

STRONG CONTRASTS: BEADWORK FROM THE OKAVANGO

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With its black and white contrasts and interplay of positive and negative spaces, the beadwork of the Mbukushu and Yei of Botswana brings to mind the geometric designs of Op Art. In some pieces the pattern creates an almost three-dimensional effect. Because of their attractiveness and rarity, such works now fetch considerable prices on the art market. However, it is always difficult to distinguish between the works of the two peoples, whose style was also decisively influenced by a third people, the Tawana. Rudolf Pösch's Tawana collection at the Weltmuseum Wien is used to demonstrate the mutual influence of the material culture of three peoples living in close proximity at the beginning of the 20th century.

INTRODUCTION

The visually striking beadwork (Figure 1) of the Kavango peoples in Botswana, Namibia, and Angola are poorly represented in literature and museum collections and only a few pieces are fully documented. Technical details and the type of glass beads, which could serve to differentiate between them, are similar in all works. The present paper aims to compile the limited facts and to show the interrelationships between the Kavango peoples and the Tawana in this area of material culture.

Historical descriptions of the Mbukushu and Yei and their beadwork

The Mbukushu and Yei¹ are two Bantu-speaking peoples who settled mainly in the area of the Okavango River and Lake Ngami, into which it flows (Figure 2). They, along with the Gciriku, Mbonza, Kwangali, and Sambyu, make-up the larger group of Kavango peoples.

The Yei migrated from the Zambezi region as early as the mid-1700s, with the Mbukushu arriving some 50 years later; both peoples initially lived and intermarried with the country's indigenous San groups. Yei and Mbukushu had separate areas of habitation. Even where they came into closer contact, they lived on different riverbanks



Figure 1. Mbukushu apron, Botswana, dimensions unknown, private collection (photo: Jacaranda Tribal).

and islands or at least had separate settlements. Despite a common origin, their languages are distinct and not mutually intelligible (Larson 2001:17). Hostilities were rare, as was intermarriage. In the 19th century, Yei and Mbukushu were subjugated by the Tawana, who conquered the region at that time (Eckl 2004:70f.). The dependence of the Mbukushu was mitigated by the fact that members of their matrilineal royal clan served the Tawana and the peoples of the neighboring regions as vital and feared “rainmakers.” This protected the Mbukushu from attack, gave them political influence, and enriched their elite through tribute payments (Gibbons 1904:213; Larson 1970:32; Shiremo 2009:68).

The first written mention of the “Bayeiye” (Yei) people was in 1849 by the Scottish explorer and missionary David Livingstone (1857:64), in his descriptions of his journey to Lake Ngami, where they formed the majority of the



Figure 2. Map of the Okavango region in northwestern Botswana (map: M. Oehrl).

population. He described them as peaceful and utterly unfit for war, leading the Tawana to refer to them as “Bakoba”, or “slave.”²² According to Livingstone, they subsisted mainly on fishing and the occasional hippopotamus kill. The Swedish-English explorer Charles Andersson, who traveled through the area of present-day Botswana between 1850 and 1854, described the women’s short leather aprons as “richly covered with beads and all kinds of ornaments of brass, copper, and iron” (Andersson 1858 [2]:254). Andersson believed that the Yei had adopted this costume from their masters, the Tawana, and depicts a “Bayeye” couple (Figure 3) whose beaded jewelry appears very sparse (Andersson 1856:481,502).

Another account of a journey through southwest Africa was penned by the Swiss botanist Hans Schinz, who traveled in the region from 1884 to 1887. The “Bajeje” women he observed wore a fur piece around their hips and a larger cape-like one around their necks. A “narrow fringed apron decorated with glass beads covered their private parts” (Schinz 1891:378). The geographer and geologist Siegfried Passarge also believed, like Andersson, that the Yei costume was adopted from the “Betschuana” (Tawana), although the concept of leather clothing is similar throughout southern Africa. Passarge also encountered the Mbukushu on his expedition, but his description of the leather clothing of the



Figure 3. “Bayeye”, illustration by Andersson (1856:481) (photo: M. Oehrl).

Mbukushu in 1898 is not nearly as descriptive as that of Thomas Larson seventy years later. Passarge refers mainly to the strikingly decorated hairstyles of the women but does not mention any extensive beadwork on their aprons (Wilmsen 1997:290f.).

The Tawana

No description of the region would be complete without the Tawana. They belong to the Tswana, the majority population in the area and the namesake of today's Botswana, who are closely related to the Sotho people of South Africa. The Tawana split off from the Ngwato, another Tswana sub-group, at the end of the 18th century due to succession disputes and sought new areas of settlement in the northwest of present-day Botswana (Larson 1989:25; Schinz 1891:380f.). Contemporaries described them as warlike and known for their use of firearms. By creating a centralized state, the Tawana quickly succeeded in subordinating the Yei and Mbukushu. The Tawana referred to the Yei as “dependents” or slaves who served the Tawana as cattle herders and agricultural laborers. They also had to make payments and levies and were auxiliary troops of the Tawana in the event of war. The Mbukushu enjoyed greater independence, partly because of their work as rainmakers, and partly because they lived at a greater distance from the Tawana.

The Tawana had early access to glass beads, which they used as jewelry and status symbols. Contacts with traders from the Cape Colony via eastern Botswana began around 1840. As early as 1858, Andersson quotes the Tawana chief Letcholètèbe I, who lived at Lake Ngami, with the “rather crude but significant” statement that beads were no longer in demand because “the women grunt like pigs under their burden” (Andersson 1858[2]:223). The beads were brought to Lake Ngami from South Africa in large quantities and were, along with weapons, the main trade goods, mostly in exchange for ivory from supplies of neighboring tributary peoples. Small beads, in the colors of “light red, matte white, light green, brick red, light blue, dark blue, and yellow” were preferred (Andersson 1858[2]:223).

A larger number of Ngwato objects from the end of the 19th century have survived and are quite typical in their pink and blue coloration. In contrast, few examples remain from the Tawana themselves. The collection of 170 Tawana objects (of which about 27 are beadwork) compiled in 1908 by the Austrian explorer Rudolf Pöch is therefore an important source of evidence. In 1936, his estate was catalogued by Walter Hirschberg, who published a book on Pöch's expedition to the Kalahari and Ngamiland in 1907-1909. From 11 September to 13 October 1908, Pöch was with the Tawana in Tsau, their main town north

of Lake Ngami, and in his travel diaries he emphasized the accuracy of the documentation of the objects collected: “[t]he name in Secwana, the method of manufacture, and the use were determined for all of them” (Hirschberg 1936:26). Hirschberg describes the clothing of the Tawana and the front aprons of the girls and women as follows:

The women wear a front apron of leather or beads (khiba) [...]. The khiba, the women's front apron, is usually decorated with beautifully patterned beads. Leather strips are used to tie it. There is also a trapezoidal front apron made of springbok skin. The back apron (massis) is sewn together from either goat, springbok, pallah, or sheepskin. The girls' khiba consists of a strip of leather trimmed with blue and white glass beads and a leather fringe. A leather belt trimmed with white and dark blue glass beads and decorated with glass bead cords in the same colors holds the khiba in place” (Hirschberg 1936:27).³

One apron, with accession number 86156, is described as “with MaKuba pattern” (Inventarbuch Weltmuseum Wien). Makuba or Makoba was a derogatory Tawana term for the Yei. Pöch collected ten Tawana front aprons not illustrated in Hirschberg's publication, several undecorated leather back aprons, and a large number of other beadwork pieces, some of which are described and illustrated.⁴ The front aprons range in size from 13 × 14 cm to 48 × 38 cm and are simple and restrained, with black, white, and sometimes red beads. The glass beads are not sewn onto the leather but are woven into a beaded fabric (Figure 4). The works came to what is now the Weltmuseum Wien (World Museum in Vienna) in 1909 (acc. nos. 86145-86151, 86154-86156).

In terms of coloration, the frontal aprons form a separate group within the Tawana works as a whole. Other Tawana beadwork often uses blue beads, which do not appear in the aprons collected by Pöch. On the other hand, the surviving body of work is too small to make definitive statements. Three of these aprons with black and white zigzag patterns (acc. nos. 86145, 86147, 86150) are similar in every detail to two aprons collected in the region by the Frenchman Jacques de Rohan-Chabot and the German Victor von Frankenberg. Von Frankenberg's example, with a striking zigzag pattern of red and white beads (“Koba, Yeye”), is now in the Ethnological Museum in Berlin (Figure 5). The entry in the museum's inventory book states that the piece (“*mussisse oa sifaha*”) was made by a Majei woman, but that the type of work originally came from the Majambo people on the Okavango River. The identity of the Majambo cannot be further verified. In 1912 when the apron was collected, Victor von Frankenberg, who at times



Figure 4. Tawana apron, Botswana, 48 x 38 cm, before 1908 (courtesy of the Weltmuseum Wien, acc. no. 86154, photo: KHM Museumsverband Wien).

held the official post of a “Resident” (an administrative German official who gave support to the local ruler), was engaged in surveying work in the Caprivi Strip, east of the Okavango (Moser 2006:122). The dark blue and white bead specimen now in the Musée du quai Branly (acc. no. 71.1912.15.252) was collected by the explorer Rohan-Chabot during the 1911–1914 expedition to Angola and the Zambezi River that bears his name. The attribution to “Angola” remains imprecise.



Figure 5. Yei apron, Namibia, 22.5 x 38 cm, before 1912 (courtesy of the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, acc. no. III D 4021, photo: Myriam Perrot).

Thomas Larson’s investigations among the Mbukushu in Botswana after 1950

The American ethnologist Thomas Larson produced several publications detailing the results of his research visits to Botswana, such as his monograph on the Mbukushu, whom he called “the rainmakers of the Okavango” (Larson 1970:38; 2001). He mentions that during his fieldwork in 1950, all Mbukushu women and most men were still dressed traditionally. Women wore particularly elaborate plaited hairstyles consisting of a crown bulge from which strands of artificial hair decorated with cowries and glass or ostrich eggshell beads hung (Figure 6). In later years, these headdresses were often removable and were also made for sale (Larson 2001:23). During Larson’s later visit to Ngamiland in 1969, a few old women still wore hairstyles in the old form, although they were removable.

Larson emphasizes the great importance of beadwork in the matrilineal society of the Mbukushu, where a month-



Figure 6. Detachable Mbukushu hairstyle, Namibia, dimensions unknown, private collection (photo: Ezakwantu).

long initiation ceremony was held for girls at which beaded jewelry designed by the young girl's grandmothers and other female relatives was presented (Larson 1975:118). If the girl was married immediately afterwards, as was customary, the groom's family gave the bride a back apron as a gift. Women also wore a necklace called a *mande* (*mpande*) made from the disc-shaped operculum of a "large river mollusk" (Larson 1975:118) or imitations of these opercula made in Europe. Such valuable pieces, often inherited, were attached to thick strands of glass beads and were considered status symbols. Other jewelry included strands of beads (*ufa*) worn around the chest. Numerous strands of ostrich eggshell beads were also given as gifts to the bride by her relatives (Larson 1979:35f.).

Larson does not mention any decoration of the leather front apron (Larson 2001:125). He also does not explicitly mention the ostrich eggshell and glass bead belts for which the Yei were known. With regard to the Mbukushu's ceremonial jewelry, he merely states that ostrich eggshell beads were used for belts. He does, however, depict some Mbukushu women with heavily decorated back aprons (Figure 7). The leather *majambaro*⁵ back apron was richly decorated with glass beads, usually in six wide bands (2001:24,119). It remains unclear from his photographs whether all the glass bead panels were attached to the apron or whether some were separate (Larson 1970:5; Larson 1975:119; Larson 2001:133). Larson points out that by 1969, the back aprons were no longer everyday wear but were only worn for his photographs. Only the numerous civil war refugees from Angola continued to dress traditionally and engage in the manufacture of leather clothing and everyday utensils (Larson 1970:40).



Figure 7. Two Mbukushu women in Shakawe, Botswana, in 1969 with back aprons and decorated hairstyles (Larson 1975:119, photo: T. Larson).

The Lambrechts' field research among the Yei

Early Yei back aprons are not known to have been collected. It is possible that they did not appear until the mid-twentieth century in their present form, when they were documented by Frank and Dora Lambrecht, who were working for the Botswana Health Service. In an article about their observations of the Yei, they describe the women's traditional costume worn only on special occasions and consisting of a back apron, a beaded belt, and a front apron (Lambrecht and Lambrecht 1977). The back apron was made of antelope skin using an intricate patchwork technique, and beads were attached to the middle section using animal sinew in a variety of ways (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Yei back apron made of antelope skin with additional belt, Botswana, 111 x 80 cm, private collection (photo: Alan Marcuson).

According to the Lambrechts, it was the men who decorated the skirts with beads, while the belts were decorated by women. The additional belt consists of a wide band from which one or more separate panels and individual cords hang down. It is knotted in the front and worn over the back apron (Figure 9). The oldest belts were decorated with ostrich eggshell beads. These were traded by the San and were often combined with glass beads (see also Larson 1975:118; Wilmsen 1997:290). The bead colors are limited to black, white, and red, but in some older pieces single black beads have been replaced with transparent dark blue beads. Usually only two colors were used per piece; if more are found, it usually indicates a

date of manufacture in the last third of the 20th century. Larson (2001:258f.) also mentions that a greater variety of colors were chosen for pieces intended for sale. At the time of their fieldwork, the Lambrechts found no front aprons among the Yei, but older women told them that originally no costume was complete without one. At that time, the back apron was generally worn on special occasions, such as the *sembukushu* dance.



Figure 9. Yei belt with panels, Botswana, 68 x 46 cm, private collection (photo: M. Oehrl).

Glass beads, techniques, and patterns

The glass beads used in beadwork, aprons, belts, necklaces and beaded headdresses are relatively large (3 × 2 mm to 5 × 3 mm) and irregularly shaped (Figures 10a, b). This applies to the early Tawana aprons, as well as the Mbukushu examples from the 1960s. The apron collected by von Frankenberg in 1912 and now in the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin (acc. no. III D 4021) incorporates red “white heart” beads (Figures 5, 10a), as does an apron collected by Pöch in the Weltmuseum Wien (acc. no. 86154). In contrast, transparent red beads are found on other aprons.

The glass beads are woven together with animal fibers, usually bovine sinew, using the so-called brick or gourd stitch, as in the case of the Tawana. The upper edge consists of a leather band of varying width, into which the bead section is either directly woven with sinew or, probably secondarily, attached with commercial thread. Narrow leather straps are either sewn directly onto this strip or fastened with buttons.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, wavy lines, triangles, and diamonds were used for decoration, similar to the patterns burned into woodwork, like vessels and sieves, or painted on Tawana clay vessels (Larson 1975:113;



Figure 10. (a) Detail of the Yei apron in Figure 5, (b) Detail of the Mbukushu apron in Figure 13a.

Hirschberg 1936: plate 2, figs. 5, 6)(Figure 11). Some of the Tawana specimens collected by Pöch play with the positive and negative areas created by these pattern elements on a white background. Forty or fifty years later, Yei and Mbukushu women developed sophisticated patterns, sometimes with almost three-dimensional effects. There are similarities between the patterns on the panels of the back aprons and the front aprons.

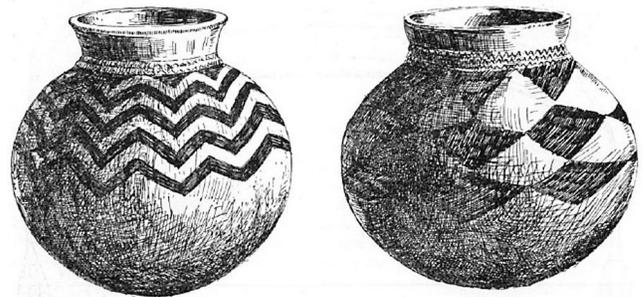


Figure 11. Tawana clay vessels with zigzag and diamond patterns (Hirschberg 1936, plate 2, Figure 5 and 6) (photo: M. Oehrl).

Since these highly complex patterns do not occur in the early collections, it is clear that a development has taken place, suggesting local innovation following a possible cultural exchange. In addition to the abovementioned origin of the glass beads from South Africa, another route via Angola would have been possible. Scherz et al. (1981:21) mention that in the mid-20th century glass beads were obtained from Angola via Mbundu traders. However, the same trade is said to have taken place as early as 1850 via Portuguese coastal towns and detribalized Mbundu as intermediaries, enabling beadwork to emerge as an art form (Haingura 1993:31, 32).

DISCUSSION

Until now, the influence of the Tswana on the works of the Mbukushu, Yei, and other Okavango peoples has not been mentioned, although there is no shortage of literature on Tswana history. Early writers often did not consider beadwork important enough to describe in detail. In Livingstone's account of his travels, for example, glass beads are mentioned frequently only in the context of goods for trading in encounters with the Tawana and Yei at Lake Ngami in 1849. Andersson limits himself to summary descriptions of the Tawana's clothing.

There is much to suggest that the Yei and Mbukushu borrowed beadwork designs from the Tawana at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the early 20th century, the Tawana began to settle in the wider region, outside their main town of Tsau, to be in closer contact with the peoples who traditionally depended on them. "Wherever they settled, the inhabitants began to adopt Tawana culture," writes A. C. Campbell (1976:167). Tawana men also married Yei women, while the reverse was not possible due to the Tawana's sense of superiority over the Yei (Larson 1989:26).

From these exchanges, local styles evolved in the material culture, although the exact sequence cannot be traced in each case. Andersson and Passarge believe that the Yei adopted their dress style from the Tawana, but they describe only sparse embellishments with beads on the Yei garments. In general, beadwork for various items such as belts or pendants was common amongst all Tswana peoples. The Ngwato sub-group, living farther east, did not wear beaded aprons, only fringed aprons or leather aprons sparsely decorated with glass beads. One exception was a small triangular glass bead apron for male youths (Brighton Museum, acc. no. R4007/21) (Figure 12).



Figure 12. Ngwato apron for boys, Botswana, 28 x 18 cm, before 1899 (courtesy of the Brighton Museum, acc. no. R4007/21, photo: Brighton Museum).

Pöch's accounts and collections are the main evidence of Tawana influence. Pöch used his one-month stay in Tsau to assemble a substantial collection of Tawana material culture. The collection numbered 170 items and included "fur coats, [...] women's aprons made of beads in various patterns, painted clay pots, wooden pots, baskets and bowls woven from palm leaves, various objects of daily use and household items, and jewelry" (Hirschberg 1936:26). He inquired about the history of the Tawana and the reason for the unrest at that time, which was based on succession disputes. This led the British colonial administration to depose the regent, Sekguma, who was considered illegitimate (Hirschberg 1936:26). Pöch described Tawana's clothing and jewelry, including much beadwork. He also mentioned that fur ornaments were provided by the San, while wooden bowls were made by the Mbukushu (Hirschberg 1936:27). Whether Pöch's reference to a "Makuba" (Makoba or Yei) pattern on the Tawana apron in Vienna (acc. no. 86156) being an indication of such borrowing from these groups must be left open here and suggests a fruitful avenue for additional research.

After the establishment of the British protectorate in Ngamiland in 1890, the Tawana were impacted by the missions, as the associated trade and subsequently Western clothing elements became established. It is not clear whether the ready availability of glass beads and Western influence also held true for the less affluent Kavango people, especially the Mbukushu who lived in the remote and undeveloped central Okavango region. Authors differ on the amount of available barter goods, such as ivory. In any case, the area was rarely visited by traders (Eckl 2004:109f; Haingura 1993:31, 33).

After the establishment of two Catholic missions and a German police station at Nkure-Nkuru on the Okavango between 1910 and 1913, trade may have increased. Large numbers of the Mbukushu, Gciriku, Kwangali, and Mbunza populations had also moved to the German colony south of the Okavango due to disputes with the Portuguese colonial power. The fifth Kavango people, the Sambyu, had fled into the interior of Angola. Glass beads were among the gifts exchanged at meetings with the colonial officials of German South West Africa (Eckl 2004:115). The mostly German missionaries of the 'Missionarii Oblati Mariae Immaculatae,' rewarded services with glass beads, but their influence in the remote and economically insignificant area remained limited.

After the local surrender of the Germans in the First World War in 1915, the British largely prevented trade in the region for years (Eckl 2004:143f.). It was only between 1925 and 1929 that further stations of various missionary societies were founded among the Kavango peoples in Namibia, and in 1959 a mission was added in Angola. Some of the population returned to Angola after the reform of Portuguese

colonial policy in 1930, because conditions there were more favorable for agriculture and cattle breeding (Fisch 2005:13).

According to Larson (2001:24), the Mbukushu names for traditional clothing are borrowed from the Siyei, suggesting that the Yei, who lived in closer contact with the Tawana, provided the model. Clothing and jewelry seem to have developed in parallel for both peoples. Unfortunately, there are no known photographs of the Mbukushu or the Yei wearing front aprons. It is therefore possible that the Mbukushu did not decorate front aprons with glass beads until the mid-20th century, while among the Yei there exists at least one early example that can be attributed with certainty. Yei and Mbukushu back aprons do not appear to have been decorated until the 1930s and '40s, respectively. There is little evidence from the years between the First and Second World Wars, despite a fairly extensive literature. The earliest published photographs of women with beaded back aprons date from the 1950s by Larson, and from the late 1960s and '70s by Lambrecht.

It was therefore a surprise when a large number of aprons from Angolan civil war refugees came to light, causing a sensation because of their striking appearance (Figure 13a-c). The struggle for independence and the ensuing decades-long civil war in Angola led to the flight of about 4,000 Mbukushu from Angola to neighboring Botswana in 1968 and '69 (Larson 1970:32; Fisch 2005:74). Between 1975 and '78 another 8,000 Mbukushu fled to Namibia (Fisch 2005:78f.). According to trade sources, a group of about 15-20 Mbukushu aprons were acquired by a Peace Corps volunteer directly from a UN refugee camp in Botswana and brought to the United States. From there, some found their way to the Museum of International Folk



Figure 13. Three Mbukushu aprons, Botswana: (a) 43 × 46 cm, private collection (photo: M. Oehrl), (b) Dimensions unknown, private collection (photo: Jacaranda Tribal), (c) 46 × 43 cm, private collection (photo: Peter Liaunig).

Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico, while others ended up on the international art market. In 1978, the exhibition “Traditional and Contemporary Crafts from Botswana” at the National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC, featured a smaller number of front aprons.⁷ Most, if not all, of these pieces were made by Mbukushu who originally lived in Angola. They date most probably from the 1940s to the ‘70s.

Overall, the number of surviving examples is not very large. Beaded back aprons were also collected around 1950 from other Kavango peoples living in the immediate western vicinity of the Mbukushu, such as the Sambyu, Gciriku, and Kwangali (Kwangari).⁸ The bead panels were often smaller and of an irregular shape, while the design is usually freer, and the patterns are less elaborate. However, there are no clear characteristics that can be used to differentiate between the works of the various makers, and only the information provided by the collectors can be used as a reference. From the second half of the 20th century, the San, who have lived in the area for thousands of years, also began to produce headbands, bracelets, and necklaces with black and white triangular patterns. However, individual pieces in other colors, especially shades of blue, existed as early as 1900, as documented in museum collections (Weltmuseum Wien: Au-Nin-San, acc. no. 85464).

CONCLUSION

There are few field observations of the beadwork of the Okavango peoples. In particular, no author has seen the frontal aprons used in situ. Nevertheless, Pöch collected aprons from the Tawana in 1908 and Frankenberg from the Yei in 1912. In 1950 Larson photographed Mbukushu women who still wore the more elaborate back aprons with many glass beads in everyday life. The Lambrechts took similar photos of the Yei’s back aprons in the 1960s and ‘70s. This makes it possible to place these works in a rough chronological order. The body of beadwork collected in the 1970s and ‘80s differs in the complexity of the designs and can be attributed to the Mbukushu who left Angola as refugees to Namibia and Botswana because of the civil war. Due to the lack of data, the assumption of mutual influence between the Tawana, Yei, Mbukushu, and other Kavango peoples is rather *prima facie* and leaves room for further investigation. However, this is suggested by the similarity of materials and techniques, and the type and color of glass beads, which have barely changed since the beginning of the 20th century.

ENDNOTES

1. Mbukushu—alternatively: Hambukushu.
Yei—alternatively: Bayei, Bayeye, Bayeyi, Bayeyi,

Bajeje, Yeye, Mayeye, Mayei, Maiye, Majei, Yeyi, Yeyei, Jei.

2. Siegfried Passarge does not translate the term as “slave” but as “boat people/canoe men” (Wilmsen 1997:89).
3. Some of the aprons (e.g. acc. no. 86145) are additionally labeled “Segomo” in the catalogue, which is translated as “string of beads” for other objects.
4. Pöch describes various other Tawana beadwork, such as neck rings worked on a leather core with triangular patterns reminiscent of the Sotho and the *mathato* necklace made of blue beads with two circular pendants in red and white (“elephant eyes”) (Hirschberg 1936: plates 1-3). He also collected fertility dolls decorated with beads in a checkered pattern (plate 3, 11). These are in the Weltmuseum Wien. Another Tswana collection, mainly from the Ngwato, is in the Brighton Museum. It comes from the British missionary William Willoughby and was compiled at the mission base in Palapye in the years 1893–1898. It contains no aprons in the same style, but very similar bags, as well as a triangular apron for boys (Royal Pavilion & Museums Trust, Brighton & Hove, acc. nos. R4007/19-R4007/21).
5. Larson uses different spellings in his publications.
6. *mojamboroo* in Siyei (Larson 1970:38), *kuan-dura mapi* in Simbukushu (Larson 1979:35).
7. <https://africa.si.edu/50years/>.
8. The American Museum of Natural History has a collection of back aprons and other beadwork of the Sambyu. They come from the William Morden Expedition of 1953 (acc. nos 90.2/995 etc.). According to Cecilia McGurk (Gibson et al. 1981:110) and Larson (2001), the Sambyu (Sambiu, Wasambiu, Shambyu) make similar back aprons. The same applies to the Gciriku (Gibson et al. 1981:173) and the Kwangari or Kwangali (Shiremo 2009).

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