds, "even if there was food enough, and if people, especially women, who had cattle and milk-cows of their own, gave suspicion that they were under the influence of Gaunab, and did secretly mischief by witchcraft, they were left to die from starvation. The people, awe-stricken were almost compelled to fly from them."<sup>3</sup>

Where burial takes place, it is accompanied by a series of rites. Among the Colonial Hottentots,

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1. Kolb, Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung, 133.
  2. Moritz, Die ältesten Reiseberichte über D.S.W.A., Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb., 28, 204 (quoting Albrecht), 220 (q. Shaw), 243 (q. Meffat), 259-260 (q. Campbell); Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen, S.A., 334.
  3. Hahn, op.cit., 86, 74.

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according to some of the old writers, a person when in the last agonies of dying was surrounded by his friends and relatives, who wailed and writhed in lamentation, the outburst of grief reaching a climax as soon as actual death had occurred. The body while still warm was then bent so as to bring the head between the legs, and in this position it was wrapped and tied up in the kaross which the dead person had worn during life. Dapper, and perhaps following him, Sparman state that the corpse was buried quite nude, without any covering at all, but this is contradicted by all other writers. Burial took place soon after death, if possible on the same day, or at latest on the following morning. There were no special burial-grounds or recognised grave-yards. Immediately after the death had occurred, the head of the kraal, with several of the men, went out to look for a suitable spot, where the grave was at once made. It took the form of a deep hole, in one side of which a special niche was hollowed out for the reception of the body. Sometimes they did not trouble to dig a grave, but selected a convenient cleft in a rock or the hole of some wild animal instead. The body meanwhile was prepared for burial in the manner already noted. When everything was ready three or four men were appointed by the kraal head or by the relatives of the deceased to carry it in their arms to the grave. It was never

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1. The description given above is based mainly upon Kolb, *op.cit.*, 155-158, supplemented from Dapper, *Beschreibung von Afrika*, 624-629; Le Vaillant, *Voyage dans l'Afrique*, II, 67-69; Sparman, *Reisen in Sudafrika*, 316, 319, 320-321; Fritsch, *op.cit.*, 335; Lichtenstein, *Reisen in S.A.*, I, 350.

taken out through the door of the hut, but through an opening specially made for the purpose by removing part of the mat-covering at the back. While this was going on, all the inhabitants of the kraal not concerned with the funeral preparations gathered before the hut, and squatted in front of the entrance, men and women apart, all lamenting loudly. As soon as the body was brought out they followed it in two separate groups to the place of burial, still lamenting and wailing. Here the body was stuck into the hole or lowered into the grave, and placed in a sitting position in the niche. The grave was then filled in with earth, and afterwards covered over with a heap of large stones and branches, so as to prevent wild animals from getting at the body. Apparently no objects of any kind were placed in or on the grave. Fritsch, it is true, says that the possessions of the dead person were buried with him, but there is no other authority for the statement.

The funeral over, everybody returned to the kraal. Here the men and the women again squatted apart in front of the hut, repeating their wailing and frequently calling on the dead person by name. This continued for about an hour. Then silence fell, and the oldest of the men arose, entered the circle first of the men and then of the women, and besprinkled them with his urine. Then he entered the hut through the door, took some ashes from the hearth, came out through the opening which had been made in the back, and strewed the ashes over all the people, who rubbed them into their

bodies. Some of the near relatives also took cowdung and smeared it over their arms, legs and body. Then they all separated and went to their huts. The family of the deceased, however, did not dare to enter the hut where he had died, but sought accommodation with other people.

On the following day all the huts in the kraal were taken down, and the people left the locality; but the hut of the deceased was left standing with all its belongings and nothing might be taken from it. Before departing the heir of the dead person slaughtered a sheep, and such of the other near relatives as could afford it did the same. All who had been present at the funeral were then feasted with the meat. The caul of the sheep he had slaughtered was thickly strewn with buchu, twisted into a cord, and hung round the neck of the heir, where he had to wear it until it rotted away. The other relatives likewise hung about their necks the cauls of the sheep they had killed. Poor relatives, if they could not afford to slaughter and hence were unable to procure a caul, shaved their heads in furrowed ridges as a sign that they too were mourning.

It is uncertain from Kolb's account which people were expected to mourn, and whether the signs of mourning varied according to the relationship of the mourners to the deceased. An earlier description speaks of all the men of a large kraal having their heads shaved as a sign of mourning, but as the dead person concerned was their chief, the usage in this case may not have been the one customary in ordinary deaths.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Molsbergen, Reizen in Zuid-Afrika, I. 209.



At the same time there is nothing to indicate whether the funerary rites for chiefs differed in any way from those for commoners. There is also no clear indication how long the period of mourning lasted, and whether any special prohibitions and other usages had to be observed by the mourners during this period. Kolb simply says that the lamentations might be kept up for three or four days, or even a week, after the death, but throws no further light on the question. His whole account, indeed, leaves much to be desired. Its main points of interest perhaps are the usages preliminary to burial, the purification ceremony afterwards and the funeral feast, and the abandonment of the locality. The description of the funeral itself is very sketchy, and unfortunately no other writer gives further details.

The series of rites connected with death among the Naman have been more fully described, but as found at present they have undergone some disintegration. "They have been telescoped, as it were, into one another", says Mrs. Hoernle, "so that often enough as many of them as remain are all carried out on the same day, after the burial." These rites fall into the category of those associated with the conception of

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2. The principal authorities are Schultze, op. cit., 516-7; Bideu and Kling, "The Funeral Ceremonies of the Hottentots", Trans. R. Soc. S. Afr., 2 (1912) 223-5; A. W. Hoernle, "Conception of !Nau, etc", 79-81; cf. also Albrecht, in Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb., 28, 205; Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten", 333; Schinz, Deutsch-Sudwest-Afrika, 99-100; v. Francois, Nama und Damara, 216.

3. Hoernle, op. cit. 79.

!nau, and in them the sacramental meal and the cleansing are still of importance. After a death not only the immediate relatives are affected, but also the larger family circle of the deceased. If it is a husband who has died, the wife becomes !nau, but his relatives - brothers, sisters, parents - have also to perform certain rites before the ceremonial meal, and in a lesser degree all members of the kraal who take part in the proceedings. Similarly if a woman dies her husband becomes !nau, while her own blood relatives perform certain other rites; and when a child has died both parents become !nau and have to undergo the usual rites associated with this condition.

As soon as a death has taken place, the body of the person is prepared for burial. Formerly, according to a description given by Schepmann, the hands were crossed over the breast and the head bent forward between the legs, which were sharply folded at the knee. The body was then fastened together and wrapped in skins.<sup>1</sup> Hahn adds that before the body was wrapped up in this way or sewn up in skins, the son of the dead man first killed a goat and smeared the body of his father with the blood.<sup>2</sup> Nowadays the eyes of the dead person are closed, then the body is washed by old women and stretched flat on its back; the arms lie along the body and the hands, palm downwards, are folded over the bosom. The body is then wrapped and sewn up in skins,

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1. Schepmann, Mitt.deuts. Schutzgeb, 29, 244.  
 2. loc. cit.

whose hairy side strewn with buchu, is turned inwards. The face remains free till shortly before burial, when it is covered with a bit of skin which has been set aside and which is now loosely stitched to the others.<sup>1</sup> Biden and Kling add that in these more degenerate days the body may sometimes be sewn up in old bags, if obtainable, and a small amount of salt is placed on its chest, the reason given being to prevent it from decomposing.<sup>2</sup> Burial takes place as a rule on the afternoon following the day of death. Till then the corpse is left alone in the hut lying on the ground skins, while the relatives, neighbours and friends spend the whole night together outside the hut singing.

A suitable spot is selected in the vicinity of the kraal, where a grave is dug in the sand by means of a gemsbok horn and a roughly-made wooden shovel. The grave is about three feet broad and six deep, with a low narrow niche made along one side. The body is taken out of the hut through a special door made for the purpose at the back, and is carried to the grave by the deceased's relatives and friends. All the members of the kraal, even the small children, accompany it. Arrived at the graveside, one of the women is appointed to approach the body, and ask a relative whether the deceased gave drink to others when he was alive, i.e. whether he was a good person. "Whereupon all the women reply 'da' (yes), and the deceased is

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 316.  
2. Biden and Kling, op.cit., 223.

praised even if there is no cause why he should be praised. All the women arise and walk towards the grave and sprinkle buchu-leaves on the body".<sup>1</sup> The body is then lowered into the grave with leather straps and two men clumb in after it to push it into the niche. According to Schultze, it is laid here flat on its back, with the grave itself on the right hand side and the head facing west.<sup>2</sup> Biden and Kling, and several of the older writers, state however that it is placed in a squatting position, with the head always facing east. This certainly seems to have been the posture desired in earlier times.<sup>3</sup>

The niche is closed in with thick bushes or with twigs and stones which cover the whole floor of the grave. Large flat stones are next placed over these in such a way that no ground can fall on the body. The grave is then filled in, everybody present picking up handfuls of earth and sand which they throw in. Finally a mound of stones is heaped up over the covered grave, the customary explanation being that this prevents wild animals from getting at the corpse. These mounds are often raised very high. A big stone, planted upright in the heap and projecting about a foot or so, indicates the head end of the grave; occasionally also the gemsbok horn is placed in this position. Everybody adds a stone or a twig to the mound, which is afterwards strewn with buchu. Any relative or friend of the dead person who is unable to be present at the funeral will

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1. Biden and Kling, op. cit., 223-4.

2. Schultze, loc. cit.

3. Biden and Kling, loc. cit., Hahn, Tsuni//Goam, 65.

also, on visiting the kraal, go to the grave and place something of the sort on the mound. Cold water is likewise thrown on the grave of a person newly-buried and often the men return again the next day to throw more water on the grave. "The reason given me," says Mrs. Hoernle, "was that it hardened the grave, so that no wild beasts could dig there, but the reason given to Theophilus Hahn in the seventies of last century was that it 'cooled the soul of the deceased'."<sup>1</sup>

When the people came back from the grave, all the inmates of the kraal, except the bereaved family and the near relatives, who must on no account touch water, wash their hands in cold water, which is placed in front of the dead man's hut. Cold water is also sprinkled on the place in the hut where the body was lying before it was taken to be buried. The explanation given for this washing is that the people would get sick if they did not do so, and the cold water sprinkled in the hut also prevents the sickness that was there from spreading.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile the dead man's relatives slaughter animals according to their means,<sup>3</sup> and collect the blood separately into one or more pots. The entrails are collected in other pots, and the meat in yet others, all the different families who are taking part providing pots. The blood is heated to boiling point, and mixed with a certain herb, and then is stirred

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1. Hoernle, "Social value of Water among the Naman", 517; Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, 113.

2. Hoernle, loc. cit.

3. The description which follows is taken from Mrs. Hoernle's account in "The Conception of !Nau etc." loc. cit.

about with a chopper, which has been heated red hot, in order to make the steam rise. The immediate relatives of the dead man - men, women and children - collect round the pots and cover their heads with their karosses, so that they perspire. Then an old man, who is related neither to the deceased nor to the widow, takes potblack and makes a line on the stomach of each person - "to prevent their getting pains from eating the food". The flesh which has been cooking is now eaten by the relatives only, other members of the kraal eating the entrails, while the blood can be used only by the officiating person and others of like age. These rites - the sweating, the putting on of the black line, and the eating - are all done in the dead person's hut. It may be noticed here that the removal of the kraal from the place of death, as mentioned by Kolb and the other old writers on the Colonial Hottentots, does not take place now among the Naman. Some of Mrs. Hoernle's informants stated, that in the early days of their recollection the hut of the dead person was always moved to some other part of the camp,<sup>1</sup> whereas nowadays the hut as a rule is not moved at all; and this latter point Mrs. Hoernle was able to confirm from personal observation.

The widow takes no part in the rites which have just been described - "she doesn't belong to the man's family", said one informant indignantly in reply to a question. But from the moment the death has taken place she has become Inau, and must observe the restrictions attendant upon this condition. How long she remains

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1. Cf. Shaw, Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, 1821, p lxxvii; Schultze, op.cit., 227.

Inau could not be ascertained. According to some of Mrs. Hoernle's informants, several days may elapse between the burial and the final cleansing, while on the other hand the cleansing is often done immediately after the burial. During the interval, whether it is long or short, the widow must not touch uncooked meat or cold water, go among the cattle, or handle the pots. She is tended by one or more elderly widows, not relatives of either man or wife, who take her through the purification rites when the time comes. First she is thoroughly cleansed from head to foot with moist cow-dung, then her whole body is rubbed with a mixture of fat and red mineral powder, and the hair is cut from the top of her head. In cutting off a bit of her hair, they spit on the end of it and say, "The next husband you get must be a lucky one, and get him quickly". She also put on a complete set of new clothes. All this time there is a pot on the fire in the hut, with a small piece of meat in it which the old woman has fetched from the cooking pots. She takes some of the black from this pot, and puts a mark under each eye, "so that everything the widow meets may be nice to her", and also on the chest, "so that her food may go down nicely". The meat in the pot is eaten by the old woman. The hair which was cut off is mixed with the ash of the fire, and the whole is then removed from the hut and a fresh fire made. The next morning the widow takes the contents of the animal's stomach, and together with

the old woman, who goes in front, scatters them over the cattle kraals, saying "let there be plenty of milk". Then follows the milking of a cow, the fetching of wood, and finally the reintroduction to water, all as in the case of the girls' puberty ceremony.

If it is a woman who has died, the treatment of the widower is much the same, save for a few additional details. After the widower has been cleansed, two cuts are made on his forehead, and the juice of a certain astringent plant (//ubus) is rubbed in. The hair is also cut from the back of his head. In the old days the cutting in both cases was done with a sharp piece of quartz, //gurus. Before he has been finally cleansed in this way the widower must not leave the hut. After the hut has also been cleaned by the removal of the fire, etc., some tamarisk and acacia branches are soaked in water over night. Next morning the widower and his attendant go out among the cattle and sheep, and sprinkle them with this water, just as in the re-marriage ceremonies. With this rite the immediate mourning rites come to an end. There is no mention of any subsequent rites, or of any further mourning observances.

#### Ghosts of the Dead.

The beliefs of the Hottentots concerning the fate of the dead have not been investigated in sufficient detail; and concrete information on the subject <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ contained only in a few fragmentary, but nevertheless important, observations. These leave untouched many problems which arise, and the following description cannot therefore be regarded as fully adequate.



But it seems safe to say, in the light of the available information, that the Hottentots have no definite conception of an after-world or special land of the dead, nor is there any established theory of reincarnation.

Olpp in a short sentence expresses concisely what appears to be the general Hottentot doctrine: "They<sup>1</sup> believe that the soul of a dead person goes with him into the grave, from which it has the faculty of emerging at will as a ghost, in either luminous or terrifying form."

This statement can be amplified somewhat. The ghosts of the dead are known to the Naman by several names: most commonly as /hei /nun, "fawn feet", sometimes as /hei khoin, "fawn-coloured people" or sobo khoin, "people of the shadow", and also as //gaunagu.<sup>2</sup> This last term is of special importance. It is the masculine plural form of //Gaunab, and //Gaunab is one of the outstanding figures in Hottentot religion and myth, just as he is in the religion of the Northern Bushmen. The term //gaunab itself may be used in the singular for "ghost", as appears from a saying noted by Hahn: //nau //gauna ta ni, "I will hear it, if I am a //gauna". "This means," says Hahn, "if I am a ghost, then I will have a better insight into things, which I now do not understand."<sup>3</sup> There is no doubt moreover that the mythical being //Gaunab also is intimately linked up with ghosts of the dead. One of Mrs. Hoernle's informants, in fact, insisted very earnestly that the /hei /nun were simply //Gaunab. "The names are two," he said, "but

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1. Olpp, Angra Pequena, 29.

2. Hahn, op.cit., 85, 143; Hoernle, "Social Value of Water", 517, 519.

3. Hahn, op.cit., 85.

the thing is one."<sup>1</sup> This close connection between //Gaunab and the ghosts of the dead is a point to which we shall have to recur.

The question arises whether all dead people become ghosts of the same sort, or whether some distinction is made in their fate according to their circumstances in life - sex, age, social status, manner of death, etc. On this point there is very little concrete information. Schultze states that people who die tranquilly also live mildly in the dreams of the survivors, whereas a man who dies in great agony or raving madly<sup>2</sup> appears to the living at night as a terrible phantom.<sup>2</sup> This implies a distinction similar to that found among certain of the Bushmen between "good deaths" and "bad deaths", and suggests that only the ghosts of the latter are to be dreaded. There is however no other mention of this particular distinction, and, as we shall see, it appears that all ghosts are dreaded as a rule. Hahn, again, states that some people are said to die from the influence of //Gaunab, and these are called //Gauna //ora khoin, "people who died the //gauna death". "Especially if people are not buried, but devoured by vultures and hyenas, they are also considered //gauna //ora".<sup>3</sup> He does not say, however, if the ghosts of these people are regarded as in any way different from those who die ordinary deaths and are buried, nor is there anything to indicate that they are more dreaded.

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1. Hoernle, op. cit., 521.

2. Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 317.

3. Hahn, op.cit., 85-86.

The ghosts are thought to hover over the graves or to come from them; in general, that is, they round the locality where the death has taken place. This point was made long ago by Kolb in discussing the Colonial Hottentot beliefs concerning the dead. The people fear, he says, that the dead may return and molest them. For this reason, when anybody has died, they all remove from the locality, believing that the dead person only haunts the place where he has died. Only if anything is taken from the hut of the dead person will his ghost follow them and trouble them.<sup>1</sup> The Naman, as we have seen, do not now move the kraal or even the hut of the dead person after a death has taken place; but we have previously noted an illustration that the same belief exists among them, in the rites to be performed when one is visiting an old locality of the tribe. The ghosts of the Y/naon, the ancestors, haunt the place, and one must protect oneself against them and propitiate them if one is to escape. So too when a man goes visiting relatives elsewhere he must be specially protected from the ghosts of that locality.<sup>2</sup> And Vedder describes the same belief in a somewhat different form when he says: "He who treads on a grave, passes one unmindfully, or points at a grave with his finger, has disturbed the rest of the dead and must expect his revenge."<sup>3</sup>

These remarks show that the attitude of the living towards the ghosts is on the whole one of dread.

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1. Kolb, op. cit., 62-63; cf. Fritsch, op.cit., 338.  
 2. v. above. p. 358 & 4.  
 3. Vedder, "The Nama", 133.

Nowadays, says Mrs. Hoernle, there are great differences among the people with regard to the dread of the /hei /nun, some people not fearing to go even to the grave, whereas others would on no account go near one, especially after sunset. "If one asks a Nama why he is afraid of the grave, he answers it is because of the thing that is in there, the skeleton, which he says is a fearsome thing. No Nama will touch a dead man's bones, if he can help it, and on the Orange River, when I found a skeleton on the sand dunes and picked it up, my native guide told me the /hei /nun would surely follow us, did they not know I was not afraid of them."<sup>1</sup>

Underlying this dread is the belief that the /hei /nun, the ghosts, cause most of the sickness and death, either in themselves, or through the !gei aogu, the magicians.<sup>2</sup> Often, when a man has died, he appears to a member of his family in sleep. When the sleeper wakes, he will say, //gan osi, !uri /kop /guriba ta go mu, "no flesh, a white bone alone I saw". The old people then say that the person who has died has come to fetch another of them - one of the family will die. Again, when people are alone the /hei /nun come chasing them, "and I have had many an instance given me of persons arriving home utterly worn out and exhausted after such a chase, who almost always died shortly afterwards. In Windhoek among the Zwartboys, I found the /hei /nun were very much dreaded, and I was

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1. Hoernle, op.cit., 518.

2. Hoernle, loc. cit.; Hahn, op.cit., 87.

told of very many cases where they had appeared to the people during the influenza epidemic, when they had tried to drag their victims off to the grave, i.e., to kill them." <sup>1</sup> And Hahn likewise states that the ghosts are believed to leave their graves on dark nights and come to kraals. They made a rattling noise as if they were dragging skins over rocks and stones in order to frighten the people. "This kind of spectre goes by the special name of ihau-san. They are very mischievous and their greatest pleasure is to beat people almost to death." <sup>2</sup>

Biden and Kling record the same belief in a somewhat different form as it occurs among the Hottentots of Little Namaqualand south of the Orange River, which at the same time has some additional points of interest. <sup>3</sup> For a few weeks after the death the male relatives of the deceased go to the grave every morning before sunrise, quite naked, and pray to the "thas" (ghost). The idea of visiting the grave in a nude state is that the ghost cannot catch them! They talk to the grave and sprinkle buchu-leaves on it, and beseech the ghost to do them no harm and to leave them undisturbed at night-time. After a month or so they suppose that the ghost has left the grave, and has entered an animal called by them "thas jackals". <sup>4</sup> They

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1. Hoernle, loc.cit.

2. Hahn, op.cit., 85.

3. Biden and Kling, op.cit., 224-25.

4. The word "jackals" (jackal) is of course taken over from the Dutch.

say that this animal - "the house of the ghosts of the deceased people" - leaves its shelter at night-time only, and glides along the ground like a shadow; no one has ever actually seen it, but it is described as having a very large head. They believe it is very strong, and cannot die, and no attempt has ever been made to kill it. It has never been caught, and another belief, distinctly traceable to contact with the early Dutch colonists, says that it can only be killed by a silver bullet. When the animal at night makes a noise, "tha...tha...tha...", the people cover themselves with their karosses; and if they happen to be at their evening meal when this noise is heard, each throws some food backwards in order to satisfy the animal, so that no harm may come to them. The cry of this animal is said to be much louder than that of any other nocturnal animals.

It may be noted in connexion with this belief that, according to Olpp, the Naman of South West Africa maintain that a certain little animal, called /has, stands in close rapport with certain people. As soon as these people quarrel with anybody, it comes along unseen, and throws dust against the enemy, at the same time crying shrilly há-há-há.<sup>1</sup> This <sup>is</sup> obviously the animal referred to by Biden and Kling. Olpp unfortunately does not state who the "certain people" are, who are befriended in this way. The Naman, however, believe that the igai aogu, magicians, are somehow in

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1. Olpp, op.cit., 30.

contact with the /hei /nun, although we are nowhere told just how this contact is established. If therefore the belief that the /hei /nun may take the form of the /has jackals is accurately reported by Biden and Kling, one would suppose that the people referred to by Olpp must be the magicians. But this is only conjecture.

Some light is thrown upon this medley of beliefs, as well as upon the other manifestations of the ghosts, by certain facts which Schultze records about //Gaunab<sup>1</sup>. To him //Gaunab is merely a mythical being (Fabelwesen), and he does not connect the name either with the personage who figures so prominently in the religious beliefs of the Hottentots, or with the ghosts of the dead. //Gaunab, he says, has the faculty of assuming human and animal form at will. The Naman conceive of him as having human shape, with ribs drawn over the flesh, and with feet the length of arms. "As quickly as a flame shoots up out of the glowing embers and then sinks down", so quickly, said one of his informants, does //Gaunab come at night into a hut and steal a child. He hastens with his captive to a hole which he has dug in the loose soil, and rides on the child until it is stifled in the dust. By day he can also take on the form of a klipbok, jackal, or any other animal, which does not flee from men, since it is invulnerable; but in human form he appears only in the distance, as in spite of all disguise he can be recognised by his facial features.

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1. Schultze, op.cit. 450-51.

It is evident, from what has already been said, that these facts must be interpreted as referring to the ghosts. The word //gaunab itself is used for a ghost; the human shape which this "mythical being" is said to possess may be compared with the form in which ghosts appear to people in dreams; the abduction and the stifling of a child in a hole is equivalent to saying that the ghosts drag their victims off to the grave; and the invulnerability of //Gaunab in animal form is paralleled by the beliefs relating to the /has jackals. The latter, if this identification is accepted, must therefore be regarded not as a form in which all ghosts become reincarnated, but rather as one of the forms which they may assume at will. There is no ground for supposing that the Hottentots have a definite doctrine of reincarnation or transmigration of the soul as is implied in the account given by Biden and Kling.

To counteract the danger threatened by the ghosts, various protective rites and precautions are employed. Some of these we have already noted. When visiting an old locality of the tribe, one takes wet clay from the waterhole and puts it on the body, at the same time saying a spell; when visiting a strange kraal, again, one is smeared on the forehead with wet clay and potblack. In both cases one comes in contact with the waters of the locality, and so, to use Mrs. Hoernle's words "is identified with the place and its spirits".<sup>1</sup>

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1. Hoernle, "Social Value of Water", 519-20. cf. above p. 358g



Again, at the burial of a dead person, cold water is poured on the grave, "to cool the soul of the deceased", and to keep him from troubling; or buchu leaves are sprinkled over the grave, and the ghost is asked not to disturb the people. Vedder states also that the stones heaped upon the grave are intended not only to protect the corpse from being damaged by wild animals, but actually also in order to prohibit it from rising up again.<sup>1</sup> This second explanation, however, is not confirmed by other writers. Afterwards, on returning to the kraal, cold water is sprinkled on the place where the body was lying before it was taken to be buried. This prevents the sickness that was there from spreading. All the inmates of the kraal, moreover, with the exception of the near relatives, wash their hands in cold water; they would get sick if they did not do so. The relatives, however, especially the near relatives, are in much greater danger than other people; the dead member of their family will appear to them in their sleep and cause them to sicken and die. Hence they must go through the much longer process of purification - sweating, putting on of potblack on the stomach, and eating a ceremonial meal - which has already been described in connection with the funeral ceremonies.

Again, when a whirlwind, a Sarés, comes swirling through a kraal and passes by a hut, the inmates rush inside, get cold water, and throw it in the

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1. Vedder, "The Nama" 153.

path of the wind. If they did not take this precaution someone would surely die. Now the other name for Sarés the whirlwind, is //Gaunab, and this tells us why the wind is a thing of ill omen. It is a form which the /hei /nun or //Gaunab can take, "it hides in its mass departed spirits which forebode ill for the living", and therefore it brings sickness and perhaps death to the inhabitants of the kraal unless precautions are taken - and these precautions consist chiefly in scattering cold water in its path.<sup>1</sup> In connection with this belief may be mentioned another belief, recorded by Schultze, that any change in weather, from calm to storm from cold to heat, etc., is regarded as being sent by the dead. He quotes the case where certain big cirrus clouds which appeared were held to have been sent by a white man who had recently died. He further states that rain, storm or thick clouds, appearing about a week after a death has taken place, are here and there regarded as a sign that the gail is fleeing from the putrefying body.<sup>2</sup>

There is some evidence also of worship offered to dead people. The clearest indication of this is seen in a conversation between Hahn and a Nama woman well known to him. He once met her travelling on the outskirts of the Kalahari, and thereupon asked what she was doing so far away from her home. She replied that her family was in great distress, and there-

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1. Hoernle, op.cit., 518-9.  
2. Schultze, op.cit., 317.

fore she was going to "pray and weep" at the grave of her father, who had died in the hunting fields, and he would give luck to her husband in hunting. "'But your father is dead', I said, 'how will he help you?' 'Yes, he is dead', she answered, 'but he only sleeps! We Khoikhoi always, if we are in trouble, go and pray at the graves of our grandparents and ancestors; it is an old custom of ours',"<sup>1</sup>

This statement, it will be noticed, implies that dead people are not wholly dreaded as ghosts which cause sickness and death; they can also be invoked to help their descendants. There is thus an ambivalent attitude towards them on the part of the living. No definite information, unfortunately, is available as to the relationship between the two aspects of this attitude. It is possible perhaps that a distinction is made between the spirit of the deceased on the one hand, and the ghost on the other, the latter being held to arise not from the "soul", as suggested by Olpp, but from the corpse, since it is sometimes described as having the form of something like a skeleton. And in this connection it may be noted that Hahn quotes certain sayings, that "the Stars are the eyes of the deceased", and also that "the Stars are the souls of the deceased", which he regards as indications of belief in a future life. As additional argument he adduces a form of imprecation: "Thou happy one, may misfortune fall on thee, from the star of my grandfather!"<sup>2</sup> These beliefs are not men-

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1. Hahn, Tsuni //goam, 112-3.

2. Hahn, op.cit., 85, 109.

tioned by any other writer on the Hottentots, although something similar to them exists among the Bushmen, but Hahn is on the whole a very reliable authority. The sayings he records may be taken to him that the dead do not merely become ghosts. The spirit or soul of the dead person might then be looked upon as capable of doing good, while the ghost arising from his body is something to be dreaded. But this again is pure conjecture, justified only by the absence of adequate data. As already indicated, the Hottentot beliefs concerning the fate of the dead need to be much more fully investigated

Hahn gives no further information about the nature, occasions and extent of the worship of the dead. It will be noticed, however, from the conversation recorded by him, that the prayers have to be offered at the graves of the dead. This fact can be linked up with other usages of the Hottentots. Olpp states that when a man passes the grave of an "ancestor", he will place one hand on the nape of his neck, throw a stone or twig on the mound, and offer a prayer for health, many children and much stock.<sup>1</sup> We have already come across the placing of stones and twigs on the grave as part of the actual burial ceremony; but it has been observed by many writers, from Muller in 1655 right up to the present, that this act is also performed by Hottentots whenever they happen to be passing one of the stone heaps marking a grave.<sup>2</sup> Olpp, as we have just seen, says that it is accompanied by prayer. This is not

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1. Olpp, op.cit., 29.

2. Muller, in Molsbergen, Reizen in Zuid-Afrika, 1, 19; Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 376; Hahn, Tsuni-//Gaom, 46-8 (quoting Sparman and Lichtenstein).

mentioned by some other writers. To take an early account first, Thunberg, who travelled in the Eastern districts of the Cape towards the end of the eighteenth century, writes as follows: "By the side of the road I observed a stone heap covered with branches and shrubs, on which each of our Hottentots, in passing by, threw some branches. Asking them for their reason in doing so, they answered that a Hottentot was buried there."<sup>1</sup> And Biden and Kling, writing in 1912, state that: "A peculiarity of the Hottentots in doing homage to their dead is what they call 'heidje eibib'. In the event of a grave being close to a road where the Hottentots continually pass to and fro, the wayfarers throw a stone on the mound when passing by. This is a sign of honour to the deceased, and this duty is strictly observed, where there are graves of ancestors of the Hottentots. There is a large 'heidje eibib' at Stygerkraal, near O'okiep (Little Namaqualand); the Hottentots say that this grave is that of one of their great-grand-fathers who originally came from another country."<sup>2</sup>

This practice obviously cannot be regarded simply as the addition of another stone or branch to the mound which is intended to protect the corpse or skeleton from wild animals. At first sight it may appear to be a protective rite against the ghost hovering over the grave; but the praying mentioned by Olpp,

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1. Thunberg, Travels in the Cape, quoted by Hahn, op.cit., 45.

2. Biden and Kling, op.cit., 225.

as well as the statement made by Hahn's informant that people sometimes go to pray at the graves of their ancestors, argue against this view. There is moreover the fact, recorded by Biden and Kling, that the name 'heidje eibib', or, more correctly, Heitsi Eibib, is associated with the practice. This is also mentioned by Alexander. "These Namaquas", he says, "thought that they came from the East. In the country (Great Namaqualand) there is occasionally found, (besides the common graves covered with a heap of stones), large heaps of stones, on which had been thrown a few bushes; and if the Namaquas are asked what these are, they say that Heije Eibib - their great father - is below the heap; they do not know what he is like, or what he does; they only imagine that he also came from the East, and had plenty of sheep and goats; and when they add a stone or a branch to the heap, they mutter, 'Give us plenty of cattle'." <sup>1</sup> Now Heitsi Eibib is one of the most prominent figures in the religion and mythology of the Hottentots. This practice therefore is linked up with another aspect of Hottentot religion, the cult of hero-gods, to which we shall turn in a moment. One other point must also be noticed, to which we shall have to return. This is the distinction made by Alexander between ordinary graves and the large mounds specially connected with Heitsi Eibib.

#### Worship of the Moon and Hero-Cult

All the Hottentot tribes have for a considerable time been more or less under the influence of mission-

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1. Alexander, Expedition into the Interior of Africa, I. 166.

aries. As a result their traditional religion has fallen largely, if not completely, into decay, and the great majority of the people in fact now claim to be Christians. The reports available about their religious beliefs and practices at the time when they first came in contact with Europeans are very inadequate; but even the later writers, although adding considerably to our knowledge, have with the exception of Hahn made little attempt to inquire more systematically into the subject. It is perhaps hardly possible therefore to arrive at anything like a full conception of the original religious cult of the Hottentots.

There is, however, some ground for supposing that, like the Bushmen, they formerly invoked the Moon. A number of the earliest writers state that at new moon and at full moon the people spent the night in dancing, singing and merrymaking,<sup>1</sup> and Valentyn also speaks of their sitting at new moon on the banks of a river and throwing balls of clay into the water.<sup>2</sup> It is by no means clear that was the exact meaning of this proceeding; one suggestion is that it was a rain-making rite; but there is no other evidence to support this view. Kolb again says that the Colonial Hottentots looked on the Moon as their visible God, and called it Gounja, or "Great Chief". At new moon and at full they would dance, jump and gesticulate all through the night in its honour, and looking towards it would sing:

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1. Dapper, Beschreibung von Afrika, 627; Vogel, Ostindische Reise, 73; Wikar, op.cit., 104.  
 2. Valentyn, Keurlyke Beschryving van Cheremandel, V. 158.

"Be welcome, give us plenty of honey, give grass to our cattle, that we may get plenty of milk".<sup>1</sup> And similarly Roos and Marais write of the Naman: "Their religion consists principally in worshipping and praising the new moon. For when it appears the men place themselves together in a circle and blow on a hollow pipe or similar instrument, whereupon the women begin to clap their hands, and dance round the men, continually crying out that the last moon had protected them and their cattle well, and they hoped the same from this new moon. In addition the first Cabonas (//Habona or //Haboben) whom we met praised the moon especially for having brought into their land a people from whom they had received so much good."<sup>2</sup> The dance described here is the ordinary reed dance of the Naman, but the invocation of the new moon shows clearly that the occasion was more than a mere social festivity.

The facts noted above, sketchy as they are, seem to indicate beyond doubt that the Hottentots revered the Moon. Nowadays, the prayers are no longer heard, and the worship has ceased, but the new moon is always hailed in welcome, and at full moon "the old heathens with the young people" still hold their dances to the music of the reed pipes, rommelpot or the fiddle.<sup>3</sup> The Moon, as we have seen, also figures in the mythology of the people, where it is associated with the origin

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1. Kolb, op.cit., 50-1.

2. Roos and Marais, in Molsbergen, II. 56.

3. Olpp, op.cit., 25.



of death; it promises immortality to men, and when they were deceived by the hare, it is also the avenger, punishing the fateful messenger. Both it and the sun are said to have lived on earth before there were people,<sup>1</sup> but no other myths connected with it have been recorded similar to those found among the Cape Bushmen.

The eclipse of the Moon is always considered a bad omen. "One would almost believe that a great calamity had befallen a kraal", writes Hahn,<sup>2</sup> "such is the disturbance on such occasions. I have seen people moaning and crying as though suffering great pain. Those prepared for a hunting expedition, or already hunting in the field, will immediately return home, and postpone their undertaking." The same dread significance is attached to the eclipse of the sun. Like that of the moon, it is believed to herald much sickness and even death. Other celestial phenomena are also ill omens. The appearance of the Aurora australis or of a comet threatens war and death; while a shooting star indicates that sickness will spread among the stock, and the people on such occasions are accustomed to move to another locality, and implore the star to spare them.<sup>3</sup> The stars, we have seen, are said to be the eyes or souls of the deceased; but there is no mention of prayers for food to either them or the sun, such as are found among the Cape Bushmen. It may be noted, however, that a religious dance is

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 387.  
2. Hahn, op.cit., 131; cf. ibid., 89.  
3. Hahn, op.cit., 89; Shaw, in Report of the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society, lxxvii; Campbell, Travels in S. Africa.

held at the first rising of the Pleiades after sunset, when prayers are offered to Tsui //Goab for rain.

Apart from the invocation of the Moon, the religious cult of the Hottentots seems to have centred mainly in the worship of Heroes, derived partly from animistic beliefs, partly from a personification of the natural forces producing rain. Of the beliefs and observances connected with these we have much fuller information, and it is apparent that they played a more prominent part in the religious life of the people than did the Moon. Three names stand out in Hottentot mythology and ritual: Tsui //Goab, Heitsi Eibib, and //Gaunab. All three, it will be observed, are masculine in form, as is also the name for the Moon, //Khab.

Tsui //Goab is the great Hero of the Nama and other Hottentot tribes. The name is usually translated "sore(or wounded) knee", from tsu or tsui, wounded, sore, and //goab or //khoab, the knee. Its origin is told in the following myth: "Tsui //Goab was a great powerful chief of the Khoikhoi; in fact, he was the first Khoikhoib, from whom all the Khoikhoi tribes took their origin. But Tsui //Goab was not his original name. This Tsui //Goab went to war with another chief, //Gaunab, because the latter always killed great numbers of Tsui //Goab's people. In the fight, however, Tsui //Goab was repeatedly overpowered by //Gaunab, but in every battle the former grew stronger; and at last he was so strong and big that he easily destroyed //Gaunab, by giving him one blow

behind the ear. While //Gaunab was expiring he gave his enemy a blow on the knee. Since that day the conqueror of //Gaunab received the name Tsui //Goab 'sore knee' or 'wounded knee'. Henceforth he could not walk properly, because he was lame.<sup>1</sup>

This derivation is discredited by Hahn, who interprets the name as "the Red Dawn". His reasons are chiefly philological, elaborated under the influence of the mythological theories current in the middle of last century, and associated mainly with the name of Max Müller. But he adduces three other considerations: that the Korana believe Tsui //Goab to live in the Red Heaven or Red Sky; that another mythological personage whom he equates with him, /Eixa/kha//nabiseb, 'The man whose body has a brass-coloured backbone', is addressed as 'Thou who paintest thyself with red ochre'; and that "when the day dawns the Kheikhoi go and pray, with the face towards the East: 'O Tsui //goa, All-Father'.<sup>2</sup>"

Still another interpretation of the name, given by Kroenlein in his dictionary, is "the painfully-invoked one". Commenting upon this Schultze caustically remarks, "I believe that on this point the missionary Kroenlein has given the philologist Kroenlein a blow from behind!" Schultze himself accepts the first explanation.<sup>3</sup>

Tsui //Goab is said to have been a great chief, a notable warrior of great physical strength,

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 61. Other variants of the same myth are given by Moffat, *Missionary Labours...in S.A.*, 258; Wuras, in *Appleyard: Kaffir Grammar*, 13, and in Hahn; op.cit., 61-62.
  2. Hahn, op.cit., 122-4.
  3. Kroenlein, *Wortschatz, der Nama-Khoi-Khoi*, 1  
Schultze, op.cit., 447.

and a powerful magician.<sup>1</sup> According to Nama belief, he first made the rocks or stones from which the ancestors of the Hottentots came,<sup>2</sup> while the Herana say that he made the first man and woman.<sup>3</sup> He could do wonderful things, which no other man could do, because he was very wise; he could tell what would happen in future times; he died several times, and several times he rose again. "And whenever he came back to us, there were great feastings and rejoicings. Milk was brought from every kraal, and fat cows and fat ewes were slaughtered. Tsui //Goab gave every man plenty of cattle and sheep, because he was very rich. He gives rain, he makes the clouds, he lives in the clouds, and he makes our cows and sheep fruitful"<sup>4</sup> Another informant, speaking of the origin of his tribe, said: "That very thing, the //Habobe, has been made by Tsui //Goab in this country, and !Khub (Lord, another name for Tsui //Goab) has made us, and has given us this country. He gives to us the rain, and he makes the grass grow"<sup>5</sup> He is ubiquitous, and the people take oaths by him, "thereby signifying that they regard him as a moral being which averts evil"; health and recovery of health are due to him, and when taken by sudden surprise they use his name in the form of the exclamation: "Tsui-//Goatse!"<sup>6</sup>

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 48, 50, 62 (quoting Moffat and Wuras); Olpp, op.cit., 28.  
 2. Wikar, op.cit., 104.  
 3. Hahn, op.cit., 62, 105.  
 4. Hahn, op.cit., 61.  
 5. Hahn, op.cit., 64.  
 6. Vedder, "The Nama", 130; Hahn, op.cit., 62. Schultze, op.cit., 447-8.

On certain occasions Tsui //Goab is worshipped openly as the rain-giver. Hahn, as we have just seen, says that the Naman leave their huts with the first rays of the dawn, and invoke him. This is not mentioned by any other writer; but there is further evidence of worship directed towards him. The missionary George Schmidt, who worked among the Hessequa, one of the Colonial Hottentot tribes, from 1737 to 1744, has left on record a short but important description of one of their religious ceremonies. At the return of the Pleiades these natives celebrated an anniversary. As soon as the stars were visible above the eastern horizon, mothers would take up their small children in their arms, and running up to elevated spots would point out the Pleiades to them and teach them to stretch out their little hands towards them. Then the inhabitants of the kraal assembled to dance and to sing, according to the old custom of their ancestors; and the chorus always sang: "O Tiqua, our Father above our heads, give rain to us, that our fruits (bulbs, etc.) may ripen, and that we may have plenty of food, send us a good year."<sup>1</sup> Tiqua is an early form of writing Tsui //Goab; and the prayer shows clearly that he is regarded as the god of the rain-giving clouds and of the food-producing fields.

Tsui //Goab is invoked by the Naman at the great annual rain-making ceremony, guri /ab or guriba /abas (yearly killing), which is the most important festival

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 43; quoting Basler Magazin, 1831.p.12.

among them.<sup>1</sup> For this ceremony the whole tribe gathers together at the headquarters of the chief. It is held, if possible, on the <sup>banks</sup> banks of a stream, and if there is no stream near by, then a trench to simulate one is dug. When the old men judge that the summer rains are due (in November or December), they tell the chief that it is time to hold the yearly feast, and he sends word to all the outlying families, and decides the time and the spot for the ceremony.

Each family contributes according to its means, all bringing milk, and those who can some female animal, a cow or a ewe, which must be pregnant. The feast cannot be held at all without one pregnant animal. On the spot itself a shelter is made, chiefly for the comfort of the men, and fires are lit to cook the meat for the feast. In addition a fire is lit on the banks of the stream for the special part of the ceremony. The animals are killed and cut up very carefully, so as to preserve the uteri intact, and these are kept till after the feast. Eating apparently goes on most of the time until all the food is finished.

When the fire at the riverside is ready, and a channel to the river or stream has been made, the old men of the tribe who are good at prophesying, take the uteri, hold them over the fire and pierce them with sticks so that the uterine fluid flows directly through the fire and down the river. At the same time milk in plenty and fat from the animals are thrown on the fire, so that liquid really flows, and great

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1. The following description is based mainly on the account given by Hoernle: "A Hottentot Rain Ceremony", Bantu Studies, I. No. 2 (May 1922) pp. 3-4; cf. Idem, "South West Africa as a Primitive Culture Area", 27-8; and "Social Value of Water," 515-6. -38-

clouds of smoke rise into the sky. Meanwhile all the people round gather together in a great tribal dance, calling on Tsui //Goab to send the rain in plenty, to make the ground soft, and the grass green, that they may have plenty of food for the year. One form of prayer<sup>1</sup> sung on such occasions has been recorded by Hahn:-

Tsui //goatse	Thou O Tsui //Goab
Abo itse	Father of our Fathers
Sida itse	Our Father.
/Nanuba /avire	Let stream the thunder cloud.
En xuna uire	Let our flocks live
Eda sida uire	Let us also live, please
/Khabuta gum goroo	I am so very weak
//Gas xao	From thirst
!As xao	From hunger.
Eta xurina amre	Let me eat field fruits
Sats gum xave sida itsao	Art thou not our Father.
Abo itsao	Father of our Fathers
Tsui //goatse	Thou Tsui //Goab.
Eda sida gangantsire	That we may praise thee
Eda sida //khava	
/khaltsire	That we may bless thee
Abo itse	Thou Father of our Fathers
Sida !Khutse	Thou, our Lord.
Tsui //goatse	Thou, Tsui //Goab.

"All through the day they would speak thus, and the informants all speak with great conviction when they affirm that soon after the smoke ascends the clouds are seen to form, and it is not long before the rain comes. 'In those days the people were happy, the rain used to have its proper time to come and they used to expect it, but now the times come and go yet it doesn't rain'."<sup>2</sup>

"This rain ceremony", continues Mrs. Hoernle, "seems to me as full of symbolic rites as any I know. Female animals must be used, and those, too, pregnant, the more to typify fertility. Milk is there in abundance,

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1. Hahn, op. cit., 58-9.

2. Hoernle, "Hottentot Rain Ceremony". 4.

and milk and water stream through the fire, putting it out just as the rain does, and run into the river, symbolizing the running of the rivers after the rains. The smoke ascends to the sky in huge clouds, darkening everything, and so, too, do the rain clouds when they come."<sup>1</sup>

A less detailed account of what seems to be the same ceremony is given by Vedder.<sup>2</sup> "If the rain stayed away for a long time, the people tried to bring it about magically by the following process: A cattle-owner would give a pregnant cow, which had never had a calf before, to be slaughtered. The blood was caught up and the meat cooked in large earthen pots. This being done the owner of the cow would come up to the still blazing fire and pour both the meat-soup and the blood into it in order to extinguish it. Whilst doing this he would pray:

My Tsui-//Goatse,  
Let the clouds rain,  
So that we can live joyfully;  
Let the field-food grow,  
So that we can find onions."

These ceremonies and the words of the prayers show clearly that Tsui //Goab must be regarded as the rain god of the Hottentots. He is also called abob, father, as the first prayer shows, as well as !khub, Lord; and Hahn further identifies him with /Nanub, the thunder-cloud, and with !Curub, the thunderer, one of the names of /Nanub. Graevenbroeck and Valentyn also quote both

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1. Loc. cit.

2. Vedder, "The Nama", 131.



names for the same god, Thikkwa (Tsui //Goab) and Khourrou (!Gurub). The cloud /Nanub is often addressed<sup>1</sup> in prayer: "O Cloud, our Lord, let rain"; while if a heavy thunderstorm is approaching, and the country is resounding from the roaring of the thunder, and the lightnings illuminate the darkness, the people assemble for a /gei, a religious dance, and, while dancing, sing<sup>2</sup> the following:-

<p>!Gurub di /Geis.</p> <p>!Nanumatse !Gari-khoi, !Gurutse</p> <p>*Ouse gobare /Havie t'am u-ha-tamao /Ubatere *Outago xuige !Gurutse /Nanus oatse</p>	<p>The Hymn of the Thunder.</p> <p>Son of the Thundercloud Thou brave, loud-speaking !Guru</p> <p>Talk softly please For I have no guilt Let me alone! (Forgive me!) For I have become quite weak Thou, O !Guru Son of the Thundercloud</p>
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This may be compared with a statement made by Valentyn, who touched at the Cape in 1705. He speaks of the "Supreme Ruler" Khourrou (i.e. !Gurub, the thunder) and of the "Great Chief" or "God" Thukwa or Thik-gua (i.e. Tsui //Goab), "who dwells on high, and to whom they showed respect, especially during great storms of thunder and lightning...saying, if it thunders, the Great Chief is angry with us"<sup>3</sup>. Almost verbatim the same was said to Hahn by an old Nama man: "The people say, if it is thundering, the Lord (!Khub, i.e. Tsui //Goab)<sup>4</sup> is speaking; he is scolding them."

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 129-130.  
2. Idem., 59-60.  
3. Valentyn, op.cit., 109, 158.  
4. Hahn, op.cit., 91-2.

Another quotation throw further light upon the conception of Tsui-//Goab. Alexander states that the Hottentots of the Kuisib R. in South West Africa had to make an offering to Tusib before they could drink water with safety.<sup>1</sup> Alexander calls the man of whom he speaks a Bushman, but his name shows that he was a Nama. "Numeep, the Bushman guide, came to me labouring under an attack of dysentery, and he said that he was about to die! I asked him what had occasioned the disease; and he said that it was from having dug for water at a place called Kuisib, in the bed of the Kuisib River, without first having made an offering, and that therefore he was sure to die unless I could help him. I asked him, what he meant by saying that he had made no offering at Kuisib. 'Before any Bushman', said Numeep, 'digs for water at Kuisib he must lay down a piece of flesh, seeds of the Naras, or an arrow, or anything else he may have about him and can spare as an offering to Toosip, the old man of the water.' I asked Numeep if he had ever seen Toosip. 'No, I have never seen him, nor has anyone else that I know of, but we believe that he is a great Redman with white hair, and who can do us good and harm. He has neither bow nor assegai nor has he a wife'. 'Do you say anything to him when you put down your offering at the waterplace?' 'We say, Oh! great Father, son of a Bush-

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1. Alexander, op.cit., II. 125.

2. Redman, or /ava-khoib, is another name used for themselves by the Naman, in distinction to the negroes, whom they call /nu-khoib, black men, and the Europeans or white men, !uri-khoib. [Hahn, op.cit., 101-102.]

man, give me food; give me the flesh of a rhinoceros, of the gemsbok, of the zebra, or what I require to have! But I was in such a hurry to drink this morning, that I scratched away the sand above the water, and took no notice of Toosip; and he was so angry that if you had not helped me I must have died!"

Mrs. Hoernle comments upon this: "Nowadays the natives do not know anything of Tusip, but Tu is the rain and Tu /oap is the rain wind, so that we have here at any rate the rain, or water-giver."<sup>1</sup> But in the seventies of last century, Hahn one day was in the company of an old Topnaar man when very heavy thunder clouds were towering above the horizon. "We both looked with great enjoyment towards the clouds, calculating that in a few hours' time the whole country ought to swim in water. 'Ah', he said, 'there comes Tsui //Goab in his old manner, as he used to do in the times of my grandfathers. You will see to-day rain, and very soon the country will be covered by Tusib!' I asked him what he meant by Tusib? He answered 'When the first green grass and herbs come after the rain, and in the morning you see that green shining colour spread over the country, we say: Tusib ke !huba ra !gu, Tusib covers the earth'." Tusib, Hahn says elsewhere, is also a local name for Tsui //Goab, or, better, /Manub. "Tu means to rain. Tusib, therefore, the Rain-giver, or the one who looks like rain, who comes from the rain - that is, the one who spreads the green shining colour over the earth".<sup>2</sup>

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1. Hoernle, "Social Value of Water", 522.

2. Hahn, op.cit., 64, 139.

Tsui //Goab, it is now evident, must be regarded/ as a personification of the natural/forces producing rain. In a country like South Africa, where water is on the whole exceedingly scarce, it is not surprising that special importance should be attached to it by the natives, who depend upon its natural supply for the well-being both of themselves and of their herds. The annual rain ceremony, the most important ceremony of the Hottentots, aims directly at providing an adequate supply of water for the life of the tribe; but even when water actually is available it plays a large part, as we have seen, in their ceremonial practices. Whilst in the normal routine life of the people it is used with impunity, and indeed with little regard or ceremony, it acquires on critical occasions a twofold significance. It becomes, on the one hand, a source of protection against evils threatening the tribe and its members, and it is, on the other hand, a danger to the members of the tribe who are, for one reason or another, in a critical condition. In the former case, we we have noted in various instances, things or persons which might harm members of the society are rendered harmless by immersion in cold water, or by the application of cold water to them, or, as in revisiting an old place of habitation, or on returning from the grave, one can protect oneself from harm by applying wet clay or water to oneself. But, though cold water has these protective powers, it is also highly dangerous to any one of the people in the condition of Inau, a

condition which prevents him from participating in the full life of the society. Thus, sick people, mothers with new-born babies, menstruating women, bereaved people, and many others, are in a precarious state and must on no account touch water lest they die. When, after many ceremonies of purification, these people are once more reintroduced to the full life of the tribe, they are specially re-introduced again to water, being splashed all over by someone well qualified to lend them strength, and so once more they take up their daily life in the tribe. All these usages are intelligible and form a harmonious whole if we realise that water is, of all the essentials of a social life, the most difficult for the Hottentots to provide, and that it is therefore one of their most important social possessions. The conception of Tsui //Goab, the attributes he possesses, the observances and prayers directed towards him show that the same outstanding significance is attached to the rain and to the natural forces producing it, which constitute by far the most important source of water.

The figure of Tsui //Goab is still endowed in the consciousness of the Nama with a certain amount of sublimity and solemnity. The same cannot be said of another famous mythical hero, Heitsi Eibib, Heigeib, or Kabib. The name is generally interpreted "prophet" or "foreteller", from heisi, to tell, to give a message, to order, and eibe, beforehand, previously. Wahn derives it, however, from the roots hei, tree, and ei, face,

likeness, appearance, arriving thus at the meaning "the One who has the appearance of a tree". In support of this he notes that another and shorter name of Heitsi Bibib is Heigeib, Great-Tree, from hei, tree, and gei, great.<sup>1</sup>

Heitsi Bibib is said to have been a great and celebrated magician among the Hottentots in prehistoric times, who did miraculous things. The Nama all describe him as their great-grandfather, and as a powerful rich chief. He lived originally in the east, and had plenty of cattle and sheep. He conquered and annihilated all his enemies, who killed his people; he was very clever and wise, and could foretell what was going to happen in the future. He was born, according to one tale, of a young girl who had chewed a kind of grass and swallowed the juice. The boy was as remarkable as his birth. He committed incest with his mother; he fought and killed various evil monsters; he conquered great lions, and put enmity between the lion's seed and mankind. He could change himself into many different forms, and was able to go through mountains and rivers when pursued. He cursed the lion, the hare, and the vulture, and to his commands are ascribed the habits of these creatures, as well as certain human observances. He died in many places, was buried, and always came to life again; and another legend represents him as being reborn as a young bull from a cow pregnant from eating grass.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Hahn, op.cit., 132-4.

2. Bleek, Reynard the Fox in S.A., 75-82; Kleinschmidt, ap. Moritz, 1915, 253; Hahn, op.cit. 64-73; Meinhof, Lehrbuch der Nama Sprache, 171-7 (Nama texts); Vedder, "The Nama", 131-2.

His "graves" are found all over the country, in the Cape Colony as well as in South West Africa, generally in narrow mountain passes on both sides of the road. Natives who pass by these graves, which consist of great heaps of stones piled up high, throw pieces of their clothing, or skins, or dung of the zebra, or twigs of shrubs and branches of trees, as well as stones, on the heap<sup>1</sup>. This they do, says Hahn, to be successful on their way; and they generally, if hunting, utter the following prayer:-

O Heitsi Eibib,  
 Thou, our Grandfather,  
 Let me be lucky,  
 Give me game,  
 Let me find honey and roots,  
 That I may bless thee again,  
 Art thou not our Great-grandfather?  
 Thou Heitsi Eibib!

Sometimes more substantial offerings of honey and honey beer are left at his graves. The Nama say that when he returns in the evening from his walks in the veld he is glad to see that they thus honour him. He still gives the people good advice, and tells them how to kill the lion's children and other wild animals, and he prevents danger from befalling them if they honour him.

Hahn identifies Heitsi Eibib with both Tsui //Goab, and the Moon. All three, he says, come from the East, and that is why the doors of the huts and the graves are found in that direction. The bodies of the deceased are also placed towards the East, so that their faces may look towards sunrise. Even those who possess wagons place them in such a position that the front is

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1. Lichtenstein, Reisen, in S.A., I, 349; Alexander, op.cit., 1, 167; Hahn, op.cit. 69, 134; Kleinschmidt, loc.cit.; Bleek, op.cit., 76.

open to the morning sun. And the Naman, when asked why they do so, always answer: "Our grandfather Tsui//Goab or our ancestor Heitsi Eibib came from the east". Both are invoked as "Father" or "All-Father"; both are rich and possessed of plenty of cattle and sheep. They all promise immortality to men, and fight with the bad beings; they kill the enemies of their people. All three can alter their shape; they can disappear and reappear.<sup>1</sup>

This identification cannot be accepted.

In spite of the resemblances noted by Hahn, the differences are more numerous and significant. Heitsi Eibib appears as the central figure in a cycle of myths; he has a family, and has dealings with various other people and animals. Moreover, like the Mantis in Cape Bushman folklore, he is full of tricks and his character is not altogether blameless. Tsui //Goab, on the other hand, figures solely in the combat with //Gaunab which gave him his name. He is also looked upon with far more respect and reverence than is Heitsi Eibib. He has creative powers, which Heitsi Eibib has not. The latter seems to be in no way connected with the rain, whereas Tsui //Goab is essentially the rain god and is worshipped as such. Heitsi Eibib, again, is prayed to only at his graves, and there is apparently no association between these graves and Tsui //Goab. The two, moreover are always spoken of by the natives as separate beings. It appears therefore that they must be regarded as distinct from each other.

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 134-5.



It is difficult to determine exactly what graves are specially connected with Heitsi Eibib. Alexander, as we have seen, distinguishes Heitsi Eibib's graves, "large heaps of stone on which had been thrown a few bushes", from "the common graves covered with a heap of stones"; whereas Biden and Kling use the term "heidje-eibib" in regard to all graves, although speaking also of a specially large "heidje eibib" near O'okiep. Hahn says that branches are thrown only on the graves of Heitsi Eibib, not on any others, which also appears from Alexander's remark. Vedder, again "was interested to know whether there were really human remains under these often stately monuments of piled up stones. Indeed, I was told that nothing of the kind was to be found under these heaps of stone, as Heiseb was resubrected; but I did not believe these sayings. I, however, found that the earth under these sepulchral monuments was indeed empty". He therefore concludes that these heaps were originally beacons set up by the Bushmen at those places where strangers used to cross their tribal boundaries on foot, that is, where there were old paths, and that later, when the Bushmen had to evacuate their country for the new immigrants, these boundary-marks appeared to the Hottentots as graves, which were revered as the graves of their own ancestors by piling stones on them.

Whatever the origin of these heaps, it is certain that the Hottentots regard them as the graves of

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1. Vedder, op.cit. 132.

Heitsi Eibib, add stones, branches and other objects to them, and pray at them to Heitsi Eibib for success in hunting, much cattle, and other benefits. We have previously noted that ordinary graves are also added to in this way, and that people will sometimes go to pray at the graves of their parents. This suggests that Heitsi Eibib is in some way connected with the ancestors. One is inclined therefore to look upon him either as a traditional hero of the past, round whom a series of legends have collected, or possibly as a mythological ancestor living much the same sort of life as the Hottentots themselves did. He certainly does not appear to be a personified nature deity of the same kind as Tsui //Goab. And it may be added here that in translations of the Bible and other religious works into the Hottentot languages, the name Tsui //Goab is used by many writers for "God", but never Heitsi Eibib. This in itself indicates how different were the native conceptions of these two figures.

In the mythology of the Hottentots Tsui //Goab, as we have seen, appears as a great tribal hero, many of whose people are killed by the evil chief //Gaunab. Tsui //Goab went to war with //Gaunab, and finally destroyed him by giving him a blow behind the ear; but though destroyed by Tsui //Goab he came alive again and one form of the myth tells the story as though the fight were an annual one. The name //Gaunab is nowadays trans-

lated by "Devil", and has exactly this significance for the natives, owing to missionary influence; but Hahn derives it from //gau, to destroy, annihilate, and hence interprets it as "the destroyer, the one who annihilates"<sup>1</sup>.

It is difficult to get a complete understanding of what the Hottentots originally understood by //Gaunab, especially as the information relating to him is rather scanty. Valentyn says that the Colonial Hottentots spoke of "a Spectre whom they feared very much, Somsoma", as well as of Dangoh or Damoh (evidently an attempt to spell the name //Gaunab), "a Devil, a black chief, who does much harm to them; they avoided speaking of him, as he often persecuted them, but in carefully examining this, it is nothing but their somsomas and spectres."<sup>2</sup> Kolb uses the word Gounia for "God, or the Great Chief", and also mentions "another chief, somewhat lesser in power, called Touqua, from whom some of them had learned witchcraft; he never does good to the people, but always harm. They must, therefore, fear him, show respect to him, and serve him. This they do by slaughtering in his honour sometimes a sheep, sometimes also a fat ox, whenever they perceive that great misfortune is threatening them."<sup>3</sup> It is evident, from what has already been said, that Kolb has confused the two names, and that the attributes he ascribes to

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 125; Hoernle, "Social Value of Water", 519.

2. Valentyn, loc. cit.

3. Kolb, op.cit., 52-3; cf. Hahn, 41-2.

Touquoa (Tsui //Goab) really belong to Gounia (//Guanab).

Wikar, again, says that the Nama believe that "war and all evil come from the devil, kouwnaap (//Gaunab); he is black, say the magicians, who assert that they sometimes see him. Because he is evil, animals must be slaughtered and offered to him."<sup>1</sup>

It will be noticed that according to both Kolb and Wikar //Gaunab is the source of all evil; he is appeased by sacrificial offerings; and he stands in close contact with the magicians. These statements are supported by later writers. Hahn says that the Topnaars of Walvis Bay, one of the Nama tribes, offer prayers to //Gaunab, so as not to provoke his anger, although they call him an evil-doer, who even kills them when they are out hunting.<sup>2</sup> All sicknesses are expected to come from //Gaunab, or from his servants, the witchcraft practitioners.<sup>3</sup> One informant said that the Rainbow was made by //Gaunab; it is a fire which he has kindled. //Gaunab deceives the people, and leads them into that fire, and there they die. Such people are spoken of as //Gauna-//O-khoin, //Gauna-dying-people.<sup>4</sup> Among the Kerana mothers used to tell their children to beware of //Gaunab, as he is a great evil-doer, who can kill them.<sup>5</sup>

//Gaunab is also another name, as we have seen, for Sares, the whirlwind, which threatens sickness

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1. Wikar, op.cit. 104.  
 2. Hahn, op.cit., 42-86.  
 3. Idem., 87.  
 4. Idem., 74.  
 5. Idem., 62.

and perhaps death. He is further intimately connected with the /hei /nun, the malicious ghosts of the dead; in fact //gaunagu in the plural is simply another name for /hei /nun, and even the term //gaunab in the singular may be used for a ghost. It may also be noted that magicians among the Naman are considered in some way connected with the /hei /nun, and therefore have an immunity from their evil effects which others have not. These facts all suggest that //Gaunab must be identified with the /hei /nun, the ghosts or spectres of the dead. This is also implied in Valentyn's description noted above, and it will be remembered that one of Mrs. Hoernle's informants insisted very earnestly that the /hei /nun were simply //Gaunab. From this it would appear that //Gaunab, when looked upon as an individual being, which is certainly also the case, may be regarded as a personification of the ghosts of the dead, i.e. of certain animistic beliefs. On the evidence available there seems no other possible interpretation.

But //Gaunab also figures in the myth as the opponent of Tsui //Goab; and there it is further said, by the Naman, that "Tsui //Goab lives in a beautiful heaven, and //Gaunab lives in a dark heaven, quite separated from the heaven of Tsui //Goab", while the Korana told Wuras that Tsui //Goab lived in the Red Sky, and //Gaunab in the Black Sky<sup>1</sup>. Two of the old writers, Valentyn and Wikar, also speak of //Gaunab as a

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1. Hahn, op.cit., 61-2.

"black chief". The interpretation of this myth is difficult, as we have no further information about the two "heavens" referred to. Hahn reads into it a metaphor to illustrate the change of day and night, identifying Tsui //Goab with the Red Dawn and //Gaunab with the Black Night.<sup>1</sup> A more plausible explanation, if we remember that Tsui//Goab is not only the rain-giver, i.e., the fertiliser but also the creator, while //Gaunab is the cause of sickness and death, may be that the myth symbolises the conflict between life and death. But this is mere speculation, as we need to know far more about the beliefs relating to these two beings, and, it should be added, about the beliefs relating to the fate of the dead. Before interpretations of their significance may be undertaken with some prospect of accuracy.

Magic and Divination.

In common with most primitive peoples the Hottentots have amongst them certain individuals who are specialists in the art of magic. Of these magicians, !gai aogu, we have extremely little information. Nothing at all appears to be known of the method in which a person becomes a !gai aob, or of the training he has to undergo. One of Mrs. Hoernle's informants said that a child born with a caul might become a clever !gai aob, if given the caul to eat whilst still young; others, however, said that such a child became a gebo aob, a seer.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Idem., 126.  
 2. Hoernle, "Social Value of Water," 520.

It is not even definitely stated if these magicians are of either sex, or men only, but the fact that the name by which they are known is always written with the masculine suffix seems to imply the latter.

The name igai aob itself, according to Schultze,<sup>1</sup> is derived from igaib, the magic medicine used by these men in their work. The medicine is carried about in a small box cut from the horn of some animal. It is made up of vegetable ingredients taken from the roots of a large diversity of plants, and of the flesh and bones of various small animals, such as a species of chameleon, the shrew mouse, bats, and a small bird of the family of Sylvidae. These ingredients are dried and cut up or ground to powder, and are then mixed with the raw goat's fat which fills the medicine horn and which is thought to absorb the effective principles of the other substances. The goat's fat has curative powers only, and is rubbed into cuts made in the patient's body, but the other ingredients, secretly mixed in tobacco or smeared on the mouthpiece of a pipe, can be used for affecting a person's emotions, as in love magic, or for injuring his health.

The principal function of the igai aob is to cure people who have been bewitched.<sup>2</sup> He is considered as in some way connected with the /hei /nun - we are nowhere told how, - and therefore has an immunity which ordinary people have not from the sickness caused

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1. Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 226.

2. Hoernle, loc. cit., Olpp, Angra Pequena, 29; Wikar, op. cit., 122-3; Schultze, loc. cit.

by the /hei /nun or by their human agents, the witchcraft practitioners. This immunity he can impart to others, and so cure them of the disease, by inoculating them with his essence, as it were, which is contained in the dirt and perspiration of his body. He scrapes the dirt off as he requires it, and it forms an essential ingredient in all his medicines and cures. The treatment he follows when called in to a patient is nowhere fully described. Generally, it seems, he first extracts from the patient's body, by massaging and sucking, the foreign bodies which are held to have been introduced there and to be causing the sickness. Then, to complete the cure, he makes cuts in the patient's body, into which he rubs some of the fat from his medicine horn mixed with dirt and perspiration scraped from his own body. Sometimes he gives the patient decoctions made from his medicines, and invariably the patient has to provide him with one or more slaughtered animals, certain internal portions of which are necessary ingredients in the medicines, and the meat of which he keeps for himself.

As long as the Igai gob uses his powers in this way for good, he is much respected, and he is an important person in the community. But he can also use it for evil, and by resorting to witchcraft make people ill or kill them, instead of curing them. If it is suspected that he himself is causing illness, the community has a sure way of protecting itself from him. <sup>1</sup> Cold

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1. Hoernle, op.cit., 520-521; Idem., "S.W.A. as a Primitive Culture Area", 27.



water is absolutely fatal to his power, and in ordinary life he never touches it on any account. Should it be decided that he has caused sickness or death among the people, the chief will therefore order him to be deprived of all his power. He is taken to the nearest pool of water and ducked completely. His power, residing in his body dirt, oozes away from him into the water, as it were, and he is an ordinary man once more! Mrs. Hoernle states that she knows of two instances in which this course was adopted.

In the same way, the medicines of the Igai aob can also be rendered innocuous by immersion in cold water. Mrs. Hoernle records the case of a girl who had been bewitched and who nearly died as a result. She was finally cured by the medicine which is all powerful against all witchcraft methods. "This is the //a Inaip, the kidney of a species of jackal, which has a smell so strong and penetrating that it is too much even for any Igai medicine. When this was given to the girl, she vomited and brought up the little Igai sticks and leaves which had been doing all the mischief. The mother showed these sticks and leaves to some old men who took them all away and threw them into cold water, so that their power was gone for ever." Here we have another instance of the protective value of water, to which attention has already been drawn.

It is difficult to determine what other regular functions the Igai aob has apart from the curing, or causing, of disease. Hahn speaks as if the Igai aob formerly officiated at the boys' puberty ceremony, at the reception of warriors returning home after battle, and at the slaughtering of a cow or sheep

"as an offering to the deceased or to the Supreme Being"<sup>1</sup>.  
 But he gives no further details and there is no other  
 statement which definitely connects the igai aob with  
 these rites.

Elsewhere Hahn mentions "a class of sorcerers"  
 chiefly occupied in making rain, "who in former times  
 must have been very numerous, but since the introduction  
 of Christianity are only met here and there on the kraals  
 of the heathen tribes."<sup>2</sup> "Having a great practical  
 knowledge of the meteorology of their country," he  
 says, "they pretend to have power over the clouds and to  
 bind them. Thus they sprinkle their urine into a burning  
 fire, being convinced that it soon will rain. They  
 also cut the nails of their fingers, and throw them  
 into the fire for the same purpose. They catch a kind  
 of caprimulgus (/ga//goeb), and burn the bird to  
 ashes, which are strewn about, in order to produce  
 clouds and ashes. These sorcerers naturally take good  
 care not to display their tricks of witchcraft if there  
 are, according to their own practical experience,  
 no sufficient indications of certain rain". He does  
 not state who these "sorcerers" are, nor does he  
 suggest any connection between them and the rain-making  
 ceremonies which have previously been described, so  
 that although there seem to have been among the Hottentots  
 special rain magicians, we cannot identify them with

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1. Hahn, op.cit. 23, 24.

2. Idem., 85.

certainty or link them up with the !gai aogu, the known workers in magic.

From Schultze's brief account of Hottentot magic, it appears that the !gai aogu are also diviners.<sup>1</sup> A thread is inserted into the fat in the medicine horn. The projecting end is set alight and held against the wind, and the direction in which the smoke blows tells the distressed Hottentot where he must seek his strayed cattle or his lost companion. If he still wishes to overtake his comrade on the way, a knot is tied in the thread and the projecting end set alight. Then, just as the flame is checked or extinguished on the knot, so will his comrade halt on the march until he comes up. Other methods of divination are also employed by the Hottentots, but there is nothing to connect them certainly with the !gai aogu. One of these we have already met with in connection with the conduct of judicial trials, where as a last resort the diviner is called in with his beads to ascertain who is the real culprit. The method there described is found also among the OvaHerero, and the Bergdama, and may have been taken over from one of these peoples, although this cannot be definitely asserted. Another method of divination, described to Mrs. Hoernle, was done for a Hottentot, but by a Bergdama. The chief Christian Goliath of the Berseba Hottentots, Mrs. Hoernle's informant, said that he had lost a mug and called in this Bergdama man to find out who had taken it. The man had three iron

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1. Schultze, loc. cit.

beads which he thre three times upon the ground. Each time one of the beads rolled in the direction of a certain hut, and when this hut was searched the mug was found there. Here, it will be noticed, an expert from another people was called in; and Mrs. Hoernle is inclined to believe that this may have been the case in most of the cases of divination by means of bone or bead throwing which have been reported among the Hottentots. All her Hottentot informants denied that the Hottentots themselves practised divination in this way.<sup>1</sup>

Kolb describes on hearsay a form of divination which he says was practised in cases of illness where medical treatment seemed to be of no benefit. A sheep was carefully flayed alive in such a way as to avoid excessive bleeding; if it then moved away from the spot, the people gathered hope that the patient would recover, but if it remained lying where it was, they abandoned both hope and any further treatment.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to these more or less standardised methods of divination, the Hottentots also place great faith in omens. Of these there are a great variety. Dreams, the flight and cry of birds, the direction of the wind, celestial phenomena, the beat of the pulse, nervous twitchings, forebodings - all these, according to Olpp, can have significance.<sup>3</sup> Some kinds of omen we have already described in connection with hunting, war and the moon.<sup>4</sup> Vedder records one or two others. Many

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1. Communicated by letter, 25/9/1924.  
 2. Kolb, op.cit., 155.  
 3. Olpp, Angra Pequena, 30.  
 4. Vedder, "The Nama", 133-4.

symptoms on the body of a dying person, or on the bodies of relatives, and, above all, strange ways of behaviour among animals, are regarded as precursors of death. Again, if the corpse of a living acquaintance or a relative appears to a person in a dream, "he has to exert himself to ward off approaching death by means of circumstantial (sic) ceremonies. Having performed these ceremonies secretly, only after a year may he relate this dream, as by then the time for its realisation will have expired, failing which he will be regarded as a murderer should the person die within that year and be treated accordingly."

The appearance of the mantis, again, is an omen of extreme good fortune. This little insect does not appear to enjoy the same reverence among the Hottentots as it does among the Bushmen, but the Naman believe that it brings luck if it creeps on a person, and no one is allowed to kill it.<sup>1</sup> The Colonial Hottentots, according to Graevenbroeck and Kolb, regarded it as a favourable omen of the highest significance.<sup>2</sup> If it went so far as to alight on man or woman, says the latter writer, the fattest ox belonging to the kraal was killed. The lucky person received the entrails and the fat, and wore the caul twisted about his neck until it rotted off, or until some other person was honoured by the mantis in the same way. The flesh of the ox was boiled, and the men or the women feasted on it, according to the sex

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1. Hahn, op.cit. 42.

2. Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 357-8; Kolb, op.cit., 53-4.

of the person on whom the mantis had alighted. The mantis, of course, was never killed or injured, for to do this would turn the omen into disaster and destruction. The mantis, however, does not appear to have been prayed to, nor does it figure at all in the mythology of the people.

There is some mention also of prophets or seers, gebo aogu, among the Naman. These people, says Hahn,<sup>1</sup> "could tell to new-born children as well as to heroes their fate, and this important institution was in the hands of the greatest and most respected old men of the clan". It is probable that the "old man good at prophesying" referred to by Mrs. Hoernle in her description of the annual rain ceremony are these gebo aogu, but this is not clearly indicated. Otherwise we have no information at all about the functions of these seers.

The wearing of various kinds of amulets, it may finally be noted, is by no means uncommon. Graevenbroeck as far back as 1695 mentions that the Colonial Hottentots often carried round their necks a small piece of wood about the thickness of a finger, which they believed would protect them at night, from all dangers when out in the open veld.<sup>2</sup> And Wikar<sup>3</sup> observed that among the Naman the magicians sold to the people all sorts of little pieces of wood to protect

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1. Hahn, op.cit. 24.  
 2. Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 367.  
 3. Wikar, op.cit., 123.

them against harm or disease, as well as against other dangers to men or cattle. These sticks were to be burned or rubbed on the body. He describes one type which was used in case of danger in war. The fortunate possessor scraped it on his foot and on his body, and then could run so fast that he could not be overtaken! Even at the present time, as we have previously seen, herdsmen and warriors, as well as others, still use similar pieces of wood, fangs, beads, pieces of scaly skin, etc., which are held as serving to ward off all dangers, maintain health or deliver the possessor from evil. As a rule these objects are worn at the breast on a thin leather strap; very often they may be tied on the painful part of the body, and are then simply called "Medicine". When circumstances demand it, they prepare these amulets themselves, but, says Vedder, they have so little confidence in their own art that they would rather purchase them from the Ovambo, OvaHerero, Bergdama, and especially from the Bushmen.

The respect for the magical powers of other peoples which is implied in the case both of the amulets and of divination was also noted by Wikar among the Naman towards the end of the eighteenth century. He says that they feared both the Bergdama and the BeChwana as powerful wizards. "I asked them if they had already had proof of the witchcraft of the BeChwana. They replied that in earlier times their forefathers had stolen cattle from the BeChwana, but had been bewitched, while on the way home, so that they became mad, and turned back with cattle and all to the BeChwana, by whom they were murdered with assegais".

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1. Vedder, 134. 2. Wikar, op.cit., 122.

IX.

## ART AND KNOWLEDGE.

Decorative and Plastic Art.

Judged by the standard of the Bushmen, the Hottentots are distinctly poor in artistic productions. Painting and engraving on rock, one of the outstanding features in the culture of the former, does not appear ever to have been practised by the latter. Their decorative art at the present time<sup>1</sup> is confined mainly to scratching or incising simple rows of dots or lines of crude chevron, zigzag or fishbone pattern on the outer surface of their metal armbands and rings. Occasionally also simple triangular designs are burned round the mouth of their wooden vessels, or scratched on their serpentine pipes; while the clay pots which they formerly made are sometimes found decorated round the neck with rows of dots or short, broad lines, apparently produced by incising. No other form of decorative art is known to occur.

The rudiments of a plastic art may be noticed among the young boys, who often model toys out of clay, which they burn in fire to obtain shades of colour, as well as hardness.<sup>2</sup> These toys consist in figures of human beings, cattle, game and other animals, sometimes also in group compositions such as a team of oxen pulling a wagon. Schultze describes

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1. Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, 249-51.

2. *Idem.*, 310-12.



and figures some of them, which are skilfully modelled and by no means devoid of artistic appeal, in some cases even showing a lively sense of caricature, as in representations of Europeans. But the talent here shown is not carried over into later life, and no modelling or carving of any description analogous to this is done by adults.

#### Music and Dancing.

If the Hottentots are deficient in the plastic arts, their musical talent at least is highly developed. The joy in imitative representation, in the fancy-free expression of stored-up impressions, lives in both young and old. Their delight and talent in mimicry is shown in pantomime, their musical sense in the use of musical instruments and in song, and their finer artistic feeling in the dance. Only in a few exceptional cases do we find these different art-forms practised in isolation; as a rule, just like the emotions which underlie them, they are all intimately combined in the same performance.

The musical instruments of the Hottentots<sup>1</sup> include some of those found among the Bushmen, such as the igoura, the igubo, the ramgyib ("ramakie") and the "rommelpot". Of these the igoura is specially important from the ethnological point of view. As previously mentioned, it is a form of musical bow having the peculiarity of being sounded by means of a

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1. Kolb, Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung, 122-3; Fritsch, Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrikas, 326-7; Schinz, Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika, 95-6; v. Francoise, Nama und Damara, 228; Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari, 374.

piece of quill connecting one end of the chord with the end of the bow-stave. Though various forms of the musical bow, including the igubo, are found widely spread over Africa, the igoura is a specialised type somewhat sharply separated from the others. Its occurrence is confined mainly to the Hottentots and the Southern Bushmen, so that it represents a common culture trait of some significance. It is now also found among some of the Southern Bantu, but has almost certainly been taken over by them from either the Bushmen or the Hottentots.

Schultze describes in addition the ordinary musical bow, kxab, which he noted among the Naman.<sup>1</sup> The stave is made from a thin piece of acacia wood, and the chord from the back-sinew of the goat, or, better still, from sheep-gut. The women are the performers. They sit on the ground, with the upper end of the bow resting on the left shoulder, while the lower end, propped up against a skin-covered bowl which serves as a sounding-board, is held there by means of the foot, inserted between the stave and the chord. The right hand of the performer picks at the chord with a small stick, the left hand holds the bow like a violin. Usually several of the women sitting round beat in time on the chord with their sticks.

From the musical point of view the chief characteristic of the theme enacted in the musical pantomime performed with this instrument lies in rhythm. In hunting themes this expresses the different

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 374-5.

types of movement of horses and game. The tracking of the hartebeest, the first galloping pursuit, the flight of the wounded animal and its overthrow, all this is indicated in the time beaten with the stick. The spurring-on of the pursuing horse, the fatal thrust, and the death rattle of the dying animal are punctuated with gestures and inarticulate sounds; the successive monotonous beaten on the chord to varying speeds only serve as accompaniment. Similarly the progress of a wagon is indicated, with such incidents as the in-spanning of the oxen and the falling out of a lame animal, while the habits of wild animals are imitated with special delight.

In all these performances the music itself is relatively unimportant, even though the chord is throughout being sounded with the stick. It is only in the reed-dance songs that the notes are first arranged into melodies. The reed pipes (fati) are among the oldest known musical instruments of the Kottentots.<sup>1</sup> These pipes, as their name indicates, are usually cut from reed; but where, as in barren tracts, no reed can be got, they are made from the hollow bark of acacia roots. They range in length from about six inches to a foot. Their barrels are like those of European flutes, but the holes on both sides meet one another and are larger than in the flute. One end of the pipe is closed with a grass cork, which is slid up and down by means of a thin

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1. The fullest descriptions are given by Schultze, *op.cit.*, 375-7; cf. v. Francois, *op.cit.*, 228.

bit of stick to vary the pitch of the instrument. These pipes are always used to accompany dances and songs.

Every large kraal has its bandmaster, ei-igun-aob, who teaches the young boys how to perform and to play on the pipes. "Boys who perform well," says Hahn, "are petted by the girls, and this kind of petting is called !kholi-/kha, to touch the body, which means 'to praise a person in a song'<sup>1</sup>". A full Hottentot orchestra has at least nine performers, each with a pipe or set of pipes tuned to a different note from those of the others. The music of each performer consists in a series of rhythmical blasts all on one note, which harmonise with those of others in the same rhythm. These notes provide the time for the dangers and singers, who lead the melody.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the songs accompanied by reed-music are without words; the theme is indicated simply by actions, and the melody "trolled" aloud, i.e. sung without articulate words.<sup>3</sup> Others have a fixed verbal text. Hahn distinguishes two kinds of the latter, sacred and profane. "The sacred hymns are generally prayers, invocations and songs of praise in honour of Tsuni //goab, !eitsiehib and the Moon; and such sacred songs and the performance with dancing is called /geib, while the general profane songs are called //nai-tsanati, and to perform them with a dance on reed-pipes, or, better, bark-pipes, is /aba kaire.

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1. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, 29.

2. Schultz, *op.cit.*, 376, 377.

3. *Idem*, 377.

The profane reed-dances or reed-songs are of a very different nature. Either the fate of a hero who fell in a battle or lost his life on a hunting expedition is deplored; and on such occasions a performance is connected with it."<sup>1</sup>

The reed-dances are usually held in the evening and often last through the whole night, especially when there is moonlight. The occasions of the Again, religious dances, are naturally determined by the character of the dance. Those in which the Moon is invoked are held at New Moon and at Full Moon; Hahn mentions another, at which Tsui //Goab is prayed to for rain, which is held when the Pleiades first appear above the eastern horizon; still another, in which Igurub, the Thunder, is invoked, even takes place, as we have seen, when a heavy thunderstorm is approaching.<sup>2</sup> The "profane" dances are held on any festive occasion, especially when anybody is being purified after a Inau seclusion, as, e.g., in the girl's puberty ceremony. If any illustrious stranger visits a kraal, he also is often welcomed with a reed-dance, an honour accorded to several of the European travellers.<sup>3</sup> But in all probability any bright evening, whether specially significant or not, provides the occasion for such an entertainment.

<sup>4</sup> In these dances the men normally form a ring, all facing inwards, each with the upper part of his

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1.Hahn, op.cit., 27-8.  
2.Idem., 58-60, passim.  
3.cf. Idem., 28; cf. Sikar, op.cit., 127.  
4.Schinz, op.cit., 31-2; v. Francois, op.cit., 228; Schultze, op.cit., 377.

body bent forward, and his lips on the pipe. Then, to the accompaniment of their music, they hop up and down on both legs simultaneously, the knees slightly bent and one foot in front of the other, and move about jerkily and slowly in this way. The women, "trolling" or singing with loud voices and clapping their hands in front of the face to the rhythm of the music, dance round the men in a larger outer ring. They move forward in small, often very small, steps, with buttocks prominently thrust out, and wagging their hips. There is no fixed number of dancers. The dance has such an irresistible attraction for the Hottentots that any group of dancers rapidly grows in size. Mothers with babies on their backs, women returning to the kraal with firewood or other burdens, attach themselves to the ring; even old matrons whose sight is failing, says von Francois, become as if electrified when they hear the dance music and dance like energetic flappers!

Many of the profane dances represent special themes. Some of them are purely pantomimic. One such dance, described by Schultze,<sup>1</sup> may serve to illustrate the wealth of imitative action with which they are enlivened. The theme is that of a hyena slinking round a sheep kraal at night and being discovered. The pantomimic representation of this theme, with its reed music, its song and its dance, is extremely delightful. The men line up in a semi-circle, as do also the women opposite them. The circle formed in this way,

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 580-1; others are described on pp.577-80.

with its two opposing entrances where the line of men approaches that of the women, represents a sheep kraal, and the women the sheep. Amid the singing and the notes of the reed music of all those standing in the circle, one of the men leaves the line, and in a crouching position, with sharply-bent knees, slinks into the interior of the "kraal" and along the line of women, with all the gestures of a bloodthirsty hyena. After a while three other men from the line make as if riding for the same opening through which the hyena has entered. In bearing and gesture they mimic the tying-up of their horses, then discover the tracks of the hyena and follow them, until suddenly they notice the animal. They hasten back to their horses and take up the pursuit. The hyena meanwhile has made for the open, but is overtaken outside the "kraal" and killed. During the whole of this performance the women uninterruptedly sing at the "hyena" the words:-  
/Hi-ra-se, kxoin xun gye, /so-be-se, kxoin xun gye, "Hyena, this, (the sheep in the kraal) is the property of men!"

Other dances and their songs depict scenes of hunting or battle. Wikar describes one mimicking a rhinoceros hunt,<sup>1</sup> Hahn another in which a hero dies bravely in battle and is left a prey to the vultures, until his friends, having defeated the enemy, return and collect his bones into a grave, at the same time singing a very doleful burial song.<sup>2</sup> Another dance

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1. Wikar, op.cit., 127-8.

2. Hahn, op.cit., 103-4.

of this type, seen often by von Francois in Windhoek, is based on the historical incident of the "murder" of Jan Jonker by Hendrik Witbooi.<sup>1</sup> The men group themselves in two parties, one with white hatbands, the other with red. The latter, representing Jonker's people, dance first, as if believing themselves safe, and the women dance round them. Then to the same melody and time the Witboois dance up out of the darkness towards the camp of the Jonkers. Suddenly they are noticed by the latter, the women spring aside and begin, standing still and clapping their hands, to take up the melody, while the men forming into line range themselves against the Witboois and in a crouching position continue blowing on their reed pipes. The Witboois also form into line, and send forward a messenger, who advances and then returns, always playing on his pipe and hopping up and down. Then one of the red-hatted men, representing Jan Jonker, dances up to the Witboois, and, still blowing on his pipe, shakes several of them by the hand. Meanwhile a Witbooi in the same manner circles round the group of women, representing the cattle, and after inspecting them all returns to his party. Now the murder of Jan Jonker is enacted, so too his men dancing up to his aid are massacred, and finally the Witboois dance away with the plundered cattle and women. The whole dance, with its wealth of action and skilful performance, is a most interesting illustration of the imitative talent of the Hottentots and their fertile imagination. In this respect at least they equal the

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1. von Francois, op.cit., 223-9.



Bushmen, even although they have not the grand masquerades dances performed by the latter.

Dancing itself without music and song is seldom practised, but singing without musical accompaniment is common.<sup>1</sup> Most of the songs are based on actual incidents which afford a suitable theme; others are love-songs; and Hahn mentions still another type known as Gares, which Hottentot mothers or nurses are in the habit of extemporising in praise of a child, while washing or anointing it.<sup>2</sup> The verbal text of these songs is generally very simple in character, and not always rigidly fixed. When singing in chorus, individuals will often add motives of their own to the text, which after shorter or longer intervals they always repeat anew with slight variations. But they are able in doing so to weave their motive harmoniously into the melody of the other singers. Nowadays the ~~songs~~<sup>songs</sup> are often church hymns or popular Dutch folk ditties, and the reed pipes are often replaced by the mouth organ or concertina, but the musical sense of the people is as lively as ever, and they find their principal recreation in its exercise.

#### Knowledge of Disease and Doctoring.

The Hottentots on the whole do not enjoy robust health. The slender body, often weakened by inadequate and irregular food, uncleanness, excessive indulgence in alcohol and tobacco, and privations of all sorts, has little power of resistance. The early writers speak of sore breasts, ophthalmias and umbilical hernias as the common diseases, and coughs appear to

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 381-3.

2. Hahn, op.cit., 107, 28-9. -73-

have been frequent. After the advent of the white man, smallpox, measles and less cleanly diseases swept the country like plagues. An epidemic of smallpox in 1713 totally wiped out many of the Colonial Hottentot tribes, and greatly weakened the numerical strength and organisation of others; a similar outbreak in 1755 again decimated them, and to add to their woes leprosy attacked them; while in 1864 large numbers of Naman also died from smallpox. At the present time, syphilis, another infection due to the white man, is widespread among them, principally in the tertiary and congenital form; tuberculosis, fevers, paralysis, ophthalmias and chicken-pox are other common diseases, while during the cold season they catch severe colds, and, like all the other inhabitants of South Africa, they suffered heavily during the influenza pandemic of 1918.<sup>1</sup>

All maladies, says, Mrs. Hoernle,<sup>2</sup> are divided by the Hottentots into two groups. First, there is /aisena, "sickness", which they regard as due to some misplacement of the internal organs. According to their notions of anatomy these organs have weird ways of wandering about the body. The treatment is massage, to restore each organ to its proper place; and in such massage the Hottentots are very highly skilled. The other group of diseases is called by the same name as death, /op, and in the treatment of these a great

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1. Laidler, "The Magic Medicine of the Hottentots", 433; Theal, History..of S.Africa, before 1795, II 431 ff., III 28, 36 ff.; Schinz, op.cit., 99; v. Francois, op. cit., 815-6; Schultze, op.cit., 227; Official Year Book of the Union of S.Africa, No.8, 985-6. passim.
  2. Hoernle, "Conception of Inau", 77-9.

variety of herbs and roots is employed. Some of the herbs are considered so valuable that journeys are made from tribe to tribe to get them, although among the herbs found in any particular territory there are always some which may serve as substitutes. But however powerful the remedy may be, if it is to be effective it must always be applied by someone who has had the disease and recovered. The most effective medicine will fail unless used by the right person.<sup>1</sup>

The chief diseases described to Mrs. Hornle as receiving this second treatment are //autas, paralysis, //keis, "fever", urub, varicose vein, and inomis, lupus. Any man who falls sick from any one of these or the other diseases called zop becomes inau and the treatment adopted to cure him is exactly similar to that described in the remarriage ceremony. The patient is secluded in a hut, and a special animal, a sheep or a goat, is slaughtered. The officiating person makes some cuts in the patient's body over the part affected. With a small horn blood is cupped from these cuts, mixed together, and some of the blood of the slaughtered animal is added. Next the officiating person scrapes some dirt from his arm and mixes it with the blood, to which the ingredients of the vegetable medicines are also added. This mixture is finally rubbed into the cuts. Till these have healed the patient must observe the customary inau restrictions: he must remain in the hut, he must not touch anyone with his hands, nor must he touch cold water or the pots. When at last the cuts are healed, the officiating person cleanses the patient

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1. cf. Schultze, op. cit., 213.

in the customary manner, the latter puts on a set of new clothes and gives the old ones to the former, the usual purification meal is held, and the fire in the hut cleaned away and renewed. Finally the reintroduction to the duties of ordinary life takes place in the usual manner, and the patient is free to mix with other people once more.

No other writer on the Hottentots mentions this particular grouping of diseases. It is implied, however, in Laidler's statement that there is a classification into minor and major troubles; but he adds that the former are treated by the herbalists, while in the latter the first step is consultation with the "witch doctor", i.e. the Igai aob, who is usually himself also a herbalist. He makes no reference to the fact, explicitly noted by both Mrs. Hoernle and Schultze, that certain diseases can only be treated by persons who have themselves had the disease and recovered from it. Many writers confirm, as we have seen, the calling in of the Igai aob in case of illness, and it would seem that one of his ordinary duties is to discover the source of the sickness. His method of doing so is nowhere clearly described, although Laidler vaguely mentions divination by examination of the entrails of a slaughtered animal. Where the patient is held to have been bewitched, the Igai aob also undertakes to cure him. His treatment in such cases, in addition to the "extracting" of the foreign

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1. Laidler, op.cit., 433,434.

bodies which are thought to be causing the sickness, is apparently similar to that employed in the diseases known as foa, since we have seen that the dirt scraped from his body is an essential ingredient in any medicine he gives. It is obvious, from what has just been said, that he does not undertake the treatment of every kind of disease.

All this implies that more than one class of persons may be called in to treat the sick and injured, the healer differing according to the nature of the complaint. But there is nowhere any full statement as to who all the persons are who may respectively act in this way. The only mention of professional healers, apart from the "herballists" referred to by Laidler, is Kolb's statement that in every Colonial Hottentot kraal there was a man chosen by the old men of the kraal to act as physician and surgeon, because of his knowledge of herbs and surgical and medical treatment. His office was not hereditary. On his death the old men chose another man with similar qualifications; and if no one suitable could be found in their own kraal they fetched him in from another. In the meantime such of the old women as had a knowledge of herbs and could make the surgical cuts undertook the treatment of the sick. <sup>1</sup> How far this statement can be regarded as accurate in all its details is difficult to say. The whole social aspect of medicine among the Hottentots has been somewhat neglected, and it is not always possible to reconcile the different statements as to the practitioners employed. Nor, except in the case of the foa diseases, can we ascertain definitely how far the practitioners profess or are be-

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1. Kolb, op cit., 44-5.

lieved to cure all diseases, or whether they specialise on particular cases. And, apart from the account given by Mrs. Hoernle, there is no full description of the ceremonies attaching to the cures or attempted cures.

On the actual methods of treatment employed we have more adequate information, thanks mainly to the detailed descriptions given by Schultze and Laidler, as well as the older writers such as Graevenbroeck<sup>1</sup> and Kolb. Massage, as we have just seen, is widely used for diffuse pains attributed to the wanderings of the internal organs, the object being to restore each organ to its proper place. It is also used, as we have previously noted, on pregnant women, and according to Laidler unfruitful women or those behind their time with menstruation are massaged on the abdomen, in the former case with a downward movement, in the latter with a rolling movement.

The knowledge of surgery is limited. Dislocations are reduced by rubbing the joint briskly with fat and then moving the limb up and down vigorously. A broken limb is first wrapped in skin, care being taken to allow free circulation of the blood; then narrow splints of wood are tied round it to form a sort of sheath, and left until the bone is firm again. Amputation of a finger joint, a common practice in the past, was cleverly performed with the aid of a ligature. Kolb states that the head of the joint

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 211-4; 233-6; Laidler, op.cit., 424-36; Graevenbroeck, op.cit., 19 ff.; Kolb, op.cit., 146-55.
  2. Kolb, op.cit., 149-53; Schultze, op.cit., 211-4; Laidler, op.cit., 436-7.

was tied up with sinew, and then cut through below, the sticky juice of certain leaves and other herbs then being applied to the raw surface.

For relatively localised pains the universal remedy is bleeding, either by venesection with bandaging or by cupping. In the former case, as described by Kolb, a thong is tied round the limb and the vein cut open below it. When enough blood has been drawn off, the incision is closed with mutton fat and the leaf of some herb placed over it. Cupping, apart from its use in the Inau ceremonies and diseases, is specially used for stiffness and pains in the limbs, in order to hinder their swelling, for colics and pains in the stomach, and also, according to Laidler, for the relief of madness and epilepsy. The cupping horn is a carefully prepared tip of calf or goat horn open at both ends, with the broader end carefully bevelled from within outwards. The smaller end is closed with a <sup>ball</sup> ~~ball~~ of soft worked resin, which is pierced by a long thorn. The horn is first applied dry, i.e. over the unscarified surface of the skin, to produce insensibility. The numbed part is then scarified, the horn pressed tightly over the bleeding cut, and the operator sucks hard. When suction is well established he bites the resin and so closes the aperture in it. The horn is left in place until the required amount of blood has been withdrawn.

Single syphilitic ulcers, according to Schultze,<sup>1</sup> are superficially scratched open and the wounds washed

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1. op. cit., 213, 225-6.

either with sea water, on the coast, or with the soap made from the ashes of a certain bush in the interior. Then the wounds are scraped out more deeply, and as soon as the bleeding ceases they are powdered with the charred stalks of a certain seaweed, Ecklonia buccinella (L) Hornem. Before this powdering the patient drinks two mouthfuls of sea water. If the ulcers are spread over the whole body, the patient is washed and his skin then scratched with the finger nails, until his body is covered with blood. One man undertakes the scratching, but others have to hold down the patient, who hits out in pain, for the procedure must be uninterrupted. Finally he is powdered all over. If new ulcers form under the scurf, the skin is again torn open. Syphilitics, Schultze adds, are recommended to swallow early in the morning a mouthful of their own urine, and they regard the brew made from the strongly aromatic fleshy leaves of a certain Geranium as a preventive against eruptions. Gonorrhoea is treated locally by dabbing into the urethra the milky sap from the fresh leaves of a certain plant known as Irubib or Kam-kharah, or they dig out the root of the plant, pound it up and make a hot decoction which they drink in large quantities.

Cures and antidotes for the bites and stings of the multitudinous snakes, spiders and scorpions found in the country naturally play a large part in Hottentot medicine. An "infallible" antidote for snake bite is the dried body of the lizard Scelates

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 224-5; Isidler, op.cit., 430-46.



capense Ehr. Small deep cuts are made slightly above and below the bite, and cupped for about half an hour. Then a tiny fragment of the lizard's body is pressed into each cut and rubbed in with wood ashes. The bite itself is only washed with water. Snake poison itself may also be used as an antidote, a small dose of prepared venom diluted in water being swallowed. Sometimes the "doctor" makes incisions over the bite, then places a piece of venom in his mouth and proceeds to suck the wound. Again, "kabroc", a potato-like root, is applied in raw wet slices to the wound to draw out the poison. Yellow Kafir wood, ground, is used as a poultice, and appears to have a certain caustic action. White potassium chlorate, in the form of the inspissated urine and faeces of the dassie purified by the action of the atmosphere, is rubbed into scarified snake bites and scorpion stings. Sometimes the crushed head of the snake may be applied as a poultice to snake bite, and so too powdered spider or tarantula is used as a poultice over their bites. In the case of scorpion sting the particular animal if possible is captured, its tail and nippers pulled off, and the body is ground and applied as a paste. The patient at the same time is given a solution of tobacco juice diluted in water as an emetic. Tobacco juice taken from the stem of the pipe may also be rubbed into the bite or a cut made near it, and Schultze seems to think that it really may be an effective antidote against snake bites and scorpion stings.

The immunization against snake bite reported

of the Bushmen is also practised by the Hottentots.<sup>1</sup>  
 One of Laidler's informants, who was the "poison doctor" for the northern portion of Little Namaqualand, learned his profession from his father, who in his turn had been similarly taught. He stated that when he was a boy - and to begin with the boy must have a good constitution - his father made two small cuts above the elbow of each arm, and into them rubbed a small portion of the dried venom of the cobra and night adder. Two weeks later his father prepared a lump of venom that contained several varieties, and gave him a piece to hold upon his tongue until he felt "funny and shivery". This was repeated twice weekly. Then he was given a piece to swallow. The ~~dose~~<sup>dose</sup> was increased daily until it reached the size of a pin's head, and this ~~dose~~<sup>dose</sup> the informant still takes every day. The only venom not used in this process is that of the puff adder, which his father told him rotted the flesh. Men immunised in this way are known as /soika son, snake-bite men, and they treat others bitten by snakes. Apart from the regular antidotes and cures already mentioned, they often use the perspiration from their body or clothing, either rubbing it into small cuts made near the bite or mixing it with water which the patient is required to drink. This form of treatment is, of course reminiscent of that employed in the foe diseases.

For internal and certain other troubles the

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1. Laidler, 436-9; Schultze, loc.cit.

Hottentots use a great variety of herbs and roots. When any of the roots which are considered really powerful medicines are dug from the ground, states Mrs. Hoernle,<sup>1</sup> something has to be given in return, otherwise the root will not act, and similarly when it is passed from person to person a present must also be given. When taking the root one addresses it with the words: "Ah, there I have dug this, and if you don't help me, harming me rather, I shall throw you into cold water" - another instance, it will be noted, of the protective power of water.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere, Mrs. Hoernle mentions, by way of example, that the root used in treating lupus, and hence known as !nomi help, "lupus stick", must be treated with great deference. "When a person comes to the bush, before digging he must put down a bracelet, a bead, or some little thing. If he fails to do so, the root will simply disappear. Later, if he divides it among his friends, the same process takes place; each must give some little thing for the piece received. I was warned to do the same lest all the virtue leave the root, even if it did not wholly disappear."

Laidler has described at some length the herbal lore of the half-breed Naman of Little Namqualand.<sup>3</sup> From the details of this lore it appears that the chief ailments treated with herbs and roots are internal pains and fevers, classed together, he says, as "fires", and distinguished only by locality, certain women's

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1. Hoernle, "Social Value of Water", 521.  
 2. Idem, "Conception of !Nau". 79.  
 3. Op.cit., 454-5, 460-6; cf. also for the Naman of S.W.A., Schultze, op.cit., 223 ff.

troubles, flatulence as an entity, diarrhoea, and, among the accidental injuries, burns. In anacisias and weaknesses red substances are used, such as Pelargonium anceps, and repeated doses are given during fevers. They are employed, several of his informants stated, because they are red, and the blood is red, and therefore they strengthen the blood; and of course when grown on red ground their value as drugs is increased enormously! All such red materials when used and finished with must be disposed of carefully, because good stuff must never be thrown away. Sutherlandia frutescens, another red plant, was formerly used in decoction for washing wounds, and given as drink for fevers; nowadays it is used for consumption, chicken-pox, etc. Eriosperrum latifolium, a red tuber, rasped up raw, is considered a good poultice on bruises and cuts, and here again the colour appears to have been the chief attraction. Other decoctions for coughs and colds, as well as for fevers, are made from the leaves of various Sages (Salvia sp.), as well as from the leaves of one species of wild olive, which are administered in any cold or fever, from a common cold to typhoid. Other wild olives are given as sweating draughts, as is also Crassula lycopodioides.

Another species of wild olive is used in decoction of leaves for dropsy, flatulence, and pains in the stomach, as a lotion for sores, and the leaves are also used as a plaster. Pains in the stomach are

also treated with decoctions of Erioccephalus umbellatus, of of the powdered and boiled roots of Royena pallens; pains in the back are treated with Boscia foetida; and shooting pains with Passerina filiformis or Berkheya sp. For toothache the people chew the alkaline leaves of Mesembrianthemum tortuosum, also taken in the same way for pains in the stomach, or the leaves of Galenia africana; headaches are treated with a decoction of dagga seeds, also used for bronchitis; and for pains in the eyes an ointment made from raw fat and pulverised dagga is applied.

Mesembrianthemum edule, stamped and given as a pulp, is used for delayed labour or retained afterbirth; Euphorbia restituta is given for tedious labour; and for troubles after parturition the leaves of Rhus sp. are boiled and taken in decoction. But a more common remedy for women's ailments is lau/arub, the condensed urine and faeces of the dassie. Boiled and strained the liquor is given in dry confinements, during parturition generally, and for irregularities of menstruation. In large doses it is believed to be the perfect abortifacient. The same substance, finally purified by the action of the atmosphere, is given internally in decoction and infusion for all sorts of poisoning of whatever origin, and rubbed into scarified snake bites and scorpion stings. It is also used in such minor complaints as stiffness of the back and pains in the stomach.

Diarrhoea is treated with a decoction made from the powdered and boiled roots and stem of Royena

pallens; and Sarcocaulon Burmense, pounded fine, is used as an astringent for the same complaint. Purgatives have a strange fascination for the natives, and are widely used for pains in the stomach or "fevers" "to work them out". A tangible removal, it is argued, must always be productive of good, for the Hottentots, according to Laidler, "firmly believe that whatever they suffer is caused by a tangible something". One of his informants, a professional herbalist, said that the same medicine prepared in different ways may have different actions. Thus if Royena pallens is cut in an upward direction it will act as an emetic, if cut downwards it is transformed into a purgative! Other purgatives are Royena hirsuta and Chiroma baccifera, two mouthfuls of which, taken in decoction, are an efficient dose and have a rapid effect. The latter plant is also used in decoction for boils, as are also Cynanchum capense Thun. and a species of liana. The latter is also burned and the ash sprinkled on ringworms.

Blasters and poultices are in common use, and it appears that a soft hot application, whether of goat-dung, the inside of a goat disembowelled alive to prevent loss of heat, or a preparation of herbs, is a favourite remedy with the Hottentots. The skin drawn off a living goat is used while still warm as an application for any severe pain. Of vegetable substances the bulbs of the "veldskoen blaar" is warmed smeared with fat, and applied to any swelling; the root of Sarcocaulon Burmense, ground fine, is used as a poultice which is peppery and acts like a mustard plaster; the

stem of Cotyledon Walchii is pounded after spine and bark have been removed, and applied to abscesses; and Berkheya sp., powdered, is used as a plaster for burns and boils. Another favourite, and indeed the first, application to burns is nasal mucus; and the cast skin of a snake, burned to powder, is also used for the same injury. Goat dung as a poultice on a sore stomach is widely used; the underlying motive seems to be that since the goat eats a large variety of plants, many of which must have medicinal properties, these properties will be to some extent retained in its dung. For the same reason the stomach of the porcupine is dried and portions infused as required. Its action is diaphoretic. The porcupine eats so many "bush things and strong things", said one of Laidler's informants, that its stomach contents must be very good medicine! Schultze notes also that among the Naman a patient suffering from chicken-pox is given several times daily a decoction made up of a handful of goat dung cooked in about half a litre of diluted milk. Powdered hyena dung is given to children for convulsions, and used also as insufflative powder in cases of diphtheria.

#### Star Lore and Calendar.

The nature lore of the Hottentots, revealed in their subsistence and medicine, their industries, pastoralism and hunting, is based more or less directly

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on material needs and intimately bound up with them. Apart from the knowledge empirically derived in this way from the cares of everyday life,, there is little trace of organised conceptions of the world of nature. The only other provinces, according to Schultze, in which the rudiments of scientific synthesis may be seen are, first, biology, of direct import to the hunter and herdsman, and, second, the division of time, whose periods in their change of season and far-reaching influence on the living world likewise force the attention of the herdsman. The former of these Schultze does not discuss at all, but of the latter and its astronomical foundations he gives a valuable and detailed description.<sup>1</sup>

From the early childhood the Hottentot is accustomed to find his way about in the open, on the pasture fields. As a child he relies for the means of doing so on adjacent objects, on groups of bushes, trees and rock formations. Later when he goes with his family on longer marches in search of pasture, he is forced owing to the barrenness of the land to seek his way from one waterhole to another. His wanderings consequently consist in treks, each of which has as its daily goal a spot relatively near by and fixed upon according to local conditions. As a result the Hottentot needs no other points of orientation in the sky apart from the sun, and his knowledge of the stars is therefore very limited.

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The sun, sores, also gives the Hottentot points

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1. Schultze, *Aus Lemland und Kalahari*, 366-76.  
2. *Idem.*, 366.



of control for distinguishing positions of the horizon. The East is named socesta //nai /kxab, "the side on which the sun rises", the West socesta /ga /kxab, "the side on which the sun sets"; while for North and South there is a common term, soresko inab, since when one faces in either of these directions the sun shines on (ina, in) the cheeks (xob). The names !kxabagab and /abas for the South and North winds respectively are sometimes also used for the abstract points of the horizon, but this Schultze regards as a later transference. The sun itself, how it rises and sets, the wind which blows from here or there, the place to which he formerly wandered, these are the elements of the Hottentot's geographical notions, and they suffice for understanding.

The moon and its phases are more appropriately discussed in connection with the calendar. Of the stars, /gamiroti<sup>1</sup>, the Hottentots knew most accurately the two planets Venus and Mercury, whose closeness to the sun and regular alternating positions in the morning and evening sky make them readily observable. Venus, //khanus, is also known as "the Forerunner" of the sun, al!guns, or as socura //hab, "the star at whose rising men run away" (i.e. from illicit sexual intercourse). Mercury is the "Dawn star", //goe/gamiroe, or the star that comes when the udders of the cows are filled again; as an evening star he is not observed. Venus as an evening star is recognised to be the same celestial body as the morning star, and is then called the "Evening Fugitive", !ui !kxoeb, since it does not

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1. Idem., 566-9.

remain long in the sky. Jupiter is also known, but is sometimes identified with Venus; when however he is seen "in the middle of the sky" he is called the "Middle Star", //aegu /gamirob.

The six stars of the belt and sword of Orion are grouped together as the "Zebras", igoregu;  $\delta, \epsilon, \zeta,$  are three fugitive zebras against the middle one of which the hunter *i* shoots his arrows  $\nu$  and  $\sigma$ . The Pleiades, on account of their thick cluster of stars, are called by the name /husesti or /kxusesti, derived from the verb /hu, to assemble, or are otherwise known as /ao /gamiroti, "Hoar-frost Stars", since at the time when they become visible the nights may already be so cold that hoar-frost is found in the morning.

Of these stars Hahn gives the following myth, which he names "The Orion Myth, or the Curse of the Women".<sup>1</sup> "The /Khunusesti (Pleiades) said to their husband, 'Go thou and shoot those three zebras for us; but if thou dost not shoot, thou darrest not come home'. And the husband went out with only one arrow, and he shot with his bow. But he did not hit, and he sat there because his arrow had missed the Zebras. On the other side stood the Lion and watched the Zebras, and the man could not go and pick up his arrow to shoot again. And because his wives had cursed him he could not return; and there he sat in the cold night shivering and suffering from thirst and hunger. And the /Khunusesti

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1. Hahn, Tsuni-//Coem, 74.

said to the other men: 'Ye men, do you think that you can compare yourselves to us, and be our equals? There now, we defy our own husband to come home because he has not killed game'.<sup>1</sup> In explanation Hahn states that the Alderbaran, or  $\alpha$  Tauri, is the husband of the myth, and /khunusoti, or the Pleiades, are his wives. His bow is  $\pi\pi$  Orionis; his sandals, /haron, are  $\epsilon$  and  $\delta$  of the Hyades; his kaross is  $\varrho$  and  $\gamma$  of the Hyades;  $\delta$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\zeta$  Orionis are the zebras, igoregu, and Leo is the lion. The arrow lab is marked by  $\iota, \delta, \epsilon$  Crinnis. of which again it is called /haus, the arrowhead, and  $\epsilon$  is the opposite end, where iams, the feather, is fixed.

The gleam of the Milky Way and of the Magellanic Clouds reminds the Hottentot of the weak glow of the embers of a hearth fire. The former is therefore known to him as tsach, Ember, the masculine singular ending reflecting the large slender shape of the constellation, and the latter as tsora, Yabers, (fem. dual), the ending reflecting the clumpy form and the smallness of the constellation. The Magellanic Clouds are also called xan Axarakka, "the two lion testicles". Of single fixed stars Schmitze heard only Sirius named, as the "Side Star", inam /gamirob. Two other names of stars are recorded by Hahn; mura, "the two eyes", for  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  Centauri, and xami di mura, the eyes of the lion, for  $\mu$   $\gamma$  and  $\delta$  Scorpionis.<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered that he also speaks of the stars as the eyes of the deceased.

1. Idem., 108-9.

2. Hahn, op.cit., 109.

The calendar of the Hottentots<sup>1</sup> is based on the change of the seasons, the phases of the moon, and the daily positions of the sun. They are well acquainted with the concrete phenomenon of the year, iaurib, as a single period of the seasonal variation, but they do not reckon in years of this sense. The year, that is, is empirically given by them, but not limited in the abstract. Above all, it is not a calendrical and numerical quantity. They keep in mind the age of their cattle, which they reckon by calving and lambing periods. They have, however, no interest in their own ages. When they wish to date back some what further, well-known events, such as the outbreak of rinderpest, hostilities with neighbouring tribes or with the whites, immigrations, etc., furnish them with satisfactory general indications, from which, coupling them in particular cases with the birth of their children or the stature of these at the time, they can arrive at a date.

The major divisions of the year are the seasons, gamagu, of which there are four. In determining these the Hottentots seem to keep in view the vegetation rather than the climate. They distinguish, first, early spring (ikxa//aeb) blossoming-time, or labah, spring), which has come when with increasing warmth, independently of the rain-fall, trees and bushes break into leaf, and in good years winter or early spring

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1. Schultze, op.cit., 365-73.

rains have revived the grass. It begins as early as August and ends in October. The following season (//kxunab; in the Bergdama dialect soreb, "sun-time") embraces the first half of the hot period, in which, when the year is good, the so-called lesser rains fall. If these are failing, or, as is usually the case, are scanty, the land is for the most part desolate, without grass or herbage. This time of drought is sometimes called by the same name as drought itself, /kxurub. It prevails from October to December inclusive, and thus corresponds to the astronomical spring of the Southern Hemisphere. The season upon the productiveness of which the welfare of the Hottentots most depends, //naob, may be called the pasture season; it includes the period of the greater rains and the time immediately after this, when the fodder has not yet lost its freshness. It comprises, loosely speaking, the period January to April, thus corresponding to summer and the beginning of autumn. Winter, saob, or the cold season, lasts from May to August, and thus embraces two-thirds of the autumn and the first half of winter.

Further divisions of the year are based on observations of the moon. The month, known by the same name as the moon itself, //kxab, begins when the crescent of the moon appears in the western sky. The phases of the moon symbolise to the Hottentot his own growth and decay. The just emerging, hardly yet visible crescent is called /kxam //kxab, /kxam meaning "unripe" in the same sense as it is used to denote a premature fruit. The slender, shining crescent, in which as it

were the moon "revives", is called by a name with that significance, igago //kxab. The first two quarters have two names common to both of them, gai-//kxagaira //kxab, "the moon which becomes great or old (gai)", and Gaira //Kxab, "the moon which becomes wise". (gaai). In the last quarter only the slender crescent is distinguished, which is called "the dying moon", //ora //kxab.

With the gradual adoption of the European calendar, the Hottentot series of months has fallen into decay. The list of months, their order and the other statements give by Schultze come from an old Nama woman, but he is not quite sure that the ideas of the Europeans had not already influenced the number of months and their succession. He refers to another list in Kroenlein's dictionary, which has only nine names. Kroenlein's February corresponds to his January; but it is only in the position of the name for July, which Schultze claims for October, that the two lists differ to any extent. The twelve months of the Hottentots and the approximate months of the European calendar are as follows:-

- I. (January) /kxoesao //kxab, the moon which follows upon the /kxoe (Salsela) bush', an important pasture bush, which has its principal flowering season in spring.
- II. (February) gama /aeb, not translated.
- III. (March) !kxai tsab, 'when it begins to be cold'.
- IV. (April) /goro /nuseb, explained by several old Hottentots as the month of increasing cold, when one sits so near the fire that 'the legs blister'.
- V. (May) /nu //kxas, 'the black month', comes in the time of drought, when the black branches of the stripped bushes give the landscape this character.
- VI. (June) /hai //kxasa, not translated.

VII. (July) /kxu //kxasa, 'the month of the Pleiades', which become visible in the latter half of June.

VIII. (August) hoarib, not translated.

IX. (September) lhoa /gaeb, 'the month when the leaves are curled up' by the cold.

X. (October) gai !kxani, not translated.

XI. (November) /goa !kxani, not translated.

XII. (December) /ho /gaeb, named from the fact when after the first productive rains upon the old and withered grass, the fresh young green shoots up, the meadows (/gaeb) appear to be dappled (/ho).

The smallest unit of time to the Hottentots is the day, tse, and the night, tsuxub. The length of a journey is always spoken of in terms of days and nights. Within the day they distinguish not lengths of time but only parts of the day. They can however express with great certainty and cleanness both points and duration of time by referring to the position of the sun. Of the hours of the day, only noon, tse !gab, is brought into prominence, and similarly the only point of night which is distinguished is midnight, tsuxub !gab the 'back of the night'. On the other hand the limits of day and night are elaborately marked out. They distinguish morning and evening twilight, //goa !arcam, and !uitsuxub respectively; morning brightness, i.e. the time of clear day shortly before sunrise, which is named !kxai //goagab, because about dawn (//goab) it is usually most perceptibly cold (!kxai), and evening brightness, /aba /hobab, the 'red twilight'. 'Little children's twilight', /kxam-/goa-/hobob, is in some places the name given

to the first noticeable diminution of light after sunset, in accordance with the belief that at this hour most children (/goan) are born. Afternoon, /uiab, and morning, //goagab, are only approximate. Finally a distinction is made between evening, !uib, and late evening, !oes, which extends till long after sunset.

The division of time into weeks was first learned by the Hottentots from the Europeans. As calendar for marking the days of the week he uses a thin flat piece of wood, about 10 cm. long and 2 cm. wide, through which seven holes are burned. To the one end is fastened a leather string, whose lower end is inserted down the row into one of the holes, each of which marks a special day of the week. The upper end of the string is used by the women for fastening the calendar to their necklaces, whereas the men prefer to carry the calendar in their hat-bands. This primitive calendar is called bekgye hais, 'week wood', the first word being taken from the Dutch week.

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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The observations brought together in the body of this work show that the Bushmen all belong to one racial group, but that the degree of purity varies. The tribes south of the Molopo River appear to be relatively pure in physical characters, while those further north have mixed to a varying extent principally with Bantu, but also with Hottentots and Bergdama. In the west of this region there is perhaps more Hottentot blood, although in the north-west there has also been a good deal of intermixture with Bantu (chiefly OvaMbo) and Bergdama. In the east Bantu blood, coming from the BeChwana and the BaRotse, is more strongly marked, especially in the Okavango-Zambesi district. Here the Bushman tribes such as the Hukwe and the Galikwe, who have been longest in contact with the Bantu, are found to show on the whole the greatest divergence from the true Bushman type as seen in the tribes ~~at~~ south of the Molopo.

The Hottentots are certainly of the same racial stock as the Bushmen, but vary from the Southern Bushman type in such features as stature and the shape of the head. On the analogy of the Northern Bushmen these differences must be regarded as due to the absorption of alien blood. The most plausible theory perhaps as to the source of this new component is that the Hottentots are a mixture of Bushman<sup>e</sup> with both Hamites and negroes, or possibly with an earlier mixture of the two latter stocks having a predominantly Hamitic culture. The small range of variability now seen among them, save where there has been quite recent intermixture with other peoples, seems to indicate that the original blending which gave rise to them is of very long standing, and hence took place before they came into South Africa. It is therefore suggested that they originated as a distinct variety probably in the region of the Great Lakes of East Africa, where the Bushmen are known to have roamed at one time.

In culture there is a certain underlying uniformity among the Bushmen. The mode of life of them all is the same. None of the independent Bushmen are herdsmen or cultivators of the soil; all derive their subsistence from the game which the men hunt and the wild vegetable foods collected by the women in the veld. They are a nomadic people, migrating frequently from waterhole to waterhole, but they all know and respect the exact limits of their territory. They live in crude shelters of bushes, or in caves where there are any. Their clothing is made entirely from skins; their ornaments include the characteristic necklace of ostrich egg-shell beads, and of their utensils the most prominent are the fire-sticks and the digging-stick. They all have bows and poisoned arrows, and all make use also of traps, snares and pitfalls in hunting.

A few variations are seen in technology. The normal Bushman bow is plain and fairly short, while the complex arrow is usually unfeathered. Longer bows and feathered arrows occur, but seem to be restricted to the regions centring in Great Namaqualand. The two are not always found together, but as there is a tendency for them to be associated, we may look upon them as a complex deviating from the normal type. The interesting reversible arrow found among the North-Western tribes appears to be a local development, for there are no instances of its occurrence elsewhere in South Africa. The manufacture of stone implements and clay pottery seems to have been confined to the tribes south of the Molopo River. It must be remembered however that the Northern tribes have long been exposed to alien influence, and the iron implements and wooden utensils now found among them may long ago have superseded stone and clay. It is certain that the Bushmen were formerly a stone age people, and that the displacement of stone by iron,

recently noted in the Southern tribes also, can be attributed to the influence of later invading cultures. None of the Bushmen ever learned to smelt their own iron, and the iron fashioned by the Northern tribes into spear and arrow heads is still obtained by barter from more advanced peoples.

The culture of the Hottentots differs in many important respects from that of the Bushmen. They have always been, as far back as our records extend, a pastoral people, with herds of long-horned cattle and flocks of fat-tailed sheep, both of which seem to be derived from the Hamites. Their material culture also is on the whole more advanced than that of the Bushmen. Their encampments are of a more settled nature, their mat huts far better constructed than the crude shelters of the Bushmen, their wooden domestic utensils more numerous and better made, and finally they knew the art of smelting ore for the manufacture of their weapons, implements and ornaments. There is no evidence that they were ever a stone age people. All these differences prevent our looking upon the Hottentot and the Bushman cultures as having any great similarity in their present forms. A few elements they certainly have in common. The Hottentots formerly made clay pottery and used bows and poisoned arrows identical in type with those of the Bushmen, and different from those of the neighbouring Southern Bantu. The fact that they also practise hunting is in itself of no great comparative importance, for all the native peoples of South Africa, even the Bantu, obtain the bulk of their meat supply in this way. But the close similarity in methods of hunting and especially in the weapons employed is of some significance in comparing the culture of the Hottentots with that of the Bushmen.

The musical instruments of the two peoples are also the same. The principal instrument is the musical bow, but while the Southern Bushman tribes have an interesting variant in the !goura, their Northern relatives have only the plain musical bow. The

Southern tribes have other instruments as well, such as the reed flutes, the "ramakie" and the "rommelpot", which are seldom found ~~found~~ further north. All these instruments are also used by the Hottentots. The only one of considerable ethnological interest, is the !goura, whose occurrence in Africa is restricted mainly to the Bushmen and the Hottentots. It therefore constitutes an important common element in their cultures. It is now also found among some of the Southern Bantu, but has undoubtedly been taken over by them from either the Bushmen or the Hottentots.

Painting and engraving on rock is most usually associated with the Southern Bushmen only, but there is evidence that the Namib Bushmen and the Hiechware also practised the art. It does not occur among the great majority of the Bushman tribes north of the Molopo River. In the Kalahari Desert this may be attributed perhaps to the absence of <sup>suitable</sup> ~~suitable~~ rock surfaces, but in the northern parts of South-West Africa, where such paintings and engravings are found, the local Bushmen have not even the faintest recollections of ever having executed them. The simplest explanation would be that these tribes have lost the art completely, in the same way as in quite recent times it has died out in the south. At the same time there is nothing to connect them definitely with it, unlike the Southern Bushmen, of whom it can confidently be asserted that they formerly painted and engraved. The Hottentots do not appear to have at any time been possessed of the art. This cannot be put down to the absence of suitable rock material, as may be the case with the Kalahari Bushmen, and it is one of the outstanding features separating the Hottentot culture from that of the Southern Bushmen.

The social organisation of the Hottentots appears to be far more complex than that of the Bushmen. This view cannot be

allowed to pass without comment, as there are several features in the Bushman system hinting at the possible existence of a clan structure similar to that of the Hottentots. Both the Nama and the Northern Bushman tribes at least are divided into patrilineal exogamous bodies, and marriage is normally patrilocal. In both peoples these bodies practise the blood feud, and in neither of them is there anything in the nature of totemism. The Hottentots have a classificatory system of relationship, and the terms of relationship collected by Miss Bleek suggest that this is also the case with the North-Western Bushmen. Of the Southern Bushmen it is now too late to find out anything, and the information available is of little assistance as far as the question of social organisation is concerned.

But even although we cannot thus entirely eliminate the possibility that the North-Western Bushmen may have a clan system something like that of the Nama, the differences in other aspects of social and political organisation are profound. The outstanding difference is that among the Hottentots the clans composing a tribe are organised into a political unity, while among the Bushmen the tribe is nothing more than a linguistic group. The hunting bands of which it is composed are fully independent, each manages its own affairs, and each vigorously resents trespass on its territory. The regulation of band movements and other activities lies in the hands of the older men generally. Chieftainship in the band is reported of the North-Western tribes only, where however the authority of the chief is very slight. Self-help is the principal, if not the only, remedy in case of offence, and the blood feud to avenge the killing of a relative is universal. Among the Hottentots the tribe, and

not the clan, is the political unit, and within the tribe there is an organised system of government and legal administration, the latter especially being quite different in nature from anything found among the Bushmen. The clans composing a tribe generally tend to become independent in course of time, but till they are recognised as separate tribes they have their representatives at the headquarters of the chief of the tribe, and their heads act as his council. The tribe, and not the clan, is also the land-owning group, but there is none of that rigid insistence on territorial exclusiveness characteristic of the hunting bands of the Bushmen.

In the social life of the Hottentots the outstanding feature is the numerous rites associated with such "transitional phases" as birth, puberty, marriage, disease and bereavement. In all these rites there is a period of seclusion during which the person affected is inau, taboo, and finally an elaborate series of purifications. Rites of this nature are found everywhere in primitive society, and their interest is primarily sociological rather than ethnological. But the fact that they appear to be far more complex and numerous among the Hottentots than among the Bushmen is of importance in a comparative study of these two peoples. Among the Bushmen the only analogous rites recorded in detail are associated with puberty. Puberty ceremonies for girls are found among all the Bushmen, but corresponding ceremonies for boys exist only in the Northern tribes. The girls pass through the rites individually. In the Northern tribes the principal feature of the ceremony is the eland bull dance, except among the Heikum, where most of the details are directly borrowed from the Hottentots. In the Southern tribes the eland bull dance is unknown, and it is difficult to determine precisely what the nature

of the ceremony was, although it undoubtedly also involved a period of seclusion on the part of the girl. The puberty rites for boys in the Northern tribes are undergone by a number of boys simultaneously, who are secluded in the bush for about a month, have the tribal marks cut between their eyes, submit to a hunting test, are instructed in the lore of the tribe, and in particular are introduced to the tribal deities. The Hiechware in the extreme east also practise circumcision of boys at puberty and a corresponding operation on the girls, but this certainly is due to Bantu influence.

It is conceivable that the boys' puberty rites among the North-Western tribes should also be attributed to Bantu influence, since nothing similar to them appears to exist in the south. But in <sup>several</sup> ~~several~~ of their details these rites differ considerably from the corresponding rites of the neighbouring South-Western and South-Central Bantu, and they are so intimately linked up with the economic activities of the Bushmen on the one hand and their religious beliefs on the other that it is difficult to imagine their having been borrowed, unless it is conceded that they have undergone a good deal of modification in the process of adaptation. But whether borrowed or not (and the possibility of borrowing, although difficult to demonstrate, is not eliminated), these rites clearly ~~separate~~ separate the North-Western tribes from their Southern relatives in at least one important feature of culture. They are also entirely different in detail from the boys' puberty rites of the Hottentots, where, for instance, the boys pass through the rites singly, there is no hunting test and no introduction to tribal <sup>e</sup> deities, nor is there any cutting of tribal marks. It may be noted, however, that the principal forms of bodily mutilation found among the Bushmen, scarification and the amputation of a

finger joint, are also common to the Hottentots, and that neither people practises either circumcision or mutilation of the teeth, the two common forms of bodily mutilation among the neighbouring Bantu tribes.

In religion there are striking likenesses and ~~marked~~ differences. All Bushmen and Hottentots pray to the moon. The Southern Bushmen also have prayers to the sun and to various stars, which the Hottentots and most of the Northern Bushmen have not, but even here the worship of the moon is far more developed than that of the other celestial bodies. This common feature is all the more significant since none of the Bantu peoples of South Africa worship the moon.

Neither Bushmen nor Hottentots, again, have any organised family or tribal ancestor-worship, nor any other form of religious practice in which the spirits of the dead are regularly invoked or propitiated, although ~~among~~ among the Southern Bushmen as well as among the Hottentots dead people are occasionally prayed to. In the beliefs of both peoples the dead are in some way connected with the stars, but they believe above all that dead people take the form of ghosts. Whereas however the Bushmen appear to have only a vague, ill-defined fear of the dead person's haunting the living, the Hottentots have a marked dread of dead people, who are held to cause sickness or death. Both the North-Western Bushmen and the Hottentots use some form of the word //gaua for the ghosts of the dead, and among them both the magicians are somehow in contact with these ghosts.

Both the North-Western Bushmen and the Hottentots further use the word //gaua as the name of a particular supernatural personage, closely connected with the ghosts of the dead. But there is here also a difference. The Hottentots regard //gaua primarily as an evil being, who causes sickness or death. The North-Western



Bushmen likewise believe that he is the cause of death, but do not, we are told, attach any evil significance to him save where there has been Hottentot influence. He is associated by them more especially with the wind and the rain, so that Miss Bleek actually regards ~~him~~<sup>him</sup> as a personification of these <sup>natural</sup> forces. This attribute the Hottentots vest in Tsui-//Goab, the rain god, who does not figure at all in Bushman belief, although among the Cape Bushmen the rain is also looked upon as a supernatural personage. Tsui-//Goab in Hottentot mythology is in conflict with //Gaunab, and so, too, by most of the writers on the Northern Bushmen //Gaua is opposed to Huwe, Hishe or Thora, protector of game and hunting, creator of mankind and human institutions, and, among the Kung at least, the object of a cult in which he is prayed to for food at the beginning of the rainy season. In all these respects Huwe resembles Tsui-//Goab, but he has apparently no special connexion with the rain, which Tsui-//Goab essentially has; he also figures in the boys' puberty ceremony, which none of the Hottentot mythical beings do. Finally the Hottentots also speak of Heitsi Eibib who is worshipped at his graves for success in hunting, etc. His mythological character in some respects is like that of the Mantis among the Cape Bushmen, but the latter is not the object of a grave cult, and this Heitsi Eibib primarily is.

The resemblances just noted are far-reaching, even when allowance is made for the by no means insignificant differences in detail. The North-Western Bushmen especially seem to have many elements of religious belief almost identical with those of the Hottentots. Meticulous comparison must unfortunately be ~~ruled~~ ruled out as at present inadvisable: we know far more about the religion of the Hottentots than we do about that of the Bushmen, of which indeed the available information is so scanty that any

elaborate discussion based on it can only be regarded as somewhat speculative. It can nevertheless ~~be~~ be fairly confidently asserted that among both Bushmen and Hottentots we find, in addition to the worship of the moon, the cult of mythical beings derived partly from animistic beliefs and partly from the personification of the natural forces producing the rain. It must be concluded therefore that both peoples have on the whole the same system of religion, although there are obviously considerable differences in detail. The importance of this community of beliefs is emphasised by the fact that this religious system differs fundamentally from that of the neighbouring Bantu.

Reviewing the cultural position generally, we find that while the form of culture is essentially the same for all the Bushmen, it is advisable to recognise at least two distinct varieties of this culture. The Namib Bushmen and those south of the Molopo River form a separate division: they have apparently been least affected by exotic influences, and in features such as art, ritual and mythology have developed along special lines. The Northern tribes on the other hand show definite signs of having been influenced in technology and other features by contact with other peoples, and their culture has consequently been modified and has deviated somewhat from that of their Southern relatives. The North-Western tribes have certain well-marked features of social organisation and religious belief not noticed further south, while the Heikum in many aspects of their culture show unmistakable signs of Hottentot and South-Western Bantu influence. The other Kalahari tribes, especially those to the north-east and in the extreme east, have been considerably affected in material culture and to some extent also in religious beliefs and practices by the Ohwana tribes among whom they live.

The really important difference between the Bushmen and the Hottentots lies in the fact that the former are hunters only, while the latter are predominantly a pastoral people. Associated with this difference in mode of life we find that the ~~pastoral~~ material culture of the Hottentots is on the whole more advanced than that of the Bushmen, although the two peoples have certain elements in common. In social organisation and customs there is a distinct difference, which may, in part at least, be attributed to the fact that the pastoral life of the Hottentots, with its more regular supply of food, allows the people to live in larger communities, and therefore to develop a more complex system of organisation. This does not imply that the social organisation is directly derived from the ~~the~~ pastoral life, but only that it has been rendered possible by the existence of the latter. The tribal cohesion of the Hottentots is something which the Bushmen cannot achieve; owing to the limitations imposed upon the size and cohesion of their communities by their more precarious means of subsistence. In religion, finally, there appear to be marked similarities, as far as the state of our knowledge of the Bushmen will permit us to judge.

"Bearing all these facts in mind", I wrote in 1925,<sup>1</sup> "I venture to put forward as a working hypothesis the suggestion that the cultural similarities between the Bushmen and the Hottentots are sufficiently important and far-reaching to make us regard the Hottentot culture as having at one time been the same as that of the Bushmen, but that it has since become considerably modified in certain respects, especially in the adoption of a pastoral life, through the influence of culture contact with some other people.

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<sup>1</sup> "A Preliminary Consideration of the Relationship between the Hottentots and the Bushmen", S. Afr. J. Sci., 23 (1926), p. 855.

I do not think it likely that the Hottentot culture is distinct from that of the Bushmen and that the elements which they now have in common have been transmitted from one people to the other. The similarities are too extensive to be regarded as due to anything but a common origin, and the Hottentot culture as now constituted seems to me to be due to the grafting of another culture on to the original Bushman culture."

This view I am now prepared to modify somewhat. It seems to me, from the detailed surveys I have made of the Bushman and the Hottentot cultures in the body of this work, that the differences are far more comprehensive than I formerly assumed them to be. The Hottentot culture on the whole differs so widely from that of the Bushmen, especially in the whole social life, that the two must be looked upon as distinct; and although I still hold, in conformity with my theory of the racial origin of the Hottentots, that "the Hottentot culture as now constituted seems .. to be due to the grafting of another culture on to the original Bushman culture", I am convinced that it has since developed along entirely different lines. The present similarities in material culture and above all in religion I now regard as due, not to a common origin, but to a long process of mutual<sup>a</sup> influence and borrowing, such as has unquestionably taken place between the North-Western Bushmen and the Nama, about whom our information is most detailed. I have been led more definitely to this conclusion by realising that the Hottentots, when they came into South Africa at a much later date than the Bushmen, already had their pastoral mode of life<sup>fully</sup> developed. It seems more reasonable therefore to suppose that such resemblances<sup>cf</sup> as are now found ~~are~~ between the Bushmen and the Hottentots have most likely arisen in South Africa, where the two peoples have for centuries lived in close interaction, than that they have survived in the culture of the Hottentots as part of the~~r~~ original heritage from the Bushman culture.

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