

Chapter 19

A Gelukksdal Funeral

By Limphe Makapela

I had not anticipated a death in the family would bring me closer to my grandmother's origins, which were expressed in many different ways in the kitchen of her home in Vergenoeg, Galeshewe (Kimberley), Northern Cape Province, South Africa. I had set out to enquire into my grandmother's past life, to try and establish what led her to leave Payneville, Springs, in Gauteng, and start a family, a whole new life in the Northern Cape. This essay is a small documentation of the slaughtering of a cow in preparation for the funeral of my grandmother's sister in Gelukksdal, Brakpan in Gauteng province, South Africa. I wanted insights into a ritual practice that is common in South Africa when there is a death in a family. Slaughtering plays a critical role in birth, union and death. In Zulu culture, there is *'imbeleko yomntwana* (a thanksgiving ceremony to the newly born), *umshado* (marriage ceremony), *ukwemula* (recognition by the head of the family that his daughter has reached marriageable age), *ukubika inxiwa* (sod-turning ceremony), and, of course, rituals associated with death.* What does it mean to kill and what does it mean to slaughter? What does it mean for me, as a vegan, to photograph slaughtering and meat consumption, especially when I'm most certainly the only vegan at the funeral? What does it mean to document what western vegans consider to be a violation of animal rights? How can a ritual practice that has been practiced for centuries be reduced to simply an act of killing when it is much more than that? What are the gendered relations, not only in the ritual practice itself, but also in the intimate moments documented in the process of slaughtering cattle? What are the intimacies between man and meat and the intimacies among men engaging in the ritualistic practice of slaughtering?

Land and its historical challenges in South Africa.

Displacement.

How do we engage in ritual practice

as the displaced?

Migration in birth.

Migration in union.

Migration in death.

We gather,

to bring together what is sacred.

* Zulu, E. 1991. Animal slaughter is a rite. *Reality*, 23(6), October, 13.



***Umqombothi* (traditional beer)**

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Mix 500 g of King Korn *Mtombo* malt with 4 cups of maize meal in a bowl. Add 2 litres of boiling water and stir until you have a smooth paste. Set aside to cool, then cover with a lid and leave in a warm place overnight to begin fermenting. Pour 4 litres of water into a large pot. Bring to a boil, remove from the heat and work in the soured mixture, stirring constantly. Place back on the heat and cook, stirring constantly, until boiling. Continue cooking the mixture for 60 minutes, until thick. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool, then transfer into a large plastic bucket. Add 6 litres of cold water, mix in the other 500 g of King Korn *Mtombo* malt and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of brown sugar. Cover with a lid and set aside for between 2 and 3 days to ferment. On the third day, the fermented mixture will have a pungent smell and tiny bubbles will appear on the surface. Pour the beer into a large fine-mesh sieve. Using your hand or a large wooden spoon, press the beer mixture through the sieve to achieve a smooth liquid. Set aside to settle for 30 minutes before serving.







***Inyama yendlu* (the meat of the house)**

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Cut 1-1.5 kgs of cattle neck meat into large pieces and season generously with salt and pepper on all sides. In a small bowl, combine 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil, 1 finely chopped onion, 3 minced garlic cloves, 1 tablespoon of ground paprika, 1 teaspoon of ground cumin, 1 teaspoon of ground coriander and 1 teaspoon of dried thyme, to create a marinade. Place the cattle neck meat in a large bowl. Pour the marinade over the meat, ensuring it is well coated. Allow the meat to marinate for at least 1 hour, or preferably overnight in the refrigerator. Remove the cattle neck meat from the marinade, allowing any excess marinade to drip off. Make a fire. When the coals are medium hot, and evenly distributed, place the meat on the braai grid, directly over the hot coals. Cook for about 5-7 minutes per side, or until the meat is nicely charred and cooked to your desired level of doneness. While grilling, baste the meat with any remaining marinade to keep it moist and add extra flavour. Once the meat is cooked, remove it from the braai and allow it to rest for a few minutes. Slice the cattle neck meat against the grain into thin strips. Serve the meat hot, garnished with chopped fresh parsley if desired. It pairs well with traditional South African side dishes like pap (corn meal) or chakalaka (spicy vegetable relish).



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Liver and onion

Slice and rinse 500 g of liver slices under cold water and pat dry with a paper towel. Cut the liver slices into smaller, bite-sized pieces if desired. In a mixing bowl, combine 2 tablespoons of all-purpose flour, 1 teaspoon of ground paprika, 1 teaspoon of ground cumin and 1 teaspoon of ground coriander. Season with salt and pepper. Toss the liver pieces in this mixture until they are well coated. Heat 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil or butter in a large frying pan or skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 large onions that have been sliced and sauté them until they become soft and caramelised, stirring occasionally. This process may take about 10 minutes. Once the onions are caramelised, remove the onions from the pan and set them aside. In the same pan, add a bit more oil or butter if needed, then add the coated liver pieces. Cook the liver for about 3-5 minutes per side until they are browned on the outside, but still slightly pink in the centre. Be careful not to overcook the liver, as it can become tough. Once the liver is cooked to your desired level of doneness, return the caramelised onions to the pan and stir them together with the liver. Allow the mixture to cook for an additional 1-2 minutes to blend the flavours. Remove the pan from the heat and allow the liver and onions to rest for a few minutes before serving. Serve the traditional liver and onions hot as a main course. It can be accompanied by pap (corn meal) or mashed potatoes, and a side of vegetables or salad.



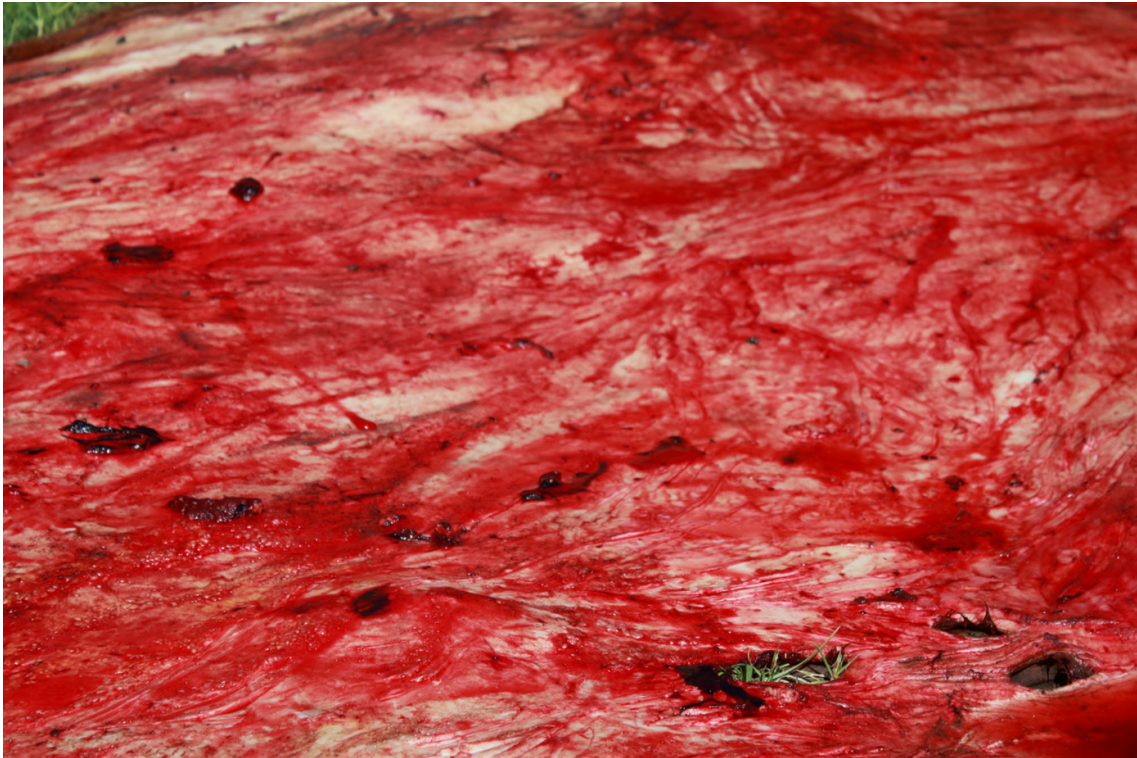




Samp and beans

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Rinse 1 cup of dried samp and 1 cup of dried beans (sugar beans, red kidney beans or speckled beans) under cold water, then soak them in water overnight or for at least 6-8 hours. This will help soften them and reduce cooking time. Drain the soaked samp and beans, then rinse them again. In a large pot, heat 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil over medium heat. Add 1 onion chopped and 2 minced garlic cloves and sauté until the onion becomes translucent and fragrant. Add the drained samp and beans to the pot, along with 2 teaspoons of curry powder, 1 teaspoon of ground coriander, 1 teaspoon of ground cumin, and 1 bay leaf. Stir well to coat the samp, beans and onions in the spice. Pour enough water into the pot to cover the samp and beans by about 5 cm. Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot with a lid, and simmer for about 2 to 3 hours, or until the samp and beans are tender. Stir occasionally and add more water if needed to prevent sticking or drying out. The cooking time may vary depending on the type and quality of the samp and beans used. Once the samp and beans are cooked to your desired tenderness, season with salt to taste. Stir well to incorporate the seasoning. Remove the bay leaf from the pot. Serve the samp and beans hot as a side dish or a main course. It pairs well with grilled meats, stews, or vegetables.



Chakalaka (spicy vegetable relish)

- 410 Place a deep pan on a stove top on medium heat. Add a nice coating of cooking oil and once warm, add a diced large onion. Sauté, before adding 1 teaspoon of spice of your choosing. Add 6 large grated carrots and begin to sauté until it softens. Add 1 can of chakalaka, 1 can of baked beans, and 1 can of green peas. Allow to simmer, then add 2 tablespoons of fruit chutney or apricot jam



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