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ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY OF THE BANGWAKETSE TO 1910

by

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A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Dalhousie University. April 1977

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ABSTRACT

This is a micro-study of a Tswana society. The study aims at demonstrating the nature of processes that are observable on a wider scale, not only among the chiefdoms of Botswana, but probably among other societies of Bantu-speaking Africa. These are processes such as the migration of peoples, patron-client relationships, incorporation of acephalous or segmentary communities into larger centralised societies, state formation and nation building. In the analysis of such processes an effort is made to emphasize African initiatives and to see Africans as prime movers rather than as mere characters reacting to colonial or imperial strategies. An attempt is also made to view the history of the Bangwaketse in perspective, and where possible to relate events to happenings in the entire region occupied by the Sotho-Tswana peoples of southern Africa. The study has therefore relied on both oral and archival sources to achieve a balanced synthesis of the Ngwaketse past.

A discussion of the origins and chronology of the entire Tswana complex of chiefdoms opens the dissertation and the relationship of the Kwena cluster of chiefdoms in Botswana to those of the Transvaal is noted. The influence of droughts, famines and epidemics in dispersing the Tswana communities is postulated, and a chronology for the emergence of modern Tswana chiefdoms is suggested. The secession and migrations of the Bangwaketse follows and the rise of the militarily powerful state under Makaba II and Sebego is discussed. The study also shows how waves of marauding invaders from the east broke upon the Tswana, and Ngwaketse resistance is examined and the consequent division and weakening of the state is noted. Then follows reunification under Gaseitsiwe and the intrusion of the European factor in Ngwaketse politics. In particular, the effects of missionary work on the integrity of the traditional state is considered. The last chapter examines Bathoen's relations with the British and his handling of the challenge to his authority presented by the traditional aristocracy who used the "Ethiopian" movement as a vehicle.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.P.S.	Aborigines Protection Society
B.D.C.	Bechuanaland District Committee
B.N.A.	Botswana National Archives
B.S.A. Co.	British South Africa Company
C. Cd.	Command Papers
C.B.H.E.	Cambridge History of the British Empire
C.O.	Colonial Office Records
G.H.	Government House Records
H.C.	High Commissioner
J.A.H.	Journal of African History
J.S.A.I.M.	Journal of South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy
L.M.S.	London Missionary Society
P.P.	Parliamentary Papers
R.C.	Resident Commissioner
S.A.J.S.	South African Journal of Science
T.R.S.S.A.	Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa
U.B.L.S.	University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland

A GLOSSARY OF SELECTED TSWANA TERMS

Bogwera	Male initiation ceremony
Bojale	Female initiation ceremony
Kgadi	An intoxicating drink, made from water and honey or sugar or syrup
Kgosi	King, chief
Kgotla	The ward or village meeting place; a ward
Letsholo	A large scale organised hunt involving most of the men in a village; an important ad hoc assembly held outside the village and usually summoned by the chief to discuss a serious matter, and attended by fully armed men
Mophato	An age-set; a military regiment
Morafe	A community; a nation; a people
Seantlo	A woman who stands in for another especially in the duty of child-bearing
Sehuba	Breast bone or brisket; any presentation to the chief in the form of tribute
Setlogolo	A nephew or niece

MARKS ON ORIGINAL

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis on the Bangwaketse people of southern Botswana is not intended to be a study in imperial history. Rather it is an attempt to contribute to the historiography of African societies of southern Africa in general, but more specifically, at a reinterpretation of the past of the peoples of Botswana and their neighbours. An attempt is made in this study to discover African initiatives and to concentrate on the roles of traditional leaders as well as to explain events in terms of the internal dynamics of Ngwaketse traditional society, rather than to stress unduly the operation of events whose roots lay far beyond the perimeters of the Sotho-Tswana world or whose motivation was of greater imperial significance than of immediate relevance to the region under consideration.

But the separation of what is African from that which is imperial is not always an easy task, nor is the exercise necessarily a clear-cut one. This has necessitated a certain degree of selectivity in determining the issues to be raised in this study. The abundance of archival sources for the colonial period compounds the difficulty of selection and presents the additional problem of maintaining a balance between the pre-colonial and the colonial aspects of such a study.

Because considerable attention has already been devoted to those aspects of the history of the Tswana falling within the colonial period some of the more familiar themes have either been omitted or passed over very lightly. This has been done to avoid distortion of emphasis. Consequently topics such as the London Convention of 1884, the role of the British South Africa Company in Botswana or its influence on the history of the Bangwaketse, as well as the 1895 visit of chiefs Bathoen I, Kgama III and Sebele I to England have not been discussed. Other topics like the Pretoria Convention of 1881, the creation of the mushroom republics of Stellaland and Goshen in 1882 and the Warren expedition (1885) have received little more than a fleeting glimpse.

It is also necessary to point out that certain dates used as land-marks in this thesis are intended to refer only to events in the history of the Bangwaketse and not to be of significance for southern African history in general. For example, the date 1889 is used to mark the end of the reign

of Gaseitsiwe and the start of that of his successor Bathoen I instead of denoting the year of the granting of a royal charter to the British South Africa Company. Likewise the year 1910 which is generally associated with the formation of the Union of South African states and colonies here only refers to the death of Bathoen I and the start of the reign of Seepapitso II. Unless one has a reasonable understanding of the social structure of Ngwaketse society, the internal or social history which forms the core of this study cannot be properly understood. For that reason, the discussion of the principal features of the structure of Ngwaketse society has been done in greater detail, in this introduction, than is customary in a study that purports to be historical rather than anthropological. It has, however, been recognised that the study of the past of pre-literate societies constrains the student of history to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach in which he draws on evidence from several disciplines in order to interpret and explain meaningfully events or historical processes he is examining. The effect of this approach has been to blur considerably the traditional boundaries between the various disciplines that are concerned with the study of human society.

Terms such as king and chief or kingdom and chiefdom are used interchangeably in this study, while a glossary explains the meaning of Tswana names and words used. Wherever possible an attempt has been made to spell the names of persons and places as the Batswana themselves render them. Except in quotations, the older orthography of spelling names of rulers such as Kgama and Bathoen has been employed, although in the latter example the diacretic sign above the letter 'n' nas been ommitted.

With an area of 220, 000 square miles, Botswana is a semi-arid tableland of roughly the same size as France or Kenya. In 1970 the population was estimated at 626, 000 with most of the people living along the eastern strip of the country in "a long, relatively narrow tract of land running south-east from the Okavango River to the upper reaches of the Limpopo",[1] then in a south-westerly direction towards Kudumane. This tract of land

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1 I. Schapera, The Tswana (London 1971), p.19.

traverses three drainage systems: the Okavango Delta – Makgadikgadi swamp and salt pans in the north, the Odi-Madikwe river system in the east and the Molopo-Kudumane area in the south.[2] The Ngwaketse district, with which this study is concerned, is situated between the Odi-Madikwe and the Molopo-Kudumane drainage systems, with a greater population concentration nearer the Odi-Madikwe drainage system. Most of the streams that run through the Ngwaketse territory are effluents of the Ngotwane which is part of the Odi-Madikwe system. But the most important river in the south, which also forms the boundary between the Bangwaketse and the Barolong, is the Molopo.

The Ngwaketse district has an area of 10, 054 square miles of which 7, 000 square miles or 69.6 per cent falls within the definition of Kgalagadi country,[3] but of the total population of 71, 289 only 5, 300 people lived in the "Kgalagadi" part of the Ngwaketse district in 1964.[4] The Ngwaketse territory is the fourth largest chiefdom in size, but numerically it is the third largest and has a population density of four persons per square mile. While the greater part of Botswana is generally described as rolling table-land at an altitude of 3, 000 feet above sea level, the eastern side of the country, including parts of the Ngwaketse district, is broken by rocky hills and river valleys.[5]

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2 Ibid.

3 H.A. Fosbrooke, "Man In the Kalahari: Tribal Areas", Botswana Society, Proceedings of the Conference on Sustained Production From Semi-Arid Areas with Particular Reference to Botswana (Gaborone, 1971), pp.41-42.

The definition of Kgalagadi accepted by the conference was "all those areas of Botswana which are covered with Kalahari sands".

4 Ibid., p.43, Table II. In the neighbouring Bakwena country 13,000 square miles of 88.3 per cent of the total of 14, 719 square miles is classified as Kgalagadi: but it was in 1964 occupied by only 4.9 per cent of the entire Bakwena population 73, 088. The Bamangwato country has a total area of 46, 095 square miles, of which 30, 000 square miles or 64 per cent is classified as Kgalagadi country on which 11.4 per cent of the population lives.

5 A. Sillery, Botswana: A Short Political History (London, 1964), p.5.

Statistics show that the greatest part of the territories occupied by the chiefdoms of the Kwena cluster is regarded as Kgalagadi. The Kgalagadi "is part of an extensive sand-covered plain which extends far beyond the boundaries of Botswana and probably represents the largest continuous sand-covered surface in the world".[6] The mean annual rain fall in the Kgalagadi areas which comprise the largest part of the Ngwaketse country is approximately 20 inches in the east, but in the southwest Kgalagadi it is often below 15 inches per annum. Over most of its area, this region suffers from from a lack of surface water.[7] Scarcity of water is, therefore, the major limiting factor of the environment. The vegetation in the southern part is predominantly grassland interspersed with thorn bush and patches of park. Although the Kgalagadi is covered with fine sand and is marked by absence of surface water, it is not an intensely dry desert such as the Sahara, as it is almost entirely covered with grass and trees.[8] The undependable rainfall and poor character of the soil[9] make the Kgalagadi districts at best "marginal country for extensive cultivation". This also explains why many Tswana are predominantly pastoralists.

Before the appearance of Europeans in Botswana, the country abounded with all kinds of game, large and small and hunting played an important part in the economy of the Tswana. They hunted game for its meat and for skins to make clothing, sandals, leather bags and sheaths. When traders made their appearance among the Tswana during the first half of the nineteenth century, some of the products of hunting such as ivory and skins were exchanged for goods sold by the traders.

The Tswana custom of settling in large villages probably also developed from the need to live around their chief near some place with a dependable supply of water. The congregation in large towns has in turn given rise to the Tswana arrangement of locating cattle-posts at a considerable distance

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6 L.W. Hyde, "Ground-Water Supplies in the Kalahari Area, Botswana", in Semi Arid Areas Conference, p.77.

7 Monica M. Cole, South Africa (London, 1961), p.10.

8 P.R. Weare, "Vegetation of the Kalahari in Botswana", Semi Arid Areas Conference, p.89.

9 Cole, South Africa, p. 10; Schapera, The Tswana, p.20.

from the town, as well as the agricultural field in well-demarcated zones outside the capital.

Within the town itself, the Tswana settled in small local divisions known as wards. A ward (kgotla) is "a patrilineal but non-exogamous body of people forming a distinct social and administrative unit under the leadership and authority of a heredity headman".[10] A ward could be very large or very small. Some wards such as Molosi at Moshaneng or the Laka ward at Kanye have less than a hundred members while others like the Ra-Sebego and Ra-Segotshane wards have more than a thousand. The members of any kgotla usually comprise the close relatives of the headman. Consequently, in the smallest wards the members could all be part of a single family. It is more usual however for a ward to contain many other family groups in addition to the headman's. These may or may not be related to that of the headman, but more often than not include remoter segments of the headman's lineage. Some family groups may be related to the headman's family through marriage.

Each ward had a definite location in the village as well as its own name. Sometimes a ward constituted an entire village by itself,[11] while in some cases the same ward may be divided into two or three locations. A good example of this in the Ngwaketse district, is provided by the Manare ward. This ward was founded for the son of King Moleta, in the eighteenth century. The headman of this ward, one Selerio, was transferred to Mokgomane, while his brother Mokgabisi remained in charge of the section in Kanye. At Mokgomane, Selerio found families of Barolong, Batlhware and Bakgalagadi who were incorporated into the ward. In 1912 Selerio asked King Seepapitso II to give him more "people" as he was alone with his family "among those foreigners". Five men were then sent to join him: two brothers from the Mabe ward, two from the Kgwatleng ward and one from the Malele ward. The descendants of all these men continue to form part of the Manare ward. Its Ngwaketse members live partly at Mokgomane while the "Kgalagadi" members live at Kanye, Mokgomane and Kokong. The Batlhware, Barolong and Masetedi

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10 I. Schapera, The Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes, (London, 1952), pp. 50-51.

11 Examples are the Bahurutshe ward of Manyana and the Molosi ward at Moshaneng.

members all live at Mokgomane.[12]

Every ward was a separate social, political and administrative unit and its headman had well-defined administrative and judicial powers and functions. The headman was responsible to the king for what happened in his ward, and he was the medium through which all official communications were made. The headmen of the different wards together form an advisory council to the king. In the mophato or age-set, each ward formed a unit by itself under the leadership of the most senior members of the group in terms of status or rank.[13]

Although members of a ward were originally nearly all related to its headman either lineally or through marriage, any member of the morafe could, with the permission of the king, live in a different ward from that of his own lineage. Thus ward membership was therefore not always determined by birth. While members of a ward acted as a corporate group associating habitually as well as cooperating with each other in times of need, and while this bond of fellowship was described by a member's reference to his fellow wardsmen as "ba ga etsho": "the people of my home" - relationship terms that applied to one's paternal relatives - one nevertheless did distinguish between one's lineal relatives and other ward associates. Thus while one could transfer one's ward affiliation by going to live in a ward of a different lineage, one's kinship obligations were permanently fixed by birth and marriage.[14]

The localised nature of patrilineal relationship based on ward organisation was balanced by relations with maternal relatives, which had to cut across the local patrilineal groupings binding people through a new series of relationships and thereby ensuring a wider diffusion of reciprocal obligations of service and protection. Maternal relatives could belong to different families within the same ward, different merafe or kingdoms or to one's own lineage. The importance of maternal relatives

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12 Schapera, Ethnic Composition, pp.50-51.

13 T. Tlou, "The Nature of Batswana State", Kutlwano, April 1974, p.7; Schapera, A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom, (London, 1970), p.21.

14 Schapera, Law and Custom, p.22.

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among the Bangwaketse is reflected in the expression: setlogolo se segolo kwa gaabo-mogolo (a uterine nephew is an important person at the home of his mother's people). The Tswana system of preferred marriages tended to strengthen kinship ties. More particularly among the aristocracy, Ngwaketse young men were encouraged to marry daughters of their mother's brothers or of their fathers' younger brothers.

Because of the importance of kinship ties in the social relationship of the Bangwaketse and other Tswana groups, marriages were expected to strengthen already existing blood ties and thereby ensuring social cohesion within kin groups. Consequently, it was the parents of the prospective spouses rather than young man and girl that made the necessary marriage negotiations. The family - its social status and wealth and not the attributes or personal qualities of the girl - mattered in selecting the prospective wife. A wife was sought among the people one knew best, and these were usually one's own relatives. Consequently Ngwaketse clans are not exogamous. It is only in the nuclear family that one cannot marry.

Among aristocrats and royals in particular, a system of peelelo (from the verb beelela - to reserve for future use) or child betrothal was common. This was necessary for succession to office was determined by the seniority of the mothers of the prospective candidates. But the senior wife was not always the first married, with the result that the heir-apparent was often much younger than the sons of wives married earlier, and despite the rigid principle of succession, the heir not infrequently had to face opposition and rivalry from the older sons of lower-ranking houses. Segotshane was ousted in that manner by Sebego. Since marriage was more than a contract between the marrying couple, Tswana custom ensured that there would be no childless marriages. This was done through the sororate marriage (seantlo) whereby a sister or some other relative of a barren wife bore children on her behalf. Thus when Queen Ntebang could not beget a son for Gaseitsiwe, Mothwane acted as her seantlo. Likewise, under the levirate custom if a king died without issue, his younger brother could enter the hut of his older brother's wife and "raise seed" for the dead man. Children born as a result were accounted to the dead king.

Ngwaketse kings, like all other Tswana rulers, used age-sets (mephato) for social, political and economic control within the state. All adults, both male and female, were members of mephato, which were organised at

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intervals averaging six years among the Bangwaketse. In the pre-colonial period the age-sets were formed when youths of ages ranging from about eighteen to twenty-two years were initiated together. Among the Ngwaketse a mophato was formed only if a prince was ready for initiation. He then became the leader of his mophato. If there was no prince ready to be initiated and there were many youths waiting, a son of one of the senior sub-chiefs was made a leader of the mophato. The male initiation, which was called bogwera, was preceded by the rite of circumcision. (The initiation of girls was known as bojale.) When the mophato graduates it is given a name of its own by the king. Once it had graduated, a mophato which was drawn from all the wards in all the villages having eligible youths could be used as a work force for public duty, as well as for military purposes. The members also behaved as intimate companions and equals and displayed a strong feeling of group solidarity. Socially, membership of the various mephato also ranked men in the village according to grades of seniority by age. Missionary teaching discredited the system, and after it was first stripped of what missionaries and colonial officers considered its most disagreeable aspects it continued for some time. Very few Tswana chiefdoms now create new mephato regularly.

The focus of this study is on state - formation among the Bangwaketse, as well as on strategies of survival adopted by the Bangwaketse as a group, both before and after the advent of Europeans in their midst. The study accordingly examines the relationship of the Bangwaketse state (from the reign of Makaba II to the death of Bathoen I) with neighbouring Sotho-Tswana societies and, later, with the Boer republic of the Transvaal as well as with agents of the British government in South Africa.

In order to place the history of the Bangwaketse in proper perspective, particularly with regards to chronology, an attempt has been made to look at the origins of the Sotho-Tswana societies and to arrive at some tentative conclusions about their chronology. The success of such an attempt depends to a large extent on the reliability of the recorded traditions used as a basis for calculating dates.

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Oral traditions, especially among centralised states, constrain the student of preliterate societies to stress, perhaps unduly, the activities of rulers as against those of communities. This happens because traditions of kings and royal families are invariably better preserved and, therefore, better remembered than those of commoners. Also, state-formation was a process in which the roles of kings - particularly warrior kings - loomed rather largely, since rulers were the principal actors in the whole drama of nation building. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that African history has tended to glorify militarist leaders such as Shaka and Mzilikazi, and rated their achievements above those of such kings as Lewanika and Mantshiwa. It was probably the same attitude that made Schapera view the reign of the pacific Gaseitsiwe (coming as it did after the wars of Makaba II and Sebego) as an unimportant epoch in the history of the Bangwaketse.

Makaba II's contribution in consolidating the Ngwaketse chiefdom and providing it with the strength and affluence necessary to enable it to withstand a series of invasions by marauders from the east, was a crucial and a substantial one. Equally important was Sebego's skilful guidance of Ngwaketse resistance to the invading regiments of the Ndebele. But the achievements of these two warrior kings, brilliant as they undoubtedly were, should not detract from the equally sound leadership provided by Gaseitsiwe and Bathoen I under radically [illegible] circumstances.

Admittedly, Gaseitsiwe and Bathoen did not have to defend the Ngwaketse state against the invasions of the Difaqane period. But both these rulers did face tremendous problems that severely taxed their leadership qualities and imposed strenuous demands not only on their material resources but also on their diplomatic skills and tactfulness. One of these problems appeared in the shape of the Voortrekker republics that were established on the highveld and recognised by Britain in 18[illegible] and 1854. As Boer relations with the Ndebele had already shown, and their dealings with the Tswana communities south of the Molopo were to demonstrate, the Boer menace was one that called for different tactics from those that had been adopted against the Makololo and the Mandebele. This study argues that Gaseitsiwe's handling of the Boer problem and internal problems such as the re-unification of the Bangwaketse (who in the midst of the Ndebele invasions split up into two rival factions) as well as his efforts to harmonise the conflicts generated by the introduction of Christianity among the

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Bangwaketse call for a re-examination of the traditional interpretation of his role in the history of the Bangwaketse.

Likewise, Bathoen's task of attempting to rationalize the responsibilities of a traditional African monarch within the framework of the obviously unequal pattern of relationships implied in the entire concept of a protectorate was an agonizing affair. Often this was exacerbated by the troublesome incubus of powerful but disloyal members of the royal aristocracy, constantly searching for opportunities to undermine Bathoen's authority with a view ultimately to deposing him as chief and replacing him with one of his relatives. Bathoen's solution was to develop close ties with fellow African chiefs Kgama III of the Bamangwato and Sebele I of the Bakwena, and then with missionaries of the London Missonary Society as well as developing a cordial working relationship with British officials in South Africa.

Needless to say, after the British had declared a protectorate over the countries of the Tswana chiefs, accommodation with Britain was really the only choice open to Bathoen I or any other Tswana ruler for that matter. What really mattered then was the extent to which any of the Tswana rulers could turn the new relationship to their people's advantage, while continuing to serve the interests of the imperial power. Despite the intrigues of a section of the Ngwaketse aristocracy, Bathoen I retained sufficient backing from the bulk of the Bangwaketse to enable him to gently defuse the destructive potential of the disloyal headmen. The loyalty of many Bangwaketse bolstered by the support of the missionaries and the active cooperation of British officials ultimately helped Bathoen to triumph over his opponents, and enabled him to introduce controversial reforms without serious danger to his position as king of the Bangwaketse.

CHAPTER I

THE CHRONOLOGY AND ORIGINS OF THE TSWANA

One of the most difficult and frustrating aspects of African historiography is the problem of pre-colonial chronology. In general, oral traditions provide only a vague, tentative, or at best, a relative chronology. This is a chronology that indicates that a particular event occurred before or after another; that the reign of king A preceded that of king B. But any attempts to discover when precisely the event or reign used as a reference occurred, are not usually productive of the kind of response that is satisfactory to historians. The complexities surrounding the attempts to establish a firm or absolute chronology appear so gigantic and the pitfalls so numerous that recent works on the subject have pessimistically characterised the exercise as a veritable "search for a chimera".[1]

Yet, however perplexing the efforts to find an absolute chronology for the events discussed in oral traditions, however imperfect the devices generally used in the attempts to measure the time depth of the pre-colonial African past, the task is one that students of pre-colonial history must confront. They can neither evade it nor wish it away. Chronology is absolutely necessary for placing historical events in time perspective. Without it the study of African history for which we have no

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1 G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville, Chronology of African History, (Oxford 1973) p.xiii; D.P. Henige, The Chronology of Oral Tradition (Oxford, 1974).

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written documents cannot rise much above ethnology. As it has been so vividly described, historical time is "the very plasma in which events are immersed, and the field within which they become intelligible",[2] or as another writer succinctly summed up the matter: "pas d'histoire sans chronologie".[3]

A major problem in the efforts of historians to work out a satisfactory chronology for the histories of preliterate societies they were studying, has been their tendency to rely on traditions collected by researchers of disciplines whose concern with time is only marginal.[4] An associated problem in the construction of a chronological framework for preliterate societies has been the tendency to concentrate on data from a single chiefdom, entirely isolated from the larger cultural group to which such a chiefdom belongs. This can be both dangerous and misleading. The traditions of one chiefdom - whether these be king-lists, age-organisations, or any other category of oral evidence - can only be most profitably and meaningfully mined for their chronological import if built into a regional chronological structure, where all cross-references can be correlated. Thus, the importance of Henige's call for a macro-approach to the study of the problem, cannot be over-emphasized.[5]

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2 M. Bloch, The Historian's Craft, (Manchester, 1954), pp.27-28.

3 Y. Person, "Tradition oral et chronologie", Cahiers d'etudes Africaines, II, 7, 1962, p.463.

4 J.B. Webster, "Noi! Noi! Famines as an Aid to Interlacustrine Chronology"; in J.B. Webster, ed., Chronological Methods and African History (forthcoming).

5 Henige, The Chronology of Oral Tradition, pp.10-11, 191.

Unless an event used as a basis for relative chronology is pegged to a firm date, it remains chronologically unsatisfactory to historians. An example is the secession of the Bangwaketse from the parent Bakwena kingdom. Tradition suggests that this occurred when the main Kwena settlement was at Phutadikobo hill.[6] Until we know that the Bakwena occupied that site during the reign of their seventh king, Motshodi, after whom Phutadikobo was subsequently renamed Motshodi, or as the British later corrupted it Mochudi,[7] we cannot have the faintest idea in which century the event occurred. Professor John Rowe gives a similar example from the history of Buganda to illustrate the need for a firm date to which an event can be related, and which is acceptable as a basis for relative chronology.[8] According to Rowe, the Buganda kingdom periodically moved the capital to different sites such as Banda Hill, Mulago or Rubago. But if these capital sites were not tied to firmly-dated events, such as the visit of the explorer, J.H. Speke, to the capital at Banda in 1862, it would be well-nigh impossible to provide tie-ins with contemporaneous events occurring elsewhere in Uganda, or in East Africa. It is, therefore, clear that information about any events in the history of Buganda referring to a specific location of the Baganda capital would have to be tied to an absolute or fixed

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6 I. Schapera, "Bakwena", in I. Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo Tsa Merafe Ya Batswana, (Lovedale, 1954), p.36; Idem., "A Short History of the Bangwaketse", African Studies, I, 1942, p.2.

7 Ibid.

8 See John A. Rowe, "Major Themes in African History" in J. Paden and E.W. Soja, eds., The African Experience, (Evanston, 1970), I, p.168.

date.

It may be useful to show, in passing, examples of the dangers inherent in a non-comparative approach to chronology, or in the failure of historians to pay sufficient critical attention to the chronological implications of an event in one society for a whole region. Following closely traditions recorded by a District Commissioner, G.E. Nettleton,[9] Sillery refers to chiefs Kwena and Ngwato fighting a battle at Morula-o-esi, near Gaborone.[10] Although the account by Nettleton stated categorically that the battle in question was probably fought in the eighteenth century,[11] because the historian concerned did not bother to compare the recorded tradition with those of neighbouring Tswana societies, he committed a very serious chronological blunder. Since indications are that both Kwena and Ngwato lived in the sixteenth century, it follows they could not have fought each other in the eighteenth. Still less could they have done so near Gaborone, for according to the traditions of both the Kwena of Botswana and of the Transvaal, neither crossed the Odi-Madikwe (or Crocodile-Marico) river system into Botswana; both died in the western Transvaal.[12]

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9 G.E. Nettleton, "Bangwato" in Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo, pp.63-64.

10 A. Sillery, Bechuañaland Protectorate, (Cape Town, 1952), pp.115-116.

11 Nettleton, "Bangwato", Ditirafalo, p.64: "Fa go kaiwa ekete ntwa e lole ka sebaka sa bo-18 makgolo a dinyaga (18th Century)".

12 For the traditions of the Bakwena cluster of chiefdoms showing the time of Kwena and Ngwato, see Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, pp.34-35; This error might have

Another, though not so serious discrepancy with chronological implications, is a tradition recorded by Schapera relating to a joint operation by Mmopane, the chief of the Bakaa and Kgabo II, chief of the Bakwena. These two are alleged to have co-operated with each other in expelling the Bakgwatleng people from the Dithejwane Hills around 1730.[13] The problem here is that while Schapera states that it was Kgabo whom Mmopane assisted, elsewhere he has stated that the Bakwena were led across the Odi-Madikwe rivers by Motshodi. If the putative king-lists of the Bakwena and of the Bakaa are not disputed, it will be found that Mmopane correlates more favourably with Motshodi rather than with Kgabo II. This is because Mmopane falls into the standard generation c.1685 - c.1715 which is the next after that ~~of Motsh~~odi, whereas Kgabo II falls in the generation c.1625 - c.1655, and is accordingly separated by an entire generation from Mmopane.[14] But the example just given is not so much one illustrating a chronological problem as it is an example of how chronology assists the historian when the names of two different kings have been given for the same event. Chronological correlations assist the historian to decide which source to accept as factual and which to discard as inaccurate.

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been passed over lightly as a simple "slip of the pen" were it not for the fact that Dr. Sillery's standing as a foremost scholar of Tswana history could mislead many younger or subsequent researchers. The real danger of this is shown by the fact that Q. Neil Parsons in an otherwise very brilliant essay ("On the Origins of the bama-Ngwato", Botswana Notes and Records, Volume V, p.92) has repeated Sillery's mistake.

13 I. Schapera, "Notes on the History of the Kaa", African Studies, IV, 3, 1945, pp.110-111.

14 See Charts I and II (Appendix).

Another and final example of the grave mistakes that can result from insufficient attention to chronology comes from traditions of the Batlhaping separation from the Barolong state. Several writers who recorded the Batlhaping tradition of separation confused the identity of two Batlhaping chiefs, Phuduhutswana and Mashwe.[15] Once a careful cross-checking of the Batlhaping and Barolong traditions has been carried out, the problem is immediately solved. Phuduhutswana and Mashwe were in fact separated by no less than five generations.[16]

The complexities of the exercise notwithstanding, historians have felt the urge to continue the quest for a more satisfactory chronology than the relative chronology offered by general oral traditions. As a result, various methods of dating the past of pre-literate societies have been employed in the drive to find absolute chronology. These have included dating from solar eclipses whose paths and dates have been methodically charted.[17] The traditions of the Tswana hardly make reference to eclipses, the notable exception being an eclipse mentioned in the traditions of the Bapedi, and which was supposed to have been connected with the death of the Pedi king Thulare.[18]

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15 See J. Tom Brown, Among the Bantu Nomads, (London, 1926, reprinted New York, 1969), pp.206-8; Z.K. Matthews, "Barolong", in Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo, p.8; A. Wookey, Dico Tsa Secwana, (Vryburg, 1929), pp.12-14.

16 See Chart I (Appendix).

17 Richard Gray, "Eclipse Maps", J.A.H., VI, (1965), pp.251-262; Idem., "Annular Eclipse Maps", J.A.H., IX, (1968), pp.147-157.

18 Leonard Thompson, "The Difaqane and its Aftermath, 1822-1836", in M. Wilson and L. Thompson, eds., Oxford History of South Africa, (London, 1969), I, p.404, n.1. cf. also D.R. Hunt, "An Account of the Bapedi", Bantu Studies, V, 1931, p.284; H.O. Monnig, The Pedi, (Pretoria, 1967), p.22.

Archeology, that much-lauded "handmaiden" of history, has done much to illumine the record of the past of Africa's pre-literate societies, providing information on technology of societies, their basic economies, some idea about the size of their social units, their burial practices, as well as their artistic achievements.[19] Even for the historian working with written or archival sources, the assistance of archeology "in establishing the architectural history, settlement size, trade, industry and everyday life" of African societies has been demonstrated.[20] But from the chronological point of view, it was in contributing the Carbon-14 dating and other similar processes that archeology as a discipline made its greatest impact on history.

For the Tswana this very useful method has not yet been able to yield the exciting results that it has produced elsewhere in Africa. This has been due largely to the relatively backward state of Iron-Age research for the entire South African region.[21] Exceptions have been the studies of Transvaal Iron Age societies conducted by Professor Revil Mason of the University of Witwatersrand, together with several young researchers working under his direction. The results of studies by these archeologists have been trickling in over the last few years

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19 M. Posnansky, "Archeology: Its Uses and Abuses", in T.O. Ranger, ed., Emerging Themes of African History, (London, 1968), p.63; J. Vansina, R. Mauny and L.V. Thomas, eds., Historian in Tropical Africa, (London, 1964), pp.65-68.

20 Posnansky, "Archeology: Its uses and Abuses", p.70.

21 R.R. Inskeep, "South Africa", in P.L. Shinnie, ed., The African Iron Age, (Oxford, 1971), pp.245-248.

and, since the year 1970, have begun to alter significantly the chronological picture for the Tswana societies of the central and western Transvaal.[22]

But the dating derived from archeology is usually within broad periods, often subject to large margins of error and usually more useful for the period prior to oral tradition rather than after it has begun. Archeological dates have occasionally been helpful in persuading sceptics that some unusually lengthy African regnal lists may have some validity. But the best they can tell us so far is normally that such and such a people were in the area they claim in their traditions at that early date. Archeologists are seldom able to confirm that states and kings existed among the said people at that time.

Glottochronology is a recent discovery in the range of techniques that can and have been employed to examine the depth of the preliterate African past. Based on the hypothesis that over long periods the vocabularies of languages change at the same overall rate, glottochronology assumes that it is possible to calculate the time of separation of related languages from the percentage of the basic vocabulary they have lost or retained.[23] While a few scholars have used this technique in their studies

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[22] In addition to R. Mason's Prehistory of the Transvaal, (Johannesburg, 1962), and his article, "The Origins of South African Society", 1965, two articles published in October 1973 and January 1974 have provided new dates for societies of the western Transvaal presumed to be sites occupied by the Tswana ranging from A.D. 450 to A.D. 1600 and making possible the division of the South African Iron Age into an Early, Middle and Late Iron-Age framework.

[23] Jack Berry, "Language Systems and Literature", in Baden and Soja, eds., The African Experience, I, p.95;

of African societies, it is still regarded as a controversial subject.[24]

However, if glottochronology is able to justify the claims being made for it, it is likely to be one of the most useful aids to the historian. Recent reconstruction of Lwo traditions in the interlacustrine region has revealed a very close correlation with the postulations of glottochronology as to how long ago it has been since the various Lwo dialect groups split up.[25] Glotto-chronology has not yet been used for dating southern African society.

Other historians have used age organisations in their attempts to grapple with the chronological problem. In parts of the continent where historical researches have concentrated on stateless societies, more intensive exploration into the value or usefulness of age-organisations as bases for reliable chronologies has been done. Scholars adopting this approach to the problem have pointed out that while Africans themselves have not been able to measure time exactly or to present a rational concept of time, they have nevertheless used the formation of age organisations as milestones along the path of history.[26]

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24 Ibid.; R.G. Armstrong, "The Use of Linguistic and Ethnographic Data in the Study of Idoma and Yoruba History", in Vansina et al., eds., The Historian in Tropical Africa, pp.131-136.

25 J.B. Webster, "Migration and Settlement of the Northern Interlacustrine Region", in J.B. Webster, ed., History of Uganda, (in press with E.A.P.H.), Volume I.

26 G. Murinki, "Chronology of the Kikuyu", in B.A. Ogot, ed., Hadith, III, p.3; A.H. Jacobs, "A Chronology of the Pastoral Maasai", ed., Hadith, I, pp.15, 17-18; J.E. Lamphear, "When the Ngitome speared their Oxen", in J.B. Webster, ed., Chronological Methods and African History, pp.2, 9.

The Bangwaketse also employ a time reference based on age sets. Referring to when their clan came to occupy their present place of abode at Kanye, the elders of the Ra-Sebako ward stated that they had been relocated during the time of the elder Bathoen before the Matshelaphala set had circumcised.[27] It appears therefore, that with diligent and painstaking research among the Bangwaketse, age-sets could be used just as they have been in certain East African societies to construct a valuable chronology for the history of that people.

But age organisations as social institutions vary widely throughout Africa. Some societies like the Kuria, Kikuyu and Karimojong have the three categories of age organisations: age-sets, age-grade groups as well as generation sets.[28] The Pastoral Maasai have only two categories. These are age and generation sets,[29] while the Tswana are limited to one kind only - namely, the age-set, or mophato. This variety means that any attempt to use the age organisation for chronological purposes requires a very intimate understanding of both the features and dynamics of the different categories of social institutions, particularly the one chosen as a tool for chronological calculation. Writings of people like Jacobs, Lamphear,

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For example, on p.9, Lamphear writes of the Jie: "Indeed, the average Jie elder seemed far better informed concerning the generation-sets of the past than many other aspects of the Jie socio-political system..."

27 Evidence of elders at Ra-Sebako ward at Kanye, especially that of Sebati Dikgageng. Interview held on Tuesday 21 August, 1973 at Motlhwareng, Ra-Sebako ward.

28 A.H. Jacobs, "A Chronology of the Pastoral Maasai", p.4.

29 Ibid.

Dyson-Hudson, Muriuki and Fosbrooke[30] have shown that among certain of the societies of East Africa, especially the Jie and Karimojong, age organisations could be cyclical while in many other societies, including the Tswana, they may be said to be linear. This is an important difference for it is likely that the intervals will be longer in the former than in the latter.

It is worth noting here that dating by age organisations has been based upon generation sets of between twenty-five and forty years. Elders of the societies concerned can through the recall of these sets periodise their history back to the seventeenth century. Age-sets which are formed every four to seven years are often only recalled back as far as about 1800. This is much less useful since many other dating devices can be employed for the nineteenth century. The Tswana possessed age-sets and would accordingly fall in the category of peoples very difficult to date if it were not for the preservation of their regnal lists.

Once age-sets are clearly distinguished from the other varieties of age organisations, the main problems in the use of that tool for dating become those of establishing an accurate sequence of the past age-sets, and of determining the intervals at which the rite was held. This will, of necessity, vary from one society to another according to the function of the institution in the socio-political life of the society in question, and

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30 Ibid.; Lamphear, "When the Ngitome Speared their Oxen", in J.B. Webster, ed., Chronological Methods and African History (forthcoming); N. Dyson-Hudson, Karimojong Politics, 1966; G. Muriuki, "Chronology of the Kikuyu"; H.A. Fosbrooke, "The Maasai Age-Group System as a Guide to Tribal Chronology", African Studies, XV, 1956.

also depending upon contingencies like favourable crop seasons,[31] "proper age of initiation" of the eldest son of the previous hereditary generation-set leader,[32] as well as the number of sons a man has and also his livestock.[33] While it appears likely that factors like good seasons, droughts or disasters such as pestilence would have some influence on the actual years chosen for the Ngwaketse bogwera and bojale ceremonies, the regularity with which these recurred[34] suggests they placed greater emphasis on periodicity.

Tswana age-sets were based on biological maturity comprising youths of definite age ranges - usually about eighteen to twenty-two years.[35] This was because the mophato was the instrument through which youths passed from boyhood to manhood. The mophato was a corporate group whose recruits passed the ceremony of go rupa or circumcision. But after the year on which the bogwera or the bojale was held, there was a closed period during which no ceremonies of the kind could be held until the next official ceremony to be held after an interval of about five to six years.

Ngwaketse age-sets have been analysed only back to 1853.

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31 Muriuki, "Chronology of the Kikuyu", p.17; Lamphear, "When the Ngitome Speared their Oxen", p.4.

32 Lamphear, "When the Ngitome Speared the Oxen", p.6.

33 Ibid., p.4.

34 Average intervals calculated from the list of dates supplied by Schapera for Ngwaketse sets are six years. The Ngwaketse elders gave the years 18-22 as the age range for admission as a mogwera.

35 These were the age ranges cited by elders interviewed in 1973 and 1974 in the Ngwaketse district. Schapera however gives the range 16-20 years. (See Schapera, The Tswana, p.38.)

Between that date and 1947, Ngwaketse age-sets were organised at intervals that averaged 6.3 years, but it is only from the year 1901 that we have definite dates. The dates between 1853 and 1896 were estimates by the researcher who first collected the traditions. Because of the regular periodicity of the Ngwaketse age-set and the short intervals between the different sets, these age-sets do lend themselves definitely to satisfactory use as tools for chronological reconstruction. But as Ngwaketse age-sets have been analysed only up to 1853 at which time dates from written documents were already available for that history, no attempt has been made here to use these age-sets for dating purposes.

Societies with centralised governments under hereditary kings have provided the most commonly used forms of dating the past of non-calendrical societies of Africa - that is, dating based on king-lists. Compared with acephalous or segmentary societies, therefore, centralised societies have been considered as a veritable paradise for the historian.[36] Some historians have approached the problem of chronology by calculating regnal lengths with a view to establishing average mean reigns. Because of fairly obvious weaknesses, this method is widely regarded as highly suspect. It is a method based on too many variable factors. As has been observed, it is a method that is

> especially affected by social conditions. To postulate, it presupposes that there be no important changes in the form of succession (age and modalities of succession, principles of social generation) for the period under

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36 Webster, "Noi! Noi! Famines as an Aid to Interlacustrine Chronology".

investigation.[37]

Thus, even in father-son succession systems, where a number of brothers follow each other, there is every likelihood that the regnal lengths will be seriously affected. It has also been demonstrated that patrilineage or matrilineage affect regnal lengths differently,[38] as would such patterns of succession as rotational succession.[39]

It would, however, be incorrect to give the impression that dating by regnal lengths does not work. To point out the immense difficulties that attend the use of this device is not to argue its inapplicability as a technique for chronological computation, but if anything, it is to show why in this essay the chronology will indeed be based on king-lists but not regnal lengths. There do exist societies in Africa, especially West Africa, that are known to keep an accurate record of lengths of reigns by mnemonic devices.[40]

Genealogically charted king-lists have been employed in this study to construct a chronology of the Tswana based on generation lengths. Because I have not been able to use age-

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37 Vansina et al., eds., The Historian in Tropical Africa, p.63.

38 A. Roberts, "Chronology of the Bemba (N.E. Zambia)", J.A.H., XI, 2, 1970, pp.235-236.

39 D.P. Henige, "Oral Tradition and Chronology", J.A.H., XII, 3, 1971, pp.380-386; Idem., The Chronology of Oral Tradition, p.4.

40 See D.H. Jones, "Problems of African Chronology", J.A.H., XI, 2, 1970, pp.162-163, where he quotes E.L.R. Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions of Origin, 1952. T. Tlou, "A Political History of Northwestern Botswana to 1906", (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin 1971), pp.8-18 uses average reign lengths to compute his chronology for the Tawana before 1849.

sets, and because I have no confidence in regnal lengths, the use of royal generations for dating is accordingly the only other option. Hitherto no attempt has been made to come to grips with the chronology of the entire Tswana-speaking peoples of Southern Africa. Previous studies on the Tswana have tended to look at the societies of the Transvaal separately from those of Botswana, and studies done in Botswana have stopped at the border with South Africa. These studies have accordingly been in two groupings. As far as is known, this is the first attempt to bring these two into harmony, chronologically, and the greatest problems have arisen in crossing the political divide.

In attempting to look at Tswana societies across the international boundary, efforts have been made to look for events that link these societies despite the man-made boundaries artificially separating them. Particular attention has therefore been paid to the operation of factors like droughts and famines as possible causes for fissions and secessions. In order to work towards the creation of a regional chronological framework, which is safer than depending upon one single regnal list, the technique of cross-referencing from one regnal list to another has been employed.

A generation is defined as the time that elapses between the birth of a man and the birth of his first surviving child.[41] Obviously this period must vary from one society to another. In

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41 D.H. Jones also defines a "dynastic generation" as "the time elapsing between the accession of the first member of a given generation to hold office, and the accession of the first representative of the next". (See "Problems of African Chronology", p.166).

Tropical Africa, historians have tended to use twenty-seven years per generation, but M.S. Kiwanuka used thirty years for Buganda, and J.B. Webster used thirty years for Kwararafa and P.L. Breutz used thirty for the Sotho-Tswana in the Transvaal. In dealing with the Luo, Webster used twenty-seven years plus twelve years for a brother succession. For this study, thirty years has been adopted as a reasonable generational mean,[42] and an additional twelve years has been allowed for a brother succession. Among Tswana societies numerically the most striking instances of brother successions occurred among the Transvaal peoples of the Bahurutshe and Bakwena-Mogopa as well as among the Kgatla-Kgafela and Pedi groups. It is, accordingly, in the lists of those groups that a significant degree of adaptation has been made through the application of the twelve year compensation principle for brother successions.[43]

Here it may be useful to turn to a brief discussion of the origins of the Tswana before a comment on their chronology is

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42 The use of the same average as is used by previous southern African writers has guided the choice of the thirty-year generational mean. But in addition empirical data has been relied upon. The Ngwaketse king, Gaseitsiwe, was born c.1813 and his first son Bathoen was born in 1845. (See E. Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, London, 1895, pp.150, 156). The Kwena king, Sechele, was born c.1810 and his child or son, Sebele, was born in 1841. (See A. Sillery, Sechele. The Story of an African Chief, Oxford, 1954, pp.53, 205). Montshiwa of the Barolong-Tshidi was born c.1815 and his first born, Kebalepile - who predeceased his father - was born in 1849. (See P.L. Breutz, Tribes of the Mafeking District, Pretoria, 1955, p.194). Finally, among the Bamangwato, Tshekedi Khama was born in 1905 and his first-born, a son named Leapetswe, was born in 1939. (M. Benson, Tshekedi Khama, London, 1960)*

43 See king-lists on charts II, for the Bahurutshe, III for the Bakwena-Mogopa and VI, for the Bakgatla and Bapedi.

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attempted. The Tswana chiefdoms form part of the larger group of Sotho peoples, while the Sotho group itself is one of the three great sub-divisions of the Bantu-speaking peoples situated north of the Nguni.[44] In addition to the Botswana or "Western Sotho", the Sotho group includes the Basotho of Lesotho and the Orange Free State, to whom the term "Sotho" has come to be more specifically and almost exclusively applied. This group sometimes also is referred to as the "Southern Sotho". A third group comprises the Bapedi who have been generally referred to as the "Northern Sotho".[45]

These different Sotho groups that together may be more conveniently described as "Sotho-Tswana" at the very earliest stage of their history, shared a number of linguistic and cultural characteristics that distinguished them from other Bantu-speakers of southern Africa. These are features such as totemism, a preemptive right of men to marry their maternal cousins, and an architectural style characterised by a round hut with a conical thatch roof supported by wooden pillars on the outside.[46] Other

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44 M. Wilson, "The Sotho, Venda and Tsonga", in M. Wilson and L. Thompson, eds., The Oxford History of South Africa, I, p.131.

45 M. Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana Peoples before 1800", in L. Thompson, ed., African Societies in Southern Africa, (London, 1969), p.97; E. Westphal, "The Linguistic Prehistory of Southern Africa", Africa, XXXIII, July 1963.

46 Legassick, "Sotho-Tswana Peoples...", p.86; N.J. van Warmelo, "Grouping and Ethnic History", in I. Schapera, ed., The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa, (London, 1937), p.57. Christopher Ehret draws attention to indirect archeological evidence of Bantu borrowing from Central Sudanic communities "in the shift of Bantu-speaking communities from their older rectangular house style - an ancient Bantu feature - reconstructible on comparative ethnographic grounds and still present in some

minor distinguishing features included their dress of skin cloaks or dikobo and breech-cloths,[47] a variety of Buispoort-type pottery closely related to Schofield's NC2 variety,[48] and a predilection for dense and close settlements,[49] as well as a tradition of large-scale building in stone.[50]

While the Sotho-Tswana developed these distinguishing characteristics, they did, of course, also share a number of characteristics with other southern Bantu-speaking peoples. These include physical features which generally-speaking, make it hard to distinguish Sotho or Tswana from Xhosa, Zulu or Swazi; although many Tswana, especially those living south of the Molopo tend to be of a lighter complexion than others, as well as being slightly lankier with prominent cheek-bones - features which clearly point to considerable inter-marriage and other forms of interaction with such groups as the Khoi, Konanna and Griqua.[51] The languages of the Sotho-Tswana and other Bantu-

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early Iron-Age Bantu sites in Zambia - to the round, conicle-roofed house prevalent in more recent periods among east-central and southern African Bantu". (C. Ehret, "Patterns of Bantu and Central Sudanic Settlement in Central and Southern Africa", Transafrican Journal of History, III, nos 1 and 2, 1973, pp.25, 27.)

47 D.F. Ellenberger, History of the Basuto: Ancient and Modern, translated by J.C. Macgregor, (London, 1912; reprinted New York, 1969), p.34.

48 R.R. Inskeep, "Archeological Background", in Wilson and Thompson, eds., Oxford History, I, p.36; J. Walton, "Early Bafokeng Settlement in South Africa", African Studies, XV, 1956, pp.37-38.

49 Wilson, "The Sotho, Venda and Tsonga", p.139.

50 Mason, Prehistory of the Transvaal, pp.378-381; Wilson, "The Sotho, Venda and Tsonga", p.139.

51 H.J. Wikar, J. Coetse, Jansz, and W. van Reenen, The Journal of Hendrik Jakob Wikar (1779)... and of Jacobus Coetse Jansz

speakers have a number of common features - they are agglutinative in construction, nearly all the words ending in vowels or with a nasal consonant; nouns do not indicate masculine or feminine gender, and these nouns are highly alliterative in character owing to an elaborate system of noun classes functioning in much the same way that gender does in European languages. Also, there are similarities in idiom which are not easy to express in a precise manner.[52]

Among the cultural affinities shared by the southern Bantu-speakers are their lineage descent systems. All these groups are patrilineal - a factor which is of tremendous importance to the pattern of succession and therefore to both dynastic and filial generations. They all practised polygyny, observed the levirate or sororate forms of marriage, gave bridal cattle on marrying their wives, and in varying degrees, observed the age-set organisation. There are also indications that at one time all these groups practised circumcision.[53]

The traditions of the Sotho-Tswana people point to a northward origin, and indicate that their southward movement was part

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(1760) and Willem van Reenen (1791), translated by A.W. vander Horst and E.E. Mossop, (Cape Town, 1935), p.143; J. Campbell, Travels in South Africa ... being a Narrative of a Second Journey, 1820, (London, 1822), II, pp.6-8; W.J. Burchell, Travels in the Interior of South Africa, 1822, ed. I. Schapera, (London, 1953), II, p.282.

52 C.M. Doke, "Language", in Schapera, ed., Bantu-speaking Tribes, pp.309-312; S.M. Molema, The Bantu - Past and Present: An Ethnographical and Historical Study of The Native Races of South Africa, (Edinburgh, 1920), pp.153-157.

53 E.J. Krige, "Individual Development", in Schapera, ed., Bantu-speaking Tribes, pp.100-107, 113.

of the great migrations of the Bantu-speaking iron-age peoples. Early Sotho people have been associated with the B.1 culture that is thought to have flourished between the Zambezi and the Limpopo, and were also thought to have developed the gold trade with Sofala. According to L. Fouche, this is also attested by evidence from pottery remains, and the Sotho period terminated when the early Shona invasion entered the Zambezi-Limpopo area about A.D. 1200.[54] Although the direction from which the Sotho and other Bantu-speakers came is readily accepted by all writers, there must be considerable reservation about locating the place of origin of these groups in either Egypt or Ethiopia.[55]

Other indications favouring the theory of north-ward origins of the ancestors of the Sotho-Tswana peoples are linguistic features, pottery styles and their architecture. Malcolm Guthrie has pointed out that there are indications that such languages as Sotho, Venda and Nguni have developed from Zezuru, which is a Shona language. If this view was tenable, it would imply a considerable period of close settlement, or at any event, a very intimate association over a long time among the speakers of those languages.[56] However, a close reading of the writings of

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54 Quoted in A.J. Wills, An Introduction to History of Central Africa, (London, 1967), p.19; J.D. Clark, The Prehistory of Southern Africa, (Harmondsworth, 1959).

55 Ellenberger, History of the Basuto, pp.xviii, xix; Molema, Bantu - Past and Present, p.40.

56 M. Guthrie, "Some Developments in the Prehistory of Bantu Languages", J.A.H., III, 2, 1962, pp.277-278. But see Ehret, "Patterns of Bantu and Central Sudanic Settlement", pp.10-13, where he shows that all the Bantu languages today covering most of Malawi, Mozambique and eastern Zambia and southeastern Africa, and including Bemba, Cewa, Makua, Shona and Nguni belong to a grouping known as Pembela bear

Christopher Ehret gives the impression that save for Venda, he questions the gist of the Guthrie thesis with respect to the development of languages like Sotho and Nguni which formed elements of a proto-Southeast Bantu network.[57] His general conclusion is that the sub-Zambezi languages, which were part of the "Pembela complex" could be divided into two groups - namely Shona and Southeast Bantu, and that what these two groups share in language they also share with other Bantu languages north of the Zambezi. Consequently "any common period in their linguistic histories would have to be attributed to historical events outside southeastern Africa".[58]

D.P. Abraham who conducted extensive oral research among societies of Rhodesia added to the evidence confirming the northward origins of Sotho-Tswana peoples by referring to a period of close interaction between such early Sotho groups as the Bafokeng and the Barolong and Rhodesian peoples. This is thought to have taken place in the Guruuswa district of Rhodesia.[59] Again John

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traits of interaction with Central Sudanic societies. The Pembela grouping later sub-divided into seven sub-groups which became distributed relatively evenly across a vast span of country stretching from far north Zambia to South Africa. Ehret further hypothesizes that: "Because Shona is only one language, though with many diverse dialects it is possible to argue ... that ancient Shona-Central Sudanic interactions might have taken place before or as ancestral Shona-speakers began to settle across the Zambezi perhaps in an area as far south as Zambia."

57 In addition to Ehret's views referred to in preceding footnote, see C. Ehret & others, "Outlining Southern African History: A Re-evaluation, A.D. 100-1500", Ufahamu, III, 1, 1972, pp.9-72.

58 Ehret, "Outlining Southern African History", pp.11-15.

59 D.P. Abraham, "The Early Political History of the Kingdom of Mwene Mutapa 850-1589", Leverhulme Inter-Collegiate History Conference, Historians in Tropical Africa,

Schofield has drawn attention to typological analogues of the ceramic wares of the Iron Age B1 culture with that of the Sotho-Tswana. It is striking, however, that Summers' discussion of the Rhodesian Iron Age B1 culture carefully refrains from any specific correlation of Sotho-Tswana and Rhodesian societies on the basis of pottery styles, while Inskeep warns against the dangers of attempting to identify ethnic groupings on the basis of pottery assemblages, especially when the samples of pottery examined have been so few. This is, of course, a typical example of the frustration that the student of history encounters so frequently in his quest for the historical conspectus amidst the plethora of esoteric and predominantly typological writings of archeologists. The archeologist is quite prepared to describe material culture but reluctant to ascribe it to the ancestors of any particular ethnic or linguistic group.

A problem flowing directly from that of the origins of the Sotho-Tswana concerns the chronology of their arrival in southern Africa. For a long time written traditions have repeated the theory that the Sotho-Tswana, or at least the Tswana, arrived in South Africa in a succession of migration waves, and speculations about the time of their arrival have been inextricably bound up with this "wave theory" of immigration. Usually the theory asserts that the Sotho-Tswana separated from other Bantu-speaking peoples in the vicinity of the Great Lakes of East Africa, and that they proceeded downwards along the western part of

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(Salisbury, 1960), pp.62, 77; Idem., "Maramuca: An exercise in the combined use of Portuguese Records and Oral Tradition", J.A.H., II, 2, 1961, p.211.

MARKS ON ORIGINAL

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present-day Rhodesia in three series of migrations.[60]

The first wave is accordingly thought to have comprised such groups as the Dighoja, the Bathammaga, Batsatsing and other early groups simply known as Bakgalagadi, who settled in parts of the Transvaal Highveld, the eastern portion of Botswana and of the northern Cape Colony, where they intermingled freely with the pre-existing Khoi and San communities. The second wave is said to have brought the ancestors of the Bafokeng, Barolong and Batlhaping societies who settled along the upper reaches of the Molopo spreading south and west from that neighbourhood. The third and largest migration is alleged to have comprised the other major Sotho-Tswana groups whose descendants have survived as the present-day societies of Botswana, Lesotho, the Transvaal, Orange Free State and the northern Cape in South Africa. According to this "wave theory" each group of immigrants into South Africa subdued or conquered groups that preceded it in the area of settlement.

Implied in this "wave theory" is the notion that by the time the Sotho-Tswana crossed the Limpopo they were already ethnically well-defined and fully differentiated into the modern chiefdoms we know today; and that many Sotho-Tswana chiefdoms can be traced back to a far distant past ante-dating their migration into South Africa. Another misleading impression conveyed is

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60 G. Stow, The Native Races of Southern Africa, (London, 1905, facsimile reprint Cape Town, 1964), chapters 21-26; Schapera, Ethnic Composition, pp.5-6; Idem., The Tswana, p.14; Breutz, Mafeking District, pp.23-24; Transvaal Native Affairs Department, Short History of the Native Tribes, (Pretoria, 1905), pp.8-13; Ellenberger and Macgregor, History of the Basuto, pp.15-20.

that of large-scale migrations that originated hundreds or even thousands of miles from the vicinity of the equatorial lakes keeping together as ethnically homogeneous groups that invaded the sub-Limpopo area conquering pre-existing, smaller and probably non-iron using peoples. This is, of course, hardly tenable. Several scholars have questioned, and through their researches, discredited this popular myth of mass migrations, and have demonstrated that where these have occurred at all, they have been a rare phenomenon.[61] With reference to the Sotho-Tswana as well, it would be far more realistic to think of their earliest migrations in terms of small-scale scattered movements of several segmentary lineage groups occurring slowly and gradually in many directions over a wide area.

While during the later stages of the ten centuries preceding 1500 A.D. there may have been a few ancient but well-recognisable Sotho-Tswana groups such as the Bafokeng and, perhaps, the Barolong, it seems fairly plausible to think of the appearance of most of the Sotho-Tswana peoples we know today as the result of a slow but steady process of mingling of several segmentary groups sharing a number of cultural features. Some groups probably increased their numerical size through being joined by other small migrant groups. Many of the groups were probably mixed and Sotho-Tswana culture would accordingly be a

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61 J. Vansina, Kingdoms of the Savanna, (Madison, 1966); Ehret, "Patterns of Bantu and Central Sudanic Settlement...," pp.1-2, 9; Idem., "Outlining Southern African History", pp. 13-20; Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana...", pp.92-93; Parsons, "Origins of the BamaNgwato", pp.82, 91; D.W. Phillipson, "Early iron-using peoples of Southern Africa", in Thompson, ed., African Societies, p.45.

blend of many cultural traits that developed over a long time in some cradle-land. The increase in the size of the Sotho-Tswana population likewise ought to be regarded as having taken place *in situ* through the absorption of other groups in the sub-Limpopo region. Monica Wilson has argued convincingly that patrilineal and polygynous lineages with traditions of exchanging cattle during marriages tend quickly to increase both their numerical strengths as groups and their wealth in stock at the expense of those without cattle.[62]

In this connection it is interesting that both the Sotho-Tswana and the Nguni emphasized patrilineage in their marriages. This, together with the Sotho-Tswana practice of preferential marriages - a practice encapsulated in the proverb, *Ngwana rrangwane, nnyale, dikgomo di boele sakeng*: "Child of my father's younger brother, marry me, so that the (bogadi) cattle may return to our kraal"[63] - would have the effect of keeping wealth in the same lineages, thereby perpetuating their preferred positions.

The suggestion made here is that proto-Sotho-Tswana lineages moved very slowly into the sub-Limpopo region - a process that took several centuries and during which they slowly diffused a "Sotho-Tswana" culture over groups they found in that region. It also seems fair to conclude that whatever the linguistic and cultural foundation they brought with them, the developments

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62 M. Wilson, "Changes in Social Structure", in Thompson, ed., *African Societies*, pp.76-83.

63 I. Schapera, "Kinship and Marriage Among the Tswana", in A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, eds., *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, (London, 1950), pp.150-151.

that have given rise to the distinctive language and culture of the Sotho-Tswana probably occurred in the cradle area or "homeland" lying immediately south of the Limpopo arc.[64]

Such a hypothesis - of scattered proto-Sotho-Tswana lineages dispersed over a wide area between the Limpopo and the Vaal rivers and the eastern limits of the Kgalagadi desert - would also help to account for the fact that many Batswana believe firmly in the creation myth of the "cave of Lowe" at Matsieng not far from Motshodi.[65] There must have been Sotho-Tswana or a proto-Sotho-Tswana population that dwelt in the vicinity long enough for the legend to gain currency and be widely diffused that they and other humans originated there. When it is also remembered that the earliest Iron-Age dates for the Transvaal go back to the fifth century A.D. the presence of iron-using, cattle-keeping and-mining peoples in that region becomes highly significant. This will be so even if we do not assume, in a facile manner, that the first iron-workers in South Africa were Bantu-speakers.[66]

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64 Cf. Ehret, "Outlining Southern African History", p.13 where he makes a similar suggestion regarding linguistic developments. See also Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana...", p.93.

65 On the "Cave of Lowe" at Matsieng, see Wookey, Dico, p.43; P.L. Breutz, The Tribes of Marico District, (Pretoria, 1953-1954), pp.67-68; Schapera, The Tswana, p.59.

66 R. Summers, "The Southern Rhodesian Iron-Age", J.A.H., II, 1, (1962), p.7; A. Galloway, The Skeletal Remains of Bambandyanalo, (Johannesburg 1959), p. 11; Brian Fagan, "The Later Iron Age in South Africa", in Thompson, ed., African Societies, indicates that evidence points to Mapungubwe being an industry of Bantu speakers. This view is endorsed by Inskeep. (See R.R. Inskeep, "The Archeological Background", in Wilson and Thompson, eds., Oxford History, I, p.38.); Idem., "South Africa", in Shinnie, ed., The African Iron Age, p.261.

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Turning more specifically to the question of chronology we may begin by considering the archeological testimony, insofar as it is intelligible to the non-archeologically trained student of history. The area between the Limpopo and the Vaal was penetrated by iron-using peoples from about the middle of the fifth century A.D. By the eighth century, some of these people were mining copper at Phalaborwa and by the eleventh, smelting metal at Melville Koppies.

Two Iron-Age cultures have been identified by the Transvaal's leading Iron-Age archeologist, Revil Mason. These cultures have been named Uitkomst and Buispoort from the type of sites representing those cultures. Uitkomst sites have been found to be concentrated in the central part of the southern Transvaal, around the source of the Odi (Crocodile) river near Tshwane or modern Pretoria. Radio-carbon dating has yielded two dates, A.D. 1060 for Melville Koppies and A.D. 1650 for the Uitkomst cave occurrence. The Uitkomst culture was an extension of the Rhodesian Leopard's Kopje culture which dates from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries. Buispoort culture sites which have a much higher density, occur mainly in the vicinity of the Rustenburg and Zeerust districts, that is, in the area to which the traditions of the Sotho-Tswana point as their centre of dispersion. The first date for the Buispoort culture was about A.D. 1350 but recent work by the archeologists in Johannesburg has resulted in a fifth century A.D. date for the "Buispoort" site of Broederstroom 24/73.[67]

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67 R. Mason, "First Early Iron Age in South Africa: Broederstroom 24/73, Brits District, Transvaal", S.A.J.S., LXIX,

In a recent re-evaluation of recorded traditions of the Sotho-Tswana, Martin Legassick has suggested a geographical identification of the Buispoort culture complex with the Kwena-Hurutshe cluster of lineages, and the Uitkomst complex with the Kgatla or what will here be termed Kgatla-Pedi cluster.[68] Mason is confident that the site Broederstroom 24/73 represents the earliest relatively complete settlement known to date in Southern Africa. The date of A.D. c.460 for that site brings the radio carbon dates for the cradle-land of the Tswana into line with that of Castle Peak in Swaziland, for which a fourth to fifth century date was recently announced.[69]

Mason has further reported a date for the earliest Iron Age penetration of South Africa. This was from a site at Silver Leaves in the district of Tzaneen, in the northern Transvaal, where charcoal samples yielded dates such as A.D. 270, A.D. 330 and A.D. 1100.[70] These dates have the significance of bringing the chronology of the Transvaal into line with that of Rhodesian and Zambian societies. The possible links with societies north of the Limpopo are not indicated by chronology alone, but also ceramic typological analogues, which suggest influences or asso-

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November, 1973. In a subsequent article, Mason released new dates for Buispoort sites ranging from A.D. 1240-1850, (see R. Mason, "Background to the Transvaal Iron Age - new discoveries at Olifantspoort and Broederstroom", S.A.J.S., LXXIV, 6, January, 1974).

68 Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana...", pp.100 et seq.; Parsons, "Origins of the bamaNgwato", pp.91-92.

69 B. Fagan, Southern Africa, (London, 1965), p.157.

70 M. Klapwijk, "An Early Iron Age site near Tzaneen, N.E. Transvaal", S.A.J.S., LXIX, November, 1973, pp.324-326.

becomes only a small elephant". But to Gaseitsiwe's repeated demands for sehuba, the Bamalete replied that they were occupying country inhabited long ago by their fore-fathers, and would therefore neither leave for the Transvaal nor pay sehuba. They claimed an independent status and refused to recognise Gaseitsiwe as their paramount chief, suzerain or over-lord.[13] Edwin Lloyd states that Gaseitsiwe had been warned long ago by the Bakwena not to receive Mokgosi and his son Ikaneng into his country for "you will find them to be simply serpents".[14]

It is difficult to imagine any situation more likely to bring about collision between the Bangwaketse and the Transvaal Boers. The siting of Ramotswa village tempts one to the conclusion that it may have been carefully selected by Mokgosi and Ikaneng to enable the Bamalete to enjoy the best of two worlds. As a small group, the Bamalete were concerned about the maintenance of their political independence. Whether the Bamalete were aware of it or not, their settlement at Ramotswa emphasised the critical and fundamental differences between African and European conceptions of boundaries. The European demarcation between political jurisdictions is a border - a fixed and precise line drawn not only on a map but on the ground as well. Consequently, the Europeans have tended to favour rivers as boundaries despite the fact that among Africans, rivers are usually centres of population concentration. Africans always preferred to have a frontier area between powerful political units.

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13 Ibid.

14 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.152.

Ellenberger states that the Bafokeng crossed the Zambezi during the eleventh or twelfth century. For an indeterminate period they dwelt together with the Bahurutshe and the Barolong for, says Ellenberger, there is a tradition that tells of the separation of the Bafokeng and the Barolong at the same time and place as the separation of Bafokeng and Bahurutshe.[74] When they left their neighbours - the Barolong and the Bahurutshe - at a place that Ellenberger described as "Bechuanaland", the Bafokeng migrated eastwards to the vicinity of the Magaliesberg range, named after Mogale. This is stated to have occurred before the start of the sixteenth century. The sanguinary conflict that is supposed to have given rise to this migration is alleged to have been over some young bulls that the "Bahurutshe" wished to castrate contrary to the wishes of the Bafokeng.[75]

In the Magaliesberg area, the Bafokeng are said to have split into two sections. One of these remained in the Magaliesberg area, and in the nineteenth century suffered much from Mandebele raids. The other section further subdivided into a number of clans which migrated southwards across the Vaal, thereby becoming the first Sotho-Tswana to cross that river.[76] Some of.

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74 Ellenberger and Macgregor, History of the Basuto, pp.15, 333; J. Walton, "Early Bafokeng Settlement in South Africa", African Studies, XV, 1, 1956, pp.37-38.

75 Ellenberger and Macgregor, History of the Basuto, pp.15,16; P.L. Breutz, The Tribes of the Rustenburg and Pilandsberg districts, (Pretoria, 1952-53), pp.59-61.

76 Ellenberger and Macgregor, History of the Basuto, p.68; Walton, "Early Bafokeng Settlement", p.38. It will be noticed that Ellenberger and Macgregor contradict themselves here. On page 53 they stated, more accurately, that the Dighoja were the first of the Sotho-Tswana peoples to migrate south of the Vaal, and that they were also responsible for the stone ruins of Dithakong near Kudumane.

these settled near the hill Ntsuanatsatsi between modern Free State towns of Frankfort and Vrede, well before the year 1530.[77]

At Ntsuanatsatsi the Bafokeng intermingled and intermarried with various San and half-caste groups found in the vicinity. Tradition states that it was such a marriage by the Bafokeng chief, Napo, at Ntsuanatsatsi which led to a serious civil strife. When the chief died the sons of his San wife were denied recognition as legitimate heirs, a situation that resulted in the disgruntled San-Fokeng sons of the late chief Napo hiving off. They migrated with their followers across the Drakensberg mountains and down along the Natal coast. Their migration route is marked by the type of pottery classified by John Schofield as Natal Coast pottery,[78] N.C.2, which bears a strong resemblance to early Bafokeng pottery found in the Orange Free State and Lesotho.[79] These Bafokeng-ba-'Mutla, literally "the Bafokeng of the hare", whose totem was the hare, lived for a short period among the Mpondo people along the Transkei coast before moving down further south and settling for some time, among the Thembu, when they became integrated into Thembu society as the Ama-Vundle clan.[80] It is thought that Mpondo and Thembu pottery styles bearing very close affinities to Fokeng pottery were a result of this interaction.

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77 Walton, "Early Bafokeng Settlement", p.38.

78 J.F. Schofield, Primitive Pottery, (Cape Town, 1948), pp.151-152.

79 Ibid.; Inskeep, "South Africa", in Shinnie, ed., The African Iron Age, pp.255-256.

80 Walton, "Early Bafokeng Settlement", p.38.

This migration of the Bafokeng-'Mutla from Ntsuanatsatsi has been dated about A.D. 1600 by Ellenberger, but Schofield dated their settlement in Natal towards the middle of the sixteenth century. Walton is of the opinion that Schofield's chronology for this group is nearer the mark because the AmaVundle traditions confirm that they lived in the Transkei for about eight to nine generations.[81] Fagan, however, casts doubt on the dependability of conclusions based on such slender or tenuous evidence, as well as on the grounds that the NC pottery series had not been dated.[82]

Then there are the corbelled stone hut settlements found widely distributed over the Sotho-Tswana area. As had once been the case with the Zimbabwe ruins, there has been much discussion about whether these were indeed built by ancestors of the people who lived in that area - in this case the Sotho-Tswana. Walton demonstrated from the pattern of the cave dwellings at Ntlo-kholo in Lesotho that the stone villages were the work of the Bafokeng, or people influenced by the way of living of the Bafokeng.[83] Since the radio-carbon date for these settlements is about 1445-1495, it tends somewhat to support Ellenberger's estimate that the Bafokeng settlement at Ntsuanatsatsi and other high-veld sites predates A.D. 1500, but does not support his estimate of the Bafokeng-'Mutla sojourn in Natal, for which

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81 Ibid.

82 Fagan, "The Later Iron Age", in Thompson, ed., African Societies, pp.64-65.

83 Mason, Prehistory of the Transvaal, pp.379-380; Idem., "The Origin of South African Society", S.A.J.S., LXI, 7, 1965, pp.255-67.

A.D. 1600 appears too late a date.

A pre-1500 date for Bafokeng occupation of Ntsuanatsatsi is in harmony with the tradition that they were found there by the Lesotho line or branch of Kwena clans. As will be seen later; the latter clans are supposed to have migrated from the Kwena dispersion centre in the Limpopo-Odi-Madikwe watershed about the middle of the fifteenth century.

When we turn to the Barolong-Batlhaping cluster, we find that the chiefdoms belonging to this cluster comprise the various Barolong chiefdoms founded by the sons of Tau - namely the Barolong-Ratlou, Barolong-Tshidi, Barolong-Seleka, Barolong-Rapulana and Barolong-Mariba - as well as the Batlhaping-Phuduhutswana and Batlhaping-Maidi sections and the Bakaa chiefdom. With the exception of the Bakaa, and [illegible]tions of the Barolong-Seleka and Barolong-[illegible] which are in Botswana, and some Barolong-Rapulana in the [illegible]h-western Transvaal, all the chiefdoms of this cluster are situated in the northern Cape, south of the Molopo River.

The Barolong were among the earliest Sotho-Tswana chiefdoms to establish themselves in South Africa. They appear to have been, without doubt, earlier than those chiefdoms claiming descent from Masilo (c.1415 - c.1445).[84] Ellenberger and Macgregor dated their first ruler Morolong, from whom the people took their name, to about 1270.[85] It has been suggested that the name Moro-

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84 Breutz, Mafeking District, p.25, states that the first two kings of Kwena-Hurutshe ("United Phofu" confederacy) were contemporaneous with the Rolong kings Morare and Mabe.

85 Ellenberger and Macgregor, History of the Basuto; pp.393,

long is derived from an old Sotho verb rola, "to forge", suggesting one who was versed in or a practitioner in the craft of a blacksmith. The association with iron or metal implied in this explanation, is carried further in the name of the son of Morolong and second ruler of the Barolong called, Noto or "hammer" as well as in the totem of these people which was tshepe or iron.[86] To arrive at the date 1270, Ellenberger and Macgregor were calculating on the basis of thirty-year generations. Using thirty years we arrive at a date like c.1325 - c.1355 for Morolong. Thought by Abraham to have been among the Sotho-Tswana clans that had been interacting with the Shona clans in the Guruuswa district of Rhodesia between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries,[87] the Barolong were already spread widely between the headwaters of the Molopo and the Modder Rivers by the time they were ruled by [R8]* MADIBOYA, c.1535 - c.1565.

Like other Sotho-Tswana peoples, the Barolong lived in large villages divided into makgotla (singular: kgotla) or wards under the leadership or superintendence of ward heads or headmen.

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86 Ibid., pp.xviii-xix; Wilson, "The Sotho, Venda and Tsonga", in Oxford History, I, p.145; Breutz, Mafeking District, p.25. Breutz differs with Ellenberger and Macgregor and states that Morolong means "koodoo-man" in the same way that Mokwena means "crocodile-man". In the Interlacustrine region, along the shores of the Nyanza (Victoria) an early ethnic group of iron workers were known as Barongo or Balongo. Their earliest chief dates to about A.D. 1250. Newcomers who were not iron workers mixed with the Balongo and new dynasties emerged in the fifteenth century. Iron working ritual was prominent among these new kings.

87 Abraham, "The Early Political History of the Kingdom of Mwene Mutapa (850 - 1589)", pp.62, 77.

* Index number to the Genealogical Charts in the Appendix.

The makgotla were grouped into dintlha or sections or divisions under the control of sub-chiefs or senior headmen. Relatives of the king or favoured basemane ba kgosi were usually the sub-chiefs or senior headmen and were, as a rule, placed in charge of large divisions of the main village or of sub-villages. But they were linked to the king in some form of client relationship, which not only made possible effective local government control, but also was supposed to act as a system of checks and balances to limit the growth of absolutism at the centre, or isolationism and secessionist tendencies at the periphery. To bring about this relationship, the king not only allocated sections of the morafe to his sons, brothers and other royal aristocrats and selected loyal commoners, but also some of the royal herds were placed under their care. Some of the fission that took place so frequently in Sotho-Tswana societies could be explained by the fact that some of these clients of the king, if they became too powerful or wealthy or simply ambitious and happened to be in control of dintlha that were located far from the capital, often found the temptation to set themselves up as independent morafe, too great to resist. Thus it will be seen that although designed to prevent fission, the Sotho-Tswana system of political control all too frequently operated in the reverse direction. This would be much more likely where the king at the centre was weak and consequently his control of the periphery ineffectual.

Traditions suggested that the Barolong kingdom, in the sixteenth century, was a large one with sections and sub-villages spread widely from around the headwaters of the Molopo River to Setlagole. Pressure from the Bahurutshe forced them to move the

capital south to Setlagole. It may have been during the reign of the Rolong king [R9] TSHESEBE c.1565 - c.1595 that one Barolong group became separate and were called after the name of their sub-chief, Phuduhutswana, and went to live far from the Barolong capital of Setlagole. (See Chart I) They settled at Dikgatlong[88] near the confluence of the Noka-e-Tshehla, or Vaal River, and the Kolong, or Harts River. Five generations afterwards, about c.1715 - c.1745, the Rolong king [R14] TAU, found the Phuduhutswana who were still subordinate to the Rolong state and paying tribute, in severe straits from famine. So serious was this that they resorted to eating fish, an item of food that was taboo among the Sotho Tswana.[89] Because of that the Phuduhutswana were called Ba-tlhaping, "those of the fish place". When the Phuduhutswana were ruled by Mokgosi - Campbell's "Makkoshee" - they declared their independence by refusing to comply any longer with the customary payment of sehuba. The dates, c.1715 - c.1745 for the Phuduhutswana ruler [TP6] Mokgosi, are not inconsistent with the dates for the Rolong king [R14] TAU from whom they are said to have forcefully taken their independence. This act on the part of the Phuduhutswana resulted in a war in which the Barolong were heavily defeated and, some say, Tau was killed.[90]

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88 Dikgatlo means confluence or meeting place.

89 F.J. Language, "Herkoms van Geskiedenis van die Tlhaping", African Studies, I, 2 (1943), pp.120,133; Stow, Native Races, pp.434-439; Brown, Bantu Nomads, p.206; Wookey, Dico, p.12.

90 Z.K. Matthews, "A Short History of the Tshidi Barolong", Fort Hare Papers, I, 1, June 1945, p.12; Idem., "Barolong", in I. Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo, p.9; Breutz, Marico District, pp.30,31.

MARKS ON ORIGINAL

The greatest confusion in Barolong-Phuduhutswana traditions arises from the fact that Brown and Wookey confuse Mashwe with Phuduhutswana. The tradition about the "deaf old king" who cheated Tau is wrongly recorded by these writers.[91] As Stow and Language correctly show, the "deaf old king" was not Phuduhutshwana. It could not be, for Phuduhutshwana was separated by four generations from Tau.[92] Once we make this distinction between Phuduhutshwana and Mashwe, it becomes clear that although the Batlhaping-Phuduhutshwana group had become a distinct or separate group from their Barolong parent community in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that they seceded and became politically independent.

Researchers frequently assume that when they collected a king-list for a chiefdom, it indicated that that political unit had been independent from the time of the first name on the list. This assumption was occasionally supported by oral traditions or, at least, modern elders did not bother to challenge it. Greater attention to an accurate chronology reveals such anomalies. An older generation of researchers were often aware of "misfits" in dating, but their heavy scepticism of the accuracy of oral tradition allowed them to ignore correlation failures rather than

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91 See Brown, Bantu Nomads, pp.206-208; A. Wookey., Dico Tsa Secwana, pp.12-14. Matthews does not refer to the incident at all, but his chapter, written in the Tswana language suggests that he thought Tau and Phuduhutswana were contemporaneous. (See Matthews, "Barolong" Ditirafalo, p.8.)

92 See Language, "Herkoms en Geskiedems"; pp.121-122; Stow, Native Races, pp.437-440.

adjust their interpretations to fit the traditions as they received them.

Within the same generation, another section of the Barolong hived off as a direct sequel to the Barolong-Batlhaping (Phuduhutshwana) war. Accused by Tau of having betrayed the Barolong to their enemies, the Phuduhutshwana, Maidi, a Barolong aristocrat in charge of one of the sections, together with his people were subjected to systematic harassment and constant pressure. This was presumably to get them to admit the charge of betrayal being levelled against them. Tradition is not precise on whether Maidi and his followers left the parent group while Tau was still reigning or whether this took place immediately after his death. They went to live with the Phuduhutshwana at Dikgatlong. They called themselves the Ba-maidi, after their leader, but the Barolong called them Batlhaping as they did the Phuduhutshwana. In this way two "Batlhaping" sections came into being, both of them eighteenth century secessions from the Barolong state. The traditions concerning the Ba-maidi section, if correct, show that Tau did not die in the battle he fought with the Batlhaping-Phuduhutshwana.[93]

One other major secession from the Barolong was that of the people called Bakaa. (See Chart I) During the reign of the Barolong king [R10] SETLHARE (c.1595 - 1625), a sub-chief known as Maleke was in charge of one division or section of the morafe located in the Magogwe valley. Maleke, was a relative of

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93 Language, "Herkoms en Geskiedenis", p.121.

the king,[94] but it is highly unlikely that, as Schapera was told by some of his informants, [KA1] Maleke (c.1565 - c.1595) could have been a son of the Barolong king [R2] Noto (c.1355 - c.1385) since he was separated from Maleke by at least six generations. What Schapera's informants probably meant by "son", was that Maleke was a descendant of a junior branch of King Noto's line. At some undefined point, Maleke began displaying impatience with his role as a client of the king. He did not, as was expected under customary law, pass on to the king the sehuba, or tribute brought to him by his people. Maleke's independent behaviour was continued by his son [KA2] Masege, when the latter succeeded his father, as well as by Masege's son, Tseme, although in theory they continued to profess loyalty and allegiance to the monarch.

Ultimately Tseme seceded. The reasons for this are not recorded in the traditions, but it would not be implausible to postulate a thirst for power and a desire for material wealth and perquisites that were the traditional monopoly of independent rulers - for example, to be recipients of sehuba or tribute and lekgetho or tax. When Tseme seceded, he had begotten a son whom he had named Magogwe after their place of residence. Tradition states that when the Rolong king was informed of the secession of Tseme's people, his reaction was one of indifference. He is believed to have said that he had long discerned the secessionist tendency of the section at Magogwe and was consequently not surprised at their action. "Ba ka ya!" "They can go!" From that outburst by the chief, they are said to have earned

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94 I. Schapera, "Notes on the History of the Kaa", African Studies, IV, 3, 1945, pp.109-110. Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.178.

their name, Bakaá or Bakaea.[95]

Of chronological import here was the fact Tseme, who was the grandson of Maleke, was the man who led the secession. Since his grandfather Máleke was probably a contemporary of [R10] SETLHARE (c.1595 - c.1625), it seems that the secession of the Bakaa occurred during the reign of Setlhare's grandson [R12] MOKGOPA, who belonged to the generation c.1655 - c.1685. It could have taken place towards the end of the seventeenth century or at the start of the eighteenth. The ease with which the Bakaa effected their exodus suggests some weakness on the part of the reigning Rolong monarch, and his apparently indifferent reaction, which was definitely atypical, could have been an excuse to cover his inability to check the secession.

Apart from the lack of chronological correlation,[96] the tradition of the Barolong king's reaction to the Bakaa-exodus was not only atypical, but also was not compatible with what we know of the character of the Rolong king [R14] TAU. Tau, whom Matthews characterised as "this Barolong Chaka",[97] was a powerful, absolute, and expansionist ruler, who extended Barolong hegemony far and wide at the expense of several of the marginal and weaker

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95 Schapera, "The Kaa", p.110; Wookey, Dico, p.82; Brown, Bantu Nomads, p.222.

96 Tseme and Barolong ruler Tau were separated by two generations. Tseme was of the same generation as Masepha the successor of Setlhare. It is, however, possible that Tseme's secession could have occurred late in the reign of [R10] Setlhare. (See Schapera, "The Kaa", p.110.)

97 Matthews, "Tshidi Barolong"; Idem., "Barolong", Ditirafalo, p.8: "Puso ya gagwe gare ga Barolong e katshwantshiwa le ya Tshaka gare ga MaZulu". (His rule of the Barolong can be compared with that of Tshaka among the Zulu.)

groups in the vicinity. It therefore seems highly unlikely that he would have countenanced such a rebuff with the same degree of equanimity. This is particularly so, for after seceding to found an independent state, the Bakaa sojourned at Mahikeng, hardly eight miles from Magogwe. His reaction to the secession of the Phuduhutswana-Tlhaping tends to strengthen this conjecture.

A more meaningful reconstruction of the traditions relating to the secession of the Bakaa from the Barolong-Tshidi state suggests the operation of several factors which resulted in the loosening of the large Rolong state at this point. It is possible that the disintegration of the Barolong-Tshidi kingdom was a result of (1) a geographic expansion of the state made possible by the incorporation of several small proto-Tswana communities - such as Dighoja, Bathamaga, Batsatsing and other groups in the area south of the Molopo; (2) an environment of greater security than had existed in previous generations encouraged separatist tendencies and thereby facilitated the hiving off of ambitious sub-chiefs. (It may be well to note here that the Phuduhutswana were also in the process of differentiating themselves from the parent Barolong-Tshidi community at this point.); and (3) Tseme's generation was also one in which the drought of 1651 was noted in the traditions of other Tswana peoples.

When the Bakaa left Mahikeng for Mathebe, near Dinokana in the western Transvaal, it was under the leadership of Magogwe. A section of the Bakaa remained at Mahikeng and were subsequently re-incorporated into the Barolong-Tshidi chiefdom as the

Motlhaku ward.[98] After another sojourn at Manyelanong, near Otse in the present-day Bamalete country, Magogwe migrated with his people to a place near Mmopane hill in Bakwena country, very close to its boundary with the Gaborone district. Here Magogwe begot a son whom that he named Mmopane after the hill.[99] There Magogwe died and was succeeded by his son, Mmopane. This suggests that the Bakaa lived for something like twenty to thirty years at Mmopane at the least, and that they probably arrived there at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Before following the Bakaa on their peregrinations, it may be useful to pose the question why the Bakaa left Mathebe in the western Transvaal to go and live at Otse in Botswana. Dinokana was an old Hurutshe centre, and it appears that the Bakaa, who left their own home to seek political independence, could only continue to live at Dinokana by acknowledging the suzerainty of the Bahurutshe. Breutz records that after settling at several places, the Bahurutshe of Moilwa occupied Dinokana or Powe for the first time around 1700.[100] This is likely to have triggered a decision to move on and resulted in the settlement at Manyelanong which probably occurred right at the start of the eighteenth century.

At Manyelanong, the Bakaa did not stay long. Again the traditions are silent on the reasons. Was it not because at the same time, the Bangwaketse under Khutwane were at Sengoma just

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98 Schapera, "The Kaa", p.110; Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.178.

99 Ibid.

100 Breutz, Marico District, p.141.

south of Ramotswa a few miles away; or if Makaba I had already moved the Bangwaketse to Seoke, site of present Woodlands Farm, could it be that the Bakaa were wedged in between the rival Ngwaketse factions at Sengoma and Seoke? Any of these explanations would not be incompatible with a Kaa settlement at Kanyelanong at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the birth of Mmopane in the Kweneng district and his succession around 1730.

Tradition then states that after Mmopane had succeeded his father, the Bakwena-Kgabo clans arrived in Botswana under the leadership of Kgabo, and that Mmopane assisted the Bakwena in evicting the Bakgwatleng clans from the Dithejwane hills. Schapera is of the opinion that this occurred around 1730.[101] What are the chronological implications of this tradition? They are tremendous and disconcerting! Hitherto the traditions of the Bakaa and the dates suggested for their history have been correlating well with events among the Barolong, Bahurutshe and Bangwaketse, thus leading to the conclusion that these traditions were impressively accurate. But to have the early 18th century Kaa ruler Mmopane cooperating with the early 17th century Kwena king Kgabo, upsets the entire edifice, for the two appear to be separated by nearly a century. Clearly, at least one of the sets of traditions is incorrect.

If it is the Kaa traditions that are faulty, we have to explain why these have correlated well with the chronology of

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101 Schapera, "The Kaa", p.111; Sillery does not give a date but does state that the Kwena under Kgabo came during the reign of the Bakaa ruler Mmopane, who expelled the Bakgwatleng from Dithejwane. (See Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.178). Although neither Schapera nor Sillery specifies the Kgabo alluded to here, it could only have been Kgabo II, father of Motshodi.

neighbouring Tswana societies before Mmopane's alleged cooperation with Kgabo, and also why Kaa chronology compares favourably with that of the Bamangwato regarding the occupation of the Shoshong hills by the two groups.[102] If it is the Bakwena traditions that are faulty, then the chronology for the entire Hurutshe-Kwena cluster of chiefdoms crumbles.

Another look at the traditions of the Kaa shows that they correlate well with those of the Bamangwato, not only as regards the occupation of the Shoshong hills in c.1770, but also with respect to the sequence of the Kaa and Ngwato rulers. These traditions are confirmed by the written testimony of Andrew Smith who, on one page, stated in 1823, that the chief of the Bakaa was "Shue", and on another page said it was "Sibeloom" meaning Lebelwane.[103] We therefore have to look at the traditions of the Bakwena to see if these will help us uncover the source of this chronological disharmony.

This brings us to the Hurutshe-Kwena cluster. The traditions of the Bahurutshe and all the Bakwena chiefdoms indicate that at some time in the past they were all under the same ruling line of kings. The chiefdoms that claim descent from a common ancestor, Masilo, are the Bahurutshe chiefdoms in the western Transvaal, the Bakwena chiefdoms of the Transvaal - the Bakwena-Mogopa, Bakwena-Modimosana with its four sections,

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102 Schapera, "The Kaa", p.111. Both Kaa and Ngwato traditions show that the Bakaa settled at Shoshong hills before the Bamangwato seceded from the Kwena, when the Bakaa were ruled by Motlhabane. Motlhabane was indeed a contemporary of the Ngwato king Mathiba.

103 Ibid., p.113; P.R. Kirby, ed., The Diary of Dr. Andrew Smith, 1834-1836, (Cape Town, 1939-1940), Vol. II, pp.175, 202.

Ramanela, Mmatau, Matlhaku and Maake; Bakwena-Moletswane, Bakwena-Moletse, the Baphalane and Bakwena cluster of Botswana which comprise the Bakwena of Molepolole, the Bamangwato, the Bangwaketse and the Batawana. The Bakwena clans of Lesotho also belong to this same group of chiefdoms.[104]

The places that occur as the earliest remembered settlement sites are Rathatheng, said to have been near the confluence of the Odi and Madikwe Rivers; and Mabjanamatswana, also known as Swart Koppies, near the modern town of Brits. Both the Transvaal and Botswana clusters share with the Bahurutshe the same kings until a break-up (c.1475 - c.1505) that resulted in the existence of separate Bahurutshe and Bakwena chiefdoms.[105] (See Chart II) There are conflicting traditions accounting for this historic split, the consequences of which were the wide dispersal of Sotho-Tswana chiefdoms over the South African highveld up to the limits of the Kgalagadi desert on the west and almost as far as the Orange River on the south; as well as the diffusion of Sotho-Tswana language and culture.

According to one tradition, the cleavage that resulted in Kwena-venerating peoples becoming Bahurutshe and Bakwena, had to do with the first fruits ceremony.[106] Another tradition attri-

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104 Ellenberger and Macgregor, History of the Basuto, chapter 7, passim; TNAD, Short History of Native Tribes; R. Massie, The Native Tribes of the Transvaal, (London, H.M.S.O., 1905); Breutz, The Tribes of Rustenburg and Pilandsberg Districts, pp.19-20; Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, pp.104-105; Schapera, Ethnic Composition, p.9.

105 See Chart II in Appendix.

106 According to this tradition, when the time for biting the curcubitae ("go loma thotse") came, it was found that baboons had already eaten the melons and Kwena accordingly refused

buted to Kwena-Mogopa informants is that the first born child in Malope's senior house was a daughter, Mohurutshe, while the first born child in the second house was a son, Kwena. According to this version, the dispute was about whether the chiefdom should be in the hands of the eldest child in the senior house regardless of whether it was female, or whether the leadership should be kept male by electing the senior son of the second house.

Whichever version is preferred, it is clear there was a leadership crisis that followed upon the death of Malope. From this it will be seen that while the followers of Mohurutshe were, in consequence, forced to leave Mabjanamatshwana and move south as a separate group, with a separate totem, and while their seniority in rank as well as in ritual matters was generally recognised, it is incorrect to speak of the Bahurutshe as the parent group of others. They were as much a splinter as the group that followed Kwena and became known as Bakwena. The only difference is that they were the senior splinter.

A close look at developments in the Sotho-Tswana world suggests that events of great moment were unfolding in the sub-Limpopo area - events which call for a causation of a different character in addition to the usual stereotypes used to explain dynastic rivalry and fission. The break-up that was occurring in the Sotho-Tswana societies was on such a scale as to render feasible the conjecture that the cleavage which produced separate Hurutshe and Bakwena kingdoms, was only the beginning of what

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to eat the saliva-stained melons, while Mohurutse and his people did so. In this way, Mohurutshe acquired seniority of rank while Kwena appeared to have gained political control. (See Wookey, Dico, p.44; also footnote 111 below.)

grew to be a huge phenomenon. Breutz dates the Hurutshe-Kwena split to about A.D. 1400 - 1480.[107]

When we glance at events occurring among the neighbouring Shona societies to the north, we are provided with clues that might help to interpret developments in the Sotho-Tswana world south and east of the Limpopo. Abraham records an infiltration by proto-Sotho-Tswana clans from the north of the western limits of the Guruuswa district of modern Rhodesia. This infiltration, which he dates c.A.D. 1250 - 1400, was according to him, due to progressive dessication and increasing aridity of the Kgalagadi desert.[108]

During the period c.1450 - 1480, a critical drought supervened in the Dande area and the Makorekore (so named by the Tavara clans, "to indicate they are as numerous in their occupation of the land as the clouds of locusts that periodically descend upon the Dande"),[109] who had moved there two generations earlier, were obliged to migrate northwards across the Zambezi into the kingdom of Maravi.[110] It is possible that the same drought that drove the Makorekore into the Dande, also led to

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107 Breutz, Marico District, p.25; Idem., Mafeking District, p.28.

108 Abraham, "Early History of Mwenemutapa", pp.62, 77. According to Abraham, this entry of militarily strong Sotho-Tswana clans stimulates a military organisation of Shona peoples under Rozvi leadership, in order to consolidate Rozvi suzerainty. The result is that by the start of the fifteenth century there was what Abraham calls "an established political hierarchy". This is followed by a shift of the Karanga kingdoms from the Guruuswa to the Dande area just below the Zambezi, around A.D. 1400.

109 Ibid., p.63.

110 Ibid., p.64.

the break-up of the Hurutshe-Kwena. Further, the fact that the tradition of the dispute between Mohurutshe and Kwena had to do with agricultural, as well as with religious matters, may be an oblique indicator of an economic crisis.

In other words, is the tradition about go loma ngwaga, "biting the year" to be taken at face value? Is it not likely that it masks a deeper and more pervasive factor which was that of drought and its menacing effects on the entire Hurutshe-Kwena community?[111] It is possible that centuries of population build-up in the area below the Limpopo, plus a gradual dessication of the Kgalagadi area, a failure of rains from the direction of the Indian Ocean during the middle decades of the fifteenth

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111 The baboons and the crisis associated with the biting of the melon may in fact be an allegory which masks an embarassing historical event. It is possible to look upon the baboons which ate the melons as famine-stricken refugees of the tshwene or baboon totem who joined the "United Phofu Confederacy" or Hurutshe-Kwena complex, and who broke the ritual taboo of eating the new harvests before the molomo or first fruits ceremony. This would make the dispute between Mohurutshe and Kwena one over whether to accept these ill-mannered refugees as citizens of the chiefdom or not. Kwena was not prepared to do so while Mohurutshe was. Thus the phofu and the tshwene peoples formed the Bahurutshe state while Kwena set up his own chiefdom of Kwena-venerating people. Upon the death of Mohurutshe, his son Motebele ruled, and again conflict with the tshwene or baboon group arose and was again told in allegory. Motebele gave a young baboon he had caught to his younger "brother" Motebejana who lost it and was chastised for it by the king and seceded in consequence. It seems possible that Motebejana may have been of the tshwene totem or had been made a sub-chief over a tshwene-venerating clan. In any case, when Motebele died, the group was re-united under Motebejana of the tshwene totem, the phofu having disappeared upon the death of Motebele. The story strongly suggests a change in the dynasty rather than a simple change of totem of the old dynasty as the tradition purports.

century resulted in an ecological pressure that called for a re-distribution of the Sotho-Tswana peoples over a wider area. It is likely that the split of the Hurutshé and Kwena was the first of that distribution.

Between five and seven generations after the separation of the Bahurutshe and the Bakwena, while Mogopa was still ruling the latter, a terrible famine occurred, "tlala e e boitshegang", which scattered and dispersed the Kwena clans far and wide. Calculating by generations gives a date in the bracket c.1625 - 1655. It will be noted that this date correlates well with dates cited for periodic droughts in the Indian Ocean locality during the seventeenth century.[112]

As a result of this famine, many Kwena clans - the Modibedi, Mogorosi, Bahlakwana, Bamonaheng, Ba-Mokotedi Makhoakhoa - migrated south of the Lekwa or Vaal River into the modern Free State. One or more of these Kwena clans went to settle at Ntsuanatsatsi near the Bafokeng settlement. These Kwena clans that migrated southwards beyond the Lekwa were the ones that were later organised into the ruling lineage of Lesotho. Other Kwena lineages such as the Bamoletse, Ba-Phogole, Phalane and others, migrated eastwards where they set themselves up as separate chiefdoms. Mogopa and the remaining Kwena groups, which still included the Modimosana cluster and those that later formed the Botswana branch,[113] migrated to Mabyanamatshwana

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112 Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, p.35; Abraham, "Early History of Mwene-Mutapa", pp.70 and 87, where Abraham cites de Souza, Oriente Conquistado, I-V-II.

113 Which is being referred to in this study as the Kwena-Kgabo in order to distinguish them from the Kwena-Mogopa.

along the Odi River to its confluence with the Madikwe, and there built a settlement named Rathatheng. After a period of very strenuous or difficult existence, owing to scarcity of food and water,[114] Mogopa migrated back to Mabyanamatshwana, in the modern Brits district of the Transvaal.

Mogopa's return migration to Mabyanamatshwana was not joined by his brother Kgabo II who, together with his followers, remained at Rathatheng. Kgabo II's followers included all the wards and divisions that were later to separate as the Bamangwato and Bangwaketse. While recorded tradition is silent on the specific reasons for Kgabo II and his followers declining to follow Mogopa to Mabyanamatshwana, it may be surmised that reservations about pressure of too dense settlement in one area in a situation of droughts could hardly help matters.[115] Personal ambition and lust for power on the part of Kgabo cannot, of course, be ruled out.

Thus, partly as a result of the droughts and famines that occurred during the generation c.1625 - c.1655, there emerged two Kwena kingdoms in the western Transvaal. These were the Bakwena-Mogopa based on Mabyanamatshwana, also known as Swart koppies, and the Bakwena-Kgabo at Rathateng. Segmentation caused by droughts and famines also resulted in the Bahurutshe state splitting into the Manyana and Gopane chiefdoms, the Bakaa and the Phuduhutswana-Tlhaping hiving off from the Barolong-

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114 Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, pp.35-36.

115 Conditions of drought and famine did not disappear for long periods. For instance, during the years 1600-1700, droughts have been recorded for the areas near the Indian Ocean in 1630, 1645 and 1660.

MARKS ON ORIGINAL

Tshidi,and the Bakwena-Modimosana splitting up with the four chiefdoms known as Ramanela, Maaka, Mmatau and Matlhaku.[116]

It was probably at Rathateng that Kgabo II was succeeded by his son Motshodi, although according to some traditions he (Kgabo II) led the migration of his followers across the Madikwe into modern Botswana. Another version attributes the leadership of that migration to his son Motshodi. Whichever we finally settle on, it will be found that their generations occurred nearly a century earlier than the chronology suggested by Schapera and Sillery for these kings.

This creates a serious problem for the correlation of the chronologies of the Bangwaketse and the Bamangwato who are said to have broken away from the Bakwena during the reign of Motshodi. If, as is suggested in this chapter, Kgabo II belonged to the generation c.1625 - c.1655, we have to explain the tradition that he was assisted by Mmopane (c.1685 - c.1715) in evicting the Bakgwatleng from the Dithejwane hills about 1730. It seems likely that the problem we have to deal with here is either one of telescoping or of deliberate lengthening of the king-lists, and accordingly one of accuracy of the putative genealogies on which our chronology is based.

First, let us look at Kgabo II. According to the traditions recorded by Schapera, Kgabo II was the son of Tebele and father of Motshodi.[117] Kgabo II and Sechele I c.1830 - 1892, are

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116 Some informants of Breutz have identified Rathateng as a place on the lower Odi (Crocodile) River. They state it is the same place as Marekuathate (Stompefontein 55) near Frederikstad. (See Breutz, Rustenburg, p.108.)

117 Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, "Kwena Line of Chiefs"

separated by seven generations. This gives a date like 1625 - 1655 for Kgabo II's generation. If the Bakwena-Kgabo clans were led into Botswana by Kgabo II, it is likely to have been during this generation. Yet, if it were so, it is hardly possible that Kgabo II would have been engaged in expelling Bakgwatleng with the assistance of Mmopane who belonged to the generation c.1685 - c.1715. Since the reign of the Bakaa chief Mmopane correlates better with the generation of Motshodi than that of Kgabo II, it seems more probable that Mmopane cooperated with the aged king Motshodi towards the end of his long reign, rather than with Motshodi's father, Kgabo II.

In another source[118] Schapera states that it was Motshodi who led the Kwena clans across the Madikwe into Botswana. Again, if the putative genealogy of the Bakwena is not disputed, there are six generations from Sechele to Motshodi. This gives us the dates c.1655 - 1685 for Motshodi's generation. Since the Bangwato and the Bangwaketse are said to have seceded during the reign of Motshodi, how does this correlate with the chronology of the Bamangwato and Bangwaketse kings?

The impression created by a careful comparison of the king-lists of the Bakwena, Bamangwato and Bangwaketse, is that the Ngwato line stretches back five generations beyond Motshodi's generation, while the Ngwaketse one extends for three generations beyond. This could mean any of three things:- (a) Motshodi's

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facing p.116 interposes Masilo II between Kgabo II and Motshodi. Wookey, Dico, p.85 does the same thing as Sillery, and further Wookey adds Mokotedi between Motshodi and Legojane.

118 Ditirafalo, p.36.

succession to the Kwena kingship occurred much later in the history of both the Bamangwato and Bangwaketse than has hitherto been acknowledged - i.e., that when he became the Kwena king, these two groups had already become independent, and that another Kwena king was ruling when they seceded; (b) those listed as Bamangwato and Bangwaketse kings before the reign of the Kwena king Motshodi were, in fact, not kings but sub-chiefs in charge of sections or villages that were regarded as subject to the Bakwena king. In that case it would be likely that secessions occurred during the apparently long reign of Motshodi; (c) If the secessions are placed firmly in the reign of Motshodi, then the leaders of those secessions will be either the kings Madirana, Kesitilwe or Makgasana for the Bamangwato, and Seepapitso, Leemá, Khuto or Khutwane for the Bangwaketse. The second alternative is the most logical, and argues strongly in favour of Khuto or Khutwane having led the actual secession, which incidentally also occurred in the generation of the great break-up of Kwena chiefdoms - the generation of the 1651 famine. This suggestion does not rule out the possibility of Makaba I c.1685 - 1715, having been the leader of the Ngwaketse secession. But whether the alternatives considered here are tenable or not, Motshodi's long reign is likely to have ended early in the eighteenth century.

A serious obstacle in our efforts to correlate the secession of the Bamangwato with that of the other members of the Kwena-Kgabo cluster has been the tendency on the part of those recording their early history to jump from the eponymous founder Ngwato, to the Moses-like figure Mathiba, and by so doing ignore

all the intervening rulers. Even if nothing is known of these rulers, if they did succeed each other in regular father-son successions, their existence is extremely important for chronological purposes. It represents a whole seven generations - just over two centuries. The reticence of historians regarding Ngwato's followers may be a strong indication of either their doubt concerning the historicity of some or all these named rulers, or whether if they all did exist, some were collateral or brother succession instead of regular father-son successions.

Confusion is, however, compounded by the fact that recorded traditions do mention the battle of Morula-o-esi, said to have been fought between Ngwato and Kwena[119] in the eighteenth century. Now, we know for certain Kwena was not alive in the eighteenth century. We also know that he probably died somewhere in the neighbourhood of Rathatheng; and that he never crossed the Madikwe. The same applies to Ngwato. He could not have fought a battle anywhere in the eighteenth century, since six generations separated him from the eighteenth century "Moses" Mathiba.

When we turn to the traditions of the Bangwaketse, we are confronted with similar inconsistencies. The claim of the Bangwaketse elders that they separated from the parent Kwena group at Phutadikobo during the reign of Kwena, and that their secession was led by Ngwaketse cannot be sustained. As already pointed out, Kwena never came to what is Botswana today. Also, when the entire Kwena-Kgabo cluster migrated from the western

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119 Nettleton, "Bangwato", in Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo, p.64; Q.N. Parsons, "Origins of the ba ma Ngwato", p.92.

Transvaal into Botswana, they were probably led by either Kgabo I or Kgabo II. Correlation of reigns makes Kgabo II contemporaneous with Leema, who is firmly placed in the seventeenth century, and not in the eighteenth. Kgabo I was a generation earlier than Ngwaketse on the lists of Bakwena kings drawn up by Sillery and Wookey.[120] Thus, it appears definitely incorrect to state, as Schapera does, that "the Ngwaketse and Ngwato broke away ... from the Kwena early in the eighteenth century".[121]

If, as the Ngwaketse elders insist, it was indeed Ngwaketse who led their exodus from "Kweneng" two conclusions would be forced on us - first, that the secession occurred before the entire Kwena-Kgabo cluster left the western Transvaal to enter Botswana, or if it occurred in Botswana - as both the Ngwaketse and Kwena elders affirm - it probably occurred during the reign of Kgabo I or more likely that of his successors Masilo II or Tebele. In attempting to unravel this convoluted tradition, it is useful to remember that while the Bangwaketse informants cannot be expected to be authoritative on Kwena kings, they nevertheless knew King Kwena and would have little hesitation or qualms about using his name in traditions connected with origins or secessions. But, by the same token, the Bangwaketse elders are expected to be well-versed on their own kings, and there would have to be compelling reasons for discarding their evidence.

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120 Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate; Wookey, Dico, p.85.

121 I. Schapera, Government and Politics in Tribal Societies, (London, Watts, 1956), p.27; Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.149; Schapera, Ethnic Composition, p.9.

Even if the version that Motshodi led the Kwena-Kgabo into Botswana were preferred, and the tradition that the Ngwaketse secession happened during his long reign was not questioned, it would still be necessary to reckon with the fact that Motshodi's reign fell in the generation c.1625 - c.1655. Then also, the linking of the Ngwaketse secession to the reign of Motshodi is essentially based on the tradition that when the Bangwaketse seceded, the main Bakwena settlement was at Phutadikobo.[122] It is, however, known that the Bakwena, as the Bangwaketse were to do subsequently, moved the site of their capital several times between Dithejwane, Moswen and Phutadikobo.[123] It is, however, not clear whether Motshodi made one settlement at Phutadikobo nor whether his was the first settlement on that site. Further, there is, according to Sillery, another undefined tradition that the Bakwena lived at Mosweu when the Ngwaketse secession took place.[124]

What becomes clear from this discussion is the fact that if the version of the Bangwaketse elders that their ancestors left the Bakwena settlement under the leadership of Ngwaketse, is not sound, the version on which Ngwaketse chronology has hitherto been based is also open to question. An acceptance of the Ngwaketse version would suggest a date like 1565 - 1595 for their secession from the Kwena kingdom. It is, of course,

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122 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.2.

123 Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, p.36; cf. also Wookey, Dico, p.46; Schapera, "Notes on the History of the Kaa", pp.110-111.

124 Sillery, Sechele, pp.51-52.

possible that only the differentiation of the Bangwaketse from the bulk of the Bakwena may have started under Ngwaketse, while the actual secession may have been led by Seepapitso or Leema. It will be seen that although this suggested date (c.1565 - c.1595) for the Ngwaketse emigration is two centuries earlier than the one suggested by Schapera, it is not incompatible with Schapera's own conclusion that all that can be stated with confidence is that the Batswana were occupying the eastern part of their country by A.D. 1600 at the latest.[125] Even that chronology is generally regarded as unduly conservative.[126]

This is certainly so when it is considered that recent archeological work on Iron Age sites in the western Transvaal has pushed back the chronology of the region to the middle of the first millenium A.D.[127] Excavation of sites known to have been occupied by the Kwena-Hurutshe complex of chiefdoms has yielded dates that render the extreme conservatism of the order already referred to, completely out of place.[128] There accordingly appears no reason for perpetuating the clearly erroneous and misleading tradition of eighteenth-century origins for the Kwena complex of chiefdoms now inhabiting the Republic of Botswana.

We may now turn to the Kgatla-Pedi cluster. The Kgatla

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125 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.2.

126 M. Wilson, "The Sotho, Venda and Tsonga", in Wilson and Thompson, eds., Oxford History of South Africa, I, p.135.

127 See above p.27 . See also B. Fagan, "The Later Iron Age in South Africa", in Thompson, ed., African Societies, pp.57-70.

128 Fagan, Southern Africa, p.153.

complex comprises the Bakgatla-Kgafela at Motshodi, and in the Pilandsberg district, the Bakgatla-Mmakau, Bakgatla-Mosetlha, Bakgatla-Motsha in Hammanskraal and the Bakgatla-Mmanaana in the Ngwaketse and Kweneng districts of Botswana. The Bapedi are also regarded as part of the Kgatla cluster. The Kgatla cluster (see chart VI) claims descent from the Bahurutshe.[129] If they did, and there seems to be no evidence to challenge this tradition, then they may have seceded from the "United Phofu Confederacy" or Hurutshe-Kwena complex since the Bahurutshe state did not come into separate existence until about 1475 - 1505, while the founder of the Bakgatla, Malekeleke was, according to the Bakgatla regnal list, of the generation c.1385 - c.1415 (see Chart VI).[130] Furthermore, Bamalete traditions report a very severe famine in that same generation (c.1385 - c.1415) which could also account for the Bakgatla secession from the "United Phofu Confederacy".

The problem here may be that the royal genealogies are faulty in that collateral successions have been represented as father-son successions, or the traditions of origins are incorrect.[131] On the other hand, the Hurutshe-Kwena may have been telescoped or there are very likely omissions and/or extensions in both lists. Thus, the Malekeleke tradition could only tie in chronologically with early Hurutshe royal genealogies if the

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129 N.J. van Warmelo, The Bakgatla of Mosetlha, p.4.

130 See Chart VI in the Appendix.

131 For an illuminating discussion on the dangers of lengthy king-lists supposed to be based on regular father-son successions, see Henige, The Chronology of Oral Tradition, Chapter 2, passim.

supposition of Breutz is accepted that a separate Bahurutshe kingdom became a reality between c.1400 and c.1480.

But it is not unusual for a tradition to say that a particular group hived off from a certain chiefdom, e.g., the Bahurutshe, when they in fact mean that they broke from the chiefdom of which the Bahurutshe were also a part. In this case, the evidence is even stronger when one considers that traditions generally have seen the Bahurutshe state as the senior and legitimate inheritor of the "United Phofu Confederacy". Further, the near similarity of the totems of the Bahurutshe and the Bakgatla groups (that is the baboon and the monkey), could also lead to a superficial conclusion of identical or common origins. But until that is proved on other grounds, the basis for such a conclusion would be tenuous and misleading. The tshwene, or baboon of the Bahurutshe was not their original totem, but one which they adopted much later after the split, not between Mohurutshe and Kwena, but between Mohurutshe's sons, Motebele and Motebejana, nearly a century after Malekeleke is alleged to have led the Bakgatla secession from the Bahurutshe.[132]

Analysing the history of all the Tswana chiefdoms discussed in this chapter, with particular attention to the last nine generations before 1895 - where accuracy of royal relationships may be taken for granted - the following facts emerge. Four chiefdoms show nine kings in nine generations, another four show

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[132] Wookey, Dico, pp.38-39. During the generations c.1565 - c.1595 and c.1595 - c.1625, the Kgatla threw off segments that went to form the independent Kgatla-Mmakau, Kgatla-Mothsa, Kgatla-Mosetla as well as the Pedi chiefdoms. It it possible that the 1561 famine cited by Abraham may have been felt here too.

ten kings in nine generations and one shows eleven kings in nine generations, all of this despite a significant number of brother successions. Thus, even if all those states had reported straight-forward father-son successions, the degree of inaccuracy would not have been great.

On the other hand, the Bakgatla and related Bahurutshe show a quite different succession pattern. The Bakgatla give sixteen kings in the last nine generations and the Bahurutshe sixteen kings in the last ten, or twenty-two kings in the fourteen generations of their existence as an independent chiefdom. The Bakgatla-Bahurutshe pattern suggests that brothers ultimately established, in practice, a stronger claim to the throne than they did in the other Tswana states. This could suggest a slightly different origin or cultural influence for these two.

Finally, we look at the traditions of the Bamalete and the Batlokwa chiefdoms. Both these are small chiefdoms located in Botswana, but with extensive affinities and ramifications in the Transvaal. The Malete, who are originally of Transvaal Ndebele stock, trace their ruling lineage to Phatle, eighteen generations before the year 1900, although the eponymous ruler was the second king on their king-list.[133] During Malete's reign, a terrible famine hit that people while they were at Lekgopung. It resulted in the break-up of that group into such splinters as Ba-ga-Laka, Ba-ga-Mokopane, the Mmauna, Ba-ga-Letwaba and Boo-Seleka.

The chronology for this disintegration of the Transvaal

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[133] See Chart VII in the Appendix.

Ndebele compares very favourably with Breutz's dates for the break-up of the Hurutshe-Kwena complex and the famine recorded by Abraham as having occurred in the Dande region of the sub-Zambezi valley. When the Bamalete left Lekgopung and occupied Fhafung near the hill Mogosane from which the River Ngoretele rises, the famine continued to afflict them, even in the neighbourhood of modern Pretoria to which they had subsequently migrated in search of favourable country. While there, they were relieved through the skilful magic of certain baroka (singular: moroka) or rain-doctors, who sprinkled a black cow - kgomo e tshwana - specially consecrated for the purpose, with doctored herbs and ceremonially released it to wander about the countryside. Traditions state that this was followed by such copious rains wherever the black cow had wandered, that the drought was broken, and from that time the locality was known as "Tshwane" - the place of the black cow, which is the Setswana name for Pretoria.[134]

Other Malete traditions provide good correlations with Ngwaketse history. During the reign of Mokgojwa, c.1805 - c.1835, the Malete state that they were attacked by the Bangwaketse under "Mathwanyane" (nickname for Makaba II, c.1780 - c.1824). Other correlations from Malete traditions are their accounts of wars between Mokgojwa and the Batlokwa king Bogatsu c.1775 - c.1805, as well as a combined attack by Bangwaketse, Bakgatla-Mmanaana, Barolong, Batlhaping and Bakgothu or Griqua on the Bamalete town of Lotlhakane. This war in which the

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134 V. Ellenberger, "Di Roba roba..." (1937-38) in T.R.R.S.A., XXV, pp.33-34.

Bamalete encountered the use of fire-arms for the first time, occurred during the reign of Mokgojwa's successor, Pooe II c.1805 - c.1835.[135]

The Batlokwa traditions also provide a few chronological correlations with those neighbouring groups. During the reign of Kgosi (c.1805 - c.1835), the Batlokwa allied with the Bangwaketse under Makaba II against the Bakwena then ruled by Motswasele II. He was killed at Boswelakgosi about 1820.[136] Soon thereafter, the Batlokwa were attacked by Sebetwane and driven northwards. Lesage, who accompanied Sebetwane to the Zambesi, was killed around 1851 by the Tawana king, Letsholathebe.[137] His brother Bafsa was killed by Mzilikazi's Mandebele around 1835.[138]

It is probably too early to make an authoritative statement about the chronology of the Tswana over the past six hundred years, but tentatively the following outline is suggested from the evidence now available. The earliest states in the area south of the Limpopo included the Bafokeng, Batlokwa, the "United Phofu Confederacy" or Hurutshe-Kwena complex and the United Barolong kingdom whose regnal lists suggest their foundation about A.D. 1325 - 1355 or some time in the fourteenth century.

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135 Ibid., pp.36-42; Idem., "Ba-ga-Malete", Ditirafalo, pp.195-205.

136 Breutz, Rustenburg, p.363; V. Ellenberger, "Batlokwa", in I. Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo, p.224.

137 V. Ellenberger, "History of the Batlokwa of Gaberones", Bantu Studies, XIII, 3, 1939, pp.177-179; Breutz, Rustenburg, p.364.

138 Breutz, Rustenburg, p.364.

This formation of centralised states should not be confused with the first presence of Sotho-Tswana peoples south of the Limpopo which probably stretches back many centuries earlier. Neither is it suggested that this is the earliest example of state formation, but it is the earliest for which we have genealogical evidence.

From the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, the pattern of development seems to have been one of absorption of earlier settlers, incorporation of new immigrants from the north resulting in the geographic expansion of the states, punctuated during severe famines by political fission, fragmentation and migration of groups away from the heavily populated cores of the states. The genealogical evidence is clearest when it comes to the process of political fragmentation; there are three periods of wide-spread fragmentation each of which falls significantly within generations noted for drought and famine.

The first was the drought generation of c.1450 - c.1480 when the Bakgatla and Bamalete were founded, both probably being secessions from larger political groupings. This was also the time when the United Phofu Confederacy broke up into the Bahurutshe and United Kwena kingdoms. During a second drought, a century later, c.1561 - c.1563, the United Kwena Kingdom fragmented into four chiefdoms - the Kwena, Bamangwato, Bangwaketse and Modimosana. A third drought generation, c.1625 - c.1660, when Indian Ocean research has shown dry periods in 1630, 1645 and 1660, witnessed a massive fragmentation, so much so that hardly any group escaped its political effects:

(1) The Kwena kingdom split into two - the Kwena Kgabo and

Kwena-Mogopa;

(2) The Bahurutshe kingdom split into two - the Manyana and Gopane chiefdoms;

(3) The Bakgatla split into five chiefdoms - the Kgafela, Mosetla, Mmakau, Motsha and Bapedi;

(4) The Bakaa broke away from the Barolong;

(5) The Modimosana chiefdom split up into four separate chiefdoms - the Ramanela, the Maaka, the Mmatau and the Matlhaku.

By about 1660, most of the major modern Tswana political units had come into existence. Each of the droughts noted above contributed to migration waves southward, which probably gave rise to the idea of the wave theory of Sotho-Tswana settlement of Southern Africa. However, initial migration and settlement should not be confused with the southward spread of chiefly organisation.

CHAPTER II.

THE MIGRATIONS AND SETTLEMENT OF THE BANGWAKETSE

As has already been noted,[1] the Bangwaketse constitute a part of the Kwena cluster of Tswana chiefdoms claiming descent from a common ancestor, Masilo.[2] What remains obscure is the exact relationship between Ngwaketse, the eponymous ruler of the Bangwaketse chiefdom, and other putative founders of the Kwena-Kgabo complex of chiefdoms in Botswana. While, as a general principle, it is true that each Tswana community distinguishing itself from its parent group tended to adopt the name of the secessionist leader, it is also useful to remember that there are instances of people having used the name of a subsequent ruler for their "national" appellation,[3] while several have names that were not derived from any of their leaders.[4]

While there is general agreement as to the common descent

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1 See above Chapter I, p.54.

2 Wookey, Dico, pp.38,43. Two of Wookey's informants - Moruti Khukwi Mogodi and Kgosi Sebele of the Bakwena, both stated that the Sotho and Tswana came out of the "Cave of Lowe", and suggest that Masilo, the first remembered king of the Kwena-Hurutshe complex was descended from Lowe. See also Ellenberger and Macgregor, History of the Basuto, p.15; Stow, Native Races, pp.520-521; Schapera, "Bakwena", in Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo, p.33; Idem., The Ethnic Composition, p.8; Molema, Bantu Past and Present, p.49.

3 Although the first king of the Bamalete was Phatlhe, that group took its name from the second ruler on their list of kings. Also, the Bakwena-Modimosana are named after the fourth or fifth ruler on their list - after whose reign the group split into four sections. (See Breutz, Rustenburg, p.426.)

4 Examples of Tswana peoples not named after secessionist leaders are the Bakaa, Bakhurutshe and Batlhaping.

of Kwena, Ngwato and Ngwaketse, there remains considerable uncertainty about the exact genealogical succession of the descendants of Masilo. For instance, it remains unclear to the student of this history whether Malope, the son of Masilo, was a brother or father to Mohurutshe, the reputed founder of the Bahurutshe line of rulers, or whether he was father or brother to Kwena - the titular head and progenitor of the Bakwena kings of the state later based on Molepolole. Accordingly, it is not clear beyond reasonable doubt what the exact relationship of Ngwaketse to Kwena was, or Ngwato to these two, or of all three to Mohurutshe.[5] This apparent confusion may be due partly to the Tswana custom whereby they tend to reelela (name someone after another) descendants, as well as partly to the simple failure of memory due to the passing of time.

The discussion on chronology has indicated that contrary to the almost unanimous claim of Bangwaketse elders that the secession of their ancestors from "Kweneng" was led by Ngwaketse

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5 According to Stow, Native Races, pp.532-559, Malope and Kwena were brothers, being both sons of Masilo; and Mohurutshe, Ngwato and Ngwaketse were the sons of Malope. Kwena was therefore neither a brother nor a father of either Ngwato or Ngwaketse but their rrangwane (uncle). Other writers who support this view are G.M. Theal, History of South Africa before 1795, Volume IV, p.395, Molema, Bantu - Past and Present, p.121, and Wookey, Dico, p.85. Mr. B.S. Gasetsewe, M.P. for Kanye South and former chief of the Bangwaketse for over forty years, was the only informant whose oral evidence agreed with the view of these writers on this matter of relationship of Ngwaketse and Ngwato to Kwena and Mohurutshe. Schapera drew attention to the existence of the problem (Ditirafalo, pp.33-35) without committing himself. G.E. Nettleton, the author of chapter III in the same work (Ditirafalo), evaded the issue, while A. Sillery, Sechele: The Story of An African Chief, p.50, stated categorically that "Malope became the father of three sons, Kwena, Ngwato and Ngwaketse".

himself, there was an opposite view. Traditions recorded by Schapera among the Bakwena, attribute the leadership of the Bangwaketse exodus to a ruler variously considered to have been Khuto, Mongala or his son, Moleta;[6] and the separation itself was considered, by Schapera's Bakwena informants, to have occurred during the reign of Motshodi. At the risk of repeating, it is necessary to emphasize that most of the Bangwaketse elders interviewed in 1973 and 1974 stated categorically that it was the chieftain, Ngwaketse, who seceded with his followers.[7] The Bangwaketse informants of Schapera, in 1938 were equally firm on that score.[8] In particular, this view was endorsed by the testimony of the aged seer and expert on Bangwaketse traditions and folk-lore, namely Tiro Motlhabane of the Lobeko ward, whose primacy among the oral historians of that chiefdom was, and still is, widely conceded. The same tradition was backed by the evidence of Kgosi Bathoen I, who ruled the Bangwaketse officially from 1889 to 1910. It was on Bathoen's testimony that A.J. Wookey of the London Missionary Society (hereafter L.M.S.) compiled the chapter of his book dealing with the Bangwaketse.[9] It

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6 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.2; Cf. Idem., Law and Custom, p.306 where Schapera designates Mongala as the first chief of the Bangwaketse after their secession from the Bakwena. See also Schapera, Ethnic Composition, p.9 where he states: "... Makaba ... became the first independent chief of the Ngwaketse".

7 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders, especially that of Tlamang Sekalaba, Tlotlang Tsima, and Keatametse Morekisi, at interview held at Kgosing ward, Kanye on Tuesday 14 August 1973.

8 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.121-122; Idem., "A Short History...", p.1; Tiro Motlhabane and G.B. Moseley, History of the Bangwaketse. Mss.

9 Wookey, Dico, p.66.

would therefore appear that the argument against Ngwaketse's leadership of the exodus from Kweneng is not sufficiently convincing or persuasive to warrant its adoption in preference to that of the Bangwaketse elders.

Although the Bangwaketse informants state that they separated from the Bakwena at Phutadikobo hill, it is quite likely that the Bangwaketse, as a group, had never lived there. As Sillery hints,[10] it may well be that both the Bangwaketse and the Bawangwato had been resident in separate settlements that constituted subordinate villages situated some distance away from the capital. Nettleton's account of Ngwato traditions mentions a battle between the Bakwena and the Bangwaketse on the one hand, and the Bamangwato on the other. This tradition, the details of which are highly suspect, is nevertheless significant; for by particularising, the impression is emphasized that the Bangwaketse were distinguishable from the main body of the Bakwena.[11] The trend towards separatism and ultimate fission among Tswana societies was encouraged by the custom whereby the ruling chief allocated a number of wards, some cattle-posts, fields and retainers to the principal sons of each of his wives. In this way, ambitious relatives of the chief found it easy to build a power base that could facilitate secession.

Indications are that the Bangwaketse were still part of the

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10 Sechele, pp.51-52; c.f. also Parsons, "Origins of the bama Ngwato", p.92.

11 J.S. Nettleton, "Bangwato", in Schapera, ed., Ditirafalo, pp.63-64. Thatedi, who was Wookey's informant on the Bamangwato says nothing about this battle. The Bangwaketse elders interviewed in 1973-1974 do not recall any traditions about the battle.

Kwena-Kgabo group when it entered Botswana and expelled the Bakgwatleng and the Baphaleng from Dithejwane Hills. They may still have formed part of that group when it later migrated eastwards to Moswen, but are likely to have remained behind when the larger group went to live at Phutadikobo.[12] If the tradition of the battle on the Ngotwane is accurate, it tends to argue in favour of an earlier secession by the Ngwato compared with the Ngwaketse. A comparison of the royal genealogies of the Bakwena, Bamangwato and the Bangwaketse also favours the suggestion that the Bamangwato were the first to leave, and that they were quickly followed by the Bangwaketse.[13] If the time depth suggested by the Bamangwato royal genealogies alone tells us anything at all, the possibility of their separation from the Bakwena before the "parent group" went to live at Phutadikobo is a real one. What is more, it poses the question whether that separation did not, in fact, take place before Kgabo II led the Bakwena into Botswana. Tradition is however divided on the question of which group was the first to secede from the parent Bakwena chiefdom.[14] It does appear that the secessions of the Bamangwato and of the Bangwaketse followed each other in such

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12 C.f. Sillery, Sechele, pp.51-52.

13 See above, chapter I, Appendix, Chart IV: Kwena-Kgabo Cluster.

14 While the Ngwaketse elders informed Schapera (Ditirafalo, p.121) that the Bangwato were the first to emigrate, Schapera himself is of the opinion that the Bangwaketse left before the Bangwato. (See Ethnic Composition, p.9) Mr. Bathoen Gaseitsiwe, Member of Parliament for Kanye South, and for forty years Chief of the Bangwaketse, insists that the Bangwaketse were the first to leave, and points to the many wars fought between the Bakwena and the Bangwaketse as the result of that secession.

quick succession that there is some confusion among informants regarding who settled where. Wookey's informant, Thatedi, thought the Bamangwato and the Bangwaketse moved out together.[15]

Before we follow the Bangwaketse on their migrations it may be useful to examine the reasons given for the separation of the Bamangwato and the Bangwaketse from the parent Kwena group. In characteristic chronological oblivion, traditions state that the founders and titular heads of the two groups - namely Ngwato and Ngwaketse in succession approached Kwena with the ruse of going on an extended hunting safari - go ya letsomo as a pretext for deserting.[16] What is not usually explained is why such an excuse became necessary at all. The seeking of permission to go implies a peaceful or at least a non-violent separation, and this attempt to give a picture of a harmonious, agreed separation was clearly noticeable in the evidence given by informants interviewed at Kanye.

It is tempting to dismiss such explanations as attempts to "smooth" the past, and in the case of the Bangwaketse, point to the war that was fought near Kgale in an effort to restore to former allegiance a group that was unilaterally declaring independence. But it is not necessary to reject that explanation in order to show that it is not adequate. The Bangwaketse, and

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15 Most of the elders interviewed at Kanye in 1973-74 repeat this tradition. This is an excellent example of the problem of "feed-back" in oral tradition. Many of these elders, having read the traditions published by Wookey and Schapera, now tend to reproduce in their answers what they read in these books.

16 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.1; Idem., "Bangwaketse", in Ditirafalo, p.121.

indeed other Tswana peoples, did and still continue to practise a mixed economy based principally on animal husbandry and crop cultivation, but supplemented extensively by hunting. While the Bangwaketse reared cattle, mainly for milk, wealth-prestige and transport, they also kept a few sheep and goats - used principally in rituals. But for their meat supply they depended mainly on hunting. Before their contact with whites, hunting also supplied the means for what clothing the Bangwaketse used, as well as materials for their sandals, shields and sheaths for knives and possibly other kinds of leather goods.[17]

Hunting therefore played an important part in the lives of pre-Difaqane Tswana societies. The areas inhabited by the Tswana were teeming with game - both large and small, as well as abounding with different kinds of wild beasts.[18] In addition to single hunters or small hunting parties engaged in hunting for their private and domestic requirements, large scale hunting safaris involving regiments were periodically organised by the chiefs either as part of the training or graduation exercises of a new regiment, or to destroy beasts of prey or with a view to

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17. I. Schapera, The Tswana, 1953, pp.24-25; I. Schapera and A.J.A. Goodwin, "Work and Wealth", in I. Schapera, ed., The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa, pp.141-142; J. Leyland, Adventures in the Far Interior of South Africa, (Facsimile Reprint 1972), pp.54-57.

18. W.C. Harris, The Wild Sports of Southern Africa, (Facsimile Reprint, Cape Town, 1963), pp.60-63, 68, 129-135, 195; Idem., Narrative of An Expedition Into Southern Africa, (New York 1967), chapters 21-24, passim. For some of the methods employed by the Tswana to capture large numbers of game, see Leyland, Adventures, pp.124-125; Schapera and Goodwin, "Work and Wealth", p.142; D. Livingstone, Missionary Researches and Travels in South Africa, 1858 (New York, 1967), p.28. For the abundance of game in Ngwaketse country see M.H. Lister, ed., Journals of Andrew Geddes Bain, (Cape Town, 1949), pp.61-63.

providing skins or pelts for the wedding of a chief.[19] Such a large collective hunting is called a letsholo and may last several weeks. It is therefore understandable that a group wanting to secede would use the "safari-going" ruse to disguise their real intentions. Even if the original objective had not been secession, abundance of game in one area, together with fertile land, could have tempted a few to remain or to return only to fetch their families;[20] so that in such a case secession would not have been one big exodus, but a gradual process over a long period.

The influence of environmental and climatological factors on a people whose settlement patterns showed a decided preference for close or dense settlement in large towns, cannot be overlooked. Periodic droughts and famines have been indicated for several parts of central and southern Africa in 1561, between 1603 and 1660, and for several years in the eighteenth century.[21] Thus, the fact that the Bamangwato and the Bangwaketse seceded in close succession, may have been a pointer to serious problems of eking out a reasonable living in over-populated settlements. Consequently, the push of economic pressures may have been reinforced by the pull of economic allurements in new and apparently

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19 Schapera, The Tswana, pp.28-29, 53.

20 In view of the fact that Ngwaketse traditions, as recorded by Mosley from Tiro Motlhabane point to the vicinity of Kgale and Crocodile Pools' or Mosweu as the place where they settled after leaving "Kweneng", it is useful to remember that that locality is on the Ngotwane River and is therefore likely to have been a very fertile valley, especially in pre-Difaqane times.

21 Abraham, Early Political History of Kingdom of Mwenemutapa, pp.63-64, , D.J. Schove, "Eclipses, Comets and the Spectrum of Time in Africa", Journal of the British Astronomical Association, LXXVIII, 2, 1968; All Indian Ocean localities' references are the same.

better endowed areas, and caused both the Bamangwato and Bangwaketse to leave in search of new pastures.

There is also the suggestion here that the Bakwena chiefdom had expanded its population - through natural increase in an environment of peace and plenty, as well as through the absorption of many of the smaller and weaker stateless societies they found in the region. Alternatively, central authority was weakening at the core, while control over some of the local subdivisions was becoming ineffectual (a natural concomitant of the clan-ward system of political organisation) and, thereby encouraging particularist or secessionist tendencies. Implied in the nature of the links between the centre and the periphery was a form of patron-client relationship expressed through the payment by clients of such forms of tribute as sehuba and dikgafela[22] and the right of the patron - in this case the chief - to exact, through his agents, services like working on the masotla or tribute fields. Because of his wealth, the chief dispensed patronage widely through placing kgamelo or "milk-pail" cattle in the care of commoners and thereby tying them

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22 In addition to being entitled to the service of every member of the morafe or "tribe", the chief claimed from hunters the breast or brisket of every big game killed, one tusk of every elephant (in particular the tusk on which the animal lies when it dies), as well as the skin of every lion or leopard killed. This tribute is known as sehuba. There was also a tribute based on agricultural produce. After every harvest, usually during the months of August or September, every household brought to the chief's kgotla a basket full of grain. This tribute is known as dikgafela. He was also entitled to the produce of the large masotla or tribute fields cultivated for him by his subjects. In 1956 there were twenty-six masotla among the Ngwaketse. (See Schapera, Government and Politics in Tribal Societies, p.99; Idem., Tribal Innovators: Tswana Chiefs and Social Change 1795-1940 (London, 1970), p.74.)

through personal loyalty to himself as his batlhanka or his personal retainers.[23] Sub-chiefs like Ngwato and Ngwaketse, whose villages were located some distance from the capital, enjoyed some of the privileges of the chief, although there were definite limits to what they could or could not do. For instance, no sub-chief could, of his own accord, create new regiments in his area or receive and keep for his own use matimela or stray cattle. The desire to qualify for the full enjoyment of the complete range of rights and privileges open to a chief must have been a powerful incentive to secession.

Finally, the nature of the relationship between Ngwato and Ngwaketse on the one hand, and Kwena on the other, may have had a bearing on whether they would or would not secede from his rule one day.[24] There are those who contend that while Ngwato and Ngwaketse were brothers, Kwena was not - being, instead, an uncle to the former two. In a situation of dynastic rivalry and competition for power and influence, it is hardly surprising that the nephews should move off to set up independent polities. Thus to personal ambition and lust for power - a yearning to be the recipient of the sehuba - must be added such motives as desire to increase wealth, especially in cattle, at the expense of weaker groups, and possibly the love of adventure.

Concerning their migrations, the Bangwaketse state that on leaving the Bakwena kingdom, they first settled at a spot not

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[23] Schapera, Law and Custom, pp.62-66; Idem., Government and Politics, pp.27-28; H.O. Monnig, The Pedi, 1967, pp.287-290.

[24] At the time at which these secessions occurred it is unlikely that either Kwena or his relatives Ngwato and Ngwaketse were the actors involved.

far from the present day town of Mochudi, a site then known as Magagarapa. If the Bangwaketse traditions about their place of separation from the Bakwena are correct, their choice of a site just south of the Bakwena is puzzling - especially when it is remembered that the Ngwaketse migration or secession was a defiant move, a unilaterial declaration of their independence. Traditions do not indicate how long the stay at Magagarapa was. It should only have been a very brief sojourn, before the Bangwaketse moved on to near Kgale hill.[25] It was at Kgale that Ngwaketse died and was succeeded by his son, Seepapitso I. It may be worth noting that while the Bangwaketse elders today do not remember anything about their sojourn at Magagarapa, several very clearly recall having heard that they once lived at Kgale, where they state their forebears were attacked by the Bakwena. They referred to a Ngwaketse battle song containing the line: "Dikgomo di mo Kgale mo, di ganela mo ntsweng" (The cattle are on Kgale hill, they are anxiously pressing towards the hill).[26]

The Bangwaketse, according to ancient military strategy, had moved the cattle and probably the women and children up the hill, which their regiments were defending. The attacking Bakwena were expected to direct the force of their attack towards divesting the seceding Bangwaketse of their cattle in

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25 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.122; Idem., "A Short History...", p.1.

26 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders; especially Tlametlu Maswabi, Mosabatha Kethibile, Keutlwile Phologolo and Seepe Modietsho, an interview held at Kgosing ward, Tuesday, 14 August 1975; Sekokotla Kaboyamodimo and Gaseitsiwe Tshosa, an interview held at Ra-Sebego ward, Matshiswane, Kanye on Thursday 23 August 1973; Mosarwa Phorego and Kwenathebe Mae, Logaba (Sennelo) Ward, 11 March 1974.

order to force them back to their former allegiance.. By all accounts the Bangwaketse repulsed the invaders, but fearing another attack Seepapitso moved his people to Ntsotswane hill (just east of the present Manyana village). Here Seepapitso died, and was succeeded by his son Leema.[27] During the latter's reign the Bangwaketse migrated to a new site called Potsane (east of Lekgolobotlo).

It was while the Bangwaketse were at Potsane that there was a change in the normal succession pattern. According to tradition, Leema had two sons Khuto and Khutwane. The heir Khuto was weak, slothful, and some even say an imbecile. Although he duly acceded to the kingship on his father's death, he nevertheless delegated nearly all authority to his younger brother Khutwane. Khutwane was energetic, wise and clearly an able person. He was probably also very ambitious. The force of his character and the firmness of his control can be gauged from the fact that although he eventually usurped the chieftainship, discontent only simmered below the surface while he was alive and did not

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27 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.1. In the traditions recorded in Tswana, Schapera states that the Ngwaketse elders stated that at Ntsotswane, King Seepapitso begat Khuto and Khutwane. Khuto was indolent and the kingship was captured by his brother Khutwane. Khutwane ruled and begat Leema, who subsequently begat Makaba I. (See Schapera, "Bangwaketse", in Ditirafalo, p.122) This is a slight variation from the succession recorded by Schapera in "A Short History..." where he states that Seepapitso begat Leema, and it was Leema who was the father of the brothers Khuto and Khutwane. The version supported by Ngwaketse elders interviewed in 1973 and 1974 is that given by Schapera in "A Short History...", p.1. They also drew attention to the manner in which the eldest son of the present chief of the Bangwaketse, Seepapitso IV, has been named - viz. Leema. Wookey's account makes no mention of Seepapitso or of the brothers Khuto and Khutwane. (See Wookey, Dico, p.66).

erupt openly until after his death. He moved the Bangwaketse settlement to Sengoma.[28] This was near a small hill south Ramotswa.

At the death of Khutwane there was a struggle for succession between Makaba, the son of Khutwane, and Modutlwa the son of Khut Makaba I won the support of the majority of the Bangwaketse, and led them south to a new settlement at Seoke. Tradition is divided on this point. Some informants indicate that Modutlwa and his followers left the main settlement and went to live near the present Malete village of Otse.[29] Whether it was Makaba who "fled" with his followers or whether it was Modutlwa who deserted, indications are that from that moment the descendants of the "House of Khuto", or at least a portion of them, became separated from the rest of the Bangwaketse, and they were not all with them at Seoke. Thus the prevailing of Makaba over Modutlwa established the line of succession in the House of Khutwane and marked the permanent eclipse of the House of Khuto, whose historical seniority is now only recognised in ritual matters.[30] Some of the descendants of Khuto appear to have

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28 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.1; Moseley and Motlhabane, History of the Bangwaketse..

29 Informants interviewed at the Modutlwa, Pudumo and Tankobong wards disclaim any knowledge of separation at all, while those of Bo-Ruele admit that their forefathers did, at one point, live apart from the rest of the Bangwaketse and they do admit that they lived at Otse and later Motsenekatse. (Group interview at Bo-Ruele ward: 29 August 1973; especially the evidence of Otswakwa Gothathamang, Rakelekang Dikgole and Kokwana Gothathamang). See also Schapera, "A Short History...", p.1; and G.B. Moseley and Tiro Mothabane, History of the Bangwaketse.

30 The decline in rank of the wards descended from Khuto is represented today in the geographical situation of those

rejoined the Bangwaketse almost immediately, while others only did so when the whole community was already living at Kanye. They founded the Ngwaketse wards at Kanye known as Ra-Modutlwa, Ra-Pudumo, Ra-Taukobong and Ruele wards.[31]

The settlement of the Bangwaketse at Seoke must have been a lengthy one. Makaba I died there and was succeeded by his own son Mongala, whose descendants became the progenitors of the present-day Ra-Mongala group of wards.[32] Dating by generations gives the relative date c.1715-c.1745 for Mongala's reign,[33] making Mongala a contemporary of the Bakwena king, Motswasele I, and the Ngwato regent Mokgadi.

At Seoke the Bangwaketse found another Tswana community whose traditions point to a much earlier occupation of the country now settled by the Kwena complex of chiefdoms. These were the Bakgwatleng. The Bangwaketse rulers came and lived with the Bakgwatleng and imposed their authority over the

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wards in the capital town of the Bangwaketse, Kanye. Unlike the other senior wards with strong royal connections, they are not situated at "Ntswenng" - i.e., on Kanye hill - but are located on the periphery of the village on the extreme south. This is particularly evident in the case of Bo-Ruele, and to a lesser extent of Bo Modutlwa, Bo-Pudumo and Taukobong. At the first fruits ceremony it is the senior representative of the Modutlwa ward who "bites" new produce or takes precedence in the ceremony.

31 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.2; Idem., "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.121-122; Moseley and Motlhabane, "History of the Bangwaketse",

32 These are the Mongala (Selohilwe), Mongala (Modukanele), Maranyana, Mongala (Moabi), Mongala (Moleme), Mongala (Tsima), Mongala (Bodiba) and Mooki wards. (See Schapera, "A Short History...", Appendix, Genealogy of Ngwaketse Ruling House).

33 These dates are based on generation lengths of 30 years from Moffat's of 1780 as the accession date for Makaba II, and from Schapera's estimate of c.1790 as the year of Makaba II's succession.

Bakgwatleng, who until then were under the rule of their own king, Tau.[34] Makaba I had married the sister of Tau so that his (Makaba's) son, Mongala, was a setlogolo, or nephew of Tau. The relations between the two communities remained amicable until a dispute arose which led to the emigration of the Bakgwatleng from Seoke. Indications are that the Bakgwatleng, who had moved down to Seoke from the vicinity of the Dithejwane Hills in order to escape the overlordship of the Bakwena, were chafing under the subordinate status created by Bangwaketse domination of their country. Thus when Tau's son Seeiso, was injured by Mongala's son, Moleta, and the Bakgwatleng found no satisfaction in the manner in which that incident was handled by Mongala, they secretly fled from Seoke to set themselves up as an independent group far from the Bangwaketse.[35]

Mongala pursued the Bakgwatleng, overtaking them at Kgalong loo-Tau near Segeng. In the battle which ensued, the Bangwaketse were worsted by the Bakgwatleng, and their king, Mongala - a nephew of the Bakgwatleng - was speared to death. The spot where he was killed is still known as Ga-Tlhaba (from go tlhaba, to stab).[36] This resulted in the succession of Mongala's son, Moleta, around 1750.[37]

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34 Evidence of Bakgwatleng elders at group interview: Wednesday 12 September 1973, especially the evidence of Selepe Mmelesi; also evidence of Kaboyamodimo Modisi at interview held on Monday 10 September 1973 at Motebyana ward.

35 Evidence of Bakgwatleng elders, 12 September 1973.

36 Ibid.; Also Wookey, Dico, p.66; although Wookey states Mongala died at Seoke, the traditions are firm that he fell at Ga-Tlhaba. The Bangwaketse were of course still living at Seoke.

37 This date is based on Moffat's estimate for Makaba's

Moleta's first task was to embark on a war of retribution against the Bakgwatleng to avenge his father's death. His war must also be seen in the same light as the much earlier attack of the Bakwena regiments on the Bangwaketse near Kgale hill - namely, to restore the Bakgwatleng to their former allegiance, and in that way consolidate the authority and base of the Ngwaketse state. Moleta's victory against the Bakgwatleng at Kgalong loo-Tau was a decisive one, for it spelt the disappearance of the Bakgwatleng chiefdom as it had existed before. He absolutely routed and scattered them, causing some to flee south to the Barolong, others to Thaba Nchu, and others still westwards into the Kalahari, who today form part of the community known as Bakgalagadi-Bango-loga or simply Bangologa.[38]

Many Bakgwatleng were captured together with their ruler Seeiso, whose life was spared. The Bakgwatleng captives were distributed among the Bangwaketse sub-chiefs and headmen, in order to render difficult or impossible any form of secret organisation on their part. Seeiso himself was left with a small following of households to form a separate ward which is still extant in the southern part of Kanye.[39] The Bakgwatleng captives and their descendants feature prominently among the

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succession. Breutz, Marico District, p.94, suggests that Boikanyo the Bahurutshe regent, who was ruling when Moleta fought the Bahurutshe, reigned during the period 1720-1730. Schapera's date for Moleta's accession is 1770. Thus the date suggested here (1750) correlates with neither that of Breutz nor that of Schapera.

38 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.124-125; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.2.

39 Ibid., Also evidence of Bakgwatleng elders: interview Bakgwatleng ward, 12 September 1973.

balala or malata (serfs) attached to the households of the royal wives.[40]

Subsequently, Moleta and the Bangwaketse left Seoke and built a village at Pitsa. It was while the Bangwaketse were living there that they were attacked by a combination of Koranna, some Batlhaping and possibly a few San clans. This incident occurred not long after the death of king Tau of the Barolong, and appears to have been part of the chain reaction he set in motion when he treacherously attacked the chief of the Morana, Kunapsoop or Taaibosch the Elder. It was one of a series of predatory attacks by the Korana and their associates upon their northerly Tswana neighbours such as the Batlhaping, the Batlou, the Bakwena, Dighoya, Bataung and others.[41] The date for the Korana attack on Moleta could reasonably be placed at around 1765.[42] It appears that the migration from Seoke to Pitsa had been motivated by this anticipated attack, for Schapera records that it was the advice that he build protective walls that led to Moleta's choice of the site at Pitsa. The battle with the Korana and their other allies from the south - "Barwa" - was

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40 Schapera, Law and Custom, p.27; Idem., Tribal Innovators, pp.83, 88-91; Idem., The Tswana, pp.28, 37; Idem., "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.124-125; P.L. Breutz, Die Politischen und Gesellschaftlichen Verhaltnisse der Sotho-Tswana in Transvaal und Betschuanaland, (Hamburg, 1941), pp.73-74.

41 Stow, Native Races, pp.286-287.

42 Tau is thought to have died around 1760 from wounds received in his war with the Korana of Taaibosch the Elder. (See Breutz, Mafeking District, p.31; Stow, Native Races, pp.286-287; S.M. Molema, Montshiwa, (Cape Town, 1966), p.6; Matthews, "Tshidi Barolong", p.12; Idem., "Barolong", Ditirafalo, p.9.) For a likehood that Tau did not die during or at the end of the war with the Korana, see Language, "Herkoms en Geskiedenis...", pp.122-123, and above, Chapter I, p.16.

fought in the pass afterwards called "Phata-ya-Barwa". Moleta defeated the invaders.[43]

Moleta's next military encounter was with the Bahurutshe ba-ga-Gopane, who were then living at the hill Powe (Dinokana) near Zeerust in the Transvaal from about 1700 and were accordingly the neighbours of the Bangwaketse on their eastern side. When the Bahurutshe king Thekisho died before Tirwe his eldest son of the first house was old enough to succeed, Boikanyo, the eldest son of the second house, became regent. When Boikanyo subsequently refused to make way for the real heir to the throne, Tirwe fled to the Bangwaketse and appealed to Moleta for help. The forces of the Bangwaketse and of the Bakwena defeated those of Boikanyo and killed him.[44] Thus Moleta assisted in having Tirwe installed as the rightful king of the Bahurutshe ba-ga-Gopane.

The Bakwena cluster of chiefdoms exhibit an unusual regularity in their dynastic successions. This instance of the Bangwaketse and Bakwena joining together to uphold orthodox succession principles among the Bahurutshe-Gopane, indicates the concern of the dynasties in maintaining the status quo, and not allowing precedents to be established which would open up the candidacy to the throne to a larger number of royal sons. The insistence by the Kwena-related dynasties upon a fixed rule of succession contributed a great deal to the stability of those

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43 Moseley and Motlhabane, History of the Bangwaketse; Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.125.

44 Breutz, Marico District, p.94; F.H.W. Jensen, "Note on the Bahurutshe", African Studies, VI, 4, 1947, pp.176-179; Campbell, Travels... Second Journey, I, p.314.

states. This fixed rule was ultimately varied so frequently among the Bahurutshe cluster of chiefdoms that it resulted in a plethora of succession crises, leading to an inordinate number of collateral successions and, eventually, political fissions.

From Pitsa, Moleta migrated to Makolontwane, northeast of Moshaneng. It was from his settlement there that the place became known as Melita to white people travelling among the southern Tswana.[45] Not far from Makolontwane, the Bakwena kingdom under Motswasele I had its cattle-posts at Gookodisa. Constant harrying by the Bakwena regiments drove Moleta southwards to a place called Mhakane very near Mabule on the Molopo River. It appears that Moleta had become apprehensive about the safety of his son and heir Makaba, whom he wished to train thoroughly in the art of warfare. It also appears that the migration from Makolontwane to Mhakane followed upon a heavy defeat of the Bangwaketse by the Bakwena. While the Bangwaketse were living on the Molopo the young prince Makaba led a plundering expedition against the Bangologa, whom he despoiled of large numbers of cattle. These cattle grow to an uncommonly tall height and have larger horns than the usual Ngwaketse breeds. In the Ngwaketse country the progeny of this strain of cattle is still available and is called dingologa.[46]

The last site occupied by the Bangwaketse under Moleta was very close to Moshaneng, and west of it, that settlement at

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45 Campbell, Travels... Second Journey, pp.70-316; Molema, Bantu - Past and Present, p.56.

46 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.125-126. Monica Wilson states that Tswana and Pedi cattle were the long-horned Sanga-type.

Setlhabatsane brought them once more to within striking reach of the Bakwena, now ruled by Seitlhamo, son of Motswasele I. Seitlhamo had just moved the Bakwena capital from Sokwane to Dithejwane.[47] Moleta died of old age at Setlhabatsane.[48] His descendants founded the Matlaro, Makgekga, Masoswane, Manare and Segwane wards of the Bangwaketse at Kanye.[49]

According to Schapera,[50] it was about 1790 when Moleta died and, therefore, when Makaba II succeeded him. Lord Hailey gives the dates c. 1795-1825[51] for the reign of Makaba.[52] Moffat, who had the advantage of having spent a week with Makaba as his guest and to have discussed with him over many issues, thought his accession occurred about 1780.[53] Further, Moffat estimated Makaba's age at above sixty years even though his mother was still alive. This provides a prima facie case in favour of the earlier date. If it is also remembered that the Bakwena have

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47 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.39, 126.

48 Ibid., p.126; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.3; Wookey, Dico, p.67. The information given to Campbell by a Morolong informant that Moleta was poisoned by his son Makaba because he desired one of his wives for himself has not been confirmed by my informants. It is not clear whether there was any connection between Makaba II's refusal to allow his uncle Moabi to take over one of his late father's widows and this tradition recorded by Campbell.

49 Schapera, "A Short History...", Appendix Genealogy of Ngwaketse Ruling House.

50 Schapera, Praise Poems, p.147; Idem., "A Short History...", p.3.

51 Lord Hailey, Native Administration in British African Territories, Part V, (H.M.S.O., 1953), p.175.

52 Ibid.

53 R. Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, ed., I. Schapera, (London, 1951), pp.135-137; Idem., Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa, (New York, 1847), p.268.

traditions which tell of the secession of the Maoto ward from the Bakwena (during the reign of Motswasele I) in order to settle among the Bangwaketse under Makaba II, then it becomes clear that Makaba II may have begun ruling well before 1790, and probably earlier than 1780.[54]

The reign of Makaba II (c.1780-1824) clearly marked the rise of the Bangwaketse to a position of great prominence in the Tswana world during the two decades immediately preceding the Difaqane wars. Makaba II was a warrior chief and during his reign fought almost all of the chiefdoms surrounding him. Although we have no record of Makaba II's military organisation, he is generally said to have made himself the most formidable ruler among the Tswana kings of the pre-Difaqane period.[55] To the nineteenth century writer George Stow, it appeared that Makaba II filled up his entire life with "making attacks and reprisals on his neighbours".[56] But the eighteenth century in Southern Africa appears to have been a period of general restlessness and instability - of fissions, splinterings and hivings off. It seems to have been the beginning of the volkerwanderung that reached its crescendo with the more dramatic encounters and upheavals of the Difaqane during the first half of the next

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54 For Bakwena traditions on the secession of Bo-Ramaoto ward during the reign of Motswasele I, See Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, pp.37-9. At an interview held in the Modietsho ward at which representatives of the Maoto ward and others were present, the arrival of Bo-Ramaoto in the reign of Makaba II was confirmed. Interview held on Wednesday 10 October, 1973.

55 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.144-147; Lord Hailey, Native Administration, Part V, p.175; Stow, Native Races, pp.534-536.

56 Stow, Native Races, p.536; Schapera, Praise Poems, p.124.

century. In such an environment of restlessness and uncertainty, it was the soldier kings or rulers that tended to succeed.

At Makaba II's accession, the Bangwaketse capital was still located at Setlhabatsane. Makaba's first war was against the Bakwena, then ruled by Seitlhamo. It was a war to avenge the defeat of the Bangwaketse regiments at Gookodisa. Employing some strategem, he tricked the Bakwena by professions of friendship and activities that seemed to herald a new policy of peaceful co-existence. These included the building of Bangwaketse cattle-posts adjacent to those of the Bakwena. Makaba II then fell suddenly upon the unsuspecting Bakwena, routing them and looting many of their cattle. Campbell's informants stated that on that occasion, Makaba II captured the Bakwena king, Seitlhamo, but released him soon afterwards. When in a subsequent attack he again captured Seitlhamo he killed him. Makaba then moved the Ngwaketse capital to Sebatleng. The infuriated Bakwena fell heavily upon Makaba II and his people, killing many of them and capturing a large number of cattle.[57] The Bakwena victory at Sebatleng appears to have been achieved under the leadership of Seitlhamo's son, Maleke (c. 1803) who, according to Bakwena traditions, burnt Makaba's village and killed one of his uncles named Tawana.[58] It was presumably after his victory over the Bangwaketse that Maleke was bitten by a mad dog and died.[59] It was also after that defeat that Makaba II moved his capital to

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57 Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, p.41; Sillery, Sechele, p.52.

58 Campbell, Travels... Second Journey, I, p.315.

59 Sillery, Sechele, p.521; Schapera, Praise Poems, p.124.

the top of Kanye hill, which is a natural redoubt and therefore easier to defend than many former Ngwaketse capitals. He fortified the hill with stone walls rendering it impregnable.

Makaba II's wars against the Bakwena and his other neighbours - as were indeed those of his predecessors, Mongala and Moleta - were principally directed at capturing cattle, and, to a lesser extent, at securing allegiance of the conquered and therefore payment of tribute. The vanquished were seldom destroyed or annihilated. Total warfare was not yet a characteristic feature of military conflicts in Southern Africa. It is accordingly possible to see most of Makaba II's wars as part of an attempt to regulate or control the "frontiers" of his geographical and political control.

Soon thereafter, the Bangwaketse had to face a combination of invaders under the leadership of a white frontier brigand of German descent, named Jan Bloem. His attack on the Bangwaketse occurred around 1798 or 1799.[60] This Jan Bloem was a fugitive and an outlaw from the Cape Colony who fled with one Piet Pienaar - another shady character whose dealings among the Korana and other Khoi societies of Trans-Orangia resulted in his amassing enormous herds of cattle in a very short time. When Piet Pienaar eventually returned to the Colony with his ill-gotten riches, Jan Bloem remained in the vicinity to continue his career of plundering the Korana and other neighbouring groups for cattle. In a region in which an ethos of lawlessness and freebooting had been quickly developed by both white and coloured adventurers, Bloem

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60 Stow, Native Races, pp.290-291, 537; G.M. Theal, History of South Africa Before 1795 (Cape Town, 1964), IV, p.403.

had no difficulty in building up a band of marauders willing to plunder and murder for the sake of profit. With the assistance of such white collaborators as Jacob and Karl Kruger, who in return received a share of the booty,[61] Bloem increased his supply of muskets and ammunition. It was probably this ability to organise increased supplies of arms, ammunition and horses that lay behind his election by a clan of Taaibosch Korana known as the Springboks to become their captain.[62] Later he established himself near the mouth of the Kolong (the Lower Harts River) from whence he extended his operations to the Tswana societies living between the Kuruman and Molopo Rivers.[63]

Bloem and his plundering horde turned the whole of the country "from the Kuruman river northward as far as the Notwane"[64] into a state of confusion. Emboldened by the relative ease of their victories against the crudely armed Tswana clans and chiefdoms of the Cis-Molopo area, Bloem and his horde planned an attack on Makaba. Victory over the most widely feared and supposedly invincible Tswana ruler would boost both the ego and the wealth of this frontier desperado. Makaba's spies quickly apprised him of Bloem's intentions.[65] The Bangwaketse regiments

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61 Stow, Native Races, p.290.

62 Ibid.; Theal, History of S.A., IV, p.400.

63 Burchell, Travels... Second Journey, II, p.249; Theal, History of S.A., IV, p.400.

64 Theal, History of S.A., p.400.

65 Stow, Native Races, p.291. For further examples of Makaba's methods of obtaining intelligence, see Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.263-264, p.270; Idem., Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp.133-135. Moffat considered his knowledge of events in neighbouring areas to be quite remarkable. There may

raised high stone walls which encircled Kanye hill with openings in them like gates, as well as heaping large stones at places where they could be rolled down on the heads of the attacking horde. The battle was fought at Matlhabanelong in Kanye. The raiders were so effectively resisted by Makaba II's regiments that "they did not capture a single beast from the Bangwaketse".[66] Jan Bloem died shortly thereafter supposedly from drinking in a well poisoned by the Bangwaketse.[67]

About 1800, the Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana occupied Motswedi village near Mabotsa (Maanwane) where they paid tribute to the Bahurutshe. Some time prior to 1808 the Bakgetla baga Mmanaana were at war with the Bangwaketse under Makaba II.[68] The war was fought on the Ngotwane (Notwane) River and the Bakgatla were heavily defeated and scattered losing nearly all their cattle to the Bangwaketse. It was then that their king Kgolle approached Makaba II to "beg for cattle". This incident resulted in the incorporation of the Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana as one of the clans in Ngwaketse society.[69] But this did not, apparently, take place

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accordingly be some substance in what the Batlhaping told Burchell, viz., that Bangwaketse traders who visited Dithakong while Burchell was in the same place were, in fact, spies. (See Burchell, Travels, II, pp.276-7, 304.)

66 Stow, Native Races, p.291.

67 Campbell, Travels...First Journey, p.540.

68 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.4; Breutz, Marico District, p.24.

69 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders; interview held at Kgatleng ward, Wednesday 22 August 1973, especially evidence of Solomon Nkokota Pula, Koboyankwe, and Headman Simanyana Mosielele. Also recorded traditions by Tiro Motlhabani in Botswana National Archives - History of the Bakgatla Ba-ga-Mmanaana.

until the Bakgatla of Mmanaana had "rebelled" against the Bahurutshe to whom they were paying tribute until about 1814-15.[70] It was probably their poverty resulting from the capture of their stock that decided the Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana against continuing to pay tribute to their Hurutshe overlords and subsequently to appeal as suppliants for Makaba's help. Makaba II settled the Bakgatla at Mogopyane, east of Kanye. Later they settled at Ga-Mafhikana which now forms part of Kanye. Kontle afterwards married one of Makaba's daughters by whom he begot a son Mosielele.[71]

Although the traditions are too vague to enable us to draw definite conclusions, there are some indications that Makaba's military strength attracted several splinter groups from the surrounding chiefdoms. In addition to the Ra-Maoto section that joined the Bangwaketse, and the Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana under Kontle, several Barolong clans fleeing from civil wars reinforced the Bangwaketse polity around 1808.[72] In the next few years the Bangwaketse regiments raided far and wide, attacking successively the Batlhaping, the Bakwena and the Bahurutshe. Makaba's raids by moonlight made him the most dreaded and hated Tswana king and provoked a "Grand Alliance" of all the neighbouring chiefdoms against the Bangwaketse. This was the war of Moabi. According to Bangwaketse traditions, this alliance was the work of Moabi, an uncle to Makaba whose attempt to take over one of Moleta's

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70 Breutz, Marico District, p.24.

71 Evidence of Nkokota Pula, Kgatleng Ward, 22 August 1973.

72 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.4.

widows was thwarted by Makaba II. The frustrated Moabi is then said to have plotted the downfall of Makaba by instigating as many of Makaba's enemies as he could persuade to attack him simultaneously. Moabi accordingly led a force comprising Batlhaping, Batlhware, Bakwena, Bahurutshe, Bakgatla ba-ga-Kgafela and some Korana. The only allies of the Bangwaketse were the Barolong ba-Tshidi under Tawana.[73] They were Makaba's immediate neighbours to the south and had had long-standing affinal relationship with the Ngwaketse royal house.[74] The battle was fought at Matlhabanelong on the slopes of Kanye hill, just least of where the mission hospital stands today. Once again the Ngwaketse regiments under Makaba triumphed. The invaders were driven back.[75]

Makaba II moved his capital eastwards from Kanye to Pitsaneng and subsequently to Makakanana not far from Mahikeng.[76] The Bamalete have traditions which mention that while their main settlement was at Lotlhakane (and during the reign of their king

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73 Wookey, Dico, p.67; Campbell, Travels... Second Journey, I, p.298; Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.126.

74 One of Makaba II's wives, Mojankunyana, was the daughter of Motshegare-a-Tawana. She was the mother of the youngest of Makaba II's sons - Moisakamo, who was the founder of the Moisakamo ward. (Evidence of Kwelagobe R. Bome, with Seepe Modietsho, S. Seleleko and Gaongalelwe; Interview on Monday 11 March, 1974). Also Tawana, the Barolong (Tshidi branch) chief was son-in-law to Makaba II, having married his daughter Maseferà, while the daughter of Tshosa (Makaba's son and heir) Tsadinyana became one of the wives of Montshiwa. (See, Molema, Montshiwa, p.216)

75 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.126; Evidence of Bangwaketse elders, especially Ntau Mogobe, Mokhaung Selotlego, Tlametlu Maswabi and Tshanana Baoki: Interview held at Kgosing ward on 15 August, 1973.

76 Brown, Bantu Nomads, p.253; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.4.

Mokgobywe) they were attacked by Bangwaketse regiments, and that the Bangwaketse were then living at Tlowe(Dinokana).[77] According to the Bamalete, the Bangwaketse ruler was Mathwanyana.[78] There are several indications that this Bamalete tradition refers to the period of Makaba II. In his praises, Makaba II is described as the "salient of Makapana and Moshana, who climbed or mounted Tlowe in order to count the neighbouring villages".[79] One informant in Kanye stated that Makaba lived for a short time at Dinokana.[80] In the praises to Ikaneng, king of the Bamalete, Makaba is referred to as Mathwanyana;[81] and Mathwanyana is referred to as a contemporary of the Bakgatla ba-ga Mmanaana king, Kontle,[82] for the latter was his ally during the battle in question.

All these factors therefore point to the possibility of the Bangwaketse having lived for a short spell at Tlowe (Dinokana) even though there is nothing in their own traditions to suggest that. The Bamalete tradition claims that the Bangwaketse and Bakgatla-Mmanaana regiments had crossed the Madikwe (Marico)

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77 V. Ellenberger, "Di roba roba Matlhakola - Tsa ga Masodi-a-Mphela", Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa, Vol. XXV, (1937-38). Ellenberger gives the relative date for Mokgojwe's reign as c. 1780-1800 which clearly makes him contemporary with Makaba II.

78 Ibid.

79 I. Schapera, Praise-Poems of Tswana Chiefs, (Oxford, 1965), p.147.

80 Personal communication by Mr. Bathoen Gaseitsiwe.

81 Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", pp.3, 27, 31. This name, which recurs in frequent allusions in Bamalete praise poems, is used in situations which suggest reference to both Makaba I and Makaba II.

82 Ibid:

River at night and slept in the Loduba bushes on the river bank, attacking at dawn. The invaders were driven back and forced to retreat across the river now in full flood. Many Bangwaketse and Bakgatla-Mmanaana were speared in the water and many more drowned.[83]

Makaba returned to Kanye and occupied the present day site of the Ra-Sebako ward. Schapera considers that it was probably around 1815. The old motlhware (olive) tree that stood in Makaba's kgotla still dominates the central courtyard of the Ra-Sebako ward. When the traveller Burchell visited the Batlhaping capital in 1812, he was struck by their hostility towards the Bangwaketse whom they accused of committing terrible atrocities to travellers and, in particular, that they murdered the members of a Cape government sponsored expedition led by Dr. Alexander Cowan and Lieutenant E.D. Donovan of the Cape garrison. This ill-starred expedition had been sent in 1808 to explore "northern Bechuanaland" and to attempt to reach overland the Portuguese settlements on the east coast. After passing north of the Molopo River, the expedition was not heard of any more, and for many years it was believed that its members had been killed by Makaba II and his people. It subsequently transpired, however, that they had passed the districts of the Bangwaketse, Bakwena and Bangwato, and had turned eastwards along the Limpopo when they mysteriously disappeared. When, in 1813, the missionary, John Campbell, arrived at the Batlhaping capital of Ditha-kong, he was given similar reports about the untrustworthiness

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83 Ibid.

and treachery of Makaba and his people.[84] Mothibi, the Batlhaping chief, would not trust anything from Makaba, not even a present of live cattle, fearing that these might have been "doctored" to bewitch him.[85]

The possibility that Makaba was desirous of genuine reconciliation with Mothibi cannot be ruled out. The Batlhaping appeared to have established contact with some of the white people as well as the mixed or half-caste clans from the south (generally known to the Tswana as "Ma-Setedi") through whom guns and ammunition were slowly penetrating the interior. Through his intelligence, he must also have been aware of the trade that seemed to follow in the wake of the white missionaries. The failure of many of these whites to reach Ngwaketse country must have convinced Makaba II that his enemies were persuading them against doing so. He probably heard of both the Burchell and Campbell visits to the Batlhaping and the latter's proceeding to Kaditshwene, the Hurutshe capital, which was only two days travel from Kanye.[86]

It was probably partly exasperation that his efforts were being thwarted by Mothibi and the Bahurutshe that led him to recommence his attacks and raids on those peoples. Thus in

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84 Burchell, Travels, II, pp.319, 439, 376, 503; Campbell, Travels... First Journey, pp.247, 264.

85 Burchell, Travels, II, p.439, 476; Lister, Bain's Journals, pp.16-17; Campbell, Travels, p.171; G. Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa, ed., Vernon S. Forbes, (Cape Town, 1967), p.83; Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp.41, 138, 141.

86 Campbell, Travels...Second Journey, I, p.274; Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.139-140; Idem., Missionary Labours, p.270.

1816-1817 he attacked Batlhaping regiments that had gone on expedition against the Bakwena. This was followed by raids against the Bahurutshe and the Bamalete and the capture of many cattle from them.[87] When Campbell paid a second visit to the Batlhaping in 1820, they were still opposed to his visiting Makaba, and it is clear from Campbell's reaction to Makaba's invitation, that the Batlhaping stories were having an effect on some white men.[88] The fact that Makaba II had at that moment a visitor such as Coenraad Buys[89] was not very helpful in his efforts to establish contact with white missionaries. The L.M.S. missionaries accused the polygamous Buys of turning the minds of the Tswana against their preaching, and of maliciously representing the missionaries as agents of the Cape Colony government. Buys did not stay long after he learnt that Campbell was in the

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87 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.5. Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.43.

88 Campbell, Travels ... Second Journey, I, p.274. Campbell declined the invitation after consulting with "Munameets and Ligueling". He concluded that Makaba only wanted beads from him or to compel him (Campbell) and his party to accompany him on a raiding expedition. Instead of going to Makaba II he sent a messenger with a few small presents, which he hoped would make a good impression on him. (See also Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.230-231.)

89 Coenraad Buys (1761-1831) lived among the Xhosa clans on the eastern Cape frontier where from about 1784 he is said to have engaged in several illicit dealings. Crossing the Orange around 1813, he became a serious menace to the missionaries at Klaarwater (Griquatown). From about 1815 he lived as the "guest" of several African chiefs like Moletsane Sekwati and Makaba, and like them he practised polygamy. He also lived among the Hurutshe at Chwenyane (Tshwenyane) where he was known as "Moro". In Bamalete traditions he is also known as "Diphafe" and is said to have played a principal role in the destruction of their capital at Lotlhakane. (See Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.42; Idem., "Ba-ga-Malete", Ditirafalo, p.205).

Bahurutshe territory, but hurried northwards to the Bamangwato country where, according to Schapera, he died.[90] Nor was Buys the first white man to visit the Bangwaketse. A few years before that, the Reverend W. Edwards, who had been a partner of Kok in the Kudumane mission, visited the Bangwaketse, accompanied by some Korana, to trade with them for ivory.[91]

While Makaba's main settlement was at Kanye wa Marapalalo (that is near where the Ra-Sebako ward is located), his son and heir, Tshosa attempted to assassinate him and capture the kingship. When his plot was discovered, Tshosa fled southward to the Barolong bo-Ratlou at Khunwana.[92] Some traditions indicate that the plot which involved a few of Makaba's relatives centred around his principal wife, the mother of Tshosa. She was said to be very anxious to have her son installed as king even before the death of Makaba. While the memories of the elders are dim regarding the details, there are some elements that support the suggestion that Mma-Tshosa may have been involved.[93] Tshosa,

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90 Contrary to what Schapera states, Buys did not die in Ngwato country, but in Portuguese East Africa. (J.J. Badenhorst, "Coenraad de Buys", D.S.A.B., II, pp.163-165; A.E. Schoeman, Coenraad de Buys, (Pretoria, 1938). Hunt, "An Account of the Bapedi", pp.287-289).

91 Burchell, Travels, II, p.537; Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.150-151.

92 Campbell, Travels... Second Journey, I, pp.310-315; Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp.50, 75-76; Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.127-129.

93 Moffat describes how at the principal town of the Barolong (Tshidi branch) i.e., at Phitsane, Tawana persuaded him not to proceed to Makaba II, Tawana had introduced Moffat to Makaba II's principal wife who was said to have fled with her two sons, one of whom was afterwards slain by Makaba's warriors (like Absolom) for treason against his father. (Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.262) Campbell records - in

who was aware of the hatred of the Batlhaping for Makaba, went to Kudumane in April 1822 to invite them to join in an invasion of the Bangwaketse. Failing to win the support of the Batlhaping he raided Bangwaketse cattle-posts with the help of a party of his Bangwaketse followers and Barolong from Khunwana capturing nearly all the cattle and killing the herdsmen. Makaba's regiments overtook Tshosa and his company near Setlagole, scattered them and recovered all the cattle. Despite an order by Makaba not to kill him but to capture him alive, he was slain in the fighting that ensued.[94]

The Tshosa dispute throws an interesting light on the problems of succession among the polygamous house-holds of the Tswana and other African societies in that region. Although Tshosa was the eldest son of Makaba's principal wife and therefore the heir-apparent, he was much younger than Sebego, the eldest son in the second ranking house. Sebego had outstanding qualities of courage and wisdom and had more experience of leadership of his regiment than the much younger and less distinguished Tshosa, even though the latter was Makaba's favourite son. The plotting by the supporters of the senior house appears to have been directed at forestalling any efforts by Sebego to

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Volume I of his second journey that on 26 March 1820 - he prepared parcels for presentation to various notables at Dithakong. These important people included Shoy who was described as the wife of Brumella "a powerful chief". His wife Shoy was formerly one of Makaba's wives. Her father fled after a dispute with Makaba and she soon did likewise. "On her arrival at Latlakoo, Brumella received her as his wife". (Campbell, Travels... Second Journey, I, p.66).

94 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.127-131.

pre-empt kingship and oust the sons of the senior house in the same manner that Khutwane had earlier ousted his brother Khuto.[95]

Sebego's mother was a Mongwaketse, a daughter of the Sekokotla ward which is descended from Bome, a son of Makaba I.[96] Sebego was, therefore, born of Ngwaketse royal stock on both sides. Since the Bangwaketse tend to favour an heir who is a setlogolo, or uterine nephew of the Bangwaketse, his chances of upsetting the regular succession pattern were extremely good. Makaba's senior wife and mother of Tshosa and Segotshane, appears to have come from the Maoto ward which originated in the Bakwena chiefdom, and although it had technically become a Ngwaketse ward, was nevertheless of recent incorporation, and accordingly, did not rank as high as the Sekokotla in seniority. It is therefore conceivable that a vicious tussle for greater influence and control at Makaba's court could have developed among the supporters and hangers-on of the Sekokotla and Maoto wards.[97]

Makaba II was about to be visited by Robert Moffat, the L.M.S. Missionary at Kudumane, when a horde of invaders comprising the Baphuting, Bahlakoana, and possibly others, threatened Kudumane. Moffat hurried back to organise Griqua resistance for the defence of Kudumane and the Batlhaping. The invaders were

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95 Personal communication by ex-chief Bathoen Gaseitsiwe, Kanye, Friday 1 March, 1974.

96 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders: Sekokotla Kaboyamodimo at public interview held at kgotla of subchief of Ra-Sebego ward, Thursday 23 August, 1973. Also evidence of Kwelagobe R. Bome with Seepe Modietsho, S. Selelеko and Gaongalelwe - private interview held 11 March, 1974; Schapera, Praise Poems, p.150.

97 Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.262.

decisively beaten at the Battle of Dithakong in June 1823.[98] Before their attack on Dithakong, these invaders, described by Moffat as "Mantatees", had attacked and dispersed Sefunelo's Barolong ba-Seleka at Matlwase (Maquassie), had reduced Bahurutse towns to ashes, and were descending upon Makaba's new settlement of Tlhorong when Makaba's regiments checked their victorious sweep through the country and inflicted heavy defeat on them, forcing them to turn southwards towards the Barolong and Batlhaping.[99] The defeat of the invaders by Makaba II, and later by the Griqua at Dithakong, made it possible for Moffat to embark on his delayed visit to Makaba II.

In August 1824, Moffat was able to respond positively to Makaba II's invitation that he should visit him. Makaba had now moved the capital to Kgwakgwe hill a few miles south of Kanye. Moffat stayed a week at Kgwakgwe, but could make no impression on Makaba II as far as Christianity and religious work was concerned. But Makaba showed a tremendous desire for a missionary to be stationed with his people. Moffat promised to send him one.[100]

Towards the end of 1824, Makaba was attacked by Sebetwane's Makololo. The Bakwena, who were supposed to be his allies in the battle, treacherously refused to help the Bangwaketse. Instead, they took part in looting Bangwaketse stock. Sebego,

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98 J.D. Omer-Cooper, The Zulu Aftermath: A Nineteenth Century Revolution in Bantu Affairs (London, 1966), p.95; Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp.87-103; Thompson, Travels and Adventures, Chapter 15; How, "An Alibi for Mantatisi", pp.69-72.

99 Stow, Native Races, p.461.

100 Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.143.

who had been put in charge of two regiments - the Malau and the Maabakgomo - and asked to hold a strategic position, deliberately withheld his regiments from assisting his father's army. Consequently, the Bangwaketse were defeated and Makaba II was killed.[101]

The death of Makaba II ended the first period of migrations which can be said to have been concerned with the search for a suitable permanent site for their main settlement. The migrations which followed - namely those under Sebego who ruled the Bangwaketse from 1824 to 1844, Senthufe (1844-1857), Segotshane and Gaseitsiwe, did not involve all the Bangwaketse moving together, but affected various sections differently. These migrations were of a temporary nature and were caused partly by the "Difaqane" wars, and partly by civil war arising from dynastic disputes.

Because of the extensive nature of the pre-Difaqane migrations of the Bangwaketse, a brief examination of the reasons may be desirable. Having separated themselves from the parent community, the Bangwaketse had, of necessity, to cast about in search of a suitable locality to provide a definite geographical base for their newly established polity. As long as they settled on land belonging to, or regarded as belonging to another chiefdom, they would be expected to pay tribute, unless they quickly established a claim to the land through conquest. In searching for a new home, it was unlikely that they would, without travel-

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101 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders: Montshosi Basogi, Ntau Mogobe, and Sebate Dikgageng. See also Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.133; Idem., "A Short History...", p.6.

ling long distances, quickly find sites that offered all the necessary advantages, and which were at the same time not claimed by some other group as lying within their own sphere of influence.

An important factor in deciding the site of a new village, was the availability of water for both man and beast. That this was crucial, not only to determining sites but also in deciding the pattern of grouping wards within a village, can still be discerned in the three dintlha or zonal groupings of Bangwaketse wards in Kanye into fa gare or central, ntlha ya godimo or upper section and ntlha ya tlase or lower section. These names are said to derive from the times when villages were habitually founded on the banks of rivers.[102] Godimo then referred to the collection of wards that were located up-stream; tlase to those situated down-stream, and fa gare was the agglomeration of wards surrounding the king's palace. From this alone it will be evident that settlement near water courses was the tradition of the Bangwaketse and other Tswana peoples. Also, because Botswana is a country of very low rainfall - the greater part of which is bounded by the rainfall isohyets of ten and twenty inches[103] - and because the people are essentially pastoralists, it follows that availability of water would have been a primary consideration in the siting of new settlements. Therefore, Moffat's

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102 Personal communication by ex-chief Bathoen Gaseitsiwe Kanye, 1 March 1974. Also Schapera, Law and Custom, pp.20-25, passim; Idem., The Tswana, pp.46-47; A. Winifred Hoernle, "Social Organisation", in Schapera, ed., Bantu-Speaking Tribes, pp.88-91.

103 Tlou, Northwestern Botswana, p.20; P. Smit, Botswana Resources and Development, (Pretoria, 1970), p.20; D.B. Knight, In Support of the Raison D'Etre: Some Aspects of the Political Geography of Botswana, (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Eastern Michigan University, 1967), p.26.

generalisation about Botswana not paying sufficient attention to the water factor in the siting of villages,[104] need not be taken seriously.

Several other factors may have decided the early Bangwaketse to move their settlement so often and over such a wide area. Often the very important consideration of an abundant water supply had, quite understandably, to be subordinated to the choice of impregnable sites,[105] and if these also happened to be situated not far from rivers or springs, then they were considered particularly ideal. The feeling of insecurity and the need to provide against surprise attacks dictated the choice of hill sites. Thus Moleta became obliged to abandon the delectable country at Seoke and ascend Pitsa Hill, so that he could build a stone wall to defend himself effectively against the invaders from the south.[106] Likewise his evacuation of Makolontwane and the migration to Mhakane, near Mabule, was necessitated by a feeling of insecurity and Moleta's desire to protect his heir from the regiments of the hostile Bakwena.[107]

It is also believed to have been a Tswana custom for a new ruler, upon accession, to move his main village to a new site, or at least to a different one from that occupied by his prede-

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104 R. Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.112. See also Burchell, Travels in the Interior of South Africa, II, p.395.

105 In reply to Campbell's question why the Bahurutshe capital was built on a hill and not in a valley, Diutlwileng said it was because of enemies. (Travels in South Africa... Second Journey, I, p.232)

106 See above p.81.

107 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.125.

cessor.[108] While this may have been the case generally speaking, there were instances where the Ngwaketse kings did not observe the custom. It is a well-known fact that three Bangwaketse kings ruled at Seoke - Makaba I, Mongala, and Moleta. On the other hand, it was quite common for one ruler to move his capital two, three or more times. Moleta's and Makaba II's shifting of their capitals provide examples of the latter tendency.

The occupation of Seoke meant not only the founding of a new capital, but, at the same time, the imposition of Ngwaketse authority over a new group. There may accordingly, have been occupations of new sites deliberately planned to facilitate the incorporation of new elements into the Ngwaketse state. In such instances, the movement of the capital would be a technique of expansion.

Finally, the operation of reasons of a magico-religious character cannot be excluded. The steady or persistent death of calves or human off-spring could lead to the evacuation of a site. So would the outbreak of a devastating epidemic such as the second small pox epidemic of 1755 that decimated whole clans of Khoikhoi in some parts of the Cape Colony.

The period of migrations reached its climax under Makaba II, whose importance lies not only in the fact that he was the first to occupy Kanye hill, but also to have fortified it against future invasion, thus enabling it to withstand assault by various combinations of groups on at least two occasions. His wars and his migrations served both to draw the perimeters of the Ngwaketse

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[108] Evidence of Gaseitsiwe in Bloemhof Bluebook, p.190; M. Legassick, The Griqua, The Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries, 1780-1840, (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1969), pp.50-51.

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state and to enforce its recognition as an independent polity by all the neighbouring chiefdoms.

Makaba II's reign is also remarkable for the first contacts - albeit very tentative ones - with missionary and therefore white influence. His anxiety to establish links with the missionaries reveals Makaba's clear grasp of the realities of economic and political trends in the region south of the Molopo and, to a lesser extent, east of the Madikwe. Through his network of spies or couriers, Makaba was made aware of the devastating force and startling mobility conferred by the white man's arms as well as by horses on the otherwise unimpressive and fragmentary Khoi communities dwelling south of the Molopo River. His migrations in the direction of the Molopo - especially that towards Mokakanana near Mahikeng can accordingly be seen as an attempt to push forward the southern-most extremes of Bangwaketse-held territory.

The Batlhaping at Kuduman had very firm links with the armed and mounted Griqua of Griquatown. A great deal of that relationship (especially during the second decade of the nineteenth century and later) could be attributed to the links that the L.M.S. agents fostered or in other ways promoted between the two groups of people.[109] Makaba, whom Moffat found well-informed on the politics of the region, could have reasoned that the presence of a white missionary among the Bangwaketse would likewise confer the same "favoured group" status on them and open the door to the supply of arms and ammunition to the Bangwaketse. It is very likely that Makaba II knew of the visits to Tlhaping

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[109] Legassick, The Griqua, The Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries, especially Chapters 9 to 11, passim.

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country of the Truter and Somerville mission in 1801 and of the later visit to the same group by Henry Lichtenstein.[110]

Indications are that Makaba II prized the hoped-for connection with white men not only for the arms, but also for trade in other goods. As Burchell observed,[111] all the Tswana rulers were anxious for trade with white men, and if they did not obtain guns, they were as keen on glass beads. They desired, through the control of trade in ivory and other goods, to increase their wealth and power. Makaba's appetite for such trade must have been whetted by visits such as those of the Dutch missionary, W. Edwards in 1807 or 1808, and perhaps by members of the Cowan expedition.[112] It is in these terms that the southward orientation of Makaba's policy must be construed. Although of Bakwena origin and, consequently, sharing a common totem with the Bakwena, Makaba's foreign relations appeared to be directed towards forging closer links with the tholo or koodoo venerating Batlhaping than with his totem-brothers the Bakwena. It could also be seen as a colonising of non-Kwena Tswana groups.

Despite his frequent attacks on the Batlhaping and his repeated frustration of their retaliatory expeditions against him,[113] and despite their intense hatred for and inordinate fear of him, Makaba's own attitude towards them does not appear to

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110 P.B. Borcherds, An Autobiographical Memoir, (Cape Town, 1861), pp.83-86; Stow, Native Races, pp.291, 434-435; Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.150; H. Lichenstein, Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806, (Cape Town, 1928-1930), p.368.

111 Burchell, Travels in the Interior of South Africa, II, p.395.

112 Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.151, 156.

113 Stow, Native Races, pp.444-452, passim.

have been governed by an implacable feeling of animosity. On the contrary, he appears to have always entertained the hope of some reconciliation between the Batlhaping and the Bangwaketse. Burchell records that just prior to his visit to Dithakong in 1812, the Bangwaketse and the Batlhaping had gone out jointly on some raiding expedition. Also, while he was at Dithakong, a "diplomatic mission" from Makaba II arrived there with a present of cattle to Mothibi, although as we have already seen, Mothibi churlishly rejected the proffered hand of friendship.[114] The refusal of Campbell, on the occasion of his second visit to Southern Africa, to visit the Bangwaketse must have convinced Makaba of the effect of Mothibi's hostile propaganda, as well as the counsel of others - like Tawana of the Barolong-Tshidi and Mokgatla of the Bahurutshe - that white men travelling among the Tswana should not visit him.[115]

Thus Makaba's success in persuading Moffat to visit, or rather Moffat's persistence to go and see for himself, so as to make an independent evaluation of the man, can be regarded as having been a significant break-through for Makaba II. For different reasons, both Makaba and Moffat regarded the visit as a crucial undertaking. On 14 May, 1823, Moffat recorded in his diary:

> For a long time it has been my wish to obtain a knowledge of the real character of Macabba, King of the Wankets, lying about two or three days journey north of the Bahurutshe. Hitherto his character has been represented to us as the worst

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114 Burchell, Travels, II, pp.439, 476.

115 Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.262; Idem., Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp.13, 129-130.

> of men, a robber and murderer possessing the cunning of the Devil. There, say the Matelapees Dr. Cowan and his associates were murdered to the last man; and many other strangers, say they, who have paid a friendly visit, have shared the same unrelenting destiny. By these reports his very name strikes terror in the surrounding tribes, and is stigmatized with the most execrable wishes.[116]

Moffat went on to observe that if all that was said of Makaba were true, it would be natural to infer that the tyranny and usurpation of such a man "must form a powerful barrier to the spread of the Gospel, and call forth a more than ordinary courage to plant the standard of the Cross within the limits of such despotic power". But Moffat did note that there were nevertheless contradictory opinions from persons who perceived Makaba's character in a different light. That, together with a recent invitation he had received from Makaba,[117] made it a duty on his part (Moffat's) to visit the Ngwaketse monarch.

The attack on Dithakong by the group that Moffat described as the "Mantatees"[118] delayed his visit to Makaba until August 1824.[119] On his way to Kgwakgwe, while at the Barolong-Tshidi town of Phitshane, Tawana, the Barolong chief, did his best to persuade Moffat not to continue his journey to the Bangwaketse. As an example of Makaba's cruelty, Tawana cited the fact that one of Makaba's wives, "a fine matronly woman", had been obliged

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116 For Tshosa's role in spreading unfounded stories about his own father, see Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp.39, 50-51, 75; J.S. Moffat, Lives of Robert and Mary Moffat (London, 1885), p.74.

117 Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.40.

118 Ibid., pp.91-97.

119 Ibid., p.118.

to flee and was subsequently married by "Brumella" [?Marumalwa].[120] Moffat nevertheless decided to continue his journey to the Ngwaketse.

Makaba's use of "spies" and other forms of intelligence kept him well-primed on the movements of Moffat. His concern that Moffat should not succumb to the propaganda of his enemies made him send his uncle Marogo and a few men to meet the Moffat party even while they were more than a days journey from the Ngwaketse capital in order to greet them and welcome their arrival in Ngwaketse country, and to send them "porridge" - an ox.[121] On 3 August, 1824, a second set of messengers met the Moffat party, then travelling in the southern part of Ngwaketse country, to greet them and to let them know that Makaba had not slept, for joy because of their approach. This was both a shrewd and a diplomatic step that helped tremendously to put the minds of his visitors at ease, as well as to keep himself informed up to the minute about the appearance and condition of the party.[122]

The solicitude with which Makaba received Moffat and his entourage, the numerous kindly gestures of friendship, the great care taken to guarantee their personal safety and the security of their property against loss or theft[123] - all these show the attentiveness of an accomplished statesman to the need to develop cordial relations between his state and such an "important"

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120 Campebll, Travels... Second Journey, I, p.66; Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.132; Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.262-263..

121 Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.134.

122 Idem., Missionary Labours, pp.263-264.

123 Ibid.

contact as Moffat. Makaba's own words indicate the importance he attached to the visit:

> My friends. I am perfectly happy; my heart is whiter than milk because you have visited me. Today I am a great man; men will now say Makabbe is in league with white people. I know that all men speak evil of me and seek my hurt, and it is because they cannot conquer me that I am hated; it is because if they do me evil I can reward them twofold... You are come to see the villain Makabbe, you are come as the Batclapees say, to die by my hands. You are wise men to come and see with your eyes. You are bold men to laugh at the testimony of my enemies;..."[124]

In reply to Moffat's statement of the object of his visit, Makaba astutely replied that it was his hope that in the future no grass would be allowed to grow between Kudumane and Kgwakgwe; but he also knew, he continued, that all attempts would be made by Mothibi to place obstacles in Moffat's way. Likewise, when Moffat (keen to disabuse Makaba of any notion of a missionary operating in a secular capacity, whether political or commercial) emphasized the missionary's strict concern with spiritual affairs, and added that one ought to be sent to the neighbouring Bahurutshe as well, Makaba's answer was a clever one. He stated that "men of peace should live in every nation, that a family intercourse might be kept up". Pointing to a string of blue beads decorating his kobo or kaross, Makaba said that they were sent to him by the missionary John Campbell, from the Bahurutshe country:

> I suppose their stories frightened him back the road he came, by representing me to be the king of villains. I hope he did not believe the testimony of my enemies. My enemies are not the persons

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[124] Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.136.

to judge of my character.[125]

After a week's stay at Kgwakgwe, Moffat left to return to Kuruman. Although he promised Makaba a missionary to be stationed among the Bangwaketse, he knew as he was leaving that he had failed to bring home to the warrior king the fundamental principle that missionaries were not intended to serve the secular needs of African chiefdoms. Makaba did not live to see the realisation of his dream of a resident white missionary among the Ngwaketse people. In the same year in which Moffat had visited, he was killed at the battle of Losabanyana, fought between the Bangwaketse and Sebetwane's Makololo.

When he died, the Bangwaketse state had already been established as the strongest of the Tswana societies, with the distinction of being the only one that had defeated the invading hordes under Jan Bloem in 1798/1799; and the roving band that attacked his village of Tlhorong in 1823. Although there was as yet no white missionary in Ngwaketseland, he had done the necessary ground work and his contact with Moffat had placed the Bangwaketse on the map of future missionary expansion.

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[125] Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.270.

CHAPTER III

CATTLE, KINGS AND CONSTITUTIONALITY: SEBEGO VERSUS SEGOTSHANE AND GASEITSIWE (1824-1844)

One of the consequences of Shaka creating his militarist Zulu state, during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, was its throwing off, from the theatre of war, of a series of waves of marauding hordes that crashed with a shattering effect on the Sotho-Tswana societies of the high veld. The flight over the escarpment of impoverished terror-stricken Nguni fighter bands with their families - groups such as the Ama-Hlubi, Ama-Ngwane and Ama-Ndebele - started the attacks, invasions and wars that were to afflict the Sotho-Tswana communities of the region for just under two decades.

It was the suddenness and speed with which these marauding hordes swept across the country dislodging whole communities and dispossessing them of cattle and crops as well as the flower of their youths that intensified the chaos and contributed to the enormity of the destruction. Out of sheer desperation the hapless victims were often forced to imitate their destroyers, adopting their military tactics and pouncing upon other unsuspecting or less well-prepared groups. Three such groups whose activities had some impact on the communities of southern Botswana were the combined Bataung-Baphuting-Bahlakoana horde[1]

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[1] This combined horde was erroneously called the "Mantatees" by Moffat. One group was the Bataung under Moletsane, the other was the Baphuting under the leadership of Tshooane, while the Bahlakoana were led by Nkgereyanye. (See W. Lye, "The Distribution of the Sotho Peoples after the Difaqane", in Thompson, ed., African Societies, p.193; Idem., "The

(1823), the Makololo (1824-1826) and Mandebele of Mzilikazi from about 1829 to 1837. These disturbed conditions, these forced migrations, this whole period of crushing or times of troubles have become known as the Mfecane in Zulu or Difaqane in Sotho.

In the preceding chapter we noted how Makaba II, in 1823, defeated the combined Bataung-Baphuting-Bahlakoana horde forcing them to turn southwards towards the Barolong and Batlhaping communities; but also how he subsequently fell before a Makololo onslaught in the following year. The wars of Sebetwane in southern Botswana not only abruptly terminated the career of the illustrious Makaba II, but also enabled Sebego, his eldest son of the second house, to take over the chieftainship of the Bangwaketse. Although Tshosa, Makaba's legitimate heir, had been killed in 1823, a second son of the senior house, Segotshane, was still alive in 1824, and had also taken part in the battle of Losabanyane at which his father was killed. According to established Ngwaketse tradition, Segotshane should have acted as regent for the minor sons of his late brother, Tshosa. But upon the defeat of the Ngwaketse forces at Losabanyana, Segotshane and his followers fled south to the Barolong-Ratlou at Khunwana[2] leaving Sebego unchallenged in his assumption of full

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Difaqane, The Mfecane in the Southern Sotho Area", J.A.H., VII, 1, (1967), pp.122-125; M. How, "An Alibi for Ma Ntatisi", African Studies, XIII, 2, 1954; Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.103, Edwin W. Smith, "Sebetwane and the Makololo", African Studies, XV, 2, 1956, pp.50-52; Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, pp.95-96.)

2 Evidence of Tlamang Sekalaba, in Seepe Modietsho, Tlotlang Tsima, Tlametlu Maswabi, at interview held at Kgosing ward, Tuesday 14 August, 1973; Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.133.

power in the Bangwaketse kingship.

Having defeated the Bangwaketse, the Makololo captured some cattle and withdrew to the Bakwena capital of Dithubaruba, where they appeared to be digging themselves in for a prolonged settlement. The Makololo were at the point of establishing themselves in the Bakwena capital because they had completely shattered the Kwena kingdom, which they found badly fragmented by dynastic squabbles.[3] The fact that the Bangwaketse had succeeded in salvaging the greater part of their national herd, a fact Livingstone attributed to Sebego's superior generalship,[4] enticed the Makololo to make further attempts at defeating the Bangwaketse, in order to strip them of their cattle. It was such attacks by Sebetwane that made the Bangwaketse abandon their main settlement at Kgwakgwe and move south-west to Selokolela,[5] which was a less favourable site. Thus the migration to Selokolela was the first one forced on the Bangwaketse by the exigencies of coping with the problem of the Difaqane. It was a tactic that he was to employ with good effect as the problem of the Difaqane raids became more serious.

But Sebego's wisdom as a military leader was demonstrated by his perception that it would not be sufficient merely to

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3 Smith, "Sebetwane and the Makololo", pp.57-58; Sillery, Sechele, Chapter 4, passim, Schapera "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, p.45.

4 D. Livingstone, Livingstone's Missionary Correspondence, 1841-1856, ed. I. Schapera, (London, 1961), p.23, D. Livingstone to J.J. Freeman, 3 July, 1842; Smith, "Sebetwane and the Makololo", p.59.

5 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.7. This occurred about June or July 1826. See also Lister, ed., Bain's Journals, p.52.

organise Bangwaketse defence against the Makololo, but also that the Makololo would have to be driven out of the area altogether. The danger from their midst would have to be extirpated. Discovering through an efficient espionage system that the Makololo were preparing for another invasion of the Ngwaketse settlement of Selokolela, Sebego had been planning a counter-offensive when the travellers Bain and Biddulph arrived there on 20 August 1826.[6] So crucial was the success of the campaign to Sebego's entire strategy that in addition to the efficient military preparations he had already mounted, he perceived in the arrival of the small party of white travellers, armed with guns, an excellent potential advantage to his battle plans.

Sebego accordingly promptly commandeered his visitors, ignoring all their protests and claims to the rights of neutrality. To the Bangwaketse and their future chances of survival the presence of the white travellers was clearly too valuable to be sacrificed for some minor scruple about the morality or fairness of coercing their luckless visitors. Sebego therefore made it clear to his visitors that for as long as they were with him, they would have to "be a protection to him", since he had no hesitation in believing that the muskets of the white men would put the Makololo to flight. Because guns were considered so crucial, Bain and Biddulph would be expected not only to assist in the protection of the Bangwaketse in case of invasion by the Makololo, but would also have to accompany the Ngwaketse regi-

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6 Lister, Bain's Journals, pp.51-53; Smith, "Sebetwane and the Makololo", p.59.

ments on an assault on Dithubaruba.[7]

The exaggerated faith shown by Sebego and his people in the capacity of such a small party, albeit well-equipped with fire-arms, to tip the balance in their favour is important as showing not only the intrusion of a new factor - that is, fire-arms - into the conflicts of the region, but also as illustrating the quickness with which Tswana peoples learnt that the unusual wars being fought during the early part of the nineteenth century called for unusual or radical methods of warfare. The decisive victory of a small band of armed and mounted Griqua fighters over the large invading horde that had descended on Dithakong in 1823[8] made a profound impression on most Tswana communities of the interior.

The Bangwaketse and other Tswana had seen clearly how possession of fire-arms turned the numerous Khoi communities north of the Orange River, especially the Bergenaars, into desperate raiders whose plundering activities caused an attrition that the southern Tswana had to contend with for nearly a quarter of a century.[9] Indeed, it had been an earlier phase of the same career of pillage that had brought a mixed band of Korana and Batlhaping to Kanye in 1798.[10] The Bangwaketse had

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7 Lister, Bain's Journals, p.53; Schapera, "A Short History ...", p.7; Livingstone, Missionary Travels, p.85.

8 Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman, pp.87-89, 91-97.

9 W. Lye, The Sotho Wars In The Interior of South Africa, 1822-1837, (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of California Los Angeles, 1969), pp.142-143; Stow, Native Races, pp.289-293.

10 Schapera, "A Short History...", p. 4; Stow, Native Races, pp.290-291, 537; Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, p.117.

witnessed the growth of Griqua power built on the twin pillars of missionary support and military predominance conferred by a good supply of fire-arms and horses; and how as a result of such power the Griqua attempted to impose their authority over the entire region between the Orange and the Molopo Rivers.[11] Subsequent acquisition of fire-arms by the Batlharo and afterwards the Batlhaping had given those peoples not only an effective means of defending themselves against the depredations of the Bergenaars but enabled them to start marauding expeditions of their own.[12]

All these factors help to explain why Sebego considered the small party of Bain and Biddulph so essential to his strategy.[13] But the tremendous and apparently exaggerated respect that the Bangwaketse exhibited for guns and fire-power should not obscure the important fact that Sebego had inherited an efficient and well-drilled army from the warrior king Makaba II. This was undoubtedly the impression created on the minds of Bain and Biddulph who formed part of the Ngwaketse expedition to Dithubaruba.

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11 Legassick, The Griqua, The Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries, chapters 7 and 8.

12 Legassick, The Griqua, The Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries, pp.367-368. An armed Tlhaping commando setting out in 1826 to plunder the Bangwaketse was only dissuaded by the Barolong-Ratlou chief Gonntse from attacking either the Bangwaketse or Barolong-Tshidi. On its return the Tlhaping commando treacherously captured Gonntse cattle and some from the Maidi.

13 In all, those who accompanied the Bangwaketse army comprised Bain, Biddulph and five coloured men, all armed with guns of one type or another. The remaining three members of the party stayed behind to guard the waggons. (See Lister, Bain's Journal, pp.58-59).

Although modern Ngwaketse traditional historians do not know anything about the mechanisms employed by either Makaba II or Sebego in the organisation of the Ngwaketse army, its basis, like that of the Zulu armies of Shaka and his lieutenants, was essentially the mophato or age-set system. But, apart from this similar basis for their military requirements, there is no indication that the military organisation of the two groups was identical. For example, whereas the Zulu regiments under Shaka were quartered in military villages subsisting on royal herds, and remained celibate until officially discharged from active service, neither Makaba II nor Sebego had any such arrangement. For the success of the manoeuvres practised by their armies, they appear to have depended on timely mobilization of the regiments forming the warrior group and intensive drills organised around a letsholo or extended collective hunt. Again, while it has not been established which regiments went out on that expedition against the Makololo, it appears very likely that the core of the army comprised the Malau and Maabakgomo regiments, which had been placed under Sebego's command during the battle of Losabanyana two years earlier. According to Bain, the Bangwaketse army that left Selokolela on 25 August 1826 numbered over 3,000, and on the following day, at Phiring, that number was reinforced by a further 1,000 men from Kang.[14]

Important to our understanding of Ngwaketse society is the description given by Bain of the very strict formation observed by the army in marching, camping as well as in sleeping. The

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14 Ibid., p.63,.n.97.

brisk marching army could be brought to a stand still by an abrupt signal from the king; and another command would have the entire army squatting at once in a regular semi-circular formation with the king and his brothers in the centre. It is the same formation that the Bangwaketse observe at kgotla meetings today. It was a formation that reflected the situation of wards in the capital of the Bangwaketse, and also indicated the social ranking of the wards within the morafe (chiefdom).

On the expedition to Dithubaruba the Ngwaketse army carried no supplies, but stopped on the way to conduct a letsholo (a large hunt). Even in hunting, the different units of the army kept a formation very closely resembling that which was observed in marching or camping. The number of big game - such as quaggas, elands and wildebeeste - killed during the two days that the army camped on the way testify both to the abundance of game in southern Botswana at the time, and to the skill of the Bangwaketse at organised hunting.[15]

Standing out above all this impressive display of orderliness and punctilious attentiveness to martial detail was the king, Sebego. It would be misleading to attribute to Sebego alone all the credit for the organisation of the highly disciplined Ngwaketse army. He must have inherited from his predecessors a great deal of its features and qualities. But it was to his credit that he did not allow standards to flag. On the contrary it appears highly likely that he improved them. His leadership on that campaign was most impressive. Personally,

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[15] Lister, Bain's Journals, pp.61-64.

he supervised every activity of that vast army.[16] Every facet of the campaign he planned to the minutest detail, leaving nothing to chance.

Sebego attacked Dithubaruba at dawn on 28 August 1826; burnt the town, killed many Makololo and looted a large number of cattle. The booty, says Bain, consisted "of at least 2,000 head of cattle and a vast number of shields, assegais and battle axes, and a few sheep".[17] The victory of the Ngwaketse army over the Makololo - which was clearly a result of Sebego's superb planning and generalship - was quite undeservedly attributed to Bain and Biddulph and their party. In the triumphant march back of the victorious army into Selokolela, Bain and his group were regarded as the heroes of the hour.

The Bangwaketse defeat of the Makololo was so decisive as to result in their complete extrusion from the Bakwena country, and the forcing of them northwards into Bamangwato country, where they resumed their career of plunder and violence against Kgari's Bamangwato and the hapless Kwena section led by Segokotlo. The Makololo forced these groups out of the capital at Serowe to seek refuge in the security of the Khutswe Hills. Sebego's victory liberated the region of southern Botswana from the menace of periodic Makololo harassment and despoilment, and made possible the gathering together of broken fragments of Tswana communities that had been scattered first by the onslaught of the combined Hlakoana-Phuthing-Taung horde in 1823,[18] and

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16 Ibid., pp.59-70.

17 Ibid., p.70.

18 One section of this group, the Phuting under the leadership

later by the Makololo. In addition to the Bahurutshe, the Bakwena, in particular, who had been split by civil strife into three sections - one led by Moruakgomo, another by Segokotlo and a third by Kgama (son of Legwale) - suffered badly from the Makololo invasion. It intensified Kwena fragmentation as well as scattering and diffusing the contending sections over a wide area.[19] Thus by dislodging Sebetwane from the fastnesses of the Dithejwane Hills, Sebego had not only expelled a formidable adversary on his flank, but had also saved all the communities of southern Botswana from a potentially protracted subordination and, consequently, from an ignominious disappearance of some of those communities from nineteenth century politics of Botswana.

The Bangwaketse victory at Dithubaruba once more established the fame of that people as a great fighting nation, and somewhat expiated the defeat of Losabanyana as well as the fall of Makaba II. It also destroyed the notion that the Makololo were invincible. Consequently Sebego's fame must have risen to a great height both within and outside Bangwaketse territory. But the euphoria engendered by his military achievement could not entirely conceal the fact that there were cleavages in Ngwaketse society that ran too deeply to be easily papered over even by such a resounding victory over such a redoubtable foe as the Makololo. For one thing, Sebego was not ruling all the Bangwaketse. There was a secessionist group under the Regent

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of Tshooane had sacked the Hurutshe capital of Kaditshwene in 1823. Soon after that the Hurutshe Regent Diutlwileng was killed resisting Makololo invasion.

19 Sillery Sechele, chapter 4 passim; Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, pp.43-49.

Segotshane temporarily living in Barolong country, and their numbers were being steadily swelled by dissident elements deserting Sebego to join the standard of Segotshane.[20]

Once the threat of the Makololo was removed, latent weaknesses in the cohesive character of the Ngwaketse state manifested themselves. There had been a superficial quality about the manner in which Makaba II had incorporated the Kgatla-Mmanaana into the kingdom. Because they came in the character of an indigent suppliant people voluntarily offering allegiance to the Ngwaketse king, who had defeated them and stripped them of all their cattle,[21] Makaba II had not considered it necessary to exact from them the sehuba (tribute) usually demanded of alien immigrants. They were only made subject to what tribute all Bangwaketse were expected to pay their king. This usually included the breast of every large animal killed in hunting, the dikgafela, a basket of grain after harvest, ploughing the lesotla or tribute field, and the payment of an ox from the parent of every initiate into bogwera or bojale.[22]

Yet indications are that although Makaba II had treated the Mmanaana-Kgatla as an integral part of his state, he had never-

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20 Schapera, Praise-Poems, p.151; Idem., "A Short History...", pp.6-7; Evidence of Bangwaketse elders Seepe Modietsho, Mokowe Malau, Tlamang Sekalaba, interview held at Kgosing ward, Tuesday 14 August, 1973. For the reasons why many dissident Bangwaketse were deserting Sebego, see below pp.135, 140.

21 Tiro Motlhabane, History of the Bakgatla, Mss.; Breutz, Marico District, p.24.

22 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders at Kgatleng ward, Ga-Mafhikana, Kanye, especially Solomon Nkokota Pule, at interview held on Wednesday, 22 August 1973; also Schapera, Law and Custom, pp.63-66.

theless permitted them to live in a village of their own instead of distributing them among the various makgotla (singular, lekgotla) or wards of the Bangwaketse.[23] Although the Kgatla-Mmanaana youths were being initiated jointly with those of the Bangwaketse, the separate residence of this group of immigrants was bound to delay their complete absorption into the Ngwaketse state. Clearly the Kgatla-Mmanaana had received special concessions from Makaba II. This philosophy of magnanimity in victory was also strengthened by affinal ties. Makaba II was increasing his power by attaching more clients to himself. Soon after their migration into Ngwaketse country, Kontle married Makaba II's daughter, Barekwanyana.[24]

As they had done to other Bangwaketse, royals and commoners alike, Makaba II, and Sebego after him, had placed royal herds in the care of Kontle and his followers, thus further attaching them to the Ngwaketse royal house, under the special relationship of basimane ba kgosi, the king's retainers. After the expulsion of the Makololo from Bakwena country, Kontle and his people left the Bangwaketse and returned to Mabotsa,[25] giving as a reason for their departure the fear that under Sebego they would not be treated as well as they had been under Makaba II. On leaving

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23 This had been done to the Bakgwatleng after their defeat by Moleta. (See above, chapter 2).

24 Evidence of Nkokota Pula, Simanyana Mosielele and Ramokgwana Koboyankwe, Interview held at Ga-Mafhikana, Kanye on Wednesday 22 August 1973; Tiro Mothabane, Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana. Barekwanyana was an elder sister of Sebego.

25 Evidence of Mmanaana-Kgatla elders, especially Semanyana Mosielele, Wednesday 22 August 1973; Breutz, Marico District, p.24.

Ngwaketse country Kontle stole the royal kgamelo cattle that had been entrusted to his care.[26]

Not only did the Kgatla-Mmanaana secession reflect on the imperfect method of state-building, but it also pointed to the presence in Ngwaketse society of forces that were undermining the solidarity and cohesiveness of the state. First of all, however successful Sebego was as a general, in times of peace he proved an unpopular ruler, if not a wholly incapable one. Traditions state that he ruled with an iron rod, and is said to have killed many of his people wantonly.[27] His flogging of nobles of such high standing as Bome, his half brother, and his other indiscretions must be regarded as principal reasons for many powerful men deserting him. These included Diatleng, the head of the powerful Matlalo ward, who after accompanying Sebego into the Kgalagadi desert, ultimately separated himself from Sebego and threw his weight behind Segotshane. He was ultimately also deserted by Mosane Tsima, and Mathiba.[28] However, these developments occurred not early, but in the latter part of Sebego's rule.

But even more serious than the character of Sebego's rule was the dissatisfaction of many Bangwaketse with Sebego's usurpation of the kingship. Lingering attachment or loyalty to the sons of Makaba's senior house were focussed around Tshosa's

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26 Tiro Motlhabane, History of the Bakgatla. Kontle's son, Mosielele, remained behind with his mother's people.

27 Evidence of Ramogonono Seribile, Ga-Mafhikana, Wednesday 22 August, 1973.

28 Schapera, "A Short History...", pp.9-11.

minor sons, Ralekoko and Gaseitsiwe, who had not been taken away by Segotshane when he fled southwards, but had remained behind under Sebego's care. As long as these young princes were still with Sebego some Bangwaketse were prepared to serve Sebego and bide their time. Tswana polygynous marriages, tended to create an atmosphere in which intrigue and dynastic disputes flourished. It is therefore not unlikely that the influence of the elders of the Ra-Maoto kgotla or ward, from which Tshosa and Segotshane's mother had been drawn, was pitted against that of the elders of the Sekokotla kgotla from which Sebego's mother came.[29] The Bangwaketse believed that Kgosi ke kgosi ka e tsetswe: "A king is a king because he is born to it".[30] This was a dictum against usurpation and usurpers.

A militarily powerful king could, however, invest a questionable succession with the stamp of legitimacy. If he was successful people were likely to forget or overlook the fact that his succession was defective. Sebego, at least during the earlier part of his rule succeeded in the one area where success was most urgently needed. During the unsettled and dangerous times of the Difaqane wars, he alone among the Tswana kings proved capable of dealing effectively with the Makololo, and thereby saving the Bangwaketse as a people from complete annihilation. Segotshane, his only serious rival, during the

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29 In patrilineal societies such as the Tswana, maternal relatives - ba ga etsho mogolo - could not compete for political power. Very often powerful maternal uncles backed their nephews in contests for political office for they stood to benefit by the success of the nephew. (See Tlou, Northwestern Botswana, p.103).

30 Schapera, Law and Custom, p.53.

minority of Ralekoko and Gaseitsiwe, had fled from Ngwaketse country and was accordingly in no position to defend the morafe.[31] An additional point in his favour was that Sebego had the young princes, Ralekoko and Gaseitsiwe, living under his care and protection. It was accordingly possible to look upon his rule as a regency even though it was never really intended to be one.[32]

Conscious of the lack of general support among the Bangwaketse, Sebego sought to counter-balance that weakness by building favourable relations with at least one of his neighbouring states. Since the Bahurutshe kingdom to his east had not yet recovered from the shattering effect of the wars of 1823-24, and because the Barolong had granted refuge to the rival Bangwaketse group, his rapprochement with the Bakwena, though they were as badly fragmented as the Bahurutshe, appeared the only course open to him. It was probably also with that idea in mind that he moved his capital to Lwale after expelling the Makololo.[33] There he was joined by a small section of the still fragmented Bakwena people - a section which included Kgakge, brother of Morwakgomo.[34] By extending a protecting wing over that section of the

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31 This ex-post facto explanation for Sebego's usurpation was often given me by Ngwaketse informants in 1973/74.

32 A properly arranged regency would have been decided upon by the khuduthamaga, a secret council of Bangwaketse royals or nobles and then declared at open kgotla. It would not have necessitated the flight of Segotshane.

33 Selokolela had a very poor water supply and the Bangwaketse settlement there had been forced upon them by constant Makololo attacks on Kgwakgwe. (See Lister, Bain's Journals, p.56; Smith, "Sebetwane and the Makololo", p.59.)

34 Schapera, "Bakwena", Ditirafalo, pp.47-48; Idem., Praise Poems, p.129; Sillery, Sechele, pp.60-62; Livingstone, Missionary Travels, p.41.

Bakwena, Sebego was consciously enhancing his image as a deliverer of the afflicted Tswana peoples, which he first earned by expelling the Makololo, as well as drawing in clients that would support him against his rival.

It is highly likely that Sebego had the same end in view when he went to the rescue of the poverty-stricken heir to the Bakwena kingship. After his release from Sebetwane's captivity, young Sechele wandered among the scattered and conflicting fragments of his people until he came to Sebego's settlement at Lwale. Diplomatically, Sebego welcomed him and his impoverished pathetically small following by presenting him with some cattle. These being the first cattle that Sechele had ever owned he called them difetlhamolelo, or fire-lighters and placed them under the care of one of his most faithful followers, namely Segakisa.[35] It was accordingly something of an anti-climax, states Sillery, when Sechele decided to seduce one of Sebego's wives, whom he removed to Lophepe.[36] This occurred probably around 1829.

Sebego's effort to build closer ties with the Bakwena was only one aspect of his plan to ensure the safety of his state. It was a policy that differed significantly from that of Makaba II who appeared more anxious to develop ties with the Tswana who lived south of the Molopo. But like his father,

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[35] Segakisa had followed and served Sechele faithfully throughout the period of privation and tribulations when the Bakwena were scattered. His descendants became traditional caretakers of "Difetlhamolelo" herd, and their ward is still known by that name today in Kweneng. (See Sillery, Sechele, p.66.)

[36] Ibid.

Sebego and, of course, other Tswana rulers of the time, thought the safety of his state would be more secure if he had a white missionary living with his people.[37] Thus, at the beginning of 1827, when Moffat visited the Barolong settlement of Tswaing on the Molopo River, Sebego sent messengers to invite Moffat to his settlement. When Moffat sent a negative reply Sebego himself took the unprecedented step of leaving his capital, accompanied by a strong escort of two hundred men. He assured the astonished Barolong of his peaceable intentions and that his large escort was only to induce Moffat to accompany him back to Ngwaketse country.[38] Although Sebego failed to persuade Moffat to accompany him,[39] he obtained a promise from Moffat that arrangements would definitely be made to send another missionary to work among the Bangwaketse. When the first missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Mission arrived in Kuruman it was planned that they would go and start a mission among the Bangwaketse.[40]

There can be little doubt that what Sebego really wanted was guns and ammunition and possibly horses. If missionaries could not supply these directly, it was hoped that their presence among the Bangwaketse would attract white traders, who might be

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37 Moffat, Apprenticeship in Kuruman, pp.75,118,135-144.

38 Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.311.

39 Moffat states that Sebego spent two days there. "He referred with much apparent pleasure, to my visit to his late father.... He had purchased one horse and had stolen another from an individual who had visited him, and wishing to appear before me in trowsers, had got a pair made of some shape, begging I would supply him with better, a request which was granted". (Missionary Labours, p.312)

40 R.C. Germond, Chronicles of Basutoland, (Morija, 1967), p.90; J.P. Pellisier, Mosika, May 1832.

quite willing to sell arms. On this point the Tswana chiefs were at least as perceptive as some of the missionaries themselves. Commenting on Mosielele's enthusiastic request for a missionary for his Mmanaana-Kgatla settlement at Mabotsa, Livingstone correctly observed:

> I need scarcely add that his wish, although sincere, does not indicate any love to the doctrines we teach. It is merely a desire for the protection and temporal benefit, which missionaries are everywhere supposed to bring. It is, however, as much as we can expect from the Heathen. If we have security for life and property, we trust the Lord will give us in His own time all the rest our hearts long for.[41]

Concern with the problems of "security for life and property" was not so much a "heathen" as a human problem. Self-defence and survival are natural instincts; and the fact that the Tswana troubled missionaries with such requests merely indicates that they expected them to be more appreciative of their needs as men who professed to be concerned with the salvation and, therefore, welfare of the Tswana. After all, missionaries did trade in some articles, even if they were cautious about contravening official policy regarding the sale of arms and ammunition to black men.[42]

From the Bangwaketse point of view, it was unfortunate that neither Sebego's efforts to obtain a resident white missionary

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41 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.35-36, Livingstone to A. Tidman, Kuruman, 24 June 1843. In 1827 Moffat had found it necessary to warn Sebego that missionaries had come to teach them about God and the immortality of souls and not to procure guns and ammunition for them. (See Apprenticeship At Kuruman, p.256)

42 On the trading activities of the missionaries J.M. Kok and William Edwards, see Burchell, Travels, II, pp.283,379; J. Campbell, Travels in Southern Africa, Undertaken at the Request of the London Missionary Society, (London, 1816), p.317.

nor his attempts to acquire guns succeeded. It was unfortunate because the Difaqane wars were not yet over, and consequently his task of defending his people as well as his allies was not yet complete. The most devastating phase of the "period of troubles" was yet to come. With guns he would be better able to confront the fresh tide of invasion menacing Tswana societies from the east. Furthermore, missionaries, if necessary, might be able to arrange another "holy alliance" of armed and mounted marksmen such as that which defended Dithakong in 1823.

The new danger came from the Mandebele of Mzilikazi who left their place of sojourn on the upper reaches of the Olifants River in 1825 and, moving westwards, occupied a site on the eastern edges of the Magaliesberg range, near the modern Pretoria.[43] This was at the time a densely populated area inhabited chiefly by Kwena chiefdoms.[44] In this area Mzilikazi built three large military settlements called E-Ndinaneni, E-Nkungwini and E-Mhlahlandlela.[45] From this base, near the Apies River, Mzilikazi's regiments ravaged the surrounding peoples for nine years, causing immense devastation of the country around the central and northern Transvaal.

Mzilikazi's stay in the central Transvaal was not entirely free from attacks coming from both south and east. Apart from traditions of serious ravages of armed Koranna, Bergenaars,

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43 W. Lye, "The Ndebele Kingdom south of the Limpopo", J.A.H., X, 1, 1969, pp.88-93.

44 R. Moffat, The Matebele Journals of Robert Moffat, ed. J.P.R. Wallis, (London, 1945), I, pp.8-9.

45 A. Bryant, Olden Times in Zululand and Natal, (London, 1929, repr. Struik 1965), p.427.

Griquas among the Tswana communities, his own outposts were subjected to a series of attacks from these groups as well as from Zulu regiments sent by Dingane. These occurred mainly between 1829 and 1830.[46] Although the Mandebele had successfully thwarted invasion, Mzilikazi became extremely unhappy about the effect of guns on his regiments. It was the feeling of insecurity bred by these attacks on his settlements - especially attacks by armed and mounted commandos - that prompted Mzilikazi to migrate westwards, in order to move further away from the Zulu state and closer to his friend Moffat.[47] To prepare for that move, Mandebele regiments were sent against the Tswana chiefdoms to the west.

A new challenge now faced Sebego and the Bangwaketse. Hitherto they had dealt successfully with two waves of the Difaqane wars. Hitherto they had not yet been defeated by any of the other Tswana peoples, and their reputation as resisters was still high. What is more, they were still rich in cattle.[48] It remained to be seen whether they would be able to maintain either their reputation as doughty defenders of Tswana independ-

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46 Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, pp.138-140; Moffat, Matabele Journals, I, pp.89-90; Kirby, Andrew Smith Diary, I, pp.144, 158-159,381-384; D.J. Kotze, ed., Letters of American Missionaries, 1835-1838, (Cape Town, 1950), p.138.

47 Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, p.141.

48 Lister, Bain's Journals, p.54. Of Ngwakekse resistance Lemue observed: "This is the only tribe which has had the courage to offer armed resistance to the Zulu tyrant". (P. Lemue, January 1833, in Germond, Chronicles of Basutoland, p.105); P. Becker, Path of Blood, (London, 1962), p.144.

ence against invading hordes or the most wealthy cattle owners in the area. According to the Bangwaketse Mzilikazi sent an ambassy to Lwale demanding that the Bangwaketse acknowledge his overlordship by paying tribute which had to be in a specified number of white cattle.[49] Having met that demand, states one version, Mzilikazi then demanded more tribute - this time in red cattle. When the second demand was equally satisfied Mzilikazi concluded that the Bangwaketse were so rich that it would be far more profitable to conquer them and capture all their cattle at once.[50]

The traditions about the white and red cattle only serve to show Mzilikazi's determination to bring all the Tswana chiefdoms under his control. His principal aim was to capture the source of wealth of the Tswana communities, so as to weaken their rulers and, accordingly, the capacity of such communities for resistance. But Mzilikazi did not want cattle only; he also wanted recruits for his armies, brides for his veteran soldiers and serfs to work the lands in his settlements and perform other non-military tasks. Given these objectives and Sebego's desire to maintain an effective independence, there was no way in which a conflict between the two could be avoided.

Learning, through spies, of the approach of a Mandebele expeditionary force of some four hundred men,[51] Sebego evacuated

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49 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditarafalo, p.133; Idem., "A Short History...", p.8.

50 Evidence of Baoki Tshanana, Sekokotla Kaboyamodimo, Kgotlaetsi Mophuting and Gaseitsiwe Tshosa; Interview held at Ra-Sebego ward, Matshitswane, Kanye, on 23 August 1973.

51 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.8 quoting P. Lemue, in Journal de Mission Evangelique, VI.

the aged, the women and children and most of the cattle from Lwale.[52] With his regiments he attempted to defend the town. Driven to flight, and pursued across the Pitsa stream by the Mandebele, the Bangwaketse fought a pitched battle at a hill near the river. The Bangwaketse were worsted. Many of their people were killed and several were captured as well as a large number of cattle.[53] Thereafter Sebego and his people migrated to Lotlhakeng in the Kgalagadi desert where he built a new village.[54] From there Sebego retreated further into the desert settling at Dutlwe where the water supply was slightly better.

It was this unexpected turn of events, this sudden breaking of the third wave of the Difaqane wars upon the Bangwaketse that foiled a plan, already worked out, for the establishment of a mission by the agents of the Paris Evangelical Society among that people. The destruction of the settlement of Lwale and the Ngwaketse flight towards the Kgalagadi desert resulted in the French missionaries, Prosper Lemue and Samuel Rolland, going to the Bahurutshe at Mosega to found a mission there.[55]

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52. Evidence of Baoki Tshanana at interview held at Ra-Sebego ward, Matshitswane, Kanye on 23 August 1973.

53 At the interview held at Ra-Sebego ward, Matshitswane in Kanye on 23 August 1973 the names of some of the captured were given.

54 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.8; Evidence of Mathiba in Evidence taken at Bloemhof before the Commission appointed to investigate the Claims of the South African Republic, Captain N. Waterboer, Chief of West Griqualand, and certain other Native Chiefs to portions of the territory on the Vaal River, now known as the Diamondfields (Cape Town, 1871), pp.186-187; Evidence of Gaseitsiwe in Ibid., pp.188-190.

55 Germond, Chronciles of Basutoland, pp.73,90; Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.368; Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.136. The French Missionaries left for Mosega on

Sebego's further penetration into the desert proved to be a well-considered and timely move. This was because Mzilikazi decided in 1834 to send a second commando against Sebego in order to break his power completely and capture all his cattle.[56] But Mzilikazi sent a commando of young inexperienced warriors, because the veterans or machaha were held back to deal with an anticipated attack by Jan Bloem and his Koranna raiders.[57] If the sending of an expedition comprising inexperienced youths reveals Mzilikazi's contempt for the military capabilities of Sebego's regiments, it also shows how seriously he had miscalculated. Led by captured Ngwaketse guides, who deliberately took a circuitous route towards Dutlwe, leading them over terrain covered with mosetlho or grapple-like thorns, the Mandebele warriors arrived at Dutlwe too worn out to put up a serious fight. Sebego's regiments attacked them from three sides killing a large number before the survivors could make good their escape.[58]

Once more Sebego had accomplished the unexpected. He had defeated or repulsed Mandebele invaders. It is true they were only youths and were not the cream of the Ndebele army, but they

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12 March 1832 and left that place on 2 June 1832.

56 Dr. Andrew Smith gave an additional reason that the Ndebele would not kill cattle captured as spoils of war till the chief from whom they were captured was killed. (See Kirby, Andrew Smith Diary, II, p.164).

57 Ibid., p.353.

58 Evidence of Baoki Tshanana at interview held at Kgosing ward on 15 August 1973; and evidence of Tlamang Sekalaba at interview held at Kgosing ward on 14 August 1973; Kirby, Andrew Smith Diary, I, p.353.

were still a Ndebele army. This is what no other Tswana group had accomplished.[59] Sebego knew only too well that Mzilikazi would follow up that reverse by despatching his best regiments to wipe out the Bangwaketse. He accordingly migrated north-westwards and settled at Monnyelatsela, near the modern Ghanzi, and quite close to Botswana's boundary with Namibia.[60] He was accordingly retreating still further into the Kgalagadi desert. Although life was extremely difficult in the desert, Sebego was gambling on the fact that the Bangwaketse would survive those conditions better than the Mandebele, and in the event of war, would be able to exploit the climatic environment to greater advantage. Also the stay in the desert was regarded as a temporary sojourn. They could not cultivate crops but had to revert to a hunting and gathering existence like the Bakgalagadi, as well as live from the milk of their cows.[61]

Meanwhile the Mandebele, who went to live at Mosega in 1832, had by 1834 occupied considerable portions of the eastern strip of Ngwaketse country where they had built many cattle posts and set up small villages. They even occupied Sebego's former capital of Lwale.[62] Thus while Sebego appeared to have succeeded

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59 See extract from Diary of Prospero Lemue at Mothito January 1833 in Germond, Chronicles of Basutoland, p.105.

60 Here he compelled a Matlamma (Herero) settlement to pay tribute to him. (See Kirby, Andrew Smith Diary, I, pp.278-279)

61 Evidence of Sekokotla Kaboyamodimo, Baoki Tshanana and others. Interview held at Ra-Sebego ward, Matshitswane, Kanye on 23 August 1973.

62 Kirby, Andrew Smith Diary, I, p.354.

in saving his people from extinction, it is nevertheless difficult to see how they would have reclaimed their country from the Mandebele, if the latter people had not been removed from the area of Mosega by other circumstances. At his temporary settlement of Monnyelatsela, Sebego took a step which marked a turn in his future career as protector and preserver of the Bangwaketse people. Fearing to openly murder the young princes Ralekoko and Gaseitsiwe, he had their lekuka or milk sack poisoned. This resulted in the death of Ralekoko, but not of Gaseitsiwe who survived after vomitting the poisoned madila. Thereafter, he expelled Gaseitsiwe and his mother, having arranged that the young prince be murdered along the way.[63] Sebego had not reckoned with Bangwaketse veneration of royalty, and the extent to which a mystical kind of sanctity in the person of a king or prince could command loyalty in the hearts of men. Gaseitsiwe was not killed but delivered safely to the rival Ngwaketse settlement headed by his other uncle Segotshane. This was at Mosite in Barolong country.[64]

The expulsion of the legitimate heir to the Ngwaketse kingship underlined, in the eyes of traditional constitutionalists, the false position of Sebego. Many who hoped he would make way for Gaseitsiwe became horrified at the thought that Sebego was after all nothing short of a usurper. Also at Taung, in the vicinity of the confluence of the Vaal and Harts Rivers, the

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63 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.135-136; Idem., "A Short History...", pp.8-9; Evidence of Ntau Mogobe, at Interview held at Kgosing ward on Wednesday 15 August 1973.

64 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.136.

the country was much more fertile even than the Kanye district. Life was accordingly easier than in the environs of Sebego's temporary settlements in the Kgalagadi desert. All these factors, together with Sebego's harsh rule of his people began opening very wide rifts among his followers.[65] Many began to desert him to live with other Tswana peoples or to join Segotshane. Among the desert communities such as the Bakgalagadi and the Ova-Herero, Sebego conducted his own reign of terror. Migrating southwards from Monnyelatsela to Lehututu he fought the local Kgalagadi and Rolong-Mariba capturing their cattle and expelled them from that place.[66] It is possible to see Sebego's raiding of the Matlamma and Kgalagadi peoples as an act of necessity. Once in the desert, and not being desert people themselves, the Bangwaketse probably felt they had to raid in order to survive at something near the standard of living they were accustomed to. This was part of the dominant effect of the Difaqane. When Sebego migrated to Lehututu, a considerable number of Bangwaketse - mainly those who formed part of the Matlalo kgotla or ward headed by Diatleng[67] - remained behind at Monnyelatsela and did not accompany Sebego. While the main group was at

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65 Dr. Andrew Smith observed: "Sobiqua is also a great tyrant among his people and puts more of his subjects to death than Mosalakatzie does". (See Kirby, Andrew Smith Diary, I, p.292); also evidence of Ramogonono Seribile who stated that his own grandfather was killed by Sebego because he declined to lend Sebego oxen he was asking for: interview held at Kgatleng ward, Ga-Mafhikana on Wednesday 23 August 1973.

66 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.9.

67 Diatleng was a descendant of Moleta and an agnatic half-brother to Makaba II. He was accordingly an uncle to both Sebego and Segotshane; and was the first headman of the Matlalo ward.

Lehututu, Bome, another son of Makaba and head of the Maeakwena kgotla, left the settlement, and first went to his maternal relatives in Bamangwato country before going south to join Segotshane's settlement which now included Gaseitsiwe, the legitimate heir to the Ngwaketse kingship.[68] Bome's decision to support Segotshane, who was now acting for Gaseitsiwe, gave considerable prestige to the rival Ngwaketse settlement at Mosite, and must have been viewed with great concern by Sebego.[69]

As Sebego's migration to Lehututu had taken place just after the expulsion of the Mandebele by a commando of Boers and African allies, Sebego was very anxious to leave Lehututu and return to Bangwaketse country. This explains his diplomatic embassies to neighbouring Tswana kings to test the nature of the reception he would get on returning to his country. It was probably his failure to secure the desired assurances that compelled Sebego to stay on longer at Lehututu.[70] This was also the reason for Sebego's feverish attempts to induce Livingstone to visit him at Lehututu, that he might "speak words of truth to him" on the safety of moving out of the desert.[71]

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68 Bome's departure was unlikely to have been a simple affair. His kgotla was probably the most senior next to the royal one and must have resulted in many in his kgotla leaving him or following him. (Evidence of Kwelagobe R. Bome, Seepe Modietsho and others at private interview held at home of K.R. Bome on 14 Marth 1974; also Schapera, "A Short History...", p.9; Moseley and Motlhabane, History of the Bangwaketse.)

69 Hence Sebego's demand that Diatleng openly declare his stand. (See Schapera, "A Short History...", p.9)

70 Ibid., pp.9-10; Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.23-24.

71 On Livingstone's return from his second journey to the interior, he found a deputation of sixteen Bangwaketse

Although some African rulers had sought missionary assistance in order to build up greater strength to come to terms with a changed world, it was really the case of the isolated ruler who found himself unable to lean on any African allies that provides the most typical instances of dependence on missionaries. Sebego had failed to establish any alliances with any other Tswana chiefdoms. As a matter of fact, there were no potential allies within easy reach. The post-Difaqane unification of the Bakwena state was still a matter of conjecture, the Barolong, though less divided, were clearly in sympathy with Segotshane and Gaseitsiwe, the Batlhaping confederation had crumbled and dissolved into mutually conflicting units, while the Bahurutshe continued to fragment several years after the expulsion of Mzilikazi.[72] Although communication was not easy, Sebego could have attempted to establish some understanding with the Batawana and Bamangwato.

The tendency to look for external support for his state appears to have arisen largely from an inability to consolidate power within. Like so many Tswana rulers of his time, Sebego was not a skilful state-builder of the calibre of Moshoeshoe I, Montshiwa or Kgama III.[73] Consequently he missed the opportunity

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waiting at Bubi's Bakwena settlement for him. (See Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.23-24; W.G. Blaikie, The Personal Life of David Livingstone, (New York, n.d.), pp.64-65.)

72 Sillery, Sechele, Chapter 4; Breutz, Marico District, pp.61-63, 76-77, 97, 125, 141; T.N.A.D., History of the Native Tribes, pp.11-13.

73 Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath; Molema, Montshiwa; G.Y. Lagden, The Basutos, 2 vols. (London, 1909); E. Casalis, The Basutos (London, 1861); G. Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, (Cape Town, 1950); H.M. Hole, The Passing of Black Kings (London, 1932).

while at Monnyelatsela and Lehututu to incorporate segmentary groups such as the Ova-Herero or Damara, known to the Tswana as Matlamma, the Kgalagadi communities and Barolong-Maniba.. His internal administration was so oppressive that it resulted in his losing the support of powerful Ngwaketse nobles who deserted him to join Segotshane. He was more capable of defending his state militarily than ruling it wisely in times of peace. Thus, when in anxiety to leave Lehututu, he disregarded Livingstone's advice to delay his coming out of the desert,[74] another one of his brothers, Mathiba remained behind. So another sub-chief and leader of an important ward - a royal kgotla became separated from the main body of the Bangwaketse.[75] Meanwhile Diatleng at Monnyelatsela had ended even his semblance of loyalty to Sebego and had thrown his political support behind the Segotshane-Gaseitsiwe section.[76]

Several other pockets of Bangwaketse that had been scattered by the Difaqane wars, and had sought temporary refuge with other Tswana communities began joining the Bangwaketse settlement at Mosita when they learnt that Gaseitsiwe had arrived there. Among the many who swelled the numbers of Segotshane's followers were probably some who deserted Sebego because they disliked his oppressive regime. Several may have left simply because life in the desert was extremely hard, while others may have found the desire to follow the legitimate heir an added incentive. As the

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74 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.33.

75 Schapera, Praise Poems, p.160.

76 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.9.

number of Bangwaketse at Mosita expanded, Segotshane moved his settlement to Tswaneng, in the south-east of the present Bangwaketse district.[77]

With the increase of Segotshane's section in numbers and importance, as more senior Bangwaketse came forward to attach themselves to Segotshane and Gaseitsiwe, Sebego became very anxious to return to Ngwaketse country so as to pre-empt settlement there by the rival Ngwaketse group. In addition, returning to more accessible country would make it possible for him to persuade Livingstone to come and settle with him. So important did Sebego see the need to have a white missionary that he promised Livingstone that if his intention was to settle with a secessionist Kwena group living at Dithubaruba under Bubi, he, Sebego, would be quite willing to go and live there too.[78] Sebego's voluntary offer to settle with a Bakwena group was, of course, also an offer of desperation and an admission on his part of inadequacy.

Livingstone's advice that Sebego should delay his departure from Lehututu had been based on what Livingstone described as a "conspiracy"[79] on the part of many Tswana chieftains. These

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77 Ibid., p.10.

78 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.24.

79 Ibid., p.23. The Batlhaping of Mahura and Gasebonwe had long been in possession of fire-arms and horses. It was the need to defend themselves against raiders and frontier filibusters that stimulated the desire for fire-arms. After the Difaqane wars, the southern Tswana, having noted the effectiveness of Griqua resistance to large invading hordes, desired arms for defence in mutual wars, for raiding cattle and for hunting. Legassick shows conclusively that the fire-arms acquired by the southern Tswana chiefdoms need not have been purchased for the purpose of attacking Sebego.

chieftains who had lost their cattle to the Mandebele were, according to Livingstone, envious of Sebego, whose "superior generalship" enabled him to retain possession of his cattle. The others, stated Livingstone, had leagued together and had "lately purchased a number of horses and guns in order that he might be a more easy prey to them..."[80] What Livingstone omitted in his account was the fact that the purchases of guns referred to were not the first ones made by the various Tswana chiefs. As early as 1812 Burchell reported how the Tlhaping chief and his councillors put so much pressure on him that he was obliged to sell them a gun and powder.[81] The missionary James Read had also procured a gun for either Mothibi or one of his relatives.[82] Livingstone may not have been aware of these early purchases and may only have known about later substantial purchases.[83] Suspicion that Livingstone's assessment of the Bangwaketse situation had a superficial quality about it becomes stronger when he goes on to observe:

> Even his own brother Sehutsane, chief of the other half of the Wanketze, murdered the ambassadors which Sebegwe had sent to conciliate him. The plundering exhibition was to have left this quarter

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80 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.24.

81 Burchell, Travels, pp.267-289 passim.

82 L.M.S. Box 7, Folder 1, Jacket D, Hamilton to Foreign Secretary, L.M.S. 15 May, 1817.

83 The evidence of the Bangwaketse before the Bloemhof Arbitration Court in 1871 confirms the impression that Segotshane and Gaseitsiwe were definitely attempting to obtain horses and fire-arms in order to attack Sebego, or at least, to secure the assistance of allies who were both mounted and armed with guns. (See evidence of Mathiba, Bloemhof Blue Book, p.187, and the evidence of Gaseitsiwe, in Ibid., p.189)

during the time I was in the Bakwain country. I therefore felt anxious to inform him of his danger.[84]

While it may not be denied that the Batlhaping, Batlharo and the Griqua or Kora groups could have been motivated by a desire to get at some of the Ngwaketse herds, it is grossly misleading to attribute Segotshane's campaign solely to that. The fact that the Bangwaketse were divided into two sections, and that the rightful heir was alive and waiting to be installed some day over a united kingdom, was certainly significant. Livingstone, therefore, clearly exaggerated the economic motives and ignored the constitutional problem. Nor is it necessarily valid to assume that the other Tswana chiefdoms would not be interested in a satisfactory settlement of the Ngwaketse dynastic crisis. In the past there had been instances of Tswana rulers cooperating to unseat an usurper and to place the legitimate heir on the "throne".[85]

By the 1840's the division of Ngwaketse society appears to have been such that Segotshane had most of the people and Sebego most of the cattle. Further, the complex nature of the Ngwaketse situation lay in the fact that military ability was in one camp while the constitutional heir was in another. Other Tswana groups could intervene, particularly if by fighting in the interests of legitimacy there was also the possibility of securing cattle. In a situation where, according to Livingstone, most of the other Tswana chiefs were poor in cattle even though they

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84 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.24.

85 T.N.A.D. History of the Native Tribes, p.12; Campbell, Travels ... Second Journey, I, p.314.

were in the grasslands, while Sebego had vast herds but lived in the desert, it is not inconceivable that apparent altruistic considerations and high ideals concerning the need to legitimize the Ngwaketse dynastic problem could have reinforced the more mundane intentions, such as relieving Sebego of some of his ill-gotten gains.

Although many people had been deserting Sebego in order to follow Segotshane and Gaseitsiwe, Sebego was still leading a substantial group. What was more, he had the cattle. As long as he had control of the royal treasure, he was in a strong position. Even the following that he had was probably loyal because his vast herds enabled him to dispense patronage widely, through the kgamelo or "milk-pail" system of clientage. It is almost certain that the only way Sebego and his group could survive in the desert was because of their cattle. It was therefore likely that if he lost the cattle his clients would also desert him.[86]

Conflict was precipitated by Sebego's migration, against the advice of Livingstone, from Lehututu to Male, very near to Moshaneng.[87] This was reported to Segotshane by Diatleng, and

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86 Compare with the young prince Sechele of the Bakwena, who wandered about from one settlement to the next without any property and with only a handful of followers; and whose poverty ultimately drove him to live "like a mo-kgalagadi" until he was rescued by Sebego, who presented him with the first herd of cattle that Sechele had ever owned. (See Sillery, Sechele, pp.65-66.)

87 Sebego's reason for disregarding the advice of Livingstone was that his people also needed to grow corn and to eat makatane (singular, lekatane) or melons. (See Blaikie, Personal Life, p.67; also Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10; Idem., "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.137.) Sebego

it prompted Segotshane to plan an immediate and effective attack upon Sebego so as to either drive him out of Ngwaketse country or to kill him.[88] Segotshane accordingly sent Bome to Mahura, the Batlhaping chief at Taung to ask for help. Mahura sent a strong commando armed with guns and mounted on horses. Sebego was heavily defeated by a combined force of Segotshane's Bangwaketse and Batlhaping under Mahura. This happened about the middle of the year 1842.[89] Sebego lost about thirty men on the battle-field and a large number of cattle. More serious, hundreds of Bangwaketse deserted Sebego after this set back and went to attach themselves to Segotshane, who, on account of the large number of deserters from Sebego who tremendously augmented his following, now moved his main settlement from Tswaneng to Dikhukhung on the Molopo.[90]

Thus, five years after Mzilikazi's expulsion, and the disappearance of the last wave of Difaqane invaders, the sons of Makaba faced each other at the head of two armies fighting for the occupation of the heart of Ngwaketseland, and for the control of the royal herds. The once united kingdom was split from top

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could also have desired to counter-balance Segotshane's advantage of having the constitutional heir in his camp, by taking occupation of Ngwaketseland before him.

88 In announcing his decision to fight Sebego, Segotshane stated: "Ke ya go kganela Sebego go ema mo Mosaneng". (I am going to prevent Sebego settling down at Moshaneng.) See Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.137.

89 Ibid.; Wookey, Dico, p.71; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10. Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.31-32; Evidence of Tlamang Sekalaba, an interview held at Kgosing ward, 14 August 1973, and Ntau Mogobe, an interview held at Kgosing ward on 15 August 1973.

90 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10.

to bottom. Sebego suffered his first defeat from Tswana armies. Once more guns and the mobility of mounted men decided the outcome of the encounter, and to a certain extent justified Sebego's great pre-occupation with the need to have a white missionary who could eventually help him to acquire them.[91]

With a considerably reduced following and an equally much reduced herd of cattle Sebego fled to Malakopi to a section of the Bakwena people living in separation from the main settlement.[92] The Kwena settlement at the Dithejwane hills was led by Bubi, who persistently resisted Sechele's efforts to unite the Bakwena. While Bubi welcomed the strengthening of his secessionist group through a Ngwaketse immigration, Sechele was extremely displeased with that move.[93] It accordingly came as no surprise when Sechele's regiments attacked Sebego soon after his settling down at Malakopi. In the fighting that ensued between Sechele's and

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91 D. Livingstone, Family Letters, 1841-1856, ed.; I, Schapera, (London, 1959), I, pp.64-65. Sebego did not, as Livingstone and Blaikie implied, naively believe that the mere presence of "a single White man" in his chiefdom would make him quite secure. He knew that missionaries could, if they wanted, procure guns for friendly chiefs or establish the contacts through which guns could be obtained. Sebego also knew that the presence of a missionary would draw white traders and hunters to that place and these would probably be quite willing to trade in fire-arms should the missionaries have compunctions about doing so. (Cf. Blaikie, Personal Life, pp.64-65; Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.24; Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.311-312; Idem., Apprenticeship at Kuruman, p.250, 254-257.)

92 Moseley and Motlhabane; History of the Bangwaketse; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10; Idem., "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.137.

93 Sebego and Bubi thus formed a kind of a partnership of renegade kings. The Bakwena had been divided for two decades, and Sechele's efforts to unite them had been thwarted by Bubi, who defeated Sechele's army and retired with his people to the Dithejwane hills. (See Sillery, Sechele, pp.65-69; Livingstone, Family Letters, I, p.82).

Sebego's regiments, the honours were evenly shared, and "some sixty men were killed on both sides".[94] It seems clear, however, that Sechele must have succeeded in relieving the Bangwaketse of more of their rapidly dwindling number of cattle.[95] But it also seems clearer that the malaise of the Difaqane had taken a firm grip of the Tswana societies long after the regiments of Mzilikazi had withdrawn their operations from the area of southern Botswana, the various communities there were continuing to attack each other and sap each others energies through mutual conflicts.

According to Livingstone, while Sechele's regiments were away doing battle with Sebego and his people, the Mandebele burst in suddenly upon Sechele's town killing many people. To fill Sebego's cup of misery to overflowing, the Mandebele proceeded to Malakopi in the Dithejwane hills, fell upon the hapless Sebego slaughtering many of his remaining people and sweeping away all his cattle.[96] As Schapera correctly observed, that Mandebele attack on Sebego became his third defeat occurring in rapid succession.[97] Well might Livingstone remark:

> So poor S. is now, from being the richest in cattle in the whole country, reduced to wander up and down the wilderness with only a handful of people, scarcely any women or children, and only his shield to sleep on at night.[98]

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94 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10. Livingstone states that Sechele was repulsed with the loss of twenty men. (Family Letters, I, p.64).

95 See below.

96 Livingstone, Family Letters, I, pp.64-65; Sillery, Sechele, p.83; Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.137.

97 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10.

98 Livingstone, Family Letters, I, p.66.

The recurrent wars of the Difaqane had resulted not only in the loss of the Ngwaketse fine herds which had once been the envy of most of his neighbours and, particularly, of the Mandebele, but had also resulted in the death of thousands of Bangwaketse and other Tswana people. It was accordingly a poverty-stricken Sebego with a very small following that landed, early in 1843, at the Bamalete settlement of Rabogadi. Bamalete traditions state that while they were at Rabogadi living under the rule of Mokgosi-a-Pooe (Mokgosi I, c. 1830-1886) Sebego "Chief of the Bangwaketsi [sic] was driven out by his own people and came to us.... He had nothing - not even an ox".[99]

In the same way that the attacks of the combined Hlakoana-Phuting-Bataung horde - Moffat's "Mantatees" on the Batlhaping built up an increasing dependency on external agencies, by making the Batlhaping lean on white missionaries and Griqua captains,[100] Sebego had now become utterly reduced to look to such external agencies for his survival. While in the western Transvaal he attempted to organise a company of Griqua hunters to join an expedition against the Bakwena in order to assist him recover his cattle from Sechele. The Griqua declined to join the expedition, but agreed to escort Sebego to Sechele's capital. Citing the French missionary Prosper Lemue, Schapera states that Sechele surrendered some sixty head of cattle, which were handed over to Sebego. This he did out of fear of the guns of the Griqua.

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99 Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.44; Idem., "Ba-ga-Malete", Ditirafalo, p.210.

100 This theme is exhaustively discussed in Legassick, The Griqua, Sotho-Tswana and Missionaries, chapter 7.

hunters.[101]

On this modest endowment Sebego settled down at Tlhasokwane, a settlement which must have been so close to those of the Bamalete and Kgatla-Mmanaana that Livingstone grouped them together in estimating the population of those villages for missionary purposes.[102] The Bangwaketse elders confirm that on being defeated by the Mandebele, Sebego fled to Tlhasokwane, a site that was thought to be near Sefatlhane.[103] There Sebego was visited by Livingstone early in March 1843. Livingstone remained a few days with Sebego "partaking", as he said, "of such hospitality as his reduced circumstances now enabled him to bestow...", before passing on to Sebego's Bakgotla neighbours. These were the Kgatla-Mmanaana then living at Mabotsa under their king, Mosielele, who was a sororal nephew of Sebego.[104]

Driven out of his kingdom by wars and reduced in power, status and wealth to something less than a petty chief Sebego appears to have received little hope of assistance from Livingstone. He accordingly determined to make one last bid to have himself restored as a powerful king in his former territory. In 1844 he travelled southwards with the intention of enlisting the support of Griqua captains,[105] but he died on the way and

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101 Schapera "A Short History...", p.10.

102 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.43, Livingstone to A. Tidman, 24 June 1843.

103 Evidence of Ntau Mogobe at interview held at Kgosing ward 15 August 1973; Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.137. Sefatlhane is the Tswana name for the town of Zeerust in the western Transvaal.

104 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.33-34.

105 Legassick shows that the authority of Griqua captains was

was buried at Ga-Segonyana near Kudumane in November 1844.[106] He was succeeded by his son Senthufe, who became chief of the Bangwaketse at Tlhasokwane. After ruling his section for some time in the western Transvaal, Senthufe moved his settlement back into Ngwaketse country, settling at Kgwakgwe. This probably occurred around 1847.[107] Indications are that some Bangwaketse remained in the western Transvaal when Senthufe migrated to Kgwakgwe.

As it turned out in 1842 the settlement in Ngwaketse country by either of the two rival sections was a sensitive issue. Consequently, each group kept a close watch on the movements of its rival so as to prevent their opponents stealing a march on them and presenting them with a fait accompli. This calculation was based on the fear that settlement in the home country would confer a de facto recognition to the group that entered and made good its claim, regardless of what the de jure situation might be. It had been on that score that Sebego's occupation of Male in 1842 had called forth an instantaneous attack from Segotshane and his Batlhaping allies. Accordingly, Senthufe's return to Ngwaketse country, and especially his occupation of Kgwakgwe could be reasonably expected to disturb the minds of Segotshane and Gaseitsiwe.

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in serious decline after 1840. (See Legassick, The Griqua, Sotho-Tswana and Missionaries, chapter 12).

106 Schapera, Praise Poems, p.149; Idem., "A Short History...", pp.10-11.

107 When in 1848 Sebobe was appointed to start mission work among the Bangwaketse, it was to Senthufe's section at Kgwakgwe that he went. Also Freeman found Senthufe there in 1849. (See Livingstone, Family Letters, I, pp.259, 263-264).

A sudden and unexpected attack on Segotshane's settlement at Dikhukung had compelled them in 1842 to migrate temporarily to Taung and take refuge under the Batlhaping chief Mahura. They settled at Maijane. It was there that Gaseitsiwe was initiated into manhood around 1846, and installed king of the Bangwaketse.[108] The return of Gaseitsiwe's section was precipitated by news that Senthufe had settled at Kgwakgwe. But the return of Gaseitsiwe and his followers could not have occurred much earlier than 1850, for when the Foreign Secretary for L.M.S. missions, The Rev. J.J. Freeman and Robert Moffat visited the Bangwaketse country in 1849, they found only Senthufe's group at Kgwakgwe.[109]

Gaseitsiwe's people first settled at Diphawana, some ten miles south of Kanye, before Boer attacks on several chiefdoms of southern Botswana obliged them to flee westwards to Segeng for safety.[110] At Segeng, which was still in Ngwaketse country, they remained for at least one year before returning to Kanye and settling on Nyorosi Hill. Thus, for the first time since 1824 when the Bangwaketse were split by the wars of the Difaqane, the two rival groups were living side-by-side at Kanye but under

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108. Wookey, Dico, p.18; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10. c.f. with Molema who suggests that Gaseitsiwe and Montshiwa grew up together and were initiated at the same time. This does not agree with his date for Montshiwa's initiation. (See Molema, Montshiwa, p.51).

109 J.J. Freeman, A Tour in South Africa, (London, 1851) p.292; Moffat, Matabele Journals, p.149.

110 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.138; Moseley and Motlhabane, History of the Bangwaketse; Moffat, Matabele Journals, I, p.149.

separate and independent leadership.[111] Steps taken by Gaseitsiwe to attempt to unite the two sections are considered in the succeeding chapter. Stopping at Kanye on his way to visit Mzilikazi in 1854, Moffat remarked:

> Between Gasiitsive and Senthuhe a friendship, not the most cordial exists. The latter still retains his people, who are attached to him on Sebegue's account. They bring the breast of the game to Senthuhe and he takes it to Gasiitsive, who would prefer their bringing it to him themselves.[112]

We may now pause to consider the effects of the Difaqane wars on the Bangwaketse state during the reign of Sebego, as well as attempt a brief evaluation of his career. The Difaqane wars that had such a profound impact on most of the Sotho-Tswana societies in general, also had a tremendous influence on the history of the Bangwaketse, in particular during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The reign of Sebego which was ushered in by the troubles and violence of the Difaqane was all but ended when a last fling of the Mandebele exploits among the chiefdoms of southern Botswana (late in 1842) administered the coup de grace to what was left of it. After that defeat at the Dithejwane hills the mighty Sebego was reduced to no more than the leader of an insignificant, poverty-stricken band living in the western Transvaal under circumstances in which he and his followers could only subsist as tribute-paying aliens on land belonging to some other ruler.

Like several other Tswana kingdoms, the Ngwaketse state was split asunder, not so much by the Difaqane wars, however, as by

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111 Moffat, Matabele Journals, I, pp.149-150.

112 Ibid., p.153.

conditions that arose out of those wars; for although the Makololo killed Makaba II, the irregular take-over of the kingship by Sebego need not have followed. But because Makaba II's death was not followed by a regency under either Segotshane or Sebego, because Sebego seized the kingship on his own behalf, the Bangwaketse state was split into two sections. Sebego himself, accordingly, was responsible for the cleavage.

It is possible to argue, and some of the Bangwaketse in fact do so, that in the disturbed conditions of southern Africa in the early nineteenth century, only militarily capable rulers could survive or would be able to efficiently protect their states, and that as Sebego proved to be the only Ngwaketse ruler who had the ability to deal effectively with the threat posed by the Makololo and Mandebele invaders, he thereby gave some justification to his seizure of the kingship. That would, of course, only do as an ex post facto explanation. Even if it be allowed, Sebego still has to be judged not only by the success with which he repelled invasions, but also the degree to which he succeeded in keeping the Bangwaketse state together or kept fragmentation to a minimum. It is precisely on this score that he appears to have failed. His failure lies not simply in his inability to end the division of the Bangwaketse, but principally in the fact that he did nothing positive to end the division that he had created.

Allowing for human nature and the dictates of practical politics, Sebego's usurpation was, in the circumstances, understandable even though it resulted in a small dissident group under Segotshane detaching itself and fleeing southwards, first

to Khunwana and then to Mosite in Barolong country. But his permitting that group to grow in numbers and in prestige and accordingly to develop into a formidable rival faction, was unfortunate. As long as Sebego kept Tshosa's wife and minor sons, Gaseitsiwe and Ralekoko under his protective wing, he could appear to be acting in the capacity of a regent for the young princes. Probably few Bangwaketse would have scrupled over whether Segotshane or Sebego acted as regent as long as they were satisfied it was limited to that only. Further, there is the possibility that in a contest for the regency, Sebego's personal attributes would have selected him over his half-brother in the senior house.

By setting himself up as king instead of regent, Sebego was not only eliminating Segotshane, but also Tshosa's minor children. He was ignoring and operating against the Tswana maxim: Kgosi ke kgosi ka e tsetswe (a chief is a chief because he is born to it) for it was not sufficient to be a descendant of Makaba II, but it was also essential to be born in the correct "house". If he had remained only a regent there was a good chance that reconciliation with Segotshane's group could have been achieved. The subsequent reconciliation of the two rival groups in the 1850's shows, that while reconciliation would not be easily accomplished, it was nevertheless not an unattainable ideal. It was, however, the failure to work out a plan or scheme for bringing together the two Bangwaketse factions after the Mandebele had been driven northwards that precipitated the downfall of Sebego. To a large extent, that failure to strive for the reunification of the Bangwaketse stemmed from Sebego's lack of fore-sight in allowing

Segotshane to gain the supreme advantage of having the heir in his group.

Thus, to Segotshane's grievance of having been by-passed, although as the son of Makaba's senior wife he had a stronger claim to the regency, was added the charge that Sebego murdered Ralekoko and nearly did the same to Gaseitsiwe. That, together with the knowledge of his treachery during the battle of Losa-banyana in 1824 - all these matters began weighing very heavily against Sebego and in favour of Segotshane. Also, Sebego's alienation of powerful and influential nobles such as Bome, Diatleng and Mathiba, caused him to lose valuable support within the morafe, thus rendering an understanding with Segotshane's group that much more difficult.

Further, while the Bangwaketse were living in divided settlements outside their own territory - while they were still "in the wilderness" as it were - trade routes were being marked out and established along a pattern established by white missionaries stationed at various points among the Tswana chief-doms. By the time a white missionary settled at Kanye, in 1871, traders had been plying the route from Mabotsa, in the western Transvaal to Molepolole and thence to Shoshong or Palapye for much too long for the traffic to be seriously affected afterwards. It is, of course, true that the "road to the north", popularised by missionaries such as Moffat, Livingstone, MacKenzie and others, ran from Kudumane (Kuruman) through Mahikeng (Mafeking) or Phitshane, and thence to Kanye, Molepolole and Shoshong. But it is also true that Campbell's route, which passed from Mahikeng to Kaditshwene opened an alternative approach to Molepolole - one

that quickly superceded that through Kanye.

From Kaditshwene, situated in the vicinity of the modern Zeerust, travellers would proceed directly to the Bakwena capital, by-passing the Bangwaketse. This happened partly because there was no resident white missionary in the Bangwaketse country. Such stations tended to act as welcome oases to travellers going into the far interior. There they enjoyed hospitality and were offered opportunities to refresh themselves and their oxen, make necessary repairs, as well as bartering with friendly Africans, arranging to hire guides and so forth. Consequently, travellers preferred routes that would enable them to pause at places such as Kudumane, Mathebe, Mabotsa, Kolsbeng or Malepolole and Shoshong. The Difaqane wars were largely responsible for the Bangwaketse missing out when it came to the founding of new mission stations between 1830 and 1850.

In addition to the absence of a mission station among the Bangwaketse, that portion of the "missionary road" that lay between the Barolong settlements of either Mahikeng or Phitshane and both Kanye and Kgwakgwe, was most notorious for its scarcity of water. This often discouraged travellers, causing them to take the alternative route that by-passed the Bangwaketse.

Finally, Sebego's over-dependence on confrontation to settle the division caused by his succession prolonged and perpetuated the division of the Bangwaketse state to such an extent that its decline could hardly be arrested even after its belated unification in the 1850's. A state which, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, had been generally regarded as the strongest, wealthiest and most well-developed of all the Tswana societies,

declined in importance giving way, by the middle of the century, to Sechele's kingdom of the Bakwena and towards the third quarter of the century, to the Bamangwato state under Kgama III.

The ultimate unification of the Bangwaketse state in the 1850's did not restore the vitality, wealth and prestige that had once made it the most famous, feared and widely respected of all the Tswana chiefdoms. When it did come, the reunification of the Bangwaketse people could be said to have come too late. Successful resistance to a new threat facing the Tswana world - the threat of Boer encroachment and colonisation - was carried out without any participation or involvement by the Bangwaketse. This was resistance to the Boer attack on Dimawe and other Tswana settlements during August 1852. Such participation in dispelling Boer aggression would have immensely added to their reputation gained by defeating the combined horde of invaders - Moffat's "Mantatees" in 1823, and the expulsion of the Makololo in 1824.

CHAPTER IV

GASEITSIWE AND THE MISSIONARIES: REUNIFICATION AND NATION BUILDING

When Gaseitsiwe was installed around 1845[1] as king of the Bangwaketse, it was not over a united people. One section of the Bangwaketse was living at Tlhasokwane in what is now the western Transvaal district of Zeerust, very near to the settlements of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana and the Bamalete.[2] This section was ruled by Senthufe, son and heir to Sebego and, accordingly, cousin to Gaseitsiwe. About 1846 - 1847, Senthufe and his followers migrated from Tlhasokwane, returning to Kgwakgwe in the Ngwaketse country. Thus, when the Tlharo teacher-evangelist, Sebubi, was appointed early in 1848 to start a London Missionary Society (hereafter L.M.S.) congregation among the Bangwaketse, it was to Senthufe's section at Kgwakgwe that he went. Senthufi therefore returned to occupy the site of an early capital of the Bangwaketse, where the missionary Robert Moffat had visited Makaba in 1824.[3] It was also at Kgwakgwe that one of the L.M.S. Secretaries for Foreign Missions, the Reverend Joseph John Freeman, 1794 - 1851, then on a tour of southern Africa, found Senthufe and his people in 1849. Freeman, who was favourably impressed

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1 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.10, citing Prosper Lemue in Journal de Mission Evangelique, XV, 1840, p.48.

2 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.33; Blaikie, Personal Life, p.68.

3 L.M.S., Box 23, Folder 4, Jacket A, R. Moffat to A. Tidman, March 1848, W. Ashton to A. Tidman, 20 April 1848; Box 24, Folder 1, Jacket A, R. Moffat to A. Tidman, 24 January 1849.

by Senthufe described him as "a young chieftain, very pleasant, intelligent and friendly".[4]

At the time of Freeman's visit, Gaseitsiwe's section of the Bangwaketse, which included his uncle Segotshane, was then still living in exile in Batlhaping country. Upon learning of Senthufe's return to the fatherland, and particularly of his settling at Kgwakgwe, they quickly perceived that such a shrewd move on the part of Senthufe would give him an immense psychological advantage over themselves, and that it was likely to boost his pretensions to legitimate succession to the Ngwaketse kingship.[5] They accordingly decided to challenge the basis for any such claim by terminating their sojourn in Batlhaping country, and also returning to Ngwaketse country. With the Mandebele menace long since withdrawn from the region, there seemed hardly any reason why either of the Ngwaketse sections should continue to live as subject peoples paying tribute to their protecting overlords. So between 1850 and 1851 Gaseitsiwe and his section of the Bangwaketse settled at Diphawana in the Ngwaketse territory, about ten miles south of Kanye.[6]

In 1837, emigrant Boers from the Cape Colony and Natal had expelled Mzilikazi from the western Transvaal, and driven him beyond the Limpopo. In expelling Mzilikazi, the Boer trekkers had been assisted by several contingents of African troops. But

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4 Freeman, A Tour in South Africa, p.292.

5 Evidence of Tlamang Sekalaba, Tlotlang Tsima, interview held at Kgosing ward, 14 August 1973.

6 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.11; Idem., "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.137-138; Moseley and Motlhabane, History of the Bangwaketse.

no sooner had the Mandebele been driven out than the Boers began making extravagant claims to the effect that all Tswana and other groups previously under the rule of Mzilikazi had, by virtue of the Boer victory over Mzilikazi, become subjects of the Boers.[7] This was as if some of these Tswana chiefdoms, whose regiments fought side-by-side with the Boer commandos in order to liberate themselves from the Mandebele oppression,[8] had done so merely to instal new masters over themselves and not with the purpose of recovering their lost lands and independence, as well as regaining former security and prosperity.

Even before the emigrant Boers had been granted official recognition of their independence by Britain, their generally hostile attitude towards British missionaries, especially those of the L.M.S., and their ill-treatment of their African neighbours had been a cause of deep concern in missionary circles. The mood of pessimism and general feeling of insecurity was perhaps most clearly expressed in a letter written by Robert Moffat to the L.M.S. headquarters in London. But that letter, from which a quotation is reproduced below, was neither the first evidence of apprehension about the probable consequences of an uncontrolled Boer exodus into the interior, nor was it a lone voice. On the contrary, it epitomised in simple, trenchant and

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7 J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton, The Native Policy of the Voortrekkers, (Cape Town, 1928), pp.51-52; L.M.S., Box 27, Folder 1, Jacket B, E. Inglis to A. Tidman, 10 June 1852.

8 L.M.S., Box 15, Folder 4, Jacket D., R. Hamilton to Wm. Ellis, 3 November 1837. Barolong-Tshidi regiments that accompanied the Boers were led by Motshegare, son of Tawana; the Barolong-Ratlou regiments were led by Leepo, and the Barolong-Rapulana regiments were under the leadership of Chief Matlaba himself. (See Molema, Montshiwa, p.28.)

undramatic language the fears and hopes of missionaries, and others, about both the welfare of African societies and the security of their own work among those societies. In a letter to Arthur Tidman, Moffat stated:[9]

> ... our prospects, especially among the Bahurutse & Bakhatla, are rather gloomy from the influx of insurgent Boers who, quite in character, have seized on all the choice fountains and portions of the country. Mr. Livingstone's station lies considerably to the west beyond the present range of the Boers and is likely to remain longer unmolested; but unless something is done to arrest the tide of immigration and check the power of lawless men with whom might is right, we fear the worst consequences to aborigines who dread the oppressions of the Boers more than they did the iron sceptre of Moselekatse.[10]

Moffat's letter suggests, among other things, that there was considerable Boer opposition to missionary work among the Tswana in general, and to Livingstone's work in particular. The Boers were unhappy about the Christianising of the Tswana, because missionary interest in the welfare of their converts would make it difficult to exploit them. Also, contact with British missionaries tended to make African societies pro-British in their sympathies, while approach to social relationships with Africans was contrary to the Boer approach of rigid master-servant relationship between white and black.

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9 Reverend Arthur Tidman (1792 - 1868) was joint holder with Joseph Freeman of the Office of Foreign Secretary of L.M.S. missions until 1846. Thereafter he held the office until his retirement.

10 L.M.S., Box 24, Folder 1, Jacket A, Moffat to Tidman, 24 January 1849. For other letters by L.M.S. drawing attention to the danger implicit in the Boer emigration, see L.M.S., Box 16, Folder 1, Jacket C, J. Philip to Wm. Ellis, 18 June 1838; L.M.S., Box 15, Folder 4, Jacket D, R. Hamilton, R. Moffat and R. Edwards, 15 June 1837.

Consequently, when Livingstone's missionary travels between 1841 and 1849 resulted not only in the opening up of new mission stations among the Bakgatla-Mmanaana, the Bahurutshe and the Bakwena of Sechele, but in addition called forth an influx of white hunters and traders into the region, the Boers of the Transvaal reacted with hostility. In 1847, they summoned Livingstone before a Boer commandant and called upon him to account for his activities among the Tswana.[11] In the same year, the Boers accosted another L.M.S. missionary, Roger Edwards at Mabotsa in their bid to find "Sechele's missionary" and to deliver him "dead or alive".[12] By 1849, the Boers were demanding of the Bechuanaland District Committee of the L.M.S. that they withdraw Livingstone forthwith to the Cape Colony. Livingstone was accused of arming Sechele and the Bakwena. The Bechuanaland District Committee was informed that if they did not act speedily the Boers would themselves forcibly evict Livingstone from the interior.[13] In passing, it must be observed that whether Livingstone and other English missionaries did or did not help to arm the Tswana chiefdoms,[14] the Boers, who migrated from the Cape

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11 A.J. Dachs, Missionary Imperialism in Bechuanaland, 1813 - 96, (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Cambridge University, 1968), p.142.

12 L.M.S., Box 23, Folder 4, Jacket A, R. Edwards to A. Tidman, 4 May, 1847.

13 L.M.S., Box 24, Folder 1, Jacket B., W. Ashton to A. Tidman, 10 December, 1849.

14 Livingstone made no attempt to refute the charge. According to Agar-Hamilton, there is ground for believing that he encouraged the rumour in the belief that the Bakwena were only saved by Boer fears that they were in fact possessing large quantities of fire-arms. (See Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy, p.124; Livingstone, Family Letters, I, p.12.)

Colony and Natal to escape British rule, were unlikely to favour the settlement or even regular travel into the interior by many Englishmen. Experience had taught them that English missionaries and traders tended to be precursors of English government. It is for that reason that they arbitrarily stopped whitemen, especially Englishmen, from travelling into the interior without permission from Boer officers.[15] The Bangwaketse and the Bakwena were likewise peremptorily ordered to close the "missionary road" to the interior to all Englishmen, whether they were, hunters, traders or missionaries.[16] By 1850, Livingstone was complaining from Kolobeng that he had been confined to the Bakwena people, by the Boers eastward of his station, and that they were forbidding him to preach "to the Gentiles that they may be saved".[17]

In January 1852, representatives of the British government concluded the Sand River Convention with the emigrant Boers living north of the Vaal River. In terms of that convention, Britain granted independence to the Boer state north of the Vaal River. By so doing, Britain abandoned her traditional role as protector of the black peoples of the interior, a role represented symbolically by the Cape of Good Hope Punishment Act of

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15 Moffat, Lives of Robert and Mary Moffat, pp.278-299; Mrs. Mary Moffat to Mrs. Sheldon, 23 July 1850; R.U. Moffat, John Smith Moffat, (London 1921, Reprint New York, 1969), p.72; Leyland, Adventures, p.110; L.M.S., Box 25, Folder 1, Jacket C., Ross to Tidman, 1 July 1850.

16 Sillery, Sechele, p.112.

17 Livingstone, Family Letters, II, p.95 - Livingstone to Mrs. & Mr. N. Livingstone, Kolobeng, 28 July, 1850.

1836, and abandoned them to the mercies of the anti-black Boer trekkers in their midsts. From the point of view of the Tswana and other black communities of the interior, two clauses of the Sand River Convention were particularly ominous. Under one of these clauses the commissioners representing Britain repudiated on her behalf "all alliances whatever and with whomsoever of the coloured nations to the north of the Vaal River". The second was an agreement by the commissioners and the Boer representatives to prohibit all trade in arms and ammunition "with the native tribes" while permitting free trade in these to the Boers.[18] Thus, Britain denied herself not only the right to intervene should serious crimes against humanity be perpetrated in the interior, she even "abandoned" the right to treat both sides alike in strict neutrality.[19]

Taking advantage of the vague terms of the Sand River Convention (which did not define the boundaries of the Transvaal), the Boers claimed obedience and loyalty from all African chiefdoms in the region north of the Vaal, and demanded that they show loyalty by paying a labour tax. This demand was made of the chiefdoms in the Transvaal as well as of the Bangwaketse and the Bakwena.[20] These Boer policies were the direct result of

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18 For the text of the Sand River Convention, see G.W. Eybers ed., Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History, 1795 - 1910, (London, 1918), pp.357-359; also C.O. 879/18, African No. 237A.

19 J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton, The Road to the North. South Africa 1852 - 1886, (London, 1937), pp.19,20. The doctrine of "limited commitment" was clearly stated by the Colonial Secretary. (See C.O. 48/326, Earl Grey to Cathcart, 2 February 1852.)

20 L.M.S., Box 27, Folder 1, Jacket A, W. Inglis to A. Tidman, 16 June 1852. Evidence of Ngwaketse elders, especially

several groups migrating from their homes in the Transvaal in order to seek refuge in exile. Boer pressure on Mosielele of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana caused him to flee to Sechele of the Bakwena for refuge, an event that was to exacerbate the already strained relations between the Boers and the Bakwena.

Consequently, in August 1852, a strong Boer commando under Piet Scholtz attacked Sechele's Bakwena at Dimawe. In the battle that ensued, sixty Bakwena men were killed, and they in turn killed twenty-eight Boers.[21] A large number of women and children were captured by the Boers and Dimawe was burnt to the ground. The Boers moved on to Kolobeng, sacked Livingstone's house and destroyed and plundered all its contents.[22] The commandos then proceeded to attack the Bangwaketse of Senthufe at Kanye, burning their town and capturing their stock.[23] At that time, Senthufe's village was situated where the Lobeko ward is located today in Kanye. Gaseitsiwe's section of the Bangwa-

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Ntau Mogobe and Mokhaung Selotlego at interview held at the Kgosing ward, 15 August 1973.

21 Livingstone, who was not present when the fighting took place, stated that thirty Boers were killed. The Boers themselves put their own losses at three men killed and six men wounded. (See Livingstone, Family Letters, II, p.185; Livingstone to Mary Livingstone, Kudumane, 20 September 1852; Idem., Private Journals, 1851 - 1853, ed., I. Schapera (London, 1960), p.85.

22 L.M.S., Box 27, Folder 1, Jacket B, Livingstone to Tidman, 2 November 1852; Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.218, 223, 231; Idem., Family Letters, II, pp.184-186; Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p.20.

23 Evidence of Kentlwile Phologolo and Mosabatha Kethibile at interview held at Kgosing ward, 14 August 1973; Ntau Mogobe, Tlametlu Maswabi and Baoki Tshanana at interview held Kgosing ward on 15 August 1973. L.M.S., Box 29, Folder 1 Jacket A, Journal of Moffat, Box 27, Folder 1, Jacket B, R. Moffat to R.W. Thompson, September 1852; Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, pp.20-21.

ketse were still at Diphawana, about ten miles south of Kanye, when they learned of the Boer attack on the Bakwena and Senthufe. Fearing a similar attack, Gaseitsiwe and his followers fled to Segeng, where they remained until all danger of attack had passed. Thereafter, they returned to Kanye to settle on Nyorosi Hill now occupied by the Tsopye ward.[24]

The Ngwaketse elders do not know whether or not a contingent of Bangwaketse went to Sechele's assistance in his war against the Boers.[25] Rather they think the Bangwaketse were attacked because they would not pay tax to the Boer government. It is useful to remember that at that time - that is, in the 1850's - the form of taxation the Boers demanded was in the form of labour. Additional reasons for the Boer attacks on the Bangwaketse must have been a desire to place them under Boer control in order to render them liable for labour tax, to gain more land at the expense of the Bangwaketse as well as to capture children who would be raised on Boer farms under the disguised form of slavery known as the "indenture system". Also, like the Bakwena, the Bangwaketse had not obeyed Boer orders to close the "missionary road" to white men wishing to travel into the interior. Although there is no specific evidence for it, it can be surmised that the Bangwaketse could have been attacked merely to impress on them the force of Boer power in the area and there-

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24 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.11; Idem., "Bangwaketse", Botirafalo, p.138; cf. also Livingstone, Private Journals, p.85.

25 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders, especially Ntau Mogobe, Oabile Gaetsalwe, Motshidisi Lerumo, Semato Sengwaketse, interview held at Ra-Mongala ward, 24 August 1973.

by rendering them more amenable to Boer instructions and control in the future. Finally, it is not difficult to imagine that the large cattle herds of the Bangwaketse were objects of considerable temptation to the Boer pastoralists.

For refusing to join the Boer commando against Sechele, the Boers threatened to attack Montshiwa's people, the Barolong-Tshidi, just to the south of the Bangwaketse. This was another example of Boer tactics designed in the first instance to cow the Tswana chiefdoms and with the ultimate object of bringing them into tributary relationship. The Barolong-Tshidi fled to their relatives the Barolong-Ratlou under Gonutse at Setlagole,[26] before proceeding to occupy various sites in Ngwaketse country.[27] The Barolong-Tshidi, in 1859, settled at Moshaneng some twelve miles west of Kanye. By granting asylum in their country to the Barolong, who were, in fact, in a state of war with the Boers of the Transvaal, the Bangwaketse were, of course, risking a direct confrontation with the Boers. Ever on the look out for a casus belli against African chiefdoms, the Boers could seize upon Gaseitsiwe's protection of Montshiwa as ground for attacking him just as they had in 1852 when Sechele had given asylum to Mosielele. Montshiwa was closely related to Gaseitsiwe, since the latter's mother was Mojankunyana, a widow of Tawana,

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26 Molema states that the Barolong-Tshidi fled at the threat of attack. Agar-Hamilton says they were attacked. (See Molema, Montshiwa, p.46; Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p.21. See also, J. Chapman, Travels in the Interior of South Africa, ed., E.C. Tabler (Cape Town, 1971), I, p.248; and P.P. 1887, LIX, C.5070, p.88. Shippard to Governor, 28 April, 1886.)

27 In the Ngwaketse country the Barolong-Tshidi occupied sites at Tshwaneng, Segeng, Selokolela and finally Moshaneng.

the father of Montshiwa.

The Transvaal Boers did not challenge Gaseitsiwe for shielding Montshiwa, at least not immediately. For a time they seemed more preoccupied with coercing the various Barolong groups into signing a treaty regulating the boundaries between their territories and that of the Boers, as well as preparing the basis for taxing the Barolong.

The Transvaal Boers appeared to have secured some influence over Senthufe, for there are reports of Boer emissaries having visited him at Kanye in late 1852 or early 1853. It is interesting that Molema describes Senthufe as "a new vassal of the South African Republic" through whom Commandant Jan Viljoen conducted his messages to Montshiwa.[28] Indications are that Gaseitsiwe and his followers did not return to Kanye from Segeng whence they had fled from a possible Boer attack until late in 1853 or early in 1854. On their visit to Kanye in May 1853, Chapman, Wilson and Thompson found only Senthufe's section there.[29] However, when Moffat reached Kanye early in June 1854, he met Gaseitsiwe and Senthufe living side-by-side at Kanye.[30]

One noticeable result of the Boer attack on the Tswana chiefdoms was the growth of a spirit of cooperation among them.

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28 According to Molema, it was Senthufe who met Montshiwa at Dikhukung, a few miles below Phitshane, and informed him that Commandant Pretorius wished to meet him at the Bahurutshe capital of Mathebe, and would also guarantee him safe passage to and from Mathebe. (See Molema; Montshiwa, p.48).

29 Chapman, Travels, I, p.99; Molema, Montshiwa, Chapter 6 passim.

30 Moffat, Matabele Journals, I, p.149.

In order to avenge the Boer attack on his capital, the capture of his people - including his son Kgari - and the loss of much property, Sechele had solicited the help of neighbouring chiefdoms. In the meantime, his own guards and spies were posted along the major trade routes in order to way-lay Boer hunters and traders. Sechele's invitation to many harassed groups from the Transvaal to join him was another example of the belated effort at cooperation among the Tswana. Such groups included the Bamalete, the Batlokwa and Bakgatla-Kgafela. In response to Sechele's appeal for help to avenge his defeat and losses, his northern neighbour, King Sekgoma of the Bamangwato, planned to kill a party of Boers that had been hunting in the vicinity of Lake Ngami. When the trader James Chapman returned from a hunting expedition in the interior he found the Bamangwato in a high state of readiness and expectation of war with the Boers. They possessed many guns and were practising shooting daily. The party of Boers under one De Beer only escaped by stealing away quietly in the night, leaving behind nearly all their possessions, such as oxen and ivory, which Sekgoma promptly confiscated.[31] But Gaseitsiwe and Montshiwa worked even more closely together after the Boer attacks of 1852, when the Barolong-Tshidi came to live in the Ngwaketse country. As a result of Montshiwa's proximity, Gaseitsiwe, who had no white missionary of his own, could take advantage of the services and counsel of Montshiwa's missionary. This was the Wesleyan missionary to the Barolong, the Reverend J.D.M. Ludorf.[32]

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31 Chapman, Travels, I, pp.76-80.

32 J.D. Ludorf was a physician and a missionary who came from

Although the Bangwaketse were the immediate neighbours of the Bakwena to the south, and although they were, like the Bamangwato, part of the Kwena complex of chiefdoms, they did not respond to Sechele's invitation. This was mainly because they were still divided into contending political factions; and since they were not integrated in the trading network in that region, they lacked guns and ammunition. It is, however, likely that Senthufe was part of the alliance of Tswana chiefs referred to by Sechele during his visit to Cape Town.[33]

Gaseitsiwe's reign has been characterised as an uneventful one in which traditions do not tell of any outstanding occurrence.[34] This summary of the long reign of Gaseitsiwe is not fully borne out by a close scrutiny of developments in and around the Bangwaketse country during this period. Apart from the 1852 attack by the Boers on Tswana societies in general, and the Bangwaketse in particular - which in itself was no minor incident - the unification of the Bangwaketse people, torn apart since the start of the Difaqane wars, and which was accomplished comparatively quickly and smoothly, was a significant milestone in the history of that kingdom. That happened early in the reign of Gaseitsiwe. His was a reign that is not remembered for any major upheavals within Ngwaketse society itself. Today elders in his chiefdom remember Gaseitsiwe as a gentle and

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Thaba Nchu in 1850, at the request of Montshiwa, to work among the Barolong-Tshidi. He was stationed at Lotlhakane about eight miles south of Mahikeng.

33 Livingstone, Private Journals, pp.90-92; Idem., Missionary Correspondence, pp.245-246; Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, pp.19-21.

34 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.11.

kindly ruler, whose humane rule was responsible for several alien groups seeking to establish themselves permanently in his country.

During this period of peaceful consolidation of Ngwaketsé society, Gaseitsiwe re-occupied the old capital of Kanye, founded by his grandfather, Makaba. His reign also witnessed the addition into Ngwaketse society of a large group of immigrants, both from areas into which emigrant Boers from the south were passing as well as from other Tswana chiefdoms north of the Molopo. Consequently, there occurred during Gaseitsiwe's reign not only the expansion of the Ngwaketse chiefdom resulting from the reunification of the hitherto separated factions of that people, but also a considerable diversification of Ngwaketse society as a result of the addition to it of several Tswana clans.

Among these immigrants were the Barolong-Tshidi under Montshiwa who settled at Moshaneng in 1859.[35] As already observed, this was because of Boer pressure to subject Montshiwa's people to a tributary relationship. But the Barolong-Tshidi immigration into Ngwaketse country, substantial as it was,[36] was never intended to be permanent. It had always been conceived as a temporary exile by the Barolong-Tshidi until they

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35 Matthews, "Tshidi Barolong", p.17; Idem., "Barolong", Ditirafalo, pp.19-22, passim; Molema, Montshiwa, p.53. Breutz, Mafeking District, p.217. Breutz states, incorrectly, that the Barolong-Tshidi remained at Moshaneng until 1871.

36 When the Austrian natural scientist Dr. Emil Holub visited the Ngwaketse country in 1873, he estimated the Barolong population at Moshaneng at over 7,000, while he thought about one thousand men were away working at the diamond mines in Kimberley. (See E. Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, translated by Ellen E. Frower (London, 1881), p.294.)

settled their differences with the Boers of the Transvaal.[37] Thus while the Barolong-Tshidi who remained at Moshaneng until 1877, were within the political boundaries of the Ngwaketse state, they were never really part of it. When Montshiwa returned to his own territory, some groups of Barolong remained in Ngwaketse country, and until recently, were still living at Moshaneng.[38]

The case of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana immigrants was different. They first came into Ngwaketse country during the reign of Makaba II, and left the country to return to the Transvaal during the reign of Sebego.[39] Conflict with the Boers forced them, once more, to leave their settlement of Mabotsa in 1850 and to seek refuge in Gaseitsiwe's country. They settled first at Ga-Mafhikana and, subsequently, at Moshupa. When they learnt that the Boers were following them with a view to forcing them back to the Transvaal, they left Moshupa in Ngwaketse country to sojourn at Dithejwane under the jurisdiction of the Bakwena king, Sechele.

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37 Matthews, "Tshidi Barolong", p.17; Molema, Montshiwa, p.53. Proof that it was intended as a temporary exile was Montshiwa's distribution of his brothers who were placed in charge of various small settlements at key positions of the Barolong-Tshidi country.

38 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.12. I did not find any families at Moshaneng with traditions going back to the Barolong-Tshidi settlement there between 1859 and 1877. In a later work, Schapera does indicate that the one Barolong ward still existing at Moshaneng had a different origin and comprised Barolong-Rrapulana families. This is in agreement with my own findings after I interviewed informants at Moshaneng.

39 Tiro Motlhabane, History of the Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana, Mss.

About the year 1863; well after the Boer threat of repatriating the Kgatla Mmanaana had abated, they decided to leave Bakwena country because they would not pay sehuba (tribute) to Sechele. This, of course, implied challenging, or at least questioning, Sechele's suzerainty over them, and could not be tolerated by a strong monarch. The Bamalete, under Mokgosi, also left Sechele's country for the same reason: they would not pay tribute to a Motswana.[40] While the Bamalete went to Mankgodi farther away from Dithejwane (they were nevertheless still in Bakwena country), the Kgatla Mmanaana went to Moshupa. Gaseitsiwe did not raise any objection to Mosielele's return to Moshupa, nor did he place any conditions on their settlement there.

Seven years after Mosielele's return to Ngwaketse, a serious succession dispute broke out in the Mmanaana-Kgatla settlement at Moshupa. Mosielele's son, Pilane (with the backing of his brother Gobuaman) claimed the right to rule from his father on the ground that he had reached mature age and Mosielele's rule in his stead could no longer be justified.[41] The community split between the supporters of Mosielele on one side, and those of Pilane and Gobuaman on the other. Gaseitsiwe and Sechele unsuccessfully attempted to mediate between the feuding sections of the Kgatla Mmanaana. As dissension mounted and

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40 Ellenberger records that Mokgosi defiantly stated he would pay tribute only to him who would collect it from one end of the country to the other. (See Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.46, Idem., "Ba-ga-Malete", Ditirafalo, p.212.)

41 Tior Motlhabane, History of the Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana; Evidence of Bangwaketse elders at Kgatleng Ward, Ga-Mafhikana. Interview held 22 August 1973;

blood-shed appeared unavoidable, Mosielele and his supporters eventually fled to Kanye.[42] Mosielele's people founded the large Kgatleng ward at Ga-Mafhikana in the southern part of Kanye.

Pilane's group went to Kgabodukwe in Bakwena country.[43] But in the Bakwena state, Pilane probably found he would have to settle only under the conditions that had driven Mosielele out of that state back into Ngwaketse country. He would have to accept to be welded into the general political framework of the Bakwena state, and become a sub-chief showing full and proper allegiance to the king at Dithejwane, instead of being a semi-autonomous potentate enjoying the protection of Sechele but not willing to bear full allegiance to him. It was probably disagreements over this basic principle of state organisation that led to Pilane's faction of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana leaving the Bakwena state in 1880 to return, with Gaseitsiwe's approval, to Moshupa.

Gaseitsiwe once more permitted the Bakgatla-Mmanaana faction of Pilane - now under the rule of Gobuaman - to settle at Moshupa without strictly imposing the conditions that were necessary for effective nation-building. In 1925, Tiro Motlhabane/expressed the opinion that this section of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana under Gobuaman was in Ngwaketse country only on sufferance and had no hereditary claim to any portion of it, either as a distinct ethnic entity or as ditlogolo, maternal nephews, of the Bangwaketse. As long as they were Mosielele's people,

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[42] Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, p. 305; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.12.

[43] L.M.S., Box 56, Folder 3, Jacket D; J.D. Hepburn to J. Mullens; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.12.

they were ditlogolo and, as such, had a special claim under Tswana custom not only to be succoured but also to be humoured, if necessary. But once they severed the link or cut the "umbilical cord" that attached them to Mosielele they were no longer different from any other bafaladi or aliens, and had, therefore, no special claim to different treatment. The implication of Tiro Motlhabane's observation is that it was weakness or short-sightedness on the part of Gaseitsiwe not to have made the payment of tribute mandatory and to enforce it rigidly.[44]

During the year 1866, Gaseitsiwe gave refuge to a third group of immigrants. These were Bamangwato followers of the Chief Sekgoma Kgari, who had been driven away by his own people. Partly Sekgoma's expulsion could be attributed to the Bakwena king, Sechele's manipulation of Ngwato politics in order to secure the installation of Macheng.[45] Partly the expulsion proceeded from a dispute between Sekgoma and his sons Kgama and Kgamane - a dispute that was powerfully backed by Tshukudu (Sekgoma's principal royal councillor at Shoshong).[46] But, central to the civil dispute was the fundamental question of legitimate succession according to established principles and

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44 Tiro Motlhabane, History of the Bakgatla ba-ga-Mmanaana.

45 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.12; H.M. Hole, The Passing of the Black Kings, (London 1932, Reprint New York, 1969), pp.63-69, 78; J.D. Hepburn, Twenty Years in Khama's Country (London, 1895), p.19.

46 Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.120; L.M.S., Box 34, Folder 1, Jacket B, J. Mackenzie to Dr. A. Tidman, 3 July 1866; J. Mackenzie, Ten Years North of the Orange River (Edinburgh, 1871) p.362.

usages of Tswana customary law.[47]

Sekgoma lived with the Bangwaketse until 1873 when he was called back home by one of the sons, Kgama (as a protection of his right to rule from being usurped by his brother Kgamane) to resume his rule over the Bamangwato.[48] On his departure for his home area, Sekgoma left behind some of his Bamangwato followers who preferred to remain under the rule of Gaseitsiwe. Among these were some Matswapong whose descendents still form the Tswapong ward in Kanye.

The Bahurutshe boo-Manyana who separated under the leadership of Manyana, from the main Bahurutshe chiefdom based at Tshwenyane, went to set themselves up as an independent group at Borutwe, very near where the present railway siding of Mangope is located, just east of Groot Marico.[49] While under the rule of Mangope, this branch of the Bahurutshe was severely harassed by Transvaal Boers. They accordingly left Borutwe under chief Mangope in 1858 settling at Manyana near Dimawe in modern Botswana.[50] After some time there, the various sections under the brothers Kontle, Sebogodi and Suping quarrelled and parted company, the other sections returning to the Transvaal, while Kontle's section remained to form part of the larger group of immigrant communities that settled in Gaseitsiwe's kingdom

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47 Mackenzie, Ten Years, p.362; Sillery, Sechele, pp.132-133.

48 Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.121.

49 It was probably between 1650 and 1680. See Breutz, Marico District, pp.56-58; Jensen, "Note on the Bahurutshe", p.177.

50 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.12; Breutz, Marico District, p.59.

after 1850.[51]

Lastly, another major group that came to live in Ngwaketse country was the Bamalete under the rule of Mokgosi-a-Pooe (Mokgosi I), c.1810 - 1886. Mokgosi had had previous experience of alliance with both the Bakwena and the Bangwaketse during their numerous conflicts in the early part of the nineteenth century.[52] His adventures in those years enabled him to accumulate a vast number of cattle. With these he returned to the Madikwe country and around him rebuilt the Bamalete chiefdom by collecting pockets of his scattered and dispersed people at Rabogadi.[53] Poor and without cattle, but occupying country that was rich in iron, the Bamalete built up a flourishing industry in iron metallurgy and were the principal purveyors among the Barolong, Batlhaping, Bangwaketse and Bahurutshe of iron implements such as axes, spears, hoes, bracelets etc.[54] These they exchanged for goats and later for cattle.[55]

Like other African communities in the Transvaal, the Bamalete were driven out by Boer pressure. The Boers "worried them without cessation, wanting the people to work as servants, farm hands, herds, [sic.] etc."[56] Consequently, the Bamalete gladly

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51 Jensen, "Note on the Hurutshe", p.177; Breutz, Marico District, p.59.

52 Lord Hailey, Native Administration, Part V, p.180; Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", pp.43-44.

53 Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", pp.43-44.

54 Ibid., p.44.

55 Ibid., "There was an established rate of exchange: Four hoes purchased a cow, three an ox".

56 Ibid., Ellenberger's informants cited cases of Bamalete

responded to Sechele's invitation (in 1852) to join him at Dithejwane, where they remained till 1863. When Sechele demanded tribute from them, the Malete left and occupied the site of Mankgodi (farther away from Sechele's capital, but still within his territory). Further pressure from Sechele for tribute drove them out of Kwena territory to Ramotswa where they settled in Gaseitsiwe's country during the year 1875,[57] although a few remained at Mankgodi and were still living there twenty years ago.[58] Mokgosi's decided aversion to paying any form of tribute to the ruler of the country in which he settled, tempts one to surmise that he would probably behave in the same manner towards his new benefactor, Gaseitsiwe.

Apart from the larger groups mentioned above, several smaller groups or pockets of immigrants appear to have trickled into Ngwaketse country for the greater part of Gaseitsiwe's reign. Such groups include Bahurutshe, Bangwato, Barolong (Ratlou), Batsopye, Ba-ga-Laka and others. Elders from such groups interviewed in 1973 and 1974 tended to plead, as a reason for immigrating to Ngwaketse country, wars that occurred a long time ago. It would, generally speaking, be fair to assume that many were fragments of groups broken up and scattered by the Difaqane wars, or refugees from Boer pressure in the Transvaal, while in

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captured and killed by the Boers, and some who escaped bore marks of Boer ill-treatment on their bodies. (See pages 44-45.)

57 Ibid., p.46; Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.163, Lord Hailey, Native Administration: Part V, p.180.

58 Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.46; Idem., "Ba-ga-Malete", Ditirafalo, p.212; Breutz, Marico District, p.211.

a very few cases some may have left their homes because of dynastic conflicts.

In the case of such small groups, there was never a problem about tribute. If the groups were big enough and had a recognised leader, they were usually constituted a separate ward of the Ngwaketse capital in Kanye. Thus it will be seen that the incorporation of small groups appeared to present no insuperable difficulties.

It was, however, Gaseitsiwe's handling of the larger groups that exposed his failure to grapple imaginatively with the problem of nation-building. While the case of the Barolong-Tshidi could be regarded as having been an exception, those of the Bahurutshe-Manyana, Bakgatla-Mmanaana and Bamalete were not. Fleeing from the tyranny of Boer government in the Transvaal, these groups reasonably expected to be granted asylum in neighbouring Tswana states but some also unreasonably hoped to be suffered to set up virtually autonomous principalities within the political borders of the states hosting or protecting them. They deliberately refused to recognise the established and cardinal principle of Tswana constitutional law encapsulated in the maxim: fa tlou e tlola noka, ke tlout swana.*

Those refugee groups that went to the Bakwena state under king Sechele I found that monarch little disposed to making any concessions over this basic principle. The most he seemed willing to grant was to allow an in-coming group time to establish itself, build a village, have a few seasons of ploughing and sowing crops before demanding that they recognize his suzerainty by paying the traditional tributes of sehuba and dikgagela;

* "When an elephant crosses a river, it becomes a little elephant".

ploughing the tribute fields (masotla), surrendering the matimela or stray cattle and other exactions generally acknowledged to be due to the monarch under Tswana traditional law.

These were neither novel nor excessive demands but standard, minimal requirements necessary to ensure the smooth running of the state, and to enable the monarch to fulfil adequately his role that is described in the Tswana proverb: Kgosi ke mosadi wa morafe: the king is the wife (mother) of the nation. These exactions should accordingly have presented no problems to the incoming Tswana groups who understood these customary requirements. These were minimal requirements, for tribute alone could not be expected to ensure permanent union. In addition to tribute, therefore, Tswana rulers forged other links that helped to tie the subjects of all the districts to the centre. One of these was through the regimental system based on the mophato or age set. Since the mophato could only be organised at the direction of the king, it followed that he alone could issue an order to mobilise the national army. Sub-chiefs or headmen in charge of subordinate villages were, indeed, the leaders of the regiments in the villages of which they themselves were members, but the purposes for which they could call out the regiments without the permission of the king were specified and limited. The fact that the recruitment of mephato (singular, mophato) was such that they cut across the vertical sub-divisions arising from the existence of subordinate villages was an additional method of achieving national unity.

Tswana kings also used clientage as a means of boosting their authority. By distributing royal herds among the dikgosana

(aristocrats), the heads of villages could in that manner be rendered more tractable and loyal to the king. Heads of immigrant communities could be among the nobles favoured with taking care of kgamelo, "milk pail" cattle. Makaba II and Sebego placed such cattle in the care of Kontle and Mosielele of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana. The kgamelo system was not confined to nobles. Commoners who distinguished themselves through bravery in war, exceptional skill in debate, excellent judgement and profound knowledge of Tswana law and custom, especially those who combined these qualities with conspicuous loyalty and faithful service, were often selected by the kings and raised to the level of sub-chiefs or senior headmen with kgamelo cattle to look after and some village to administer on behalf of the king.

Although this system was practised with varying degrees of perfection by most Tswana rulers, it was, however, among the Bamangwato and Batawana that the system was most fully developed.[59] There it resulted in the emergence of a "class" of commoner - notables - who were often used to counterpoise the influence of the royal nobles. The operation of these social and political institutions in the direction of checking separatist tendencies on the part of sub-chiefs was often qualified by the fact that the heads of alien groups absorbed into the morafe were themselves of royal birth and, therefore, commanded considerable loyalty and respect among their villagers. Like the king, they ruled at their own local courts with the assistance and advice

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59 Schapera, Law and Custom, p.67; Tlou, Northwestern Botswana, pp.124, 127, 128-129.

of their own relatives. Such local loyalties opened the door to secession by rebellious sub-chiefs, particularly where obligations such as the payment of the different forms of tribute were not enforced in a systematic and rigid manner. It was in such circumstances that the character and personality of the reigning monarch or his approach to nation-building became a crucial factor.

It was probably Sechele's thorough grasp of this fundamental principle that made him insist on the refugee communities to whom he had given asylum complying with the customary requirement of tribute. When the Bamalete and the Bakgatla-Mmanaana chose to leave the Kwena state rather than pay tribute to Sechele they were probably gambling on their defiant attitudes prevailing in the Ngwaketse kingdom. Gaseitsiwe's demand for tribute was as strenuously resisted by the Bamalete as they had done to Sechele's demand earlier. Gaseitsiwe did nothing to coerce the Bamalete to pay the sehubá.

In his evidence, given in 1925,[60] on the traditions of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana, the Ngwaketse aged seer, Tiro Motlhabane, stated that with the possible exception of the "Bakgalagadi", the Bangwaketse had never had any subject community living in their country and consequently were "not awake" to the need to exact tribute from the chief of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana. Tiro might have added that Makaba II himself treated the Mmanaana as a special case - ditlogolo - because Mosielele's mother was a daughter of Makaba and Sebego's full sister.[61] While Tiro's

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[60] Tiro Motlhabane, History of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana.

[61] It is probable that it was Sebego's decision to enforce

explanation may have had some validity as far as the Bakgatla-Mmanaana were concerned, it does not explain the case of other groups admitted after them, certainly not that of the Bamalete, towards whom Gaseitsiwe had no responsibility at all and against whose perfidious nature he had been warned by Sechele.[62]

Even if allowance is made for the gentleness and good-natured character (bokgwabo) of this almost saintly and well-loved monarch (about whose "soft voice" and "mellifluous tones" Lloyd waxes so eloquently),[63] the conclusion seems inescapable that he was weak and irresolute, and suffered from a chronic lack of despatch in dealing with burning issues.[64] Clearly there was something strange about groups migrating in and out of states, seeking protection yet resenting the payment of tribute to the protecting states. These groups must have known that the issue was either tribute to the Boers or tribute to Tswana protecting states.

An examination of Tswana social and political institutions suggests that machinery for nation building did exist. What appears to have been necessary was a determined and purposeful drive towards that goal. It was precisely in this respect that Sechele's treatment of the in-coming communities tended to show

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some of these obligations on the Bakgatla-Mmanaana that made them leave Ga-Ngwaketse in the 1820's and return to the Transvaal. According to Tiro Motlhabane, Kontle absconded with Sebego's royal herds placed in his care.

62 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.152.

63 Ibid.

64 He suffered the Bakgatla-Mmanaana section of Pilane (which separated from Mosielele's in 1871) to disregard his instructions with impunity.

off Gaseitsiwe in a poorer light. By insisting on all the subject groups in his state paying tribute, Sechele showed himself to be more conscious of the need for nation-building than Gaseitsiwe. Given the attitude of the latter it appears that he looked upon nearly all these new groups as purely temporary sojourners in his kingdom, and that they would return whence they came once the Boer "Difaqane" had subsided. But Gaseitsiwe's laissez-faire attitude towards these larger groups presented the danger of them becoming so many "states within the state" and, thereby, harming rather than enhancing the central authority within the Ngwaketse state.

If the internal challenges of a growing Ngwaketse state appeared to be severely taxing the talents of Gaseitsiwe, his reactions to developments in neighbouring countries were, if not wholely inspired, at least creditable. Apart from whites who were now beginning to settle down as traders in Ngwaketse country, the activities of the neighbouring Boer government of the South African Republic was seriously threatening the welfare of black states including that of the Bangwaketse. On the reasoning that the Boer defeat of Mzilikazi and his Mandebele entitled them to succession over what they considered Mzilikazi's domains, the Transvaal commandant for the western Transvaal, P. Scholtz had in February 1852 summoned all the chiefs in that area to a meeting at Mabotsa where the Boers made their pronouncement. They had taken over all Mzilikazi's lands and subjects. All the Tswana chiefs in the area were henceforth required to pay taxes to the Transvaal Boers in the form of service as the country had been given over to them by the English. All white men travelling

into the interior could only do so if granted permission by the Boer government of the Transvaal. The "missionary road" through the Bangwaketse and the Bakwena had to be closed.[65]

The Boer attack on Sechele at Dimawe and on Senthufe at Kanye later that year, was an indication of the seriousness of their purpose namely, having Boer influence and authority undisputed in the interior. This was followed up in 1868 by extending their boundary westwards to incorporate most of the land of the Tswana. This proclamation which was in keeping with both Boer intentions and practice[66] - namely to expand at the expense of the land of the Tswana - was, however, precipitated by the discovery of gold at Tati in 1866.[67] Pretorius' proclamation was not recognised by the British government[68] and was consequently not put into effect. Soon thereafter the Transvaal government encouraged the pretensions of Gopane's Hurutshe people who were claiming land at the expense of the Bangwaketse. With the assistance of their Hurutshe vassals, the Boers erected beacons on a line that sliced off an enormous portion of Ngwaketse country along the eastern border. Gaseitsiwe promptly had

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65 L.M.S., Box 27, Folder 1, Jacket A, W. Inglis to A. Tidman, Mathebe 16 June 1852; Mss. British Empire, S.22, G.B., W. Inglis to Sir George Clark, Philippolis, 10 October 1853.

66 The Barolong-Tshidi complained bitterly to the Cape Governor and High Commissioner, Sir Philip Wodehouse about Boer seizures of their fountains and lands. (See P.P. 1868-9, XLIII, 4141, p.21.

67 Mackenzie, Ten Years, p.454; W.D. Mackenzie, John Mackenzie, South African Missionary and Statesman, (London, 1887), p.123.

68 C.W. DeKiewiet, "The Period of Transition in South African Policy, 1854-1870", in E.A. Walker, ed., Cambridge History of the British Empire (Cambridge, 1963), VIII, p.42.

the beacons removed. This was a successful resistance by Gaseitsiwe to a surreptitious move on the part of the Boers to expand unfairly against his country through championing the phoney claims of a client group.

Thereafter Gaseitsiwe went to attend a meeting at Dishwaing on the Molopo River between the Transvaal Government representatives and southern Tswana chiefs. This was in November 1870. His purpose in attending was to protest at the Boer tactics of encroaching unfairly and unjustifiably on Ngwaketse lands.[69] Once more the Boers made an attempt to impose their jurisdiction on the various Tswana chiefs. Gaseitsiwe and other chiefs present rejected such claims, and failure to reach agreement over boundaries between the Transvaal and lands ruled by the Tswana chiefs resulted in the appointment of an arbitration commission which sat at Bloemhof in April 1871 to deal with the matter. When the commissioners could not agree, the matter was passed on to the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, R.W. Keate for final arbitration. While it is correct to say that the Keate Award dealt mainly with the land disputes with the Barolong and the Batlhaping, it is not strictly accurate to maintain, as Lord Hailey does,[70] that it "did not touch the tribes of northern Bechuanaland". Keate's arbitration did adjust the boundaries of the Barolong, Batlhaping and Bangwaketse peoples "in accordance with those claimed on their behalf".[71] With reference to the

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69 Bloemhof Blue Book, pp.187, 189. Evidence of Mathiba and Gaseitsiwe before the Bloemhof Arbitration Court; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.13; Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p.72.

70 Lord Hailey, Native Administration: Part V, p.189.

71 P.P., 1872, XLIII, C.508, p.25.

Bangwaketse's eastern border with the Transvaal, the Award pronounced as follows:

> I do award, order, and adjudge that henceforth and for the future, the boundary line of the territory of Chief Gaseitsiwe of the Bangoaketsi tribe shall commence on the west of Leganing and proceeding by Lepaklapaling, Pattapatta, Lingoma, Pellayanging (narrow place), Deboganko or Schaapkuil, Sepatobie (bare place), where it abuts upon the line of territory of the Barolong tribes.[72]

Thus Gaseitsiwe's energetic defence of the country of his people was rewarded with success, and his foresight in recognising the need to present his case at the Bloemhof Arbitration Commission (April 1871) was vindicated. It was a continuation of the strategy that had dictated his attendance at the Dishwaing Conference (on the Molopo) when representatives of the Transvaal Boer republic attempted to force the Tswana chiefdoms of the south to acknowledge their (Boer) suzerainty by paying taxes to them.

Gaseitsiwe's strategy was also a gamble. If the arbitration court had decided against his claims, he would have been obliged to abide by its ruling. In the event his gamble paid off. But it was a move that was dictated by very prudent assessment of realities. Gaseitsiwe knew that his Ngwaketse state had not the military capacity to resist Boer encroachment by force of arms,[73] and he accordingly determined to embark on a judicious blend of

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[72] Ibid., p.26. Sillery confirms that this was the boundary line claimed for the Bangwaketse by Gaseitsiwe. (See Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.138.)

[73] Although there were several subject communities in the Ngwaketse country and they recognised Gaseitsiwe's overlordship, they were too loosely controlled to be depended on in times of crises.

resistance with seeking as wide as possible recognition of the boundaries of his state. The effectiveness of this approach can be gauged from the manner in which his appearance at Bloemhof discomfited the Boer leaders, who tried hard to persuade Gaseitsiwe that he had no business there since his country was situated several hundred miles to the north and was free.[74]

But as may be seen from what happened (especially after 1881) to the boundaries laid down by the Keate Award for the Barolong and Batlhaping, exact timing had been crucial for Gaseitsiwe. He acted before any Boer free-booters had begun settling on his territory. The misfortune of the other chiefs to the south was that the Keate Award came too late, after many Boers from the Transvaal had carved out farms on lands west of the Keate Award line. Many more did so after the Award.[75] Although the Transvaal government had promptly repudiated the Keate Award,[76] they did not openly challenge the border line between their state and the Bangwaketsé. As will be seen presently, they were to resort to indirect means of attempting to impose their authority on the Bangwaketse.

Meanwhile inside the Ngwaketse state, other important developments were taking place. Although the Bangwaketse had been receiving Christian teaching from African evangelists like Sebobi and Tlhomelang since 1848, it was not until 1871 that the

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74 Bloemhof Blue Book, p.189, Evidence of Gaseitsiwe; Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p.72.

75 P.P., 1882, XLVII, C. 3381, pp.85-89, Sir Hercules Robinson to Lord Kimberley, 22 May, 1882.

76 C.O. 48/459, Sir Henry Barkly to Lord Kimberley, 2 January 1872, enclosing correspondence with Acting President D.J. Erasmus of the South African Republic.

MARKS ON ORIGINAL

L.M.S. appointed a fully-ordained white pastor at Kanye. This was the Reverend James Good, who arrived in South Africa in 1865, to be stationed at Griqua Town[77] in association with "Brother" Hughes". By the end of 1867, Good was expressing the opinion that Griqua Town was no longer of sufficient importance to remain as an independent station; and was requesting the Directors that he be posted to "some station to the North of Kuruman".[78]

While standing in for John Mackenzie at Shoshong[79] at the request of the Bechuanaland District Committee*, Good again expressed his "ultimate wish" to be stationed among the Bangwaketse, "a place to which numbers of the Griqua Town people have removed" and regarded by many as a place where "our prospects would be improved". Good stated that as he passed Kanye on his way to Shoshong accompanied by the Reverend Roger Price of Molepolole, he (Good) spoke to Gaseitsiwe "who expressed himself as ready and also anxious to have an European missionary amongst them". To strengthen his argument, Good added that the numbers of Griquas residing in that locality was one of the incentives for him to wish to go and labour there. He argued that having spent years among the Griqua he was reluctant "to throw away" his knowledge of "the language" by going to live in any place

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77 Early in 1865 Robert Moffat wrote: "We have been cheered with the information that a Mr. Good may be expected ere long, at Griqua Town..." (See L.M.S., Box 33, Folder 5, Jacket A, R. Moffat to A. Tidman, 15 February 1865; also J. Good to Dr. Tidman, 9 June 1865).

78 L.M.S., Box 34, Folder 3, Jacket A, J. Good to J. Mullens, 22 November 1867.

79 L.M.S. Box 35, Folder 2 Jacket D., I. Hughes to J. Mullens, 29 June 1869 and R. Moffat to I. Mullens, June 1869.

* A local committee comprising European missionaries of the L.M.S. stationed among the Tswana-speaking societies of Southern Africa.

where that language was not spoken.[80]

On the face of it this was a sound enough case for the directors and the District Committee to consider favourably transferring the labours of James Good to a sphere where there would be greater use made of his talents. Kanye appeared just such a place. For nearly a quarter of a century African evangelists had been plodding away among the Bangwaketse and subject groups, and it can be assumed that not all the seed they sowed fell on stony ground.[81] This fact, probably more than his fear of losing the opportunity of employing the Griqua language, seems a reasonable explanation for his enthusiasm for that field. In passing, it may be worth observing that it was indeed a strange premise for a request to be appointed to the Bangwaketse to plead one's proficiency in the language of the Griqua, especially when there is no indication anywhere of any substantial Griqua group in the Ngwaketse state. Further, in conducting oral research among the Bangwaketse, no community of distinct Griqua ethnic origin was identified. If there had been any they had presumably left Ngwaketse country or had become rapidly assimilated into the dominant Ngwaketse group.

Nevertheless, in requesting to go northwards, Good was on strong ground. A vast and potentially rich field of mission activity among the Tswana chiefdoms north of the Molopo had long been confirmed by men of no less statue than Moffat and Livingstone.[82] The long-standing requests of Ngwaketse kings for a

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80 L.M.S. Box 35, J. Good to Dr. Mullens, Shoshong, 10 September, 1869.

81 Moffat, Matabele Journals, I, pp.149-160 passim, II, p.23.

82 Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.4-5, D. Living-

white missionary notwithstanding, the L.M.S. itself, chastened by the shock of denominational rivalry from the Boer-sponsored agents of the Hermaunsburg Lutheran Society (who not only showed little qualms in taking over Livingstone's own station of Molepolole, but even went so far as laying subtle claims to a denominational sphere of influence among the Bakgatla-Mmanaana at Moshupa and the Bangwaketse themselves),[83] was becoming less complacent about its presumed monopoly for proselytizing the chiefdoms of Botswana. Finally, because of its policy, whether openly declared or not, towards African evangelists, the status of the Ngwaketse L.M.S. circuit remained that of an outstation[84] as long as it had no white missionary.

At its meeting held at Kudumane (23 December 1870 to 9 January 1871) the Bechuanaland District Committee resolved that James Good, if medically fit, "be recommended to proceed at once to the Bangwaketse".[85] Early in June 1871 Good and his family left Kudumane for Kanye to take over, but not to found the L.M.S. mission among the Bangwaketse.[86] The arrival of James Good at

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stone to J.J. Freeman, Kudumane, 24 December 1841; pp.26-30, D. Livingstone to J.J. Freeman, Kudumane, 18 July 1842; L.M.S., Box 20, Folder 1, Jacket B, Report of Hamilton, Moffat and Ashton dated 12 October 1844; Dachs, Missionary Imperialism, Ph.D. Thesis, pp.141-142.

83 L.M.S., Box 31, Folder 1, Jacket A, R. Moffat to A. Tidman, Kuruman, 10 February 1858; Box 36, Folder 3, Jacket D, Minutes of B.X.C., deeting, Molepolole 29 July - 10 Aug. 1871.

84 L.M.S., Box 36, Folder 1, Jacket A, R. Price to J. Mullens, Molepolole, 5 July 1870.

85 L.M.S., Box 36, Folder 1, Jacket B, J.S. Moffat to J. Mullens, 4 November 1870; Box 36, Folder 1, Jacket C. Minutes of B.D.C. meeting 23 December 1870 - 9 January 1871.

86 L.M.S., Box 36, Folder 3, Jacket D, J.S. Moffat to Dr. J. Mullens, 16 June 1871; R. Lovett, The History of the London Missionary Society, (London, 1795-1895), I, p.647.

Kanye immediately elevated the status of that mission, which until then had been an out-station of Molepolole under the Rev. Roger Price. Henceforth Kanye itself became the centre of several out-stations like Moshupa, Disaneng (generally known as Jan Masibi's) and Khunwana - all under the care of African evangelists.[87] It was probably this new importance that the mission there acquired when it got its first white missionary that has led some writers to imply that it owed its establishment to the work of James Good.[88]

While it seems clear that Gaseitsiwe's reign witnessed the arrival and settling down of a few whites among the Bangwaketse, the arrival of the white missionary appears to have had an importance and value that surpassed that of other white men. This can be seen from the fact that while the Bangwaketse elders cannot remember the names of the first white traders to settle in Kanye they unhesitatingly state that Good ("Kwiti") was the first white man to live with their forebears.[89] It is, of course, not difficult to see why the missionaries made such a great impact on African societies. While it may be true that all white men who moved and settled among the Africans tended to

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87 In 1876 the B.D.C. added Maanwane and Mathebe mission stations, in the western Transvaal, to the outstations under the supervision of the missionary at Kanye. (See L.M.S., Box 38, Folder 3, Jacket B.)

88 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.153; Sillery, Founding A Protectorate, p.67, implies the same thing although he had stated the position accurately in his earlier work, The Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.138.

89 This was stated by elders at nearly all interviews, but especially Sebati Dikgageng, Private interview at his home Rasebako ward, 5 March 1974, and Montshosi Basogi at his home Motebejane ward, 1 March 1974.

bring in new ways, new ideas and supply new goods - all of which contributed in some measure to the gradual transformation of African societies - but more than his racial kinsmen engaged in the pursuit of more secular occupations, the missionary quickly gained the confidence of the African people and was thereby able to march in closer harmony (than did the other whites) with the people among whom he worked, at least as far as their immediate objectives were concerned.[90]

It was probably not so much that missionaries had greater sympathy and understanding for the Tswana and their culture as the fact that they seemed, at a superficial glance, to threaten them least; and also that they appeared more prepared than other whites to help defend and protect the lives and property of their charges against depredation and spoliation by other hostile African groups as well as by Boers. Needless to say, this was an attitude prompted not only by humanitarian considerations, but also proceeding from a well calculated degree of enlightened self-interest. For the missionary's sphere of labour to be preserved intact, it was necessary for him to help prevent the annihilation of his people. Although the missionaries themselves persistently stressed their preoccupation only with the spiritual rather than worldly or political affairs, it was more for the secular benefits of their work that the majority of the Tswana rulers and peoples prized the presence of missionaries

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90 An example of such faith was the Batlhaping king Mothibi's decision to leave the charge of his capital, Dithakong, to the missionary James Read while he (Mothibi) was out on commando. (See Dachs, Missionary Imperialism, (Thesis) p.43.)

among them.[91] Unlike the trader, the hunter, the mineral prospector and the concession-seeker, the missionary appeared the only white man who did not aim at taking away anything from the Tswana community he was serving, but instead gave the impression of being willing to give, that is to bring to Tswana communities, free of charge, certain skills and services that appeared designed to benefit the entire local community.

Such considerations must have been uppermost in the calculations of Gaseitsiwe and his council when they decided to extend a warm welcome to the Reverend James Good on the occasion of his arrival among the Bangwaketse.[92] Gaseitsiwe was, after all, the first Ngwaketse monarch to witness the fulfilment of a dream that had been cherished by his forebears, Makaba and Sebego. Further, unlike them, he had been afforded a rare opportunity of practically savouring and therefore evaluating the services of a white missionary when he had to turn to Ludorf the white missionary stationed among Montshiwa's people, just south of Mafeking. During Gaseitsiwe's handling of the Bangwaketse boundary question before the Bloemhof Arbitration Commission, he had leaned heavily on Ludorf for advice.[93]

In his first substantial report on progress at Kanye,[94]

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91 For an elaboration of this theme see Dachs, Missionary Imperialism (Thesis). Kgama III of the Bamangwato was probably the exception that proved the rule.

92 L.M.S., Box 38, Folder 3, Jacket A, J. Good to J. Mullens, Kanye, 28 April 1876.

93 See G.H. 14/8, Reverend J. Ludorf to Sir Henry Barkly, Klipdrift, 13 July 1871.

94 L.M.S., Box 38, Folder 3, Jacket A, J. Good to J. Mullens, Kanye, 28 April 1876.

James Good reported that he had been very warmly received by Gaseitsiwe and the Bangwaketse; and they were treating him with the greatest respect. He expressed satisfaction with the number of people who attended his services and listened to his teaching "with pleasing attention". In the same report Good testified to some changes that were already taking place in Ngwaketse society. He referred to changing consumer habits among those people, which if not demonstrating the creation of new wants, were at least pointing to some gradual adjustment of the society from a purely subsistence one to one that was geared to accommodate external goods. Citing the opinions of traders on the changing consumer habits of the Bangwaketse he pointed out the surprise of traders at the immense quantity of clothing purchased by the people. "Beads and trinkets of a half a dozen years ago find a very slow market", and were thought to be patronised "by that class which may very properly be called intensely heathen". Ploughs which "might be taken as a mark of civilization and advancement among them", were so numerous that it appeared they could be found in every family.[95]

Not only were there observable changes in their living styles, but even their attitude to the outward observance of "the Sabbath" had changed significantly for the better, said Good.[96]

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95 For examples of similar changes in consumer and trading patterns among other Tswana, see Chirenje, Northern Tswana, pp.61-64; Tlou, Northwestern Botswana, pp.172-185.

96 "I have often been surprised at the delay - even when the rains had begun to fall and it would have been to their advantage to commence at once with every energy their agricultural operations, they have waited until the Sabbath was passed and although I can see numbers of gardens from my own door, I have very rarely seen during the last two

Also, whereas when he commenced his work in the area he had to conduct services at the chief's kgotla (public court yard) where his services suffered from continual disturbance by all the activity taking place there, he had since built a tolerably good church "of poles and plaister[sic]". The church which could accommodate 300 was often too small to take all those attending the services. He had forty-five enquirers divided into three classes, and these furnished him with his "most pleasing departments of service".[97]

Much of the progress reported by Good had been made possible partly by the favourable climate in which his predecessors had carried on their work of teaching and preaching, and partly it had been due to the very favourable disposition of Gaseitsiwe to the missionary Good himself. This is attested by no less formidable a witness than Edwin Lloyd,[98] who was not only Good's son-in-law, but was also co-worker with him at Kanye for at least sixteen years and ultimately his successor at that mission. Lloyd wrote in glowing language about the strange friendly relationship that prevailed between the non-Christian king and his Christian missionary, a relationship that reminds us somewhat of that which existed between Mzilikazi and Moffat. It was probably at the missionary's insistence that he revoked certain unwholesome but not fundamental customs to the smooth function-

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years, owners of them ploughing during the Sabbath". (See L.M.S., Box 38, Folder 3, Jacket A, J. Good to J. Mullens, Kanye, 28 April 1876.)

97 Ibid.

98 Three Great African Chiefs, pp.153-154.

ing of a traditional Tswana community. Such customs included the seantlo, grotesquely misrepresented by Lloyd as "the old custom of taking any woman that a man had a fancy for, even though she was already the wife of another man". Gaseitsiwe also put a curb on the wildest abuses of some dishonest diviners and medicinemen by publicly exposing their fraudulent pretensions.[99]

But while Gaseitsiwe did nothing to hamper the work of the Christian missionary, he did not, like Khama or Sechele, submit to conversion and baptism himself. Nor did he, like his southern neighbour and kinsman, Montshiwa of Tshidi-Barolong persecute the converts to Christianity.[100] In certain respects, such as a positive response to the teaching of literacy, both he and his wife set a fine example for the Bangwaketse, just as the converted Sechele had done. Like him also, he aided the missionary in the work of church building by allocating certain duties to mephato (age sets) that he had chosen.[101]

Thus, when a historian writes that after the founding of a mission at Kanye in 1971 "Gaseitsiwe continued his heathern rule but his son Bathoen showed a favor for the ministry of Good",[102]

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99 Lloyd, loc.cit.

100 Molema, Montshiwa, pp. 53-55; Holub, Seven Years, p. 296 Mackenzie, Ten Years, pp. 103, 228,229.

101 Schapera, Tribal Innovators, p. 120; Evidence of Several Mgwaketse elders, in particular Montshosi Basugi.

102 Dachs, Missionary Imperialism (Thesis), p. 174. Gaseitsiwe's attitude to the work of missionaries was more correctly described by R.U. Moffat as one of "friendly neutrality", (see R.U. Moffat, John Smith Moffat, pp.144-145), while Edwin Lloyd observed: "Strange to say, though he never allied himself with the Christians, he was a friend to them and their missionary, Rev. James Good..." (Three Great Chiefs, p. 151).

such a statement could only be partly true. Gaseitsiwe showed as much favour for the ministry of Good as he reckoned his position as king of the Bangwaketse, and ex hypothesi, chief priest of the realm, would permit. As the controller of the traditional religion of the Bangwaketse, and the holder of the mystical authority conferred on him by his special birth and the royal charms (dipheku) he had sacred responsibilities which he would hardly be able to perform if he accepted the doctrine as taught by the Christian missionaries. This was more so if, as was the case among the Bangwaketse, the great majority of his people were still ardent adherents of the traditional religion. Because of a mistaken belief that has gained currency - that Livingstone found the key to mission work in Africa was the conversion of the monarch[103] - kings like Gaseitsiwe, Sekgoma and Montshiwa, sho resisted conversion have tended to receive less than fair treatment from western Christian scholars.[104]

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103 C. Northcott, David Livingstone: His Triumph, Decline and Fall, (Philadelphia, 1973), p.31; Moffat, John Smith Moffat, p.144. Livingstone's conversion of Sechele was never followed by mass conversion or baptism of the Bakwena into the new faith. On the contrary, his "divorcing" of four of his wives in order to conform with the Christian doctrine of monogamy nearly brought about rebellion in his kingdom. So slight was the progress of conversion in the Bakwena country that Sechele thought he might have to whip the Bakwena and coerce them to become Christians. (See Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, p.286, Livingstone to William Thompson, Linyanti, 27 September 1855, where Livingstone gave his principal reason for leaving the Bakwena" "determined hostility to the requirements of the gospel...") Mothibi of the Batlhaping was only converted on his death bed, while Moremi I of the Batawana became converted but shortly thereafter turned apostate. (Tlou, North-western Botswana, pp.219-221)

104 Cf. Sillery, Botswana, p.34, where he remarks that Sekgoma of the Bamangwato has been badly treated by writers, especially missionaries.

What many of the Tswana kings were doing was simply to insist on selecting those changes that they considered would not be entirely subversive to essential elements of traditional society. Nor was this emphasis on selectivity a purely Tswana phenomenon. Moshoeshoe I, who, like other African rulers, early recognised the wisdom of having baruti "teachers" among his people, not only remained unbaptised until his death, but in 1848 persuaded Sechele I of the Bakwena against conversion.[105] Mzilikazi was another example of an African king who desired only specific benefits from contact with missionaries. Not even the great attachment he showed towards Moffat, whom he dotingly called his father "Machobane" would make him even consider the idea of Christian conversion.

Gaseitsiwe accordingly held fast onto those traditional rites that he adjudged crucial to the survival of a smooth functioning centralised traditional state. Although the Bamangwato had banned the initiation ceremonies of bogwera and bojale in 1876, and the Batawana under Moremi had done so between 1881 and 1886,[106] the Bangwaketse continued, under Gaseitsiwe to conduct regular initiation ceremonies. Five such (bogwera) ceremonies were held during his reign. These were, according to Schapera, as follows:[107]

? 1853	Ma-Lokwana	Sekgatlhanye	Bome	Makaba II

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105 Livingstone, Family Letters, I, p.260.

106 Schapera, Tribal Innovators, p.127; Tlou, North-western Botswana, pp.219-220.

107 Schapera, Law and Custom, p.315. The age sets mentioned here are only the male ones.

?	1858	Ma-Lwelakgomo	Mogabi Matlhopha Moleta
?	1860	Ma-Losankwe	Kwelagobe Bome Makaba II
?	1864	Ma-Isantwa	Bathoen Gaseitsiwe (Bathoen I)
?	1875	Matlotlakgang	Keemenao Senthufi Sebego Makaba II
?	1882	Ma-Yakathatha	Johane Gaseitsiwe
?	1889	Ma-Yakapula	Kaelo Makaba Segotshane Makaba II

This determination on the part of Gaseitsiwe to continue both the observance and practice of essential and venerated traditional rites and ceremonies in the teeth of sharp missionary denunciation was significant. Gaseitsiwe's reign was bolstered by several royal uncles, all sons of the great Makaba II. They were clearly exerting tremendous pressure on Gaseitsiwe to maintain the traditional integrity and cohesion of the Ngwaketse state. It was these dikgosana (sub-chiefs) who about this time, compelled Gaseitsiwe to divorce his first wife who was of alien origin (i.e., non-Ngwaketse) and to marry a daughter of one of his uncles. Indications are that they also backed his opposition to missionary pressure to do away with initiation ceremonies and other customs.

In passing, it ought to be mentioned that missionary denunciation of Tswana initiation customs as immoral and heinous practices of a barbarous and depraved people merely because among other things the initiates were given instructions in sexual behaviour, is a good example of missionary prejudice against, and their superficial grasp of the essentials in African culture. As well as displaying their lack of sympathy for what was precious and dear among the people they worked with, their attitudes cast

a rather lurid light upon the quality of their humanitarianism and the Victorian puritanism that inspired their doctrine.

As might have been expected, Ngwaketse society was soon split asunder into a large section (the majority) of those who preferred to remain loyal to the old traditional ways and a smaller one of those pledged to "the new teaching" which enjoined them to abjure many of their old traditional rites and ceremonies. Relations between the two groups became strained almost to the breaking point. Tensions created by the refusal of the Christian converts to participate in the old rites were exacerbated by a degree of partiality that the traditionalists thought the young heir Bathoen displayed towards the Christian converts.

Similar crises had been observed among the Barolong-Tshidi when they lived at Moshaneng, only a few miles from Kanye. There bitter strife had broken out between Montshiwa, the king, who was determined to do all in his power to defend the old order, and his brother Molema who championed the Christian cause. Likewise among the Bamangwato, Sekgoma I and his sons were locked in a series of conflicts which engendered prolonged political and constitutional upheavals largely because of differences in their reactions to missionary challenges to traditional institutions. Among the Bangwaketse an element of urgency was injected into the conflict. The old king Gaseitsiwe was advanced in years and his health was fast declining. Some say the latter was due largely to excessive addiction to the whiteman's liquor. For a considerable time therefore, the real control of political matters had been in the hands of Bathoen, although the Bangwaketse nobles continued to exert pressure on the weak Gaseitsiwe

and in that way managed to keep Bathoen in check.

There was consequently considerable uneasiness on the part of the traditionalists about what might happen once Gaseitsiwe died and was succeeded by his son and heir Bathoen, who in the 1880's appeared to be going through a phase of intense admiration of the rather ascetic Kgama III, since 1875 king of the Bamangwato. It was while he was away (in 1887) on a visit to his mentor Kgama III that the traditionalists took their next move, which was calculated to strike a mortal blow at what they regarded as an insidious movement poised to destroy the very roots of Ngwaketse culture.[108]

About the middle of September 1887 a bojale was organized in Kanye. As expected, the Bangwaketse converts not only declined to participate in the ceremony, but also held their daughters back. However, the mysterious disappearance of one Christian girl from her home and from the village led to speculation that she might have been kidnapped or otherwise compelled to participate.[109] With the advice of James Good a number of Christians prepared to go and extricate the girl,[110] even by force if necessary.

Whether or not the Christians actually attacked the Bojale

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108 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.160-161; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.17.

109 Moffat, John Smith Moffat, p.210, correctly shows that she need not have been compelled; "Children of Christian parents would sometimes participate in the forbidden mysteries, either voluntarily, or as a result of pressure from the other side, and trouble would thereby ensue".

110 C.O. 417/16, J.S. Moffat to S.G.A. Shippard, 17 September 1887, enclosed in Robinson to Holland, 12 October 1887.

settlement, as Moffat said they did,[111] or whether as Good claims,[112] they were only espied while waiting at strategic points for an opportunity to intercept the truant girl, the upshot was that it led to the most serious public riot ever to occur in the history of the Bangwaketse before 1910. For a graphic if not wholly objective picture of the fury unleased by this series of incidents it may be worth quoting, in extenso, from James Good's report to R. Wardlaw Thompson, Foreign Secretary of L.M.S. Missions in London:[113]

> It was while thus occupied [i.e., with watching for an opportunity to intercept the girl] that some of the stragglers passed them who were on their way to the assembly where the orgy was being performed, and knowing the intention of these Xtians, set up one of their maniacal howls and rushed madly to the Chief and laid the complaint that they had been interfered with.
>
> The Chief who was never more than an excuse for a man, overwhelmed by their frenzy, at once proclaimed an "auto da fe" and instantly that residuum of depravity that always gravitates towards the Chiefs flesh and beer pots, took up the howl - those of the baser sort throughout the town joining in the cry, Away with them. Kill them. Kill the believers and in a few short minutes the whole town was in a state of the wildest uproar and we had in miniature the old sad picture of Christ and his followers repeated.
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> By some wonderous good fortune the Xtians all escaped with their lives, they were sadly maltreated being pelted with large stones and struck with their heavy knobbed sticks and some very narrowly escaped. The "Furies" contented themselves with setting fire

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111 Ibid. John Smith Moffat, the son of Robert Moffat, and himself a missionary for many years, had resigned from the L.M.S. in 1879. After holding various government positions between 1880 and 1886 he was, in 1887, appointed Assistant Commissioner North of the Molopo. Moffat was at Kanye at the beginning of his tour as Assistant Commissioner when the "Bojale riots" broke out.

112 L.M.S., Box 44, Folder 6, Jacket A, J. Good to R.W. Thompson, 1 October 1887.

113 Ibid.

to their houses not being allowed, the satisfaction of expending their rage on their bodies.

As it was, in the evening when the storm burst, it produced rather a startling scene. The houses of the Xtians were scattered throughout the town and in an incredibly short space of time they were all ablaze it seemed as though the whole town were burning - we were thirty miles away and saw the reflection in the heavens, little supposing the cause.

The first thought of some of them seems to have been to rush to my house, for it seemed more than probable that they would be followed, which possibly might have been the case had not Mr. Moffat, our new Assist. Commissr. been with us at the time. Mrs. Good put the new room at their disposal and some of the refugees are still occupying it until their new houses can be built.

The Chief, Nero-like, having set the city ablaze, retired (leaving the houseless Xtians to seek shelter where they could) to his couch & wine - not to sleep however for it was a sleepless night to all. The courageous house burners dreading reprisals formed themselves into companies & through the livelong night sat gun in hand awaiting the arrival of the Xtians who were hourly expected to fire the whole town. This they could have done most effectually as there shortly arose such a wind as I imagine is only known on the heights of Kanye & one small spark would have rendered houseless thousands.

Good then proceeds to reflect how wonderful it was that the Christians did not think of retaliation but chose to bear their losses with Christian resignation that seems to have astonished even their enemies. He states that on the following two days several pitsos (public meetings) were held at which "the heathen party advocated killing of all the Xtians". But that, writes Good, seemed to have horrified the Chief. Ultimately, one person was selected and would most probably have been killed but for "the remonstrance of Mr. Moffat".

The missionary's report dwells on the startling effect the fearlessness of the Christians had on their persecutors. He remarks on how during the many gatherings that followed the riot,

the Christians mingled in a fearless and carefree manner with their enemies "much to the surprise of the Chief, who seems to have been so thoroughly ashamed of his conduct as to attempt a denial of his complicity" in the cruel act. Of Gaseitsiwe's remorse Good correctly remarks that it came too late to be of any service to those who had been so cruelly used.

It is difficult not to be moved by James Good's cri de coeur over the sufferings of his Bangwaketse Christian converts, or by the personal tribulations and material want which had become the fate of those hapless and miserable people who were thus trapped between the horns of a dilemma. Regardless of the facts of the situation, they were the victims of circumstances they could not control. They had responded positively to the teachings of Christian missionaries whose presence in the country had been the direct result of repeated invitations from the chiefs themselves. They discovered to their cost that the doctrine as taught by white missionaries did not allow for one being a good Christian as well as being a good Mongwaketse.

A great deal of responsibility for that violent outbreak ought, as Good maintained, to devolve on the shoulders of Gaseitsiwe for granting permission (if he did so at all) for the traditionalists to take the law into their own hands. But for Gaseitsiwe (who, at best, was never a strong king), it might be argued that in addition to having been weakened by continual poor health, he was also under tremendous pressure from a powerful but conservative ring of tradition-bound nobles ever on the alert for an opportunity to increase their own power and influence over the king. As will become clear later during this

study, these men were also looking for a stick with which to beat Bathoen, whom they had come to regard as the champion of the rebellious Christian element, and were ultimately hoping to pry the succession out of his hands. It was very probably this group of conservative aristocrats more than the goodly and ailing old king who gave encouragement to their traditionalist supporters to attack the Christians.

Even if it were proved beyond doubt that Gaseitsiwe alone was responsible for the attack on the Christians, there nevertheless remain certain elements in Good's account of those incidents that are not completely reassuring. For example, his report does not show that although he was away visiting one of his out-stations when the riot broke out, he had been present when the planning and discussion of Christian action was taking place. It is not stated in his own report that he was the one who insisted that the Christians go and recover the truant girl even if that meant doing so by force. Nor does Good's report to the Foreign Secretary for L.M.S. missions say that the Christians attacked the initiation lodge(s), while that of Moffat states this categorically, and the Bangwaketse informants confirmed it.[114] Finally, there is something which, if not altogether disagreeable, was at least disturbing about the manner in which Good encouraged his followers to embark on a risky undertaking and then taking off for the country-side leaving his guest and visiting official

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114 Evidence of Ngwaketse elders at several interviews, in particular that of Montshosi Basugi, private interview at his home, 1 March 1974; and Sebati Dikgageng, private interview at his home, Rasebako ward, 5 March 1974.

Moffat to intervene at critical moments during the disturbances so as to prevent loss of life.

It is only when we are aware of these other details, not included in the report of Good to the missionary headquarters in London, that we begin to realise that there is another side to the story. Only then does it begin to appear that the missionary and his flock might indeed have acted, on that occasion, with a rashness and lack of circumspection that bordered on criminal irresponsibility, and that their actions could be said to have subjected the traditionalists to a considerable degree of provocation.[115] But what is even more important than the apportionment of blame and the weighing of responsibility for that riot is the realisation of the very deep roots of the conflict over initiation ceremonies, the deep cleavage in Ngwaketse society consequent upon the introduction of Christianity and, ultimately, the ominous implications contained in these developments for the career of the future ruler of the Bangwaketse.

In addition to initiation ceremonies, other Tswana customs condemned as barbarous or obnoxious by the missionaries were polygamy, the levirate and sororate as well as the custom of rain-making. Gaseitsiwe himself took no steps to end or limit the practice of polygamy. While he himself never practised it (certainly not in its classical form) he did resort to the

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115 L.M.S., Box 40, Folder 1, Jacket D, J. Good to J.O. Whitehouse, 25 August 1879. In this letter Good described the rigours of a Ngwaketse ceremony called "the Black circumcision", but concluded with the words: "... but from the determined stand taken by the Xtians & the mildness of the Chief - the Xtians have been entirely exempt from the whole business...."

seantlo (sororate) expedient in order to beget another son. There is every reason to suppose that among those who remained loyal to the traditional way of life polygamy, the levirate and sororate were an accepted way of life during the reign of Gaseitsiwe.

Rain-making was still a very living art among the Tswana at the turn of the century. A confirmed traditionalist, Gaseitsiwe considered it his duty to succour his people by arranging rain-making ceremonies as and when the occasion called for it. Although every Tswana king was in theory the chief priest for his people, Gaseitsiwe (and for that matter all the Ngwaketse kings) never had a reputation of having been good rain-makers.[116] Gaseitsiwe accordingly employed the services of several rain-making experts (baroka; singular - moroka). The most famous moroka in Ngwaketse country during the reign of Gaseitsiwe was Lenong, who came from the northern Transvaal. He and his followers eventually settled down in Kanye, and he became the founder of the small kgotla or ward of Boo Ra-Lenong or Ba-ga-Laka in Kanye.[117]

Gaseitsiwe's insistence on an eclectic response to the benefits and pressures posed by the increasing contacts between his people and the whites should not be taken to mean that he was necessarily able to control or direct the overall effect of white influences on Ngwaketse society. One example of this difficulty was the extent to which European liquor quickly

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116 Sechele of the Bakwena had such a reputation. See Livingstone, Missionary Correspondence, pp.103, 118-120.

117 Evidence of Toko Lenong, interview held at Modutlwa ward, 11 September 1973; I. Schapera, Rainmaking Rites of Tswana Tribes, (Cambridge, 1971), p.125.

became popular among the Bangwaketse. This was a matter that alarmed several white observers who visited Kanye during the reign of Gaseitsiwe.[118] The missionaries themselves commented frequently on the scourge of the white-man's liquor among the Tswana people in general[119] and those at Kanye, about Gaseitsiwe's addiction to it. Yet by the time of Warren's visit, Gaseitsiwe was clearly perturbed at the dimensions of the problem, and was anxiously seeking Warren's advice on how to cope with it.

But if Gaseitsiwe failed to select what he desired from his people's growing contact with traders and missionaries, neither did the church achieve absolute success in its crusade against "heathen" customs and practices. It is true that as the missionary statistics in the annual reports to London showed a gradual increase in the numbers of Tswana converted, more people would join the ranks of those no longer willing to answer the chief's call for initiation ceremonies and other traditional rites condemned by the church.[120] But the missionaries also discovered to their dismay that some of these customs were deeply ingrained in the characters of their most zealous converts.[121] While

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118 B.N.A. HC. 15/70 Assistant Commissioner to Deputy Commissioner, 17 September 1887.

119 L.M.S., Box 32, Folder 1, Jacket A, Wm. Ashton to A. Tidman; Box 41, Folder 1, Jacket C, J. Good to R.W. Thompson, 28 July 1881; Box 53, Folder 1, Jacket A, J. Brown to Thompson (n.d.).

120 Good cites the case of a young man from the mission station of Mothito under the charge of a French missionary Fredoux who defied all efforts by his parents to coerce him to undergo bogwera. L.M.S., Box 40, Folder 1, Jacket D.

121 L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D, J. Good to R.W. Thompson,

hardly any converts would observe polygamy, the levirate and sororate customs towards the end of Gaseitsiwe's reign, several converts were still sending their sons for circumcision, though no longer for female initiation. Also, though the missionaries frowned on bogadi (bride wealth) it nevertheless continued to form an essential element of Ngwaketse marriage contracts down to the present.

In addition to traders (both resident and itinerant ones) and missionaries, contact with whites increased along a different direction. The opening up of diamond mines in Kimberley drew to that place African labourers from all corners of southern Africa. As De Kiewiet put it,

> To the fields came two streams, one white and one black. For every little clerk, deserting sailor, drought-stricken farmer or turn-collar parson who came to the fields, there came two, three or four Zulus, Basuto, Bechuana, and Xosas.[122]

Many went to earn money to buy guns and while there also developed a taste for the "Cape 'smoke' and Hamburg fire-water" so easily available on the diamond fields. As De Kiewiet correctly observes the great bulk had however come out of a stronger compulsion than guns or drink. They were the victims of white land encroachment, of free-booting and filibustering; "They were the evidence of the disruption of tribal life and economy".[123]

Although in discussing the problem of restricting the sale of arms and ammunition to Africans, both the Lieutenant-Governor

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3 December 1882; Box 47, Folder 1, Jacket A, 8 January 1890.

122 C.W. De Kiewiet, History of South Africa: Social and Economic (London, 1957), p.91.

123 Ibid.

of Griqualand West, Richard Southey and the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Barkly, had stated that the majority of African labourers at the diamond fields were of the "Bechuana nation";[124] those observations were probably more correct in respect to the southern Tswana communities - that is those living south of the Molopo region. It was probably because not many African labourers from areas north of the Molopo were employed in the diamond fields that the Griqualand West Administration decided in 1876 to send a Mr. A. Bailie to the chiefs of the north to recruit labour for the diamond fields.[125]

Bailie visited Gaseitsiwe (and his son Bathoen) as he eventually did all the other Tswana kings to the north of the Ngwaketse. Gaseitsiwe's initial reaction to Bailie's mission was one of horror because he erroneously associated the request for labourers with the Boer practice of commandeering groups of Africans for unpaid labour on their farms. When he understood the nature of Bailie's mission, Gaseitsiwe undertook to support it by encouraging his subjects to go and work in Kimberley. In a letter he subsequently addressed to the Griqualand West Administrator he repeated his pledge to promote the campaign and took the opportunity to assure the Administrator of his continued friendship with the British Government.[126] But unlike Kgama and Sechele he did not, however, ask that the British Government take over his country. Bailie, however, expressed the opinion that

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124 C.O. 879/6, African No.59 , Sir Henry Barkly to the Earl of Carnarvon, 24 August 1874.

125 P.P. 1878-79, LII, C.2220.

126 Ibid., p.49.

it was probable that Gaseitsiwe could be persuaded to accept a British Resident.[127] While at Kanye Bailie took the opportunity to visit Montshiwa, king of the Tshidi-Barolong who, with some of his people, was still living in exile in Ngwaketse country. In contrast with Gaseitsiwe who received Bailie well "though not cordially",[128] Montshiwa offered him much hospitality, slaughtering an ox for Bailie.. He also entertained him to a shooting exhibition which favourably impressed Bailie with marksmanship of the Barolong at Moshaneng.[129] Putting his best foot forward in order to make a good impression on this messenger from the English government, Montshiwa thoughtfully lent him four oxen for his wagon, and although Bailie's report says nothing about it, it can be assumed that he was equally cooperative about providing men to labour at the diamond fields. Bailie learnt from Montshiwa that he intended to remove his settlement from Moshaneng back to his own country on the Molopo.[130]

Bailie proceeded northwards to the Bakwena whom he found locked in a bitter struggle with the Kgafela-Kgatla. At Sechele's request, he succeeded in arranging a truce between the two groups. When Bailie arrived among the Bamangwato, Kgama III was being menaced by a strong party of Boers of the conservative Dopper

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127 Ibid., p.50. Bailie remarked; "I did not press the matter of a Resident with Gaseitsit [sic] as he is sure to follow the example of Montsioa and his neighbours".

128 Ibid., p.49.

129 Ibid., Bailie went on to observe: "Those of his people I saw were well armed and shot well".

130 This he actually did in December 1876, reaching Ga-Sehuba early in the following year. (Molema, Montshiwa, p.86).

sect of the D.R.C. mission.[131] These Boers were exploiting a local dynastic conflict for the purpose of gaining a foothold on Kgama's country.[132] Once again, acting more like an ambassador armed with plenipotentiary powers than a labour recruiting officer, Bailie strongly warned the Commandant of the Boers concerned that the action they were contemplating would not be countenanced by Her Majesty's Government, and further that "any acts of aggression committed upon any of the Chiefs who are in treaty with the British Government may bring you into collision with that Government".[133]

Like Gaseitsiwe, both Sechele and Kgama III cooperated with Bailie's mission of labour recruitment. Even Sechele's son-in-law, Pilane, the chief of the Bakgatla-Mmanaana promised to do what he could for Bailie, although the latter thought Pilane "too weak a Chief to be able to be of real assistance".[134]

We may now briefly consider the impact of these various forms of European contact on the Bangwaketse area during the reign of Gaseitsiwe. As we have already noted, Tswana societies in general had been changing gradually from contact with hunters and traders who had begun penetrating the areas north of the Molopo River towards the middle of the nineteenth century. The process of contact and interaction with whites intensified during

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131 That party of Boers was escaping from the modernising tendencies of the regime of President Thomas F. Burgens.

132 E.C. Tabler, The Far Interior: Chronicles of Pioneering in the Matabele and Mashona Countries 1847-1879, (Cape Town, 1955), pp.411-412; Hole, Passing of Black Kings, pp.147-148.

133 P.P. 1878-79, LII, C. 2220, p.44.

134 Ibid., p.49.

the reign of Gaseitsiwe when some traders settled down among the Bangwaketse.[135] While statistics for the Ngwaketse have not been found, it is nevertheless certain that they shared in the vast trade between the Cape Colony and the communities north of the Orange - a trade whose volume was estimated at the end of 1877 to be not less than £200,000. Trade at Shoshong alone was estimated at about £50,000 per annum.[136] Without doubt most of this trade with the Tswana was concentrated on Molepolole, Shoshong and Ngamiland,[137] but whatever fraction of it that fell to the Bangwaketse towns was sufficiently substantial to affect the traditional consumer habits and tastes of the Bangwaketse.

What was this increased volume of trade in? In the early days of contact with whites - during the days of the itinerant semausu* - when valueless trinkets such as looking glasses, tinderboxes, brass buttons and tobacco etc. were still a novelty, many Tswana were attracted by such articles. Beads were particularly desired. But in the second half of the nineteenth century the Tswana, or at least the Bangwaketse, tended to buy

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135 While the Ngwaketse elders do not remember the names of the first traders to settle in Ngwaketse country, it has been suggested that the Bakwena and the Bangwaketse had six traders between them. (See the Report of Lieutenant A. Stokes in B.N.A., HC. 2/7/12, Lieutenant A. Stokes to Major-General Sir Charles Warren, 11 April 1885.)

136 C.A., G.H. 27/2, Frere to Carnavon, Confidential, 12 November 1877; Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, pp.150, 153.

137 In 1852 the traveller James Chapman counted one hundred wagons of traders at Shoshong. (See Chapman, Travels, I, 50, also L.M.S., Report of Deputation, R.W. Thompson for the importance of the Shoshong trade.)

* This was the Tswana corruption of the Dutch word smous

more clothing, ploughs, guns and ammunition.[138] As soon as they had discovered the value of ivory, elephant tusks replaced beads as currency; and later still money was introduced as the more established means of exchange. In return the traders wanted karosses, skins, hides, cattle, ivory and ostrich feathers. The trading stores tended to sell machine-made goods and in that way contributed to the decline of Ngwaketse local industries. To purchase many of these goods sold by traders, the Bangwaketse were drawn into a money economy.

There was yet another way in which white hunters and traders contributed to a rapid change in Tswana society. The enormous quantity of game they killed had the effect of destroying the ecological balance that used to prevail in Botswana hunting areas.[139] Game was both drastically reduced in numbers as well as driven far beyond the reach of the average Motswana hunter. Thus seasons of crop failure or disasters such as cattle epidemics could not easily be alleviated by hunting with traditional weapons. Consequently, big game became scarce and fire-arms became even more necessary for purposes of hunting. This meant that men without cattle and whose lands had failed to produce sufficiently for their needs, or men who needed money to buy

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138 See L.M.S., Box 40, Folder 1, Jacket D, J. Good to J.O.

139 In the year 1877 Hendrik van Zyl, a hunter from Shanzi alone despatched some 15,000 lbs of ivory from Walfisch Bay. (See W.J. De Kock, Ekstra-territoriale Vraagstukke van die Kaapse Regering (1872-1885) Met Besondere Verwysing Na Die Transgariep en Betsjoeanaland, (Pretoria, 1948), p.52. An entry for 16 October 1859 in the diary of the hunter W.C. Baldwin shows that on one hunting trip he purchased 5,000 lbs of ivory. Baldwin was also informed by Transvaal hunters, Jan Viljoen and Piet Jacobs that they had killed ninety-three elephants. (See J.M. Chirenje, The Northern Tswana and Europeans, (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1973).

fire-arms had to leave their homes to take up employment with whites. A few were already engaging themselves to white farmers before 1870 in order to earn some money to buy stock or other necessaries.

When the diamond fields in Griqualand West were opened, many Africans from all parts of southern Africa flocked there in search of employment. But the officials felt there were not enough Africans coming. Consequently, the recruitment mission of Bailie was despatched to bring thousands of Batswana, Mandebele and Mashona to the diamond fields. That mission set an early pattern for a ruthless system of exploitation of the poor of southern Africa - the migratory labour system. Gaseitsiwe and the other important rulers of Botswana chiefdoms all agreed to support the labour recruitment campaign both for the sake of those individuals who would have liked to avail themselves of the opportunity to go and earn money, but more for the sake of being in good standing with the British Government, whose messenger they thought Bailie was.

The manner with which Bailie was regarded by the chiefs whose territories he visited, calls for some comment however brief. It was the first visit north of the Molopo by any officer remotely resembling a representative of Her Majesty's Government. He came armed with letters of introduction from the Administrator of the Crown Colony of Griqualand West. Although chiefs like Sechele, Macheng, and Kgama III had been crying out for British protection since 1852, the first response from a British Crown colony was designed to deal primarily with the labour requirements of the diamond fields. The chiefs were

confused by the semi-official air of the visit and Bailie's mentioning of a "British Resident". Since it was neither in the power of Bailie nor in that of the Administrator of Griqualand West to handle the matter of a British Resident with any or all of the chiefs, one wonders whether this was not introduced as a subterfuge to disguise the essentially private nature of the mission and render the chiefs more amenable as well as get them to "behave loyally". So successfully did Bailie play this role that he even succeeded in striking terror into the hearts of the Boers who were planning to attack Kgama III.[140]

Gaseitsiwe's own performance before Bailie did not leave a glowing impression of either his qualities as a leader or his hospitality as a host. What is worse, is that it gave occasion for the first of many comments in official reports about his tendency to drink too much.[141] For a ruler who desired to manipulate British power to ensure the protection and safety of his state, he appears to have been poor at his public relations. Although unimportant in itself, Bailie's recommendation about the creation of labour depots between the diamond fields and Lobengula's country, is nonetheless revealing of his own estimate of Gaseitsiwe's importance.[142]

In due course many Bangwaketse formed part of the unending

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140 P.P., 1878-79, LII, C. 2220, p.44, Bailie to the Commander of the Emigrant Boers, 13 November 1876.

141 Ibid., p.49.

142 When Bailie recommended sites in the country of the Tswana for labour recruitment depots he clearly overlooked Kanye, for he recommended Shoshong, Molepolole, Moshupa and Mahikeng.

stream of labourers to the diamond fields. Like other African labourers it can be expected that they brought home money, guns, clothing and other goods as well as new habits and modes of behaviour.[143] The social changes that Ngwaketse society had been undergoing as a result of permanent contact with whites in Kanye and other towns, are unlikely to have been abated by the drift to the mines. On the contrary, it is likely that they were intensified. With the rapid disintegration of traditional society, the position of the traditional leader was bound to be affected.

In his report Alex Bailie remarked how he was struck by the fact that the Tswana chiefs appeared more powerful as one moved northwards from the Batlhaping. He interpreted it as demonstrating that the "tendency of the natives being brought into contact with Europeans is to weaken the power of the chief".[144] Another major factor in the revolution that the Ngwaketse society was undergoing was the teaching of white Christian missionaries. While the first preachers to the Bangwaketse were African evangelists who started before his reign, the first white missionary came during Gaseitsiwe's reign. Whatever corrosive effect the new teaching had on the basic institutions of Ngwaketse traditional society, these were not felt or realised until after the arrival of James Good in Kanye. As presented by him and other white missionaries, Christianity turned out to be a destructive

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143 I. Schapera, Migrant Labour and Tribal Life, (London, 1947), Chapter 5, passim; E. Hellman, "The Native in the Towns", in I. Schapera, ed., Bantu-Speaking Tribes, pp.429-434; Schapera, Tribal Innovators, pp.115-118.

144 P.P., 1878-79, LII, C. 2220, p.76.

force that did not weld or help to keep together Ngwaketse society. Instead, it created a widening chasm between the chief and his traditionalist supporters on the one hand, and Good and the Christian converts on the other.

While missionaries did import such secular benefits as reading and writing, horticulture or even agriculture and other forms of hand-work, while they did write letters and acted as advisors to the chief, their work did also result in discord in the community; it led to the weakening of chiefly authority and to the unnecessary obliteration or decay of harmless African institutions. In Ngwaketse society, as indeed in other Tswana chiefdoms, the chief found the missionary an enigma. Brought in to protect and, therefore, to help preserve, he seemed bent to destroy in order to rebuild according to his own design. Permitted to work under the protection and therefore blessing of the chief, he set out to create a state within a state. To a ruler who was determined to hold fast to his traditional way of life, such as Gaseitsiwe was, the Christian missionary must have appeared as a veritable Trojan horse.

CHAPTER V

GASEITSIWE AND EUROPEAN INTRUSION

The stance adopted by the Boer government of the Transvaal Republic when, in 1868, it extended its western boundary as far as Lake Ngami and Kudumane,[1] and which was further represented by its repudiation of this Keate Award in 1871,[2] was a rigid one which that government was to pursue doggedly for the next one and a half decades. For the very brief interlude of the British annexation of the Transvaal (1877-1881), the Tswana chiefdoms along its western border enjoyed a respite, and were encouraged to look forward to a period of peaceful settlement under the security of boundaries which, if not strictly arranged under the fiat of Her Majesty's Officers in South Africa, had at least the sanction of one of the Queen's own ministers, the Secretary of State for Colonies.

Consequently, some of the African chiefs on the borders of the Transvaal and others further inland, viewed the retrocession of that country, in terms of the Pretoria Convention, with grave misgivings and a deep sense of betrayal by Britain.[3] They feared that once the Boers were left to themselves they would recommence their practice of forced labour, and the raiding of cattle and encroachment on their lands would be intensified. During a

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1 C.O. 48/441, Wodehouse to Buckingham, 18 July 1868.

2 C.O. 48/459, Barkly to Kimberley, 2 January 1872.

3 C.O. 291/11, telegram, Robinson to Secretary of State, 4 August 1881; P.P., 1882, XLVII, C. 3098, p.45; Molema, Montshiwa, p.113.

recent rebellion of the Transvaal burghers against Britain (1880-1881), some of these Tswana chiefdoms had taken up positions against the Boers, and they feared that the latter would lose no time in retaliation.

The Transvaal boundaries as defined by the Royal Commission of 1881[4] were incorporated in the Pretoria Convention, which not only granted independence to the Transvaal State, but also enjoined that state "to prevent any of its inhabitants from making any encroachments upon lands beyond the said state".[5] By signing the Pretoria Convention, the Transvaal delegates, in the words of Sillery, "renounced on behalf of their compatriots the habits of generations".[6] But, for the Transvaal free-booters and frontier filibusters, encroachment against the lands of the Tswana had been too lucrative an operation to be so lightly abandoned. Emboldened by the memory of Majuba, they would require more than pious pronouncements to hold them in check. Thus, when the small police force under Major Lowe was withdrawn from the Cis-Molopo region in 1879, there was no force to deal with the free-booters and the way was consequently paved for the area to become "the abode of anarchy, filibustering and outrage".[7] The principle of expanding at the expense of the Tswana chiefdoms was pursued with ever greater vigour after the Transvaal-

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4 P.P. 1882, XXVIII, C. 3114, Report of the Royal Commission, p.22.

5 C.O. 879/18/238, Convention dated 3 August 1881.

6 A. Sillery, Botswana: A Short Political History, (London, 1974), p.52.

7 J. Mackenzie, Austral Africa: Losing It or Ruling It (London, 1887, Reprint New York, 1969), I, p.118.

British war of 1880-1881, only the tactics of encroachment varied.

Hitherto, the Bangwaketse had escaped the direct attentions of the Boer free-booters. But, as we have already seen,[8] the Transvaal had attempted, in 1875, to use indirect means of re-defining its western border, and accordingly its border with the Bangwaketse, by using the spurious claims of the Bahurutshe of Gopane to try to pre-empt territorial claims based on occupation by their vassals, the Bahurutshe-Gopane. It was only the prompt and resolute action taken by Gaseitsiwe of destroying the beacons erected by the Boers, that foiled the scheme.

Although the de jure situation was that the Bangwaketse/Transvaal border had been defined by the Keate Award in 1871, the fact that the Boers had repudiated the Award[9] was probably a constant source of anxiety to Gaseitsiwe. Accordingly, the repeated Boer violations of that boundary in the territories of the Tswana south of the Molopo, was unlikely to be viewed with equanimity by the Ngwaketse king and his people.[10] The concern over the possibility of an attack from the east and from the south probably accounts for the rather southward orientation of Gaseitsiwe's foreign relations compared with those of his predecessor, Sebego and his own son Bathoen. It probably also explains the frequent embroilment of the Bangwaketse in Tshidi-Barolong conflicts with others - sometimes well outside the

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8 Discussed in previous chapter.

9 See above note no. 2.

10 Kruger had warned Gaseitsiwe at the Bloemhof inquiry that wherever Mzilikazi had trodden, that was territory that the Transvaal claimed. Cited Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North.

boundaries of the Ngwaketse state.

As was the case with the Bangwaketse, and soon to be the case with the Bakwena, the ruler of the Bamalete, Mokgosi, was aged and infirm and the duties of ruling were being exercised by his son Ikaneng on his behalf. Mokgosi's people left Mankgodi in 1875 to establish the village of Ramotswa, which straddled the Ngwaketse-Transvaal border, namely the Ngotwane River. The largest portion of Ramotswa was located upon Bangwaketse land. Furthermore, Ramotswa was very close to old sites on the Transvaal side which the Bamalete had occupied before leaving in 1852 to join Sechele at Dithejwane. Finally, it appears that not all the Bamalete had vacated the Transvaal in 1852. There were still a few scattered cattle posts at Mogofe.[11] The Bamalete left the country of the Bakwena because Sechele had persisted in demanding their payment of sehuba or tribute to him.[12]

As Mokgosi and his people had elected to leave rather than pay sehuba to Sechele, it seems fair to conclude they would not be willing to do so to Gaseitsiwe who claimed the greater part of the land on which Ramotswa was situated. A ruler who was less pacific and more particular about exercising his authority firmly throughout his domains would probably have tested Mokgosi or Ikaneng by immediately enforcing the observance of a well-known Tswana law. Ra tlou e tlola noka ke tloutswana, literally, "when an elephant crosses a river, i.e., its boundary, it

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11 Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.46. A small section of the Bamalete remained at Mankgodi under Headmen Masega and Thobega.

12 Ibid.

becomes only a small elephant". But to Gaseitsiwe's repeated demands for sehuba, the Bamalete replied that they were occupying country inhabited long ago by their fore-fathers, and would therefore neither leave for the Transvaal nor pay sehuba. They claimed an independent status and refused to recognise Gaseitsiwe as their paramount chief, suzerain or over-lord.[13] Edwin Lloyd states that Gaseitsiwe had been warned long ago by the Bakwena not to receive Mokgosi and his son Ikaneng into his country for "you will find them to be simply serpents".[14]

It is difficult to imagine any situation more likely to bring about collision between the Bangwaketse and the Transvaal Boers. The siting of Ramotswa village tempts one to the conclusion that it may have been carefully selected by Mokgosi and Ikaneng to enable the Bamalete to enjoy the best of two worlds. As a small group, the Bamalete were concerned about the maintenance of their political independence. Whether the Bamalete were aware of it or not, their settlement at Ramotswa emphasised the critical and fundamental differences between African and European conceptions of boundaries. The European demarcation between political jurisdictions is a border - a fixed and precise line drawn not only on a map but on the ground as well. Consequently, the Europeans have tended to favour rivers as boundaries despite the fact that among Africans, rivers are usually centres of population concentration. Africans always preferred to have a frontier area between powerful political units.

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13 Ibid.

14 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.152.

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Sometimes this frontier zone has been referred to as a no-man's-land. It was, of course, very different from that. It was a zone or area in which small groups like the Bamalete, who were unwilling to submit to the onerous burdens and pressures of conformity to large states, could continue to survive. Frontier zones were particularly important during periods of transition from numerous small directly participatory chiefdoms to larger bureaucratic states with hierarchies of officials. Nineteenth century Southern Africa was very much in such a transitional phase. In South Africa, it was the British who appeared firmly committed to the idea of a fixed border, while the Tswana and other African states sought to maintain the frontier zone theory. The Boers who thoroughly understood both these concepts, attempted to use whichever operated to their advantage upon any particular occasion.

It is therefore probable that the siting of Ramotswa was a deliberately calculated move by Mokgosi and Ikaneng according to their best understanding of African conception of the frontier zone. Given that the Keate Award of 1871 fixed the Ngwaketse-Transvaal border on the Ngotwane, it would be useful for Mokgosi and Ikaneng to straddle the river in their new settlement. In an all African situation, the Bamalete might have got away with it, as two large African polities separated by a frontier zone might have tolerated a small buffer group such as the Bamalete who could be regarded as some kind of an insurance against war between larger states. Such a small and weak group might have been expected to allow citizens of either of the states across the frontier zone to water their cattle and otherwise use the

river under their impartial jurisdiction.

The situation on this frontier however, was not an all African one. Boer encroachments against Tswana groups south of the Molopo, as well as against others in the western Transvaal, had converted the Bangwaketse from the concept of a fluid frontier to the European view of a fixed border. Gaseitsiwe's attendance at the Molopo summit in 1870 and the appearance of the Bangwaketse contingent at the Bloemhof Arbitration Court in 1871 all emphasised the Ngwaketse conviction that nothing short of a fixed border with the Boers was desirable. Hence their insistence that either the Bamalete paid tribute or crossed the river into the Transvaal. Meanwhile, the Boers had been pinned down by a fixed border which, by their European tradition, they had to recognise, but which they were prepared to breach on the least excuse. In theory the Boers wanted a fixed border, but in practice a frontier suited their instincts best.

Gaseitsiwe's apparent reluctance to coerce the Bamalete to pay sehuba was viewed by the Bamalete as a sign of weakness. As the years went by, Ikaneng's obstreperous denunciation of what he characterised as Ngwaketse pretensions must have sorely tried the patience of the Bangwaketse - especially that of Bathoen and the younger men. Ultimately Bathoen, who was already playing some part in the affairs of the kingdom by assisting his father, decided to attack the Bamalete settlement, presumably to enforce payment of sehuba rather than to expel them. It is, however, not clear why he chose to embark on that campaign late in 1881, after the retrocession of the Transvaal to Boer rule. Although from Bangwaketse traditions, the impression created is that the

decision to attack was rather sudden or a hasty and ill-considered affair, the Bamalete traditions recorded by Ellenberger claim early knowledge by the Bamalete of Ngwaketse plans to attack them. It appears that the rumours of an invasion had been in the air several times before the eventual attack came.[15]

While the Bamalete tradition states that all the Bangwaketse warriors came out and were assisted by the Bakgatla of Moshupa and the Bahurutshe of Manyana under Kontle,[16] the Bangwaketse informants contend that Bathoen employed two regiments - the Maisantwa, whose leader he was, and the Matlotlakgang. It is further stated by the Ngwaketse elders that Gaseitsiwe had not been in favour of the campaign and that Bathoen had apparently contradicted his father's wish by leading the two regiments against the Bamalete. Bathoen appears to have relied on surprising the Bamalete and had thought the affair would be a "neat surgical operation", but the Ngwaketse expeditionary army is said to have lost the element of surprise through betrayal of their plans to the Bamalete.[17] Information supplied by Reverend James Good of the L.M.S. to his headquarters mischievously attributed the campaign to Gaseitsiwe without indicating his reservation or

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15 Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", pp.46-47.

16 Ibid., p.48. There is no special significance in this submission of the Bamalete elders. If, as the Bangwaketse claim, Bathoen attacked with only two regiments, it still follows that the members of those regiments themselves would be drawn from all the villages under and loyal to Bangwaketse state. See also Schapera, "A Short History...", p.13.

17 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders at Ra-Sebego ward, especially that of Sekokotla Kaboyamodimo, at interview held at Ra-Sebego ward, Matshiswane, Kanye on 16 August 1973; also private communication by the Hon. Mr. B. Gaseitsiwe.

objection to it.[18]

The impression conveyed by Ngwaketse traditional historians is that Gaseitsiwe was positively against enforcing the payment of sehuba by the Bamalete, and yet the insistence in demanding it showed that he was by no means unconcerned with the attitude of Ikaneng in flagrantly violating not only his authority but also the important principle of Tswana law already referred to.[19] It appears therefore that Gaseitsiwe sought to rely upon persuasion and negotiation to win the recognition of his authority by Ikaneng as well as the obedience of the entire Bamalete immigrant community. This could be interpreted as a sign of weakness on the part of Gaseitsiwe; the older men were probably prepared to treat the Bamalete according to African traditional practices in a frontier zone.

Bathoen and the younger men probably wished to maintain a hard frontier and it was their insistence which pressed upon Gaseitsiwe to insist upon the sehuba. After all, if ultimately the Boers successfully claimed the Bamalete as their subjects, they then would gain a foothold across the river and the entire boundary question would be open again. (The manner in which the Boers were manipulating the Bahurutshe and promoting their land claims against the Bangwaketse was clear enough proof they could be expected to do the same with the Bamalete).[20] Furthermore,

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18 L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D, Good to Thompson, Kanye, 3 December 1882.

19 Tradition is unanimous that the Bangwaketse campaign centred on Bathoen's own regiment - the Maisantwa, formed around 1864 - supported by their immediate juniors, the Matlotlakgang under Keemenao Senthufe, and formed about 1875.

20 Boer attempts to push the claims of their Bahurutshe clients

it must have been obvious to Bathoen that the strength of the African resistance lay in seeking to win by persuasion if possible and force if necessary the loyalty of small groups such as the Bamalete. King Sechele of the Bakwena was demonstrating that in practice size was important, and that in the last quarter of the nineteenth century there was really no longer any place for small groups such as the Bamalete.

While the resident white missionary puts the blame for the attack on the Bamalete squarely on the shoulders of Gaseitsiwe, the Bangwaketse elders insist that Bathoen led the campaign against his father's advice in November 1881. The Bangwaketse elders could not say whether the powerful aristocratic clique that was operating furtively against Bathoen had anything to do with the divided counsels over the Bamalete campaign which prevailed at the Ngwaketse court. Missionary accounts of the campaign convey the impression of some lack of military discipline or purpose as well as low morale among Bathoen's warriors.[21] Division at home appears to have manifested itself on the battlefield in the absence of a united, vigorous and purposeful thrust. What seems palpably clear is that Bathoen underestimated both the determination and stoutness of Bamalete resistance, as well as the effectiveness of their intelligence system. However, from the fact that only two regiments participated, it does appear

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against the Bangwaketse and their erecting of beacons in Ngwaketse country have been dealt with in an earlier chapter.

21 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.158-159 states "Bathoen was not supported by his men". See also James Good to R.W. Thompson, 3 December 1882, in L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D.

that Bathoen's intentions were limited. According to the missionary Good, the Bangwaketse leader (whom the missionary unforgivably represented as Gaseitsiwe) thought "in the pride of his heart to frighten, rather than drive the people away".[22] Schapera, leaning heavily on Malete traditions for this event, states that Bathoen wanted to expel the Bamalete from the Ngwaketse country by force.[23] It may well be that Bathoen kept both ends in view - to force the Bamalete to pay sehuba or drive them out if they refused. It is not improbable that Bamalete propaganda at the time would stress expulsion in order to promote the fullest resistance. Thereafter, tradition could be expected to perpetuate that propaganda as a historical fact.

During the fighting that ensued, some Bangwaketse divisions crossed the boundary line to attack Bamalete settlements inside Transvaal territory. They burnt some huts and killed a few people. The Bangwaketse regiments were driven back with heavy losses, and Bathoen narrowly escaped with his life.[24] That "unaccountable piece of folly",[25] cost the Bangwaketse about one hundred killed and many wounded, including a number of James Good's very promising converts and lay preachers.

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22 L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D, Good to Thompson, 3 December 1882.

23 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.13.

24 Ibid., Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", pp.47-48; Wookey, Dico tsa Secwana, p.69; Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.158-159. Contrary to Lloyd's view that the Bamalete were not able to follow the Bangwaketse, they in fact, pursued them as far as Ntlhantlhe hill. (See Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.48.)

25 L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D, Good to Thompson, 3 December 1882.

Whatever view is adopted of Bathoen's decision to march against the Bamalete, his decision to cross the Ngotwane River during the battle itself was, in more ways than one, "an unaccountable piece of folly". For if it be assumed that Bathoen was seeking to maintain a fixed border, why should he have permitted his warriors to cross it? In his favour, it might be argued that once engaged and finding it impossible to assault the Bamalete settlement on their own side of the river, Bathoen and his lieutenants, desperate for victory, hoped to find the rear less well prepared and more open to attack. Nevertheless, by this action, Bathoen was about to bring upon the Bangwaketse state the very problems he had sought to forestall by his military action in the first place.

For Bathoen's campaign now provided the Transvaal government, recently restored to independence, with an excellent casus belli. For the illegal invasion of their country by his people, for the distruction of property and the spilling of blood there, the Transvaal government threatened to despatch commandos on a punitive expedition against Gaseitsiwe unless he made suitable reparations within a specified time limit. They demanded that he surrender Bathoen and those involved in violating the border to stand trial before the courts of the Transvaal, pay an indemnity of 4,000 head of cattle or £16,000.[26] At the same time they imposed a fine of £700 per day for any delay.[27]

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26 Ibid.; Schapera, "Short History...", p.14; Ditirafalo, p.141.

27 L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D, Good to Thompson, 3 December 1882.

Good reported that in a short time the Transvaal Boers had massed 2,000 men on the Ngwaketse-Transvaal border. The missionary described the effect of the Boer ultimatum and threatened invasion in the Ngwaketse town:

> We were as you might suppose in a state of fear, the Traders packed up and left the town and we stood to await their approach almost daily hearing that they had commenced to move.[28]

At last an opportunity had come for Gaseitsiwe to put the services of his white missionary to the kind of use chiefs had in mind when they asked for a missionary. He consulted with James Good, who advised him not to pay anything until he had contacted George Hudson, the British Resident in Pretoria. Good also contacted General Piet Joubert, a member of the Transvaal triumvirate, and sought an interview for Gaseitsiwe, as well as "safe conduct" to Pretoria and back, so as to enable him to present his case before the British Resident.[29]

In his report Good comments on the immense distrust the Tswana had for the Boers. Even the solemn guarantee of an officer of Joubert's standing was not sufficient to dispel their fear of treachery. Consequently weeks passed in a state of suspense "until the commando was dispersed (we supposed) by some message received from England". Shortly before that order came, wrote the missionary, three Boers had made their appearance at Kanye and persuaded Gaseitsiwe to sign a promise to pay 1,000 head of cattle and also go to Pretoria to meet Hudson. On going to Pretoria, says Good, the Chief was detained for three months

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28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

for dilatoriness in responding to Boer demands. After three months he was released but his wagons were detained - two of them were ultimately sold.[30]

Schapera states that it was negotiations in which the British Resident participated that resulted in Gaseitsiwe's agreement to payment of 1,000 head, and that it was also that Officer's intervention which rescued Gaseitsiwe from a demand by the Transvaal that he sign a declaration recognising the Bamalete as independent and that he agree to a delimitation of boundaries.[31] The Boers did prevail on Gaseitsiwe to sign an undertaking not to attack the Bamalete again and, contrary to the provisions of the Pretoria Convention, to refer any future dispute with the Bamalete to the Transvaal government for mediation.[32]

Whatever the niceties of the agreement, the Bangwaketse appear to have lost most of what they had been trying to achieve through military action. They had failed to "harden" the border, in fact, quite the opposite - the river was no longer a firm boundary. True, the Bangwaketse had not been forced to recognise the Bamalete independence, but worse than that from their point of view, the Bamalete had virtually been placed under Boer protection. The Bamalete choice could not have been better for

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30 The Bangwaketse elders state that Bathoen was summoned by "Kirikiri", i.e., Kruger to stand trial before a Transvaal court, that Gaseitsiwe accompanied him, and that when the Boers wanted to detain Bathoen, Gaseitsiwe offered that he be detained in his stead. He was held a hostage until redeemed with 2,000 head of cattle.

31 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.14.

32 Ibid.; cf. Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, pp.192 et seq.

the land-hungry Boers, always looking for client groups in a "soft" exploitable frontier. The Bamalete seemed to promise to the Boers the same leverage that Moshwete of Khunwana and Matlaba of Bodiba afforded them in their relations with Batlhaping and the Barolong respectively.

As for the British officers in the region, it is difficult to believe that they were as much baffled and uncomprehending by-standers as European tradition suggests. The British Resident in Pretoria, George Hudson, participated in the settling of the Bamalete case, and the impression left is that he acted to mediate Boer demands and secure less severe terms for the Bangwaketse. The question to be considered is whether in fact he did so. Surely he was able to see that the number of cattle involved in the fine was far less crucial to a long term settlement and peace than the issue of a firm boundary. Boer negotiators eventually stopped their demands for cattle or trials or any other short-term objectives for the long-term advantage of creating an unstable frontier. It is hard to believe that British Residents like Hudson were not often in collusion with the Boers on the frontier question. This, however, is a suspicion that is not easy to prove.[33]

Nevertheless, it appears the Bamalete were only saved by

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33 Commenting on the role that could be played by a British Resident in protecting or acting as "watchdog" over the interests of Africans, Sillery observed: "Something might conceivably have been saved if the British Resident in Pretoria had been a man of high calibre, but this was not so. George Hudson, chosen from the Cape Civil Service for this important post, was neither a strong man, nor, as it turned out, a very trustworthy one". (See A. Sillery, John Mackenzie, (Cape Town, 1970) p.66 and below p.20.)

two things from a larger retaliatory campaign.[34] These were the intervention of the Transvaal government, as well as an urgent appeal from Chief Montshiwa of the Barolong-Tshidi to Gaseitsiwe for assistance against Moshwete and his free-booters.[35] Not only the Bangwaketse but also other Tswana groups were having troubles with the Boers of the Transvaal. The policy of conciliation and withdrawal pursued by the Gladstone Liberal government after 1880, prompted largely by a need to reduce expenditure, resulted in their sacrificing humanitarian principles. This happened despite Gladstone's assurance to humanitarians in the House of Commons that the retention of the suzerainty clause of the Pretoria Convention was designed to guarantee the interests of Africans.[36] Thus the Liberal government's compromise with Boer nationalism prompted by anxiety to avert a "race war" between Boer and Briton eventually paved the way for race domination of "Bantu" by Boer.

As Mackenzie correctly summed up the situation, this policy of withdrawal, which manifested itself in the territories of the Southern Tswana by the sudden withdrawal of Major Lowe's police,

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34 Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.48; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.13.

35 For the Barolong war, see Molema, Montshiwa, Chapter 10; Mackenzie, Austral Africa, I, pp.63-74; P.P. 1883, XXIX, C. 3486, p.46-71.

36 For a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the policy of Gladstone's Liberal Government towards the region, see D.M. Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, (London, 1969), Chapters 5 and 6; also C.W. De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, (London, 1937), pp.294-296. For Rhodes' and Cape merchants' pressure to annex to the Cape the lands of Southern Tswana, see C.O. 879/20, Telegraphic communications between Rhodes and Scanlen, in Smyth to Derby, 5 June 1883.

caused the region to become "what every confidential adviser and commissioner of Her Majesty had said it would become the abode of anarchy, filibustering and outrage".[37] Early in 1882 the Boer puppet chiefs Moshwete and Matlaba assisted by white filibusters from the Transvaal were at war with the pro-British Montshiwa, whose town they beleaguered for nearly ten months. Some of the Boers involved in that operation left the scene of fighting to go and attack the inhabitants of the Batlharo village of Disaneng under the chieftaincy of Jan Masibi. Most of Masibi's men were fighting with the Tshidi-Barolong against Matlaba and the Transvaal filibusters. Although Disaneng was nearer Bangwaketse territory than to Mahikeng, and although it was an out-station of the L.M.S. mission at Kanye, it was not under Ngwaketse political influence, but was a satellite community of the Tshidi-Barolong under Montshiwa. The L.M.S. congregation at Disaneng was under the leadership of a Mongwaketse evangelist Motlhanke.[38] The Boers tricked nineteen villagers of Disaneng into abandoning efforts at self-defence, then imprisoned them and delivered them bound to Moshwete, who had them shot in cold blood, with the exception of Masibi together with his brother and two relatives.[39]

The Boer filibusters took full advantage of the British policy of conciliation and withdrawal to harass and punish those

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37 Mackenzie, Austral Africa, I, p.118.

38 L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D, Good to Thompson, 3 December 1882; Molema, Montshiwa, p.120.

39 Ibid.; P.P. 1883, XLIX, C. 3486, p.23; Breutz, Mafeking District, p.246.

Tswana groups that had been associated with or allied with the British during the war of 1880-1881. In March 1882, Commandants Piet Joubert and Ferreira accompanied by a small commando, visited the Madikwe area and imposed a fine of hundreds of cattle, amounting to £21,000 in value, on Ikalafeng, chief of the Bahurutshe (Moilwa section) for being "parmantig" (cheeky). His crimes had been his close friendship with the pro-British Montshiwa, and particularly his alliance with Montshiwa against the Transvaal puppet chief Matlaba in May 1881. Also, Ikalafeng had given refuge to Englishmen during the recent Anglo-Boer war, and had protected John S. Moffat, who had been in the service of the British Administration in the Transvaal, from being captured and disciplined by the Boers. Gaseitsiwe, who had also participated in the war between Montshiwa and Matlaba, was warned by Joubert "against British adventurers, traitors and poison-strewers".[40]

Late in the year 1882, white free-booters, mainly from the Transvaal brought the pro-British Batlhaping chief, Mankurwane, to his knees and, despairing of any assistance from his Imperial patrons, he was forced to turn to the Transvaal for intervention and protection.[41] Kruger was not prepared to take any steps to restrain the free-booters. Nothing served better to underline the Transvaal republic's argument that all the frontier troubles stemmed from the unsatisfactory border imposed by the Pretoria Convention than the free-booters' continuing depreda-

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40 Mackenzie, Austral Africa, I, p.67.

41 P.P. 1882, XLVII, C. 3419, pp.66-76, Robinson to Kimberley and Mankurwane to Robinson.

tions. Given the Transvaal's unhappiness about the borders as established by the Pretoria Convention, the Transvaal government was quite happy to turn a blind eye to the activities of the free-booters which helped to keep the position on the frontier fluid and therefore favourable to Transvaal expansionism at the expense of the Tswana chiefdoms.[42] For much the same reasons, the Transvaal rejected the plan of the British High Commissioner in South Africa, Sir Hercules Robinson, to have a joint police force provided and supported by the Cape Colony, the Transvaal, Orange Free State and the Imperial Government. Robinson's absurd and clearly unworkable plan was, quite understandably, rejected not only by the Transvaal, but also by the Free State and Cape Colony.[43]

The outcome was the creation of the free-booters republic of Stellaland out of the land captured from Mankurwane and which sprawled across the "missionary road". Thereafter another group of free-booters tackled Montshiwa, Gaseitsiwe's neighbour to the south. In October 1882, Montshiwa capitulated to a Transvaal commandant, Piet Joubert. The republic of Goshen was set up on the farm Rooigrond near the Transvaal border.[44] The mushroom republics of Stellaland and Goshen were examples of the insatiable land-hunger of the Boer farmers, who when it came to despoil-

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42 See De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, p.292, where he states that the free-booters were a sign that the Transvaal was unwilling to accept the Pretoria Convention. For much the same view, see Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, pp.168-182, p.177; Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, pp.259-268.

43 P.P. XLVII, 1882, C. 3419, pp.23-28, 51-63, Robinson to Kimberley, 18 July and 1 August 1882.

44 P.P. 1883, XLIX, C. 3486, pp.68-71.

ing Africans of either land or cattle made no discrimination between ally and foe. As De Kiewiet so aptly put it:

> It mattered little whether a chief enjoyed the alliance or enmity of these land-hungry men. The reward they accepted and the punishment they exacted were the same - land and yet more land.[45]

But, over and above the simple passion of the Boers for land, lay the secret scheming of the expansionist Transvaal government which was determined to break beyond the curbs on its southern boundary imposed by the Pretoria Convention. The Transvaal government desired a fluid frontier situation and the free-booters who set up the mushroom republics were looking forward to being incorporated into the Transvaal state which had supplied them with arms to raid Tswana and into whose territory they retreated with stolen cattle or when hard pressed in fighting.[46]

Gladstone's suzerainty clause notwithstanding, neither British authorities in England nor those in South Africa did anything to prevent Tswana territories from being encroached upon or carved up by land-hungry Boers. British officers in South Africa would not permit either Mankurwane or Montshiwā to obtain supplies of arms or ammunition from the Cape Colony although they were aware that Moshwete and Moshweu were liberally supplied by the free-booters with weapons. Again, although everyone knew that the Boer puppet chiefs were supported by droves of free-booters, Mankurwane's volunteers, who were mostly

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45 De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, p.291.

46 J.A. Mouton, General P.J. Joubert in Die Transvaalse Geskiedenis, (Pretoria, 1957), p.90; Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p.250.

from the Cape Colony, withdrew because of the High Commissioner's decision to invoke in February 1882, the Foreign Enlistment Act. This almost guaranteed victory for the pro-Boer chiefs. With the withdrawal of Major Lowe's police from the area went the only force that could ensure a certain degree of stability. Instead, the withdrawal of the policy facilitated the over-running of the area by free-booters, filibusters and land-sharks. Thus to the Tswana, it appeared that the only intervention British authorities in South Africa made, was of a kind that ensured the triumph of Boer expansion against the Tswana chiefdoms.

Tswana chiefs north of the Molopo viewed the developments among the southern Tswana with great uneasiness. Gaseitsiwe, in particular, had close personal ties with both Mankurwane and Montshiwa. During his exile he spent several years under the protective wing of Mankurwane's predecessor Mahura, while Montshiwa was not only a near relative but also a close friend. With these two and also with other chiefs of the southern Tswana he had been associated in several meetings to plan common approaches and adopt joint strategies in the defence of their lands against the encroaching Boers. Relationships aside, the Tswana knew enough of Boer ambitions and tactics to realise that Boer expansionism posed a threat to the future and welfare of all Tswana chiefdoms. The Boer attacks of 1852 on the Bakwena, Bangwaketse, Bakgatla-Mmanaana and Barolong-Tshidi, the burning of villages, lifting of cattle and other things, were still fresh in their minds.[47]

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[47] The Boer attacks on Tswana chiefdoms in 1852 have been discussed in a previous chapter. An example of the general

It was therefore not surprising that the Tswana chiefs should seek strength in their own numbers. In 1883 a defensive alliance was arranged between Gaseitsiwe, Montshiwa and Sechele. They pledged themselves to drive the Boers from Tswanaland.[48] In solidarity with his neighbours and kinsmen, Montshiwa, Gaseitsiwe and his people had permitted the Barolong-Tshidi to move their stock into Ngwaketse country during their wars with the Boers. Because of that and Ngwaketse involvement in the war with Matlaba in May 1881, as well as Ngwaketse sheltering of some of Jan Masibi's people and their stock, the Boers of Goshen were looking for an opportunity of striking a retaliatory blow against the Bangwaketse. It came in July 1884, when a strong party of armed Boers entered Ngwaketse country and captured 3000 head of cattle, killed several men defending the cattle, and to goad the Barolong into battle, drove the captured herds past Montshiwa's town of Mahikeng.[49]

In the fierce battle that ensued between Barolong and Bangwaketse regiments on one side, and the Goshenite free-booters on the other, the Boers-later on reinforced by commandos from

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menace of Boer policies in the area was the so-called "Snyman treaty" supposed to have been signed by Montshiwa and four of his councillors on 24 October 1882. By this the Barolong representatives were supposed not only to have repudiated the British Government and placed the entire Barolong country under the Transvaal Government, but also to have agreed to be compensated at the expense of Gaseitsiwe and Sechele. (See P.P. 1883, XLIX, C. 3486, pp.260, 274-275.)

48 P.P. 1884, LVII, C. 3841, p.2. Montshiwa to Hudson, 2 June 1883.

49 P.P. 1885, LVII, C. 4213, pp.34, 135-143, Robinson to Derby, 20 August 1884.

Stellaland and the Harts River district-completely defeated the Barolong and the Bangwaketse. This battle was fought on the Lotlhakane and Magogwe streams, four miles south of Mahikeng, around 1 August 1884.[50] According to Molema, one hundred and eighty-one Tswana were killed and about as many wounded. Of these, sixty-seven were Bangwaketse. Two of the fallen were Englishmen who had been helping the Tswana, and one of them was married to Tepo Boabile, an attractive Barolong woman and cousin to chief Montshiwa.[51] The Goshenites "lost about 50 men, among them two Coetzee brothers".[52] Both the Bangwaketse and the Barolong referred to that disastrous encounter as the Ntwa Ya Tigele (literally, "War or Battle of Tigele") - "Tigele" meaning prostration, subsidence or submergence. To the Bangwaketse the "battle of Tigele" was only a little less disastrous than that of Ramotswa less than three years earlier.

The peculiar position of the Bamalete and their relations with both the Bangwaketse and the Boers of the Transvaal soon presented another area in which British officers in southern Africa became constrained to modify the doctrine of non-intervention in the affairs of Tswana societies. When the British protectorate of the Tswana north of the Molopo was declared in

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50 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders Tlamang Sekalaba, Tlotlang Tsima Keatametse Morekesi and Mokowe Malau, interview held at Kgosing ward, Kanye, 14 August 1973; and Ntau Mogobe, Tlametlu Maswabi and Mokhaung Selotlego; interview held at Kgosing ward, 15 August 1973; also Molema, Montshiwa, p.140; Schapera, Praise Poems, pp.163-166.

51 Molema, Montshiwa, p.104.

52 Ibid., p.140.

March 1885, the Bangwaketse had not yet reached a proper settlement with the Bamalete since the war of 1880-1881.[53] The subsequent involvement of Bangwaketse regiments in the Barolong war of 1881 prevented speedy retaliation in force. Although it appears that Gaseitsiwe himself would have preferred to accomodate the Bamalete under the African concept of a frontier, even to the extent of overlooking their refusal to pay the sehuba, it seems likely that the great reversal suffered by the small Ngwaketse army led by Bathoen would have hardened feelings against the Bamalete and have called forth a full-scale war to avenge the deaths of so many Ngwaketse warriors, as well as restore the military prestige of the Bangwaketse among the Tswana.

What was even more decisive in protecting the Bamalete from certain Ngwaketse retaliation was Boer intervention. By putting pressure on Gaseitsiwe to sign an undertaking not to attack the Bamalete again, and to refer all points of dispute to the Transvaal government for arbitration, that government was not only placing a limiting qualification on the sovereignty of the Ngwaketse state - a limitation not unlike that which the Transvaal itself was seriously disputing - but it was also consciously and deliberately keeping the frontier from hardening into a fixed international border. In a flexible situation such as the Transvaal was striving to achieve its expansion could be better realised. Also, the Bamalete who were already under qualified Transvaal control because some of them lived on Transvaal terri-

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[53] Discussed in previous chapter.

tory were, as a result of the agreement forced on Gaseitsiwe, placed more securely under the wing of the Transvaal government, a step that was likely to defeat the long-term objectives of the Bamalete.

It is necessary to observe in passing that the impression created by Reverend James Good and which is also implied in Schapera's account, is that in the conflict between Gaseitsiwe and the Transvaal, arising out of the Bamalete war, the intervention of the British Resident George Hudson procured favourable terms for the Bangwaketse. This is, however, only so in appearance. A closer examination reveals that Hudson, far from assisting Gaseitsiwe, actually assisted the Boers and helped considerably to compromise the position of the Bangwaketse. To start with, Gaseitsiwe only agreed to go to Pretoria and discuss the question with Hudson when he was promised safe conduct by the Transvaal officers - an undertaking that Hudson helped to negotiate. It was specifically to Hudson that Gaseitsiwe was going to outline his case. But Hudson failed to hold the Boer officers down to their pledge and at the end of the talks Gaseitsiwe was arrested or detained.[54]

As far as the fine of 4,000 cattle originally demanded by Boers was concerned, it is true that they were ultimately persuaded to reduce it to 2,000,[55] although their cupidity could

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[54] L.M.S., Box 41, Folder 3, Jacket D, James Good to R.W. Thompson, 3 December 1882; Schapera, "A Short History...", p.14.

[55] See Schapera, "A Short History...", p.14 where it is recorded that Gaseitsiwe agreed to pay 1,000 head of cattle, in Ditirafalo. Schapera states that the fine was 2,000, a figure mentioned also by A.J. Wookey, Dico tsa Secwana, p.69.

not permit them to abstain from capturing the wagons. The most serious blow to Gaseitsiwe and the Bangwaketse was over the border question. For years Gaseitsiwe had been engaged in strenuous efforts to harden his border with the Transvaal. To that extent Bathoen and his warriors were extremely unwise in crossing it while fighting the Bamalete. It was on the border question that Hudson could have seriously intervened to save the Bangwaketse from the designs of the Boers. But it was precisely on that crucial and fundamental issue that he failed them, although he had the power to help. The Pretoria Convention, signed by the British Government and the Transvaal Government, expressly bound the Transvaal to the Keate Award boundary with the Ngwaketse. That Convention also prevented the Boers from concluding any treaties with African chiefdoms on its borders. Yet, Hudson let the Boers press on Gaseitsiwe their agreement to do nothing in the future about the border, never again to engage the Bamalete in battle and to submit future disputes to their (Transvaal) arbitration. Surely, Hudson knew that any agreement that left the Bamalete question unresolved was no settlement.

The Bangwaketse were accordingly placed in an awkward position and only the declaration of the protectorate north of the Molopo extricated them from an invidious position. Meanwhile, the Bamalete who, because of their peculiar status, had not been included in the British protectorate, began chafing under the very close attention of their patrons. Boer harassment, which had obliged other Tswana societies previously resident in the Transvaal to migrate from that area ultimately compelled them also to appeal to the British authorities for the extension

of the protectorate over themselves. On the other hand, the government of the Transvaal demanded to be informed about the strict position of the Bamalete - that is, if they were under the protectorate recently declared in Botswana or whether they could be regarded as Transvaal subjects.[56]

The upshot was the despatch of Lieutenant A. Bethell towards the end of 1885 to arrange a permanent settlement. It was to be based on the principles that Bamalete had to choose "immediately and once and for all" whether they wished to retain their rights and property in the Transvaal Republic; if so they had to migrate with everything they had into the Transvaal losing all claims to settle in Botswana and becoming Transvaal subjects. If they chose to stay in Botswana, they would have to lose all rights in the Transvaal, acknowledge Gaseitsiwe as their paramount chief and pay reasonable and moderate tribute to the Bangwaketse king. Gaseitsiwe,on the other hand, was to be induced to grant land in the eastern strip of his country sufficient for all the requirements of Mokgosi and his subjects, including those living in the Transvaal.[57]

Bethell's instructions for settling the Bangwaketse-Bamalete dispute are illuminating because of two important principles contained in those instructions which could be said to have characterised official British policy in that area. The need to compel the Bamalete to come to a decision about where they wished to be was a clear indication that the British were not

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56 Sillery, Founding a Protectorate, p.85.

57 B.N.A. H.C. 36/30, Secretary of State to Robinson, 10 February, 1886; P.P. 1886, XLVIII, C. 4643, p.249.

prepared to have the flexible frontier situation that the Boers desired most. Thus official British policy contradicted the kind of arrangement that Hudson had participated in. It also showed that while Bathoen and his warriors were clearly wrong in crossing the Ngotwane, their objective of fixing a clear and precise border with the Transvaal was a sound one that was about to be endorsed by the British. In a sense, therefore, British policy on the border issue could be said to have been merely a successful continuation of Bangwaketse policy. The other principle was that of ensuring the subordination of the Bamalete to the Bangwaketse state, by making the alternative of leaving for the Transvaal not merely the moving of all his people to Botswana but also the recognition of Gaseitsiwe as the paramount ruler and the practical expression of that recognition through payment to Gaseitsiwe of a moderate and reasonable tribute. This was, of course, the administrative policy that was to be so skilfully formulated in Lord Lugard's Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa - the policy of "indirect rule". This was an administrative policy that appeared to work best where there was grouping of tiny polities like the Bamalete under larger ones and the consequent creation of pyramid-like hierarchies of collaborating rulers. Here Gaseitsiwe was to be the paramount, and the heads of the other constituent elements of the administrative unit would be under his supervision.

Bethell's interview with Gaseitsiwe and his councillors held on 25 December 1885, revealed the change that had developed in the attitudes of Gaseitsiwe and the Bangwaketse on the question of the fate of the Bamalete. Whereas hitherto the inten-

tion had been to secure the payment of tribute and the recognition of Bangwaketse suzerainty while they resided in Bangwaketse country, after Gaseitsiwe arrest, feelings began to harden against the Bamalete. Those Bangwaketse who, like Gaseitsiwe had been prepared to accommodate them on the basis of the African concept of frontier even when they did not pay tribute, now began questioning whether the Bamalete in particular were worth preserving as a group. It is necessary to understand that even Bathoen's decision to coerce them to pay was not initially calculated to expel them, but was an attempt to get them to recognise well-established Tswana law. But the upshot had been that the Bangwaketse not only failed to accomplish their objectives, but were instead militarily humiliated by a small group, lost nearly one hundred men killed, had their king arrested and "tied like a pig", fined 2,000 head of cattle and his wagons confiscated. But most serious, the Bangwaketse were forced to accept a situation where they could do nothing about the dangerous settlement of the Bamalete athwart the Ngotwane. The experiences of the Bangwaketse between 1881 and 1885 made them even more conscious of the danger to the safety of their state inherent in the unusual settlement of Bamalete at Ramotswa. It was this realisation that converted even those who like Gaseitsiwe had been willing, in the interests of peace, to overlook their intractability. Bethell found, in December 1885, that the Bangwaketse now demanded nothing short of the total eviction of the Bamalete from Bangwaketse-held territory. It was with the greatest difficulty that Bethell managed to persuade Gaseitsiwe - only by "demonstrating to him the advantages he would

derive from Machosi's presence in his country, he gradually came round" - and signed a draft treaty drawn up by Bethell.[58]

Negotiations with Mokgosi and the Bamalete, at Ramoutswa, were no less difficult. Predictably, they opted to leave the Transvaal altogether and move into Botswana, but objected most strenuously to the suggestion of any form of subordination to Gaseitsiwe, to whom they refused to pay tribute. They would rather pay it to the British Government. In taking that stand the Bamalete were being both consistent and inconsistent. Since 1875 the Bamalete had strenuously resisted either the notion of tribute or recognising Gaseitsiwe as paramount chief with the same vigour with which they resisted Sechele's attempts to exact tribute from them. The choice of coming to Botswana and forfeiting what claims they may have had in the Transvaal also indicates a strong determination to maintain their independence. Hitherto, they were definitely acting consistently. But the willingness - nay, readiness - to surrender that much cherished independence to the British suggests inconsistency and, accordingly, merits some explanation.

Ikaneng was aware that having opted to leave the Transvaal and thus avoid subjection to the Boer government, he would not be able to escape subjection to either the Bangwaketse or the British for much longer. In fact, there was a distinct danger of being subjected to both. Ikaneng thought it would be preferable to submit to the British who had already established a protectorate over the Bangwaketse, Bakwena, Bamangwato and others

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58 See Report of Bethell in Robinson to Stanley, 12 of 13 January, 1886, P.P. 1886, XLVIII, C. 4643, p.249.

north of the Limpopo, placing them all under some form of British imperialism. Submission to the British would place him on a par with all the heads of these chiefdoms and only the British administrator would be his paramount. But if he came under Bangwaketse subjection, it would be submission to more than one superior and would be subjection at the third tier or level - a subjection to what may be termed Bangwaketse sub-imperialism. It was bad enough to be subject to one paramount, being down on the third tier would render imperialism doubly onerous. This was precisely the role in which the Bethell arrangement sought to cast the Bamalete, and the Bangwaketse still smarting under the setbacks of 1881 for which they held the Bamalete responsible, were abandoning their traditional position vis-a-vis the Bamalete, and were becoming reluctant sub-imperialists. For the Bamalete, however, the third tier from the top of the imperial pyramid was really the most onerous level of subjection. Given their strong objection to the Bethell plan, it is perhaps not deducing too much from the facts to say that they could only have been compelled under some threat of force to sign the Bethell treaty.[59] This means that Bethell's report describing his Bangwaketse-Bamalete settlement was false and he therefore deceived the British authorities.

Briefly, the Bethell settlement which Mokgosi's son, Ikaneng, was made to sign on behalf of his father provided for

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59 For Bamalete version of how Bethell coerced them into signing the agreement, see B.N.A. H.C. 21/23; Moffat to Shippard, 12 January 1888 enclosed in Shippard to Robinson, 167 G. of 23 July 1888; Ellenberger, "Di roba roba...", p.48.

the cession of land by Gaseitsiwe for occupation by Mokgosi and his people for all their normal requirements on condition they paid him an annual rent of ten head of cattle, recognised him as paramount chief, although they retained full jurisdiction in all matters pertaining to their own chiefdom, strictly observed the territorial boundaries assigned them "as may from time to time be mutually agreed", and undertook not to interfere with or engage in any hostile action against the Bangwaketse without prior submission of any dispute for arbitration. They should renounce all claims to property or rights in the Transvaal Republic.[60]

The effect of the Bethell settlement was that the troublesome question of the border with the Transvaal was resolved. This could only tend towards strengthening the position of the Bangwaketse state, by interposing a buffer community between the upper portion of the Bangwaketse border with the Transvaal. Also as a result of that settlement, the Bamalete were compelled to pay, at least for a short time, some tribute to Gaseitsiwe. Thus the short-term net result of intervention by British officers in the Bangwaketse-Bamalete dispute was to strengthen the authority of Gaseitsiwe. This was so, even though at first it appeared that by pressing him to accept the Bethell settlement, Gaseitsiwe was being frustrated in his desire for the total expulsion of the Bamalete. A further significance of the Bethell settlement lay in the warning implied - that whatever the protectorate claimed not to be in theory, in practice it could be

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60 P.P. 1886, XLVIII, C. 4643, p.249.

handled in ways that were capable of limiting or opposing the intentions and desires of Tswana rulers - especially weak ones.

When the question of the right to grant mineral concessions resulted in the publication of a Government Notice in March 1888 proclaiming Gaseitsiwe's paramountcy over the Bamalete and other subject communities living under their headmen in the Ngwaketse district, Ikaneng promptly contested that assumption. In a meeting held by J.S. Moffat, the Assistant Commissioner for the Protectorate on 12 July 1888 at Dimawe, on the Kolobeng River, Ikaneng challenged Bethell's interpretation that the Bamalete had voluntarily submitted to Bangwaketse suzerainty in 1885. Ikaneng's statement, confirmed by other senior Bamalete and by the Reverend C. Schulenberg; the Lutheran missionary at Ramotswa who had been present at Bethell's meeting and acted as interpreter, was that Lieutenant Bethell threatened the Bamalete with immediate war if they did not sign the agreement. Further, the Bamalete stated when they paid the ten oxen to the police that they did so on the understanding that they were for government, and stated that they would not have paid had they known the oxen were intended for Gaseitsiwe.[61]

Ikaneng's and his councillors statements were very strongly contradicted by representatives of the Bangwaketse, who by now had overcome their sullenness over the non-expulsion of the Bamalete and appeared to have become converted from reluctant to enthusiastic sub-imperialists. After all the Bamalete were not the only sub-group present at that meeting. There were also

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61. B.N.A. H.C. 21/23, Moffat to Shippard, 12 July 1888.

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representatives of Bamangwato under Kgari whose village was at Ngomare, the Mmanaana-Kgatla under Pilane who lived at Moshupa, and the Maanyane-Hurutshe under Kontle whose village was Manyana. The Bangwaketse maintained that as the British had made the agreement binding the Bamalete to the payment of tribute, it was the responsibility of the British agents to see that the agreement was honoured. Because of the heat generated by the dispute Moffat suspended the discussion and referred the matter to the High Commissioner.[62]

As Moffat had predicted,[63] Robinson decided in favour of Gaseitsiwe and the Bangwaketse, arguing that it was too late in the day to re-open the question of the Bethell treaty and to debate "whether that treaty was or was not obtained by means of undue pressure". Robinson continued:

> The agreement signed by Ikaneng secured for him valuable consideration in allowing him the peaceful tenancy of a portion of Gaseitsiwe's country and having enjoyed that consideration, he cannot now repudiate the payment which he agreed to make for it.[64]

As we have already noted, indications are that Ikaneng and his people had, as they claimed, signed the Bethell agreement under duress, and for Robinson therefore to express himself in terms suggesting a volte face on their part was both illogical and dishonest. Bethell himself stated very clearly in his report how strongly opposed the Bamalete had been to either recognising

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62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 C.O. 417/22, Robinson to Knutsford, 324 of 1 August 1888.

Gaseitsiwe as paramount or to paying him tribute.[65] It is true that the arrangements that flowed from the Bethell treaty legally freed the Bamalete from the suffocating embrace of their erstwhile patrons, the Transvaal, as well as somewhat regularising their domicile in Ngwaketse country. But by imposing a mandatory tributary relationship to the Bangwaketse, they were forced to take a backward step. Their ruler's status suffered more when it was stated that he could not grant any concessions, not even on the territory released by the Bangwaketse for Bamalete use.[66]

Why did the British officers settle the Bangwaketse-Bamalete case in that manner? The answer was partly provided in the same letter from Robinson:

> I think too, that in looking to the excitement now existing on the Transvaal frontier, it would be very undesirable to allow this dispute to grow into a petty native war, which might spread to neighbouring tribes.[67]

The need to preserve peace in the region so as to avoid a general conflagration that would provoke intervention by the Transvaal was the overwhelming imperative. This required the appeasement of the larger, more powerful and potentially more troublesome group at the expense of the smaller and weaker community, whose situation was such that they were not only more susceptible to

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65 Report of Bethell dated 27 December 1885 in P.P. 1886, XLVIII, C. 4643, p.249.

66 B.N.A. H.C. 21/23, Moffat to Shippard, 12 July 1888.

67 C.O. 417/22, Robinson to Knutsford, 324 of 1 August 1888; P.P. 1888, LXXV, C. 5524, pp.40 et seq. Robinson's decision was endorsed by the Secretary of State. See C.O. 417/22, Knutsford to Robinson, 110 of 27 August 1888.

pressure from the British authorities, but were also expendable from the point of view of overall imperial policy for that region. The settlement promised little or no heavy financial commitment on the part of the British and was therefore in keeping with the protectorate doctrine of limited involvement as opposed to the full internal administration of a crown colony. The Bangwaketse-Bamalete settlement was also in line with other British policy elsewhere in Africa - subordination of smaller kingdoms to larger ones in the search for a convenient or appropriate size for administration as well as for rewarding their principal collaborators. The small kingdoms were the sacrificial lambs of collaboration between the paramount imperialists and sub-imperialists. Finally, the endorsement by the High Commissioner and the Colonial Secretary of the Bethell Treaty favouring the Bangwaketse may have been prompted by a need for consistency of policy and a desire to avoid vacillation.

Thus in 1888, as was the case in 1885, British intervention resulted in the triumph of the Bangwaketse position over that of the Bamalete. Robinson's verdict, strengthened by the approval of the Colonial Secretary secured for the Bangwaketse what they had been unable to achieve on their own since the settlement of the Bamalete at Ramotswa in 1875. Although in terms of the settlement arranged in 1885 and confirmed in 1888, Gaseitsiwe would not be permitted to grant concessions in land occupied by the Bamalete, the High Commissioner's ruling left no doubt about how he viewed the relationship between Gaseitsiwe and Ikaneng. Now devoid of any further qualms about operating in the role of imperial agents, and their taste for power as well as their

vanity kindled by their newly discovered status, with their appetite for more sehuba considerably whetted by the ten oxen, received at the end of 1885, the Bangwaketse were, at last, becoming quite enthusiastic about their new role under the British dispensation. When the Bamalete defaulted, Gaseitsiwe appealed to the Assistant Commissioner for the Protectorate.[68] Thus by applying pressure on Moffat, and through him skilfully manipulating the British agents in Southern Africa, Gaseitsiwe was able to utilize British influence to bolster and strengthen his own position and power.

In general, it seems fair to assume that once a British foothold had been established in Botswana, any increase in the British government's involvement or commitment would be determined largely by the experiences of imperial interests in the area. Where imperial priorities were low it enabled British authorities to strive towards the aloofness from local affairs that appeared to be implied in the "protectorate" doctrine, the successful implementation of such a policy was invariably qualified by the manner in which rulers like Gaseitsiwe decided to exploit British agents in South Africa to their own advantage. However earnest the British may have been about avoiding embroilment in the internal affairs of the various protectorate communities, certain developments that took place inside those communities rendered the attainment of that ideal extremely difficult.

Activities of chiefs both in their dealings with white men,

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68 B.N.A. H.C. 21/23, Moffat to Shippard, 12 July 1888.

and in their roles as collaborators had the tendency to draw both aggressive and hesitant British authorities deep into the vortex of local politics. The year of the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand also witnessed a feverish scramble for gold prospecting licences in several other parts of southern Africa. In 1886 it was generally believed that gold in economically workable quantities had been found in the country of the Bangwaketse, and letters reaching the office of Sidney Shippard, the Deputy Commissioner for the Protectorate dealing with the subject of concessions and licences for mineral prospecting led him to admonish Gaseitsiwe about the need to exercise the greatest prudence in granting such concessions. In particular, he warned him to avoid granting "any exclusive concession or monopoly to anyone".[69] If not entirely altruistic or disinterested, the advice was nevertheless sound.[70]

Prominent among those who pestered Gaseitsiwe for prospecting licences were some of the white traders in Kanye, especially George Gray, Tom Martin and John Williams. The most important competitor from outside Botswana was a syndicate of three men from Mahikeng - A. Sedgwick Woolley, G. Riesle and J.A. Nicolls.[71]

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69 B.N.A. H.C. 126/2, Shippard to Gaseitsiwe, 18 October 1886.

70 It appears that at the same time Shippard was warning Gaseitsiwe, he was counselling one A. Sedgwick Woolley on how best to proceed in his efforts to get permission to prospect for gold and probably also a concession in Bangwaketse country. (See B.N.A. H.C. 126/2, Woolley to Shippard, dated Mafeking, 23 September 1886, Encl. in Shippard to Governor, 125 G of 23 September 1886.)

71 B.N.A. H.C. 126/2, Shippard to Robinson, 125 G of 23 September 1886; Woolley to Shippard, 25 June 1887, Encl. No. 3 in Shippard to Robinson, 174 G of 15 July 1887.

The intensity of the rivalry among the Kanye traders on the one hand, and the Kanye traders and outside concession hunters on the other, in their bids to wrest monopolies from Gaseitsiwe created a most deplorable environment of intrigue and chicanery in which bribery and corruption became standard practices, and during which Gaseitsiwe and his councillors were shamelessly inundated with European liquor on a hitherto unprecedented scale, and which they, to their disgrace, shamefully swilled without thought or restraint.

After an earlier unsuccessful attempt at obtaining a concession Woolley and partners subsequently returned, now suitably armed with a letter of introduction from Shippard. They took advantage of Bathoen's and Good's absence from Kanye and with the collaboration of some local white traders, one of whom acted as interpreter, managed to hoodwink Gaseitsiwe and his councillors and putting forward a case that a concession had been granted. They prepared for Shippard an elaborate statement setting out the details of the proceedings which were supposedly witnessed by several local European traders, as well as the salient points of the agreement. No Mongwaketse witnessed the document and no copy of it was given to Gaseitsiwe and the Bangwaketse. The validity of the alleged concession was subsequently formally challenged in writing by both Bathoen and Good. On investigating Moffat found that contrary to the impression created by Woolley and his friends there never had been a written agreement, and that Woolley and his friends were therefore lying by pretending that their report to Shippard was an agreement.

Having found there was no written agreement and faced with contradictory verbal accounts, Moffat nevertheless took the surprising decision of causing the granting of a new concession or re-issuing of the disputed one, the details of which (following closely the alleged unwritten one), he had himself committed to writing. This was done, he said, "as a compromise". The "compromise" now granted, Woolley and patrons had a legally valid concession precisely like the one they falsely claimed they had obtained. So they sacrificed nothing towards reaching the "compromise". The Bangwaketse were made to capitulate to the point of view of the white concession-hunters. Here, Moffat an officer of the British government and protectorate power, used his position and the prestige of the British government in the eyes of the Bangwaketse to tip the balance - nay, to overturn the tables - on the Bangwaketse. Moffat clearly sided with white traders and concession hunters against the Bangwaketse.

Moffat's role in the concessions dispute of 1887 is yet another example of how Africans were let down time and again by the representatives of the British government in which they reposed so much faith and confidence. The responsibility of the protecting government was not only to safeguard the rights of the Tswana against the Boers, but also against all white adventurers whose schemes and intrigues threatened to filch the patrimony of the protected peoples. Moffat should therefore have taken a legal stand, and have ruled that in the absence of a written concession or agreement, and in the face of persistent Bangwaketse refutation of the verbal concession, there was no agreement.

This dispute further illustrates the crisis of power or authority that was progressively confronting Tswana rulers with every increase of contact with Europeans. Moffat made revealing comments about Gaseitsiwe's inability to cope with the machinations of all the concession seekers - some of whom were plying him with liquor, while others were imposing upon him by pretending that they had an official status - and that any interference with them would be followed by government interposition.[72] The concession finally granted to Woolley and his partners brought in a negligible revenue of £400 per annum, but tied up large tracts of land - about four hundred square miles to one company - without even defining clearly the territorial limits of the concession. Early in 1888 the grant by Gaseitsiwe and his advisors including Bathoen, of another concession to a Kanye trader, John Williams, led to an involved dispute between himself and Woolley's company now known as the Kanye Exploration Office.[73]

The temptation to grant hasty and ill-considered concessions indiscriminately has been one of the greatest scourges of modern African history. It amounted to an irresponsible sale of the rights of whole groups of people by rulers, often for sums that were ridiculously out of proportion to the size of the grants

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72 B.N.A. H.C. 16/24, Moffat to Deputy Commissioner, 11 October 1887, encl. in Shippard to Governor, 266 G of 21 October 1887. This was an allusion to the behaviour of Woolley and his friends, who brought a letter from Shippard and deliberately sought to convey the impression that they were his agents. See B.N.A. H.C. 126/2, Shippard to Robinson, 144 G of 31 May 1887.

73 B.N.A. H.C. 126/2, Moffat to Shippard dated Kanye, 5 July 1888.

that they were making. It compounded the problem of retaining intact, the power of the king and of keeping the communal heritage inviolate.[74] Further, by granting concessions in lands occupied by the Bamalete, Gaseitsiwe was constantly throwing his own actions open to review by British officers, and therefore liable to some kind of veto by either the Commissioner for the Protectorate at Huhudi (Vryburg), later at Mahikeng, or by the High Commissioner himself in Cape Town. This was particularly unfortunate for the authority of the Ngwaketse king was already being undermined by several factors - moral, religious and political.

Although in theory the British government was still proclaiming the notion of a limited "protectorate" administration where imperial needs called for it, they seldom permitted the scruples of the various communities to thwart what was considered essential by the protecting power. In 1887 a detachment of police was stationed at Kanye. This was to be a first tangible link in the imperial relationship. This action was taken without considering whether the Bangwaketse approved of it or not.[75] Indeed, when Shippard was lobbying the Tswana chiefs north of the Molopo in preparation for the Kopong conference,[76] he reported that Gaseitsiwe was in agreement with certain aspects of the proposed agenda but "... does not like the police coming

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74 B.N.A. H.C. 126/2, Shippard to Robinson, 118 G of 22 May 1888 with enclosures.

75 P.P. 1888, LXXV, C. 5363, p.10. Cf. with Shippard's assurances to Gaseitsiwe during interviews early in March 1887. (See enclosure in Robinson to Holland, 114 of 30 March, 1887, C. 417/14.)

76 Sillery, Founding a Protectorate, (London, 1965), pp.119-122.

into his land".[77] It is therefore clear that the discovery by British agents that certain aspects of their protectorate policy were not palatable to the Tswana chiefs did not always cause them to alter or withhold the implementation of such policies. Particularly after the failure of the Kopong conference, the trend became increasingly less deferential to the wishes of the chiefs themselves.[78]

The protectorate over the southern Tswana had been declared by John MacKenzie in May 1884. In March 1885 Sir Charles Warren, known as "Ra-Galase"[78a] to the Tswana, sent to clear the Cis-Molopo protectorate of free-booters, proceeded to declare a protectorate over the Tswana living north of the Molopo up to latitude 22° south. It is not correct to attribute the Warren expedition and declaration of the protectorates over the Tswana to the killing of Christopher Bethell, even though questions were indeed raised in the House of Commons about his death. More than anything else it was the German protectorate over Damaraland that moved the British to action in order to prevent the closing of the "road to the north" by rival governments and powers.[79]

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77 C.O. 417/27, Gaseitsiwe to Shippard, 25 January 1889, Encl. in Robinson to Knutsford, 72 of 30 January 1889.

78 Sillery, Founding a Protectorate, Chapter 12, passim.

78a "Mr. Glass". This was because of the monocle he used.

79 J. Flint, Cecil Rhodes (Boston, 1974), pp.68-69; W.J. De Kock, Ekstra-Territoriale Vraagstukke, pp.249-250; C.O. 879/23, Memorandum by Fairfield 15 July 1885. In suggesting that Christopher Bethell's activities provoked a renewal of Boer aggression on the Transvaal-Tswana border and that the costly Warren expedition was a result of that provocation Fairfield was grossly oversimplifying as well as misinterpreting developments in that region.

As soon as the protectorate north of the Molopo was declared, Gaseitsiwe and Bathoen presented to Warren at Mahikeng a statement of Ngwaketse losses sustained on the occasion of the Boer raid at Tlapeng in July 1884. The Ngwaketse claimed they lost 1083 head of cattle and some 320 sheep and goats, plus three men killed and one wounded. Warren strongly recommended to Robinson that "very grave importance be attached to making good those losses, as without it Gaseitsiwe cannot believe that Her Majesty's Protection is anything but a name". Consequently, Robinson recommended to the Colonial Secretary that, although the raid had occurred before the establishment of the Protectorate, Gaseitsiwe's losses be reckoned in a general investigation of stock stolen from Montshiwa after the Protectorate over his country had been declared.[80] There is no indication whether the matter was taken any further.

It is interesting that one of the first acts of Warren after the declaration of the Protectorate over the Bangwaketse, Bakwena, Bamangwato and other peoples of Botswana, was to send an officer, Lieutenant A. Stokes to carry out a close inspection of the Bangwaketse and other territories of Botswana and report on the economic prospects of the inhabitants, with a view to assuming the possibilities of raising revenue through taxation. Stokes reported from Kanye on 26 March and 11 April 1885[81] that the country of the Bangwaketse was excellent for cattle grazing.

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80 P.P. 1885, LVII, C. 4432, p.110; P.P. 1885, LVII, C. 4588, pp.11 et seq., 23.

81 B.N.A. H.C, 2/7/12. Lieut. A. Stokes to Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Warren, 26 March and 11 April 1885.

and that the people kept large herds of cattle. Between the border with the Barolong and the capital town of Kanye, he had noticed several cattle-posts located around water pits. Between the Molopo River and Kanye fields of maize and "Kaffir corn" (sorghum) lined both sides of the road. The town of Kanye was situated on a plateau about 200 feet above the surrounding plain and commanded the country for a great distance. It was also a strong defensive position and was situated about sixty-six miles north of Mafeking (Mahiking). Stokes estimated the number of huts in Kanye at 3,000 - a great number of which were deserted at that time as the inhabitants were busy attending to crops on their ploughing fields which were some distance from the main settlement. At the foot of Kanye hill Stokes noted five villages containing some six hundred huts.

Stokes was of the opinion that the crops on the whole looked very well, and stated that many people had "Grahamstown wagons"[82]. There were three stores in the town - two below the hill kept by a Mr. Williams and a Mr. Jones, and one on the hill run by a Mr. Gray (of the firm Bogn [sic], (Boyne?) Walker and Gray) who had also a store at Molepolole, and a cattle-post between Kanye and that place. There were nine white people living at Kanye, excluding the missionary James Good, who was away in England at that moment. There was a fairly well-built church on the west side of the village below the hill.

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82 Cf. Report of James Good to R.W. Thompson (Foreign Secretary, L.M.S.) dated 1 and 28 December 1885, both of which referred to drought and absence of rain. In his second communication of 28 December, Good opined that it was already too late to plough and that his people had not been able to put in any seed; "so at Kanye there will be no harvest this year and our cattle are very wretched, there being little grass".

On the hill itself there was no water, but there was a plentiful supply below it on the north and south. There was also one large pool fed by a spring, and a dam at both of which cattle drank. Stokes thought the water supply could be increased by a better method of constructing dams.

Commenting on Gaseitsiwe himself, Stokes remarked that "The Chief Gaseitsiwe appears to be a very weak old man, both in body and will, his people seem but little to acknowledge his authority or at any rate to conform to it". As an example he cited the fact that Gaseitsiwe had called a big meeting of his people but only a very small gathering of some seven or eight hundred men assembled. Also he stated that when Gaseitsiwe abused his subjects for various shortcomings and failures, two men stood up one ~~after the~~ other and called the Chief and his son liars.

According to Stokes, Bathoen, the chief's son, seemed shrewd enough but, like his father, had not much power. Bathoen was much opposed to his father giving up the country, as he feared that it would mean that the country would no longer remain under the Chief, out of whose hands rule of the country was likely to be taken. Gaseitsiwe, in talking about the Protectorate appeared much preoccupied with the problem of protecting the border with the Transvaal against filibusters.

As far as the revenue that could be gathered from Bangwaketse country was concerned, Stokes estimated the number of huts at a total of 5,500 which would yield £2,750 in taxes. He suggested that store-keepers also be taxed. Stokes also observed that in contrast with some places where the chiefs had forbidden

the sale of liquor, it was rather openly sold at Kanye.[83]

For Gaseitsiwe's country Stokes thought a large contingent of police out of question as the country would not be able to pay for it. Yet some form of force was desirable to keep the Boers in check. "Could English farmers be induced to settle down and farm on the borders on the understanding that they were liable to (be) commandeered if necessary....". On grounds of expense, a small force would seem necessary, to carry despatches and act as a body-guard to the Resident - say an officer and ten or twelve men (something Gaseitsiwe's country would be able to pay for). But Stokes considered the time inopportune for introducing an African police force, "until the natives have realised that the whole country now in the Protectorate, is as it were one country" and though the chiefs were independent, they could no longer act independently, but under the Resident Commissioner.[84]

Immediately after Stokes' return, Warren himself visited the Tswana rulers north of the Molopo in order to "judge of the administration required and revenue obtainable".[85] He arrived at Kanye on April 1885 and had an interview with Gaseitsiwe. As with Stokes earlier, Gaseitsiwe showed himself to be much concerned with the threat of Boer invasion on his eastern flank.

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83 See also L.M.S., Box 42, Folder 2, Jacket B; R.W. Thompson to J.O. Whitehouse, 22 February 1884; C.O. 879/30, Shippard to Governor, March 1889.

84 B.N.A. H.C. 2/7/12., Stokes to Warren, 11 April 1885.

85 Warren's visit was also to acquaint the Tswana chiefs north of the Molopo with the fact that the protectorate had been declared. See C.O. 417/4, Robinson to Special Commissioner Charles Warren, 5 January 1885.

While obviously very uncertain of how British protection was likely to affect his powers of ruling his people, he nevertheless clearly indicated that if not too enthusiastic, he was equally not averse to it. In fact, Gaseitsiwe went so far as offering land on the eastern and western edges of his country for occupation by English settlers, in return for protection against Boer filibustering.

In other words, Gaseitsiwe's conception of a British protectorate was of the nature of a treaty of alliance whereby the British Government guaranteed the integrity of the boundaries of the Ngwaketse state in return for grants of strips of territory for European settlement. A cardinal element of this concept of a protectorate was that the character of the Ngwaketse state was to remain unaltered and undisturbed - he, Gaseitsiwe wished to continue ruling his people "as at present", and that rights enjoyed by the Bangwaketse in the past such as hunting game be not thereby infringed.[86] Simply to state, as Sillery and Chirenje have done, that Gaseitsiwe "made no fuss" or accepted the protectorate after very little persuasion,[87] is to gloss over the considerable anxiety and soul searching that Gaseitsiwe and Bathoen underwent in deciding on the right course to follow.

Gaseitsiwe's long reign, which lasted from 1846 to 1889 was not marked by any dramatic achievements such as great victories and memorable battles of confrontation with invading peoples, but it was nevertheless a reign that coincided with very import-

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86 P.P. 1885, LVII, C. 4588, p.48.

87 Cf. Sillery, Botswana; A Short Political History, p.76; Chirenje, The Northern Tswana, p.151.

ant developments in the history of the Bangwaketse. It fell to him to bring together the two divided sections of the Bangwaketse people, after the fragmentation caused by the Difaqane wars. Although not a ruler cast in the militarist mould, Gaseitsiwe succeeded through the deployment of other mechanisms such as diplomacy and negotiating skill in inducing Senthufe's rival section to settle with his own at Kanye. It was only when persuasion failed to convince Senthufe that even though the Bangwaketse were once more living together under a scheme of reconciliation, it was neither desirable nor practicable to have two kings of equal status living side by side in the same settlement, that it became necessary for Gaseitsiwe to take drastic action. He first threatened Senthufe and ultimately attacked him, after Senthufe had moved his section of the Bangwaketse to Male, three miles west of Kanye.

In one respect the reign of Gaseitsiwe was reminiscent of that of Moshoeshoe I, founder of the kingdom of Lesotho. Not only did he bring together the two main sections of his people but like Moshoeshoe he drew under his protective wing fragments of other Tswana peoples who sought new homes and security under his rule. His reputation as a kind ruler is said to have been the main quality that drew so many immigrants to Ngwaketse society during his reign. According to Ngwaketse informants, Gaseitsiwe's paternal rule over his subjects ensured their unquestioned loyalty towards him, as well as demonstrated in practice the Tswana saying that kgosi ke mosadi wamorafe, literally: "the king is the wife of the nation" - an expression emphasising the qualities of humaneness and succouring of his

people. Thus, under his rule, the once broken Bangwaketse grew to become one of the largest kingdoms of Botswana.

Gaseitsiwe was no innovator. He was, instead, a thorough going traditionalist who appeared satisfied to maintain the status quo. While his reign did not witness major structural changes in the social and political framework of the Ngwaketse state, the arrival of so many new groups - large and small - necessitated reorganisation and the creation of new wards. Gaseitsiwe did not found any new royal ward, although he created the basis for the establishment of a new one.[88] Large immigrant groups like the Bahurutshe-Manyana and the Bakgatla-Mmanaana were organised into large "wards" which were in fact separate villages, sub-divided into numerous sub-wards. As already noticed the heads of these sub-villages were royal princes of alien origin. In Ga-Ngwaketse their wards were therefore not royal but commoner wards.

From the ripples of Bamangwato migrations that reached Ga-Ngwaketse (following upon the recurrent dynastic upheavals in the Ngwato state during the latter half of the nineteenth century), Gaseitsiwe created the Macheng, Matshogo, Malele, Moloko, Montsho and Mma-Ngwato wards. The first of these was

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88 Schapera, Ethnic Composition, p.48. Kgosimotse who was a brother of Gaseitsiwe remained in the royal or kgosing ward until 1912, although his mother had much earlier been given servant families, all descended from a commoner named Tsalakwe. According to this date recorded by Schapera, the founding of Kgosimotse ward should have taken place during the reign of Seepapitso II (1910-1916). According to the evidence of Karabo Marapane, Bogaisitse Tsima, and Mooketsi Kgosimotse, at interview held in the Dinaledi ward, 4 April 1974, the creation of the Dinaledi ward occurred during the reign of Bathoen I.

located at Ngomare, the second at Mmakaibele and all the others at Kanye.[89] Batlharo immigrants were organised into two wards, the Tanaka ward under the evangelist Sebubi, and Phadima ward, at Magoriapitse, whose members were mostly descendants of refugees who had been involved in an unsuccessful war against the Cape Colony. They went to Ga-Ngwaketse because the senior wife of Gaseitsiwe was of the Batlharo royal family.[90] Two wards comprising members of Batlhaping origin were founded during Gaseitsiwe's reign. One of these, the Rantadi ward was later re-located at Khakea by Bathoen I. The second, the Ranaka (Thema) ward, was made up of families that joined the Ngwaketse morafe towards the end of the reign of Gaseitsiwe.[91]

Like his predecessors and other Tswana monarchs, Gaseitsiwe created some of the wards for the specific purpose of rewarding faithful personal retainers. Examples are the Kalabeng and Lobeko wards. Kalabeng was a motlhanka or servant of Selohilwe, a son of Mongala. He later became a favourite motlhanka of Gaseitsiwe, who consequently created a new ward for him. The Lobeko ward was an off-shoot of the Ra-Sebako ward, and is consequently often referred to as "Sebakwana" or "junior Sebako". The ward was created for Lobeko in recognition of his faithful and loyal service to Gaseitsiwe.[92]

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89 Schapera, Ethnic Composition, p.41.

90 Ibid., p.42.

91 Ibid., pp.42-43.

92 Evidence of Rankane Tiro, Mogorosi Kgosisejo Kgosijang, and Mogorosana Kgosijane-a-Lobeko, at private interview held at home of Mogorosana, 3 April 1974.

In addition to the challenge of having to reunite a divided and fragmented people and the reorganisation of the Ngwaketse state, Gaseitsiwe had to face the new threat of Boer encroachment upon Tswana societies and had to protect his country from either falling directly into Boer hands or being reduced to a puppet chiefdom at the perpetual behest of Boer officers for the notorious labour tax, supply of child "apprentices" or forceful conscription on commandos against other African states. Perhaps more than on any other of the many problems facing him, Gaseitsiwe showed the highest degree of perceptiveness of Boer motives and tactics. To counter these he employed a variety of strategies. These ranged from attendance at summit meetings of Tswana chiefs living south of the Molopo together with representatives of the Transvaal Republic, and pleading his case before arbitration courts like the one held at Bloemhof in 1871. Together with other southern Tswana chiefs, they petitioned the High Commissioner for intervention in their troubles with the Transvaal Boers. In 1883 he formed a defensive alliance with Montshiwa and Sechele. It may be interesting to note here, that unlike his predecessor Sebego, Gaseitsiwe showed a greater preference for co-operating with Tswana chiefs south of the Molopo, although after the declaration of the protectorate he seemed to make one or two perfunctory efforts at harmonising his own actions with those of his neighbours immediately north of him.

While Gaseitsiwe never specifically petitioned the British to be taken over by them, as did Sechele, Macheng and Khama III, he nevertheless displayed a definite preference for having agents

of the British government mediating in the troubles between his people and the Boers. When the protectorate finally came in 1885, his anxiety about the future role of the Ngwaketse king under such an arrangement had been entirely allayed, but probably the knowledge of what had happened to Montshiwa and Mankwane persuaded him as to the wisdom of submitting to the British protectorate.

It had been the desire to establish close ties with British authorities that had made him welcome the arrival of the first white missionary to his kingdom, and not any enthusiasm to embrace the teachings of the Christian gospel as such. His calculations, like those of his predecessors, had been that missionaries would not only help preserve the safety of the Ngwaketse state from external dangers, but that he, as king, would also be able to exploit their expertise in order to enhance and strengthen his own authority within his kingdom. When, however, the teaching of missionaries resulted, instead, in a cleavage in Ngwaketse society, the effect was rather to weaken than bolster the authority of Gaseitsiwe, who resolutely resisted all attempts to have himself converted. Although this weakened his authority, it does not appear to have shaken the loyalty or the attachment of his people towards him. His own reign was consequently never threatened by a civil rebellion. Divisive and dissensionist forces tended to remain below the surface during his own reign, surfacing only after his death.

Gaseitsiwe's career and his role in the history of the Bangwaketse has not received the attention it deserves. On the whole it can be fairly stated that Gaseitsiwe appears to have

had a "bad press". This appears to have been due largely to the excessive attention to Gaseitsiwe's drinking habits mentioned repeatedly by many official visitors to his kingdom after 1875.[93] In their reports to the headquarters of the L.M.S., missionaries also helped reinforce this image of Gaseitsiwe as a feeble, drunken, or somewhat pathetic ruler.[94] On the other hand, the Bangwaketse elders interviewed in 1973 and 1974 do not appear to recall that Gaseitsiwe was a confirmed drunkard. The enduring memory that tradition has left behind is of a very kind, good-natured, probably placid and peace-loving king.[95] It is readily conceded that this image of Gaseitsiwe need not be necessarily inconsistent with that of an essentially inebriate king portrayed in the various official and other records already alluded to. But even if we allow for a certain degree of defensiveness on the part of the present-day Ngwaketse informants, there remains some doubt whether the Tswana themselves regarded the consumption of various alcoholic beverages in as serious a light as many of the white commentators who expressed themselves on the subject. Beyond bald statements by officials and mission-

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93 Cf. with Wheeler's view that the Shangana king, Gungunyane was being badly evaluated by writers who not only considered him to lack ability, but also dismissed him as "a confirmed drunkard". (See D.L. Wheeler, "Gungunyane the Negotiator: A Study in African Diplomacy", J.A.H., IX, 4, 1968, p.585. See also J.E. Flint, "Mary Kingsley - A Reassessment", J.A.H., IV, 1, 1963, p.98.)

94 L.M.S., Box 42, Folder 2, Jacket B. Thompson to Whitehouse, dated Kanye, 22 February 1884; L.M.S., Box 44, Folder 6, Jacket A, Good to Thompson, 1 October 1887.

95 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.153-154; Schapera, "A Short History....", p.17.

aries that Gaseitsiwe was drinking excessively, there is no evidence that Ngwaketse society was being seriously menaced by liquor. A great deal of what was said about the drinking of Africans had to do with agitation connected with the British temperance movement, which had close links with the churches and missionary societies. Because excessive consumption of liquor by the poorer classes in England created a problem, it was assumed by many officials and missionaries that it would of necessity debauch whole villages in Africa.[96]

The issue also raises the question of the appropriateness of judging the behaviour of Tswana rulers by a moral standard conditioned by Victorian puritanical attitudes. After all, Tswana chiefs and people did not have a religion that fulminated against drinking of alcoholic beverages. To them bojalwa or traditional African beer was both food and an alcoholic beverage and was taken socially and freely, without any sense of moral reservation or stigma attached to it; although it was generally regarded as something in which adults only should indulge, children and very young persons being discouraged from doing so. It is accordingly possible to see how some chiefs and people could have adopted the same kind of casual approach to the white man's liquor when it became available in their area. This was true not only of Gaseitsiwe and the Bangwaketse but also of many other Tswana communities.[97]

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96 For West Africa Mary Kingsley has shown that the liquor trade did not seriously undermine the well-being of African societies, but that instead, it played an important social, commercial and economic role. (See Flint, "Mary Kingsley", p.98.

97 See Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, I, pp.236-239 for

In the final analysis the most serious question must be to what extent drinking interfered with or rendered impossible the normal performance of the king's duties. Moffat suggests that around 1887 and 1888 Gaseitsiwe was rendered increasingly incapable of carrying out his duties, and had to lean heavily on Bathoen.[98] While drinking may indeed have been a contributory factor, it is suggested here that Moffat (and probably other white officers) tended to overlook the factors of infirmity and old age, which made Mokgosi depend for many years on the help of his son, Ikaneng, and Sechele on his son, Sebele. As has been demonstrated, Gaseitsiwe dealt reasonably satisfactorily with the main challenges facing his reign. Admittedly his handling of concessions and prospecting licences for minerals was shockingly deplorable, but it was no more inept than that of other African rulers attempting to cope with a strange and difficult problem whose implications were not always easy to foresee.[99]

The missionaries who wrote so scathingly and uncharitably about Gaseitsiwe appeared to have been regretting too much the fact that he never agreed, as Khama III and Sechele I did, to become a Christian himself, and they forgot how cooperation with them considerably eased their work, and how the use of his traditional authority and resources made possible the erection of the first church building at Kanye at virtually no cost to

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Batlhaping near Brown's mission station at Taung begging for alcohol.

98 B.N.A. H.C. 16/24, Moffat to Shippard, 11 October 1887.

99 For the manner with which Khama III and Sebele handled concessions, see Sillery, Botswana, Chapter 8.

L.M.S.[100] British officers who denounced Gaseitsiwe for his love of the white man's drink overlooked the fact that the entry of the white missionaries and traders always brought with it changes that were both useful and harmful and that the problem of selection was indeed an agonising one.

Whatever the truth concerning Gaseitsiwe's attitude to drink, it appears incorrect to suggest that he was either a feeble ruler or a pathetic character. While he was not a strong absolute ruler of the type of Mzilikazi or Shaka, he was also not a feeble one. His successful handling of many serious problems referred to earlier including his internal reforms, all suggest a certain kind of strength. Also, although he was always surrounded by a powerful royal aristocracy ever on the alert to increase their power at the expense of that of the king, there is no evidence that he was beleaguered. Further, the impressions of some visitors, who did not appear to have an axe to grind, were far more positive about Gaseitsiwe and the clear signs of progress achieved by him and his people.

Finally, in the praise poem on Gaseitsiwe, recorded by Schapera, the praise-singer takes the liberty to indulge in some gentle reproof and criticism of his king.[101] He charges him with being too relaxed and being too trusting in a political environment that was still unsettled and, therefore, potentially bristling with intrigues and scheming. The dominant imagery

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100 L.M.S., Box 38, Folder 3, Jacket A, Good to Mullens, 28 April 1876; L.M.S., Box 44, Folder 6, Jacket A, Good to Thompson, 1 October 1887, where Good gives a detailed description of the voluntary labours performed by the Bangwaketse regiments in the work of building the church at Kanye.

101 Schapera, Praise Poems, pp.158-160.

suggests a reign of prosperity and happiness, although in the same praise poem we are reminded that Gaseitsiwe could be both firm and severe in dealing with offenders. His action against the party of Christian converts in 1887 ought to be seen in the same light.[102] These incidents, together with his disciplining of Tiro Motlhabane,[103] demonstrates that it could be utterly misleading to think of Gaseitsiwe as a pathetic figure. Gaseitsiwe must be looked upon as a ruler of considerable ability and foresight. Facing the powerful new forces of white settlement, missionary and commercial penetration as well as colonial partition which almost everywhere in Africa overwhelmed indigenous rulers, Gaseitsiwe steered his country along a course which at least preserved the essentials of its culture and identity.

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102 This incident is discussed above in chapter IV.

103 Evidence of Rankane Tiro at private interview held at his house in Lobeko ward in Kanye on Wednesday 3 April 1974. Rankane Tiro testified that the Lobeko ward became separated from its parent ward Sebako as a disciplinary measure imposed by Gaseitsiwe. This was because Tiro Motlhabane, the sub-headman, gave tribute to his elder brother, Mmutlwe, who was the senior headman, instead of sending it to the king. For that misdemeanor, Gaseitsiwe removed both Mmutlwe and Tiro from "Ntsweng", the hill-top and sent them down to the plain. Only the very earnest entreaty of Tiro with a solemn promise never to repeat the offence, saved him from being transplanted out of his traditional residential section tlase, on the eastward, to the godimo section on the west. Also the allusion in his praise poem to "Motebele motshwana" or Black Tebele was supposed to be a reference to lack of mercy - a quality instanced by Gaseitsiwe's killing of Tholo, a servant of Kgwadibana captured during the fighting against Senthufi in 1857. (See Schapera, Praise Poems, pp.156-159.)

CHAPTER VI

THE ERA OF BATHOEN I 1889-1910

Bathoen I was the eldest son of Gaseitsiwe's senior wife and, therefore, heir to the Ngwaketse chieftaincy. He was born in 1845 at Tswaneng in the southern part of the Ngwaketse district and his mother was of the Batlhware people. Recorded traditions state that he learnt to read and write at a mission school. This suggests that he was probably among the pupils taught by the first L.M.S. teacher-evangelists to the Bangwaketse - namely, Sebube and Tlhomelang. As son of the Chief, he became the leader of his mophato or age set, the Ma-ISANTWA (literally, those who carry war to the enemy) which graduated into a regiment about 1864. Although he did not submit to baptism until late in his life, he early became a good friend of the missionaries, and their teachings exerted a profound influence on his character.

In the year 1895, the L.M.S. missionary Edwin Lloyd, who first met him in 1886, gave this pen-portrait of Bathoen:

> He is of a somewhat jocular turn when in good humour, which he usually is. He has trouble with his eyes on account of ingrowing eyelashes, which often prevent him looking up and well forward. He is inclined to corpulency; in height about 5 feet 8 inches. He is fairer than most Bechuana; Sebele and Khame being very black beside him. He possesses an excellent knowledge of his own language, the Sengwaketse dialect of Sechwana, and is a clear and forcible speaker. He knows little Dutch and less English. He is well versed in the customs of his tribe, its traditions and proverbial lore.

In his youth he is said to have made a name for himself as a skilful hunter of big game and elephants, and recorded tradi-

tions refer to a spot in the Kgalagadi desert known as "The Pool of Bathwing" where he shot twelve elephants. At the kgotla his prowess at cross-examination and summing up was considered proverbial, largely because of the skill with which he marshalled his profound knowledge of Tswana law and custom, as well as his peculiar capacity for bringing a touch of humour to the proceedings and thereby shedding light and sunshine to what would otherwise have been gloomy and melancholy proceedings. He is said to have invariably acquitted himself creditably before commissions of enquiry or other investigations conducted by British officers. "He is also able to give his own evidence well, and to answer the keenest and most piercing questions. He invariably dresses carefully and neatly, generally in black".[1]

Details of Bathoen's first marriage are obscure, as are the facts concerning the birth of his eldest child, a daughter named Lesego, after which event he was known as Ra-Lesego. In any event, Lesego herself is thought to have died young. During the year 1890, Bathoen married, in a Christian ceremony, Gagoangwe, daughter of the Bakwena king, Sechele. This was in accordance with the traditional practice of Tswana kings - the desire to strengthen relationships by building close ties with neighbouring states through carefully-planned royal marriages. As a daughter of Sechele, Gagoangwe was thus a sister to Sebele, who succeeded his father in 1892, as well as being a widow of the Kgatla-Mmanaana Chief, Pilane of Moshupa and mother to Baitirile the new chief at Moshupa. She was accordingly "the daughter,

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1 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.165; P.P., 1890, LI, C. 5918, p.152.

sister, widow, wife and mother of a Chief".[2] This policy of diplomatic marriages was strengthened when in the same year that he married Gagoangwe, his own sister, Gasekete, the widow of one of Sechele's sons, was wedded to Kgama III, king of the Bamangwato.

Bathoen's relations with his Barolong neighbours to the south were also not based purely on good neighbourliness. In addition to traditional alliances, bonds between the Bangwaketse and the Barolong-Tshidi had been cemented by Montshiwa's marriage to Bathoen's rakgadi or paternal aunt, Tshadinyana, the daughter of Tshosa Makaba and mother of Montshiwa's sons Kebalepile, Besele and Tawana. Also, Montshiwa was married to Gadibusanye, who was daughter of Senthufe Sebego and aunt to Bathoen.[3] Thus, superficially, the picture looked fairly auspicious at the start of Bathoen's reign. His relations with the missionaries were cordial; and with the other major chiefdoms of the Kwena cluster sanguinary ties had been reinforced by affinal ones.

One more requirement was needed to put the coping stone on this impressive edifice of relationships and ties to prop up Bathoen's reign and protect it against unforeseen hazards. This was the need to bind some of the powerful Ngwaketse aristocratic families to himself through carefully chosen marriages with them. This, however, required the practice of polygamy - a condition that was proscribed by Bathoen's deliberate choice

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2 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.165-166.

3 Molema, Montshiwa, pp.216, 217.

of adhesion to Christian principles as well as his preference to model himself on the illustrious Kgama III rather than on his own father.

The fact that Gaseitsiwe tended towards the end of his reign to consult with Sechele and to take his cue from him in reacting to the various overtures and approaches of British agents, has probably led to the mistaken and unwarranted interpretation that Bathoen, in his turn, followed the lead set by Sebele.[4] A close study of events shows, however, that it was neither Sebele nor his own father that formed his model, but Kgama III. This is not to say that Bathoen was merely an imitator of Kgama III, rather that the example set by Kgama III partly inspired his own policies in dealing with the missionaries, the British administration and some of the reforms he introduced in the Ngwaketse state. His visit to Kgama III in 1887 appears to have marked a turning point in Bathoen's career. Between 1880 and 1888 Bathoen was thought to be in danger of giving way to intemperance, an abberation he subsequently corrected.[5] It is very probable that Kgama's influence helped Bathoen's fight against alcohol. To that visit must be ascribed also his more pronounced proclivity towards Christianity after 1887 and his sympathy towards the missionaries and the Christian converts.

As already noted, Bathoen duly succeeded his father at his

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4 Sillery, Founding A Protectorate, p.117.

5 P.P., 1890, C. 5918, p.152. Deputy Commissioner to High Commissioner, 11 December 1888; Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.159.

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death in 1889. In practice he had, like the sons of other aging Tswana chiefs, been involved much earlier in the duties of administering the Ngwaketse state. It had been in that capacity that he had in 1881 led two Ngwaketse regiments against the Bamalete. Chastened by the ignominious failure of his Bamalete campaign which is said to have been carried out without the blessing of his ailing father, Bathoen appears to have played a subdued role in the leadership of the Ngwaketse morafe between 1882 and 1887. It is possible that he was severely reprimanded by either Gaseitsiwe and the Khuduthamaga (Chief's secret council) for his rash action. The high death toll alone could have had a very adverse effect on his image as the future king of Bangwaketse. It could also have generated such widespread disgruntlement as to convince Bathoen of the futility of attempting to replace Gaseitsiwe's policy of cautious pacifism with one of bravado or reckless vigour in foreign affairs.

While he played an insignificant role in the affairs of his people between 1882 and 1886, he nevertheless assisted his father in deliberations and negotiations with British officers in the years immediately preceding the declaration of the Protectorate,[6] as well as participating more fully in affairs between 1887 and 1889. As already observed, Bathoen tried his best in 1887 to rescue his father from the extortion of white traders and other concession-seekers who were mainly concerned to secure prospecting licences in Ngwaketse country. Also, what faltering steps the Ngwaketse ruler had taken towards

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6 Sillery, Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.139.

controlling the liquor traffic, were probably due to Bathoen's promptings. It was during these years (1887-1889) that Bathoen began drawing closer to the missionary James Good, and was beginning to appear to many observers as the champion, in the Ngwaketse court, of the still insignificant band of Christian converts. It was for that reason that some writers thought the 1887 riots that involved traditionalists clashing with Christian converts had been skilfully timed to occur during Bathoen's absence from Kanye.[7] This allegation is, however, based on purely circumstantial evidence.

The Kopong Conference held in February 1889, at which Bathoen and Sebele represented their aged and ailing fathers,[8] is more often remembered not for what was done there but more for what could not be done. Yet it was in many other ways a very important meeting. In one respect its importance lay in the fact that it represented the first attempt by British agents to bring together around "one table" the heads of the various Tswana states situated north of the Molopo River. Hitherto British agents had been meeting each ruler individually without arranging to take a united expression of opinion from the heads of the different Tswana states north of the Molopo. The Kopong Conference was also an attempt to start a new policy of "effective" British administration in the Protectorate; and from the point of view of the chiefs, it marked the beginning of a policy they had always suspected was probably lurking below the

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7 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.160-161.

8 C.O. 417/27, Shippard to Robinson, telegram, 11 January 1889, enclosed in Robinson to Knutsford, 37 of 16 January 1889.

apparently innocent pronouncements of such officers as Warren, Shippard and Moffat:

> As indicated in a circular letter sent out on 11 January 1889 to the various chiefs, the agenda of the meeting included such subjects as defence against invasion, medicine and hospitals, hut-tax, peaceful settlement of inter-tribal disputes, the construction of railway and telegraph lines and the digging of permanent water wells.[9]

At the Kopong Conference Bathoen led the debate on the various issues tabled by Shippard. In particular he attacked the suggestion of hut-tax, and stated that the Bangwaketse would pay no tax under any circumstances. This was echoed by other chiefs present - notably, Sebele and Lentswe of the Bakgatla. Shippard abruptly closed the conference. Thus the stand of strong opposition to Shippard's proposals adopted by Bathoen contributed towards the failure of the Kopong Conference. United action by leaders of the Tswana thus helped to defeat efforts to use them as mere cogs in wider imperialist schemes that were of no immediate relevance to their own welfare.

More than anything else the Kopong Conference demonstrated the unwillingness of the chiefs to acquiesce in British pronouncements about the protectorate, however reassuring; it also showed that however much they may have sought and welcomed British protection, they had no desire to part with their sovereignty or cede powers of taxation to the colonial rulers. On the other hand, these attempts to introduce effective govern-

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9 C.O. 417/27, enclosed in Robinson to Knutsford, 60 of 24 January 1889.

ment which were now exposing the hollowness of previous utterances by British officers on the subject, can be seen as merely the normalising of British imperial administration in the area, bringing it into line with practices elsewhere in Africa. This clearly entailed the introduction of a qualified form of indirect rule in the area, in which Tswana chiefs and peoples would share responsibility for the costs of administration. The British wanted an empire ruled at the least possible cost.

What the chiefs were not aware of when they thus frustrated the proposals of Shippard (whom the Tswana referred to as "Ra-Maaka" or "Mr. Lies") at Kopong was that their actions were threatening bigger imperial plans. That same year was to witness the grant of a royal charter to Rhodes' company - the British South Africa Company - whose area of operations was defined as north of the territories of the Tswana and west of the Transvaal and Portuguese territories - an area that clearly included Botswana as well as the area of modern Rhodesia. Did the refractory attitude of chiefs like Bathoen and others at Kopong push the imperial authorities towards an alternative scheme, namely handing over the Tswana chiefs and their territories to the administration of Rhodes' Company? Or was the plan of Company rule for Botswana a preconceived idea?[10] Rhodes' letter to Lord Ripon towards the end of 1894 left no doubt of what the real position was, and the reply of Ripon confirmed that

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10 For the background to the granting of the royal charter to the B.S.A. Company, see Flint, Cecil Rhodes, chapter 5, passim; Sillery, Founding A Protectorate, chapter 11; L.H. Gann, A History of Southern Rhodesia: early day to 1934, (London, 1965), p.81; J.G. Lockhart and C.M. Woodhouse, Rhodes (London, 1963), pp.267-268, 274-276; C.O. 417/119 Cameron to Ripon, 309 of 21 May 1894.

impression,[11]

But Rhodes did not make any move to gobble up the land of the Tswana until his company had digested the chunk it had swallowed earlier in the territory of modern Rhodesia. In the meantime, the immediate problem that confronted Bathoen vis-a-vis the British, was their determination to go ahead with plans to construct a telegraph line through Ngwaketse country despite the position taken up by Bathoen and his brother chiefs at Kopong, and despite promises made from time to time that the Protectorate would leave the powers of the chiefs in tact.

After the Kopong Conference imperial officers were quite willing to come out into the open and confess that the declaration of a protectorate was hardly compatible with the notion of retention of the sovereign rights of the chiefs. It was inevitable that chiefs should at various times be restrained from doing things which they had been accustomed to doing and the imperial government must do what it considered essential to its larger imperial aims.[12] Shippard found that Bathoen's uncompromising opposition to the telegraph line was due to his being in the hands of European syndicates, and that he had a revenue of £900 per annum from white concessionaries. According to Shippard's report, Bathoen had granted to the Kanye Exploration Company a concession giving them a monopoly to construct telegraph lines and railways in his territories including that part

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11 C.O. 879/42, African No.484, p.74, Rhodes to Ripon, 28 November 1894, and page 75, Ripon to Rhodes, private, 30 November 1894.

12 See C.O. 417/44, Loch to Knutsford, 491 of 8 July 1890.

occupied by Ikaneng and his Bamalete people.[13] In passing, it may be observed that Shippard was hardly a good independent source, for he was one of Rhodes' henchmen, financially connected with De Beer's and an executor for his will.[14]

Bathoen and others were accordingly told that the telegraph line would be constructed regardless of their wishes and that claims of white concessionaries would not be allowed to pre-empt the entitlement of the imperial government to embark on projects that were essential to the responsibility of the protecting authority. Bathoen protested that this humiliated him because he had already granted the rights sought to other persons, but this was brushed aside.[15] The building of the telegraph went through without further opposition from the Bangwaketse.

Here it may be convenient to look at Bathoen's internal reforms. Because of Bathoen's commitment to a policy of "modernising" the Ngwaketse state, his reign was to witness the most extensive and thorough-going process of social change that his people had experienced up to that point. Bathoen's innovations were as much a result of the use of his official position and power as they were of exhortation and personal example. His father's resistance to conversion and baptism must have played a large part in encouraging most of the Ngwaketse royal aristo-

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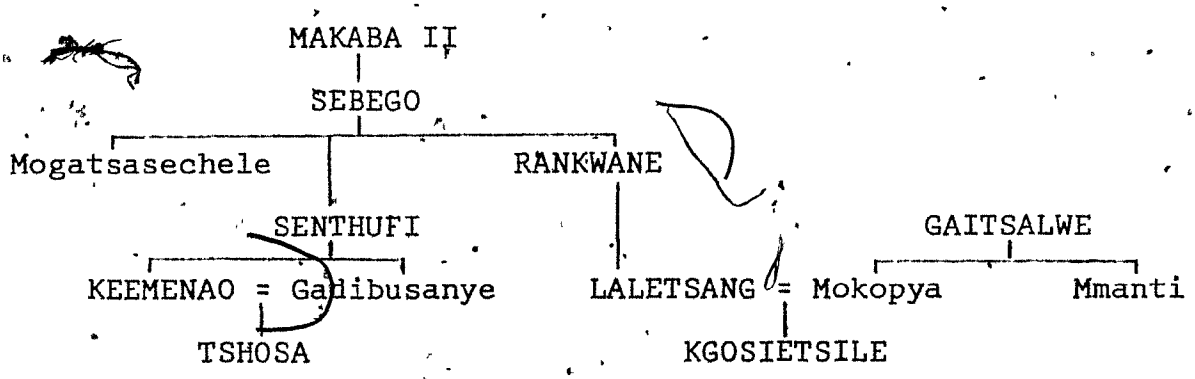
13 C.O. 417/42, Shippard to Loch, telegram, 16 May 1890, enclosed in Loch to Knutsford, 336 of 20 May 1890.

14 Flint, Cecil Rhodes, pp.100-101.

15 C.O. 879/32, African No. 392, pp.216 et seq., 253, 274.

cracy in their tenacious adherence to traditional religion and practices and, accordingly, their resistance to Christianity. But when Bathoen became a modumedi or believer this influenced hundreds of Bangwaketse to respond favourably to the teaching of Christian missionaries.[16] It is almost certain that his scrupulous attention to correct European dress and the acquisition of guns and ploughs, already much in vogue in his father's time, were even more stimulated under the reign of Bathoen I.[17] Also with respect to monogamy, Bathoen I set the example without issuing any decree prohibiting polygamy.

Besides the force or influence of example, Bathoen specifically legislated against any Mongwaketse marrying a "half-sister, half-sister's daughter or step-daughter".[18] According to Schapera, when Bathoen abolished this kind of marriage, it was on the decline among both the nobles and the commoners. The following sketch shows an example of the marriages that did take place among first kin in the past:



16 See Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.188-189.

17 P.P., 1890, LI, C. 5918, p.152, Shippard to Robinson, 11 December 1888; Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.165.

18 I. Schpaera, "Marriage of Near Kin Among the Tswana", Africa, XXVII, 2, 1957, p.144; Idem., Tribal Innovators, p.136.

Rankwane, Sebego's son in the third "house" married Mogatsa-sechele, Sebego's daughter in the first house; Keemenao, Senthufi's son in the first house married Gadibusanye, his sister in the second house (their son, Tshosa, was acting chief of the Bangwaketse in 1919-23); and Kgosietsile, son of Lale-tsang Rankwane by Mokopye Gaetsalwe, married his mother's agnatic half-sister, Mmanti.[19]

Bathoen abolished these near kin marriages because he viewed such a practice as immoral (maswe) and degrading. The same applied to the "seed-raising" with a step-mother or father's widow.[20] He also forbade the seantlo or sororate form of marriage requiring the occasional sending of a married woman to replace her deceased elder sister.[21] He also decreed that at divorce or separation of a couple a guilty woman receive no alimony; but if the husband was at fault, the woman was not only to receive the household goods as had hitherto been the practise, but was also to be awarded two head of cattle.[22]

Other social reforms instituted by Bathoen I were the control of the liquor traffic. Whereas his father had displayed utter inability to handle this problem, Bathoen tackled it with much vigour. In 1889 he banned the sale of European liquor and

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19 Schapera, "Marriage of Near Kin...", p.149.

20 Schapera, Tribal Innovators, p.140.

21 Here he reissued and emphasized an earlier reform introduced by Gaseitsiwe. This is the custom that Lloyd wrongly and crudely described as the "taking of any woman that a man had a fancy for, even though she was already the wife of another man". (Three Great African Chiefs, p.153)

22 Schapera, Tribal Innovators, p.142.

took prompt as well as sharp action against traders who disobeyed his orders. As the white traders did not seem keen to abandon a trade that had proved so profitable, Bathoen I was constrained to take tough action before the traffic showed signs of abating. But the use of the white man's drink was thought to be becoming so general as to warrant the Special Commissioner Charles Warren writing to the High Commissioner urging a measure completely prohibiting the supply of liquor to Africans as an absolute necessity for the Protectorate.[23] This duly followed in 1892. Yet the matter was apparently still of sufficient concern as to form part of the agreement between Chamberlain and the "Three Chiefs" in 1895. Consequently a further proclamation making it illegal for an African to be in "unauthorised" possession of liquor was promulgated in 1897.[24]

With the free sale of the white man's drink restricted, missionaries and officials turned their attention to what they considered a new problem. This was the brewing of kgadi. In 1889 Bathoen had banned the importation and sale of European liquor, but not the brewing of bojalwa - the traditional Tswana beverage brewed from malt. In 1892 he also banned the sale or purchase of bojalwa. As a reason for the ban, Bathoen told his people:

> If you need your corn-beer for your own refreshment, it is well; but I refuse to allow the Bangwaketse to make gain and profit by a liquor trade, for that would make some houses regular drinking shops.[25]

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23 P.P., 1884-85, LVII, C. 4588, p.10.

24 Schapera, Tribal Innovators, p.147.

25 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.84-85.

This ban on beer-sales, together with a prohibition of parties and rowdyism at night was repeated in 1910. Firing of guns in Kanye and the galloping of horses through its streets were also forbidden. In addition strict rules governing out-spanning of wagons and the priority on the roads were introduced.[26] These reforms show how Bathoen was concerned to order the way of living of the Bangwaketse so as to rid his people of the worst excesses of a society in the throes of transition from one way of living to another.

Bathoen's reforms also touched the economic life of the Bangwaketse. Here he made laws against the fraudulent sale of diseased animals under the pretext that these had been cured of nteremane or lung-sickness. In an effort to curb usurious practices and to prevent the growth of excessive materialism in Ngwaketse society, Bathoen put an end to the practice of charging passers-by a special fee for watering their cattle at Ngwaketse-owned wells and watering places.[27] Nor was anyone to take the law into his hands by seizing trespassing cattle from another man's field in order to compensate himself for non-payment of debt.[28]

The chief's desire to maintain a firm control on trade in his territory can be seen from his decree of 1898 which provided that traders had to be brought to the chief's kgotla before they could begin trading.[29] In the same year rules were

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26 Schapera, Tribal Innovators, pp.150-151.

27 Ibid., p.99.

28 Ibid., p.47.

29 Ibid., pp.108-109.

promulgated which governed the proper observance of defined arable areas and pasturage,[30] and conditions laid down for compensation in case of damage to crops stipulated that any man who detained trespassing cattle instead of returning them to the owner would himself be liable for any damage to gardens or crops while these were in his care.[31]

The presence of white traders among the Ngwaketse had brought about new problems whereby the Bangwaketse improvidently sold their crop produce to traders at low prices only to have to re-purchase such food at highly inflated prices in seasons of scarcity. Accordingly, in 1898 Bathoen passed a law to control the sale of food to traders and others. Likewise after the depletion of Ngwaketse cattle by Rinderpest, no-one was allowed to slaughter an ox as mogoga, that is as a sacrificial beast for the purification feast held after a married person's death. Bathoen also fixed minimum prices for furs and the sewing for karosses or skin cloaks to traders.[32]

During 1899 the Tswana had to pay hut-tax, and to ease the burden on several categories of his subjects, Bathoen sought to relieve them of the obligation to pay certain dues that would render compliance with the new tax burden more onerous. The Kgalagadi peoples were freed from the obligation of paying certain forms of tribute to their patrons so that they might use their furs, pelts and tanned wares to raise cash for taxes.

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30 Ibid., pp.95, 97, 103, 108.

31 Ibid., p.103.

32 Ibid., pp.104, 111-112.

He abolished the practice of inaugurating the seasonal chores of ploughing, weeding and reaping on the masotla or chief's tribute fields.[33] While this may have been designed to encourage innovation and provide incentive to a healthy degree of initiative and individualistic enterprise, Bathoen did not lose sight of the need to regulate and keep control over certain vital activities. Thus, although he encouraged the sinking of wells and the making of dams, he regulated these so that they could not take place without his permission.[34] In this way adequate care was taken to ensure that the wells were properly spaced in order to prevent over-grazing on the land around them. When it came to the castration of calves at an early age Bathoen I did not make any law about it but merely advised the Bangwaketse of the value of doing so.[35]

In order to ensure planned exploitation of natural resources, certain animals and birds were protected from hunters. In 1892, for instance, Bathoen I prohibited the hunting of the ostrich, presumably to prevent the extinction of that bird whose feathers were still a valuable item of trade.[36] Later, in 1907, when the Administration placed an embargo on the killing at all, "in certain parts", of various species "in danger of extermination", Bathoen I agreed to support the law. This was not merely to show his willingness to cooperate to the British Administration, but also part of a desire to inculcate

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33 Ibid., pp.101-102.

34 Ibid., p.99.

35 Ibid., p.104.

36 Ibid., p.106.

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restraint and prudent use of resources that had driven him in 1898 to prohibit trapping by deadfalls and staked pits and instead, to encourage the use of European metal traps. He also prohibited any trapping at all on roads.[37]

Further, in response to a suggestion of the Administration Bathoen I prohibited the burning of grass until after harvest. This clearly illustrates the varied nature of the motives that actuated Bathoen in launching his many reforms. Thus, while he sometimes followed the official policy laid down by the Administration, some of his reforms stemmed from his feeling of personal responsibility for guiding the destinies of his people and in that manner assist them to make rational responses to new economic challenges that came in the wake of increasing contacts with whites. Some of the social reforms were designed to prevent the growth of a spirit of materialistic opportunism that would breed rapacity and usury, and in the process subvert the basic humanity of Tswana society.

Other reforms of Bathoen I were probably inspired by the Christian missionaries at his capital as well as by the example of Kgama III. Among these reforms were the abolition of rain-making ceremonies. In 1892 Bathoen publicly declared that he would no longer perform or participate in rain-making ceremonies, although he would not prevent those who believed they had to "make rain or perish" from doing so.[38] Bathoen's discontinuation of other rites closely related to rain-making had

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37 Ibid., p.107.

38 Hepburn, Twenty Years in Khamas Country, p.17; Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.184-185.

the same effect as banning them, since the king was the only one who could initiate action in such ceremonies. Where the king remained disinterested, no one could replace him. These rites like go bapula lefatshe - purifying the country of and strengthening it against sorcery; go foka marumo - doctoring the weapons of the army; were discontinued by Bathoen.

Ngwaketse elders state that the banning of initiation ceremonies - bogwera and bojale was due to the influence of Kgama III though it would be unwise to discount the influence of Christian missionaries. Bathoen I was baptised in 1894. The Matshelaphala age set which graduated in 1896 and was led by Bathoen's younger brother Kwenaetsile, accordingly became the last to celebrate with full traditional rites, i.e., to undergo bogwera. Although the youths whose age sets were created afterwards[39] were not supposed to have undergone bogwera, many went off to neighbouring chiefdoms like the Bamalete and Bahurutshe in order to join initiation ceremonies of those peoples that were still being done in the traditional manner. Informants belonging to such age sets as the Matloladibe which graduated in 1921 and the Ma-Isantwa of 1928 described how they and their parents were punished for disobeying the ban on bogwera. Such testimony proves how tenaciously the average Mongwaketse held on to these customs. Well might the missionary Lloyd observe: "Many of these customs were not only of hoary antiquity, but the people were fondly and enthusiastically attached to them".[40]

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39 That is, those age sets beginning with the Ma-Lau of 1901.

40 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.160.

Bathoen I made few changes in local administration. The basic local government structure of Ngwaketse society was the work of his predecessors. During his reign the Bangwaketse did not receive any major or significant groups of immigrants, and there were no great social upheavals that called for a re-settlement of the different elements of Ngwaketse society. Consequently all the wards that Bathoen created were not of incoming peoples, but were the result of a reorganisation of existing Ngwaketse wards.

One of the wards created by Bathoen was Mhuhutso ward founded immediately after the Anglo-Boer war, 1899-1902.[41] Because of his stand of benevolent neutrality and the services that Bathoen had rendered to the British during that war,[42] he was rewarded with some cattle, which he entrusted to two men from the Kalabeng ward. These men were Mogatwane and Koosaletse. With their descendants and some Kgalagadi serfs they went to form the new Mhuhutso ward, some of whose members were located at Kanye, others at Selokolela and still more at Diphathane.

The Kwelagobe ward also came into being during the reign of Bathoen. Before that it was part of the Maeakwena ward founded for his son Bome by Makaba II. In 1909 a dispute involving charges of sorcery caused Ratlhaudi Kwelagobe to secede from the Maeakwena together with his family and servants. Other families now forming part of the Kwelagobe ward were

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41 Schapera, Ethnic Composition, pp.51-52.

42 See below pp.325-326.

either related through marriage or are descended from servants of Bome.[43]

Bathoen also had a new ward created at Khakhea when he took Rathadi Samotse of the Matlalo ward in Kanye and sent him to govern Khakhea. Ranthadi was accompanied only by his brothers and sons, but all the inhabitants of Khakea, who were nearly all Bakgalagadi, became members of this new ward named Ranthadi. Similarly, Radikoro Moletsane was appointed headman at Kokong where a new ward was created for him by Bathoen. With him went his brothers and their sons and together with the Kgalagadi and Rolong-Maebu inhabitants of Kokong, they founded the new ward.

Another ward founded during Bathoen's reign was called the Sodu ward. It was made up of people who had been followers of Kgari Macheng[44] although they were ethnically of Khurutshe stock. Because of alleged ill-treatment they separated from him in 1895 and were allowed by Bathoen to found the Sodu ward. Bathoen also reorganised the Manare ward in Kanye. This was an old ward which had been for Mosima, a son of Chief Moleta, who was a great-grandfather of Bathoen. Branches of the Manare ward were created by both Bathoen and his son Seepapitso II with the result that the ward was (in 1933) spread over three localities: Kanye, Mokgomane and Kokong.[45] It appears that over-crowding was the principal reason for the creation of these

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43 Schapera, Government and Politics, p.179; Idem., Ethnic Composition, p.51.

44 Son of the Bamangwato chief Macheng. In 1882 Kgari settled with his followers at Ngomare in the Ngwaketse country.

45 Schapera, Ethnic Composition, pp.48, 50-51.

sub-divisions of the Manare ward. By 1896 Bathoen had stationed three resident "care-takers" of the Ba-Kgalagadi in the western portion of the Ngwaketse reserve. These "care-takers" later became known as the chief's representatives.

As noted before, Bathoen's succession to the chieftaincy was accomplished smoothly but it did not have the unanimous approval of the Ngwaketse aristocracy. Although he was Gaseitsiwe's eldest son, his mother had been a southerner - a princess of the Batlhware chiefdom. Bathoen was therefore a nephew or setlogolo of the Batlhware. This fact was most unwelcome to the powerful Ngwaketse royal nobles, many of whom were descended from Makabe II, Moleta and Mongala. They desired that a Ngwaketse heir should be the son of a Mongwaketse queen and therefore a setlogolo of the Bangwaketse. It was for that reason that they had applied pressure on Gaseitsiwe to divorce his Motlhware queen Keitebetse and marry Ntebang, daughter of his paternal uncle Mathiba. When Ntebang failed to give birth to a son, Mothwane the daughter of Modietsho was brought in as a seantlo or substitute for Ntebang. She begot a son significantly named Kwenaetsile and Gaotlhotswe.[46] The Ngwaketse

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[46] Kwenaetsile means "the crocodile has come". This name implied that the genuine crocodile (heir) descended from Ngwaketse royal stock on both sides - as opposed to Bathoen whose mother was an alien - had arrived. His second name, Gaotlhotswe, may be loosely translated as "God's purpose cannot be defeated". The explanation given by Ngwaketse elders for Kwenaetsile's second name was that although it appeared Ntebang's failure to beget a son was likely to defeat the objective of divorcing Keitebetse and marrying a Mongwaketse, if God desired to give the Bangwaketse a true heir, nothing could stand in the way. (Evidence of Bangwaketse elders at several

nobles who wished to keep the monarchy weak and unstable saw in the birth of Kwenaetsile an excellent opportunity to oppose Bathoen's succession. They hoped that when the opportunity came they would push forward the candidacy of Kwenaetsile. But Kwenaetsile was still young when his father died in 1889, and Bathoen's succession could not really be stopped. Further, in that year, Bathoen may still have been riding the crest of a wave of popularity arising from his bold stand in opposing Shippard at the Kopong Conference.

Bathoen's ties with the Christian element were both a source of alarm to and a ground for resistance on the part of the traditionalists. Thus, to their unhappiness about his pedigree was added the unpopular direction of policies. Yet open resistance to Bathoen was not an easy matter, for he too had powerful interests ranged on his side. The influence of the Christian missionaries and their supporters was both strong and growing. Bathoen's standing with the British authorities was good, as was his relationship with the Bamangwato, the Bakwena and others. And he was still reasonably popular after the various campaigns to defend the interests of the Bangwaketse and the integrity of the boundaries of the Ngwaketse state conducted during the earlier part of his reign.

Among the problems that Bathoen had to deal with during the earlier part of his reign were boundary disputes. On the north the boundary of the Bangwaketse state with that of the

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interviews, especially the evidence of K.R. Bome and others at a private interview held in Kwelagobe ward 11 March 1974.).

Bakwena had first been fixed during the reign of Gaseitsiwe. After the Bloemhof Arbitration the short-lived British Administration in the Transvaal sent Surveyor-General, T. Melville, to settle the Kwena-Ngwaketse boundary. Assisted by a Colonel Fereira and Surveyor Pache, Melville fixed the boundary in the presence of Sechele and Gaseitsiwe. In 1887 that line was redefined by A. Sedgwick Woolley.[47]

Soon after Bathoen's succession trouble flared up on the eastern boundary of the Bangwaketse. This was over a boundary dispute between the Bahurutshe-Gopane and the Bangwaketse. The Bahurutshe-Gopane, who were Transvaal people, had been granted permission by Gaseitsiwe to graze their cattle on the eastern strip of the Ngwaketse country which adjoined their settlement across the Transvaal-Ngwaketse boundary. But when in 1890 they began embarking on more permanent forms of occupation, such as ploughing and constructing dwellings, and particularly when they evicted some Bangwaketse and damaged their crops, Bathoen appealed to the British Administration.[48]

The newly appointed Assistant Commissioner for the Southern Protectorate, W.H. Surmon, who took up that office in 1890, conducted an enquiry, the validity of which the Bahurutshe-Gopane refused to recognise.[49] Surmon reported that there was evidence that certain officers of the Transvaal government were

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47 P.P., 1887, LIX, C. 5070, p.83. For a description of that boundary line, see A. Sedgwick Woolley to the Administrator, British Bechuanaland,

48 B.N.A. H.C. 142/2, Bathoen to Surmon, 14 November 1890.

49 C.O. 417/43, Loch to Knutsford, telegram of 9 June 1890; Sillery, Founding A Protectorate, p.50.

instigating and encouraging the Bahurutshe-Gopane in their violation of border and their illegal occupation of Ngwaketse country. The British authorities afterwards presented the Bahurutshe-Gopane with an ultimatum to leave Ngwaketse country, and Bathoen was given official permission to evict them at the expiry of the ultimatum. Bathoen accordingly moved to Tirwane with a force of 500 armed Bangwaketse, one hundred of whom were mounted. He was supported by a detachment of police under Surmon. When Bathoen's armed force and the police arrived at Tirwane they found that the Bahurutshe-Gopane had left for the Transvaal. A subsequent full-scale investigation conducted by Surmon in April 1891 revealed that the Bahurutshe-Gopane had no valid claim to the territory in question, which was declared to be unquestionably Ngwaketse country.[50] After that incident Bathoen pressed that the Bahurutshe-Gopane at Pileng village in Lobatse should move to Kanye.

No sooner had the Bahurutshe land dispute ended than fresh trouble blew up over the southern boundary of the Bangwaketse - that is, their boundary with the Barolong-Tshidi. The Bangwaketse claimed the boundaries defined under the Keate Award of 1871, and accordingly disputed the claim of the Barolong-Tshidi to land north of the Molopo. For their part, the Tshidi-Barolong contended that they had long been in possession of the country north of the Ramatlhabama, where they had cattle posts in an area stretching northwards up to Phitshane Photlhokwe and

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50 C.O. 879/33, African No.403, pp.66-73, Loch to Knutsford, 29 December 1890 with enclosures 1-15, pp.107-108. Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.167-168.

westwards beyond Matsheng.[51]

Moffat, who was sent to settle the dispute, decided in favour of the Barolong-Tshidi. Bathoen protested and travelled to Cape Town to put his case in person before the High Commissioner.[52] Bathoen's objection to the Moffat settlement was that it gave away territory around Matsheng that the Bangwaketse regarded as their own. Not only was Bathoen well received by the High Commissioner, but his mission resulted in a new enquiry into the dispute, carried out by a commission comprising Moffat and Surmon. This commission which sat in November 1892 changed the previous decision by excluding the Barolong from the country west of the Phuring Spruit.- that is, the Matsheng district - but awarding them, in the east, land between Ramatlhabama and Kgoro.[53] This award satisfied Bathoen and his people, and it was accordingly the turn of the Barolong to protest.

Bathoen's strenuous efforts to protect the country of the Bangwaketse from encroachments, his armed march upon Gopane's

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51 Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, pp.171-172; Molema, Montshiwa, p.192.

52 When representatives of the two peoples were invited to help putting up beacons along the boundary line drawn up by Moffat and St. Quintin, Bathoen attended in person accompanied by Tsima and other sub-chiefs and headmen, while Montshiwa sent his cousins Lekoko and Silas Molema and his son Besele. On discovering where the line would run, Bathoen and his advisors would have nothing to do with the proceedings and left in protest. (See Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.171; Montshiwa, p.192.)

53 C.O. 879/84; African No. 746, pp.291-292, Ralph Williams to Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, 112 H.C. of 7 October 1903; Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p.172.

Bahurutshe at Tirwane, his protest against boundary surveys conducted by St. Quintin on the basis of the Moffat settlement, and finally his travelling to Cape Town to appeal directly to the High Commissioner - all these moves must have made a most favourable impression on the morafe. These were examples of positive leadership and in some ways helped to cut the ground from under the feet of Bathoen's detractors in Ngwaketse society. Bathoen took great care to ensure that every serious move he took in these boundary crises had been well discussed before, and that his final approach had the approval or backing of both the Khudutamaga or chief's secret council and or the pitso or general assembly of the Bangwaketse. Not only did he take pains to ensure that his actions were approved by most of his people, but he invariably also checked with the representative of the British Administration in order to ensure their support for or goodwill towards his policies.[54]

Both boundary disputes and Bathoen's manner of dealing with them reveal his general strategy in coping with challenges that were confronting him and his people from time to time. This was to ensure harmonious relations with British authorities, even when their decisions went against the wishes of himself and his people. It was a strategy that relied on representing his protest against decisions of junior officers at the higher echelons of British Administration, and it accordingly required that he sometimes concede a point or two if he thought he could

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54 For Bathoen's cautious attitude and full consultations with both the Assistant Commissioner and his councillors on the occasion of the Bahurutshe-Gopane trespass at Tirwane, see C.O. 879/33, African No. 403, pp.107-108.

thereby gain more advantages for himself and his people. For example, while Sechele's opposition to the railway and telegraph appeared to British agents (because of the manner in which it was presented) to be an example of obtuseness and deliberate obstruction, Bathoen's opposition to the same projects was softened by his indication that he was not really objecting to the telegraph and railway lines per se, but that his main problem was that he had already granted a concession for the same services to other people.[55] Although in the end Loch had to overrule Bathoen's objection just as he did that of Sechele, the impression created on Loch and Shippard of Bathoen's general disposition was a favourable one.

For a man who was aware of his own military incapacity to take on the British there would have been little or no sense in pursuing a gratuitously bellicose policy. To have done so with the danger of an internal rebellion always possible, would have been foolish. Besides, the intriguing of Transvaal Boers who used Gopane's Bahurutshe as a bait, clearly showed that Tswana societies were not so safely out of the bush as to dispense lightly with British goodwill or protection. Bathoen accordingly cultivated British authorities as much as he could, with a view to exploiting his good standing with them to maximum advantage. In the years 1890 to 1892 that policy yielded good dividends and can therefore be said to have been eminently successful.

It is thus possible to see Bathoen's reforms, most of

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55 C.O. 417/42, Shippard to Loch, telegram of May 1890, enclosed in Knutsford, 335 of May 1890.

which were enunciated in 1892, as having been the product of a growing confidence that stemmed from maturing relations with both the missionaries and the British, as well as mounting support within the morafe. Bathoen's visit, with Sebele, to the High Commissioner Loch in Cape Town in June 1892 must have tremendously boosted his confidence as well as influencing his ideas about the modernisation of the Ngwaketse state. In the meantime, the work of converting the Bangwaketse to Christianity had been growing apace during the early years of Bathoen's reign. Between 1887 and 1895 the membership of the Kanye church had leapt from about one hundred to a thousand. A new church building was erected at a cost of £2,000 subscribed by the Bangwaketse, and in the construction of which mephato such as the Ma-Yakapula and Ma-Tshelaphala played a key role. Bathoen himself was baptised in 1894.[56]

It seems likely that the last mophato to graduate after the full traditional rites of bogwera did so in 1894 - the year during which Bathoen was baptised, and that the rites of bogwera and bojale were banned immediately thereafter. The Ma-Lau and Ma-Lwelanaga regiments created in 1901 and 1909 respectively, were graduated without officially undergoing bogwera, or doing so in the Ngwaketse country. Members of these and of later regiments often joined bogwera ceremonies of neighbouring Tswana groups where such rites had not been banned.[57]

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[56] The only surviving member of the Ma-Tshelaphala age set Montshosi Basugi of the Motebejana ward testified that his mophato moulded bricks below the hill, and standing in single file transported the bricks to the site where the church stands on Kanye hill.

[57] Evidence of elders K. Morekisi and Montshosi Basugi, at

As we have already noted, it was Gaseitsiwé who granted the first concessions to white men to prospect for and mine minerals in Ngwaketse country. The principal concessionaires were the Kanye Exploration Company. In 1890 Bathoen granted a concession to the same company for prospecting in country occupied by the Bamalete. It was concessions like this one and others granted by Tswana chiefs that moved Loch to appoint a commission of inquiry to report upon the various kinds of concessions granted by them. The Commission appointed in 1893 comprised W.H. Surmon (Chairman), J. Vintcent, Crown Prosecutor and Major F.W. Panzera. It sat at Gaborone, Mahikeng and Kudumane, and after examining forty-five concessions it invalidated most of these recognising no more than seven.[58]

When early in July 1895 Bathoen I learned of the planned transfer of the Protectorate to the British South Africa Company, he lost no time in making his protest on behalf of the Bangwaketse. He travelled twice from Kanye to Gaborone and informed Surmon of what he had learnt in the press. He demanded official confirmation or denial. He also gave notice of the intention of the Bangwaketse to send a written petition against being placed under a company stating that they wished to remain under Her Majesty's Government.[59] As he had done on two occasions before, Bathoen also sought leave to go to Cape Town

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private interview held at home of Bitsang Basugi, Motebejana ward, 1 March 1974; Schapera, Tribal Innovators, p.210.

58 C.O. 417/101A, Loch to Ripon, 422 of 7 October 1893.

59 B.N.A., H.C. 196/1, Private Secretary, Vryburg to High Commissioner, Cape Town, telegram No. 13 89, 11 July 1895.

about the matter. As could be expected, the High Commissioner's reply was far from re-assuring.[60] He telegraphed that Bathoen be informed that whilst it was the policy of Her Majesty's Government ultimately to transfer the administration of the Protectorate to the B.S.A. Company, he had no reason to believe that the transfer was likely to take place at an early date. Bathoen therefore sent a petition dated 31 July 1895 to the "Chief Secretary of the QUEEN'S GOVERNMENT".[61]

In addition to his protest at the office of the Assistant Commissioner at Gaborone, and the petition despatched to the Queen, Bathoen joined Sebele and Kgama III on a visit to England to present in person their objection to the planned transfer. From Kanye Bathoen was accompanied by two headmen, Tsima and David Lobeko.[62] One of Bathoen's uncles and sub-chiefs, Makaba became Acting Chief while Bathoen was away in England.[63] Bathoen and his brother chiefs protested to the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain (who had replaced Lord Ripon when

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60 B.N.A., H.C. 196/1, High Commissioner, Sir H. Robinson, to Private Secretary Vryburg: telegram, 11 July, 1895.

61 C.O. 417/142, Bathoen to Chief Secretary of the Queen's Government, 31 July 1895, enclosed in Robinson to Chamberlain, 417 of 7 August 1895.

62 Parson states that Bathoen was accompanied by "Leonsing (Bathoen's brother-in-law), Tshima (a sub-chief)". (Three Botswana Chiefs, p.65.) There is a strong likelihood that this information is wrong. Bathoen's wife was Gagoangwe, the daughter of the Kwena king Sechele. It is inconceivable that Bathoen would have had a prince of the Bakwena kingdom in his retinue. If the relationship referred to by Parsons is to an earlier marriage, I am neither able to confirm nor refute it. At any rate, the name "Leonsing" as it stands, is not a Tswana name. On the other hand, David Lobeko was a prominent headman and councillor of both Gaseitsiwe and Bathoen.

63 C.O. 417/144, Makaba to Surmon, 11 October 1895, enclosed in Robinson to Chamberlain, 643 of 17 November 1895.

Rosebery's Government made way for one under Lord Salisbury) against the proposed handover and asked to remain under Her Majesty's Government. Chamberlain's initial reaction was not very encouraging to the three chiefs as he then tended to hold firm to the advice of British officers in South Africa, whose relationship to Rhodes and the B.S.A. Company was such that they could hardly be expected fairly to carry out their duties as agents of the protecting government.[64]

Leaning on Robinson's advice, Chamberlain confirmed that it was the ultimate intention of the British Government to hand-over the Protectorate to the Company, but he stated that no time had been fixed for the transfer. He claimed that his hands were tied by his predecessor's commitment to that policy, but promised Bathoen and his brother chiefs every consideration of their wishes about the conditions of transfer. On Chamberlain's return from a holiday abroad he found that the Chiefs had not altered their position.[65] They had reiterated their decision to remain under the Queen, thus rejecting the thesis that there was no difference between being under the rule of the Company and that of Her Majesty's Government. They asked

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64 Both the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson and the Deputy Commissioner for "Bechuanaland" Sidney Shippard were henchmen of Rhodes and had financial links with the B.S.A. Company. Francis Newton, the private secretary of Robinson who upon Shippard's retirement was appointed Resident Commissioner of the Bechuanaland Protectorate (November 1895) was equally committed to Rhodes. (See Flint, Cecil Rhodes, pp.100-01; J.S. Galbraith, Crown and Charter: The Early Years of the British South Africa Company, (Los Angeles, 1975), pp.67-68; J. van der Poel, The Jameson Raid, (London, 1951), pp.23-24, 33.

65 P.P. 1896, LIX, C. 7962, p.
Parsons, Three Botswana Chiefs, pp.78 et seq.

that the boundaries of their areas be clearly defined, after reserves for their respective chiefdoms had been clearly demarcated. In return, the chiefs promised that their people would pay hut-tax.

Before his departure on leave, Chamberlain had advised the chiefs to negotiate for a good settlement with the representatives of the Company while they were in England, and that if negotiations failed to give satisfaction, the Colonial Secretary would then intervene.[66] While in England Bathoen and his fellow chiefs were engaged in pitting their wits against those of the permanent staff of the Colonial Office, Rhodes and his henchmen in South Africa were desperately working behind the scenes to undo their work as well as to undermine the united stand of the Tswana chiefs which was developing in the course of their opposition to the proposed transfer. With the collaboration of Robinson and the active assistance of Shippard,[67] agents of the B.S.A. Company were negotiating with the Barolong chief Montshiwa and the Bamalete chief Ikaneng to secure the transfer of their territories in Botswana to the Company's administration.[68]

Ikaneng, who was keen to receive official recognition as

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66 See letter of Colonial Office to the Three Chiefs signed by R.H. Meade and dated 7 October 1895 in P.P. 1896, LIX, C. 7962, p.17.

67 B.N.A. H.C. 196/1, Graham Bower to C.J. Rhodes, 26 September, 1895.

68 C.O. 417/143, Robinson to Chamberlain, Telegram, 9 September, 1895; Robinson to Shippard, B.B. 214 of 14 September 1895, enclosed in Robinson to Chamberlain, 518 of 14 September 1895.

an independent chief, readily agreed and Shippard duly pronounced him independent of Bathoen both on grounds of "conquest and prescription". At the same time, representatives of the Company approached Bathoen in England asking him to agree to the transfer of the Bamalete district to Company rule. Bathoen wisely questioned the logic of separating the question of the territory occupied by the Bamalete from the larger issue. What Rhodes and Robinson were really doing was pursuing a policy of "divide and rule". Among other things, their aim was to separate Ikaneng and Montshiwa from the solid stand taken by Bathoen, Kgama and Sebele. Thus, early in October Robinson was able to report that "Ikaning and Montsioa are willing to acquiesce" in the transfer and to recommend that Chamberlain transfer to the B.S.A. Company the territories ceded by Bathoen and Sebele to Sir Charles Warren in 1885.[69]

Chamberlain's second meeting with the chiefs held early in November 1895 was far more productive of the kind of results that the chiefs had expected. Like ex-High Commissioner Loch,[70]

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69 B.N.A. H.C. 196/1, Governor to Secretary of State, 5 October 1895.

70 Sir Henry Brougham (later Lord) Loch (1827-1900) became Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa in 1890. Unlike his predecessor Sir Hercules Robinson, whose close ties with Rhodes and the B.S.A. Company virtually made him an instrument in the hands of Rhodes, Loch saw himself as an agent of the imperial government in South Africa. Like Rhodes and Robinson, Loch desired British supremacy in Southern Africa and was even prepared to use force if necessary in order to realise that objective; but he was not prepared to allow a private company to assume the powers and obligations of the imperial government. He therefore decided to keep a close watch on the activities of the B.S.A. Company and to control its activities. Whereas Rhodes whose objectives Robinson was ready to facilitate wanted to eliminate the .

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Chamberlain had become very uneasy about handing over to a private company responsibilities that ought more appropriately to be exercised by the imperial government.[71] Consequently he now accepted that it was not necessary to transfer the entire Protectorate to the Company as long as the chiefs were prepared to release a strip of land on the eastern portion of their territories for the construction of the proposed railway line. As the Chiefs requested, the British Government accepted that they would preserve African lands in properly demarcated reserves, where the chiefs and their people would remain directly under the Queen's protection. It was also agreed that the chiefs would rule their own people as they were currently doing. A government officer would be located in the area of each chief to look into cases concerning white people or Africans belonging to different ethnic groups. Also the British officer would hear appeals from the court of the chief. The subjects of Bathoen, Kgama and Sebele were to pay hut-tax but these chiefs were to be responsible for collecting it. No

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"imperial factor" from South African politics Loch believed in firm and active control by officers of Her Majesty's government. In order to ensure that he would have a pliable High Commissioner before embarking on his attack on the Transvaal, Rhodes complained that he could not work with Loch and asked for Robinson's replacement of Loch, although Robinson was over seventy years of age, in ill-health and had earlier been removed from the same office because of his subservience to Rhodes. (See Flint, Cecil Rhodes, pp.177-178, 180-183, passim; Galbraith, Crown and Charter, pp.132-133; Van der Poel, Jameson Raid, pp.22-24; J. Butler, The Liberal Party and the Jameson Raid, (Oxford, 1968), pp.36-39.)

71 The explanation for Chamberlain's unexpected decision is dealt with fully by Sillery. (See Founding A Protectorate, pp.226-234, passim.)

European liquor was to be imported into their territories.[72]

Without any doubt the three chiefs had achieved a great victory for themselves and their peoples. The triumph was the more resounding because it was scored against Rhodes, who was then at the height of his political power, and whose money enlisted in his cause very prominent and high-placed British officers serving the imperial cause in South Africa. Rhodes' rage at being so ignominiously out-manoeuvred by three "canting" chiefs knew no bounds. To fill his cup of misery to overflowing, the outbreak of the Jameson Raid resulted in the cancellation of that part of Chamberlain's settlement with the chiefs whereby the strip of territory released for railway purposes was to be transferred to Rhodes' company. Thus the territory of the Bamalete and the Barolong already made over to the Company now reverted to the control of the High Commissioner.[73]

As a result of the agreement between Bathoen and his brother chiefs on the one hand, and Colonial Secretary Chamberlain on the other, the British Government sent out Lieutenant-Colonel H. Goold-Adams in 1896 to draw up the boundaries of the reserves. He was instructed as far as possible to operate on the principle of current occupation. For the Bangwaketse, the boundary settlement he made on the eastern portion presented no problems. It was acceptable to Bathoen and his people. But it became necessary for Goold-Adams to overrule the extravagant

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72 P.P., 1896, LIX, C. 7962, pp.12-20, passim; Fairfield to Rev. W.C. Willoughby, 7 November 1895; C.O. 879/44, African No. 498, pp.123 et seq.

73 C.O. 417/163, Robinson to Chamberlain, 47 of 4 February 1896.

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claims of the Bamalete, who were claiming that their country extended up to Ntlhantlhe hill, an area at which Goold-Adams actually found Ngwaketse cattle-posts.[74]

On Bathoen's southern and western boundaries the situation was vastly different. In the south Goold-Adams made a boundary settlement that distinctly favoured the Barolong at the expense of the Bangwaketse. This he did by setting aside the Surmon-Moffat award of 1892, and thereby excluded the Bangwaketse from frontage on the one important water course in the entire region - namely the Molopo River. Similarly on the western boundary Goold-Adams cut off Ngwaketse cattle-posts at Khakhea, Sekgoma and Kokong from the rest of the Ngwaketse territory, only granting rights to the Bangwaketse at those pans.[75] This Goold-Adams did because he believed those water pans were not occupied by Ngwaketse people but by Bakgalagadi, although he admitted he found Ngwaketse cattle there.[76]

Goold-Adams did admit that in so delimiting the western border of the Bangwaketse he took it upon himself "to go outside the instructions given me by Mr. Chamberlain". He did so by ignoring the accepted fact that Bathoen's western most cattle-post was Kokong. What was even more serious, Goold-Adams further took it upon himself to determine who was truly Ngwa-

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74 B.N.A. R.C. 2/15, Goold-Adams to Imperial Secretary, 17 January 1896, enclosed in Robinson to Newton, B.P. 24 of 28 February 1896.

75 L.M.S., Box 52, Folder 2, Jacket A, Lloyd to Thompson, 23 May 1899.

76 B.N.A. R.C. 2/19, Goold-Adams to Bathoen, 11 March 1896, enclosed in Goold-Adams to Imperial Secretary, 26 March 1896; C.O. 879/47, African No.517, pp.122, 132-137.

ketse and who was not. By attempting to make that judgement without proper consultation, his award, which was based on that erroneous judgement, was as ridiculous as it was unworkable. The explanation given in Goold-Adam's letters betrays absolute ighorance of the fundamental principles of the Tswana ward system, as well as the operation of the clientage system based on kgamelo cattle.[77]

The boundary drawn up by Goold-Adams on the west cut forty miles off Ngwaketse country or an area of about 1,600 square miles. Coming as it did after his reversal of the 1892 award, which granted the Bangwaketse access to the Molopo, Bathoen's cri de coeur was quite understandable. His protests were backed by representations from L.M.S. missionaries James Good and Edwin Lloyd at Kanye,[78] and by others in London. Although the Goold-Adams award, especially that part of it dealing with the western boundary of the Bangwaketse, was clearly indefensible, the matter lingered on inconclusively until after the Rinderpest epidemic had swept through the country in 1896. The real reasons for the controversy, or the real motive for Goold-Adams' self-confessed deviation from his instructions can be found in correspondence between the Resident Commissioner Newton and the Office of the High Commissioner in Cape Town. It had to do with what Newton regarded as the unsatisfactory nature of the London settlement of 1895 between the Colonial

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77 For the discussion on how Bathoen I created new Ngwaketse wards at Kokong and Khakhea, see above pp.296.

78 C.O. 879/47, African No. 517, pp.119-120, Rev. Edwin Lloyd to Colonial Office, 7 April 1897.

Secretary and the three chiefs. By not pressing the chiefs to give up more land to the British Government other than the strip required for railway concessions, it was argued, no provision had been made for unforeseen contingencies. No adequate crown lands had been reserved for construction of government buildings as well as for occupation by Europeans. Newton was of the opinion, and the High Commissioner's office appears to have been in agreement, that the final settlement of the boundaries ought to await the determination of lands that would be designated as crown territory.

Like other Batswana and many other peoples of Southern Africa the Bangwaketse were seriously afflicted by the terrible scourge that visited southern African societies towards the turn of the nineteenth century. This was the Rinderpest epidemic, known to the Bangwaketse as bolawana, bololwana or simply as "Ronopesi". Spreading from the vicinity of Somalia where it erupted around 1889, the epidemic was, by 1890, ravaging Uganda,[79] and by the second half of that year it was reported to be in Zambia.[80] For awhile the Zambezi appears to have been an effective barrier that seemed to contain the rapid spread of the disease, for it does not appear to have made its appearance in Rhodesia until the beginning of 1896. From there it, however, spread like wild fire, its dissemination being

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79 J. Middleton, "Colonial Rule Among the Lugbara", in V.W. Turner, ed., Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960 (Cambridge, 1971), p.13.

80 C. Van Onselen, "Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896-97", The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries, (University of London, I.C.S. 1973), NI, p.66.

facilitated by the ox-wagon traffic plying between Rhodesia and Botswana. By March 1896 it was reported in Palapye and in a few weeks time it had reached Ngwaketse country:

> Within a period of 25 days [of the first reported occurrence in Rhodesia], therefore, rinderpest had travelled southwards at a rate of 20 miles a day, and had reached a point 16 miles north of the Colonial Border on the 31st March.[81]

By the middle of June, missionaries of the L.M.S. stationed among the Tswana were reporting the disastrous effects of the epidemic among their peoples.

Botswana had, according to Van Onselen, the misfortune to be the first area through which Rinderpest spread rapidly and in a most virulent form. It destroyed "not less than 90 per cent - at a low estimate - of the enormous herds of cattle...", and left in its wake "hundreds of wagons stranded along the roads". Towards the end of June, the extent of the disaster had reached enormous proportions. At the beginning of April Roger Price and Alfred Wookey were describing the instantaneous visitation of hunger and famine as Rinderpest wiped out nearly all the cattle of the Tswana in the northern Protectorate.[82] Wookey thought that of every hundred cattle, two or three were managing to survive.[83]

From Kanye Lloyd reported how essential missionary construction projects were held up by the outbreak of the epidemic

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81 Ibid., p.67.

82 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 1, Jacket C, Wookey to Thompson, 1 April 1896; Box 53, Folder 1, Jacket D, Price to Thompson, 12 April 1896.

83 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 2, Jacket C., Wookey to Thompson, 20 June 1896.

among the Bangwaketse, and the resultant expenditure, which played havoc with estimates made before the outbreak. There were no oxen to pull wagons and the cost of everything shot up because of expenses of transportation. Of the Kanye mission cattle he wrote:

> Rinderpest first appeared among our cattle on May 4th & by middle of June all were dead, save two. Even those that are "salted" of Rinderpest, soon succumb to the old "Lungziekte".[84]

The suffering brought by this disastrous cattle disease was aggravated by the outbreak of a very serious drought in 1896.

While the Tswana were able to do their best in a very bad situation, while they confronted this scourge with considerable calmness and fortitude, it is indeed surprising to find writers who maintain that the effects of these disasters were "not as great as might have been expected".[85] The drying and salting of dying cattle or of those that were being shot in order to contain the epidemic was not a free option which the Tswana could exercise if they felt like it. Nor was that a guarantee against starvation or death resulting from the consumption of diseased meat. It is true that Rinderpest did not make cannibals of the Bangwaketse or other Tswana peoples, but it cannot be doubted that serious consequences followed its eruption.

> Carcasses of the dead beasts dotted the countryside and polluted the water supply of the human population. By late November two thousand Ngwaketse had

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84 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 3, Jacket B., Lloyd to Thompson, 15 September 1896. "Lungziekte" is a Dutch word for lung-sickness. The Tswana called it Nteremane.

85 Sillery, Botswana, p.115.

> perished from sickness brought about by deficiencies in their diet and the bad water they were forced to drink and aggravated by the general condition of hunger in the region.[86]

The effect was the same among the Bakwena and the Bamangwato.[87] Missionaries scheduled to travel to different parts in the country were prevented from doing so, and others who had already started out on journeys found themselves stranded along the way with all their oxen dead. Rinderpest not only killed cattle but it also killed sheep, goats and game.[88] Wookey, attempting to go to Barkly, was stranded at Kanye, from where he reported to Thompson that the Rinderpest had

> ... swept all through the Protectorate down to the Colonial border, and is now raging at the cattle posts away West in the Khalahadi. The trek oxen in the country have been all swept off by the thousands and most of the other cattle.[89]

In June 1896 Lloyd repeated his report of the suffering among the Bangwaketse caused by the Rinderpest, which he claimed had destroyed all the cattle belonging to the missionaries making movement to the out-stations extremely difficult. In a sentence that was clearly written to answer the B.D.C. resolution adopted at a recent meeting, Lloyd stated there were no mules in Kanye, nor had been for years, "tho our bretheren seem to think they

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86 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 3, Jacket C, Lloyd to Thompson, 24 November 1896.

87 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 1, Jacket D, Price to Thompson, 12 April 1896.

88 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 2, Jacket A, Minutes of the Bechuanaland District Committee of the L.M.S., Barkly 18 May 1896.

89 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 2, Jacket C, Wookey to Thompson, 20 June 1896.

are very plentiful".[90]

Efforts by the Bangwaketse to lessen the disastrous effects of Rinderpest were strengthened by food relief made available by the London Missionary Society. At Kanye, Lloyd became daily engaged in distributing food supplies among the poor. This helped somewhat to keep down the numbers of the dying. Towards the end of November Lloyd acknowledged monetary contributions towards the relief of the starving Ngwaketse: £100 from the L.M.S. Foreign Secretary and £5 from an anonymous doner at Germiston.

These monetary donations enabled Lloyd to purchase 40 muids of maize for consumption and 10 muids of sorghum for seed,[91] although Lloyd added that he feared many of the poor people had been obliged to eat all their seed because of the scarcity of food. Consequently Lloyd appealed, through Secretary Thompson, for more help from such groups as the Duke of Westminster's Committee.

> as between now & February, our people will be in sore straits for food. The really severe starvation has only just begun, since their stock of dried Rinderpest meat (biltong) has been exhausted. The Government has been dilatory in the matter of relief, for altho' they had bought grain for them, it was stocked at Mafikeng & Gaborones, too far away to be of any use, in a country without means of transport.[92]

When maize from Government sources did reach Kanye late in

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90 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 2, Jacket B, Lloyd to Thompson, 15 June 1896.

91 A muid is a Dutch unit of capacity used in South Africa. It is equal to three bushels.

92 L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 3, Jacket C, Lloyd to Thompson, 24 November 1896.

November it was being sold a price too high for the poor.[93] Thus the missionaries appeared to be doing far more work than officials and seemed more deeply committed than them to the task of famine relief consequent upon the outbreak of Rinderpest.

Eventually food relief was sent for the benefit of the Batswana by the Imperial Government. Aid from this source, however, has been thought by some to have been given with an ulterior motive - namely, retention of the goodwill of the Tswana, as well as a need to keep open the "Great North Road" towards the rebellious Company controlled territory of Matabeleland.[94] Chamberlain did urge, largely on the recommendations of southern African based imperial officers, that the Tswana be encouraged to go out to work in the mines of South Africa to reimburse the Government.[95]

Further, one gets the impression that there is a decidedly tendentious ring in the correspondence of imperial officers who formed part of the Protectorate administration: and one accordingly finds it difficult to resist the conclusion that they perceived a brighter prospect for the labour market in South Africa. They could have felt that such natural disasters as Rinderpest and famine would ultimately achieve for their Administration in Botswana, what Rhodes' Glen Grey Act was

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93 Ibid.

94 L.W. Truschel, Accommodation Under Imperial Rule: The Tswana of the Bechuanaland Protectorate (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Northwestern University, 1970), pp.158-159.

95 C.O. 417/165, Fairfield to Milner, minute of 30 April 1896 on Robinson to Chamberlain, telegram, 2 of 16 April 1896.

designed to bring about in the African districts of the Transkei and Ciskei. It is therefore not surprising that at a time when the suffering of the Tswana was being clearly attested by those who lived among them,[96] imperial officers with a background of close relationship to the B.S.A. Company and to Rhodes should declare that there was no hardship in Botswana, and state that if there were any Tswana who were starving they should go out and work on railway construction.[97] By denying the existence of any hardship among the Tswana, Newton was, of course, contradicting the reports of such officers as Surmon and Ashburnham as well as of the missionaries Good, Lloyd, Price, Wookey and Ashton.

As the missionary Lloyd had predicted,[98] the year 1897 turned out to be a particularly bad one for famine. Consequently in the first third of the year missionaries at Kanye were regretting that no more aid for their starving people was forthcoming from the Directors of the L.M.S. "as we have without doubt very severe distress before us".[99] Earlier it had been reported from Kanye that the half-grown crops had been devoured by

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96 Reports of Assistant Commissioners W.H. Surmon and J.A. Ashburham in Annual Reports for 1896-7, p.4; L.M.S., Box 53, Folder 2, Jacket B, Lloyd to Thompson, 15 June 1896; Box 53, Folder 3, Jacket B, Lloyd to Thompson, 15 September 1896.

97 C.O. 879/47, African No. 517, p.201, Resident Commissioner to Acting High Commissioner, 79 HC of 13 July 1896, enclosed in Lieutenant-General Goodenough to Chamberlain.

98 See above p.318.

99 L.M.S., Box 54, Folder 1, Jacket C, Lloyd to Geo. Cousins, 13 April 1897.

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locusts and with no cattle, many Bangwaketse perished daily.[100]

So serious had been the effect of the Rinderpest on the Bangwaketse, that when the Langeberg rebellion broke out among the southern Tswana in 1897,[101] the British Administration became anxious to know the attitude of chiefs in Botswana to the rebellion. In the same way that the Rinderpest formed part of the political backdrop to the 1896-97 revolt in Rhodesia, it resulted in an armed uprising of Batlhaping clans under Chief Galeshewe, grandson of Mothibi, against the Cape Government. Among the Batlhaping, however, the Rinderpest provided the spark that led to the conflagration. The main reason for their discontent was the annexation of "British Bechuanaland" to the Cape Colony in 1895. Dynastic squabbles complicated the situation. Thus when Batlhaping cattle were shot by Cape officers to prevent the southward spread of Rinderpest, the Batlhaping rebelled, took refuge in the mountain range known as the Langeberg and there resisted a government force of over 2,000 men.

Knowing the distress of Bathoen and his people caused by Rinderpest and drought, and aware that Bathoen was still sullen over the Goold-Adams boundary award in the west, they became suspicious when he failed to respond to a request that Protectorate chiefs assist the Administration by capturing the rebel chief Galeshewe if he fled to their countries.[102] This suspi-

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100 L.M.S. Reports, Africa South, Box 2, Good's report for Kanye, 21 February 1897.

101 H. Saker and J. Aldridge, "The Origins of the Langeberg Rebellion", J.A.H., XII, 2, 1971, pp.299-317; P.P., 1898, LX, C. 8797.

102 C.O. 417/211, Surmon to Newton, 7 August 1897, enclosed in

cion of Bathoen's intentions was reinforced by rumours that he had become extremely disenchanted with both the Administration and all whites generally, and was accordingly preparing to join hands with the Batlhaping who were then engaged in the "Langeberg rebellion".[103] An investigation by Surmon cleared Bathoen of any suspicion,[104] and he also assisted by explaining his delay and promising to cooperate with the British should Galeshewe flee to his country.[105]

In September 1897 Lloyd sent to London a detailed account of the manner in which the Bechuanaland Relief Fund had been disbursed. He reported that 868 persons had been assisted.[106] That, he correctly argued, showed that missionary help was clearly useful but was rather limited. The Imperial Government pledged, through the Colonial Office, to supply maize in three consignments of 10,000 bags each,[107] but as Lloyd had pointed out, although government maize was later sold at the almost give-away price of ten shillings a muid, the Bangwaketse were too poor to be able to afford the cost..

Milner to Chamberlain, 713 of 23 August 1897.

103 C.O. 417/211, Milner to Newton, Telegram of 31 July 1897, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, 667 of 10 August 1897.

104 C.O. 417/211, Surmon to Newton, 20 August 1897, enclosed in Dawkins to Under-Secretary of State for Colonies, 755 of 4 September 1897.

105 C.O. 417/211, Bathoen to Surmon, 12 August 1897, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, 713 of 28 August 1897.

106 L.M.S., Box 54, Folder 2, Jacket B, Lloyd to Geo. Cousins, 17 September 1897.

107 P.P. 1896, LIX, (C. 8141), p.59.

Many Bangwaketse men were accordingly compelled to proceed to centres such as the mines, railway construction works and other places of employment in order to earn money to pay for the grain that their families had to purchase in Kanye. Poverty and starvation rendered the Bangwaketse prone to all manner of diseases. In 1898 it was reported that the incidence of malaria reached unprecedent levels in a period of thirty-five years, while crop failures continued unabated.[108] Good reported that late in 1898 the missionaries at Kanye were still engaged in the exercise of daily feeding 500 people, adding: "I can assure you they need it, many of them are nearly skeletons".[109] Even though good rains had fallen in April these had come too late for the people to benefit that year.

In the following year the British Administration imposed the hut-tax that Bathoen and his brother had in 1895 agreed to pay. A sum of ten shillings per annum was to be paid for each hut. The chiefs were required to collect the tax and were to be induced to do so by giving them ten per cent as commission.[110] While the Administration had every justification for imposing the hut-tax, the timing seemed unfortunate. It was on that ground that Bathoen protested the tax introduction, as his

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108 C.O. 417/239, Surmon to Goold-Adams, minute of 22 June 1898, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, 382 of 2 July 1898.

109 L.M.S., Box 55, Folder 2, Jacket B, Good to Thompson, 19 September 1898. Lloyd writing two days later stated that 400 lbs. of grain in portions of one lb. to each adult and a half lb. to each child were distributed daily. "The number of people assisted daily are Old Men 10, Old Women 410, Children 81 making a total of 501 fed daily.

110 B.N.A. H.C.128/2, Goold-Adams to Surmon, 11 April 1899, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, No. 31 of 26 April 1899: C.O. 417/257, Ashburnham to Goold-Adams, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, No. 498 of 25 July, 1899.

people had suffered a succession of bad crop failures, and most of his young men were away working to earn money.[111] The validity of Bathoen's plea became evident when disappointingly poor tax collections were made from the Bangwaketse in comparison with the other Tswana peoples in the Protectorate. As their economic situation improved, tax payments of the Bangwaketse improved correspondingly with the result that in the years after 1900 they had the record of the best tax-payers in the southern part of Botswana.[112]

Although Bathoen's concern for the welfare of his people and his vigilance against the diminution of their lands demanded that he should from time to time protest against the activities or decisions of British agents in South Africa, he was, nevertheless, always striving to stand in a good relationship with the Queen's Government and its servants in southern Africa. For a ruler whose conscious and deliberate policy it was to exploit British power and influence for his own benefit and that of his people, Bathoen's policy appears to have been characterised by great wisdom. Thus, after his initial protest at the bad timing for introducing the hut-tax, he subsequently cooperated to the utmost in collecting the tax. Before that, he had in 1897 made a token presentation of a giraffe to Queen Victoria, as evidence of his loyalty. Further, to mark the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, he handed over the L.M.S. church

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111 B.N.A., R.C. 4/11, Surmon to Goold-Adams, 21 April 1899.

112 C.O. 417/257, Goold-Adams to Milner, 58 H.C. of 21 July 1899, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, 498 of 25 July 1899.

building at Kanye to the Society.[113]

The long outstanding settlement of the southern and western boundaries of the Bangwaketse was accomplished in 1899 at a time when Lloyd was already despairing that the matter would ever be satisfactorily concluded. He thought Bathoen's dilatoriness in collating all the necessary information required to present a strong case to Colonial Secretary Chamberlain was responsible for the lack of progress in the final settlement of the boundary question.[114] However, Bathoen's dignified protests were not entirely without avail. Ultimately under Proclamation No. 9 of 1899 the Bangwaketse boundaries were eventually defined in a reasonably satisfactory manner, restoring the lost patrimony on the western frontier, as well as granting frontage on the southern "life line" - the Molopo River.[115]

Because the Tswana were asked to stay neutral during the Anglo-Boer war, Bathoen and his people maintained a benevolent neutrality towards the British. Bathoen kept three regiments on the alert. These were the Matlotlakgang under Maseng Mathiba, the Ma-Yakathatha under Sekgatlanye Bome, and the Ma-Yakapula under Ratlhaudi Kwelagobe. These regiments were detailed to guard the Ngwaketse borders against violation by

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113 Truschel, Accommodation, p.161; L.M.S., Box 54, Folder 2, Jacket C, Good to Cousins, 30 October, 1897.

114 Bathoen's letter to Chamberlain setting out the gist of his complaint was forwarded by Good under cover of letter dated 13 April 1898 (See L.M.S., Box 55, Folder 1, Jacket B; and Box 56, Folder 2, Jacket A, Lloyd to Thompson, 23 May 1899.)

115 C.O. 417/256, Goold-Adams to Milner, 15 March 1899, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, 217 of 11 April 1899.

the Boers.[116] Bathoen, however, not only allowed British troops to march through his territory, but actually permitted Colonel H.C.O. Phumer to use Kanye as a supply depot for a thousand men command on their way to the relief of Mahikeng.[117] According to Plumer the Bangwaketse rendered all assistance required by the British force. In addition many of them took up employment with the military authorities, working mainly as transport riders.[118] Like other Africans in the employ of the military authorities, several must have worked as scouts, spies, guards and in other positions that could not be strictly classified as non-combatant. Consequently, some Bangwaketse profited from the war, for it appears they were able to sell supplies to military authorities at very good rates. But unlike Lenchwe's Bakgatla, the Bangwaketse did not engage the Boers in bloody conflict, as the Boers never violated Ngwaketse boundaries.

After the war many Bangwaketse lodged claims against the British for compensation. The majority of these claims were for cattle losses caused by contagion from diseased oxen in Colonel Plumer's column. Many British soldiers had also helped themselves freely to some of the small stock and poultry owned by the Bangwaketse; as well as removing fencing poles from the stockades of some Bangwaketse in order to provide themselves

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116 Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, p.145.

117 Great Britain, Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, Minutes of Evidence, Volume II, Evidence of Colonel H.C.O. Plumer, 12 March, 1903.

118 Evidence of Bangwaketse elders, Ra-Sebeko ward, interview held August 1973. See also L.D. Ngcongco, Imvo Zabantsundu and Cape "Native" Policy 1884-1902 (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of South Africa, 1974), pp.188-189.

with fire-wood. A commission or board of inquiry was set up to examine the claims, and in 1905 it awarded a lump sum to pay half the value of some claims and three-quarters of others.[119] By the end of the war many Bangwaketse had replaced a considerable number of the cattle they lost during the Rinderpest, and official reports were once more referring to an atmosphere of general prosperity that seemed to be prevailing among the Bangwaketse.

The year 1902 was to witness the eruption of a church dispute among the Bangwaketse, which started as a simple dispute in one congregation but grew to take on the features of a secessionist movement that simultaneously provided a mask for incipient political revolution. The leader and central figure of the church dispute was a Mongwaketse teacher-evangelist of Kanye known as Mothowagae Motlogelwa. A member of the Ma-Isantwa mophato or regiment of which Bathoen was the leader, Mothowagae came from the Kalabeng ward in Kanye which is located on the hill very close to the royal kgotla. Thus, Mothowagae was probably between the age 50 and 55 years when the dispute erupted.

Mothowagae was trained at the Bible School at Kudumane as a teacher-evangelist between 1880 and 1884.[120] At the end of

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119 Truschel, Accommodation, p.163; B.N.A. R.C. 12/13, Ellenberger to Ralph Williams, 13 April 1905.

120 Before that, i.e., from 1874 to 1880 Mothowagae was an assistant teacher under James Good. (See B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/1 Mothowagae and others, "Petition of the King Edward Bangwaketse Free Church", dated 19 October 1903.)

the latter year he was appointed an evangelist at Kanye, a position which it appears combined the duties of assistant to the pastor as well as instructing the youth who attended the local mission school. He is thought to have been a popular teacher-evangelist, a brilliant and in many ways a progressive man, who was also well-versed in Tswana law and custom. He is also said to have been a powerful speaker, an assertive and bold, if not a courageous person. By 1893 Mothowagae had already distinguished himself in church activities, where James Good's easy-going and somewhat lethargic manner of directing affairs provided excellent scope for the rather pushful, ambitious as well as capable evangelist. There is reason to believe that in traditional politics he was influential and that Bathoen relied much on his counsel.[121]

It seems likely that when the younger Edwin Lloyd, Good's son-in-law came to Kanye in 1889, his tighter control over the Kanye church created a great deal of disquiet among the leading church members accustomed to the easy-going manner of James Good.[122] In the same year Lloyd divided the mission school at Kanye into a non-fee paying Tswana-medium school under Mothowagae, and one in which English was taught and where the pupils had to pay six pence a month.[123] Towards the end of February

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121 See L.M.S., Box 50, Folder 1, Jacket B, for Bathoen's consultation with Mothowagae regarding the transfer of Motlhanke to Kooi in the desert.

122 In 1893 Lloyd suspended the stipend of the evangelist Motlhanke Sera of Disaneng on the grounds that Motlhanke absented him for long periods from stations without just cause.

123 Chirenje states that Lloyd's "Fee School" did not teach

1893, Lloyd's fee-paying school had an enrolment of sixty-two pupils but for both the months of January and February he had collected only the sum of sixteen shillings and ninepence in fees. Although Lloyd used two Kuruman-trained monitors at his fee-paying school, it became progressively unpopular with the result that by October 1893 enrolment had dropped below thirty pupils and hardly any of those were paying any fees, while the enrolment at Mothowagae's school continued to climb as many pupils registered there instead of at the "Fee School".[124]

In fairness to Lloyd it ought to be stated that he was not responsible for the unpopular policy of introducing a "Fee School". The originator of that idea was the Reverend R. Wardlaw Thompson, Secretary for Foreign Missions of the L.M.S.[125] It appears very likely that it was the burden of fees that led to the decline of Lloyd's and the growth of Mothowagae's school. But given Mothowagae's own charismatic qualities there is no reason to suppose that his popularity as a teacher could not result in his "Free School" drawing nearly all the pupils from the rival school. To many people in Kanye, the setback experienced by the new "Fee School" project was probably an example of Mothowagae's triumph over Lloyd. What is more, Mothowagae

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English. (The Northern Tswana, p.209) In a letter to Thompson dated 21 February 1893, Lloyd described his school as an English teaching School. (L.M.S., Box 50, Folder 1, Jacket B)

124 L.M.S., Box 50, Folder 2, Jacket D, Lloyd to Thompson, 21 December 1893.

125 L.M.S., Box 50, Folder 1, Jacket B, Lloyd to Thompson, 21 February 1893. At Moshupa John Kesieman reported that there were no arrears at the one school which was also a "Fee School".

himself, who had by 1900 come to look upon himself as standing on a par with the youthful Lloyd,[126] the failure of the English school must have been a personal victory.

Lloyd's strict enforcement of a resolution of the Bechuanaland District Committee of the L.M.S. banning the consumption of kgadi by church members, as well as the doubling of church dues contributed a great deal to the unhappiness of many Kanye church members with his strict and autocratic control over the congregation.[127] Even before the war, plans were made to appoint a young Lovedale trained teacher to take over the mission school at Kanye. Bathoen, who favoured the idea, pledged one half of the salary of the new teacher while the L.M.S. were expected to raise the other half.[128] The young man in question was Kgosikobo Chelengane, whose return to Kanye from Lovedale was considerably delayed by the Anglo-Boer war then raging.[129] As soon as Kgosikobo Chelenyane arrived in Kanye he was placed in charge of the mission school, Mothowagae having been transferred in 1901 to the small out-station of Lehututu in the Kgalagadi desert.[130]

Indications are that Mothowagae had been among the out-

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126 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/1, Petition of King Edward Bangwaketse Church.

127 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.20; L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 1, Kanye L.M.S. Congregation to Directors of L.M.S. London, 16 December 1902.

128 L.M.S., Box 56, Folder 2, Jacket A, Lloyd to Thompson, 23 May 1899.

129 L.M.S., Box 59, Folder 1, Lloyd to Thompson, 18 January, 1901.

130 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.20.

spoken critics of Lloyd's iron-handed control of the Kanye church. It accordingly seems difficult not to conclude that the decision of the Bechuanaland District Committee to transfer him to Lehututu was not inspired or prompted by Lloyd's desire to remove a wilful and troublesome evangelist from his centre of popular support. In the event, transferring Mothowagae to Lehututu was tantamount to sending him to Siberia. It is therefore hardly surprising that he should have declined to go, although he softened his refusal by pleading his wife's illness as an excuse for declining.[131] But Lloyd, who desperately desired to remove Mothowagae from Kanye had found a good excuse. So he promptly dismissed Mothowagae and paid him off in July 1901.[132]

Lloyd's dismissal of Mothowagae, like his earlier suspension of the salary of the evangelist Motlhanke Sera of Disaneng, was a blunder that upset many church members in Kanye. Mothowagae's leadership had earned him the respect and admiration of many Bangwaketse, while his wisdom and eloquence at the royal kgotla made him one of Bathoen's trusted advisers. The senior missionary at Kanye, James Good, had been aware of the tremendous respect Mothowagae enjoyed at Kanye, and despite Mothowagae's bumptiousness, continued to treat him with great con-

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131 While Bathoen gave as a reason for Mothowagae's inability to go to Lehututu the excuse that Mothowagae's wife was in a poor health, he himself stressed that Bathoen and the Kanye congregation wanted him to stay.

132 It is interesting that when in 1897 Lloyd was sent to Molepolole by the B.D.C. to act as locum tenens for the Rev. Howard Williams, Lloyd refused to go. No-one even considered dismissing him. (See L.M.S., Box 54, Folder 2, Jacket B, Lloyd to Cousins, 23 September 1897.)

sideration. Good and Mothowagae were probably also men of the same age generation, and Mothowagae would accordingly be more prepared to take reasonable disciplinary action from "Monare Kwiti" than from the younger and not so tactful Lloyd. Further, there was an additional reason that would dispose Mothowagae to be more tolerant to any chastisement by Good. It was Good who identified and coopted him to the position of an assistant between 1874 and 1880, before sending him to Kudumane to be trained as an evangelist.

To the bulk of the Bangwaketse, Mothowagae's training spell at Kudumane was probably looked upon as a training that would make of him a fully-fledged moruti or teacher like "Monare Kwiti". They could not and did not know of the different gradations and ranks within the clerical cadres. There is abundant evidence suggesting that Mothowagae himself had by 1900 come to look upon himself as not just an evangelist but a fully-fledged pastor on a par with such men as Good and Lloyd.[133] It would, therefore, appear that Mothowagae's own pretensions and his social standing among the Bangwaketse called for great tact or at least considerably more finesse in handling him than Lloyd seemed capable of. To justify his own action, Lloyd deliberately played down the seriousness of the discontent caused by his dismissal of Mothowagae. He suggested that most of those who complained were not full church members but "enquirers" whose real discontent was based on the fact that they had not been too quickly admitted to full church membership of the L.M.S. congre-

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133 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/2, Evidence of Mothowagae, "Petition of King Edward Bangwaketse Free Church" dated 19 October 1903.

gation at Kanye. According to Lloyd that insignificant group of malcontent converts gained notoriety by being reinforced by an equally malcontent group of headmen who were planning rebellion against the chief.[134]

This explanation, however, concealed more than it revealed. Those Bangwaketse who had become converts had been with missionaries long enough to have a general grasp of what the requirements were regarding admittance to full church membership. If they did complain it is possible that changes introduced by Lloyd were too drastic or had not been adequately explained to the "enquirers". Otherwise it seems hard to believe that people who were only "enquirers" would take such a stand during their period of preparation for membership. Further, a petition sent by some members of the Kanye L.M.S. congregation to London gave the sole reason for Mothowagae's followers rebelling against Lloyd as the prohibition of the brew known as kgadi.[135] Needless to say, this explanation which gave the point of view of the loyal members of the L.M.S. was as one-sided as Lloyd's version. Certainly, the expulsion of Mothowagae was a very important facton,[136] as was the increasing of church dues from

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134 L.M.S., Box 60, Lloyd to Thompson, 9 May, 1902; also B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/1, Lloyd to Assistant Commissioner, 26 June 1902.

135 L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 1, Kanye L.M.S. Congregation to Directors of the L.M.S., London, 16 December 1902.

136 Lloyd admitted afterwards that Mothowagae's dismissal and replacement by the young boy trained at Lovedale, Kgosikobo Chelenyane, was a fundamental cause of his secession. (See L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 4, Lloyd to Thompson, 23 December 1903, where Lloyd says of Kgosikobo: "He came and replaced Motho-oa-gae [sic.] in the school, and this was one of Motho-oa-gae's grievances".

five to ten shillings per year. Many of these discontented church members stayed away from the regular services of the L.M.S. and attended those of Mothowagae, who during the rest of the year 1901, held his own services at the royal kgotla although he continued to regard himself as part of the L.M.S.

As we had already noted, Bathoen's supreme authority over his people was qualified by the efforts of a group of sub-chiefs and headmen who were always striving to increase their own power at the expense of that of the king. These nobles had failed to prevent his automatic succession mainly because of the relative minority of the young pretender whom they wished to put up against Bathoen's candidacy. Bathoen had in the meantime strengthened his ties with the missionaries and the British administration and also built up a strong following among the Ngwaketse Christian converts. These alliances made Bathoen a formidable ruler to those who might wish to overthrow his rule. In addition, Bathoen's popularity had been increasing among Christians and non-Christians as a result of his indefatigable efforts to prevent any encroachments on Ngwaketse territory and property. His strong stand against unpopular or disadvantageous boundary awards, his visit to Britain with Kgama III and Sebele and his attempts to shield his people against the burdens of hut-tax at a time when the Bangwaketse were still very depressed by recent disasters - all these policies had done much to marshall the support of nearly all his people.

But some of Bathoen's reforms were irksome to many of the traditionalists. For instance, he started the new year of 1902

by renewing his ban on the ancient initiation ceremonies of bogwera and bojale.[137] Thus, although the Ma-Lau regiment was formed without having undergone the rite of circumcision, many of its members had in fact fled to neighbouring Tswana communities where the rite was not outlawed and had undergone circumcision there. These rites were too deeply embedded in the cultural lives of the people to be lightly done away with at the stroke of a pen. The dissatisfaction generated by some of Bathoen's reforms proved to be grist to the mill of the malcontent sub-chiefs and headmen. The immediate consequence was the flocking of several headmen, with many of their followers, to Mothowagae's dissenting church.

Thus, whereas Mothowagae started with a following of about forty-five members, by October 1903 he claimed to have 779 people in different parts of the Ngwaketse country.[138] The dissident headmen and other Bangwaketse who were opposed to Bathoen had found in Mothowagae's church movement a convenient way of continuing a political campaign under the cloak of religion, and Mothowagae was used as the stick with which to beat Bathoen. It is therefore likely that it was the accretion to his group of followers of this powerful clique that moved Mothowagae to sever links with the L.M.S. early in 1902.[139] With

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137 L.M.S., Box 60, Folder 1, Lloyd to Thompson, 15 January, 1902.

138 B.N.A. R.C. 10/11/2. Statement of Mothowagae, "Petition of Members of the King Edward Bangwaketse Free Church", dated 19 October 1903, enclosed in Ellenberger to Ralph Williams, 31 October 1903.

139 L.M.S., Box 60, Folder 1, Lloyd to Thompson, 29 January, 1902.

his followers, they set up the King Edward Bangwaketse Free Church under Mothowagae's leadership.

According to a petition of the King Edward Church addressed to the Resident Commissioner, twenty sub-chiefs and headmen were listed as members of Mothowagae's church.[140] While Bathoen was sympathetic to Mothowagae's personal grievance against Lloyd, he was nevertheless loyal to the L.M.S. and certainly could not be expected to look with favour upon the formation of a rival church in his own capital. It thus appears that his ambivalent attitude towards the new church stemmed both from his realisation of the forces that were ranged behind Mothowagae, as from some vague hope that the split was a transient affair that would disappear after some satisfactory settlement of problems in the Kanye L.M.S. church. Thus his permission that Mothowagae conduct his services in the royal kgotla could have been partly a result of pressure exerted on him by these powerful rebel headmen, whose leader was thought to be Bathoen's own brother-in-law, Tsima,[141] and partly Bathoen's own belief that Mothowagae and his group had not moved so far away from the L.M.S. that they were beyond reconciliation with it.

It was this belief on the part of Bathoen that made him take the initiative in getting the L.M.S. authorities to consider the possibility of ordaining Mothowagae. It was also the

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140 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/3, The sub-chiefs and headmen listed were: Paul, Tsima, Koko, Ratlhaudi, Boakgomo, Tlhori, Mookodi, Moremedi, Kgosiearen, Nakatlon, Rasepe, Koorapetse, Kelailwe, Modisenyane, Kgampu, Johnae, Loago, Moncholomi, Monyenyane and Seana.

141 L.M.S., Box 60,Folder 1, Lloyd to R.W. Thompson, 27 January 1902.

realisation by the B.D.C. of the calibre of men supporting Mothowagae that made them yield to Bathoen's pressure to consider Mothowagae as a candidate for ordination. This the B.D.C. meeting, sitting at Palapye in May 1902, agreed to do even though Mothowagae had broken away from the L.M.S. and founded a separate church. According to L.M.S. sources, Mothowagae failed the test set by the B.D.C. and thus lost all claim to be considered for ordination. Schapera is probably correct in stating that in addition to lacking "the necessary educational qualifications" he was rejected "mainly because he had been guilty of schism".[142] While missionary sources are silent on the nature of the test or the panel that examined Mothowagae, he himself claimed that he was tested in subjects that the missionaries had never taught him:

> ... I was given [a] Latin Book, Greek and Hebrew and asked to read the same, I informed them that they had not taught me this language in their Schools and they refused to ordain me.

Clearly relying for his information on missionary accounts, Bathoen simply stated that Mothowagae had failed everything, while Willoughby described him as an "ignorant fellow".[143]

Until Mothowagae's failure to secure ordination, Bathoen had been handling the Mothowagae group with much consideration. Once ordained, Mothowagae would replace Lloyd as the minister at Kanye. This would destroy the vehicle for the disguised revolt that Bathoen believed the King Edward Church had become. It must have been this realisation of the extent to which the

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142 Schapera, "A Short History...", p.20.

143 Chirenje, The Northern Tswana, p.250.

dissident headmen had captured Mothowagae's religious faction that moved Bathoen to appeal to the Acting Assistant Commissioner Jules Ellenberger for advice.[144]

When Ellenberger enquired of James Good what the real nature of the dispute was, his letter was answered by Edwin Lloyd who gave him the missionary version of the dispute. Obviously very sensitive and irritated by the Acting Assistant Commissioner's interest in the matter, Lloyd reminded Ellenberger that the dispute was a purely church matter.[145] This was, of course, incorrect. Whatever it might have been when it started, the Mothowagae church movement had by June 1902 ceased to be a purely church affair. Still unable to make a realistic assessment of the extent of the religious-cum-political revolt, missionaries were inclined to be hyper-sensitive about what they deemed the unwarranted interest of secular authorities in the Mothowagae affair. To reassure the missionaries the Resident Commissioner in Mahikeng affirmed that purely church disputes fell outside the purview of government.[146]

Bathoen, who sought the advice of government officials on how to handle the Mothowagae dispute, had been far more perceptive than the missionaries about the complex nature of the dispute. He knew that it was religious only to the extent that Mothowagae started it in opposition to Lloyd, and on what

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144 B.N.A., R.C. 7/8, Bathoen to Acting Assistant Commissioner 12 June and 27 June 1902.

145 B.N.A., R.C. 7/8, Lloyd to the Acting Assistant Commissioner, 27 June 1902.

146 B.N.A., R.C. 7/8, Ralph Williams to B.D.C., 18 August 1902.

looked like straightforward religious or church grounds. But he soon perceived that the number and calibre of people the new church attracted quickly changed its character turning it into a movement directed more against himself than against the L.M.S. He saw that the King Edward Church was both a movement to secure a definite African voice and leadership in church matters, as well as being a convenient vehicle for opposition and dissent.

James Good was therefore not far off the mark when he described the Mothowagae movement as part of a wider movement known as "Ethiopianism"; and represented a desire "to cast off the tutelage" in which the Tswana had lived up to that moment.[147] Where Good was missing the point was in ascribing "Ethiopianism" in Kanye to the influence wielded by migrant workers returning from the Johannesburg and Kimberley mines, as well as Tswana students at Lovedale who brought back "the most wonderful stories about the churches and their methods in the colony ... the Ethiopians in particular".[148]

Clearly, the causes of "Ethiopianism" among the people of Botswana were not radically different from those that led to the growth of that movement in other parts of Africa. Among the Bangwaketse those causes were partly dissatisfaction with the manner in which the teachings of the white-directed L.M.S. sought to destroy African values and customs through its assault on the very pillars of indigenous culture - rain-making, polygamy, levirate and sororate marriages, initiation (both bogwera

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147 B.N.A., R.C. 7/8, James Good, Kenilworth, Cape, to Ellenberger, 30 June 1902.

148 Ibid.

and bojale) rites and so forth. Partly the Bangwaketse resisted the frustration bred by a racial exclusiveness which made little or no provision for talented Africans in the normal operations of these mission churches. Finally the so-called Ethiopianism was sometimes caused by the high-handed manner with which white missionaries treated their African congregations or the cavalier treatment that young missionaries like Lloyd meted out to senior and respectable African leaders such as Motlanke and Mothowagae.

Bathoen himself did not wish to have anything to do with Ethiopianism. Less than four years before he had refused two "Ethiopians", Seele and Mareko, permission to build a small church in Kanye.[149] He had permitted Mothowagae to preach at the kgotla only as long as he thought there was still hope of reconciliation through the ordination of Mothowagae into the pastorate of the L.M.S. Once this appeared impossible he had ordered Mothowagae to desist, but his order had been ignored. To meet Bathoen half-way, the B.D.C. having declined to ordain Mothowagae felt it should accede to his other request - namely to transfer Lloyd from Kanye. But Lloyd's very strong reaction to that decision,[150] and a petition against the transfer of Lloyd signed by forty-six members of the Kanye L.M.S. Congregation resulted in the cancellation of the transfer. This letter

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149 L.M.S., Box 55, Folder 2, Jacket D, Good to Thompson, 11 November 1898. On that occasion Bathoen told the "Ethiopian" representatives, in the presence of many Bangwaketse that he (Bathoen) was in the "Lontone". All he knew he had learnt from the "Lontone". They had come to his help when spoilers wanted to take his country. The "Lontone" had taken him to England. He asked whether the "Ethiopians" could do the same for him and his people.

150 L.M.S., Box 60, Folder 1, Lloyd to Thompson, 9 May 1902.

also asked the Board of Directors of the L.M.S. to send a deputation of ministers who were thoroughly acquainted with the Tswana to investigate the religious dispute at Kanye.[151]

Early in the following year, a commission of enquiry comprising two white missionaries, who had served a long time among the Tswana, was sent to investigate the dispute at Kanye and to prepare the way for a reconciliation. The Brown-Willoughby commission did not approach its task with an open mind. The commission appears to have proceeded on the basis that Mothowagae and his followers had defied the Mission and could therefore not be heard at the same meetings as those of loyal or regular members of the L.M.S. Because Brown and Willoughby insulted the Mothowagae party by refusing them entry at a meeting held in the church on Tuesday morning, 17 February 1903,[152] the Mothowagae party, in turn, administered a similar snub to the commission members when they subsequently sent for them.[153] Thus, when Brown and Willoughby reported that Lloyd

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151 L.M.S., Box 52, Folder 1, Kanye L.M.S. Congregation to Directors of the L.M.S., London, 16 December 1902. According to Chirenje there had been an earlier request by twelve members of the Kanye L.M.S. congregation claiming to speak for five hundred members. (Chirenje, The Northern Tswana, p.252.)

152 See Report of Brown and Willoughby, p.5, in L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 1, March 1903.

153 According to the Brown-Willoughby Report, when the commissioners sent for Mothowagae and his people suggesting alternative places of meeting them, the Mothowagae party sent a message stating that they themselves had no particular wish to see the members of the commission; but if Brown and Willoughby wished to see them they could "follow them among the stones and go to Mothowagae's house". This the commissioners judged an "impudent message" and made no further efforts to contact them.

was not to blame for the dispute at Kanye they had done so without hearing the case for the Mothowagae party.

The blatantly partisan approach of Brown and Willoughby drew a complaint from Bathoen that the commissioners had "consulted one party and left the other party unconsulted" despite their having asked him (Bathoen) to call Mothowagae and his followers.[154] Bathoen then asked for a different missionary. To this the L.M.S. Secretary for Foreign Missions replied on behalf of the Directors that Bathoen was wantonly interfering in church affairs, and reminded Bathoen that no secular authority, whether it be the chief of the Bangwaketse or the British Government could remove a missionary.[155] In a subsequent letter to Thompson, Bathoen reported that the Mothowagae party had now taken the position that they had finished with the L.M.S. and would not rejoin it even if Lloyd were removed from Kanye. Bathoen, had however made it clear that no other society would be permitted to establish itself in Kanye. This was bending over backwards to retain goodwill and reassure the L.M.S. of their virtually "established" position in Ngwaketse country. In this way, Bathoen was taking care not to break with the missionaries as a body even though he emphasized that Lloyd himself would have to be removed.[156] This, Bathoen reckoned, would clear the way for reconciliation with the L.M.S. and

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154 L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 1, Bathoen to Thompson, 19 February 1903.

155 L.M.S., Box 67, Folder 2, Thompson to Bathoen, 28 March 1906.

156 L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 2, Bathoen to Thompson, 21 May, 1903.

accordingly facilitate the ending of the schism.

Bathoen's comments suggest that he had as his principal concerns not only the division of Ngwaketse unity, but also the dangerous menace to his own position as king. His apparent tendency to blow hot and cold over the issue of the removal of Lloyd suggests his tremendous mental conflict and agony as he battled to keep the loyal supporters of the L.M.S. and the dissenters happy. But towards the middle of the year 1903 it was becoming clear to Bathoen that the Mothowagae group had become irreconcilably alienated: what was more, the headmen in Mothowagae's church continued their political intrigues designed to supplant Bathoen with Kwenaetsile. Thus, although only three months before Bathoen had been insisting that Lloyd would have to go, when in August 1903 he learnt of the decision of the Board of Directors to transfer Lloyd to Barkly West, he expressed the opinion that that transfer would make no difference to the split as the two parties were determined not to be reconciled.[157] About two months later, Bathoen had abandoned attempts to appease the secessionists over Lloyd's position at Kanye. He now definitely retracted his earlier pressure to have him transferred:

> I beg to inform you that I have a missionary here at Kanye the Rev. Mr. E. Lloyd. And if you sent [sic.] another missionary it must be clearly understood that he is not comming [sic.] to Kanye but to another place.[158]

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157 L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 2, Bathoen to Thompson, 27 August 1903.

158 L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 4, Bathoen to Thompson, 23 October 1903.

Lloyd's letter of 3 September 1903 protesting against his transfer from Kanye claimed that his continued stay there was desired by his deacons, the entire church as well as by Bathoen. Like Bathoen's letter of 27 August, 1903, it represented the religious dispute as having gone into a state of abeyance:

> Even the Mothowagae party does not cause the trouble it once did, as there is every probability of its falling to pieces presently. Indeed, several of them have already returned to us.[159]

If this slightly reassuring picture was correct at all, that must have been so only on the denominational front. There was nothing to suggest that the political menace to Bathoen's position and authority was receding. On the contrary, Lloyd advised Thompson that:

> The Headmen who have allied themselves with Mothowagae are conspirators working against Bathoen, and they have selected Bathoen's own brother to be chief, and they have done this under the cloak of religion.[160]

The scheming of the headmen in Mothowagae's church appears to have reached such an intensity towards the end of 1903 that Bathoen was warned by both Kgama III and Sebele about how the disloyal headmen were using Mothowagae as a tool to achieve their own ends. It appears likely that they also counselled him to suppress Mothowagae's church.

Meanwhile Mothowagae's own bumptiousness and over-confidence, bolstered by the support of the headmen, caused him to over-reach himself, and thereby precipitate a collision

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159 L.M.S., Box. 62, Folder 3, Lloyd to Thompson, 3 September 1903.

160 Ibid.

between Bathoen and himself. For over a year Bathoen had been watching Mothowagae frustrating all his efforts to bring about reconciliation and end the disunity of the Bangwaketse at Kanye. Noting with horror Mothowagae's increasingly obstreperous and insolent bearing towards himself, Bathoen gradually lost what sympathy he had shown for Mothowagae at the start of the schism.

The feeling of mutual antipathy between these two members of the Ma-Isantwa regiment reached a climax in September 1903. At a public prayer meeting for rain held at the royal kgotla Mothowagae is said to have stood up and boasted that he had stopped the rain the previous year and had bewitched or cast a spell on all the efforts of the Bangwaketse to improve their lot. As a result, the Bangwaketse claims for compensation for losses incurred during the Anglo-Boer war would all fail. Mothowagae's pretensions annoyed Bathoen:

> We, the Bangwaketse were very much hurt... at hearing that a teacher has power exceeding that of God & of the ruler. I saw that Motho-oa-gae would destroy the Bangwaketse by his actions and his words.[161]

Bathoen further told Ramaeba[162] that although Mothowagae was an unordained teacher, he was dispensing holy communion and performing baptism: "he is not afraid of anything". He complained that Mothowagae was misleading many Bangwaketse who were unaware

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161 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/1, Bathoen to Ramaeba, n.d., enclosed in Ellenberger to Ralph Williams, 31 October 1903.

162 Contrary to Truschel's view that "Ramaeba" was one of Bathoen's trusted headmen, he was in fact none other than the Acting Assistant Commissioner, Lieutenant Colonel Jules Ellenberger. "Ramaeba" was the name by which the Tswana called him. (Cf. Truschel, Accommodation, p.168.)

of the fact that most of his activities were irregular. If he were permitted to continue to live in Kanye, the Bangwaketse would eventually be like a people without order. "I say that he must be removed from the village before he teaches evil to the Bangwaketse". Bathoen therefore appealed to the Administration because, he said, "I am a man in the hands of the Government... and I would not like to do anything of any importance without Government knowing of it".[163]

On 26 October 1903, Bathoen summoned a large pitso or general assembly of the Bangwaketse and told them he had decided to expel Mothowagae from the Ngwaketse reserve because of his persistent defiance of his (Bathoen's) authority. Mothowagae himself stated at an interview with Ellenberger that Bathoen accused him of having paid a clandestine visit to the Resident Commissioner at Mahikeng and lodging a complaint there against him (Bathoen).[164] After Bathoen's decision to expel Mothowagae from Ngwaketse country, the latter took refuge with the headman Makaba.[165]

Bathoen's decision to expel Mothowagae resulted in a great uproar in the village; as some of the sub-chiefs and headmen as

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163 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/1, Bathoen to Ramaeba, n.d.

164 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/4, Evidence of Mothowagae at interview with the Acting Assistant Commissioner held at Gaborone on 30 October 1903. Mothowagae's submission on this allegation was corroborated by Ellenberger who was present at that meeting.

165 Chirenje incorrectly states that Makaba was "one of Bathoen's brothers". (The Northern Tswana, p.258). He was not a brother but an uncle of Bathoen as he was the son of Segotshane and, therefore, first cousin to Bathoen's father Gaseitsiwe. As head of the Segotshane ward he was one of the very senior royal headmen (dikgosana).

well as other partisans of Mothowagae openly sympathised with Mothowagae. That night many people congregated at Makaba's kgotla and it was clear that Bathoen had little support. The hostile demonstrations of many Bangwaketse appeared clearly seditious to Bathoen and a few of his closest supporters. It was even considered that a guard be put to defend Bathoen at night, but he himself turned down the suggestion. Many pleas by several sub-chiefs and headmen that Bathoen should forgive Mothowagae were turned down by the chief.[166] As Bathoen refused to be moved by these intercessions and representations from the hostile nobles, one of them, Seametso, accompanied Mothowagae to Gaborone to request the intervention of the British Administration.[167]

As might have been expected, Ellenberger sought the advice of the Resident Commissioner. Although these officers were inclined to support Bathoen, they were hesitant to do so if the dispute was of a purely religious character. The Resident Commissioner stated:

> I don't care if a man is a fire worshipper, a Mohametan or a Christian, he is entitled to his own views - but if he uses the fact of his religious belief to create disturbance in the tribe and as an excuse for disobedience of lawful authority, it cannot be allowed ...
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> If Bathoen turns out Mothowagae because he differs from his religious views, he is, of course, wrong.
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> If Mothowagae uses his religious belief as an

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166 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/3, Bathoen to Assistant Commissioner, 29 October 1903.

167 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/3, Bathoen to Assistant Commissioner, 29 October 1903; B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/4, interview between the Assistant Commissioner and Mothowagae, 30 October 1903.

> excuse to disobey lawful authority, he is wrong.[168]

This was consistent with the position Ralph Williams had taken the previous year when he told the B.D.C. that the Administration had no intention to interfere in strictly church affairs. Ellenberger therefore went to Kanye to determine the exact nature of the trouble there. During his interview with Bathoen, the latter catalogued the sins of Mothowagae. These included Mothowagae's unauthorised obstruction of Mabe, a Mongwaketse who came from Morija in Lesotho, by preventing him teaching the scriptures to some Bangwaketse at the royal kgotla and Mothowagae's refusal to appear before Bathoen to explain his behaviour even though Bathoen had sent four times for him.[169] Mothowagae also refused to pay tax. Some time back Mothowagae had borrowed money from Bathoen to have a wagon made for himself at Grahamstown and was now refusing to repay the loan. Then there was his uncalled for and provocative declaration that he had stopped the rain and had bewitched the work of the Bangwaketse. Finally, Mothowagae spoke to Bathoen in a most disrespectful manner, and was treating him as an equal rather than as his chief.[170]

While it would appear from the foregoing that Bathoen was

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168 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11, Resident Commissioner to Assistant Commissioner, 2 November 1903.

169 Bathoen stated that he first sent Motlhanke, then Siele, later he sent Thata-ca-one and finally Gabatshwane. All these messengers were baruti (teachers) like Mothowagae, but he refused to appear before the chief.

170 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/9, Evidence of Bathoen, interview with the Assistant Commissioner held at Kanye on 10-12 November 1903.

making a good case for a charge of civil disobedience by Mothowagae, he did not press the charge home. While he regretted his people following Mothowagae, who was misleading them, he also stated that his banishment of Mothowagae had nothing to do with religion. In the eyes of British officers, Mothowagae's offence was not sufficient to warrant the extreme punishment of banishment from the Ngwaketse reserve. Ellenberger accordingly suggested his banishment to an isolated part of Bangwaketse territory. All this was conditional upon Mothowagae apologising publicly to Bathoen and stating that he recognized him as his chief. Following very closely the advice given by Ellenberger, Bathoen announced at a public gathering held on 11 November 1903 his decision to send Mothowagae not "across the boundary" as he had originally stated but to Lekgolobotlo.

Mothowagae now displayed his thorough knowledge of Tswana law and custom. On the same night on which Bathoen proclaimed his banishment Mothowagae found his way into the hut of Bathoen's mother, who brought him to the royal kgotla early the next morning. This, according to Tswana custom, left Bathoen with no other option but to pardon Mothowagae, since Mothowagae had by so doing taken refuge in the belly of Gaseitsiwe.[171] In a subsequent letter to Ellenberger, Bathoen explained that according to an ancient Tswana law an offender (who was not a murderer) could by running into the chief's house be said to have taken refuge in the Chief's belly, from where he could not be extracted. "As Mothowagae has clearly found out his fault

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171 B.N.A. R.C. 10/11, Ralph Williams to Ellenberger, 20 November 1903.

he has run into my House and that only has saved him from being punished".[172] Thus through the skilful exploitation of ancient Tswana custom, Mothowagae gained a last minute reprieve, and was allowed to continue to live at Kanye.

Bathoen's handling of Mothowagae is difficult to understand if one forgets his predicament concerning the rebellious nobles who were really the moving spirits behind Mothowagae. Most of these men seemed to be involved in the conspiracy to replace Bathoen with his younger brother Kwenaetsile. Thus to the Bamangwato and other Tswana watching the activities of Mothowagae at a distance, Bathoen's ambivalence in dealing with the refractory "Ethiopian" evangelist was baffling. In November 1903, a Tswana newspaper published in Mahikeng, printed a commentary on the Mothowagae affair purporting to "The argument of the Bamangwato". It denounced Mothowagae on his own testimony, as a wizard for claiming to have stopped rain, and warned that Mothowagae was leading a seditious movement that would eventually bring the same kind of ruin on the Bangwaketse as similar movements in the past had brought on both the Bamangwato and Bakwena societies.

The article ended with a veiled and gentle reproof of Bathoen for his inability to punish Mothowagae. Turning to Mothowagae, the article stated that had he been among the Bamangwato, they would have taken him "round to those villages [that he had bewitched] and would have caused you to wash your-

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172 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/10, Bathoen to Assistant Commissioner, 14 November 1903.

self with bitter roots".[173] Another article in the same organ addressed itself to the followers of Mothowagae, calling upon them to be a little more critical in looking at his own teachings and reconciling these with the gospel as it was contained in the scriptures. Accusing him of being a charlatan and a false prophet, the article concluded by addressing Mothowagae in these terms:

> Truly, if you speak in this way [and] you were among us, Mokhalahari, we should place you in the sun, and would rub you with the rain-stopper's roots, until you know that a rain-stopper is not spared from pity or love.[174]

The articles in Koranta were in fact saying that if the Bangwaketse did not know how to deal with a "false prophet" the Bamangwato would show them how to do it.

Early in 1904 the young pretender Kwenaetsile was reported to be dying of consumption. Dr. Macrae who was attending him held out no hope for his recovery although he was of the opinion that he could linger a long time. At this time, while on his death-bed, Kwenaetsile, who was the only member of the Ngwaketse royal house to have actually joined Mothowagae's church, returned to the L.M.S.[175] In January Lloyd had reported that twenty-seven persons had returned from Mothowagae.[176] Kwenaetsile's death occurred on 25 May 1904, his burial providing the final round in the long drawn-out contest between Lloyd and

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173 Translation from Koranta Ea Becoana, 25 November 1903, in B.N.A., R.C. 10/11.

174 Koranta Ea Becoana, 2 December 1903.

175 L.M.S., Box 64, Folder 1, Lloyd to Thompson, 3 March 1904.

176 L.M.S., Box 64, Folder 1, Lloyd to Thompson, 23 Jan. 1904.

Mothowagae for the position of premier cleric of the Bangwaketse.[177]

The death of Kwenaetsile also removed the focus for the political intrigues and machinations of Bathoen's opponents, as well as disposing of what had been a veritable Achilles heel for that king. Most of the dissident nobles were not so vocal in their opposition and tended to rely on Mothowagae stirring up trouble on the religious side, while Kwenaetsile was to keep the cauldron boiling on the political front. Thus the death of the young prince and the temporary silencing of Mothowagae threw these nobles into comparative obscurity, until Bathoen's programme of reform gave them fresh cause for rallying around Mothowagae. A letter written late in June 1904 described how dramatically Bathoen promulgated one of these reforms. This was done at a lecholo or meeting of armed men held outside Kanye on the veld. There Bathoen denounced kgadi as foreign liquor, brought into the country from the south:

> Three strangers came into our country long ago - two were men, and the third was only a child. (1) The first man-stranger was called Brandy: him I sent away long ago. (2) The second man-stranger is called Khadi (made of honey, sugar, golden syrup etc.): him I denounce as an enemy today, on this eleventh of July, 1904, and I hereby drive him out of my country, as a dangerous enemy. The seretse with which you leaven the khadi must all be brought to me that I might destroy it with fire. (3) The third stranger is a harmless child called "Coffee". Him I find no fault with - he can remain among us. Learn my people that khadi ceases today throughout my country.[178]

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177 L.M.S., Box 64, Folder 2, Lloyd to Thompson, 25 June 1904.

178 L.M.S., Box 64, Folder 3, Lloyd to Thompson, 22 July 1904.

Coming as it did after his recent renewal of his ban on initiation ceremonies, the banning of kgadi was not well-received by many Bangwaketse. Discontent arising from the banning of khadi and the renewal of the ban on initiation rites was soon intensified by Bathoen's levy of an education tax of two shillings. This was to subsidise the costs of the school at Kanye, and to augment the Ngwaketse educational fund which was being paid through a levy of one shilling since 1901.

At Moshupa the chief of the Kgatla-Mmanaana, Gobuamang, defied Bathoen's ban on initiation ceremonies by organising his own bogwera in 1904. At Kanye many Bangwaketse demonstrated their displeasure with Bathoen's latest reforms by going over to Mothowagae, who though a little more cautious in his bearing towards the chief, had nevertheless continued to hold separate services. On Mothowagae himself, these reforms had an indirect influence. His movement appeared to fare best when the Bangwaketse were upset with affairs at Kanye. Kwenaetsile's death seems to have marked a turning point in the career of Mothowagae. Hitherto his efforts tended to be directed both towards ousting Lloyd from Kanye and compelling religious and political authorities to recognise him as the moruti of the Bangwaketse. To do this he had relied heavily on the support of the dissident aristocrats to bend Bathoen's will.

Kwenaetsile's death robbed Mothowagae of leverage, since it removed the danger that posed a threat to Bathoen personally. It also took the fire out of the opposition with which some of the dissident headmen confronted Bathoen. Also, the supplicatory terms of the condition on which Mothowagae earned his

reprieve from banishment dictated the need for much caution and the avoidance of a direct collision with Bathoen. It appears to have been this need to readapt his course or modify his strategy that eventually swung Mothowagae into the mainstream of "Ethiopianism" as it was generally known in southern Africa.

With the young prince dead Mothowagae's church lost the flavour of dynastic rivalry that had attached to it soon after its founding. The issue now became a straight-forward contest between a European-directed or an African church, the essential element of "Ethiopianism". Bathoen who was a strong ally of the L.M.S., did not like Mothowagae's resumption of his preaching, especially when many Bangwaketse started to join his movement after 1904. But as long as he did not figure as the prominent leader of an anti-Bathoen movement, or did not openly defy Bathoen, the latter could hardly justify banning him purely on the basis of running a different church.

When the time came for Lloyd to go on furlough in 1905 he was, according to prior arrangement,[179] replaced by James Good as <u>locum tenens</u>. It is probable that the B.D.C. gambled that because of Good's popularity with the Bangwaketse it would be wise to send him to Kanye so as to keep the situation from deterionating. Whatever their calculations were, the result was disastrous for Lloyd. After a year with Good the Bangwaketse must have made it plain to Bathoen that Lloyd would have to go. Suddenly in 1906 Bathoen called upon the L.M.S. to send

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179 L.M.S., Box 64, Folder 1, Minutes of B.D.C. meeting held at Vryburg, 4-12 February 1904, Resolution No. XVII (b); Box 64, Folder 4, Minutes of B.D.C. meeting held at Serowe, 15-27 October 1904, Resolution 22.

another minister to Kanye. He stated that:

> The Rev. E. Lloyd has now preached long enough among the Bangwaketse tribe, and has passed the appointed time which is usually taken by the ministers in the other reserves.[180]

This time Thompson did not tell Bathoen that he was meddling in church affairs. Instead the Board of Directors of the L.M.S. in London instructed the B.D.C. to investigate. A commission of enquiry comprising Howard Williams and W.C. Willoughby was sent to Kanye in July 1906 to investigate the real reasons behind Bathoen's astonishing request. According to their findings the complaint of Bathoen and the other Ngwaketse members of the L.M.S. congregation at Kanye was that Lloyd was a lazy man.[181] Late that year Howard Williams was sent to Kanye to take the place of Edwin Lloyd.

Early in 1907 Bathoen donated, as a personal gift, the sum of £220 for an organ for the Kanye Church, and pledged another £20 for freight.[182] Howard Williams found that the effect of years of denominational strife and civil discord were reflected in the chaotic state of the records of both the church and school, making it difficult for him to send a meaningful report to London. It is probable that James Good's year as locum tenens was one in which much of the organisational structures

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180 L.M.S., Box 67, Folder 1, Bathoen to Thompson, 8 February 1906.

181 Chirenje, The Northern Tswana, p.266, citing Report of Deputation to Kanye, July 1906. (I did not see this Report).

182 L.M.S., Box 68, Folder 3, Howard Williams to Geo. Cousins, 27 March 1907; Box 68, Folder 4, Williams to Thompson, 24 November 1907.

collapsed, and back-slidings among the church members abounded making it necessary for Howard Williams to refer to a need to cleanse "this latter day Corinthian Church".[183] But if the dispute had robbed the Kanye church of quantity, it was, in the opinion of Williams, left with material of higher quality. The men and women who remained were said to be "jealous for the honour & purity of the church". Although Williams expressed much desire to see the split healed, his report to London showed that he expected the healing process to take place only on the basis of the unconditional repentence of the schismatics:

> The Mothowagae party was on more than one occasion indirectly inquired on what terms they could be received. "Terms" however are quite out of court in this matter.[184]

It appears that Lloyd's retirement was demanded by Bathoen as a last attempt at bringing about the sort of compromise that would facilitate reconciliation with the schismatics. But when Mothowagae and a few die-hards (many returned after Lloyd's departure) refused to rejoin the L.M.S., rumours spread that Mothowagae was in contact with one Matolo, an "Ethiopian" at Taung in the northern Cape Colony.[185] Bathoen first accused the headmen who backed Mothowagae of attempting to bewitch him and his son Seepapitso. He stated that those responsible for bewitching him were the sons of Makaba, Moleta and Mongala,

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183 L.M.S., Box 68, Folder 3, Williams to Cousins, 4 February 1907; Box 71, Folder 1, Williams to Thompson, 24 February 1909.

184 L.M.S., Box 69, Folder 3, Williams to Thompson, 5 August 1908.

185 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/26, Seepapitso to Resident Commissioner, 28 June 1911.

together with several ward-heads and even some of his personal retainers were part of the plot to destroy him.[186] He accordingly gave all those who held kgamelo cattle from him the option of renouncing Mothowagae and the schismatic movement or surrendering the cattle under their care.

The years immediately preceding the formation of the South African union were ones in which Bathoen became more and more troubled by the festering sore of the Mothowagae schism. He had tried all he could to end the church dispute but in vain. To make matters worse, the years 1907 and 1908 were, according to Howard Williams, ones of "unusual distress throughout the Southern Protectorate - Kanye and Molepolole especially".[187] These were years in which the Bangwaketse experienced a series of economic disasters. Drought and crop failures were aggravated by swarms of locusts, while a slump in the world diamond markets brought about a temporary closure of the Kimberley mines,[188] accentuating hardship as many Bangwaketse who were usually employed there were without work and income.

These conditions of privation soon gave rise to the burst in 1908 of a wave of millenarianism as prophets mushroomed all over the Southern Protectorate. According to Howard Williams,

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186 "Kgosi Bathoeng ... a simolola go dira mabatla, a bolelela morafe fa o mmolaya, e bile batlhanka ba gagwe ba le mo teng ga modiko o. 'A umaka gore o bolawa ke barwa-Makaba, Moleta le Mongala, le beng ba makgotla go tla go tsena mo bagotsing ba gagwe". (Schapera, "Bangwaketse", Ditirafalo, pp.147-148.)

187 L.M.S., Box 71, Folder 1, Williams to Thompson, 24 February 1909.

188 Schapera, Migrant Labour and Tribal Life, pp.28-29.

these were "Ethiopians" masquerading as prophets.[189] One still well-remembered young man whose prophesying caused a stir at Kanye was called Sentso. He claimed to be an angel of God, to be a prophet and often Jesus himself. Sentso maintained that the suffering of the Bangwaketse was caused by their neglect of their customs and their adherence to the teachings of the white man. He urged the people to return to their ancient customs and to traditional religion. That he said, would be followed by copious rain that would drown the hill-tops, and the country would be liberated from the control of the white man.

Thousands of Bangwaketse attended Sentso's meetings and were converted as lesser angels. Many destroyed their bibles and hymn-books and offered Sentso several presents. The alarm caused by Sentso and his followers resulted in his arrest and detention, although he was subsequently released on grounds of insanity. Bathoen and his son dealt firmly with the lesser angels who refused to give up their prophecying. Their property was confiscated and many were given corporal punishment. When Sentso was released and placed under the care of his parents, he stayed for a short tiem before fleeing to continue his mission in Bakwena country.

Meanwhile, Bathoen failed completely to suppress Mothowagae's church, which appeared to be growing by leaps and bounds at Moshupa.[190] Bathoen was left with no alternative but

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189 L.M.S. Reports, Box 4, Kanye Annual Report for 1908, H. Williams, 31 December 1908.

190 As early as 1905 "Ethiopianism" was said to be gaining ground in Moshupa. (See L.M.S., Box 62, Folder 1, Lloyd to Thompson, 30 March 1905.)

to disregard entirely the principle of freedom of conscience. It is likely that he feared the possibility of Mothowagae receiving strong backing or support from the difficult chief of the Kgatla-Mmanaana at Moshupa. When in the presence of Ellenberger, Mothowagae and his followers stubbornly refused to give up their church and rejoin the L.M.S. or declined to attach themselves to other 'recognised' societies such as the Weslyans, Bathoen banished Mothowagae to Lekgolobotlo in the Ngwaketse country.[191] As Bathoen himself died on 1 July 1910 the removal of Mothowagae to his place of banishment was carried out under his son Seepapitso, who ruled as chief of the Bangwaketse from 1910 to 1916.

In conclusion, it will be seen that Bathoen's career was a complex and delicate one, in which he had to balance the forces of change necessitated by the exposure of the Ngwaketse state to white missionaries, traders and government officials with the conservatism of traditional society represented by Ngwaketse aristocrats (dikgosana). Bathoen inaugurated his reign with spirited campaigns to safeguard the Ngwaketse boundaries against interlopers like the Bahurutshe-Gopane and boundary settlements like the Moffat award of 1882 which appeared harmful to the interests of his state. Later he successfully challenged the boundary settlement made by Goold-Adams which would have cut off enormous tracts of land from the country of the Bangwaketse as well as depriving them of access to the one important water course in the vicinity, namely the Molopo River.

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191 B.N.A., R.C. 10/11/24, Ellenberger to Panzera, 20 August 1910.

Bathoen's internal reform programme which aimed at modernising the Ngwaketse state could be said to have been partly inspired by the example of his own father. He wished to carry out in a vigorous manner reforms that his father introduced in a tentative fashion. Some of his reforms were the result of the influence of missionaries, while others derived from a conscious decision on his part to emulate Kgama III. While Bathoen's reforms earned for him the respect of whites, some of the reforms triggered off opposition to his policies from the traditionalists. Many of these had been unhappy about Bathoen's pedigree, and were plotting to replace him with his younger half-brother as king.

Bathoen's friendly relations with the missionaries and British authorities saved him from the threat of revolution. His cooperation with the British was aimed at bolstering his own authority internally by acting as a counterpoise to the enervating effect of aristocratic obstruction. His success in drawing the British officials to his side in the Mothowagae controversy shows that his policy was sometimes successful. Bathoen's reign also indicates the advantages of the operation of indirect rule to the British imperial authorities, and the difficult position of an African king seeking to operate within that peculiar type of imperial system. All the discontent within the political system was focussed on and directed at the African ruler, with the result that Ethiopianism, usually thought of as a black revolt against white control, became within the Ngwaketse context a vehicle for protest against black collaborative agents. Because Bathoen opted for accommo-

dation with the British rather than resistance, he earned British favour and support when he faced crises within his state. But it should be borne in mind, that while the British respected Bathoen, they would have quickly withdrawn their support for him and transferred it to his opponent, if this had been necessary to pacify rebels.

CONCLUSION

Although radio-carbon dates for the area of the Sotho-Tswana peoples indicate that the ancestors of these people occupied the region south of the Limpopo and east of the Kalagadi desert by, at least, the end of the first millenium A.D., the chronological frontiers of oral traditions still fall considerably short of the dates indicated by archeological investigation. The gap between the archeological and oral chronology suggests that royal genealogies that have been collected by scholars do not in themselves show when states began, but ought to be seen as the remains of what was left at the dissolution of earlier agglomerations, clusters, confederacies or "empires", no longer remembered in the traditions of the Sotho-Tswana peoples. The genealogies of the Sotho-Tswana societies that have been collected indicate that modern Tswana states have genealogical depths going back to about the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Traditions also suggest that the formation of most of the modern Tswana states was probably due to population growth caused by the absorption of several small groups found in the area below the Limpopo by cattle-keeping pastoralists. This population build-up that climaxed in the break up of huge Tswana agglomerations below the Limpopo had occurred over several centuries; and was not so much a result of long-distance or large-scale migrations as of incorporation, organisation and consolidation of several small groups sharing basic cultural denominators, and cattle ownership, control of centres with

rich iron deposits and the operation of a system of patron-client relationships. Famines, droughts, epidemics, dynastic rivalries and succession conflicts were crucial forces operating behind the apparently meaningless fissions, hivings off, secessions and migrations.

It was such factors that contributed to the dissolution of the large Hurutshe-Kwena complex (also referred to, for ease of reference, as the "United Phofu Confederacy") resulting in the establishment of separate Hurutshe and Kwena clusters of chiefdoms. Natural disasters like famines split the Kwena cluster into the Kwena-Mogopa and Kwena-Modimosana clusters of the modern Transvaal as well as the Kwena-Kgabo group of chiefdoms now located in modern Botswana. Such disasters also drove southwards several other Kwena clans that were later amalgamated to form the ruling lineage of the Kingdom of Lesotho. From the Kwena-Kgabo emerged the Bakwena, Bamangwato, Bangwaketse and Batawana chiefdoms of Botswana.

Like the Bamangwato, the Bangwaketse appear to have been one of the large sections or divisions (dintlha) within the large Kwena-Kgabo kingdom, and their royal genealogy indicates that they probably became a distinct group known as the "Bangwaketse" some time in the sixteenth century, although their secession from the Bakwena probably occurred in the seventeenth century. The migrations of the Bangwaketse which dominate their traditions for most of the eighteenth century took them over a wide expanse of country - from Kgale to sites near Ramotswa, Seoke (near Lobatse), Tlhowe in the vicinity of Dinokana in the western Transvaal, then westwards to sites not far from

their present capital, southward to Barolong-Tshidi country and then back to Kanye. The migrations, which not only resulted in the incorporation of several alien groups, served to delineate the outer limits of Ngwaketse domination. The period of migrations probably spanned the reigns of six or seven monarchs from Seepapitso I or Leema to Makaba II. During the reign of Makaba II, the strong hill of Kanye was occupied, and the Bangwaketse became the strongest and, militarily, the most famous of the Tswana kingdoms.

While it is obvious that Makaba II established the basis for the present political structure of the Ngwaketse state, it is also clear that he built upon foundations laid by his predecessors Moleta, Mongala and Makaba I, and that those patterns were part of their heritage of Tswana political organisation. Makaba II's reign witnessed the first contacts with white men as well as feeling the impact of the first waves of the Difaqane. It was a measure of the strength of the Ngwaketse state built by Makaba II and inherited by Sebego that the Bangwaketse were the only Tswana people who successfully resisted two waves of invaders during the earlier phase of the Difaqane wars on the Tswana when as a people they were still substantially undivided. Even though Mzilikazi's regiments later drove them into the Kgalagadi desert, they escaped the crushing defeats and expropriation of cattle that were the usual concomitant of encounter with the Mandebele. It is tempting to speculate on what might have happened if Sebego's usurpation had not divided the Bangwaketse into two rival groups. The overall effect of the division of Ngwaketse society - partly by the Difaqane and

partly by dynastic rivalry - was to leave them too weakened to put up any resistance to a new threat that followed hard upon the heels of Mzilikazi's Mandebele. This was the threat of Boer encroachment upon Tswana territories.

After thirty years of division and exile, the Bangwaketse were reunited under Gaseitsiwe in 1857. Boer ill-treatment of Transvaal Tswana communities drove many of them to seek refuge in modern Botswana. King Sechele I of the Bakwena and Gaseitsiwe of the Bangwaketse shared the burden of granting shelter and protection to various groups of harassed people from the Transvaal. The arrival of such refugee groups in the Ngwaketse state enabled Gaseitsiwe to embark upon a reorganisation of the ward structure in his efforts to integrate the immigrants into his kingdom. This was easily accomplished in the case of small groups. The integration of large groups, which entered as sizeable ethnically homogeneous entities under hereditary chieftains, presented problems for Gaseitsiwe, whose casual approach to the problem appears to have led him to abjure the use of force as a method in nation-building. More than anything else, Gaseitsiwe's failure to transform what consequently became a loose-knit "Ngwaketse-mozaic" of peoples into a politically united and virile "nation" qualified the ability of the Bangwaketse to resist the persistent threat of Boer incursions on their state and forced their rulers into a position of abject dependence on the British.

While Gaseitsiwe's readiness to shelter fellow Tswana was a commendable stand, he unfortunately treated the bigger refugee communities as temporary sojourners in his kingdom who might

wish to return to their former territories at the end of the period of disturbances. It is possible that he was also content to leave some of the larger groups as autonomous principalities in some kind of a "frontier zone", in the hope that they would serve as a buffer between the Bangwaketse and the Boers of the Transvaal.. Whatever his real intentions, Gaseitsiwe was nevertheless wise in his insistence upon clear demarcation of boundaries between his own state and the neighbouring Boer republic of the Transvaal. It was necessary that that boundary should not only be publicly demarcated but also that it should be internationally recognised. Hsi efforts in that direction, especially his attendance at the Bloemhof Arbitration Court in 1871, was accordingly a tremendous service to his people.

This policy of alertness over the boundaries of his state Gaseitsiwe bequeathed to his son Bathoen I who, throughout his reign, displayed similar attentiveness to the need to protect Ngwaketse borders against incursions by Boer filibusters or encroachment by neighbouring Tswana peoples. Even more than his father Bathoen was forced upon greater reliance on missionary assistance and British support to preserve his authority in the Ngwaketse state intact. Pressure from external influences probably played a greater part - even more than his deliberate choice - in persuading him to adapt the social and political institutions of the Ngwaketse kingdom to the exigencies dictated by the superimposition of imperial authority over and above that of the Ngwaketse monarch.

Bathoen's own policies, together with other incidental developments that occurred both before and during his reign,

gave rise to a movement that began as an opposition to the white-controlled L.M.S. mission at Kanye, but eventually became focussed on Bathoen himself. Mothowagae's "Ethiopian" movement could be seen as the outcome of dissatisfaction with the extent to which the king identified with the Mission that seemed bent not only on wiping out all that was precious and vital to the smooth operation of traditional Ngwaketse society, but also had little room for talented Africans like Mothowagae. Perhaps Africans who joined the King Edward Bangwaketse Free Church found more dignity and self-expression there than they could in the L.M.S. or other mission churches. It is true that the "Ethiopians" were used by Bathoen's aristocratic opponents, but they held firm to their convictions - in the face of increasing pressure from Bathoen and British officials although they never committed any violence - and showed themselves to be a viable religious movement until the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century. But Bathoen was a king. He wanted a united Christian church in a united kingdom - in other words, an "established" church. He could therefore not be expected to countenance, let alone support "Ethiopianism". His might well have been the same dictum as that of James I of England: "No bishop - no King!".

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Oral research was conducted in the Ngwaketse District between August 1973 and April 1974. Most of the interviews were group interviews held at the kgotla or public meeting place of the ward at which the interview was being conducted. The evidence was collected on tapes which still have to be edited and numbered. When this has been done the texts will be referred to as the "Ngwaketse Historical Texts".

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CHART I: UNITED BAROLONG

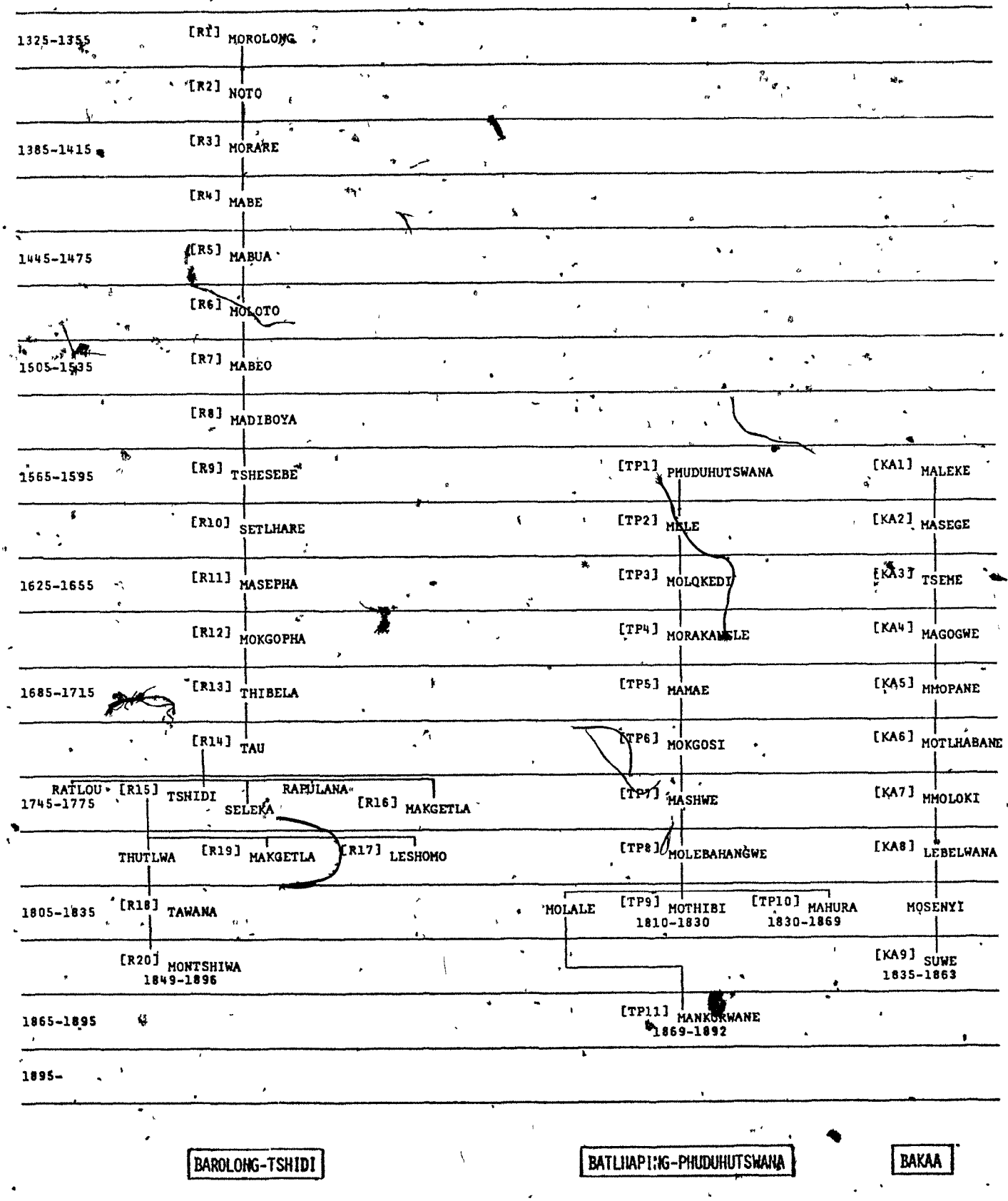


CHART II: UNITED "PHOFU" CONFEDERACY

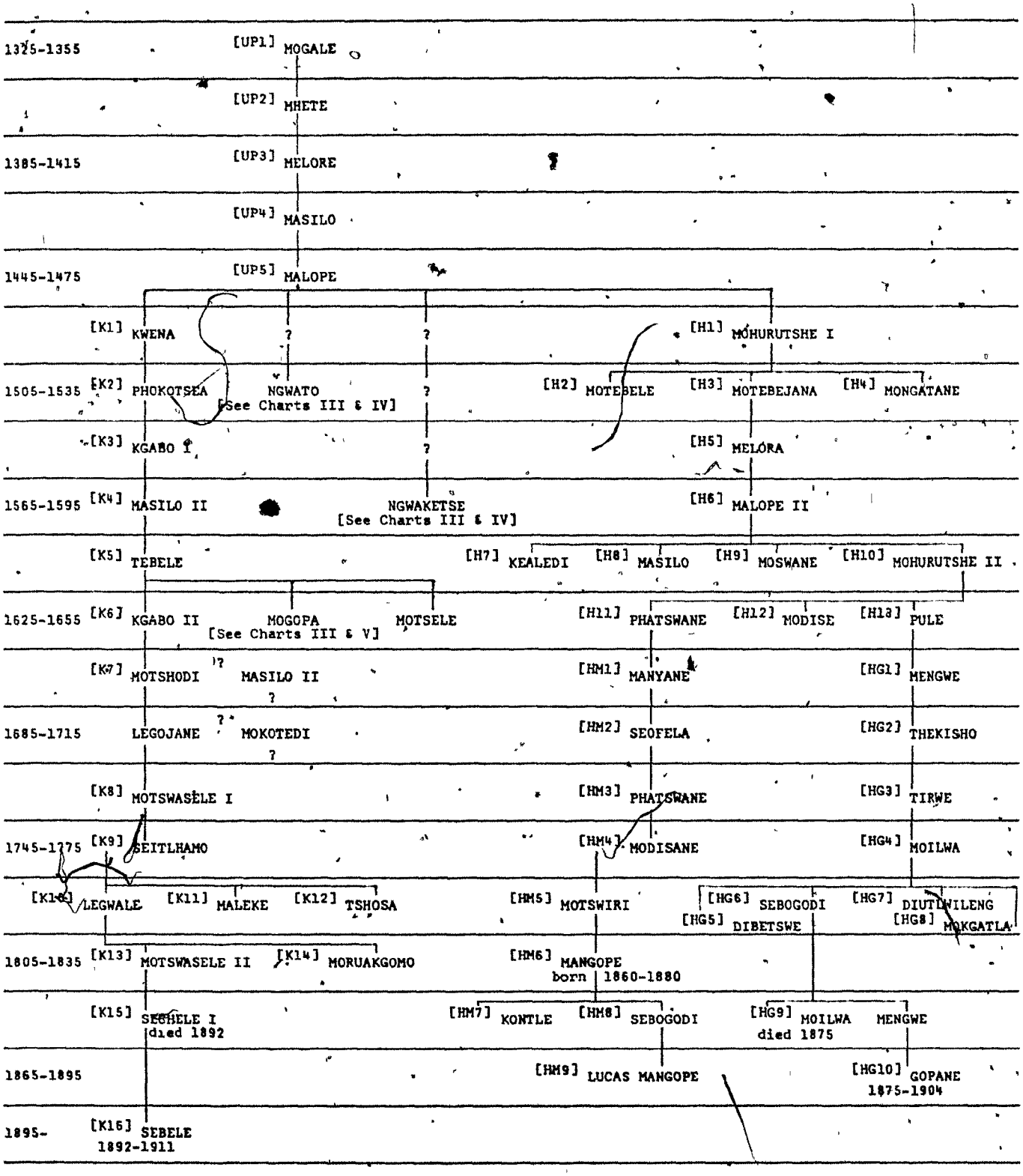


CHART III: UNITED KWENA

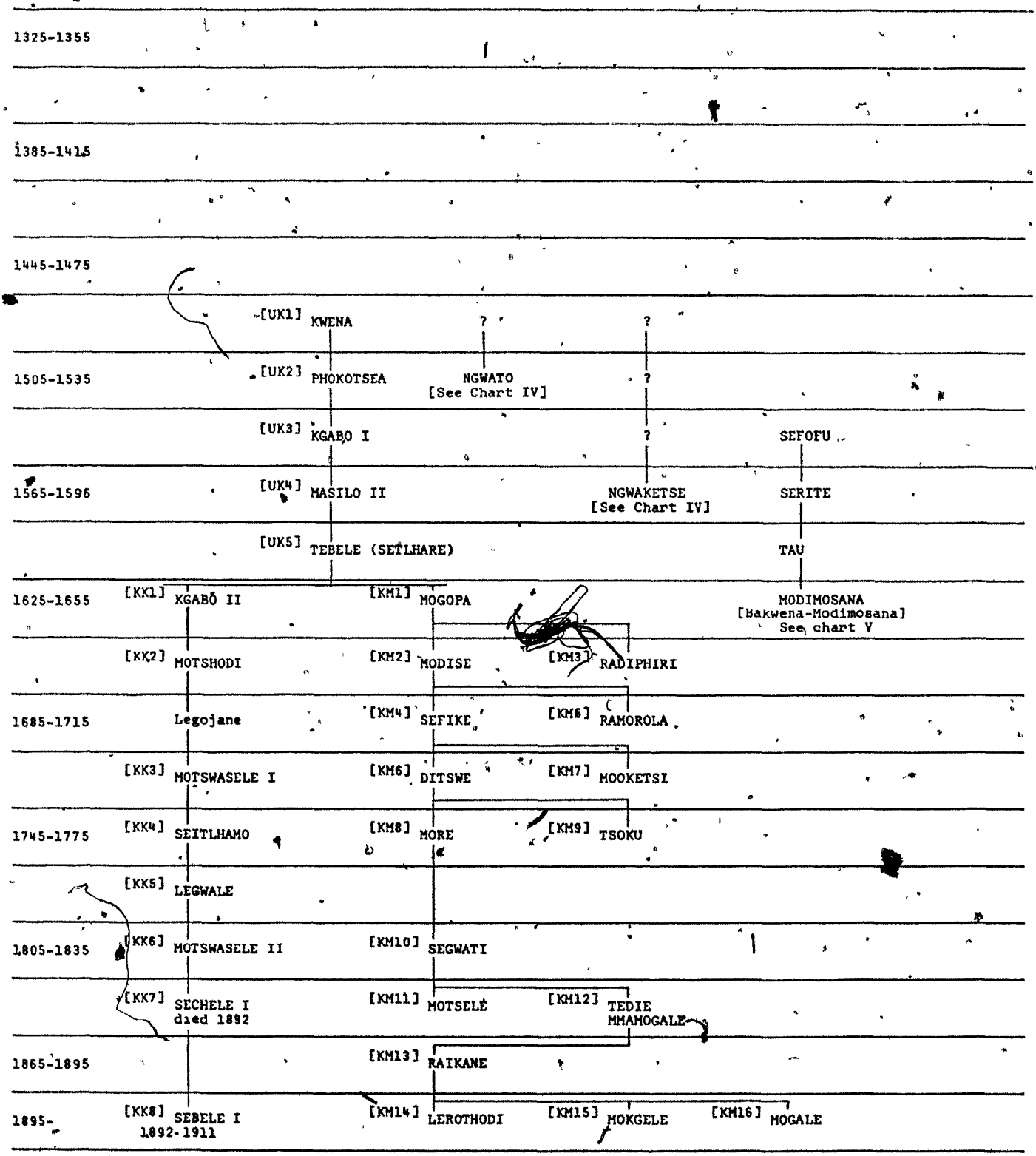


CHART IV: KWENA-KGABO CLUSTER

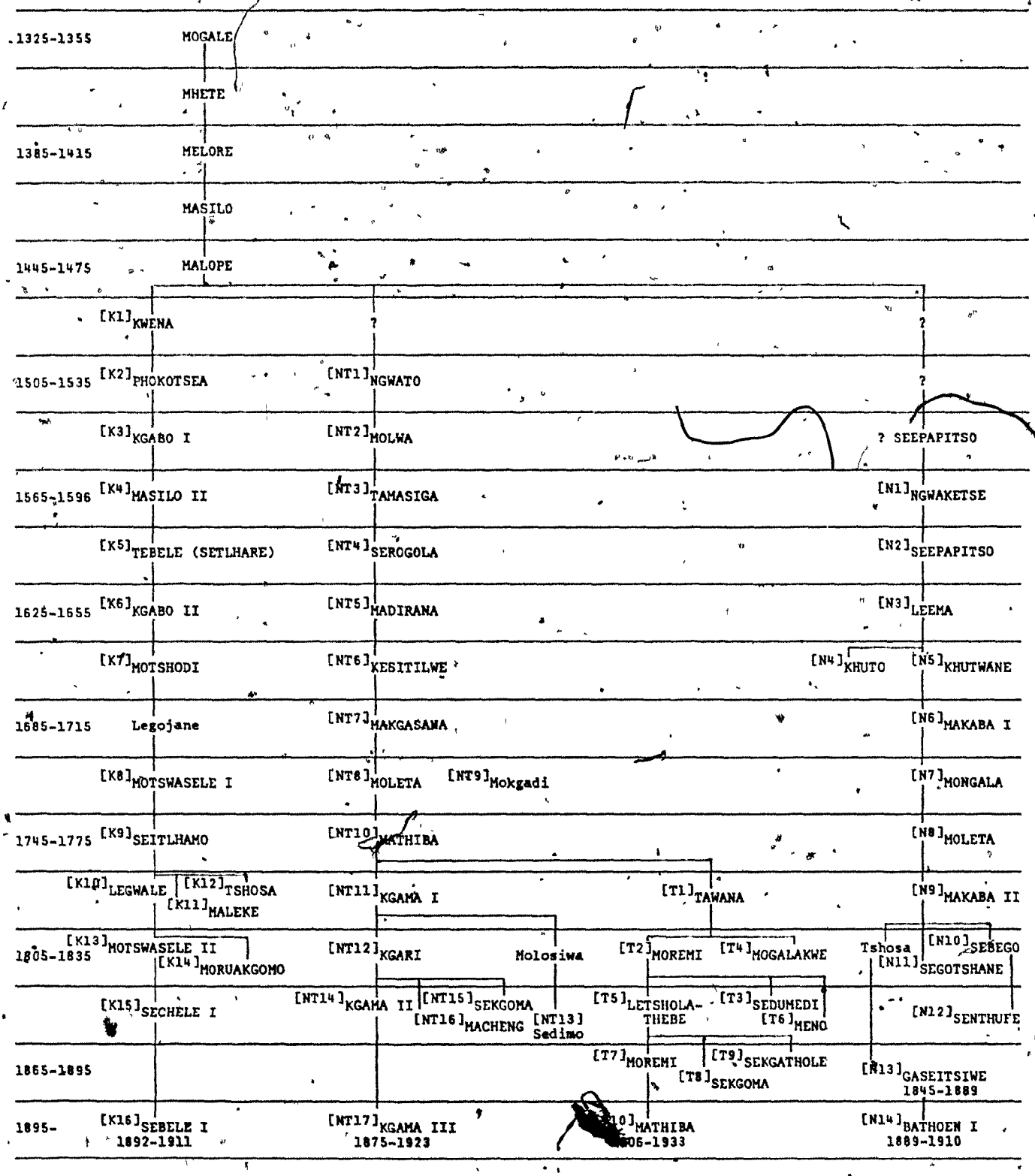


CHART V: BAKWENA-MODIMOSANA

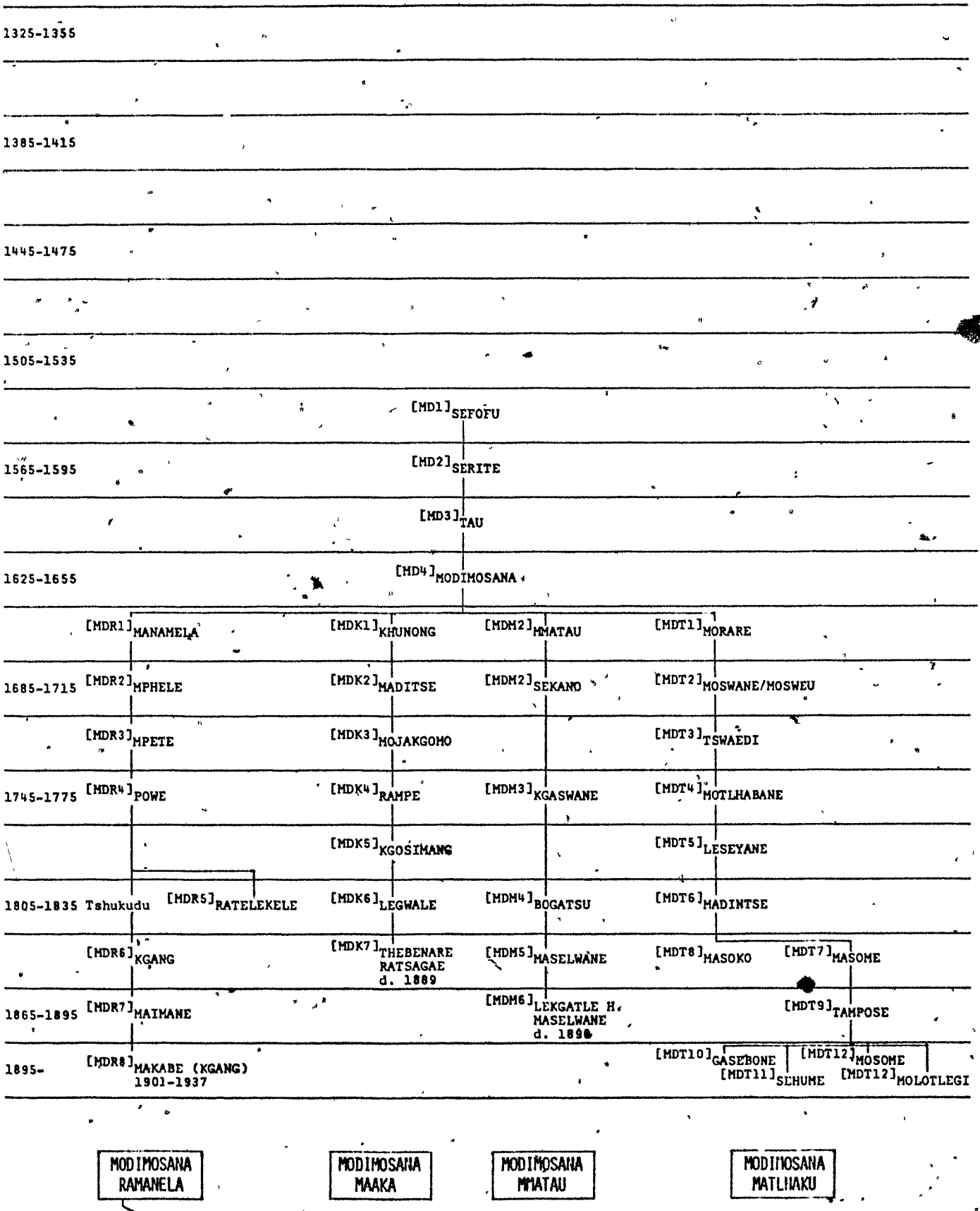


CHART VI: BAKGATA-BAPEDI CLUSTER

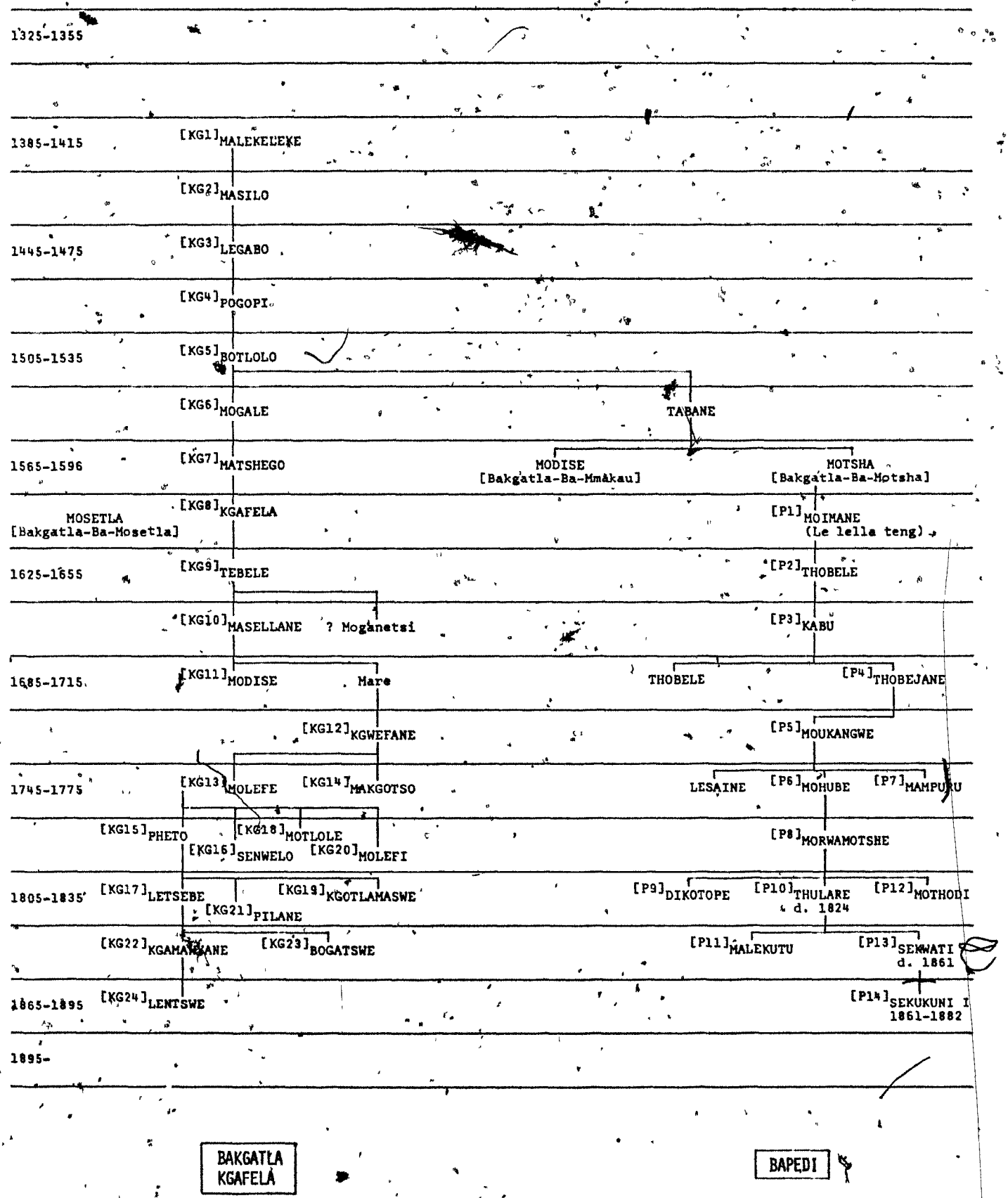
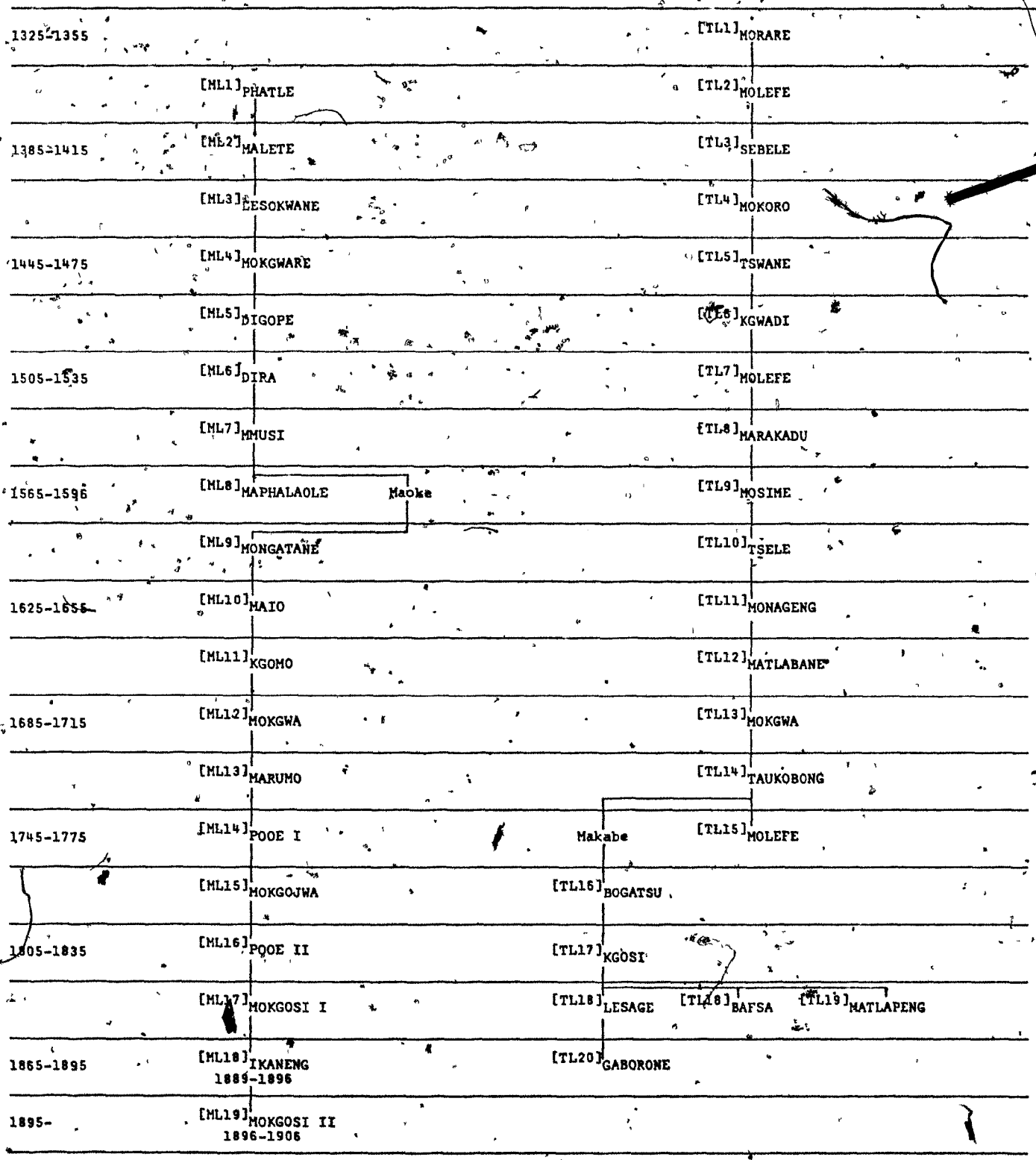


CHART VII: BAMALETE & BATLOKWA

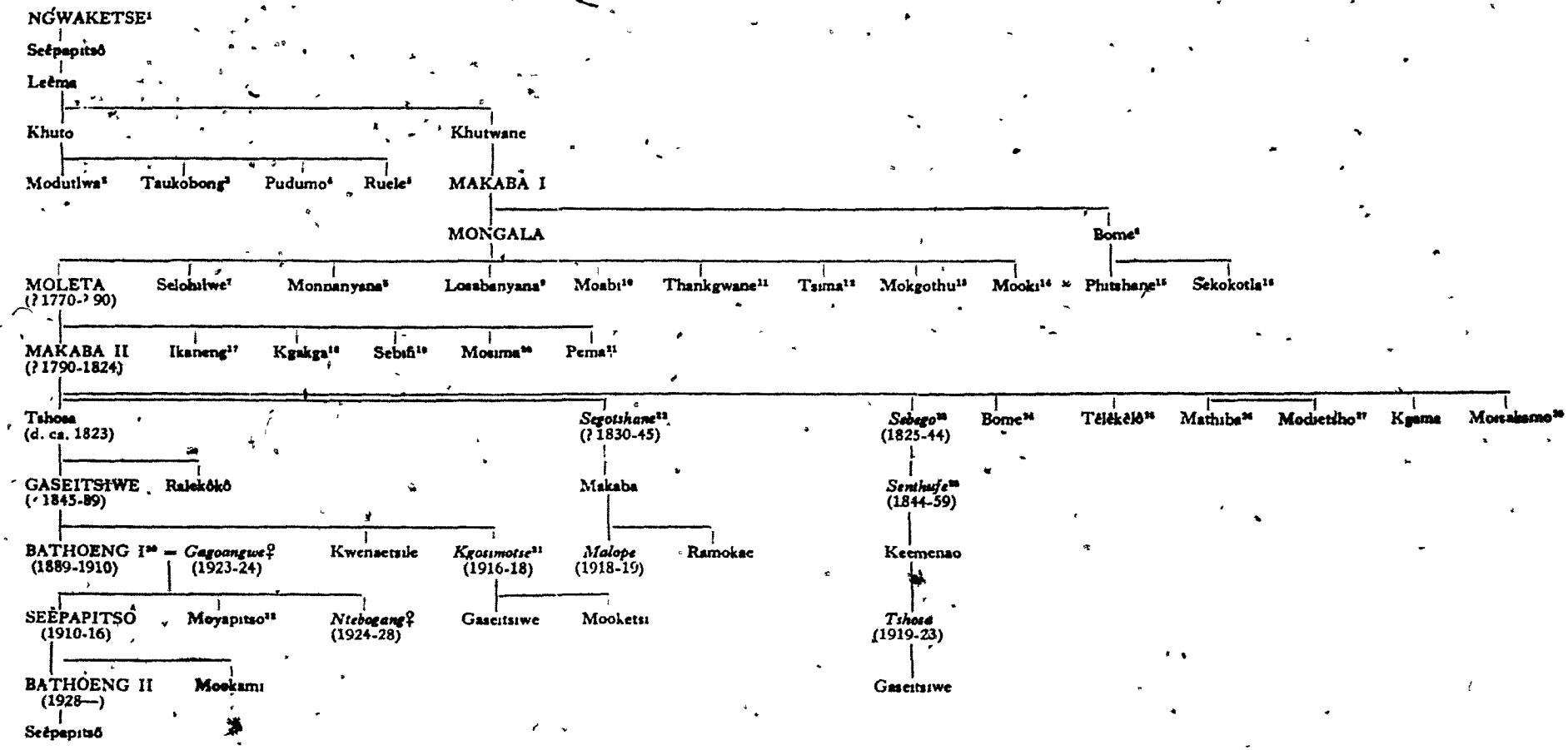


DATE	NAME OF MOPHATO	NAME OF ORIGIN
*1805	Ma-Thubapula	Mosime Moleta
*1810	Ma-Galatladi	Moloko?
*1820	Ma-Lau	Tshosa Makaba
*1825	Ma-Abakgomo	Sebego Mkaba
*1830	Ma-Yakantwa	Segotshane Makaba
*1836	Ma-Tloladibe	Mathiba Miakaba
*1843	Ma-Gatakgomo	Kgosi Gaseitsiwe
*1848	Ma-Yakathebe	Bareki?
*1854	Ma-Lokwana	Modietsho Mathiba
*1859	Ma-Losankwe	Morwatshipi?
1864	Ma-Isantwa	Kwelagobe Bome
*1875	Ma-Tlotlakgang	Kgosi Bathweng I
*1882	Ma-Lekathata	Keemenao Senthufi Sebego
*1887	Ma-Yakapula	Mokgadi Sekgatlanye Bome
*1896	Ma-Tshelaphala	Kaelo?
1901	Ma-Lau	Tshosa Keemenao
1909	Ma-Lwelanaga	Kgosi Seepapitso Bathweng

All the dates preceded by an asterisk are conjectural

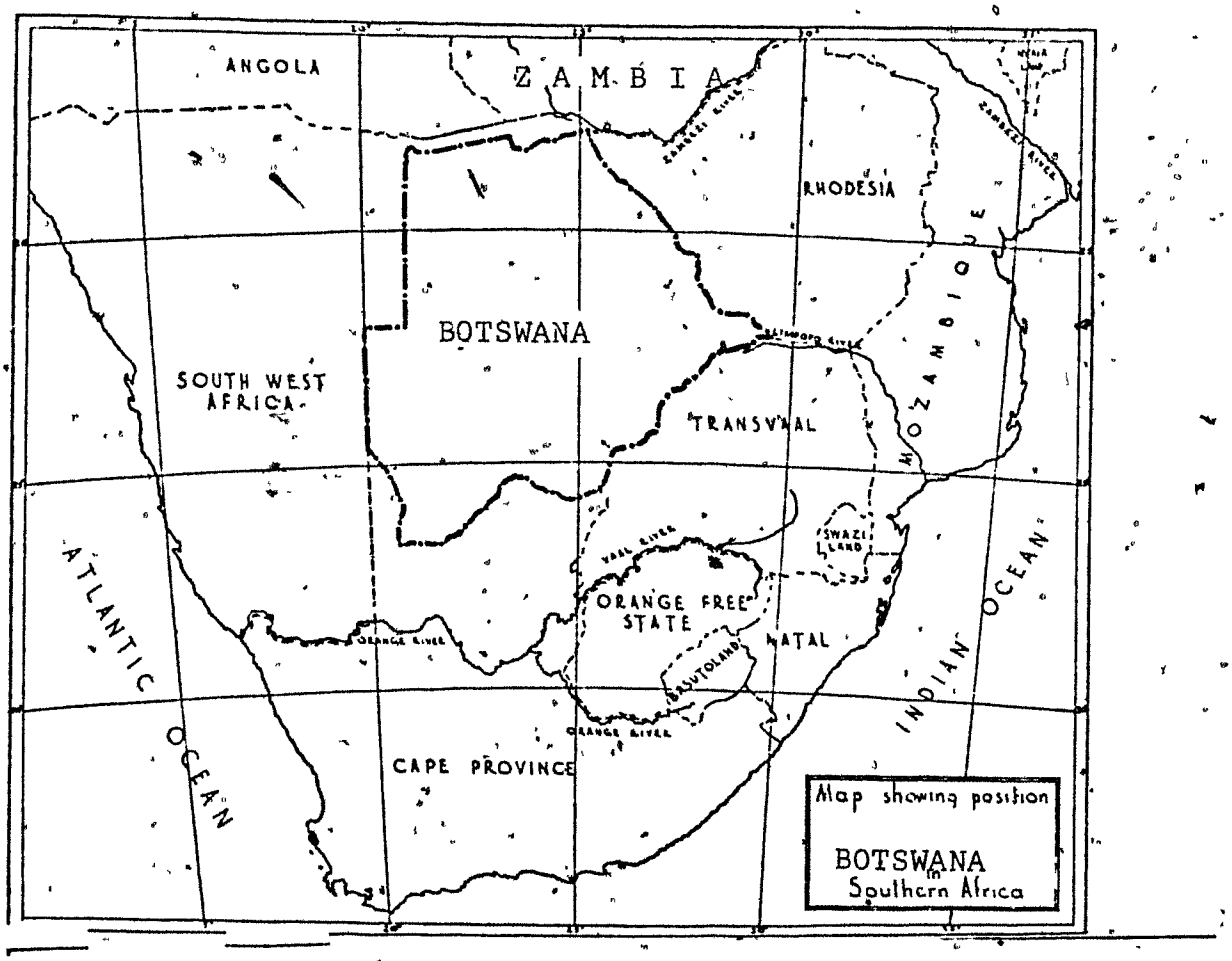
GENEALOGY OF THE NGWAKETSE RULING HOUSE

[The names of chiefs are given in CAPITALS: those of regents in *italics*]



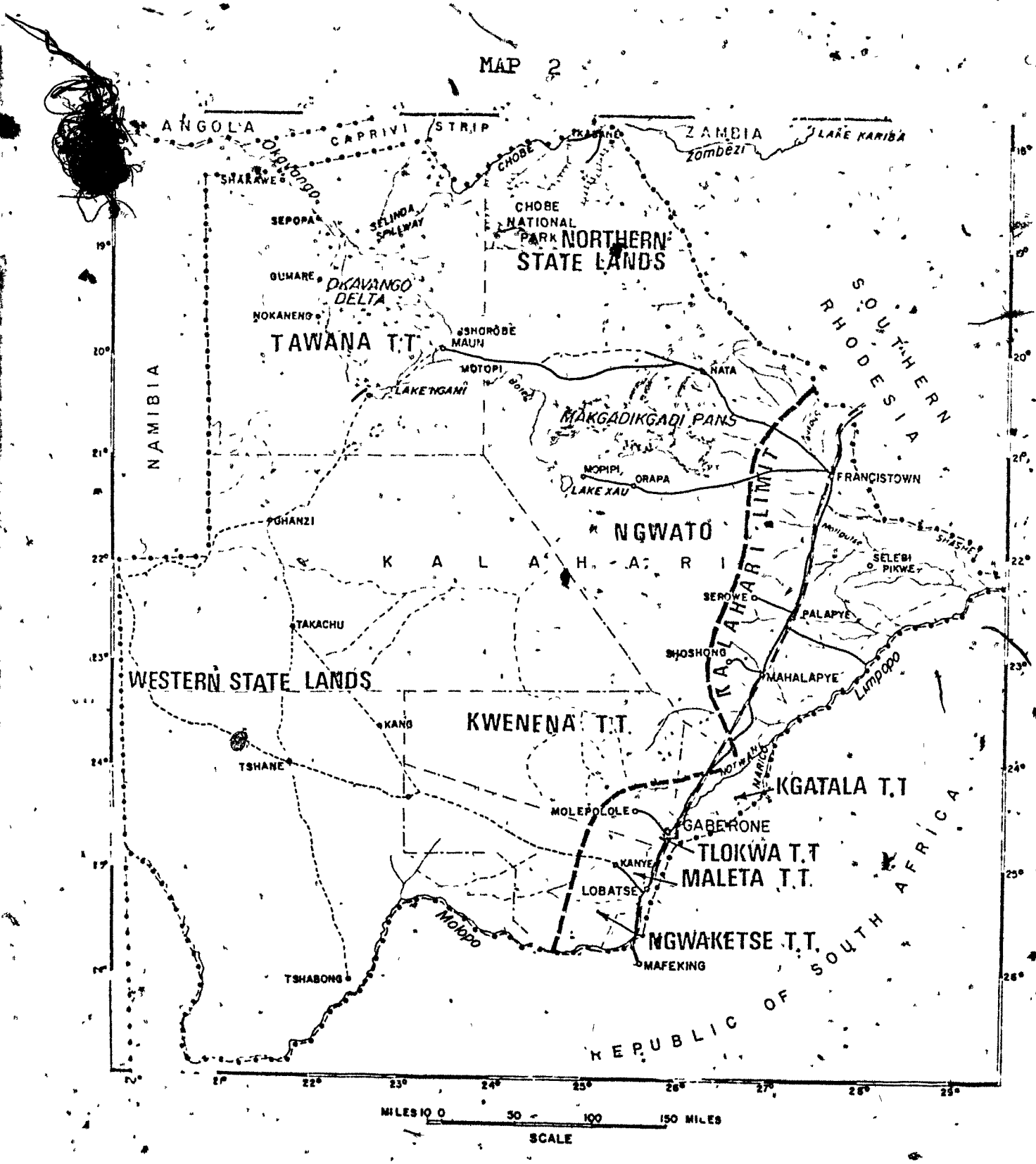
1. Titular founder of the tribe
2. Progenitor of MODUTLWA wards
3. „ „ TAUKOBONG, LOGABA, SEBONEGO wards
4. „ „ PUDUMO wards
5. „ „ RUELE „
6. „ „ BOME „
7. „ „ MONGALA (SELOHILWE) ward
8. „ „ MONGALA (MODUKANELE) ward
9. „ „ MORANYANA ward
10. „ „ MONGALA (MOABI) ward
11. „ „ MONGALA (MOLEME) „
12. Progenitor of MONGALA (TSIMA) ward
13. „ „ MONGALA (BODIBA) „
14. „ „ MOOKI ward
15. „ „ PHITSHANA ward
16. „ „ SEKOKOTLA „
17. „ „ MATLALO „
18. „ „ KGAKGA „
19. „ „ MASOSWANE „
20. „ „ MANARE „
21. „ „ SEGWANA „
22. „ „ SEGOTSHANE ward
23. Progenitor of SEBEGO ward. seceded with part of tribe
24. „ „ MAEAKWENA ward
25. „ „ TELEKELO „
26. „ „ MATHIBA „
27. „ „ MODIETSHO „
28. „ „ MOISAKAMO „
29. Ruled seceding part of tribe until reunion of 1859.
30. Progenitor of present ROYAL ward (KGOSING)
31. „ „ DINALEDI „
32. Hanged for murder of Seêpapitsô (1916).

MAP 1



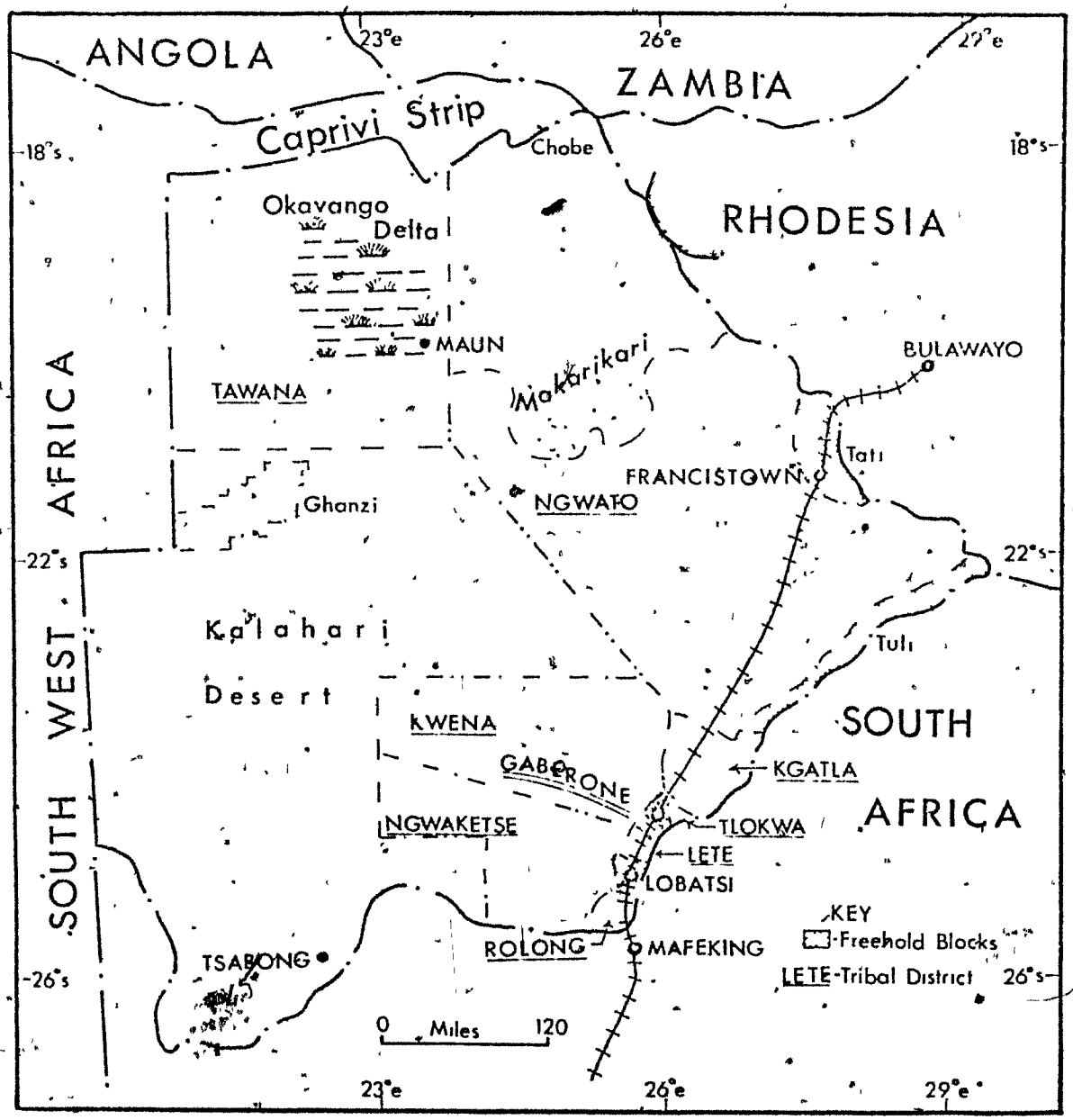
SOUTHERN AFRICA

MAP 2



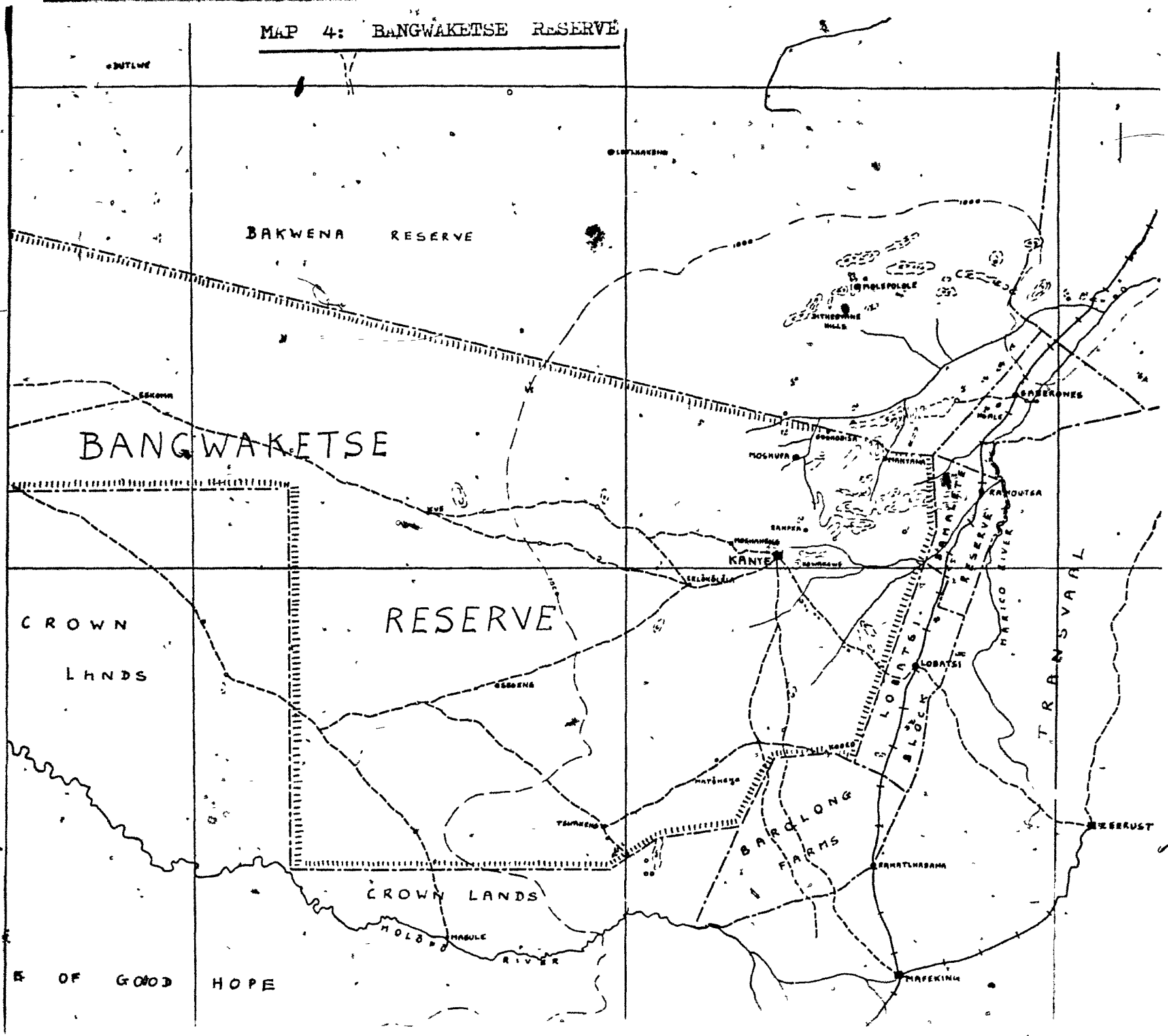
BOTSWANA KGALAGADI LIMITS

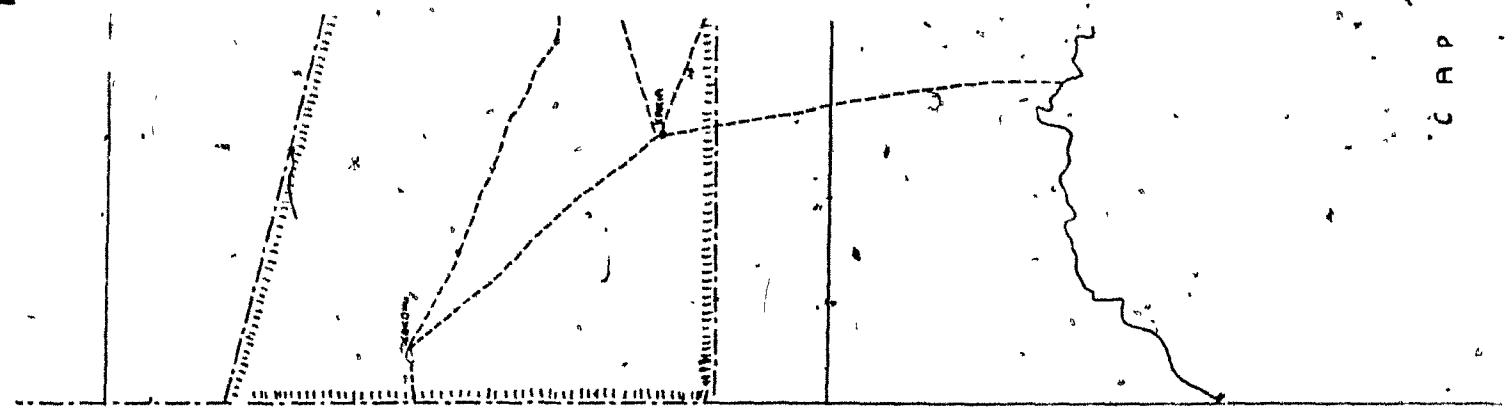
MAP 3



BOTSWANA

KWENA CLUSTER OF CHIEFDOMS


MAP 4: BANGWAKETSE RESERVE
BAKWENA RESERVE
BANGWAKETSE
RESERVE
CROWN
LANDS
CROWN LANDS
KANYE
MOSHUPA
RATSOUTSA
LOBATSI
BARLONG FARMS
BLOCK
LOBATSI
RESERVE
MARICO RIVER
TRANSVAAL
MAFEKING
OF GOOD HOPE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