

Orange-Senqu

River Awareness Kit

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People and the River

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History and Water Related Culture: Stories: Stories about basic Experiences

Stories from Lesotho

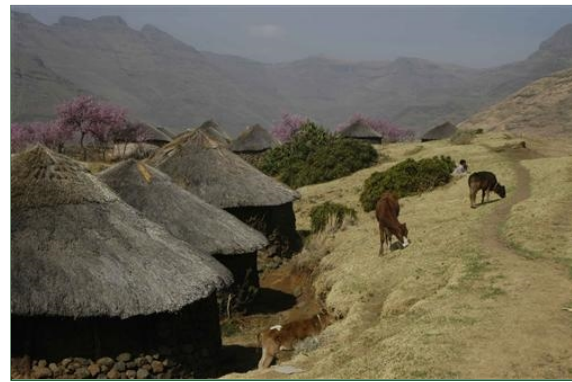
The following stories were been compiled by Lira Molapo, a village dweller from Lesotho.

Water and birth

As a child I have known that children are obtained from the lakes, where large snakes dwell. Culturally at each house with a newly born the sign is two reeds that are erected at the entrance of the hut, to indicate that there is a newly born. No visitors are allowed into such a hut especially males. Females are allowed into that house only after performing a certain ritual; such as jumping over fire.

Culturally, informing the father about the birth of his eldest daughter is to pour water on him; if unaware and if he becomes furious you tell him "you have a baby daughter"; this serves to indicate that the father has someone who will draw water for him at old age. Culturally the father is kept away as labour approaches for his wife, so he is not aware in the end what sex of the child he has, and this is a way of informing him of what child he has. There is a story that even at the hospital where Her Majesty was at the birth of the first Princess, the nurses were waiting excitedly with buckets of water for His Majesty, I am not sure if they succeeded in drenching him.

If it is a boy then the father would be beaten with sticks unaware by women; this serves to indicate that the father has a soldier who will fight for him.



The Lesotho Highlands.
 Source: Vogel 2009
 (click to enlarge)

Water and Marriage

When the groom's party visits the bride's home to ask for her hand in marriage they are said to be asking for "mohope oa metsi" that is "a gourd of water", meaning that they want someone who will draw water for the groom's family.

Water and Death

After a funeral the whole congregation that attended the funeral has to wash hands before they can enter the family's compound from the grave yard. The vehicle that transports the corpse is sprinkled with water and the spades and pick axes used for digging the grave are sprinkled with water; all these acts are cleansing acts against death. If you do not wash it is believed that death will follow you into your house.

[Next: The Water Snake](#)

Interactive

Basin Map

Explore the sub-basins of the Orange-Senqu River

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Tour video scenes along the Orange-Senqu River related to People and the River

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