

Letter to Wilhelm H.I. Bleek, 22 February 1859

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[0001]

Tette - 22^d Feb^y 1859

My Dear D^r Bleek

Presuming that His

Excellency the Governor has gone to England, I enclose a copy of the Lord's prayer and Creed to you - they are as nearly as we can ascertain what the jesuits taught here more than a hundred years ago - some old blind women were the depositories and ^ words were taken down at their dictation by S^r Candido & Pascoal who know the dialect of Tette thoroughly - Major Secard with his usual kindness did all he could to secure correctness. So I think that remembering the

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difficulty of getting ladies who had always sung them to speak slowly, you must reward us by placing the documents in some little nook of the "Library" till you get better.

As I never answered your kind note when about to leave the Cape I may now do it so far by giving you a few remarks on the term. Ba etsuana, for that if I mistake not is the way you (mis)spell it. M^r Moffats idea is probably the right one, but as a philologist you may like to hear why some minds prefer the meaning of "likeness or equality"

When sex is spoken of in connection with colour the diminutive form is invariably applied - thus khoma

[0003]

e tseu = a white ox - i.e. altogether white
khomu e tsūana = a white cow - not
a little but entirely white. Khomu e
entsu = a black ox - Khomu e
tsuána a black cow = quite black.
K. e khueba = a speckled ox. K. e
khuebana a speckled cow - the
idea of littleness seems to go to denote
sex by the lesser size of the females -
the males being sometimes denoted
by tóna big - in the same way.

This point is not adverted to
in the Analysis but it is so distinctly
adhered to in the language that an
additional syllable is introduced
to express a little of any colour, thus
Mosheu = a white man - Mosheu-
-enyana = a little white man -
Montsu = a black one = Montsun-
yana = a little ~~white~~ black one = one of
the diminutive being referred to the colour
not size

[0004]

Sebituane's daughters is called Montsuyane
from her colour being as light as an
Arab woman's - i.e. only a little black.

Were it not for the cow difficulty the
term Batsuána would be better translated
a "little black" instead of a little white -
they were a little blacker than the bushmen
& Hottentots - they had intercourse with them
but having had none with the people
beyond the Desert, to say they are a little
whiter than these people, is to reason
from our own knowledge of what is
only partially the case - the Batōka for
instance, and Banyai and other tribes being as light
as they are - The above is against - hear
pro - in one sentence - A man was checked
by Sechele for telling him some heathen story
He did not wish to hear it. "you are under
the Southern people" said the man in a pet
"Re Batsuana" replied Sechele, I follow
what I find in the book. I am not inferior

or under them” - If he had been applying
a feminine term to himself his assertions
of equality would have been meaningless D. Livingstone