

THE HURUTSHE IN THE MARICO DISTRICT OF THE TRANSVAAL,
1848 - 1914

BY

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ABSTRACT

The Hurutshe are a Tswana-speaking chiefdom who lived in the vicinity of the Marico (Madikwe) river on the South African Highveld and emerged as an identifiable community with a distinct political structure about 350 years ago. They enjoyed periods of political and economic dominance in the mid-to late seventeenth century and again in the late eighteenth century. Following the economic and political disruptions attendant upon European commercial activities and the growth of more centralised and powerful African states in South Africa, they were propelled from their homeland in 1822-23. They returned only in 1848 to face the difficulties of Trekker overlordship. After a decade of political and economic pressures the general patterns of precolonial life were restored in their new reserve. A re-integrated Hurutshe social order provided the basis for agricultural innovation and expansion. The encroaching colonial order and the merchant and industrial economy inexorably drew them in to closer relations with these systems, and into direct involvement in the contest between Boer and Britain for control of the South African hinterland. Consequently the nature of reserve life changed as men, women and chiefs extended or took up new occupations and activities which cut across or restructured previous social, political and economic relationships. After the South African War new challenges and opportunities presented themselves as a consequence of the qualitatively different nature of British colonial rule and the increased economic scope afforded to rural African producers. Thus a combination of factors - a favourable environment, a cohesive society and the lack of competitive white agriculture - provided the basis for economic stability and even accumulation among certain categories of Hurutshe producers until well into the twentieth century. Hurutshe society was not untouched however, for subsequent events near the middle of the century were to reveal the depth of social distinctions and antagonisms that undoubtedly had their roots in the earlier years of their history.

ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

The following abbreviations have been used in this thesis.

BNA	Botswana National Archives
HMS	Hermannsburg Missionary Society
JAH	Journal of African History
JSAS	Journal of Southern African Studies
LMS	London Missionary Society
OHSA	Oxford History of South Africa
RM	Resident Magistrate
SAR	South African Republic
SNA	Secretary of Native Affairs
TA	Transvaal Archives
UWL	University of the Witwatersrand Library

Glossary

bogadi	- bridewealth
bogwera	- male initiation rites
bojale	- female initiation rites
botlhanka	- a form of dependence
kgotla	- public meeting
khuduthamaga	- close advisors of chief
landdros	- SAR official equivalent of a magistrate
mafisa	- cattle for loan
mephato	- age - regiments
veldcornet	- local district official with mainly military duties
volksraad	- the parliament of the SAR

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Abstract	ii
Abbreviations and Glossary	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Genealogy	opp.81
<u>Maps</u>	opp.66
i) The Study Area	opp.32
ii) Marico Veld Types	opp.188
iii) The Hurutshe Reserve	opp.222
iv) The Western Border of the Reserve (1882)	

INTRODUCTION

1

- I) - THE SCOPE AND APPROACH
- II) - SOURCES
 - a) Sources for Precolonial Hurutshe History
 - b) Archival Sources

CHAPTER ONE - THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

29

- I) - THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING
- II) - THE HURUTSHE BEFORE THE DIFAQANE
 - a) c.1200-1750
 - b) Centralisation and State Formation c.1750-1790
 - c) The Period of Conflict c.1790-1820
- III) - THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF PRECOLONIAL HURUTSHE SOCIETY
- IV) - THE INTENSIFICATION OF REGIONAL VIOLENCE - THE DIFAQANE
- V) - "AN INVOLVED MAP OF NATIVE POLITICS"
- VI) - THE MARICO TREKKERS

CHAPTER TWO - "THE DOG OF THE BOERS" - THE HURUTSHE, 1849-1859

94

- I) - SETTLING IN THE RESERVE
- II) - RELATIONS WITH THE TREKKERS
- III) - STABILISING THE POLITY
 - a) Relations with African Neighbours
 - b) New Missionaries

CHAPTER THREE - STRENGTHENING THE POLITY, 1859-1875

122

- I) - THE WIDER ECONOMIC SETTING - MERCHANT CAPITAL, FISCAL INSTABILITY AND THE MARICO "JAGTERSGEMEENSKAP"

	PAGE
II) - THE EXPANDING HURUTSHE ECONOMY: "RICH AND FRIENDLY ... TRIBES"	
III) - CHIEFLY CONTROL OVER PRODUCTION	
IV) - INTERNAL TENSIONS	
V) - EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
a) The Missionaries	
b) The Trekkers	
 <u>CHAPTER FOUR - PARTITION AND CRISIS -</u>	
<u>A TURNING POINT IN HURUTSHE HISTORY, 1875-1884.</u>	159
I) - THE ANNEXATION OF THE TRANSVAAL	
II) - CIVIL STRIFE	
III) - LAND APPORTIONMENT AND THE QUESTION OF BOUNDARIES	
IV) - RESISTANCE AND DISPOSSESSION - THE HURUTSHE AT DINOKANA	
V) - REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THE HURUTSHE	
 <u>CHAPTER FIVE - THE MAKING OF THE RESERVE ECONOMY, 1884-1899</u>	188
I) - POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL	
II) - THE HURUTSHE AND THE STATE - THE CONTEST OVER LABOUR "HOLDING A THUMB TO THE THROAT"	
III) - LABOUR MIGRANCY AND THE EXPERIENCE OF EMPLOYMENT	
IV) - TRADERS AND CONCESSIONAIRES	
V) - EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
 <u>CHAPTER SIX - A TIME OF FLUX - THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR AND THE RECONSTRUCTING OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1899-1914</u>	227
I) - THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, 1899-1902	
II) - NEW PRESSURES, NEW ADAPTATIONS; HURUTSHE SOCIETY AND ECONOMY, 1902-1914	
a) The Aims of Reconstruction	
b) Relations with the Transvaal Colonial State: "A plethora of Instructions"	
c) Economic Developments in the Hurutshe Reserve	
d) Social Structure and Social Relations in the Reserve.	
 <u>CONCLUSION</u>	271
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	284

INTRODUCTION

I) The Scope and Approach

Nearly twenty years ago, a pioneering "revisionist" historian noted that the Hurutshe was a "community of whom a detailed history is urgently needed".¹ This thesis seeks to provide precisely such a history, giving the fullest account of the Hurutshe precolonial past yet written, and tracing political and economic events among the Hurutshe between 1848 and 1913. The period chosen for detailed study is essentially the "colonial" era of Hurutshe history. During this period the Hurutshe occupied territory in the Marico district of the Western Transvaal, from 1848 under the authority of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republic (ZAR or SAR) and then, after the British colonial interregnum following the South African War, as subjects of the Union of South Africa.

Since the early 1970s, historical research has vastly increased our knowledge (both empirically and conceptually) of nineteenth century African societies in southern Africa. Much of this new work has been by scholars employing analytical tools based on a materialist or political economy approach. They attempt to comprehend political, economic and social change in their interrelations, and they look at issues of production, class formation and class relations. This thesis has been influenced by these concerns, and consequently seeks to trace and analyse political and economic changes taking place in Hurutshe society.

In order to examine the effects of the imposition of colonial rule on the Hurutshe and the means and forms of their incorporation into an industrial society it is necessary to look back into their history

¹M. Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana Peoples Before 1800", in L. Thompson (ed), African Societies in Southern Africa, (London, 1969), p.109.

and to identify the key features of the precapitalist social formation. This provides the background against which it is possible to examine continuities or transformations in their society. The second section of chapter One of the thesis thus examines precolonial Hurutshe history and the character of the social formation in about 1820.

During the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century the Hurutshe social formation was subject to numerous upheavals which emerged out of the fundamental remodelling of relations of production and power in South Africa. In 1848 the Hurutshe polity was still struggling to constitute itself anew after the depredations of the difagane. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century it was confronted both by a Boer society seeking to expand and accumulate resources and by increasingly vigorous merchant capital extending commerce and stimulating commodity production on the western highveld. In the latter decades of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century Hurutshe society was inevitably drawn into the vortex of an industrialising South Africa which ultimately led to the social and economic restructuring of society, both urban and rural. The cumulative effects of these changes acted as a powerful solvent of crucial elements of pre-capitalist social relations.

However these new forces had also a contradictory role, identified in comparable instances, in preserving and entrenching existing elements of 'traditional' society. In a study of the "Janus Face" of merchant capital, Eugene Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese contend that merchant capital in a wider sense played an "overwhelmingly" conservative role in colonial societies, "feed[ing] off existing modes of production ... and resist[ing] all attempts to introduce revolutionary transformations into the economy".² A similarly

²E. Fox-Genovese and E. Genovese, Fruits of Merchant Capital, (Oxford, 1983), p.5.

paradoxical role can be ascribed to merchant capital in mid-nineteenth century South Africa. On a political level the weak, underpopulated and divided South African Republic was never able to dominate larger or independent neighbouring African communities. Depending on the circumstances of the locality and period it accordingly sought forms of accommodation and co-existence with African peoples in the Transvaal. Even in the twentieth century South African capitalist state, as Wolpe's pioneering work uncovered, elements of precapitalist production were preserved to ensure capital's need for a cheap and easily obtainable supply of labour.³ These paradoxes ensured that social transformation was not linear. Precapitalist societies like the Hurutshe did not march from the status of independent cultivators to peasants, and thence to impoverished cultivators to proletarians in easily recognisable steps down the stairwell to the working-class.

My work on the Hurutshe has benefited throughout from the growing corpus of literature on the precolonial and early colonial history of the Tswana, particularly those societies of present-day Botswana.⁴ All of these histories are indebted to the pioneering

³H. Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap labour-power in South Africa: from Segregation to Apartheid', Economy and Society, vol.1, (1972).

⁴See M. Legassick, "The Griqua, the Sotho - Tswana and the Missionaries, 1790 - 1840", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1969; Q.N. Parsons, "Khama III, the Bamangwato and the British, with Special Reference to 1895-1923", unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1973; M. Kinsman, "Notes on the Southern Tswana Social Formation", unpublished seminar paper, University of Cape Town, 1980; M. Kinsman, "Beasts of Burden: The Subordination of Southern Tswana Women", Journal of South African Studies, (JSAS) vol.II, no.I. (1983); T. Tlou, A History of Ngamiland, 1750 to 1906, (Gaborone, 1985); L. Ngcongco, "Aspects of the History of the Bangwaketse up to 1910", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1979; G.Y. Okahiro, "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators and Traders; Interaction and Change in the Kgalagadi, Nineteenth Century", unpublished D.Phil. dissertation, UCLA, 1976; G.Y. Okahiro, "Pre-colonial Economic change among the Tlhaping, c.1705 - 1817", International Journal of African Historical Studies,

research of the eminent anthropologist Isaac Schapera. The materialist historians particularly, have differed from Schapera in stressing the inegalitarian and differentiated nature of these chiefdoms. These works have enriched my construction of the structure, organisation and history of Hurutshe society and has opened up possibilities for a comparative assessment. This comparison has not been limited by the fact that the Hurutshe, from 1848, were part of the SAR state and theoretically were set apart from Tswana chiefdoms to the west, for, until 1885 the border remained vague and artificial and interaction occurred continuously. Furthermore, accounts of the histories of the Ngwaketse, Rolong, Tlhaping, Kwenana and Kgatla peoples offer interesting alternative viewpoints on Hurutshe history. However, with some exceptions, notably Shillington's study on the southern Tswana and Parson's treatment of the Ngwato under Khama III, nearly all of these works deal with the Tswana in the pre-industrial era of Southern Africa's development.

In examining the impact of colonial rule on an African community, this work is similar in its focus and enquiry to that conducted by a number of other scholars in Southern African history in the past decade or more. This study intersects with, shares some of the preoccupations, and draws on similar studies, particularly the work of Delius, Bonner, Guy, Peires, Shillington, Beinart, Kimble, Harries, Cobbing and Wright and Manson.⁵ Similarly the theoretical underpinnings informing much of this research has been incorporated

vol.17, no.I, (1984); F. Nangati, "Constraints on a Precolonial Economy; the Bakwena State c 1820 - 1885", Pula, vol.2, no.I, (1980). A number of research essays by undergraduate students from the University of Botswana have opened up some interesting perspectives of local history. T. Tlou and A. Campbell, A History of Botswana, (Gaborone, 1984), incorporates in a less academic form many of the substantive points of recent research into Botswana's pre-history and pre-colonial history.

⁵p. Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, (Johannesburg, 1983); P. Bonner Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires, (Cambridge, 1983); J. Guy,

into this history.

This thesis also benefits from analyses by Trapido, Delius and Keegan of the political economy of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State and the nature of settler society in the interior of South Africa.⁶ Geographically their studies are confined more to the central, eastern and southern highveld. Another difference is that this body of writing deals with regions in which, generally, settler penetration was deeper and colonial subjugation more intensive. In examining the history of a Tswana-speaking community in the Marico district of Transvaal this work presents a local study of an hitherto unexplored region, thereby adding to our understanding of the complex relationship between white and black societies, and between various classes and groups within them, on the South African highveld.

This research also pursues a second dominant theme in South Africa

The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom, (London, 1979); J.B. Peires, The House of Phalo, (Johannesburg, 1981); K. Shillington, The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana, (Johannesburg, 1985); J. Kimble, "Towards an Understanding of the Political Economy of Lesotho: The Origins of Commodity Production and Migrant Labour, 1830-c.1885", M.A. thesis, University of Lesotho, 1978. P. Harries, "Labour Migration from Mozambique to South Africa; with special reference to the Delagoa Bay hinterland, c.1862-1897", Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1983; J. Cobbing, "The Ndebele Under the Khumalos, 1820-1896", D.Phil. Lancaster University, 1976. J. Wright and A. Manson, The Hlubi Chiefdom in Zululand/Natal, (Ladysmith, 1983). Many of the essays in S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds), Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa (London 1980), pursue the same concerns.

⁶S. Trapido, "Reflections on Land, Office and Wealth in the South African Republic, 1850-1900", in Marks and Atmore, Economy and Society, pp.350-362; S. Trapido, "Landlord and Tenant in a Colonial Economy, The Transvaal, 1880-1910", JSAS, vol 5, no.I, (1978), pp.26-58; P. Delius and S. Trapido, "Inboekselings and Oorlams: The Creation and Transformation of a Servile Class", in B. Bozzoli (ed), Town and Countryside in the Transvaal, (Johannesburg, 1983), pp.53-88; T. Keegan, Rural Transformations in Industrialising South Africa, (Johannesburg, 1986), particularly pp.1-50.

historiography in recent years, one which flows from, and certainly interlocks with, local studies of African societies in rural areas. This is a concern for rural or agrarian history. Agrarian history is not a separate category from "other" forms of historical investigation; but it is important nevertheless to try and define more accurately its essential features. Its focus is different from that of agricultural history with its narrowly conceived concern for the impact of state policy and new technology upon agricultural output and distribution. Agrarian history rather concentrates on the types of contact between ethnically and ecologically distinct and often diverse communities with the regional or wider economy, and pays particular attention to the interplay of forces and classes located in these areas. Rural history points to, and exposes in a way that more abstract studies have failed to do, the process of accumulation and dispossession in the countryside. It frequently explores also the experiences of rural communities in the process of both looking back at their precolonial past and engaging with a new industrialising South Africa. It covers then a chronologically broad period from the precapitalist period to recent years, (though some historians consider its primary focus to be on the post-mining period, before which, with the exception of the Cape, the distinction between urban and rural history is inappropriate).

This is not to suggest that the "new grouping" of the social historians, as they have been dubbed,⁷ have not been alert to the need to examine or refer to South Africa's precapitalist formations; indeed timely reminders of this need have periodically been

⁷M. Morris, "Social History and the Transition to Capitalism in the South African Countryside", Africa Perspective, vol.I, nos 5 & 6, (1988).

issued.⁸ Nor is it to suggest that the broader forces for change in society should be neglected or left to those specialists seeking to understand the nature of the South African state and its particular strategies at given points in time. In a review of the range of issues explored by rural historians, Beinart, Delius and Trapido make the point that their "pursuit of process ... has forced historians to locate landlords and tenants within wider contexts and made them aware that the farm cannot be abstracted and isolated as a unit of study".⁹ At the same time the agricultural policies of the state have a bearing on the lives of rural communities which the agrarian historians would be remiss to ignore.

A further branch in the corpus of research on rural South African history has been an investigation into, and a rethinking of, the issue of rural resistance. In the period of Hurutshe history studied in this thesis, resistance, both covert and open, comprises one of the several varied and complex responses of the community to the changing economic and political conditions they encountered. Some of the issues and interests that have concerned historians studying rural resistance history are echoed on this study, though most previous research on the topic has been located within the (later) context of the rise of nationalism and the remarkable spread of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) in the South African countryside.¹⁰

Three recent publications encompass much of the tenor and direction of this research into the various aspects of agrarian history outlined above. Keegan's Rural Transformations in Industrialising South Africa (1986) examines the emergence of capitalist agriculture

⁸See T.O. Ranger, "Growing from the Roots: Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa", JSAS, vol.5, no.1, (1978), and J. Lewis, "The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry: A Critique and Reassessment", JSAS, vol.II, no 1, (1984). This is not however the substantive point in Lewis' argument.

⁹W. Beinart, P. Delius, S. Trapido eds), Putting a Plough to the Ground, (Johannesburg, 1986), p.16.

¹⁰H. Bradford, A Taste of Freedom, The ICU in Rural South Africa, 1924-1930, (Johannesburg, 1987).

on the highveld and the "complex process whereby black rural production was undermined as white farming gathered momentum".¹¹ Beinart, Delius and Trapido's Putting a Plough to the Ground (1986), is a collection of regional studies of rural society in South Africa based around the theme of accumulation and impoverishment in the making of the South African countryside, by the mid-twentieth century starkly divided into capitalised white farmlands and (for the most part) denuded and underproductive reserves. In the introduction the editors present a valuable summary of the differing approaches adopted by South African agrarian historians, and point out the significance of the advances and reinterpretations made from the 1920's. Beinart, Delius and Trapido suggest that the collection of essays in Putting a Plough to the Ground begin to ask some of the "unposed questions" to the unresolved problems of South African rural history.¹²

While these questions help to elucidate problems of accumulation and dispossession and to examine forms of tenancy in certain areas of the South African countryside, the reserves still remained a relatively forgotten factor. The third of these publications is Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa (1987) a series of thematically linked essays by William Beinart and Colin Bundy. As the title suggests it is the "hidden" struggles of rural communities against the forms of their oppression that provides the focus of the book. In doing so they fill a previous lacuna in the study of rural society by exploring the breadth and complexity of life "away in the locations". This work reasserts the significance of individual (African) agency and grapples with the difficult task of determining the nature of rural African political consciousness. Finally the publication breaks new ground by indicating that rural communities

¹¹Keegan, Rural Transformation, introduction, xiv.

¹²Beinart et al, Putting a Plough to the Ground, p.15.

possessed a capacity to understand and participate in modern political processes and institutions; a capacity which hitherto has only been accorded to nationalist or trade union organisations.

These publications share a similar approach which categorise them as belonging to the so-called "new social history". In essence this approach was a reaction against the conventional and narrow focus of economic and constitutional history in the post-war period. It also offered a critique of the authoritarianism and economic determinism of Marxist historians, and of the institutional focus of labour history written within a Marxist tradition.¹³ The form in which it developed however, revealed the wide range of intellectual and sociological concerns prevalent in Europe and America in the post-war period. Nevertheless the "new social history" did share certain broad themes and concerns, which have been summarised by Johnson. These are: a need to break from elitist notions of culture and to raise the idea of working-class culture; to treat with suspicion economic or rationalist formal theory; to emphasise "experience" as opposed to functional analyses and accounts of social experience; and to express a humanistic concern for oppressed or historically "forgotten" peoples.¹⁴ The most significant propagators of these concerns were Raymond Williams, George Rude, Christopher Hill and Eric Hobsbawm in the late 1950s, Hobsbawm and E.P. Thompson in the 1960s and the contributors to the British History Workshop movement (and journal of the same name) in the 1970s. The new social historians sought to write history "from the bottom up" in the belief that the view from below, in revealing the complexity and diversity of responses to state initiatives, provides a more fertile investigative field for agrarian historians. It also restored to the

¹³E.J. Hobsbawm, "Labor History and Ideology", Journal of Social History, vol.vii.(1980).

¹⁴R. Johnson, "Culture and the Historians", in J. Clarke, C. Critcher and R. Johnson (eds.), (Working Class Culture; Studies in History and Theory, (London, 1980).

dominated classes a role in the shaping not only of their own history but, mainly through forms of resistance to state initiatives, a sense in which they could shape or define state policy itself.

Much of the social historians work is critical of structuralism, especially, in the South African context, in the writings of Morris.¹⁵ Morris draws on Lenin's explanation of the possible routes to capitalist relations of production in the countryside. Lenin suggested there were two transformational paths; the one where the state, in conjunction with a landed aristocracy conceives and actively promotes the transition from "above", the second from "below", where progressive elements of the peasantry initiate changes in rural production. In both cases the old landowning economy was transformed into an entrepreneurial capitalist economy. Morris compared the development of capitalism in South Africa with the first of these, named by Lenin the "Prussian path" or the "Junker road" because of its application on the large estates of east Elbian Germany, and used the model to create his own theory regarding the transition to capitalism in South Africa. Morris' generalised view of an evolutionary development to capitalism, pursued in consensus by an identifiable class of emergent capitalist farmers who imposed their programme on the rest of rural society was dissimilar to that which emerged from the research of the agrarian social historians.

To these agrarian social historians the evidence provided by their focus on the propertyless rural classes suggested that the growth of an industrial economy was not accompanied by a similar transition to

¹⁵M. Morris, "The Development of Capitalism in South African Agriculture", Economy and Society, vol.5, no.3, (1976); M. Morris, "The State and the Development of Capitalist Social Relations in the South African countryside: A Process of Class Struggle", unpublished PhD. thesis, University of Sussex, 1981. It would be a great benefit if Morris' work were to become more widely accessible.

a rural proletariat on the land. Nor could this transition neatly conform to the period of the late 1920s. Morris' critics argued that a rent-paying peasantry continued to find ways of avoiding the slide into wage labour. Furthermore Morris' class of Boer landowners, mistakenly characterised as undifferentiated in the latter half of the nineteenth century, was seen as incapable of accumulating sufficient capital to initiate or sustain highly capitalised farming. Many Boer landowners continued to keep African tenants on their land, and sharecropping, a common though not necessarily uncontested relationship, spread rapidly over a vast area of the highveld surviving almost to the mid-twentieth century as a bridge between "a relatively peripheral colonial rural economy linked into capitalist markets ... and a more explicitly capitalist agriculture in which there was no place for black household production".¹⁶ Central to this view was the rebuttal of the idea that the 1913 Natives Land Act effectively delivered the coup de grace to the era of peasant production and enterprise.¹⁷ According to Keegan, "there was no way that the transformation of productive relations could be artificially engineered by state intervention whilst the capitalist base of so much settler agriculture remained meagre".¹⁸

¹⁶Keegan, Rural Transformations, p.198; For a discussion of land tenure in the twentieth century see also Bradford, "A Taste of Freedom", pp.34-38.

¹⁷The 1913 Land Act obliged the payment of rent by African tenants to be in the form of labour and limited the number of tenants on each farm to five families. The Act also prevented any further land purchases by Africans outside areas scheduled as reserves. Morris' view of the Land Act was influenced strongly by Bundy's pioneering research on the growth of an African peasantry in South Africa. Bundy, in attempting to periodise the "fall" of an African peasantry, suggested that the Act marked the end of the period of peasant productivity. C. Bundy, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry, (London, 1979). This idea was expanded into a view of the Act as a decisive act of state intervention to propel South African agriculture into capitalist production.

¹⁸T. Keegan, "The Sharecropping Economy, African Class Formation and the 1913 Land Act in the Highveld Maize Belt" in B. Bozzoli (ed.), Town and Countryside in the Transvaal, pp.118-119.

It should be noted that the incomplete or uneven transformation of indigenous economies to fully-fledged capitalist relations of production is not a phenomenon restricted to South Africa. A similar pattern has been observed in many rural communities in Africa, Asia and South America. This has given rise to several explanations regarding the form of capitalist transition. The most notable of these are the theory of global or "world capitalist" development, the underdevelopment or dependency theory of capitalist development and the theory of the articulation of modes of production. The existence of share-contracts in the sub-Saharan Africa from the beginning of this century is also widespread. They reveal a good deal of variation and flexibility in different regions of the continent, "underlining the contention that the transformation of African agriculture takes place differentially over space and time".¹⁹ However what makes the transition to capitalist relations such an intriguing and complex field of study in South Africa is the fact of its early, rapid and intense advancement into an industrial state, and the peculiarities of South African society,²⁰ amongst which the contrast of productive capitalised farms with depleted rural reserves and the co-existence of pre-capitalist and capitalist productive and social relations figure as major anomalies.

A rejoinder to the criticism of the social historians has been issued, though it has not stimulated to the same extent the debate between structuralists and social historians as in Britain and

Town and Countryside in the Transvaal, pp.118-119.

¹⁹K. Swindell, Farm Labour, (Cambridge, 1985), p.111.

²⁰I refer here to the divisions in race, wealth and the disproportionate access to political power. This has posed a problem to some analysts of the South African state seeking to explain the growth of such a "deviant" child of the capitalist family.

Europe.²¹ Morris countered that the writings of the "new" social historians revoked the earlier theoretical advances of Marxist analysis. He charged that instead of giving sharper definition to "key concepts" of Marxist analysis, as the social historians claimed to do, there had been no theoretical advances made at all. Morris reposed the pertinent question to which he considered there had been no answers:

"Where is the conceptualisation of capitalism? Where is the analysis of the political implications of the particular form the transition to capitalism took for the state, the peasantry, sharecroppers and labour tenants? What of the Marxist theory of ground rent and the form of, and necessity for, different types of surplus value extraction?"²²

Most crucial in Morris' view was the need to theorise in all its political implications the transition to capitalism in the countryside²³ and he urged in effect a reopening of the discussions generated amongst historians (mainly Marxists) by Christopher Hill's The English Revolution 1640 and Maurice Dobb's Studies in the History of Capitalism, a debate which has persisted in an uneven manner since the 1940s.²⁴

²¹Much of this debate has been conducted in the History Workshop Journal (HWJ). See HWJ nos. 6, 7 and 8, 1978 and 1979. See also G. Eley and K. Nield, "Why Does Social History Ignore Politics?" in Social History, Vol.5 no.2, (1980). The source of the dialogue goes back further to the controversy between Perry Anderson and Edward Thompson, conducted in the New Left Review and Social Register in 1964 and 1965.

²²Morris, "Social history", p.14. See also the contributions of Murray and Krikler to this debate on p.16, fn.33.

²³Morris, "Social history", p.15.

²⁴The transition debate actually began before Dobb's Studies, in the early 1940s. It continued into the 1950s, was given new life by the republication of the early debates by New Left Books in 1976 and a further

It would be apt to recall the lack of resolution to this debate in the mid-1950s and to the problems and pitfalls it has presented to historians up to the present. These have been analysed by Tribe, who concluded that the attempts to periodise the transition to capitalism in a European context led to "crude generalisations about classes and political change" and that the debate itself has been "circumscribed by what is in effect a crude base-superstructure model of social formations".²⁵ Tribe identifies two major problems in the writing of Marxist history in Britain. The first is a "commitment to the analysis of contemporary capitalism through the method of genealogy; the second is the attempt to treat political forces as simply derivative, secondary to prior economic forces."²⁶ Once an attempt is made to pinpoint the transition to capitalism "serious lapses appear in the fabric of this genealogy - the process of transition at the economic level is revealed as one that unrolls spasmodically and not always in the prescribed direction."²⁷ The reason for these shortcomings, according to Tribe, is due to a too-great reliance on Marx so that "within the framework of Marx such a project is fraught with contradictions that render the outcome ambivalent".²⁸

lease of life by Fox-Genovese and Genovese in Fruits of Merchant Capital. For an account of the debate see K. Tribe, Genealogies of Capitalism, (London, 1981), pp.6-34.

²⁵Tribe, Genealogies, p.23, pp.26-27.

²⁶Tribe, Genealogies, p.31.

²⁷Tribe, Genealogies, p.32.

²⁸Tribe, Genealogies, p.34. The same point is made in A. Hussain and K. Tribe, Marxism and the Agrarian Question, vol.2, (London, 1981), pp.134-136. The authors assert that the "process of a return to Marx as the source of Marxism surreptitiously and continually reworks Marxism as and "unchanging totality" founded on the project of Capital." (p.134) They also point out that the "Agrarian question" was not posed within Marxist writing but arose in response to solutions suggested to specific problems facing Social Democratic organisations in the late nineteenth and

Added to these inherent problems which have particularly bedevilled British historians could be mentioned the point that European models of transition to capitalist agriculture, where agriculture was indigenously transformed through the contradictions of a feudal system that simply withered away, cannot be "transposed on pre-capitalist social formations where capitalism was implanted by force and colonial domination".²⁹ Yet a further difficulty about extending the term capitalist to an economic system is the multiplicity of characteristics that can be applied to capitalism and the difficulties attached to selecting central or common features of a capitalist system.

Morris' recent reproach has begun to evoke responses from the ranks of the revisionist social historians. Bradford in an initial reply stilled the debate in a quarrelsome swipe at all the contending ideologies, suggesting that a new era would eventually emerge out of South Africa's current political crisis which would in turn shape the course of intellectual thought. This new reality will, in Bradford's view, swallow the "old divisions and breathe new intellectual life" into the debate concerning agrarian transition.³⁰ In a later paper (similarly entitled) Bradford offers a more positive analysis and underlines the importance of continued research and debate about the "agrarian" question in South Africa. After a careful analysis of the various contributions relating to it, she suggests a probable path of transition to rural capitalism, emphasising again the importance of the "merchant road" - in other words the role of merchant capital, especially on the nineteenth-century South African highveld. Keegan has rebuked Morris for misrepresenting or misunderstanding the intentions, findings and research methodology of the social historians. He restates the case for the kind of microstudies which Morris eschews, emphasising once again their

early twentieth centuries.

²⁹D. Goodman and M. Redclift, From Peasant to Proletarian: Capitalist Development and Agrarian Transitions, (Oxford, 1981), p.214.

³⁰H. Bradford, "Highways, Byways and Cul de Sacs: The Transition to Agrarian Capitalism in South African Historiography", Unpublished Paper, University of Witwatersrand, 1988, p.10.

importance in providing a more complex and nuanced picture of capitalist development in South Africa. While acknowledging the imprint of the guiding hand of the capitalist world system upon the mode of production that emerged in South Africa, Keegan stresses that the empirical findings of social historians have, and will continue, to illustrate that in "pre-industrial South Africa there was no readily identifiable, mature, dominant set of productive relationships".³¹

In mentioning these responses to Morris, it is not the intention to reject Morris' injunction to consider the issues he raises, though it is important to point to the extended and problematic nature of the debate regarding the transition to capitalism. The "wheel", to borrow Morris' terminology, has turned "fully circle" and there would be little value in treading the same wheel over again. Nevertheless it is important to heed the warnings of Morris and others such as Murray and Krikler, who raise similar points. There is a danger for "experiential" history to turn the historian into a mere collector of oral texts which purport to convey a historical reality. There has been 'also in the writings of the social historians a lack of clarity and consistency in the use of Marxist categories that has led to "conceptual confusion and evasion",³² as well as a tendency to shy away from theory and to regard it as axiomatically obscuring the path of agrarian transformation.³³ Mindful of this, the study of a local rural community like the Hurutshe to 1913 does not however

³¹T. Keegan, "Mike Morris and the Social Historians: A Response and a Critique", Africa Perspective, (New Series) vol.I, nos.7 and 8.(1989) p.9.

³²In this regard Bradford cites Ross as a prime offender, who, in his explanation of the expansion of agrarian capitalism at the Cape, "drives the pre-suppositions of social historians to their logical conclusion" by his own employment of "idiosyncratic or allusive images of such key terms as capitalism ..."

³³See M. Murray, "The Triumph of Marxist Approaches in South African Social and Labour History", Journal of Asian and African Studies, vol.XXII, (1988). Murray believes that the social historians have "erred in the opposite direction" by failing to see the possibilities of "theorising about the general trends of agrarian transformation", p.85.

offer the terrain to make broad theoretical generalisations about South Africa's agrarian past (or future). While it is not the purpose of this thesis to make theoretical advances to this debate it is essential nevertheless to be alert to the possibilities of relating the narrow area of this research to broader interpretive schemes and concepts regarding South Africa's past and to recognise that structures impose limits on human action. It would be pertinent to conclude with Marks' level-headed comments regarding the tensions between structures in society and the variations of human consciousness and action; "If we are to move forward, it is necessary to bring together structure and meaning, process and consciousness, to engage in a constant dialogue with empirical data and theory, and to use the former to refine and modify the latter".³⁴

This brief recapitulation has attempted to define the scope and approach of this study and has noted some of the comparative and theoretical literature which has provided the perspectives, parameters and cautions informing this work. It has led to an attempt to interfuse political structure with political process to produce a view of Hurutshe society being constantly shaped by political, economic and ideological struggles both from within and from beyond its "borders".

II) Sources

This account of sources utilised in this work is divided into two sections, precolonial and archival (for the colonial period). Whilst there may be some chronological overlap between these two categories it provides at the same time an opportunity to discuss the different approaches the historian is obliged to take towards these categories of source material.

³⁴S. Marks, "The Historiography of South Africa - Recent Developments", in B. Jewsiewicki, D. Newbury (eds), African Historiographies, What History for which Africa? (London, 1986), p.175.

a) Sources for Precolonial Hurutshe history

The historian of precolonial African societies is inevitably drawn to the work of archaeologists, anthropologists and ethnographers in order to reconstruct a view of the past and the process and causes of change in society. These disciplines have provided much of the evidence for historians of this period, and have opened up valuable insights and ideas. They come however as a "boon and a burden"³⁵ to the historian.

Archaeology has provided ample evidence of the antiquity of African societies and has destroyed the myth that they changed only in response to contact with "outsiders", usually "superior in civilisation".³⁶ Despite these important and now incontrovertible additions to our understanding of the African past, a significant body of archaeological research has been based on flawed assumptions. Firstly, for a long period certain archaeologists regarded African societies as evolutionary and measured their progress in recognisable and separate phases of transition. A second weakness is archaeology's reliance on an ethnography which divided African societies into clearly delineated "tribes" with different cultures, traditions and languages. Certain archaeologists, as Hall explains, "keen to bring their potsherds to life, seized on these tribal groupings as explanatory of artifactual categories".³⁷ A last limitation is what Hall refers to as the environmental response

³⁵The phrase is Kinsman's in a review of anthropological sources. See M. Kinsman, "The Uses and Abuses of Anthropology", Paper to Conference on Pre-Colonial History of Southern Africa, University of Cape Town, 1986, p. 1.

³⁶For a long time archaeologists were content to repeat such myths, usually in the cause of creating an imperial ethic. This was especially true of Rhodesia during the period of the illegal Smith regime of the mid-1960s to early 1980s. See M. Hall, "The Burden of Tribalism: The Social Context of Southern African Iron-Age Studies," American Antiquity, vol. 49, no.3, (1984), p. 466.

³⁷Hall, "Burden of Tribalism", p. 466.

where changes in cultural forms were taken to be "passive reflections of the environmental milieu".³⁸

More recently a growing body of archaeological research has orientated itself around different sets of suppositions. Huffman, in addition to showing a greater degree of sensitivity to historical context, attributes the rise of Tswana settlement patterns to the interplay of several factors; specifically the environment, agriculture, population dynamics, wealth and political power, in contrast to former explanations which considered Sotho-Tswana settlements in terms only of cultural preferences or environmental constraint.³⁹

Hall has stripped away the conventional distinctions between hunter-gathering and agricultural economies. Changes in the Southern African past have been conceptualised instead in terms of a change in the modes of production "in which, firstly, accumulation replaced distribution, and secondly, centralisation replaced fission".⁴⁰ Similarly emphasis on the changing role of relations of production is now seen as the driving force in the transition from lineage to tributary modes of production.⁴¹ These theories have not been the sole preserve of archaeologists - indeed historians have given considerable attention to the reasons underlying the transition to more complex social formations in

³⁸M. Hall, "At the Frontier: Some Arguments against Hunter - Gathering and Farming Modes of Production in South Africa", Paper to Conference on Pre-Colonial History of Southern Africa, University of Cape Town, 1986, p. 2.

³⁹See T. Huffman, "Archaeological Evidence and Conventional Explanations of Southern Bantu Settlement Patterns", Africa, vol. 56, no.3, (1986). The view that environmental factors caused closer settlement patterns among the Tswana is expressed principally by Sansom. See B. Sansom, "Traditional economic Systems" in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed.) The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa, (London), 1974, pp. 135-176.

⁴⁰M. Hall, The Changing Past: Farmers, Kings and Traders in Southern Africa, 200-1860, (Cape Town, 1987), p.146

⁴¹M. Hall, "Archaeology and Modes of Production in Pre-colonial Southern Africa", JSAS, vol.14, no.I, (1987).

southern Africa, as later discussion will reveal.

A good example of how recent archaeological findings have forced a reconsideration of previous historical concepts is found in central and northern Botswana. Here evidence from Toutswe⁴² (and Mapungubwe to the east) indicate the presence of settlement patterns in the first millennium which reflect the presence of centralised authorities or, possibly, chieftainships. This challenges the belief that political cohesion in African societies was maintained through the ideology of kinship and that only sometime near the end of the eighteenth century was there a mutation to a more centralised state under the clear control of a chief drawn from a dominant lineage.⁴³ There is however a similar danger in overestimating the significance of recent archaeological finds and using such new evidence totally to overturn former concepts or ideas. For example Hammond-Tooke uses the Toutswe findings to suggest that "chiefdoms [rather than kinship-based lineage systems] have been a basic feature of Southern Bantu social formations for at least a millennium".⁴⁴ Firstly it should be noted that such settlement patterns were, apart from Toutsweogela itself, "small and dispersed", even the larger sites being only "probably the capitals of relatively powerful petty chiefs".⁴⁵ Secondly it is unlikely that they were inhabited by Sotho-Tswana people, and thirdly the people responsible for the Toutswe sites disappeared leaving the area unpopulated by man or

⁴²J.R. Denbow, "The Toutswe Tradition: A Study in Socio-economic change", in R.R. Hitchcock and M.R. Smith (eds) Proceedings of a Symposium on Settlement in Botswana, (Gaborone, 1982), pp. 87-91.

⁴³This analysis was expressed by P. Bonner, Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires; and J. Guy, The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom; C. Hamilton and J. Wright, "The Making of the Lala: Ethnicity, Ideology and Class-formation in a precolonial context", unpublished Seminar Paper to History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, 1984.

⁴⁴W.D. Hammond-Tooke, "Descent Groups, Chiefdoms and South African Historiography", JSAS, vol.11, no.2, (April 1985), pp.305-319.

⁴⁵T. Huffman, "Archaeological evidence", p. 287.

cattle. Given these points Hammond-Tooke's assertion made from this specific evidence seems too imprecise.⁴⁶

What can be deduced from much of this archaeological evidence is perhaps a more realistic picture of different human populations congregating into larger settlements under varied or concomitant circumstances such as defensive need, competition for control over trade (in cattle or ivory), the accumulation of cattle or environmental constraints. These settlements appeared to have had varying degrees of centralised authorities from simple hierarchies based on a headman or weak petty chiefdom level of organisation, through to more complex "state" systems with a more powerful and coercive locus of power in the chief and his supporters. It seems likely also that lineage-based authorities co-existed with territorial authorities and that on occasions the two were indistinguishable. Clearly these settlements or chiefdoms disaggregated under specific historical circumstances and cannot therefore be viewed as a consistent feature of precolonial social formations.

Denbow's and Wilmsen's research in Botswana, which shows that the Khoi oscillated between herding, hunting and foraging, and agriculture from as early as the 5th century AD⁴⁷, likewise shatters the image which has permeated anthropology of the Khoisan as relics of an unchanging past to which they adapted with an unproblematic durability.

The historian of precolonial Africa must work in close association

⁴⁶This is particularly so as Hammond-Tooke does admit that the evidence is "patchy". The central point of his argument however is to disprove the presence of functional descent groups in South African social formations. He uses linguistic and archaeological evidence to suggest the alternative view of an earlier presence of chiefdoms in South Africa.

⁴⁷J. Denbow, "A New Look at the later Pre-history of the Kalahari", Journal of African History, (JAH) vol. 27, (1986), pp. 3-28. For a summary and clear exposition of the significance of this research see N. Parsons, "Lost World Regained: Recent Insights into Precolonial Kalahari History", Unpublished paper to Conference on Precolonial History of Southern Africa, University of Cape Town, July 1986.

with the archaeologist who is extending and pushing back our knowledge of precolonial history. But the historian has to ensure firstly that he does not imbibe the possible limitations of archaeological reconstruction, particularly when it is presented as a given "archaeological reality", and then has to integrate new evidence into the wider context of sources to present a more unified reading of the past.

Some of the limitations of anthropology and ethnology have been alluded to already. One of the most explicit evaluations of the usefulness of anthropological theory and evidence for the historian of Tswana communities such as the Hurutshe has been made by Margaret Kinsman.⁴⁸ A brief summary of the main points of her argument offer a clear picture of some of the problems of using anthropological literature for historical reconstruction.

Kinsman notes firstly that the early ethnologies were stilted. Isaac Schapera, upon whose vast body of anthropological literature (over a hundred publications) historians have relied to construct a view of the pre-colonial past of the Tswana, wrote much of his work for the specific purpose of assisting colonial administrators.⁴⁹ He tries therefore to present a clear account of the principal structures and rules governing Tswana societies, free from the kind of contradictions which are the grist to the social historians' mill. A second problem is that Schapera's studies were concentrated on the Bakgatla mainly and provided a detailed picture of these people at the time of his fieldwork, freezing them as it were in the 1930s and 1940s. A similar point could be made about the way in which colonial administrators in Africa codified and promulgated traditions, "thereby transforming flexible custom into hard prescription".⁵⁰ The effect of these limitations is to restrict the view of changing

⁴⁸Kinsman, "Uses and Abuses of Anthropology".

⁴⁹Kinsman, "Uses and Abuses", p. 1.

⁵⁰E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), The Invention of Tradition, (Cambridge, 1983), p. 212.

forms of dominance or control in the political structure of the community itself.⁵¹ Kinsman's third major objection is to the structuralist preoccupations of the school of economic anthropology which, while concerned to investigate the sources of power within precapitalist modes of production and the extent of exploitation within them, nevertheless usually provided only a rarified view of societies "'from the top' - focusing on the powers of the chief [and Elders] to extract labour".⁵² This obscures the view of other sectors of Tswana society such as women, youths or slaves. "It is high time", Kinsman concludes, "that we attempted to come to terms with the view from the bottom - that which takes into account the circumstances and avenues of resistance of the subordinates".⁵³

A further distortion of anthropological discourse about South Africa arises out of the frequent desire to provide authentic "evidence" for the existence of separate ethnic identities and leadership structures within dominated or colonised peoples. Several scholars have thus argued that this research has provided the underpinnings of segregationist policy in the 1920s and 1930s in South Africa.⁵⁴ I have argued elsewhere that the first ethnological accounts of the Hurutshe by G.P. Lestrade in the 1920s and their uncritical acceptance by P.L. Breutz in his major ethnological survey of the Hurutshe in 1954 contradicted "the essential features of 19th-century

⁵¹Kinsman, "Uses and Abuses of Anthropology", p. 3.

⁵²Kinsman, "Uses and Abuses of Anthropology", p. 11. Kinsman is referring here specifically to the work of Claude Meillassoux who argued that although classes did not exist in African subsistence economies, patterns of dominance by male elders over women and juniors did.

⁵³Kinsman, "Uses and Abuses of Anthropology", p. 11.

⁵⁴See S. Dubow, "Understanding the Native Mind; the Impact of Anthropological Thought on Segregationist Discourse in South Africa, 1914-1933", Paper to History Workshop Conference, Johannesburg 1984; J.S. Sharpe, "The Roots of the Development of Volkekunde in South Africa", JSAS vol. 8, no. 1, (1981); J. Wright, "Politics, Ideology and the Invention of the 'Nguni'", in T. Lodge (ed.), Resistance and Ideology in Settler Societies, (Johannesburg 1987).

Tswana and Hurutshe history and represent[ed] a re-creation of traditions to suit current political needs".⁵⁵ Further reference to this issue will be made later.

The other sources employed to examine the pre-history and early history of the Hurutshe do not derive from other disciplines but warrant examination nevertheless. These are oral traditions and travellers' and missionary accounts.

The use of oral traditions as historical sources has been keenly argued since the publication of Jan Vansina's Oral Traditions, A Study in Historical Method. It is unnecessary here to outline either the increasingly complex methodology that oral traditions have assumed or the criticisms which earlier exponents subsequently have faced, but an obvious conclusion to be drawn from these is that the historian making use of these sources has to be alert to their inherent deficiencies. These include: the peculiarities and weakness of human memory; the problem of establishing a reasonable chronology, especially where genealogies have been elongated or "collapsed"; the overlaying of oral traditions with ruling group histories, and the general emphasis in oral traditions on the activities of the rulers as opposed to the ruled. On a cautionary note it should be mentioned that the fundamentally ideological nature of many oral traditions, generally regarded as a source of obfuscation, has also been seen as means of exploring precisely those ideological struggles which they are thought to obscure.⁵⁶

⁵⁵A. Manson, "The Making of a Dynasty: The Re-creation of Traditions among the Hurutshe", Paper to Conference on Precolonial History of Southern Africa, University of Cape Town, 1986, p. 6.

⁵⁶C. Hamilton, "Ideology and Oral Traditions; Listening to the 'Voices From Below'", History in Africa, vol. 14, (1987). Hamilton shows how "evidence can be found, not in the consistency of oral traditions, but in their contradictions and 'fault lines'".

Oral traditions, gleaned from several different accounts, have been used as a source of information in this study, as have oral testimonies (though the latter have been restricted by fact that the period of this study falls mostly outside the period of living memory). Where relevant the specific caveats against using this evidence will be mentioned especially as oral testimony usually represents personal history and is characteristically individual, and therefore not reducible to generalised formulations.

Travellers' and missionaries' accounts are similarly coloured by the prejudices, credos and convictions of ideology or personal opinion. Research on the Tswana peoples began at a relatively early period - the Truter-Somerville expedition was in 1801 and records of it were made by Daniell, Borchers and Barrow. Lichtenstein described aspects of Tswana life in detail in 1811-12, and Campbell wrote extensively of his travels into Hurutshe territory in 1813 and 1820.⁵⁷ Some of this writing was remarkably systematic and observant. But in most instances it was partisan, impressionistic and limited in ethnographic content. Travellers' accounts focused mainly on the mercantile possibilities of the hinterland, while missionaries frequently attempted to impress upon superintendents in their home countries the daily rigours of proselytisation among ungrateful and "uncivilised" communities. Many of the official recorders of Tswana life from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, such as Emil Holub, Gustav Fritsch and John Mackenzie, shared the dominant academic preconceptions of the era and countries in which they lived - specifically the Kulturhistorische Schule with its conceptions of universal cultural history and its English equivalent of Social Darwinism, both of which attempted to classify

⁵⁷S. Daniell, African Scenery and Animals, (London, 1805); P.B. Borchers, An Autobiographical Memoir, (Cape Town, 1861); J. Barrow, Voyage to Cochin China ... to which is annexed an account of a Journey ... to the ... Chief of the Bootchuana, (London, 1806); H. Lichtenstein, Travels in South Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, (Cape Town 1928-1930); J. Campbell, Travels in South Africa, 1813, London, 1815 and Travels in South Africa ... Narrative of a Second Journey, 1820, 2 vols., (London, 1822).

and rank human societies on an evolutionary scale.⁵⁸ The German missionaries, whose reports form a mine of information for the latter parts of this thesis, brought their own specific criteria for approval - practicality, obedience, thrift and long-suffering - from the austere countryside of the Luneberg in North Germany.⁵⁹ They saw themselves as agents of the Bauernmission (peasant mission) and consequently perpetuated a system of "extensive peasant farming, in many respects similar to that of the Transvaal Boers".⁶⁰

b) Archival Sources

Extensive use has been made of the records of the South African Republic and Transvaal archives in Pretoria and of the records of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society (HMS). The latter, which comprises a greatly under utilised source for the history of the western Transvaal, can be grouped into three categories. These are the printed Missionsberichte, the unpublished correspondence of the HMS missionaries housed at the Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionswerk in Niedersachsen (ELM) archives in Hermannsburg, W. Germany, and the

⁵⁸The Kulturhistorische Schule observed that identical mental and material cultural forms were found in varying regions of the world. This occurrence was explained by "assuming that the evolution of mankind has always, and in all parts of the world, been subject to the same laws [and] that this evolution had been a linear one". See D.L. Stills (ed.) The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 6, p. 18. For an account of the historiography of this period see N. Parsons, "Before The Flood: Research on Botswana up to 1970", Symposium on Research for Development, Botswana Society, 1985; M. Wilson, "The Sotho, Venda and Tsonga" in M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds), The Oxford History of South Africa, (OHSa) vol I, pp. 135-138; M. Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana peoples Before 1800", in L. Thompson, (eds) African Societies in Southern Africa, (London, 1989).

⁵⁹The two most important missionaries among the Hurutshe were Danes whose homeland of Schleswig-Holstein was incorporated into Germany while in the employ of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society.

⁶⁰W. Kistner, The Anti-Slavery Agitation Against the Transvaal Republic, 1852-1862, Archives Year Book, (Parrow, 1952), p. 222 f.n.

various records in the Hesse Collection at the University of South Africa. The National Archives of Botswana were consulted for material dating from 1885 thus providing a view of the responses of the Protectorate's officials and inhabitants to events along and within the SAR's western border. Oral records were collected during fieldwork in Moiloa's reserve. Their value was two-fold; firstly to confirm or show the prevailing conceptions of previously collected traditions and secondly (and more importantly) to give an idea of the differing preoccupations of individuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with reserve life in its various forms, and of the nature and extent of their personal links with the world beyond the reserve. Oral records were of very limited value in the period prior to this - in the middle and latter decades of the nineteenth century - as most informants repeated interpretations of traditions written up by Jensen (a H.M.S. missionary), and the ethnologists Breutz and Lestrade in the first half of this century.

The shortcoming of archival records is that they overwhelmingly reflect the interests and biases of the officials of settler and colonial society. These are offset to some extent by verbatim reports of chiefs or correspondence from chiefs to the seat of government. On the whole however official reports need to be treated critically. In addition in the SAR period despatches were intermittent and local officials all too frequently resorted to personal and "on the spot" decisions regarding the administration of their African charges. Piecing together the lacunae created by such informal arrangements is both difficult and speculative. Furthermore official records from the Marico simply cease for four years in the early 1860s, possibly the consequence of the destruction of records in the early twentieth century.⁶¹ Despite these weaknesses and gaps archival records form a significant component in this construction of Hurutshe history.

⁶¹John Gubbins, who contributed a series of short articles on the history of the Marico to The Marico Chronicle at this time, observed the destruction of records in 1912.

This discussion has concentrated upon available sources, their potential and their limitations, for the precolonial period of the Hurutshe past. It has indicated the value of archaeological data, while warning against the assumptions that have shaped some archaeological conclusions; similarly, it has acknowledged the utility of existing anthropological and ethnographic studies, while identifying the particular distortions of some of these studies in the South African context. It has assessed the contributions of oral tradition and oral testimony, on the one hand, and early travel and mission accounts on the other. Finally it has made mention of the strengths and weaknesses of archival records. An account of the Marico district and the people occupying it in the mid-nineteenth century now follows.

CHAPTER ONE - THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE
IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

I - The Geographical setting

The Marico district which formed the marchlands of Trekker occupation of the western highveld in the mid-nineteenth century evokes today a vision of a rural backwater, populated by a typical Boer society exhibiting both the rustic virtues and conservative prejudices of the past. This image, of course, derives almost entirely from the piquant tales of Herman Charles Bosman. Bosman, an inhabitant of the district in the late 1920s, subsequently created a 'mythical' Marico (and its past) - reflecting, exaggerating and distorting the realities he encountered - so as to construct a mental archetype of the district. This view has been assimilated into popular consciousness by subsequent generations, usually fed a steady diet of Bosman at school and through the media.¹ Though Bosman, in his inimitable satirical style, points to frequent instances of social or racial stress in Marico society, the general picture is of quietude, changelessness and repose, which, as this study will show, is at odds with the historical record and ignores the very real struggle for economic survival among the inhabitants of this frontier region.

The Marico district lies in the western Transvaal and derives its name from the drainage system that is formed by the Marico and Crocodile (Madikwe - Odi) rivers. From 1848 it formed part of the Potchefstroom district but in 1872 it came to be designated a separate magisterial district.² The proclamation according

¹The way in which literature has created a sense of region or defined place in South Africa has been touched upon by J. Hofmeyer in "Turning Region into Narrative: English storytelling in the Waterberg", Paper to History Workshop, University of Witwatersrand, 1987.

²See Proclamation no. 812, 24 February 1872, cited in J.F. Jeppe and J.G. Kotze, De Locale Wetten der Zuid-Afrikaanhe Republiek, 1849-1885, (Pretoria, 1887), p. 462.

Marico this status did not define the precise boundaries but it was taken to designate an area from the Dwarsberg mountains in the north to the Groot Marico river in the east (the north-east corner being the confluence of the Groot Marico and Limpopo rivers), to close to the settlement of Bloemhof in the south-west, to the Molopo river in south-west.³ The western boundary, which formed the boundary of the South African Republic (S.A.R.), was not defined until 1871 under the Keate Award. It was described as a line running from Pitlanganyane in the north-west to Ramatlabama in the south-west. This was confirmed by the London Agreement of 1884 but a section of the boundary was altered in 1897 when the Bechuanaland Protectorate authorities were fixing their international and internal boundaries (between chiefdoms).⁴ It was only in the early 1960s when a border fence was erected that the exact boundary was demarcated. Earlier attempts in 1868 had been made to place beacons along the "boundary" but they proved ineffective.⁵

The Marico district in 1848 accords in all respects with what has been termed the "open" frontier in South African (and North American) history. Not only had it no definite boundary but it also represented a "zone of interpenetration between two previously distinct societies... one... indigenous to the region... the other intrusive".⁶ In addition the Transvaalers struggled to establish hegemony over the region, as subsequent discussion will indicate.

³See P.J. Oosthuizen, "Die Geskiedenis van Marico tot 1900", unpublished M.A, Potchefstroom University, 1976, p. 35.

⁴Botswana National Archives (BNA), S/194/2, Contained in a Report from Resident Commissioner Mafikeng to High Commissioner, Pretoria, 4/12/1962.

⁵Ngcongco, "The Bangwaketse" pp. 184-185.

⁶H. Lamar and L. Thompson (eds.), The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa compared, (New Haven, 1981), p. 7. See also the contribution of H. Giliomee which traces the transition from a pioneering frontier to a settled frontier in the Eastern Cape, H. Giliomee, "Process in the Development of the Southern African Frontier", pp.76-119.

Until 1884-1885 the Dwarsberg actually marked the point at which Trekker occupation of the north-west highveld ended. Attempts previous to this by the SAR to expand its control failed completely. For example SAR claims to ownership of the Tati goldfields in 1868 had to be withdrawn in the face of a powerful Ngwato rebuttal.⁷ The failure of the SAR authorities accurately to define its borders or even to publish official maps led to numerous disputes between black and white societies in the region and between African groups as well. In 1876 the Transvaal Argus complained that these boundary disputes had led to nothing more than "a perpetual haggling and bandying of words with half a dozen Kafir chiefs".⁸ The Marico frontier "closed" in two stages. Firstly in 1884-1885 as a consequence of the declaration of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the London Convention which led to a more rigidly defined and observed boundary; and secondly between 1894 and 1896, after the Malapoch War and the Rinderpest epidemic which facilitated Trekker penetration of the Limpopo Valley.⁹ Only by the end of the century had the "filling in" process, a pre-condition for the closing of the frontier, actually taken place.¹⁰

The Marico district divided up into three regions distinguishable by topography, soil types and vegetation. (See map) They conform also to different densities of settler occupation. The area around the town of Zeerust (founded 1868) stretching eastwards towards the Witwatersrand and westwards as far as the Molopo river lies in the

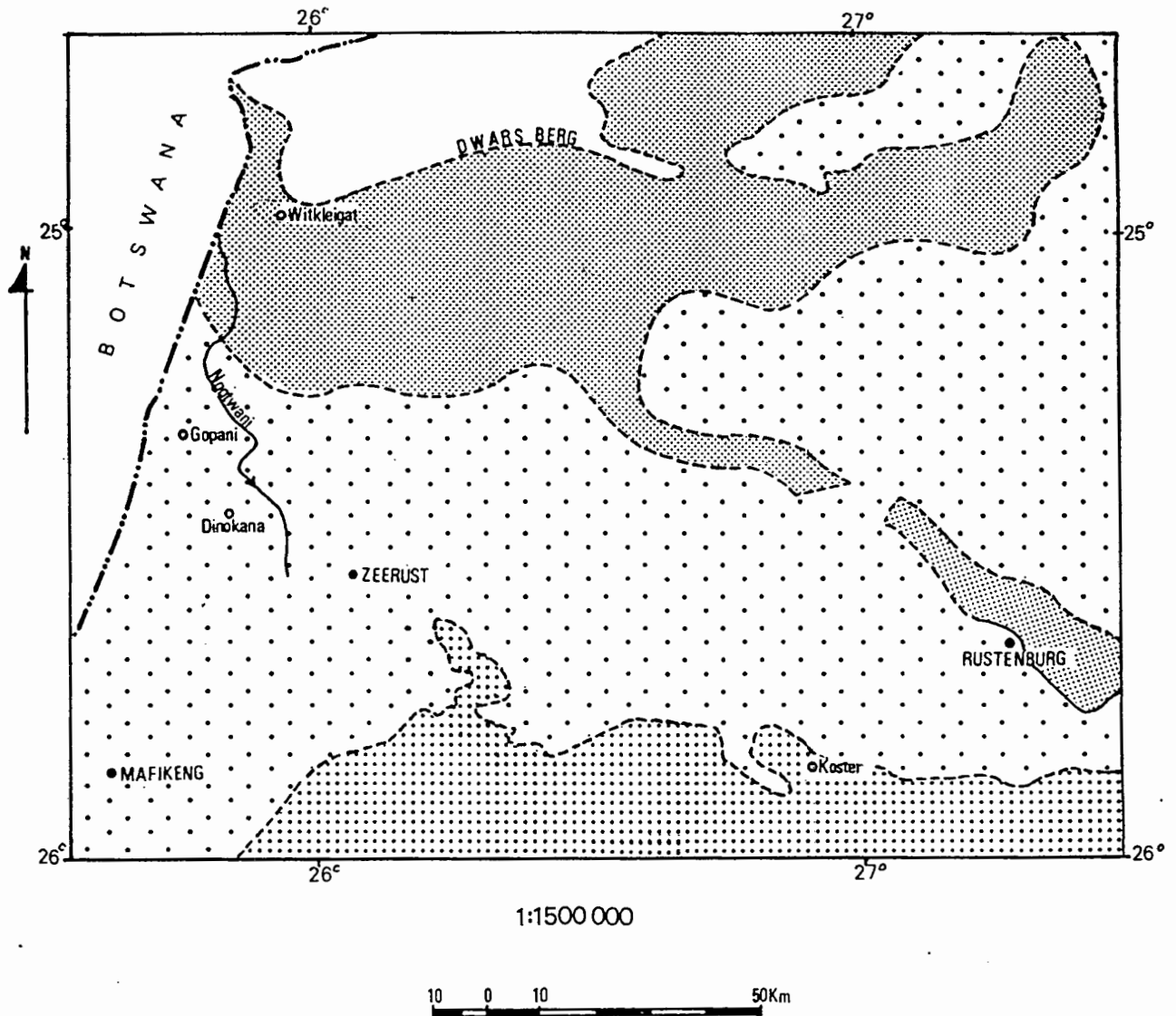
⁷I. Schapera, "A Short History of the Bangwaketse", African Studies, vol. XV, 4, (1941), p. 12.

⁸The Transvaal Argus, 22 December 1876.

⁹Parsons, "Khama III, The Bamangwato", p.77. Parsons observes that "contemporary maps customarily marked the Limpopo as the boundary and South African historians have accepted this fiction as if before the 1900s the SAR had indeed 'filled out' as far north-west as the Limpopo".

¹⁰Giliomee, "The Southern African Frontier", p.102.

MARICO VELD TYPES



LEGEND

-  Transvaal mixed grass veld
-  Marico Valley Lands — Mixed Bushveld
-  Bushveld — Turf Thornveld

Adapted from J.P.H. Acocks VELD TYPES OF SOUTH AFRICA
 Dept. of Agricultural Technical Services

Transvaal middleveld. This is an area of mixed grasslands and soil types and has a varied rainfall, though it is usually drier in the west. The average rainfall figure for Zeerust between 1903-1911 (the first time it was accurately recorded) was 25.38 inches per annum, the highest annual figure being 41.22 inches and the lowest 15.07.¹¹ In the mid-to late-nineteenth century it was an area suited to pastoralism though the scarcity of water sources, low rainfall and frequency of droughts (as the rainfall figures cited above indicate) prevented extensive pastoralism. It lies on the fringes of the so-called "maize triangle", suited to more intensive arable farming. A majority of the settlers took occupation of this district.

The second region is the valley lands of the Marico and Klein Marico rivers, which flow eastwards into the Crocodile river. This was the area occupied by the first Trekkers onto the western highveld. As it was an area of good agricultural potential large farms were quickly carved out preventing later emigrants from taking up residence in the vicinity. This river system was suited to intensive agriculture and by the late nineteenth century wheat, citrus fruits and a little tobacco were being cultivated. This in turn created a demand for seasonal labour. Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century however there was little attempt by the Boers to commercialise either pastoralism or agriculture. Productive activities were limited to hunting and ostrich farming, the latter though always subject to a fluctuating and faddish market.

The third area, the Marico bushveld, lies to the north and north-west of the middleveld and Marico river system. It comprises two mountainous belts, one to the north of the Klein Marico and the other, the Dwarsberg (Motlhwane), stretching across the north of the

¹¹The Marico Chronicle, 9 March 1912. An incomplete collection of this Newspaper is housed in the Gubbins Collection, Church of the Province Archives, University of the Witwatersrand Library (UWL) Box A205.

district. An alluvial basin lies between the two mountainous chains. The Limpopo river flows in the very north-west of the area, where the soil is sandy and the rainfall low (21-23 inches p.a.).¹² The limestone soil is unable to support much vegetation except for "Buffalo grass" (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) a grass of medium to high palatability which in good seasons gave a dense stand of about two feet deep, and a variety of acacia trees.¹³ A number of small spruits (streams) run into the Ngotwane river which flows through the western part of this area. The Ngotwane is a perennial stream. Three important features characterise this area of the Marico. Firstly outcrops of iron and copper ore are found abundantly in the Dwarsberg and Rand van Tweedeport ranges about 80 kilometres north of present-day Zeerust. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century these outcrops provided the source of metals for the Hurutshe's well-attested reputation as miners and smiths. The second feature is the presence of several ranges of hills in the west of the district, one, known as the Makadima, providing the site of the mid-nineteenth century Hurutshe capital town. The presence of springs in this area is due to the encounter of dolomitic limestone with banded ironstone which forces subterranean water to the surface. The springs here provide a constant source for the Ngotwane river. Thirdly the bushveld north of the Makadima range was almost uninhabitable to the Trekkers due to intense heat in summer, the presence of mosquitoes and the shortage of water. West of the Makadima hills lies a waterless plateau which formed the "border" with the Ngwaketse in the region of the modern town of Lobatsi. To the south-west of the Makadima lies an undulating valley area called the Mosega basin.

¹²P.L. Breutz, The Tribes of the Marico District, Dept. of Native Affairs Ethnological Publications, no. 30, (Pretoria, 1953), p. 4.

¹³P. Naude, "Boerdery in die Suid- Afrikaansche Republiek, 1858-1899", unpublished D. Litt. University of South Africa, 1954, p. 8; LDB 1581, r2547/1. Report re: Agricultural conditions in Marico District, by Magistrate Office, Zeerust, 23 January 1924.

Nineteenth-century descriptions of the western bushveld area, the Mosega basin and the Marico rivers are favourable, almost adulatory in some cases, indicating that the area was better wooded and grassed than at present. The missionary John Campbell, on a visit to select possible sites for the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1820, described the view from an eminence in the centre of Hurutshe territory. "The hills" he wrote (and sketched), "were delightfully adorned with various kinds of trees ... altogether the scenery had not been surpassed by any we had seen ... the general prospect resembled Welch (sic) scenery".¹⁴ Just over a decade later, the French missionary, Rolland, on a similar reconnoitre of the Mosega vicinity for the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (PEMS) was struck by the "magnificent mountain chain [in this country] intersected by numerous valleys with two very high summits dominating the middle of the range".¹⁵ Andrew Smith, leading an official expedition from the Cape to the Highveld in 1834 described Mosega as a "fine undulating country, abounding with grass and fully watered, the bottom of every ravine forming the channel of a running stream".¹⁶ Game was plentiful in the first half of the nineteenth century attracting the early attention of gun-using hunters on the western highveld. Most of the game animals of the African savannah were to be found in the Marico district. Lions were a particular scourge to man and animals alike. The Hurutshe were forced to build special elevated sleeping structures for their children to keep them safe from lions¹⁷, and Livingstone nearly met his end in a lion attack in 1846. Well-known hunters like Gordon Cumming and William Cornwallis Harris found the area to their liking and traversed it

¹⁴J. Campbell, Travels in South Africa, p. 218-219.

¹⁵R.C. Germond (ed.), Chronicles of Basutoland, (Moriya, 1967), p.94.

¹⁶W. Lye(ed.), Andrew Smith's South African Journal, 1834-36, (Cape Town, 1975), p. 214.

¹⁷J. Campbell, Travels, p.220

several times in the 1840s.¹⁸ Even in 1870 the Czech naturalist Dr Emil Holub referred to the "abundance of game" in the region of the Dwarsberg, specifically gazelles, varieties of antelope, zebras and buffaloes.¹⁹ Possibly it was the richness of this environment that drew Rider Haggard to the Marico in the South African period to get local colour for his novel King Solomon's Mines.

It was this region of the South African highveld that, by 1848, was being occupied and contested by the Hurutshe and Trekboers from the Cape and Orange Free State. The former were returning to their old territory after having been displaced in 1823 by the intruders onto the highveld while the whites were occupying the area for the first time in significant numbers. Formally, however, political authority lay with the Trekkers for they claimed to have dislodged the Ndebele who had exercised dominance in the region since about 1826. This act was considered to have legitimated their control over the region. In addition to this the Hurutshe had agreed to specific terms regarding their return to the Marico in an agreement signed with Andries Potgieter, the Trekker leader.²⁰ This placed them, initially at least, in a uniquely exposed position in relation to the Trekkers. The significance of this undertaking will be revealed later. In the mid-nineteenth century then, the balance of power was weighted more towards the white community.

At this stage it is important to consider what were the major political and economic forces sustaining Hurutshe and trekker society in 1848? And in particular, out of what historical processes had the

¹⁸R. Gordon Cumming, Five Years of a Hunter's Life in South Africa, vol I, (New York, 1904), pp. 227-229; W.C. Harris, The Wild Sports of Southern Africa, (London, 1852).

¹⁹E. Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol. I, Africana Reprint, (Johannesburg 1975), p. 412.

²⁰Bloemhof Blue Book, evidence of Moolio (Moiloo), pp. 142-143.

Hurutshe polity emerged?

II - The Hurutshe before the "Difaqane"

a) c.1200 - 1750

The western highveld/eastern Kalahari area which was to become the site of occupation by the Hurutshe has supported, at differing periods, historic human populations of foragers, hunters and farmers for at least two millennia. There was a considerable amount of social interaction and economic exchange between the communities although they were widely spread and ethnically and culturally diverse. A common though not necessarily consistent pattern of Tswana and Hurutshe history in the last five centuries has been the process of centralisation and fragmentation. The evidence for this process of centralisation is clearer for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when oral traditions begin to reveal more clearly what the archaeological record suggests for the earlier period. Similarly when considering the causes of this political restructuring, historians are on firmer ground from the mid-eighteenth century when documentary evidence allows for more suggestive interpretation of social relations. For these reasons the initiation and causation of centralisation (or state-formation) will be dealt with at the appropriate point in this chronological outline. Nevertheless it is useful to hold in mind possible explanations for the forces of centralisation and fission among the emergent Tswana chiefdoms of the early centuries of the second millennium. Centralisation may have arisen out of the attempts by individuals to establish political and economic power. As this power was established so certain families and lineages were accorded higher rank and privilege based on primogeniture. Among these lineages the senior members or elders tended to reinforce these privileges by controlling the distribution of productive resources such as cattle

and land, "thereby holding economic power over their juniors".²¹ There was at the same time a tension in these societies, as competition for power by rivals led to fission. "Thus", concludes Hall, "through time, chiefdoms are constantly fragmenting and reforming as factions gain power, build up strength and subsequently lose control to other groups".²² There may have been other reasons for fission such as a depletion of natural resources, especially in areas of high concentration of people or livestock; or natural disasters, of which drought was probably the most frequent and damaging. In this outline of early Hurutshe history plausible suggestions for centralisation or fission will be offered wherever possible.

The archaeological record suggests that the ancestors of the modern Sotho-Tswana peoples lived near the Magaliesberg in the Transvaal from about 1200 A.D..²³ This is confirmed by oral traditions which trace the Tswana ruling lineages back to the 13th-14th centuries. It is also suggested by a tradition which gives rise to the so-called United Phofu Confederacy, consisting of the Hurutshe and the Kwenā, although it seems that these "lineage-clusters" were almost indistinguishable at this stage. One of Breutz's informants records that the Kwenā and Hurutshe at one time shared a common token, indicative of their being one people.²⁴ The founding ancestors of the Tswana are said to be Masilo, Mokgatla and Morolong, from whom all the ruling Tswana lineages are descended. According to a generally accepted version Masilo's lineage divided after the death of the fifth chief, Malope I.²⁵ One account related that Malope

²¹Hall; The Changing Past, p.65.

²²Hall, The Changing Past, pp.63-64.

²³Hall, The Changing Past, p. 39; Tlou and Campbell, History of Botswana, p.60

²⁴Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p. 19.

²⁵See, Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p. 18; D.F Ellenberger,

lineages. The Kwenā crossed the Vaal river to the south as a consequence (possibly a cause) of Hurutshe strength. The Rolong clearly record being expelled from the Marico area in the sixteenth century and forced westwards across the Molopo river.³⁰ In addition the Kgatla, a lineage cluster that proliferated at the same time as the Kwenā (from 1600) look on the Hurutshe as Bakgatla-ba-Bogolo ("high Bakgatla").³¹ This seniority was given ritual respect in ceremonies where Hurutshe chiefs have been recognised as the highest in rank.³² This has led to a line of ethnographers and historians accepting such evidence as "fact" right up the twentieth century. G.P. Lestrade, the first ethnologist to be attached to the Native Affairs Department chose to conduct research on the Hurutshe because "it is the senior tribe of the Bechuana"³³ and is "regarded as being the oldest and most archaic of the Chuana-speaking groups as a whole". Any divergence of Tswana-speaking communities from the Hurutshe model, asserted Lestrade, was "to be regarded as secondary".³⁴ It seems that the Hurutshe chiefs successfully promoted an ideology of superiority based on primogenitary rights, which they could mobilise to gain support in times of challenge and probably manipulated to legitimate

³⁰See Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana", p. 115; Breutz, Tribes of Marico, pp. 23-24.

³¹Cited in Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana", p. 103 from Transvaal Natives Affairs Dept., Short History of the Native Tribes of the Transvaal, p. 27.

³²See I. Schapera, The Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes, London School of Economics Monograph, (1952), p. 8; Jensen, "Note on Bahurutshe", p. 176.

³³G.P. Lestrade, "Some Notes on the Bogadi system of the Bahurutshe", South African Journal of Science, vol. XXIII, (1926), p. 937.

³⁴G.P. Lestrade, "Some Notes on the Political Organisation of the Bechuana", South African Journal of Science, vol. XXV, (1928), p. 427. The unambiguous acceptance of Hurutshe seniority was perpetuated by G.W. Stow, The Native Races of South Africa, (London, 1905), p.52 and Ellenberger, The Basotho, pp.334-337, 374-88.

the continued holding of power. In hard political terms however the Hurutshe seem only to have achieved dominance for periods in the late sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

Traditions record that there was a rivalry for power after the death of Mohurutshe between his/her two sons, Motebele and Motobejane. Motebele's faction fled to Ootse, west of the Marico, while Motobejane remained near the Marico. Motebele, as the older brother, tried to reassert control over Motobejane and attacked him in an attempt to get his followers back. Schapera cites this case as an example of the way in which fissions within Tswana chiefdoms were not just accepted as a matter of course.³⁵ Motebele's brother, Lesele, who had accompanied him to Ootse, later quarrelled with Motebele and moved north to the area of present-day Shoshong. Here his people came into contact with the "Kalaka", who corrupted their name into Khurutshe, by which they are still known. The Khurutshe divided again and moved northwards to the Shashe river in about 1800.³⁶ Motebele's Hurutshe then divided, some remaining with the Kwenā in modern Botswana, some, so a number of traditions record, moving to the northern Transvaal where they gave rise to the Gananwa people.

Accounts concur that Motobejane's faction established a capital at Tshwenyane near present-day Enzelsberg (15 kilometres north of Zeerust). This occurred in about 1600 and conforms with the Rolong tradition of displacement from this vicinity. Motobele's attack on Tshwenyane caused the displacement of a group of Motobejane's adherents who fled under another brother, Mosoane, and settled on the Macquassie river, south-east of Lichtenburg. On the whole however the first half of the seventeenth century seems to have been a period of consolidation for the Hurutshe. Iron age sites on the western

³⁵Schapera, Tswana Tribes, p. 15.

³⁶Schapera, Tswana Tribes, p. 13. No further mention will be made to these people.

highveld and east Botswana, spreading up to the Zimbabwean plateau suggest an abundance of cattle and people concentrated in major centres surrounded by smaller outlying villages between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries.³⁷ Thus oral traditions and archaeology point to this basic pattern emerging among the Hurutshe from the late sixteenth century to almost the close of the seventeenth century. The apogee of Hurutshe power seems to have been reached in the mid-seventeenth century when the Hurutshe controlled territory stretching as far east as the Rustenburg district where they were subjugating the Fokeng and Kgatla peoples in the area.³⁸

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century a process of fission began to re-appear which severely reduced the cohesion and strength of the Hurutshe chiefdom or incipient state as it might correctly be called at this period. In about 1660 a number of the Hurutshe at Tshwenyane under Mangope moved away and settled at Borutwe, just east of Groot Marico, leaving his younger brother Menwe with a reduced (though still majority) following.³⁹ The traditional version of this schism is that Menwe and Mangope quarrelled over cattle-ownership ear markings.⁴⁰ A younger brother, Nong, left with Mangope but after the latter's death moved to Mangkodi in Botswana to settle with the Kwenā. Here they formed a separate group, the Bahurutshe boo Mokibidu.⁴¹

³⁷This was not the case on the southern highveld where Maggs' analysis shows the absence of large centres of settlement. See T. Maggs, Iron Age Communities of the Southern Highveld, (Pietemmaritzburg, 1976).

³⁸Breutz, "Tribes of Marico", p. 94; Legassick, "The Sotho-Tswana", p. 109.

³⁹Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p. 58.

⁴⁰Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p. 58.

⁴¹See L. Thlomeleng, "Bahurutshe Ba Manyane" Undergraduate Research Dissertation, University of Botswana, 1977, for an account of the subsequent history of these people.

Shortly after Mangope's departure, Menwe moved from Tshwenyane to a site called Kaditshwene a short distance to the south-east (approximately 2 kilometres), giving rise to the idea of the Hurutshe "twin-capital" of Tshwenyane/Kaditshwene.⁴² However the new town was not settled for long by this faction of the Hurutshe for in about 1700 they moved east to a hill called Powe, near Dinokana, under Thekiso, Menwe's son. Another tradition records a further Hurutshe settlement springing up at Mmutlawagae (eight kilometres due west of Zeerust) shortly after. It is tempting to suggest that this period of fission was related to the frequent droughts between 1620-1670 which set in motion a dispersal of the major Tswana chiefdoms - a section of the Kgatla moved to the north, and the Ngwaketse and Ngwato separated from the Kwenā, moving south-east and northwards respectively.⁴³

By the middle of the eighteenth century however the Hurutshe, like the major Tswana chiefdoms in the area, (the Kwenā, Rolong, Ngwato, Thlaping and Ngwaketse) as well as the northern Nguni speakers were undergoing a remarkable resurgence in economic activity and political cohesion. So important is this development in the history of

⁴²Kaditshwene lies on the top of a long inclining flatish hill on the farm Bloemfontein 223, about 17 kilometres north of present-day Zeerust. Surprisingly its site has been a source of confusion. Revil Mason considers it to be south of Zeerust, believing that the Bloemfontein site is too small, (personal communication). Seddon's attempt to locate Kaditshwene from aerial surveys of stone-walled complexes in the western Transvaal is exceedingly vague. See J.D.Seddon, "Kurrichane: A late Iron-Age site in the western Transvaal", African Studies, vol. 25, no 4, (1966). I have absolutely no doubt that the site on Bloemfontein 223 is the correct one. Breutz is quite certain about the location, which is confirmed by Campbell's descriptions and drawings in his Travels to South Africa. Moreover Hurutshe living near the site are adamant that the name Kaditshwene can be ascribed to the ruins on Bloemfontein. Jensen likewise described Kaditshwene as being "on a mountain between Leeufontein and Bloemfontein", Marico Chronicle, letter from F.H.L. Jensen, 16 March 1912.

⁴³See, Ngcongco, History of the Bangwaketse, pp. 63-64; Tlou and Campbell, History of Botswana, pp. 66-67.

pre-colonial South Africa that it requires fuller explanation.

b) Centralisation and State-Formation c.1750-1790

It is generally agreed that from the mid-eighteenth century there emerged in southern Africa societies with a greater degree of centralisation than had been found previously. There was also a concomitant increase in the economic and legal powers of ruling groups within these societies which has led scholars to link them to the concept of the state.⁴⁴ Central to this concept was a change in the relations of production which allowed power-holders to increase their control over resources and to attract and maintain an increasing number of adherents. This allowed for the extraction of surplus on a scale never experienced before. There emerged also a politically and economically dominant and self-perpetuating group at the apex of this society and a more permanent location of power in the chiefship. There was therefore a deepening of the divisions that had existed in the chiefdoms of the middle centuries of the second millenium. These processes are clearly evident in the course of Hurutshe history in this period.

However, before studying the evidence for Hurutshe power building, the causes for this change need brief examination. Historians are divided on this issue but three broadly differing sets of arguments have been advanced. Although these arguments cover a wide chronological and geographical span they can be considered side by side. Firstly the theory advanced by Slater, Hedges and Bonner is that the need to organise large-scale hunting and burning parties to obtain respectively ivory for trade and more land for cultivation, led northern Nguni states to reorganise their labour processes.

⁴⁴For example see P. Bonner, "The Dynamics of late Eighteenth century northern Nguni Society: Some Hypotheses", in J. Peires (ed.), Before and after Shaka: Papers in Nguni History, (Grahamstown, 1981); Hedges, "Trade and Politics in Southern Mozambique".

Bonner takes this a step further to argue that these re-organised labour processes " provided the framework of tactics and military formations" ⁴⁵ that were a key feature in the transition to a tributary mode based on the accumulation of surplus. This surplus allowed the ruling groups in these chiefdoms to weld together their power-base more tightly than before. The concentration of power was provided for by the amabutho or age-regiments, whose size and range of duties increased dramatically in the late-eighteenth century.⁴⁶

A second argument rests on the assumption that the entry of new trade items into southern Africa from as early as the thirteenth century created new needs in African societies. This stimulated an internal demand for exchangeable items that in turn required a re-organisation of society in order to produce a surplus. In the mid-eighteenth century it was the demand by competing European traders for ivory, exported through Delagoa Bay,⁴⁷ that provided the impetus for social reorganisation. In Hall's assessment the sudden availability of exotic trade goods made possible by trade allowed for an accumulation of wealth on an unprecedented scale" leading to class formation and the transition from the lineage to the tributary mode of production".⁴⁸ In order to take advantage of trade opportunities two important preconditions had to be met; firstly local leaders had to wield sufficient power to control or maintain access to trade routes; secondly their societies had to produce sufficient

⁴⁵Bonner, Kings, Commoners, Concessionaires, p.14. See also D. Hedges, "Trade and Politics in Southern Mozambique".

⁴⁶J. Wright, "Pre-Shakan age-group formation among the Northern Nguni", Natalia, no.8(1978).

⁴⁷A. Smith, "The Trade of Delagoa Bay as a factor in Nguni politics, 1750-1835", in L. Thompson (ed.), African Societies.

⁴⁸M. Hall, "Archaeology and Modes of Production in Pre-Colonial Southern Africa," JSAS, vol.14, no.I, (1987). See also Hall, Changing Past, p.89. See also the contribution of A. Smith, "The Trade of Delagoa Bay as a factor in Nguni Politics", in Thompson (ed.), African Societies.

commodities for exchange. This necessitated closer control by ruling lineages over the community's productive elements (young men and women) in order to increase production, to compete with trade rivals, and to prevent access to trade goods by commoners who might obtain them and so disrupt the established order. 49

A third theory sees cattle as the key form of surplus storage. While the importance of cattle to southern Africa's precapitalist societies generally has been recognised and analysed accordingly, Guy has drawn attention to the failure of historians and anthropologists to see the dynamic relationship between cattle, women and labour power in these societies. The exchange of cattle for women between homesteads represented a transfer of the labour power of the woman and her future children. It was, Guy reminds us,

...The continuous acquisition, creation, control, and appropriation of labour power which was the dynamic social principle upon which South African pre-capitalist societies were founded. This labour power was realised by men, through the exchange of cattle for the productive and reproductive capacities of women... these societies were all organised around the creation and control of labour power.⁵⁰

In times of crisis political authorities could, through extending and improvising upon this basic principle, build up the power of the state through the appropriation of more and more surplus labour without destroying the fundamental power relationships within it.

The strength of Guy's analysis is in its wide-ranging applicability, both regionally and chronologically - even up to the capitalist phase of development in South Africa when the rural homestead and precapitalist relations were maintained (though often in a

⁴⁹See Wright, "Pre-Shakan age-group formation"; Hedges, "Trade and Politics"; Bonner, Kings Commoners, Concessionaires, pp.10-26.

⁵⁰Guy, "Pre-capitalist Societies in Southern Africa", JSAS, vol.14, no.I, (1987).

restructured form). Its apparent weakness has been pinpointed by Hall, who notes that the accumulation of surplus in the form of cattle sets a limit to economic differentiation. Natural increases in cattle allowed commoners to build up their herds as much as the powerholders, and larger herds required grazing cattle at long distances which would make them vulnerable to human and animal predation.⁵¹

In addition it could be added that Guy's explanation, while constructed on an internal logic based on certain given laws, leaves open the problem of the extent to which the introduction of durable commodities, especially luxury items and later cash, upset these social principles.

A final objection to Guy's interpretation lies in his underestimation of the mafisa (or cattle loan) system, a distortion which arises from his (and Kinsman's) determination to locate the central contradiction in precapitalist societies as between married men (homestead heads) and women and children. The mafisa system, which enabled chiefs and important men to attract or maintain the support of poorer clients has been described as 'the fundamental principle upon which all pre-mfecane Iron-age states were organised south of the Zambesi'.⁵²

Poorer male clients worked for wealthier male patrons in exchange for the loan of cattle. While it is true that many of these clients were temporarily impoverished members of the society who would later re-enter the normal household and ward structures, many remained locked into a cycle of dependency and unlike most adult males had no access to the legal system and had no property rights.⁵³

There was therefore a structural tension between

⁵¹Hall, "Archaeology and Modes of Production", p.16.

⁵²J. Denbow, D. Kiyaga-Mulindwa and Q.N. Parsons, "Historical and Archaeological Research in Botswana", Symposium on Research for Development, Gaborone, 1985.

⁵³Tlou, History of Ngamaland, pp. 51-62; Kinsman, "The Southern Tswana Social Formation".

(male) patrons and (male) clients, particularly in Tswana societies.

Opposed to all these hypotheses, (with perhaps the partial exception of the trade theory) which posit an "internal revolution" integral to African societies is the recent research of Cobbing. Briefly Cobbing (whose arguments will be discussed later in more detail) ascribes the rise of these new states to external agency in the shape of capitalist penetration into the interior of South Africa. ⁵⁴

These, in outline, are the theories advanced by scholars of the past to explain the evolution of centralised states. Once the process of centralisation had occurred, certain features helped to hold it together. On the western highveld environmental factors, a shortage of water sources and arable and pastureland, tended to restrict fission, though paradoxically, because of the greater possibility of overutilisation of resources, these constraints frequently led to fission - a point which finds frequent mention in Tswana oral sources. The Tswana ward structure greatly facilitated amalgamation and, it is safe to suggest, emerged in its clearest form during the mid-eighteenth century when more powerful Tswana chiefdoms were attempting to consolidate and attract more adherents. Schapera's research on the composition of Tswana chiefdoms shows that they were not self-contained ethnic units,⁵⁵ and that ethnic intermingling had been a feature of Tswana society for over a 150 years, and probably longer, before his studies in the 1950s. This indicates that ethnicity, a concept which today implies a sense of common origin and cultural homogeneity, was of lesser significance as a differentiating category in the past and most probably was given emphasis under certain circumstances, such as conflict or environmental crisis, when leaders manipulated an ethnic

⁵⁴J. Wright and J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane: Beginning the Inquest", Paper to African Studies Institute, University of Witwatersrand, 1988, p.17.

⁵⁵Schapera, Tswana Tribes.

consciousness to gain support. It appears as though political and economic controls served to bond Tswana societies more effectively than any notions of membership, culture, tradition or ethnic affiliations, though there is an obvious danger in extrapolating uncomplicatedly or ahistorically back to earlier periods.

What evidence exists for the processes of centralisation and state formation by the Hurutshe in the late eighteenth century?

Firstly travellers' accounts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century observed the extended trade networks in operation; from Delagoa Bay to the southern Kalahari and north/south from the western Kalahari to the Orange river.⁵⁶ In 1820 the Hurutshe were able to provide Campbell with a detailed description of the inhabitants and countryside to the "east" as far as the coast.⁵⁷ The volume and pace of local trade increased too. The Hurutshe had a well-attested reputation for the mining and smelting of iron⁵⁸ and were located in a favourable position on the axis of the extensive mining and metal trade between the Orange and the Limpopo. They traded with the Tlhaping and probably with the western Tswana chiefdoms who did not mine to any significant extent.⁵⁹ To

⁵⁶See for example, H.J. Wikar, The Journal of Henry Jacob Wikar, (Cape Town, 1935 ed.), pp. 76-79, 149; Borchers, Memoir, p.84; W.H. Lichtenstein, About the Bechuanas, (Cape Town, 1973 ed.), pp. 64-65. For a composite account of early travellers views on the Sotho-Tswana see M. Wilson, "The Hunters and Herders", pp. 55-56 and "The Sotho", pp.135-137, in M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.) The Oxford History of South Africa (OHSa), vol.I.

⁵⁷Campbell, Travels ... 1820, vol. I, pp. 240-241.

⁵⁸The following eye-witness accounts give adequate proof of this; Campbell, Travels, vol. I, pp. 214, 228, 245; W.J. Burchell, Travels in the Interior of South Africa, 1822, vol II, (London, 1953), p. 399; R. Moffat, Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa, (London, 1842), pp. 121-122. Moffat reports a Hurutshe smith mixing copper and tin to produce, presumably, bronze.

⁵⁹See Okihiro, "Economic Change Among the Tlhaping", p. 69, 77; Tlou and Campbell, History of Botswana, pp. 79-80.

the east their major trading partners were most probably the Pedi, whose metalworking skills, like the Hurutshe's, had at this time "secured them a privileged and mediating position in the trade networks which spanned the highveld, bushveld and lowveld".⁶⁰ Campbell records that individuals among the Hurutshe at Kaditshwene and the Tlhaping at Dithakong had "marts"(mates)-or a "particular connection with a person belonging to another nation" - and he later records that "our Latakoo friends, who travelled with us, having 'marts' at Motabee [a Kora settlement on the tributary the Harts river] were well received".⁶¹ Wilson considers that this "tantalising remark" suggests the existence of a pattern of trading partners throughout the area although there is no corroborative evidence for this.⁶²

Secondly, evidence for the process of amalgamation is suggested by a careful reading of Schapera's The Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes, which shows a large number of new wards coming into existence between 1760 and 1820. Unfortunately Schapera's study did not include the Hurutshe but the same development among them is very probable. The significance of the ward system, as Omer-Cooper notes, is that the ward heads "constituted a nascent appointee bureaucracy which could be used to increase centralisation and liberate the ruler from dependence on his potentially rebellious relatives".⁶³ The ward system was also a means of implementing an increasing load of legislation which would be associated with the process of state formation.

⁶⁰Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p. 17.

⁶¹Campbell, Travels, vol.I, p.274.

⁶²Wilson, "The Sotho", OHSA vol. I, p. 152.

⁶³J.D. Omer-Cooper, "Aspects of Political Change in the Mfecane", in Thompson (ed), African Societies, p. 211.

Finally, Hurutshe aggrandisement from the last decades of the eighteenth century is suggested in the oral record during the chieftainship of Moiloa (the first), Sebogodi and Diutlwileng. Kaditshwene was re-established as the central town in the mid-eighteenth century. The Kgatla ba ga Mmanaana, living at Mabotsa (about 22 kilometres north-west of Kaditshwene) became subject to the Hurutshe at this time. Their traditions record the existence of a close relationship signified by inter-marriage and the common worship of the Hurutshe deity Thobega.⁶⁴ Little is known about the Hurutshe boo Manyana at this time, except that they continued to live at Borutwe.

c) The Period of Conflict c.1790 - 1820

By the last quarter of the century conflict had set in amongst the western highveld communities. This took the form of competition for clients and allies, attempts to dictate the political affairs of opponents, and endemic warfare. The conflict was caused by a number of probable factors including increasing competition among several powerful Tswana polities for control of trade; by social disruptions generated by colonial labour seekers and raiders; and finally by a shortage of agricultural land or pasture, exacerbated by the drought of 1790 to 1810.⁶⁵ Rolong traditions record the death of their chief Magketlwa in a battle with the Hurutshe at the turn of the century and during this same period the Hurutshe were harassed by a new group of intruders, the Kora, under the command of Jan Bloem, the frontier brigand, who were attempting to plunder surplus from the

⁶⁴B.M. Tseloesele, "Bakgatla ba ga Mmanaana", B.A. research dissertation, University of Botswana, 1978, p.7.

⁶⁵See P. Maylam, A History of the African People of South Africa, (London, 1986), p. 46, citing N. Parsons, A New History of Southern Africa, (London, 1982), pp. 41-50. One theory, supported by Hedges and Delius is that trade with Delagoa Bay was declining in the late eighteenth century, thus generating further conflict.

southern Tswana peoples.⁶⁶ Sebogodi's praise poems refer to his encounters with the "Hottentot army" (Bokgothu) and his reputation as a Hurutshe "warrior-king" seems to have been due to his victories over the Kora raiders.⁶⁷ The activities of these raiders, who might well have seized captives for the Cape labour market - the evidence is not conclusive - would have heightened insecurity, set chiefdoms against one another and loosened the bonds of Tswana social and political organisation.

The major challenge to the Hurutshe however came from their neighbours to the west, the Ngwaketse, who from the mid-eighteenth century seemed intent on breaking the Hurutshe stronghold over the Marico/Ngotwane region. From as early as 1740 they had interceded directly in Hurutshe affairs by placing a client chief, Tirwe, in power⁶⁸, and when their powerful regent Makaba II came to prominence, the Ngwaketse tried to expand the frontier of their control to the east. In about 1808 they managed to draw the Kgatla ba Mmanaana, tributaries of the Hurutshe, into a conflict. Makaba inflicted a defeat on the Kgatla taking most of their cattle. Unable to continue the payment of tribute to the Hurutshe, the Kgatla then sought refuge with the Ngwaketse. The Hurutshe were thus forced to reassert their hold over the Kgatla and launched an attack on them in 1815, during which action Sebogodi was killed.⁶⁹ If this act was intended as a pre-emptive strike it failed, for Kontle, the Kgatla

⁶⁶Z.K. Matthews, "A short history of the Tshidi-Barolong", Fort Hare Papers vol. i, no. 1, (1945) p. 13; G.M. Theal, History of South Africa before 1795, vol. iv, (Cape Town, 1964), p. 400. Theal states that Bloem's party threw the country "from the Kuruman river northwards to the Ngotwane" into confusion.

⁶⁷Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p. 35. Praise poems collected by F. Jensen in 1905.

⁶⁸See Breutz, Tribes of Marico; I. Schapera, "A Short history of the Bangwaketse", African Studies, vol. xv, (1941), p.3.

⁶⁹Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p. 95.

chief, took up residence with the Ngwaketse shortly thereafter.⁷⁰ The Hurutshe were eventually forced into an alliance with the Tlhaping, Kwená, Kgatla-ba-Kgafela and some Kora groups to keep the Ngwaketse at bay. They also found an ally from an unexpected quarter. Some time after 1815 Coenraad Buys, one of the growing trickle of settlers from across the Orange river, arrived among the Hurutshe earning the name "Moro", apparently an adulteration of his first salutation("More").⁷¹ Buys assisted the Hurutshe in an attack on the Malete, living near Rustenburg, who had been a "thorn in the eye"⁷² of the Hurutshe probably by preventing access to the important trade routes to the east. The Malete were defeated and their capital destroyed. They were placed firmly under Hurutshe leadership, some being incorporated into Senosé's ward at Kaditshwene. Thus the Hurutshe must have had cause to view the first representatives of the shifting frontiers in South Africa ambiguously, as possible allies or enemies.⁷³ However the threat from the west persisted, for when Campbell encountered the Hurutshe at Kaditshwene in 1820 they maintained constant patrols along the Ngotwane to guard against Ngwaketse raids and had curtailed trade to the west and south.⁷⁴

Thompson has suggested that the easy dispersal of the Tswana was due

⁷⁰Ngcongco, "History of the Ngwaketse", pp. 89-90.

⁷¹Marico Chronicle, March 16, 1912, letter from F. Jensen.

⁷²Marico Chronicle, March 16, 1912.

⁷³In another pioneering study Leggasick cites Buys as one of the frontierspeople whose actions indicated an absence of colour consciousness; a view in contrast to a long cherished opinion that racism and violence in South African society originated in a naturally conflictive frontier situation. See M. Legassick, "The Frontier Tradition in South African Historiography", in S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds), Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa, (London, 1980), pp. 65-66. Some of Legassick's opinions are being re-scrutinised by S. Newton-King in a study of interaction on the Cape frontier in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

⁷⁴Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 251, p.283.

to rivalries which prevented cooperation and to the town settlement pattern which rendered them "vulnerable to piecemeal attack".⁷⁵ However it is important to include the point that this period of almost incessant conflict between 1790 and 1820 undoubtedly weakened the capacity of the Tswana chiefdoms to resist the more determined raiders of the difagane. Explanations for the disintegration of the Tswana chiefdoms on the highveld that concentrate on their fissiparous tendencies or lack of militarism⁷⁶ are insubstantial and in any event are contradicted by the emergence of strong and militarised Tswana states in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The answer would seem to lie more in the spiral of drought, environmental decline, competition for resources and warfare which sapped the foundations of these societies.

III - The structure and organisation of precolonial Hurutshe Society.

A general understanding of Hurutshe political and economic structure and institutions in about 1820 is necessary in order to comprehend the dynamics of change from that time onwards. The model which follows draws heavily on Campbell's description of his visit in 1820 and on comparative insights from recent research into Tswana precolonial societies.⁷⁷ A number of cautions should be raised in undertaking such an exercise. Firstly this model does not focus upon differences between Tswana pre-colonial chiefdoms. Secondly, as it

⁷⁵Thompson, "Co-operation and Conflict: The Highveld", OHSA, vol.I, p.396.

⁷⁶These views are quoted, and accepted, by Maylam, History of African People, pp. 47-48. The main exponent is Samson, "Traditional Economic Systems" in Hammond-Tooke (ed.) Bantu-Speaking Peoples.

⁷⁷It is interesting to observe that S. Marks' and A. Atmore's Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa, published in 1980, and incorporating much of the recent research on precolonial societies had not one study devoted to Tswana communities. Accounts of the Tswana pre-colonial past therefore emerged later than case studies devoted to the Nguni-speakers.

relies heavily on Campbell's 1820 account, it does not posit the possibility of changes that may have occurred in the structure of Hurutshe society in previous periods. Thirdly this account does not attempt to describe or suggest changes that may have occurred in the availability of resources or technology, nor of the effect of environmental changes or sudden natural disasters. Finally, it could be argued (as Cobbing has done) that by 1820 few, if any, African societies in southern Africa could be termed precolonial in the sense that they were restructuring in response to colonial penetration. This model like most is therefore imperfect but it does however provide a framework within which later transformations can be examined.

The Hurutshe in the early nineteenth century were pastoralists, hunters and agriculturalists. In a schematic sense cattle were valued mostly for milk (rather than meat), were regarded as a store of wealth, were used for trading purposes and were central to bridewealth (boqadi) obligations and to the mafisa or cattle loan system. However a simple listing of the constituent utilities of cattle fails to capture their importance as the central dynamic in precapitalist societies in southern Africa. There existed a complex link between cattle and the accumulation and control of labour power and political authority which has been subtly explored by Guy particularly, and to which previous reference has been made. The Hurutshe like most African peoples at this period kept large herds. Campbell witnessed "their herds returning in the evening to the enclosures in the town ... for two miles in one direction the town was covered with droves of cattle".⁷⁸

Hunting provided the main source of meat. It was carried out in two forms; the "grand hunt" where many hunters drove game in a circular pattern into game traps or the arms of waiting spearmen, and small-scale hunting parties, several of which Campbell encountered on

⁷⁸Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 256.

approaching Kaditshwene. (A few of these hunters fled away at the sight of Campbell in his blue and white striped trousers and umbrella.)⁷⁹ Sheep and goats provided another source of meat which was supplemented by the collection of wild fruits (veldkos). Campbell records being informed that at certain periods "Hurutshe towns are almost emptied of inhabitants, who take up their residence upon the mountains, for the purpose of gathering [fruit]".⁸⁰

Situated in a more arable area than most of the Tswana chiefdoms in the early nineteenth century, the Hurutshe accordingly practised agriculture more extensively than their neighbours. Arable production therefore was of greater importance to their society than to most other Tswana economies. Sorghum was widely cultivated together with a variety of pumpkins and melons. Campbell records on arriving at Kaditshwene that he came "within sight of extensive cornfields in a plain of great length".⁸¹ (Two to three miles broad). The chief usually had control over the agricultural cycle, deciding when planting, hoeing and harvesting occurred. Each household was allocated suitable land through the ward heads and what was produced was regarded as the property of the household. The household was then expected to raise labour from among its female retinue to supply its agricultural subsistence requirements. The crops had to be threshed by women and were laid in storage bins for later consumption. Grain was ground and cooked into porridge or brewed, responsibilities again allocated to women. Agricultural products formed a larger proportion of the food source just after harvest but food was stored and, after good seasons, could last through to the next sowing season if sparingly consumed.⁸² Thus agricultural products were important in the diet of the Hurutshe,

⁷⁹Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 214, 224.

⁸⁰Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p.220.

⁸¹Campbell, Travels, vol.i, p.220.

⁸²Kinsman, "Beasts of Burden", p.44.

though the frequency of low rainfalls caused them to place a greater emphasis on pastoralism and hunting than did the Nguni and Sotho in the more fertile regions to the south-east. The Hurutshe were also renowned as tobacco growers which they traded, especially with the Tlhaping.⁸³ The Hurutshe appear to have had sole right to the cultivation of the best quality tobacco, a privilege granted by right of their seniority, a clear instance of ideological forms of dominance being capitalised upon to entrench economic production. They also cultivated hemp (leonotis leonoris) for local consumption and for trade, probably with the Khoi who had a particular liking for it⁸⁴, and a variety of sugarcane, which seems to have been regarded as a luxury.⁸⁵

Agricultural products however formed only a small portion of their total trade items. The following articles of trade are listed by Campbell as being manufactured at Kaditshwane: Iron objects (pick-axes, knives, awls), ivory carvings (leg and arm rings, knife-handles), copper ornaments, rush baskets, leather cloaks and caps, wooden and clay pots and dishes.⁸⁶ Campbell's account clearly reveals a society geared towards an exchange economy.

Before concluding this account of Hurutshe economic life, it should be noted that there was a strict division of labour between men and

⁸³See Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 276; Okahiro, "Economic Change Among the Tlhaping", pp. 77-78. In Campbell's original diary he records that "Marootse tobacco is well known everywhere". See J. Campbell, Diary, vol. III, South African Public Library, Cape Town.

⁸⁴Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 226; Wilson, "The Sotho", OHSa vol. i, p.142.

⁸⁵Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 226 f.n. This was a variety of sweet grass, or saccharum officinarum, consumed by coastal Africans from at least the 17th Century. See P. Richardson, "The Natal Sugar Industry in the Nineteenth Century", in Beinart et al, Plough to the Ground, p.132.

⁸⁶Campbell, Travels, p.276.

women as there was in most regions of southern Africa at the time. Pastoralism was solely a male preserve and was carried out in work teams drawn from the household or the ward. The same applied to hunting activities. Herding was the task of youths or clients who were often sent out to cattle posts for up to several years at a time. The production and exchange of most trade items was in the hands of a male elite, drawn from the chiefs' immediate advisors and senior ward heads. The art of mining and smelting copper was a closely guarded secret among the Hurutshe which even Campbell was forbidden to see.⁸⁷ Agricultural tasks, with the exception of land-clearing, were the function of women who were responsible for cultivating a field to provide the household. Women also worked in teams although little documentation exists regarding their composition.⁸⁸ Only gathering was a family-based activity involving men and women.

As is evident the Hurutshe, like nearly all Tswana communities, lived in large settlements which contained the bulk of the population, with satellite cattle posts or small villages at a distance from the major settlement. Kaditshwene, like the Tlhaping capital at Ditlakong, was quite extensive and populous, Campbell estimating the population at between sixteen and twenty thousand.⁸⁹ The settlements were divided into wards, whose function and importance have been stressed already. At Kaditshwene many of the wards were situated on surrounding hilltops. Campbell describes these, one about a mile distant, under Senose, being almost as large as the chief's centre and the other the same distance to the north.⁹⁰ Senose's ward was almost autonomous and was probably on the verge of moving

⁸⁷Campbell, Travels, vol i, p. 275.

⁸⁸Kinsman, "Southern Tswana Social Formation", p. 4.

⁸⁹The published Travels gives a figure of sixteen thousand, the Diary twenty.

⁹⁰Campbell, Travels, vol. i, pp. 227-229.

away to form a new section - which indeed it did shortly thereafter, giving rise to the Hurutshe boo Mokgatla (after Senose's son). Each ward consisted of several households making up a clearly defined family group which constituted the basis of the ward. The household would produce most of its food, clothing and domestic utensils.

The family households were controlled by the eldest male relative, the wards by heads drawn from either the royal lineage (often the chief's sons) or from non-royals on the basis of wealth or hereditary leadership.⁹¹

The chief controlled the largest ward as a rule, and he assigned land for residential and arable purposes to each household. The chief had ultimate control over this land and individuals could appeal to him directly against the ward heads' decisions.⁹²

Chiefs could also generate wealth and power in other forms. As administrative heads they could impose judicial fines which were a source of extractive wealth. In addition the Hurutshe chiefs had titular control over the age-regiments (mephato) which apart from maintaining the royal herds, added to them through raiding and plundering cattle from other communities. Furthermore it is generally agreed that in Tswana (and Sotho and Swazi) society the preference for endogamous cousin marriages in royal families only circulated bridewealth payments into their hands.⁹³ The chief also had claim to particular products of the hunt, most significantly to skins and ivory, both of which were trade items. Campbell in fact encountered the acting Hurutshe chief, Mogkathe, busy sewing a skin.⁹⁴

Finally the chief and wealthier male members of the

⁹¹Schapera, "Ethnic Composition", pp. 28-29.

⁹²See I. Schapera, Native Land Tenure in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, (London, 1943), p. 42.

⁹³See P. Bonner, "Classes, Production and the State in Precolonial Swaziland", in Marks and Atmore (eds) Economy and Society, p. 93.

⁹⁴Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 235. The rightful chief, Diutlwileng, was still a minor.

society further enriched themselves through taking clients, drawn either from the ranks of batlhanka (young captives pirated from other settlements) or from members of the community who had fallen into destitution.⁹⁵ In return for access to mafisa cattle these people were expected to act as herders or huntsmen for their patrons. "Clientship", concludes Kinsman, "constituted a means of extracting surplus that was precluded to aristocrats in their relations with free families in the towns".⁹⁶ Clearly then, although the structure of Hurutshe society was apparently egalitarian, wealth and power were concentrated in the hands of the chief, the ward heads, and male members of the household who ultimately controlled access to the means of production. This ability to extract surplus labour power corresponds in some analyses to the tributary mode of production, which is linked to the presence of distinct classes and the notion of the state.

The position of the subordinate groups in Tswana societies like the Hurutshe has recently received the attention of a number of historians. Kinsman has focused on the position of women (and to a lesser extent juniors) in Rolong society seeing their subordination in legal circumscriptions and property relations which denied them ownership of livestock.⁹⁷ Thus the fundamental class division in precapitalist societies like the Hurutshe is considered by some historians to be between the dominant married men/household heads and the subordinate women and children.⁹⁸ Tlou on the other hand

⁹⁵Kinsman, "Southern Tswana Social Formation", pp. 13-14.

⁹⁶Kinsman, "Southern Tswana Social Formation", p. 15. Guy on the other hand, has contested the argument that clientship was an essential form of chiefly power and appropriation, and has redirected historians to the question of control over labour power, where he locates the major source of chiefly/male power.

⁹⁷M. Kinsman, "'Beasts of Burden : 'The Subordination of Southern Tswana Women", Journal of Southern African Studies, vol 10, no. I, (1983); Kinsman, "Uses and Abuses of Anthropology".

⁹⁸This view is held by Guy who asserts that "in central analytical terms it is incorrect to see chiefs and homestead heads [males] as the poles of a social dichotomy", See Guy, "Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies", p.29.

has examined the forms of serfdom (clientship and botlhanka) that emerged among the Tswana, and Mautle, the pauperisation of the Bakalagadi by the Kwena in the nineteenth century.⁹⁹ These different case studies suggest that regional or temporal specificities determined the major divisions in Tswana societies. There is no reason to doubt that Hurutshe society contained many of the inegalitarian and differentiated forms that characterised Tswana precolonial social formations as a whole and that these forms intensified over time. This in turn led to a certain amount of conflict between labour/ tribute-paying and labour/tribute-receiving classes, and within the ruling group over economic control and political authority.

On the other hand reciprocal relations existed between the various levels of Hurutshe society, a feature which has led some historians to describe Tswana societies as "feudalistic".¹⁰⁰ While tribute passed up the hierarchical structure of Hurutshe society the same tributary goods were redistributed down the hierarchy. The batlhanka, in return for working for their masters, were housed, clothed and fed and their position has been likened to that of dependent children; Tlou has asserted that "the uncritical use of the word 'slavery' with reference to social relationships between the Batawana [of Ngamiland] and their subject peoples is unacceptable".¹⁰¹

analytical terms it is incorrect to see chiefs and homestead heads [males] as the poles of a social dichotomy", See Guy, "Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies", p.29.

⁹⁹See Tlou, History of Ngamiland, pp. 51-62 and T. Tlou, "Servility and Political Control: Botlhanka among the Batswana of northern Botswana", in J. Miers and S. Kopytoff (eds.), Slavery in Africa, (Madison, 1977), pp. 367-390; G. Mautle, "Bakgalagadi - Bakwena Relationships: A case of Slavery, c.1840-1920", Botswana Notes and Records, vol. 18, (1983), pp. 19-29.

¹⁰⁰Denbow et al. "Research in Botswana", p. 11.

¹⁰¹Tlou, History of Ngamiland, pp. 59-61. Mautle is firm in declaring the relationship between the Kgalagadi and Kwena to be slavery, but he is referring to a later period when new historical developments were taking place.

In the case of women Kinsman has pointed to factors which mitigated the extent of their subordination to men, for example the fact that women controlled the harvests, over which they maintained a vigilant right of use and distribution.¹⁰²

There were also checks and restraints on the legal and extractive powers of chiefs and ward heads. Hurutshe chiefs could not impose specific control over household production nor could they directly extract surplus from family labour within the ward. In administrative affairs the Hurutshe chiefs have been described as the "interpreters and executors of the general will"¹⁰³, being constrained by the decisions of the Kgotla (public assembly) and the advice of their close advisors (Khuduthamaga). Campbell described the scenes at a Kgotla he attended noting with some surprise that "none of the observers seemed to have the smallest timidity, nor were they reluctant to express their minds with freedom"¹⁰⁴, a significant pointer to the right of opinion in Hurutshe public life.

It is probable then that exploited elements in Hurutshe society could maintain a measure of economic independence through resistance to male, elder or chiefly exploitation.¹⁰⁵ This struggle occurred at all levels of the society from the household up to the highest councils of the state. The possibilities created by economic developments in the latter half of the nineteenth century for these groups to further loosen their bonds of dependence remain to be examined.

¹⁰²Kinsman, "Uses and Abuses of Anthropology", p. 8.

¹⁰³Lestrade, "Political Organisation of Bechwana", p. 431.

¹⁰⁴Campbell, Travels, vol. i, pp. 269-269.

¹⁰⁵Kinsman has suggested avenues of approach to studying forms of resistance in precolonial Tswana communities. See "Uses and Abuses of Anthropology", pp. 7-11. Kinsman asserts that Meillassoux's important conceptual breakthroughs, though providing a new vision of African precolonial societies, were too broad to allow for the "dynamic tensions between dominant and subordinated, nor to illuminate the predicament of the subordinated". See p.4.

IV - The Intensification of Regional Violence - "The Difagane"

Campbell would have had little inkling of what was to befall the Hurutshe when he departed for Kuruman in the second week of May 1820. Within three years the cohesive and productive society he described was being torn apart by disruptive forces which destroyed the very fabric of Tswana societies - sedentary town life - and ushered in a period of rapid social change. The long accepted explanation for this widespread conflict is that competition between emergent and powerful states, led to the dominance of the Zulu conquest state under Shaka.¹⁰⁶

Shaka's military activities caused a process of population dispersal, generally subsumed under the catch-all term of the mfecane or difagane. However, it is important to note that the very idea of the difagane is being strongly challenged. Cobbing has pointed to the "spatial and chronological teleologies of mfecane theory" and to the conceptual contradictions which its usage gives rise to.¹⁰⁷ Wright has exposed the racist and elitist origins and implications of the "difagane myth".¹⁰⁸ In addition the former Africanist explanation of a "self-generated internal revolution" among the Nguni has been strongly rejected by Cobbing. Cobbing suggests alternatively that slave-raids emanating from Delagoa Bay and the Cape to obtain labour for the South American and Cape markets respectively placed pressure on African societies, especially after 1810 when the demand for labour increased dramatically at the Cape following restrictions on

¹⁰⁶See for example J. Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath; (London, 1966); Hedges, "Trade and Politics in Southern Mocambique", unpublished Ph.D. University of London, 1978, Ch's 6 & 7; A. Smith, "The Trade of Delagoa Bay as a factor in Nguni Politics, 1750-1835", in Thompson (ed), African Societies; J. Guy, "Ecological Factors in the Rise of Shaka and the Zulu Kingdom", in Marks and Atmore (eds), Economy and Society. pp.102-118; J. Wright, "Pre-Shakan Age-group formation among the northern Nguni", Natalia, vol. 8, (1978).

¹⁰⁷J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolombo, "JAH", vol.29 (1988), p.517.

¹⁰⁸J. Wright and J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane: Beginning the Inquest", unpublished Seminar Paper, African Studies Institute, University of Witwatersrand, 1988. See also J. Richter, "The Withering Away of the 'Lifagane': or a Change of Paradigm", B.A.(Hons.) dissertation, Rhodes University, 1988.

the use of slave and local African labour. ¹⁰⁹ These European-inspired pressures forced African societies to reorganise themselves for defence, thus raising the level of conflict. The upheavals formerly known as the difagane thus had not one but several sources of origin and began before the expansion of the Zulu Kingdom. Buys' sojourn among the Hurutshe in 1805, during which he may well have been rewarded with captives from the Maleté, is an example of the destabilising activities of colonial agents over a decade before rise of Shaka to power in the Zulu kingdom.

Nevertheless while the insertion of the role of white agency adds a powerful causative factor for the violence and social upheavals that spread across the South African region in the 1820s and 1830s, more research is needed to establish the overall effect of colonial-inspired violence in the region. Furthermore it seems an overreaction to reject totally the African role in the disruptions of the period or to dismiss, as Cobbing does, the emergence and significance of new states in southern Africa in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As Hamilton argues, "Cobbing's reconstruction of events... is as Eurocentric as the Mfecane theory is Afrocentric".¹¹⁰ In another sense his analysis is doubly Eurocentric in that Cobbing assumes that "the production of history in the nineteenth century was carried out by whites only"¹¹¹ whereas the myth of Shaka has been accepted, and lent credence by Africanists who saw in a powerful figure like Shaka an opportunity to advance an African view of the past.

These important reservations about Cobbing's work raised by Hamilton, together with other reservations at the empirical level, mean that currently the debate about the difagane is in a state of flux. This

¹⁰⁹J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi"

¹¹⁰C. Hamilton, "A Review of Cobbing", unpublished paper in progress, p.4. I am grateful to Carolyn Hamilton for providing a copy of this manuscript and for her private comments.

¹¹¹Hamilton, "Review of Cobbing" p.6.

dispute is likely to persist and the central and orthodox place which the difagane has occupied in recent South African history is certain to be reformulated. My usage of this term and all its connotations consequently recognises its potential theoretical and terminological limitations.

There has been also a shift of emphasis in more recent studies of the effects of the difagane. Kinsman, in a study of the Rolong during this period, has stressed the fundamental challenge posed by these upheavals to the social and economic base of Tswana societies, rather than the destructive and barbarous aspects which captured the attention of earlier historians of the period such as Stow and Ellenberger.¹¹²

The following account traces the chronology of warfare, dislocation and transformation of the Hurutshe from 1823 to 1848. In so doing it accords with the belief that this period is best understood from the viewpoint of specific communities, rather than as an entity in itself, for this allows the historian to trace both the detailed demographic consequences and the social transformations which loosened the structure of pre-difagane societies and ultimately hastened involvement in commodity production and migrant labour. This account will focus on the fortunes of five identifiable separate Hurutshe groups between 1822 and 1838; conceivably some smaller bands of Hurutshe opted not to pursue any of these alternatives but the evidence does not permit a more detailed reconstruction of them. These groups are; Mokgathle and Moilola's faction, the refugees with the Rolong, the Hurutshe boo Manyane at Borutwe, the Mosega faction and the Cape migrants. As the fate of the first of these factions is the most fully documented the emphasis of this narration is unavoidably weighted towards it. Despite the disorderliness of this period it is possible to discern four general trends; firstly that it was a time of extreme political fluidity when different groups

¹¹²See M. Kinsman, "The impact of the Difagane on Southern Tswana Communities: with Special Reference to the Rolong", unpublished Paper to History Workshop, University of Witwatersrand, 1984. Stow, Native Races; Ellenberger, History of the Basotho.

competed for power, secondly, that political allegiances consequently shifted frequently and did not correspond to any notions of race or ethnicity, thirdly that groups which could offer political security and material sustenance were likely to attract large followings, fourthly that traditional leadership structures fell apart, many never to be revived.

In 1823 the LMS missionary Samuel Kay, following up Campbell's initial reports, paid a visit to the Hurutshe. His account differs sharply from Campbell's. Kay reported that a "gloomy spiritlessness" pervaded the townspeople, that most of the Hurutshe mephato were in the field and that young chief Diutlwileng had been killed in a conflict with either the Phuting or with Sebetwane's Patsa-Fokeng or a combined force of both parties.¹¹³ Attacks occurred on a frequent basis and there is simply not enough evidence to attribute Hurutshe displacement to a specific group of raiders. The evacuation of Kaditshwene seems to have taken place in stages between April and September of 1823,¹¹⁴ which indicates that the Hurutshe exodus took place in response to a number of repeated incursions. Moffat records that Hurutshe women joined the Phuting in panic after the death of Diutlwileng in the first quarter of 1823, but the capital was attacked again in September.¹¹⁵ Both these groups overwhelmed the Hurutshe by sheer weight in numbers, their ranks having been swelled by other displaced communities.¹¹⁶ It is little wonder then that the attackers' origins were unclear to the Hurutshe at the time. Once dispersed from Kaditshwene the Hurutshe fragmented and a confused and disintegrative period in their history ensued.

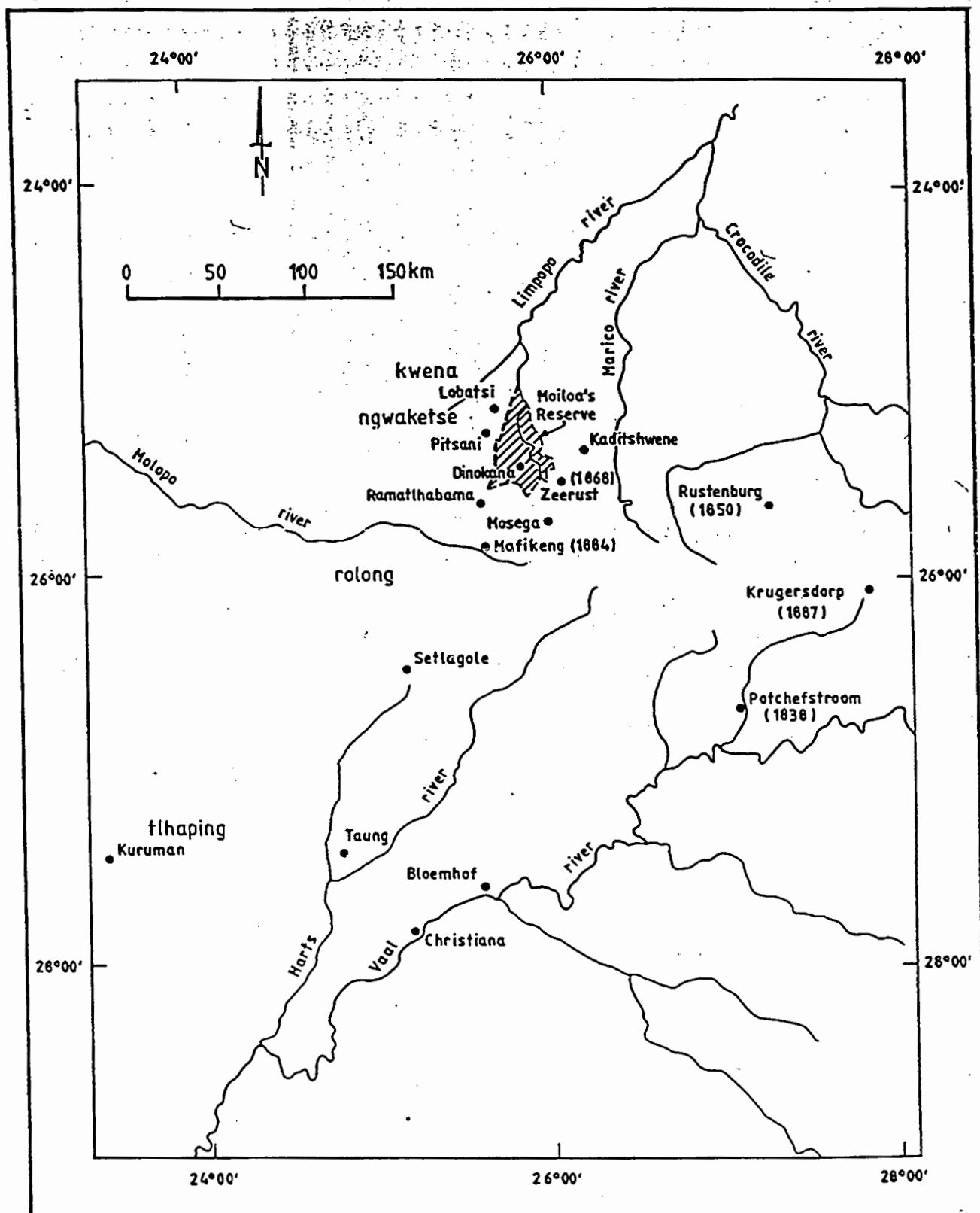
¹¹³S. Kay, Travels and Researches in South Africa, (London, 1853), pp. 225-227; Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, p.116.

¹¹⁴Such is the pervasive influence of the later Ndebele power in the region that Hurutshe oral traditions give little clue as to the earlier invaders. See Breutz, Tribes of Marico, pp. 7-8.

¹¹⁵R. and M. Moffat, Apprenticeship at Kuruman: Journals and Letters of Robert and Mary Moffat, edited by I. Schapera, (London, 1951), p.95.

¹¹⁶See Kinsman, Impact of Difagane, p. 6; R. Moffat, Missionary Labours, p. 355.

Fig.1; Study Area 1830 - 1850



Adapted from: Union of South Africa, Province of Transvaal - Magisterial District of MARICO. Sheet M9. (1925)
Boer Republics and Adjacent Territories 1852 - 1899. (1969)

a) Mokgathle and Moiloa's Faction

Initially this group was fairly numerous and under the leadership of Mokgathle, Diutlwileng's brother. With Mokgathle was his nephew Moiloa, whom Campbell had noticed at Kaditshwene, remarking, perceptively, that "I should not wonder if Moeelway's popularity excited suspicions in the mind of the Regent, lest by and by he might wrest the legal power from his hands".¹¹⁷ It was probably this Hurutshe faction which beat off an attack by a group of invaders from the east in July 1824,¹¹⁸ including - perhaps led by - a Phuting chief Ratsebe. Another raid was launched by the Taung under Moletsane, for one of their traditions ascribes the death of Diutlwileng to an encounter in late 1823 or early in 1824.¹¹⁹ While an attack on Mosega may well have occurred, the weight of evidence suggests that Diutlwileng was dead by this time. However, Mokgathle's people managed to hold their position at Mosega despite these raids. Moffat encountered them here in 1829 en route to a visit to the Ndebele. Moffat wrote that these Hurutshe "subsisted on game, roots, berries and the produce of their cornfields, having been deprived of their flocks by the Mantatees".¹²⁰ According to Lemue they were by this time subject to the Ndebele, whose core settlement may have on the Apies river from where they could have periodically raided the Hurutshe from 1826 onwards.¹²¹ Tribute was paid to the Ndebele "in corn".¹²² Moffat also observed that

¹¹⁷Campbell, Travels, vol. i, p. 261.

¹¹⁸Cited in Legassick, "The Griqua" vol.II, p.337 from entries by R. Hamilton, LMS 9/2/B, - April 12, 1824, LMS 9/2/C, 12 June 1824; Moffat, Apprenticeship, pp.117-118.

¹¹⁹See N. Parsons, A New History of Southern Africa, (London 1982), pp.71-73.

¹²⁰Missionary Labours, p. 134.

¹²¹Germond (ed.), Chronicles of Basutoland, p.76.

¹²²Cited in Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, p.70, from LMS Correspondence, NAR, no.5/1/1, R. Hamilton to Moffat, 19 November, 1830.

Mokgathle was "probably a usurper", but "will not resign the reins of government to Moiloa who [is] the lawful heir".¹²³ This was incorrect for the heir was Motlaadile, Moiloa's brother and eldest son of Sebogodi. Motlaadile's whereabouts are not known at this time. Nevertheless it is perhaps an indication of Moiloa's power that his ascension to chieftainship was regarded as both rightful and imminent by Campbell. Mokgathle seized the chance to travel with Moffat to Mzilikazi's, presuming to gain greater protection through his association with the missionary. Nevertheless Mokgathle was "coolly received" by Mzilikazi.¹²⁴

From 1829 attempts were made to deprive the Ndebele of their cattle by Griqua and Kora groups. In a sense these predators were similar to those hunting and trading groups who had been harassing them from their east.¹²⁵ Their motives seem to have been to raid for cattle and possibly captives, rather than to oust the Ndebele from the highveld. The first raid was led by Jan Bloem the Kora brigand. In 1830/1831 a more determined effort was made to deprive Mzilikazi's people of their herds by the Griqua Captain Barend Barends¹²⁶ and in June 1831 a large commando including several Rolong groups set off intent on further large-scale raiding. Both sorties were unsuccessful because the Ndebele were able to retrieve their cattle by following up the raiding parties. According to standard accounts the Ndebele during the same period were harassed by Zulu raids from the south-east, though these views have been challenged recently.¹²⁷ An obvious course of action for the Ndebele leaders

¹²³R. Moffat, The Matabele Journals of Robert Moffat, edited by J.P.R. Wallis, (London, 1975 ed.), vol.1, p.5.

¹²⁴Moffat, Matabele Journals, p.19. Mokgathle's concern to placate the Ndebele indicates that they were not so far distant. If, as Richter suggests, they were as far east as Ermelo district, it is unlikely that the Hurutshe would have been so discomforted.

¹²⁵The activities of these eastern raiders have been documented by Richter.

¹²⁶See Kinsman, "Impact of the Difagane", pp.22-23.

¹²⁷See Richter, "The Withering Away of the 'Lifagane'", p.17. Richter asserts that there "exists no hard evidence for any

was now to move westwards, closer to the Marico district. If the Zulu under Dingane had been threatening an attack this certainly would have placed them at a greater distance from their tormentors. It would certainly have placed the Ndebele in a better position to reduce to clientship the Tswana peoples west of the Molopo river, some of whom had already proved to be irksome.

From Mosega, Mokgathle and Moilola must have watched these events with growing unease. Although tributaries they had at least formalised relationships with the Ndebele.¹²⁸ They had also begun a process of economic regeneration based on agriculture. The absence of cornfields among the Ndebele was contrasted with Hurutshe productivity and they were observed trading cattle for corn with some Rolong.¹²⁹ Though reportedly having had few cattle they were clearly in the process of rebuilding their herds, largely from mafisa cattle from the Ndebele.¹³⁰ The Hurutshe leaders must have known that a Ndebele move would disrupt this status quo, in the sense that they would now face the prospect of direct incorporation into the Ndebele state. Moilola observed in 1831 that Mzilikazi, after his defeat of Barend's commando, "considers himself master of the world", and he apparently predicted an imminent Ndebele move to the west.¹³¹ Consequently Moffat's former offer of a missionary's presence assumed a more advantageous perspective. Moilola was delegated to visit the French missionaries, Rolland and Pellisier, of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, at Setlagole, and to request them to establish a mission at Mosega. His object was

Zulu expedition on to the highveld", thus contradicting Owen-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, pp.137-139, Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, pp.85-91; Cobbing, "The Ndebele", pp.26-27.

¹²⁸Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moilio, p.316. At Bloemhof Moilola asserted that he and Mzilikazi were "good friends", an opinion softened possibly by the passing of 40 years.

¹²⁹Germond, Chronicle of Basutoland, p.104; Journal des Missions Evangeliques de Paris, vol.8, 1833 pp.100-101.

¹³⁰Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, p.70.

¹³¹Germond, Chronicles of Basutoland, p.84; Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, p.81.

clearly to seek some form of protection, for he informed the missionaries to proceed only "if they were sufficiently strong and numerous".¹³² In what was possibly a further attempt to seek support, Moiloa proposed marriage, unsuccessfully, to the widow of the Kwenā chief, Motswasele, who sought temporary refuge with the Hurutshe at this time.¹³³

The missionaries arrived in February 1832, but, despite Moffat's protective overtures to Mzilikazi on their behalf, they remained fearful of the Ndebele, stricken by illness and of little assistance to the Hurutshe. In mid-1832 some Ndebele envoys were allegedly killed, and a party of Hurutshe were accused,¹³⁴ thus giving Mzilikazi the causus bellum he sought to attack them and establish himself at Mosega. If indeed these murders had been committed by the Hurutshe at Mosega, it was an extremely foolhardy move, for up to this time the Hurutshe had avoided Ndebele aggression. Before an attack was launched, however, the sight of a retaliatory impi sent by Mzilikazi against the Rolong for their participation in Barend's raid caused many of the Hurutshe at Mosega to lose their nerve and flee.¹³⁵ They were in fact preceded by the French missionaries who had hastened to Kuruman to consult with Dr. Philip, superintendent of the IMS, for a new site for the Hurutshe mission. Mzilikazi established one of his barracks at Mosega and based his new settlement at the old Hurutshe capital at Kaditshwene.¹³⁶ Remarkably, Mosega was to become the centre of two more hapless and short-lived mission stations before the decade was over.

As was the case during the evacuation of Kaditshwene, the Hurutshe fled from Mosega in groups; probably because they stood a better chance of avoiding attack or attaching themselves to other

¹³²Germond, Chronicles of Basutoland, p.84.

¹³³A. Sillery, Sechele, Oxford, 1954, p.65.

¹³⁴This is accepted by Cobbing, "The Ndebele", p.25.

¹³⁵Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, p.100.

¹³⁶Cobbing, "The Ndebele", pp.27-28.

communities. A considerable number opted not to leave Mosega at all. This kind of individualistic choice typifies the instability of the period which broke the interlocking social and economic relationships between chiefs and commoners. Traditional chiefs could not necessarily attract or maintain adherents, and people probably tended to move about in wards or smaller family groups. This makes it impossible to give a full reconstruction of the migrations of the Hurutshe as a whole, especially those who took up an ambulatory existence over the next decade or so.

Mokgathle's and Moilola's first move was to the Maritsane river. According to Breutz's informants, Motlaadile, the brother of Moilola, remained at Mosega and drew the attention of a group of Kora people to their departure together with "numerous cattle" (a further indication that they had managed to renew pastoralism at Mosega). Mokgathle however was warned of the impending attack and beat off the Kora.¹³⁷ A different source mentions that a ward head, Ramesega Setshele, remained at Mosega, but later fled to Maamuse near Schweizer Reneke.¹³⁸

At the Maritsane, Mokgathle's group awaited the outcome of discussions between Lemue and Rolland and Dr. Philip. In fact the Griqua under their chief Waterboer had agreed to provide a site for the missionaries on which to resettle the Hurutshe but when Lemue returned to Maritsane with this news the Hurutshe had abandoned the area and were camped near the Harts river¹³⁹. Here the missionaries found them in early in 1833 in a state of destitution. They had lost their cattle and had narrowly avoided detection by the

¹³⁷Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.97. Breutz suggested that Sebogodi earned his reputation in this battle. However he is incorrect, Sebogodi was dead by 1815.

¹³⁸Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.97 citing a note in Native Affairs Dept. files on a 'Short history of the Native Tribes of the Transvaal'.

¹³⁹Journal des Missions Evangeliques, vol.8, 1833 pp.198-199.

Ndebele impi sent against Tawane's Rolong.¹⁴⁰ "It is easy to imagine what these people must have suffered", wrote Rolland, "for they were accustomed to abundance, but, in the interval of a day, found themselves reduced to a diet of meagre roots".¹⁴¹ Many people had returned to Mosega to try and gather food but had been killed by the Ndebele. The missionaries placed their number at seven to eight hundred people, "all that remained of the thousands we had recently seen at Mosega".¹⁴²

The divided leadership of the group now became even more apparent. A majority under Moiloa seemed prepared to follow the missionaries but Mokgathle had devised a different plan-to attach themselves to Barends in the hope that he would offer protection against the Ndebele. However when it was clear that the majority supported Moiloa, Mokgathle dropped this idea and ordered an evacuation the following day. The missionaries' account make it evident that Moiloa was the more forceful leader, and it seems that real power was passing more and more into his hands. But chiefly influence waned under such formidable circumstances. Two days out of Kuruman the Hurutshe refugees fell in with a Kora band who "spoke flatteringly of Barends and his new plan against Moselikatzi" and "seduced" away the majority.¹⁴³ In the end only about 50 leaderless individuals arrived with the French missionaries at their station at Mothitho.

The precise course of events at this stage is hard to determine. According to the PEMS missionaries Mogathle and Moiloa returned to Modimong on the Harts river to find that the Rolong had crossed to the south side of the Vaal.¹⁴⁴ For a while they remained secure

¹⁴⁰Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moilio, p.316.

¹⁴¹Germond, Chronicles of Basutoland, p.107.

¹⁴²Journal des Missions Evangeliques, vol.8, 1833, pp.203.

¹⁴³Journal des Missions Evangeliques, vol.8, 1833, pp202-204..

¹⁴⁴Germond, Chronicles of Basutoland, p.114; Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moilio, p.316. The trader Andrew Bain also encountered the Hurutshe here in 1834. See A.G. Bain, Journals of Andrew Geddes Bain, edited by M.H. Lister, (Cape Town, 1949), p.142.

for the Ndebele, according to Rasmussen, did not attack communities in 1833/1834 because they were attempting to revive internal peace and order. In January 1834 however they conducted an offensive against the Hurutshe. The motives for this are unclear; it may have been a cattle-raid, or a punitive expedition for having fled Mosega after the supposed murder of Ndebele envoys. Mokgathle appealed, successfully, to Mosweu's Kora for assistance. The Kora suffered a defeat but managed to deflect the main Ndebele thrust against the Hurutshe. The significance of the attack was that it "seems to have set in motion a Griqua/Korana invasion which had been developing for three years".¹⁴⁵ It also linked the Hurutshe's fortunes more closely with the Griqua/Kora's. Evidence for this is that in 1834 another commando which attacked the Ndebele had amongst its Tswana contingent Moiloa and a number of his followers, who returned from this raid with a few hundred cattle.¹⁴⁶ This informal alliance points again to the undefined nature of political allegiances during this period.

Thus in the convulsions which accompanied the creation of a new Ndebele march as far west as the Molopo river the Hurutshe had found the missionaries a poor source of support. Even Moiloa recognised this, though he had been prepared to continue pinning his hopes on them. From 1833 however this group transferred its allegiance to the Griqua/Kora hoping no doubt that the balance of power in the region would shift further in their direction. This was a reasonable deduction to make at the time, for all Tswana communities north of the Orange had witnessed the growth of Griqua power predicated on military dominance conferred by guns and horses. At the same time however the defeat of Barends' expedition against the Ndebele in 1831 showed that Griqua control in the region was by no means complete.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, p.105; See also Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moilio, p.316-317.

¹⁴⁶Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Magala, p.326.

¹⁴⁷Legassick, "The Griqua", pp.425-432.

Consequently it may have been for this reason that these Hurutshe came to acknowledge the suzerainty of Mahura's Tlhaping who from the early 1830s were acquiring guns and horses themselves and were spreading out into the Harts/Vaal country and building a loose confederacy out of the heterogeneous groups of Sotho-Tswana from their base downstream of the Vaal/Harts confluence.¹⁴⁸ In 1835 Mokgathle informed Mahura, the Tlhaping chief, that he wished to remove south to Dithakong but was advised by the latter to remain where he was, as Waterboer's Griqua were attempting to extend control over the area around Dithakong.¹⁴⁹

In 1836 Mahura himself moved from Dithakong to Taung and the Hurutshe, numbering about 3000 people, now found themselves more directly under Tlhaping control and shelter. The Taung settlement was reported by Lemue in 1838 to consist of about fifteen villages spread alongside the Harts.¹⁵⁰ As Mahura's Tlhaping grew in strength and "played an increasingly important part in the power balance of Transorangia"¹⁵¹ the Hurutshe leaders obviously considered it wise to remain at Taung during this period. From here in the mid-1830s they launched several raids, sometimes jointly with the Tlhaping, against Ndebele cattle posts.¹⁵²

In 1837 the tide began to turn against the Ndebele. Firstly the Voortrekkers took the offensive against them in January 1837, attacking Mosega and inflicting upon the Ndebele (and their Hurutshe dependents) over a thousand losses. Then, according to standard accounts, in May a Zulu force captured from the Ndebele the largest booty of their chief, Dingane's, reign. Emboldened by these events

¹⁴⁸See Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Rarapulan, p.379; Shillington, The Southern Tswana, p.13; Legassick, "The Griqua", pp.515-516.

¹⁴⁹Legassick, "The Griqua", pp.479-500.

¹⁵⁰Journal des Missions Evangelique, vol.XIV, 1838, pp.331-332.

¹⁵¹Legassick, "The Griqua", p.517.

¹⁵²Cobbing, "The Ndebele", p.34.

Moiloa sent a larger contingent under Bloem to raid for Ndebele cattle near Mosega.¹⁵³ In evidence given to the Bloemhof Commission in 1871, Mogale, a Hurutshe subject of Mzilikazi's, describes Moiloa's attack on them and the subsequent capture of Ndebele cattle. Mogale as a boy had been captured by the Ndebele but had been given cattle and established a homestead near Mosega. A few years later, he joined Moiloa and was to settle with him without any complication at Dinokana.¹⁵⁴ His account indicates very clearly the fluidity of ethnic categories during the difagane.

In November 1837 Potgieter led a final commando against the Ndebele after which Mzilikazi prepared to lead his followers northwards across the Limpopo. Some of the Hurutshe may have assisted Potgieter in this engagement; the evidence is somewhat inconclusive.¹⁵⁵ However when Moiloa travelled to see Potgieter shortly thereafter to ask for land to settle on, the Trekker leader gave him preferential treatment, even if only on the basis that they regarded the Ndebele as a common foe.¹⁵⁶ Before the Ndebele departed for good, Moiloa and a Griqua force under Bloem and Jan Isaac conducted another raid, this time on Ndebele cattle posts in Ngwaketse territory.¹⁵⁷

Mention now must be made of the fate of the other groups of Hurutshe during the two decades following the evacuation of their homeland.

¹⁵³See Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, pp.124-129; Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moilio, p.317; Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, pp.142-143.

¹⁵⁴Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Mogale, pp.326-327.

¹⁵⁵Moiloa's evidence at Bloemhof is unclear, see p.317. Breutz, following the Report re Acquisition and Tenure of Land by Natives in the Transvaal, NAD 1904, p.15, asserts that there was cooperation.

¹⁵⁶See Report re Acquisition ... of Land, p.15; J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton, The Native Policy of the Voortrekkers, Cape Town, 1928, p.51.

¹⁵⁷Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, pp.129-130.

b) "Scattered and Peeled" - The Hurutshe Refugees with the Rolong

This Hurutshe faction found refuge by attaching themselves to stronger or more established communities. For example Gontle had resettled part of his Rolong following at Phitsane in 1824, providing shelter for a "numerous division" of Hurutshe refugees.¹⁵⁸ Phitsane at this time had a population of about 20,000 people. Another contingent of Hurutshe found refuge with Makaba's Ngwaketse, and fought under Makaba in his major but unsuccessful attack on Sebetwane's Kololo in 1824. On another visit to the Ngwaketse in 1826/27 Moffat noticed another group of Hurutshe with a faction of the Rolong at Sebateng under Bogatsu. This was an offshoot of the Rolong at Phitsane and may have included those Hurutshe originally with Gontle. Here Moffat met a former smith from Kaditshwene actively plying his trade among the Rolong and Ngwaketse. "The Bahurutsian refugees", wrote Moffat, "were the most interesting and industrious".¹⁵⁹ A Hurutshe headman asked Moffat to consider a IMS station for the Hurutshe, as Campbell had promised, but Moffat considered the Hurutshe too "scattered and peeled" to embark on such a venture.¹⁶⁰ In the disturbed circumstances of 1827 it was apparent that "only guns and missionaries, together or separately, appeared to offer defence against the unprecedented warfare and slaughter".¹⁶¹

These Hurutshe residing with the Rolong were violently propelled south of the Molopo river in 1833 following attacks on Kurwane and Phitsane by the Ndebele.¹⁶² The area between the Molopo and

¹⁵⁸Moffat, Missionary Labour, p.102.

¹⁵⁹Moffat, Missionary Labour, p.121-122.

¹⁶⁰Moffat, Apprenticeship, pp.357-358. Isaac Hughes had arrived at Kuruman in August 1824 to take up residence with the Hurutshe, but due to the unsettled state of affairs and differences with Moffat he was transferred to Griquatown in 1827. See Legassick, "The Griqua", p.373 f.n.112.

¹⁶¹Legassick, "The Griqua", p.377.

¹⁶²Kinsman, "Impact of the Difagane", pp.23-24.

Mashowing rivers became filled with impoverished Rolong and Hurutshe refugees. Smith encountered a few "active hamlets" of Hurutshe, remarking that "they have the appearance of half-starved persons, [and] have no cattle".¹⁶³ A year later, in 1836, Bain, while traversing the area between the Mashowing and Setlagole rivers, noted that the "remains of various Bechuana tribes, such as Bahurutsie, Wanketsie and Barolongs ... live in very small communities, scattered over the face of the country, but have not a single head of cattle to live by, their only food being locusts, or such game as chance may direct into their pitfalls".¹⁶⁴ In all probability these Hurutshe either remained with the Rolong to resettle at Thaba Nchu or found their way later back to the Hurutshe in the Transvaal.¹⁶⁵

c) The Hurutshe boo Manyane

Very little is known about the Hurutshe boo Manyane at Borutwe from the late eighteenth century. In the late 1820s however one community is reported to have given the Ndebele tribute in the form of skins and another in grain.¹⁶⁶ These may have been the Hurutshe boo Manyane who, according to their traditions, did not move from Borutwe during the Ndebele occupation of the western highveld. Though essentially tributaries some of these Hurutshe were drawn into the Ndebele state directly, for there is mention of Hurutshe individuals participating in Ndebele raids, one as early as 1828.¹⁶⁷

It should be noted though that the presence on the highveld of the Ndebele brought with it a period of ambiguous peace, keeping at

¹⁶³A. Smith, The Diary of Andrew Smith, edited by P. Kirby, (Cape Town, 1939), vol.II, p.38.

¹⁶⁴Bain, Journals, p.140

¹⁶⁵Schapera, Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes, p.31, refers to Hurutshe refugees returning from the Tshidi-Rolong. They may have been part of a group of subsequent Hurutshe defectors.

¹⁶⁶Cited in Kinsman "Impact of the Difagane", p.19 from GWLC 66 vol.c.

¹⁶⁷Cited in K. Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom: Mzilikazi's Ndebele in South Africa, London, 1978, p.66; Bloemhof Blue Book, (Cape Town, 1871), Cape Archives, pp.326-327.

bay the early peripatetic raiders of the difagane. It is evident too that the Ndebele allowed peripheral communities a measure of autonomy, and a breathing space in which to re-establish community life. The extraction of tribute and periodic raids were a means of obtaining cattle and retaining control over outlying districts rather than random acts of devastation. Indeed the military capacity of the Ndebele state may have been exaggerated.¹⁶⁸ Thus the Hurutshe boo Manyane remained at Borutwe, relatively intact, as tributaries within the Ndebele domain. On Moffat's second visit in 1835 he encountered them under their chief Mangope. They "appeared to live very comfortably under Moselekatse", noted Moffat, adding that Mzilikazi had also given them cattle.¹⁶⁹ Their traditions record however that Mangope's eldest son Phofu had been captured by the Ndebele a few years prior to Moffat's trip.¹⁷⁰

d) The Mosega faction

On this visit Moffat also refers to the Hurutshe who remained at Mosega, probably Motlaadile's supporters, recording that of the thirteen hamlets there, six were Hurutshe, "who appeared to be tolerably well treated,... [Mzilikazi] took great pains to point this out to me as proof of the benignity of his sway".¹⁷¹ Others, like Phofu and Mogale, were absorbed more completely into Ndebele society. On Moffat's 1829 trip for example he makes mention of four Hurutshe women and a young man in the service of Mzilikazi's brother.¹⁷² In addition the Ndebele military village at Mosega, established to guard their western flank, was reported to contain 100 men of Hurutshe or Kwena origin.¹⁷³ Moffat's impression of Hurutshe-Ndebele relations was probably distorted. Cobbing considers

¹⁶⁸See Richter, "The Withering Away of the 'Lifagane'", pp.14-18.

¹⁶⁹Moffat, Matabele Journals, p.99.

¹⁷⁰Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.61.

¹⁷¹Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.153.

¹⁷²Moffat, Matabele Journals, p.19.

¹⁷³Moffat, Matabele Journals, p.111.

the Hurutshe to have been a "dangerous problem" to the Ndebele, who, because of their close connection with Mokgathle's "independent" Hurutshe, were "among Mzilikazi's worst subjects".¹⁷⁴

The number of subject or incorporated Hurutshe who left finally with the Ndebele is open to conjecture. According to Moffat all the captive Hurutshe were permitted to remain, but Rasmussen considers this a "gross exaggeration", a consequence of Moffat's distorted opinion of Mzilikazi's benevolence.¹⁷⁵ Smith's estimation that two-thirds of Mzilikazi's party into Matebeleland were of Sotho-Tswana extraction¹⁷⁶, even if accurate, is not helpful as they could have been absorbed from a number of communities at different periods. It can be presumed however that some Hurutshe were content to follow the Ndebele and that others, facing an equally uncertain future if they remained, had little option but to pursue the search for security across the Limpopo.

e) The Migrant Labourers

Finally some Hurutshe were drawn into a quite different vortex of migrant labour. The small group that linked up with the Phuting after the evacuation of Kaditshwene were inadvertently caught up in the battle at Dithakong. If, as Cobbing has shown, many of the captives were released onto the Cape labour market, then the Hurutshe refugees would have been included.¹⁷⁷ Kinsman more convincingly has shown how southern Tswana refugees, loosened from the matrix of their society and impoverished by the collapse of economic production based on town life, sought labour on farms in the Cape Colony in the 1820s and 1830s.¹⁷⁸ The problem of studying migrant labour

¹⁷⁴Cobbing, "The Ndebele", pp.29-30.

¹⁷⁵Rasmussen, Migrant Kingdom, p.137.

¹⁷⁶Smith, Diary, vol.II, p.246.

¹⁷⁷Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi".

¹⁷⁸M. Kinsman, "Between Two Stones: The onset of Migrant Labour amongst the Southern Tswana", unpublished seminar paper,

patterns in this period is that all the diverse highveld groups were designated as simply "mantatees". Nevertheless Kinsman has demonstrated the extent of migrancy from the western highveld to the Cape and has traced the return of Tswana groups back to their home areas. There is evidence, for example, of three Hurutshe women being in the employ of a slaveholder, J. Baird, in the Somerset district in 1825.¹⁷⁹

There is another interesting case of a Hurutshe convert, who after a periodic spell of labour in the Cape began a journey back to his homeland with a few livestock. In Colesberg however he learned of the death of his parents at the hands of the Griqua and he made his way to Thaba Nchu where he settled in 1840 or 1841.¹⁸⁰

It is feasible to suggest that other Hurutshe found their way into service on colonial farms and that some returned later to their former homeland. These individuals would certainly have recognised the advantages of seeking occasional labour to satisfy a demand for commodities or cash payments, or for subsistence needs in times of economic distress. They would also have realised that wages could be used for the purchase of livestock which would withdraw them from dependence on the distributive structures of traditional society.

V "An Involved Map of Native Politics", 1838-1848.

It was the Hurutshe along the Harts river at Modimong near Taung under Mogkathle and Moiloa who formed the nucleus of the post-difagane Hurutshe chiefdom. However nearly a decade was to pass after Mzilikazi's departure before they re-occupied their former homeland. This period is rather a lacuna in Hurutshe history during which the motives for certain decisions (or lack of them) are a matter either for conjecture or a consequence of what the IMS missionary, Walter Inglis, referred to as an "involved map" of

¹⁷⁹Kinsman, "Migrant Labour", p.31 f.n 103 from CO2658, Baird, Beaufort West, 2.20.1824.

¹⁸⁰See Kinsman, "Migrant Labour", p.42. f.n 106 from "Life of John?" (illegible).

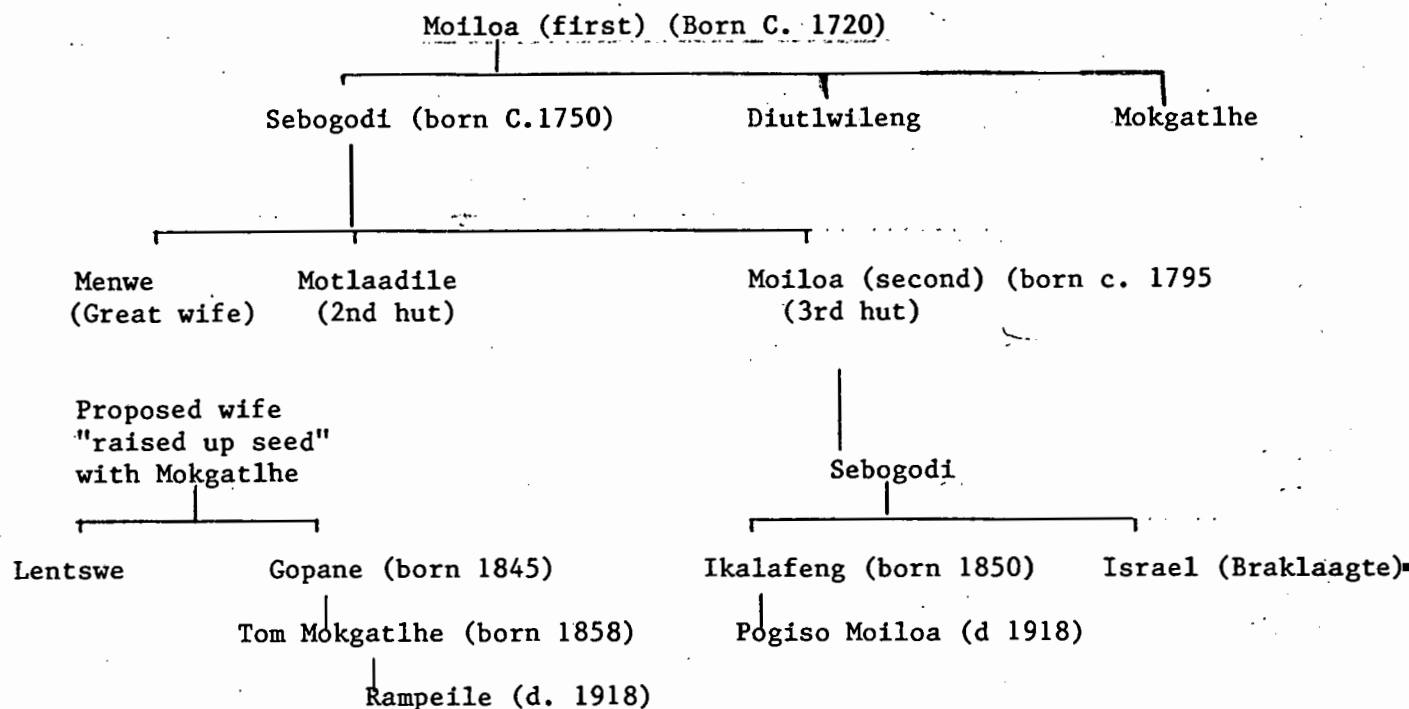
Hurutshe politics.¹⁸¹ The obvious problem is to find answers as to why the Hurutshe did not return sooner to the Marico district. It will be recalled that Potgieter in 1837 had gone as far as showing Moiloa the boundaries of the land he could occupy, provided he remained "loyal and obedient". This agreement had been set down in writing even though Moiloa did not receive a copy of the treaty himself. (It was subsequently "lost").¹⁸² What accounts then for the hesitancy of the Hurutshe during this period?

Clearly the 1840s were a time of considerable confusion for Tswana chiefdoms on the highveld and the reason for Mokgathle's and Moiloa's caution may lie in the general political uncertainties of the period. There was, firstly, a possibility that the Ndebele might return, indeed their continual attempts to control events among the Ngwato indicated precisely this. Furthermore there was no way of knowing if the Trekkers would remain on the highveld, or if they did, whether they would contrive to exert dominance in the region. By the early 1840s the Boer settlements were themselves locked in competition and when in 1845 Potgieter moved to the Steelpoort valley in the lowveld Moiloa may have wondered if his original agreement was binding on Andries Pretorius, Potgieter's rival, who was now settled in the Magaliesberg. Moreover a new and potentially powerful authority was beginning to make its presence felt; Britain was being drawn into the affairs of the Sotho, Griqua and Kora peoples from 1842 and by 1843 had made separate treaties with the Sotho under Moshoeshe and with the Griquas under Waterboer. In addition to these developments the Hurutshe's Tswana neighbours, Gasibone's Tlhaping, the Rolong and the Kwenas, were extending their influence by incorporating less powerful Tswana groups and by expanding territorially. Consequently there was a likelihood that the Hurutshe near Taung were waiting to see which were the ascendent political

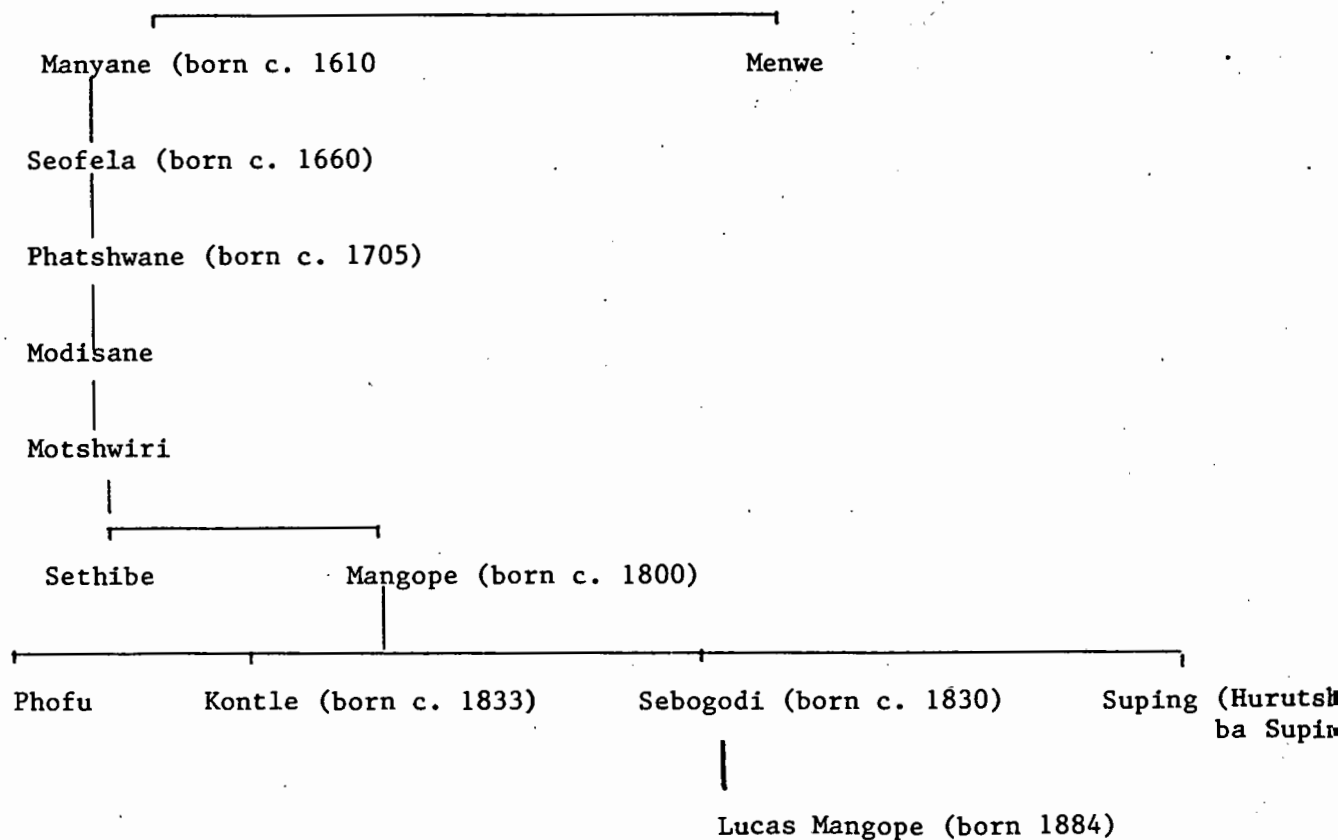
¹⁸¹See IMS Correspondence, Box 23, Inglis to Directors, 26 September 1848.

¹⁸²Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moilio, pp.142-143; Report re Acquisition of Land, p.15. The document was allegedly transferred later to the Landrost office in Zeerust but could not be found.

GENEALOGY OF HURUTSHE, OF GOPANE, MOILOA AND MOKGATLHE. (ADAPTED FROM P.L. BREUTZ)



HURUTSHE BOO MANYANE GENEALOGY



forces in the region before they took their next step.

On the other hand there are clear indications of an internal struggle for power taking place which may account for the lack of firm action during this period. In order to understand the dynamics of this struggle it is necessary to sort out precisely where the leading figures stood in relation to the Hurutshe "throne". Diutlwileng and Mokgathle had both been "regents" appointed to rule in place of Sebogodi's sons. The son of Sebogodi's official wife (or Mohamugadi) was Menoe the second, but he predeceased his father leaving Motlaadile and Moiloa as possible candidates for chieftainship. Of these two the former had seniority as second son of the second hut, and rightfully considered himself a scion of the Hurutshe. However, to complicate matters, Mokgathle had married the appointed wife of Menoe and claimed that succession fell on his son Lentswe, in accordance with the Hurutshe custom that chieftainship falls on the eldest son of the first wife, whoever the real father may be.¹⁸³ Mokgathle, sensing the growing power of Motlaadile and Moiloa, claimed this right for Lentswe in the mid-1840s. Moiloa and Mokgathle logically should have been at odds over this but they continued for a while to remain together and were to later trek from Modimong to settle at Kolosi near modern Ventersdorp, leaving Motlaadile at Modimong.¹⁸⁴ Possibly Moiloa was not making a serious bid for power at this stage for he recognised Motlaadile's seniority over him;¹⁸⁵ so it seems did the Trekkers who signed a further agreement with Motlaadile in 1839, two years after the initial agreement with Moiloa, to the effect that territory formerly controlled by Mzilikazi now devolved upon Potgieter's Trekkers.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³Jensen, "Note on Bahurutshe", p.178.

¹⁸⁴Jensen, "Note on Bahurutshe", p.178.

¹⁸⁵Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moilio, p.316.

¹⁸⁶Cited in Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.51.

Added to this may have been a point suggested by Legassick, that a qualitative change had taken place in the "frontier zone" in that Tswana chiefdoms which normally resorted to fission to resolve succession disputes now found themselves forced to compete for followers and resources in a limited and disputed area.¹⁸⁷

Though Moilola may have been biding his time in the mid-1840s he had certainly made preparations for a challenge for leadership in the preceding seven or eight years. Building on his close relationship with the Griqua he travelled to Griqua Town in 1838 or 1839. Here he asked Waterboer to give him a group of followers to accompany him back to the Marico. His request was brought before the Griqua Council who sent out two expeditions to inspect the country. The second reported unfavourably of the area described by Moilola, despite the "abundance of water" there¹⁸⁸, and, for the time being, the Griqua did not respond to Moilola's overtures. Moilola's intentions were clear enough. Not only would the Griquas be able to offer military support if necessary but they would be able to offer skills and services which could be invaluable to the community - as indeed they were to other Tswana communities in the mid-nineteenth century, such as the one at Bethulie.¹⁸⁹ The IMS missionary, Walter Inglis, was at Griqua Town during this period and by all accounts the idea of a mission to the Hurutshe was hatched between him and Moilola. Moilola kept in close contact with the missionary over the following years.¹⁹⁰

If indeed the Hurutshe at Modimong were waiting to see which way the

¹⁸⁷Legassick, "The Griqua", p.643.

¹⁸⁸Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Kruger, Janz, pp.350-352.

¹⁸⁹T. Keegan, "Dispossession and Accumulation in the South African Interior: The Boers and the Batlhaping of Bethulie, 1854-1861", JAH, vol,27 no.3, (1986).

¹⁹⁰Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Kruger, p.350; Council of World Missions, Correspondence of London Missionary Society (hereafter IMS) Box 23, W. Inglis to Directors, 26 September 1848; Box 24, Edwards to Tidman, 12 August 1848.

wind would blow they were buffeted soon by one of the rising gales whose strength they sought to determine. In 1845 or 1846 they suffered an attack at the hands of a combined Tlhaping and Kora force and applied for permission to settle in the Transvaal.¹⁹¹ Why they did not move directly to the Marico district is again impossible to determine precisely, though it may have been due to the unsettled state of the district. In any event permission was granted and the group moved to Matlaba's stad (Kolosi) near Potchefstroom¹⁹² where they were given shelter by the Tshidi-Rapulana- and Ratlou-Rolong who were occupying the area after moving from Thaba Nchu in 1839. Here they were encountered by the LMS missionary Rogers Edwards in May 1847 who reported that the Hurutshe were "very dissatisfied with their present position and anxious to move forward (to the Marico) if only there was the prospect of safety-the Boers also requested them to leave as soon as their corn is harvested".¹⁹³

a) The Impact of the LMS

The Hurutshe's moves from now only assume meaning in the context of a consideration of the aims and activities of the LMS in the northern Cape region. The arrival of the Ndebele on the highveld had put a halt to the expansion of the LMS into Tswana communities. In the 1830s the LMS was reluctant to take up the drive for missionary expansion that appeared imminent in the early 1820s and was prepared to allow, even assist, other societies to try and establish missions in the region. After the PEMS's brief sojourn the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent out three missionaries to the Ndebele. In June 1836 they arrived at Mosega (or Sendlingspost as the Trekkers more aptly called it). In 1837 they became involved in an attack on the Ndebele by the Trekkers and were forced to flee with

¹⁹¹Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.77. Edwards confirms this attack.

¹⁹²Breutz, "Tribes of Marico", p.97, following Jensen, says they moved to Kolosi (near Ventersdorp). I am unable to ascertain if this is the same locality, but it seems probable.

¹⁹³LMS Correspondence, Box 24, Edwards to Tidman, 4 May 1847. Edwards' name is sometimes incorrectly given as Rodger.

them, thus strengthening the impression that they had been acting as Boer spies. Even more futile was an attempt to establish a base at Mosega by Francis Owen and Hewitson of the Church Missionary Society. Arriving in August 1839 to find the area now vacated by the Ndebele, the missionaries left the district in September 1840.¹⁹⁴

In 1842 the LMS, which had discreetly refrained from trying to establish a station in such difficult circumstances as the 1830s presented, continued its forward expansion. In 1842 David Livingstone scouted for a station among the Kgatla ba Mmaanana who had now reasserted their independence from the Ngwaketse and returned to their former district. Livingstone arrived to build a station at Mabotsa in August 1843 with Edwards, with whom he was soon to fall out.¹⁹⁵

These LMS missionaries to South Africa were filled with the sense of optimism that involved missionary activity in the late 1830s. It was a time when the abolitionist campaign "fuelled the fires of missionary zeal, and anti-slavery was the animating impulse of that characteristic expression of the 'commerce and Christianity' ideal".¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴See N. Roberts, Lest we Forget, the Story of Marico, (Lichtenburg, 1934), pp.9-13.

¹⁹⁵For the alleged origins of this see G. Seaver, David Livingstone: His Life and Letters, London, 1957, pp.71-84. Perhaps the most potent cause of friction between Livingstone and Edwards lies in a statement credited to a fellow missionary Dr. Ross, that Livingstone on the trip to South Africa had "the intention to impose upon my wife", an allegation that Edwards (and his wife especially) were happy to propagate. This event lies at the bottom of Livingstone's accusations of "scandalising" against Edwards. Livingstone's various biographers have seemed reluctant to air the issue or possibly are ignorant of it. See LMS Correspondence, Freeman, Philip and Livingstone Letters, Box 18, Livingstone to Moffat, 11 February 1846.

¹⁹⁶B. Stanley, "'Commerce and Christianity': Providence Theory, The Missionary Movement, and The Imperialism of Free Trade, 1842-1860", The Historical Journal, vol. 26, no. 1 (1983).

The IMS missionaries ultimately were to be the harbingers of colonial expansion and trade into this region of southern Africa - it was only a few years later that Livingstone was to deliver his famous maxim that "wherever a missionary lives, traders are sure to come; they are mutually dependent, and each aids the other".¹⁹⁷ The principles of free trade added economic sense to the anti-slavery movement, for "unfree" forms of labour were argued to be less productive than "free" labour. It was their role in combating the signs of slavery among the Transvaal Boers that was to earn them the gratitude and support of those African groups, like the Hurutshe, now beginning to feel the brunt of trekker raids for labour and the apprenticing of young captives or inboekselings.¹⁹⁸ Concomitantly it was precisely this role which earned them the antagonism of the Trekkers and set in motion a chain of events which had disastrous consequences for those very people whom the missionaries sought to protect.¹⁹⁹

Encouraged by the success of the station at Mobotsa, Inglis moved there himself in April 1847 to prepare the establishment of the new station among the Hurutshe. A few months later he moved to the site chosen by the Hurutshe at the "Maniloe" (Mangelo) river, about 5 kilometres west of the old town of Kaditshwene, an area familiar to the Hurutshe leaders. Here a few hundred people under Mokgathle had now moved from Motlaba's stad.²⁰⁰ In September 1848 Moilola finally arrived. Inglis reported delightedly that:

I am happy to say Moilola my old chief has joined me with his people. He was with us last Sabbath. It was by far the largest meeting I have ever had ... it had been a great misfortune to me that the Bahurutshe did not come on all at

¹⁹⁷D. Livingstone, Travels and Researches in South Africa, (London, 1912), p.28.

¹⁹⁸For a fuller account of this system see P. Delius and S. Trapido, "Inboekselings and Oorlams: The creation and Transformation of a Servile Class", in B. Bozzoli (ed), Town and Countryside in the Transvaal pp.53-88.

¹⁹⁹For a description of this dispute see Kistner, "Anti-Slavery Agitation".

²⁰⁰Reports of Directors of IMS, 1848, p.117.

once. The whole question is an involved map of native politics ... Moiloe has had great difficulties in his way to join us ... now Moiloe has come the scattered villages will be gathered together. He will give weight and respectability to the mission... Moiloe has a brother at Kuruman, I believe he is preparing to join us.²⁰¹

From Inglis' remarks it is evident that the "involved map of native politics", - a clear struggle for control over Hurutshe politics - was being recharted with a clearer image of Moiloe as their accepted leader. It also accords with the tradition which states that Mokgathle quarrelled with his son Lentswe who went to join Montshiwa's Rolong now settled at Lotlhakane, and that Mokgathle "in his old age" became reconciled to Moiloe and encouraged the rest of the Hurutshe to accept his leadership.²⁰²

For the Hurutshe the first year in their old environs was fairly trouble-free. The Boers in the Transvaal were thinly spread and were concentrated nearer to the settlement at Potchefstroom. In 1845 Potgieter had moved with his supporters to the eastern Transvaal. Another party of Trekkers had joined Pretorius and were preoccupied with his attempts to expel the British from the Orange River Sovereignty following its annexation in 1848 by Sir Henry Smith, though officially the Transvaalers did not want to risk their position in the Transvaal by challenging British authority. However after the Boer defeat at Boomplaats in August 1848 the Boers fled over the Vaal and by early 1849 were beginning to encroach increasingly on the lands of the Hurutshe.

VI - The Marico Trekkers

The Marico trekkers display most of the characteristics that studies of the highveld Afrikaners elsewhere have revealed and one can discern quite clearly the determinants of a frontier society marked

²⁰¹IMS Correspondence, Box 23, Inglis to Directors, 26 September 1848.

²⁰²Jensen, "Note on Bahurutshe", p.178, Schapera, Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes, p.23.

by "flux and [the] absence of clear-cut definition at a stage before the colonial state takes over".²⁰³ Also evident on the Marico frontier was the evolution of an antagonistic and irreconcilable situation between a white and black society which shared the similar aims of gaining and retaining access to productive resources after the equally disruptive processes of the difaqane and the 1836 trek from the Cape. But there are also features of their society which were shaped by the particularities of this part of the country.

Our knowledge of the economic and social circumstances of the early Trekkers is unfortunately rather limited. The nature and extent of accumulation and dispossession in Boer society that recent studies have focused on therefore tend to take the post-Trek period as their starting point.²⁰⁴

An analysis of earlier patterns of differentiation among them might help to shed light on the nature of Boer rural society in the Transvaal from the mid-nineteenth century. The first three trekkers in the area were Jan Viljoen, Terreblanche and Oosthuizen. Viljoen, who was to play a prominent role in the political and economic history of the community, in 1836 was a bywoner on his brother-in-law's farm near Outshoorn in the Cape. He obtained a farm in Transorangia in the Winberg district in 1839 but after serving with Pretorius' force he had his farm confiscated and had to spend three months in prison in Colesberg.²⁰⁵

How representative Viljoen was of the first Marico Trekkers is difficult to assess, but it seems improbable that any of them arrived with significant capital assets. Control of land however was a major step towards economic rejuvenation and offered, as Trapido has suggested,

²⁰³The phrase is Marks and Atmore's in Economy and Society, p.8, commenting on Legassick's seminal article, "The Frontier Tradition", in the same publication.

²⁰⁴See Trapido, "Landlord and Tenant": Delius and Trapido "Inboekselings and Oorlams"; P. Delius "Abel Erasmus: Power and Profit in the Eastern Transvaal" in Beinart, Delius, Trapido (eds), Plough to the Ground, pp.176-217; Keegan, Rural Transformations, pp.1-50.

²⁰⁵J.E. Grobler, "Jan Viljoen (1812-1893), 'n' Transvaalse Wesgrenspionier", unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Pretoria, 1976, p.8.

the ability to command labour as well.²⁰⁶ Viljoen and the first trekkers acquired farms close to the Klein Marico river, some of them as large as 30,000 morgen, as a reward for their services at Boomplaats and elsewhere during the 1848 hostilities.²⁰⁷ Within a year however the choice farming areas had been occupied and, the bushveld being largely impenetrable, the Boers were beginning to encroach towards the Molopo and the fountains near the Makadima hills.

Pastoralism was an important pillar in their economy. In the drier areas of the Marico access to fountains and labour to move cattle to water and grazing areas were essential prerequisites of a pastoral existence. Inevitably this was to intensify competition with African communities in the Marico and Molopo river regions and heightened the demand for local labour. The Boers had a right to two farms, generally one being set aside for agriculture, and in the late 1840s many of the trekkers had every intention of trying their hands at agricultural pursuits.²⁰⁸ In 1851 a visiting predikant (Minister) referred to the Marico district as the "garden of the Transvaal" where all kinds of fruit and wheat could be obtained.²⁰⁹ The brewing of alcohol, particularly "Cape Smoke", a form of peach brandy, was much in evidence in 1851.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶Trapido, "Landlord and Tenant", p.26.

²⁰⁷P.J. Oosthuizen, "Die Geskiedenis van Marico tot 1902", unpublished M.A. thesis, Potchefstroom University, p.30, 1972.

²⁰⁸Oosthuizen, "Geskieiedenis van Marico", p.48.

²⁰⁹Grobler, "Viljoen", p.25. See also Naude, "Boerdery", p.49.

²¹⁰Cited in Oosthuizen, "Geskieiedenis van Marico", from J. Sanderson, Memoranda of a Trading trip into the Transvaal ... 1851-1852, p.126. A study of the nineteenth century political economy of Rustenburg district is much needed and may shed light on the extent and significance of the trade in alcohol. The reputation of Marico as a brewing district has been re-inforced through the later stories of H.C. Bosman. Unlike much of the general image of local Marico colour that Bosman conveys, this aspect of its local economy has a genuine basis.

Even before the Hurutshe had settled in the Marico it was evident that the Trekkers were not going to find it easy to stamp their authority over their western flank or to expand in this direction. Tswana communities to the west and north (the Rolong, Ngwaketse, Kwenā and Ngwato) had manipulated the period of relative stability in the 1840s to reconstruct their communities, to acquire guns and in some cases to gain missionary protection.²¹¹ Attempts to impress these people into service or to expand territorially at their expense were likely to meet with resistance or even counter action. The amorphous nature of political relationships and alignments on the frontier was also becoming evident. Sekhomo of the Ngwato had chosen to ally with the Boers to launch an attack on their common foe the Ndebele, though relations soured in 1847 when Potgieter's force withdrew, leaving the Ngwato regiments to face the Ndebele alone.²¹² The Hurutshe, whose territory not only lay between the Marico trekkers and the independent Tswana but also constituted a section of the route to the interior, were to find themselves caught up in the cross-currents of events surrounding the complex history of the Transvaal's troubled western border.

Hunting soon became an important feature of Trekker production, though not all of the Marico boers were in a position to earn their livelihood by this means. In 1848-1849 hunting was confined mostly to local game whose skins were worked into karroses and leather goods and sold to traders in Potchefstroom (many of them English) who conveyed them to the Cape or Natal for sale.²¹³ These all important commercial links, which belie the image of the Trekkers as and economically isolated community, were therefore important in

²¹¹See Okihiro, "Hunters, Herders", p.193; Parsons, "Khama III", pp.18-21; Ngcongco, "History of Bangwaketse", p.157. (Reconstruction among the Ngwaketse really only began in the late 1840s).

²¹²See L.W. Truschel, "Accommodation under Imperial Rule: The Tswana of the Bechuanaland Protectorate", unpublished Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1970, p.37.

²¹³Oosthuizen, "Geschiedenis van Marico", p.55.

providing a rapid means of recouping losses and accumulating capital for more ambitious commercial hunting ventures. Ivory was of course the most lucrative and prized of hunting products. However the hunting grounds were north of the Dwarsberg range and across the Limpopo to Lake Ngami and in "Matabeleland" where Mzilikazi had taken his adherents a decade previously. It was in fact the local Marico hunters who pioneered the well-known fly-free "hunters' road" through to the Translimpopo hunting grounds. Led by the indomitable Viljoen these hunters were carving out a hunting domain in the Shoshong district and further north near the Zambesi as early as 1850-1852.²¹⁴

Viljoen may have made contact with Mzilikazi as early as 1850²¹⁵ and certainly within five years was to enter into an agreement with Mzilikazi granting him access to hunting grounds in "Matabeleland".

A significant point is that many Marico boers were not in a position to hunt for ivory. By about 1860 elephant herds had retreated to the "fly" country where they could not be hunted on foot. Local Boers could not resort, like the wealthy English ivory-entrepreneurs such as Phillips and Westbeach and the hunters' communities at Schoemansdal and Orighstad, to the employment of local swartskut²¹⁶ (African hunters). Ivory hunting therefore was more of a long-distance affair but the mounting and equipping of hunting parties was a costly business. Wagons and teams of oxen had to be purchased, and spare parts (axles, harnesses, etc) carried in specially built structures under the wagons. Sufficient powder and

²¹⁴Elephant herds were not exhausted in the Shoshong area until the 1860s during which time it was, in Parson's words, "the emporium of the north". See Parsons, "Khama III", p.23.

²¹⁵Cited in Grobler, "Viljoen", p.203, from D.W. Krynauw and H.S. Pretorius (eds), Transvaalse Argiefstukke, r219/50, p.34.

²¹⁶See R. Wagner, "Zoutpansberg: The Dynamics of a Hunting Frontier", in Marks and Atmore (eds), Economy and Society, pp.313-349; Bonner, Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires, pp.45-70; J.M. Mackenzie, "Chivalry, Social Darwinism and ritualised killing: The hunting ethos in Central Africa up to 1914", in D. Anderson and R. Grove (eds), Conservation in Africa, (Cambridge 1987), pp.43-44.

lead had to be taken for four to five months' hunting and each hunter needed at least two expensive hunting horses.²¹⁷ In addition hunting trips were really only feasible in the winter months when there was less risk of malaria. This predicament created the added uncertainty about the availability of water, and hunters had to be prepared for the kind of catastrophe which befell Viljoen in 1859 when he had to jettison 190 tusks north of Kolobeng to search for water.²¹⁸ Apart from the hunting of ostriches (in any event an uncertain enterprise) commercial hunting was restricted to those who could obtain sufficient capital and those who could secure access both to game and tsetse-fly free routes from local African groups north of the Dwarsberg. Thus while some Boers were intent on obtaining labour and expanding onto African-held arable land, others looked on such activities as potentially disruptive of the ivory trade, and on occasions a great deal of animosity between these groups was evinced. There is a marked similarity between the Marico and the eastern Transvaal, where, as Bonner has convincingly shown, a common sense of isolation and conflict did not forge a sense of group Afrikaner consciousness.²¹⁹ The evolution of these conflicting interests and their effect on the Hurutshe will be seen later.

The time-honoured practice of land accumulation through the holding of public office was no less evident in the Marico than it was elsewhere²²⁰, and competition for the key posts of veldcornet, commandant and landdrost was a continuing, and at times all-absorbing, feature of local trekker politics. It is possibly not

²¹⁷The enormous capital outlay required is evident from Gronum's description in C.F. Gronum, Boere en Jagters in Ou Marico, (Potchefstroom, 1974), p.20.

²¹⁸See Grobler, "Viljoen", pp.260-261.

²¹⁹Bonner, Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires, pp.52-64; P. Bonner, "Factions and Fissions: Transvaal/Swazi Politics in the mid-nineteenth Century", Journal of African History, vol.19 no.2, (1978), pp.219-238.

²²⁰See S. Trapido, "Reflections on Land, Office and Wealth in the South African Republic, 1850-1900", in Marks and Atmore, (eds), Economy and Society, pp.350-368.

surprising that Viljoen, who also held the post of veldcornet, "strove for peaceful coexistence" with the local African communities and "never took part in an expedition against any Black tribe"²²¹ for to have done so would have seriously damaged his own position as the western Transvaal's foremost hunter. Thus Viljoen's personal concerns regarding the need to maintain peaceful relations with local African communities lent a modicum of stability to the Hurutshe which they might not have experienced with another veldcornet. However it would be wrong to overestimate the extent of security that this offered, for Viljoen did nothing to forestall trekker encroachment onto Hurutshe land and turned a blind eye to raids for Hurutshe captives, nor was he above the practice of taking captives himself.²²²

In conclusion to suggest that the Trekkers gained an easier hold over the means of production in the western Transvaal than they did in the eastern and northern Transvaal by virtue of the fact that they managed to establish a legitimate claim over the area and that Tswana communities consequently were less resistant to Trekker expropriation is to create something of a false distinction.²²³ While it is true that groups like the Hurutshe and Kgatla were more vulnerable to the implantation of capitalist production, divisions in the local Boer community continually surfaced, weakening their capacity to exert real hegemony over the local African inhabitants. But this is to anticipate future developments in the Marico. In the early years in the SAR the fledgling Hurutshe community bore the brunt of Trekker exactions just at the crucial stage of reconstruction of their own

²²¹Grobler, "Viljoen", p.332.

²²²Oosthuizen, "Geschiedenis van Marico", p.60.

²²³See Marks and Atmore (eds) Economy and Society, p.29. Marks and Atmore do not however make the contrast that starkly; Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.133; G. Relly, "The Transformation of Rural Relationships in the Western Transvaal", unpublished M.A thesis, University of London, 1978, p.2. Relly, to be fair, also distinguishes between the Marico/Rustenburg districts and the Potchefstroom/Lichtenburg districts, the latter being an area of scattered and easily subjugated African homesteads.

society. To worsen matters they found themselves caught between the cleft stick of Trekker ambitions against neighbouring African communities and Tswana retaliation. It is to these early years under Afrikaner domination that this study of the Hurutshe now turns.

CHAPTER TWO - "THE DOG OF THE BOERS" - THE HURUTSHE, 1849 - 1859

"Ek staat nu met de Roer in myn hande - ik zal nu gaan tot op de eynde van de wereld" (Commandant P.Scholtz)¹

I. Settling in the Reserve

This chapter examines the problems faced by the Hurutshe in establishing themselves in their new abode under the changed circumstances of the 1850s. Although the Hurutshe re-grouped and laid claim to fertile land, strained relations between them and their Boer overlords gave rise to insecurity. The first section indicates the extent and nature of Boer hegemony, in the form of labour obligations, the payment of tribute, the rendering of military assistance and the seizure of captives. In addition to these burdens the Hurutshe became embroiled in discord between the Trekkers and other Tswana chiefdoms, and between the Afrikaners and British missionaries. This made the problem of accommodation between white and black societies all the more arduous. However some important developments, covered in the second part of this chapter, helped to mitigate the extent of Hurutshe subordination. The Hurutshe leaders were to discover an ambivalent side to their new rulers and to realise that the Boers exercised only a limited suzerainty which ultimately obliged them to seek forms of co-operation with their supposed African subjects. Consequently it was not an enduringly bleak decade and by the late 1850s the Hurutshe could begin to turn their attention to the urgent task of reviving productive activities.

In 1849 at a meeting at Deerdopoort the decision was taken to establish a government of unity for the Transvaal. Though Potgieter stood aloof from this meeting and though government remained fragmented and localised, provisions were made for the meeting of a

¹The heading of this chapter is taken from a phrase of Moilola's, cited in a report dated 22 November 1852 by R. Moffat in R. Lovett, The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895, vol.I, (London, 1899), p.596. Scholtz's statement is contained in T.A. SS vol.5 r468/53.

Volksraad, Commandants-General were appointed to oversee African affairs, and some sense was given to the political shape of the Transvaal. An indication of this was that in January 1850 a commission was appointed to settle the question of demarcation between white and African held land in the Marico district. The land issue had become a problem the year before when the Marico Boers had begun encroaching onto the land of the Hurutshe. In June of 1849 Edwards reported that a number of Boers had "located at Mosega on the streams in the vicinity about twenty miles distant. Their further progress will be northwards".²

Anticipating a conflict of interests Edwards met with Potgieter and received reassurances about the security of the Hurutshe and the LMS missionaries. The Hurutshe and Kgatla were not altogether convinced by these pledges and made "defensive preparations", from which Edwards deterred them and quickly rode over to the Boers to "remove any apprehension of war from their minds".³ Again the missionary departed with the impression that mutual understanding had been reached with Potgieter.

But Potgieter's influence in this area was on the wane, despite the temporary loss of authority experienced by his rival, Pretorius, after Boomplaats. In any event the Derdepoort meeting had not authorised the appointment of a single commandant, dividing the post into four "Ensigns" of whom one, J. A. Enslin, represented the Marico area. In September Edwards reported that the trekkers were now "determined to occupy every available fountain and [are] resolved

²LMS correspondence, Box 24, Edwards to Tidman, 19 June 1849. Mary Moffat in January 1849 had observed, on the basis of Livingstone's information, that "the Boers are forcibly taking all the fountains and fine lands of the Bahurutshe". See J.S. Moffat, Robert and Mary Moffat, p.273.

³LMS correspondence, Box 24, Edwards to Tidman, 12 August 1849.

upon making chiefs and people bow to their own rule."⁴ Relations between the Trekkers and the IMS missionaries and their African charges took a further turn for the worse when Inglis went to complain about the shooting (in the leg) of a young Hurutshe boy by a Boer youth at a cattle post. Inglis was harangued and told that he was above the line of 26th latitude, and therefore under Afrikaner control, though he departed on reasonably amicable terms.

Meanwhile at the Manegelo river Moilola had received an order to provide labourers to the Boers at Mosega and, taking matters into his own hands, decided it was more prudent to move away from the denser areas of Boer settlement.⁵ The following month Moilola moved to Dinokana, a site about twelve kilometres west of the encroaching Trekkers and closer to the Kgatla. With him were about 1,500 Hurutshe and 50 Griqua converts, the latter group's presence being a sure sign that this earlier contact with Waterboer had paid off.

The Hurutshe presumably had a better knowledge of this area than the Afrikaners as Dinokana had been an area occupied by them in the mid-eighteenth century. According to Livingstone it was the site always preferred by the Hurutshe for a station because it contained some of the largest fountains in the district.⁶ It would most certainly have been settled by Boers if its existence had been known to them, though as Inglis correctly anticipated, once its presence was discovered it "quickened the cupidity of the Boers to attain it".⁷ The new station was called Mathebe. According to a recently recorded tradition Dinokana was already inhabited by Ramesega Setshele, the ward head who had fled to near Schweize-Reneke during the 1830s and Moilola had to enter into negotiations with him

⁴IMS correspondence, Box 24, Edwards to Tidman, 4 September 1849.

⁵IMS correspondence, Box 24, Inglis to Directors, 6 September 1849.

⁶I. Schapera (ed) Livingstone's Missionary Correspondence, 1841-1856, Los Angeles, 1961, p.77.

⁷IMS correspondence, Box 24, Report by Inglis, 22 October 1849.

prior to settling there.⁸

At Dinokana Moilola was to begin the long and laborious task of reconstructing the Hurutshe under difficult circumstances. There were certain features which gave cause for confidence. Firstly the Commission of 1850 established a distinct area for Hurutshe occupation which was pointed out to Moilola personally by Pretorius. Whether the reserve's boundaries were accurately defined is not known.⁹

In 1865 however the Volksraad passed a resolution defining Moilola's Reserve. It refers to pre-erected beacons and geographical sites (e.g "saddles") which makes its verbal definition somewhat meaningless. At that time only an area in the north-east, around Mzilikatskop, was still undefined and the Executive Council recommended a Commission be set up under the veldcornet to draw the boundary in this vicinity.¹⁰ In fact the Reserve was never disposed of by a Deed of Grant and was never registered in the Deeds Office, a fact which gave rise to serious complications later.¹¹ After the South African War the extent of the Reserve was calculated at 125,587 morgen, making it the largest tract of land set aside for African occupation in the Western Transvaal.¹²

Though its size in 1850 was smaller (additions to the Reserve being made later) it represented a rural base from which reconstruction was possible. A further positive factor ensuring the Hurutshe a hold on the land was the fact that in 1851 Pretorius issued a Proclamation prohibiting further grants of land along the western border until a boundary had been established. The prohibition was largely adhered to until 1849.

⁸Interview with D. Molefi, R. Morweng; Gopane, 9 September 1985.

⁹No details, reports concerning this commission are available. See also Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.73; IMS correspondence, Box 25, Inglis to Tidman, 24 August 1850.

¹⁰T.A. LD 1103, AG 3062/05, Report on Moilola Reserve.

¹¹T.A.LD 1103, AG 3062/05 p.5.

¹²Report re. Acquisition of Land, p.5.

to because the Trekkers ran the risk of loosing state protection if they advanced too far westwards.¹³

Secondly between 1849 and 1852 Moiloa's Hurutshe were joined by several of the splinter groups which had gone their own way between 1823 and 1832. In 1849 Moiloa's brother, Motlaadile, who had placed himself under the authority of the Tlhaping near Taung, began to accept Moiloa's leadership and negotiated his return to the Marico district. He arrived with some of his followers in June 1850, his cattle having preceded him.¹⁴ His activities from here onwards are not clear and it seems that he faded out of the picture as a possible contender for leadership. In August Inglis reported a further influx of Hurutshe from a "town east of the Limpopo" and a party of converts under an alleged "brother" of Moiloa (Pule) who had arrived from Kuruman.¹⁵ In 1851 Lentswe was killed in a skirmish with some Boers at Lotlhakane and his brother Sethunya (Moiloa's nephew) led most, though not all, of this party of Hurutshe back to Dinokana shortly after 1852.¹⁶ In addition the legal requirement that Africans not living under a recognised chief should enter the service of farmers probably encouraged non-Hurutshe in the Marico to attach themselves to Moiloa.

There are no population estimates for the Hurutshe in the 1850s but in the early 1860s a figure of about 8 000 people was suggested¹⁷, so that a figure of about four to five thousand for the previous decade would represent a reasonably accurate guess. Motlaadile's

¹³Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.157.

¹⁴LMS correspondence, Box 25, Inglis to Tidman, 17 June 1850.

¹⁵LMS correspondence, Inglis to Tidman, 24 August 1850. There seems to be no other reference to Pule as a brother of Moiloa's in Hurutshe traditions.

¹⁶Schapera, Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes, p.33. Though Lentswe was Mokgatlhe's son, his brother Sethunya was not, although they shared the same mother, Menwe.

¹⁷See Hermannsburg Mission Archives, "Description of Affairs of Linokana Station", by F. Zimmermann n.d, p.8, Hermannsburg Missions-berichte (hereafter HMB) No.12, 1864, p.189.

loss of influence and Lentswe's death meant that any effective opposition to Moiloa was for the time being removed, for Lentswe's son, Gopane, around whom Moiloa's challengers might have rallied, was only about six years old. It was therefore futile for Moiloa's opponents to try to manipulate succession laws to elevate a possible rival to power. Moiloa was accepted, either as the rightful chief by some of the Hurutshe, or as a regent by those who claimed the succession fell on Gopane.

Thus the Hurutshe had land, undisputed leadership and a reasonable number of followers, the essential pre-requisites for stability and expansion of all African societies in Southern Africa. They had also the nominal support of missionaries and the skills of a coterie of Griqua and Hurutshe converts. But even these resources provided an insubstantial basis for support in the ferment of the early period under Trekker domination.

II Relations with the Trekkers

This account of Hurutshe-Trekker relations discusses the forms of coerced labour and tribute obligations that the Hurutshe were forced to render. It will become apparent from the ensuing discussion that this relationship was as much contingent upon Boer relations with other groups in the district (especially the Kwena) as it was attributable directly to interaction between the Trekkers and the Hurutshe.

The ambiguity of having the support of missionaries who were fundamentally opposed to the Boer state very soon became apparent. The Boers resented the outspoken objections of the IMS to indications that the Boers practised slavery and they resented the encouragement given by missionaries to traders who sold guns to the Tswana, even accusing Livingstone of personally arming the Kwena under Setshele.¹⁸ In 1847 Livingstone was called to account for

¹⁸The causes and course of the antagonistic relationship between the IMS working among the Tswana and the Transvalers has been quite extensively covered by Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of

his activities among the Tswana and by 1849 the Boers demanded his withdrawal from the region and from the Bechuana-land Committee of the IMS.¹⁹ Mokgathle was apparently instructed by local Boers as early as 1847 to kill Edwards at Mabotsa, and a few years later they threatened to attack the Kgatla if Edwards "should not promise to teach the natives that the Boers are a superior race".²⁰ This developing friction was to have destructive consequences for all the inhabitants of the Marico, though it should be recognised that the Transvaalers' opposition to missionaries' actions also was part of a wider fear that their expansion northwards would be cut off by a British presence beyond their western boundary.

If the missionaries' presence served on the one hand only to antagonise the Boers it failed on the other to prevent acts of spoilation against Africans in the Marico district generally. The Reverend Freeman, on a tour of the IMS stations at Mabotsa and Mathebe in 1849, reported an occasion when:

a party of armed Boers came and demanded orphans who might be there... after much altercation and the steady refusal of the chief to give up the orphans, the Boers demanded the children of the people. The Boers began to seize them and put them into waggon; the men interfered; the Boers fired, and in the result most of the men were killed defending their families and the wagons were loaded with children and driven off as booty.²¹

¹⁹IMS correspondence, Box 24, W. Ashton to Tidman, 10 December 1849.

²⁰Cited by Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, pp.122-123.

²¹Freeman, A Tour in South Africa, p.274.

The trader Chapman also observed "inboekselings" being taken at Dinokana in 1851 or 1852.²²

Apart from the taking of the euphemistically termed "apprentices" the other major source of conflict lay in the labour tax. Its precise origins are obscure but lines of descent can be traced back to a similar practise of corvee labour in the Cape and to the isibhalo or forced labour system emanating from Natal.²³ Its legitimacy was questionable for there is no record of its legal origins but the custom was derived vaguely from the notion that tribute or labour "rent" could be exacted by the state from subjugated people. In 1850 the practice was regulated (on the basis of its supposed existence) and veldcornets were entrusted with the duty of providing labour for farmers in their districts for no longer than fourteen days at a time.

The IMS missionaries and Chapman all observed the system in practice among the Transvaal Tswana. Livingstone complained that:

Whoever required a piece of work done, just rode over to the nearest Bechuana town and ordered the chief to furnish twenty or thirty men or women. In the majority of cases when the work is finished they were dismissed without even a morsel of food".²⁴

Chapman noted that at Dinokana in 1850-1851 "all the men were out labouring amongst the Boers under the compulsory system".²⁵ In January 1852 Scholtz, the newly elected Commandant of the Marico district called all the western Tswana chiefs to a meeting at Mabotsa where the labour tax system was explained and apparently regularised. The chiefs were now expected to provide 20 to 30 men to

²²Chapman, Travels, p.20, pp.29-30.

²³See Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.196 and D. Welsh, The Roots of Segregation, Cape Town, 1971, pp.122-124.

²⁴Cited in Shapera (ed), Livingstone's South African Papers, p.9, from article by Livingstone in The Banner, 4 July 1849.

²⁵Chapman, Travels, p.40.

work for a year in return for a heifer.²⁶ In March of the same year Pretorius and Potgieter signed an agreement with the chiefs, included in which was an order restraining anyone under the rank of Commandant from "interfering" in the homesteads of the African population.²⁷

However, despite these conditions it seems that the labour tax system continued to be abused and was varyingly applied-for example it was sometimes shelved in exchange for military assistance at an unspecified future time. Pretorius himself, after a tour of the western frontier in September 1851 voiced reservations to the Volksraad about the corvee system, realising that veldcornets ultimately relied on coercion to exact labour and that conflict would inevitably result.²⁸

In addition to this, direct tribute in cattle or maize was occasionally exacted from the Kgatla and Hurutshe. Livingstone observed that the Boers often captured cattle belonging to Tswana returning from spells of migrant labour in the Cape and during the Boer engagement with the Kwenana in 1852 the commando requisitioned food and a military corps from the Hurutshe on the grounds that they were tributaries.²⁹ Finally it should be noted that these demands for labour or tribute were frequently accompanied by acts of violence, such as whippings, a sign both of Trekker inability to extract surplus in a systematic form and of the need, in Delius' words, "to symbolise and entrench Trekker power and authority".³⁰ Indeed violence, as Phyllis Martin has observed in another colonial

²⁶LMS correspondence, Box 27, Inglis to Tidman, 10 June 1852.

²⁷See Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.73.

²⁸Cited in D. C. McGill, "A History of the Transvaal, 1853-1864", unpublished D.Phil, University of Cape Town, 1943, p.349.

²⁹Livingstone, Travels and Researches, p.27; Shapera (ed), Livingstone's Missionary Correspondence, p.220 f.n. from Ross, South African Missionary Report, 1852, p.45.

³⁰Delius, Land Belongs to Us, p.35.

context, "is not power but an instrument of power".³¹

An event which captures this sense of Trekker confidence and determination to bend the independent minded Tswana and their missionary allies to their will was the much publicised attack on the Kwena at Dimawe and their missionary David Livingstone at nearby Kolobeng in 1852. Its significance for the Hurutshe will become apparent from the following discussion. The timing of the attack was in no way purely coincidental. The Marico authorities noticed signs of Kwena resistance to Trekker power early in 1850 when Enslin reported to the Volkraad that Setshele was preparing for a war. Later that year the Volkraad appointed a commission to try and determine attitudes and come to arrangements with all the Kwena, Rolong and Tlhaping and to warn them not to hinder the progress of hunters. Enslin again reported that Setshele had accumulated guns and was "impudent" in his attitude to the Boers.³² Another emissary was sent early in 1851 to demand that Setshele "makes peace with the Krigsraad (War Council) on terms acceptable to the Commandant-General".³³ After the signing of the Sand River Convention in January 1852 by which Britain abandoned her protective role towards the Africans north of the Vaal, the Transvaalers felt less constrained about curtailing these signs of what they perceived as Kwena aggression. It needed only an incident to trigger off an attack on the Kwena and this was provided by the decision of the Kgatla chief Mosielele, situated a mere fifteen kilometers from the Hurutshe at Dinokana, to flee from Trekker control in 1852 and seek the protection of Setshele.

Scholtz's instructions to the Tswana chiefs at Mabotsa in mid-1852 regarding the provision of annual labour seem to have been the last

³¹D. Birmingham and P. Martin (eds), The History of Central Africa, vol.ii, (London 1983), p.20.

X ³²Oosthuizen, "Geskeidenis van Marico", pp.63-64; Grobler, "Viljoen", p.183.

³³T.A. SS vol.3 r 359/51 W. Jacobse to M.H. Pretorius, 26 December 1850.

straw for the Kgatla. In June Inglis reported Mosielele's growing restlessness and his refusal to conform to the Boer requirement of reporting the presence of English traders amongst the Tswana.³⁴ In July Mosielele refused to meet new demands for compulsory labour and under threat of attack from the Boers he fled to Setshele's capital to the west. The Boer authorities now decided that a show of force against their incomppliant Tswana neighbours was both timely and appropriate. Viljoen was away on a hunt at the time with Chapman and so in July Scholtz was empowered to raise a commando and to proceed to the Marico. He arrived there in late July reporting that he had "with cunning" obtained an African levy from Mangope's Hurutshe at Borutwe though he complained simultaneously about the failure of Boer levies elsewhere to arrive.³⁵ The situation became panicky over the next few days with the remaining Kgatla abandoning Mabotsa and reports of war preparations being received on either side. A final warning to Setshele to deliver up Mosielele on 20 August met with no response and the Boer commando went into action.³⁶ At its head, according to Chapman, was an auxiliary of about 50 to 60 of Moiloa's followers driven by the Boers and armed with firebrands to set fire to Dimawe.³⁷ Moiloa in the ensuing conflict evacuated Dinokana and fled, probably to the west. The Boers, having destroyed Setshele's capital town and sacked Livingstone's mission station at Kolobeng, then turned south to attack the Ngwaketse and Rolong, ostensibly because the Ngwaketse had failed to provide the Transvaalers with labour and the Rolong had refused to join the commando against the Kwenā, though its underlying purpose was to reduce both societies to tributary status and hasten Boer occupation of the water sources in the Molopo river region.

³⁴LMS correspondence, Box 27, Inglis to Tidman, 20 June 1852.

³⁵T.A. SS vol.4 r 413/52, Scholtz to A.H. Pretorius, 21 July 1852.

³⁶T.A. SS vol.4 r 434/52, Scholtz to A.H. Pretorius, 20 August 1852.

³⁷Chapman, Travels, p.83.

The whereabouts of the Hurutshe between August 1852 and the beginning of 1853 is not clear. Moilola, presumably with a large following, was encountered by Viljoen in January 1853 at Chonwane (Setshele's "oud stad," 80 kilometres north of Mathebe). Viljoen asked Moilola why he had fled during the raid, to which Moilola replied that the other chiefs around him had fled and furthermore he "was looked upon as a traitor because he lived among whites".³⁸ Moilola affirmed his peaceable intentions and Viljoen told him to return to Dinokana. The meeting concluded with an interesting exchange. Viljoen insisted that Moilola observe the labour requirement, to which he reportedly replied, "No, don't ever ask me for people, I have too much to do myself, but keep the road of peace open and I will see to it that people still come to you as before".³⁹ Moilola was thus able to indicate some of the resentment faced by chiefs placed in the invidious position of having to act as provisioners of labour against the clear wishes of their adherents.⁴⁰ In May Viljoen encountered Moilola again between Chonwane and Dinokana, reporting that he was in no hurry to return and was allowing his cattle to graze en route. By August Moilola's followers and their cattle had returned to Dinokana but Moilola himself was resident with Senthufe, chief of the Ngwaketse, and Viljoen again had to appeal to him to return, which he did shortly thereafter.⁴¹ Viljoen's persistence in tracking down Moilola's Hurutshe and his promises given regarding their safety, indicates an awareness on his part of how crucial a source of labour they were to the Marico trekkers. In addition it reveals yet again Viljoen's general concern to establish orderly relations on the Republic's borders.

³⁸T.A. SS vol.5 r 486/53, Report of Viljoen's meeting by Afgeraardigden (Representative) dated 16 January 1853.

³⁹T.A. SS vol.5 r 486/53.

⁴⁰Chiefs in Natal faced a similar problem, see J. Wright and A. Manson, The Hlubi Chiefdom in Zululand/Natal, (Ladysmith, 1983), p.41. Later, when chiefs started to receive remittances of various kinds for recruitment they were of course often willing to act as suppliers of labour.

⁴¹Cited in Grobler, "Viljoen" from D.W. Kranauw and H.S. Pretorius (eds), Transvaalse Argiefstukke, r 537/53, pp.247-248; r 561/63, 737/54, J.L. Viljoen to F.C. Kruger, 10 December 1854.

In the interim a melodramatic epilogue to the Boer-missionary conflict had played in itself out in the Transvaal. Edwards protested immediately to the Transvaal authorities about the capture of about 100 Kgatla children during the course of the attack on the Kwena, concluding that such events happened "nowhere else except on the west coast of Africa".⁴² Several Boers took advantage of the raid to seize children from the Hurutshe as well. Inglis followed up Edwards' letter with a similar remonstrance. They were then summoned to Rustenburg by Scholtz to reply to their accusations. In fact Edwards had written a further letter to the South African Commercial Advertiser condemning the authorities for sanctioning slavery and it was this public attack which had enraged the officials of the SAR. They were then charged with high treason (for supplying guns to the Tswana) and after rather comic opera court proceedings found guilty and expelled from the Transvaal. Inglis must have had cause to disavow an earlier sentiment that the "emigration of the Boers [dates] as the beginning of a brilliant era in South African civilisation".⁴³ In the end the LMS chose not to make much out of the case and the whole affair sank into oblivion.

For Moiloa's Hurutshe the missionaries' departure was only one of several blows that they suffered as a consequence of being caught up in the events of 1852. They had not been able to plant in 1852, many of the people who had just returned had fled or been taken captive and serious doubts about the permanence of their new home had been raised. It was no doubt a major setback, and one that was to have long-lasting repercussions. The incident also throws into focus the

⁴²T.A. SS vol.4 r 421/52, Edwards to Scholtz, 21 August 1852.

⁴³Cited in Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.116 from LMS, Inglis to Tidman, 24 August 1848. For a fuller account of the whole affair see W. Cochrane, Memoirs of Reverend Walter Inglis, (Toronto, 1887), pp.76-85.

forces that had been at work within Afrikaner society over the past decades. The Trekkers were representative of a society that, in Ross' words, had:

by the use of force, established over at least the southern half of the modern country the agricultural system that, mutatis mutandis, was later to be applied further north. Modern South African agriculture developed out of the preindustrial relations of production, which were at least quasi-capitalist in the sense that labour was largely alienated from the means of production.⁴⁴

The relationship between the Marico Trekkers and the Hurutshe between 1849 and 1853 starkly reveals the Trekkers' intent to harness the means of production for their own use and to deprive the Hurutshe of crucial resources. Although they would not have perceived it in these terms the Hurutshe must have recognised the qualitative difference between Ndebele and Afrikaner overrule. The tension between formal recognition of the Hurutshe in the Marico and random incursions upon their land, the confusion concerning borders, the apparent military and technological superiority of the Boers and their violent seizure of labourers, all led Moilola to the disconsolate observation in 1852 that he was a "dog of the Boers".

As if matters were not serious enough in late 1853 when Moilola returned to the Marico district, the Hurutshe now found themselves subject to a new set of uncertainties caused by developments in the Marico and beyond. While the Boer attack on the Kwena, Rolong and Nwaketse was recorded quite fully, particularly by Livingstone, the following events are significantly less well known. Once the commando had disbanded and returned home sated with booty the Marico Boers were at the mercy of reprisal attacks from the Kwena and Rolong who sought to redeem the loss of their cattle and children, including

⁴⁴R. Ross, "The origins of Capitalist Agriculture in the Cape Colony: A Survey", in Beinart et al., Putting a Plough to the Ground, p.86. Trollope, on a visit to South Africa made a similar point regarding Trekker attitudes to land. He wrote "The Dutchmen who came into the country brought with them ideas and usages as to the distribution of land from the Cape Colony". See A. Trollope, South Africa, vol.I, (London, 1878), p.108.

Setshele's son, which they had suffered. Cattle were raided from Boer farms and between 1852 and 1853 three Boers were killed in minor skirmishes. The result was that the Marico farms were abandoned and the Boers went into laager. On 17th January 1853 Chapman encountered 200 waggons headed for Potchefstroom and Magaliesberg.⁴⁵ To make matters more serious a fever had swept the district resulting in the death of several families. Hunting was suspended and the deserted Boer farms and homesteads looted. Viljoen reported the destruction of his own mill and harvest in April 1853 and later (at a meeting with Pretorius) bitterly condemned Scholtz of having caused the "ruination of the inhabitants by his wanton proceedings".⁴⁶ In the winter of 1853 Scholtz entertained the possibility of a Boer retreat from the Marico, an event which would have been analogous to the collapse of other frontiers of Trekker occupation in the Transvaal at Ohrigstad and Schoemansdal.

Now that Setshele had the upper hand he was in a position to negotiate a peace on terms favourable to him. He laid down the precondition that he would accept no form of Trekker control and insisted that the Marico officials held discussions at his capital. Scholtz refused to attend, citing Retief's murder by Dingane as an excuse, and it was left to the "hunter's faction" led by Viljoen, J. Snyman and one Van der Merwe to hold a meeting with the Kwenā chief in November 1852.⁴⁷ Although the meeting was successful it took a long time before the Trekkers returned to the district and even longer before tranquility was restored: the Marico whites only returned in late 1854 and for two years instability continued as a result of the murder of several Boers in the region and retaliatory

⁴⁵T.A.SS vol.5 r 531a/53, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 19 May 1853. Bloemhof Blue Book, evidence of I. Buys, pp.229-231, evidence of Molema, p.145; Chapman Travels, p.84.

⁴⁶See T.A.SS vol.5 r 517/53, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 16 April 1853; Chapman, Travels, p.88.

⁴⁷Cited in Grobler, "Viljoen", from Kruger and Pretorius (eds) Transvaal Argiefstukke, r 444/52, p.255.

attacks on groups of Kwenas inside the SAR.⁴⁸ Although the perpetrators were never identified Pretorius felt sure that the Kwenas were guilty and determined that another punitive commando should be sent against them. This the Marico Trekkers rejected totally, threatening not to serve on any such commando and, if compelled, to trek out of the district.⁴⁹ In the face of this protest Pretorius relented.

In March 1856 Setshele made a fresh attempt to establish peace. The specific reason was to seek Viljoen's support in a "tribal war". The details of this conflict are not given but its occurrence in 1856 coincides with a period in which Bakalagadi groups in the Kweneng district were resisting subjugation by the Kwenas, and this may well have been the reason for Setshele's request.⁵⁰ In addition an outbreak of lung-sickness and crop diseases in 1856 probably further weakened the capacity of the Kwenas to resist any possible attack. This sudden appeal for Trekker support indicates yet again the fluctuating relationships of interdependence and dissension that emerged between the Afrikaners and African societies in the first decades of contact on the highveld. However, before Viljoen had time to pursue Setshele's approach another Boer, Nortjie, was murdered near Swartruggens and Pretorius resolved on yet another commando. The Marico Boers again spurned Pretorius' suggestion but fortunately the matter blew over when it was discovered that Setshele's people were not responsible.⁵¹ By August Marico hunters were back in Setshele's domain and peace reigned along the frontier. In 1857 Setshele hit on the idea of gaining a missionary and simultaneously

⁴⁸T.A.SS vol.12 r 1225/56, D. Coetzee to A.W. Pretorius, 24 January 1856. These deaths were also recalled in a letter to The Transvaal Advocate, 24 January 1874; SS vol.7 r 740/55, Sechele to J.W. Viljoen, 15 January 1955.

⁴⁹T.A. SS vol.7 r 795/55 *Memorie van J.W. Viljoen en 59 ander Maricoaners to M.W. Pretorius*, 9 April 1855.

⁵⁰Mautle, "Bakalagadi-Bakwena Relationships", p.22.

⁵¹Grobler, "Viljoen", pp.193-194; T.A.SS vol.11 r 988/56, J.W. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 21 February, 1856, r 107/56, 21 May 1856.

cementing relations with the SAR by seeking Pretorius' assistance in obtaining German missionaries.⁵² After this, and for the next eight years, the Marico Boers and the Kwena coexisted peacefully.

However, it was not only the Kwena who sought to affirm their independence from the SAR in this period. In 1856 hunters were killed in the Ngwato territory leading to fears that Sekgoma planned to cut off access northwards. In addition news of Ndebele incursions into the area south of the Ngwato fuelled further fears of conflict from that quarter.⁵³

The Hurutshe could not escape the consequences of these developments. Firstly they found themselves the target of counter-attacks from Tswana communities who saw them as allies of the SAR. Montshiwa reportedly sent a message to Moiloa early in 1853 informing him that the Marico "now belongs to him" and that the Hurutshe were to regard themselves as fair game for Rolong cattle raids.⁵⁴ The Rolong were now sited at Moshaneng where they had taken refuge with the Ngwaketse and were only a few hours' away from the Hurutshe at Dinokana. In the face of these threats Moiloa abandoned his capital yet again in April 1853 and sent slaughter oxen to Setshele as a token of friendship, possibly even an indication that he considered himself subject to the Kwena at this time.⁵⁵

The second development, and consequent on the first, was that the Hurutshe were drawn into a closer though ultimately ambiguous

⁵²See H.E.W. Backeberg, "Die Politieke Betenkenis van die eerste Hermansberg Sendlinge op die Transvaal wesgrens", Historiese Studies, vol.1, no.2,(1939) J. Mutero Chirenje, "Church, State and Education in Bechuanaland in the Nineteenth Century", International Journal of African Historical Studies, vol.9, 1976, p.407.

⁵³T.A. SS vol.12 r 1225/56, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 24 January, 1864. 273/59, Zimmermann to J.W. Viljoen 22 April 1859.

⁵⁴T.A. SS vol.5 r 517/53, J.W. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 16 April 1853.

⁵⁵T.A. SS vol.12 r 1113/56, J.W. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 19 June 1856.

relationship with the Marico Trekkers and the Boer state. The obvious inability on the part of the SAR to exert real hegemony over the Tswana to the west and the importance of maintaining the crucial "Hunter's Road" to the north forced the Trekkers into a relationship of dependence on African allies, of whom Moiloa seems to have been considered one of the staunchest. This mutually dependent relationship bears a direct resemblance to that which developed elsewhere in the Transvaal between factions within African societies and Trekker communities. The Swazi and the "Volksraad faction" of the Orighstad trekkers exchanged land for protection (from the Zulu), while Potgieter's followers entered into an agreement with the Pedi that led to the mounting of joint hunts and raids on other African communities. In the Zoutpansberg the Venda gained firearms (and the superiority they afforded) in exchange for acting as hunters for the local boers, and in the same district Joao Albasini constructed a personal chiefdom out of Tsonga and Venda followers to whom he offered protection and a share of the spoils of plunder which he was able to undertake as a result of his expanded following.⁵⁶ These revelations advance the perception of the SAR as being divided and limited in its power to act authoritatively, and of its citizens as opportunistic and self-interested.⁵⁷

This development was accompanied also by a transition from the dominance of a quasi-official policy (represented by Pretorius, Scholtz and Kruger--none of them Marico men) which had long cherished the possibility of subjugating the Tswana on the Republic's western border, to a more pragmatic and locally inspired policy which sought an accommodation with the African people within and beyond the Marico

⁵⁶See Bonner, Kings, Commoners, Concessionaries, pp.65-85; Wagner, "Zoutpansburg", pp.313-337; C. Saunders, "Political Processes in the Southern African Frontier Zones", in H. Lamar and L. Thompson (eds), The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared, (Yale, 1981), pp.149-171; The Land Belongs to Us, pp.32-37.

⁵⁷This theme has been explored in the works of Stanley Trapido; "Landlord and Tenant" and "Reflections on Land, Office and Wealth".

district.⁵⁸ Significantly it was Viljoen who had played the arbitrator's role in negotiations with the Kwenas, Ngwaketse and Rolong in August and October 1853 which in theory restored a status quo ante bellum.

Thus it was that the Hurutshe were obliged to play the role of henchmen to the Trekkers. Negotiations between Tswana chiefs and Boer officials took place at Moiloa's town, Moiloa passed messages on between the Marico authorities and Montshiwa and Setshele, he reported incidents of cattle theft from Boers and rendered information regarding those responsible for the deaths of Marico Boers in 1854 and 1855.⁵⁹ In 1855 Viljoen, seeking clarity about rumours of hostility on the part of the Kwenas, called a meeting which was attended, among others, by Moiloa and his council. Viljoen later reported that his "spies" along the western border, most probably his Hurutshe informants, considered the rumours to be false and that those responsible for them, three Griquas in the employ of the Marico Boers, had "drunk too much brandy and spoken a lot".⁶⁰ The extent to which Moiloa was prepared to co-operate with the SAR authorities is suggested in a statement made to Viljoen in 1865 that "if a fly falls in the milk from my side I will take it out so that Pretorius can punish the culprit".⁶¹ Moiloa's Hurutshe furthermore were prepared to provide volunteers in the event of a reoccurrence of conflict in the uneasy years of 1854 and 1855.⁶² The Marico

⁵⁸Grobler, "Viljoen", p.224.

⁵⁹Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moiloa, p.317; Evidence of Molema, p.145; T.A. SS vol.12 r 1127/56, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 30 July 1856; r 1067/56, Report from "Marico Burghers", 15 May 1856.

⁶⁰T.A. SS vol.8 r 944/55, Report of Negotiations between J. Viljoen and Certain Bastards, 22 November 1855, SS r 947/55, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 7 December 1855.

⁶¹T.A. SS vol.11 r 1127/56, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 30 July 1856.

⁶²T.A. SS vol.11 r 1113/56, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius 19 June 1856.

veldcornets visited Dinokana to gauge the general mood of the African population in the Marico, reporting their impressions after each visit.⁶³ The Hurutshe also continued to provide labourers, perhaps in the spirit of the "arrangement" suggested at Moiloa's meeting with Viljoen in January 1853. In time Moiloa was to appreciate the advantages to be gained from Trekker reliance upon him but in the 1850s his main concern seems to have been to secure peace and stability for the Hurutshe, and he had little option but to play a collaborative role.

III) Stabilising the polity

a) Hurutshe relations with African neighbours

This quest for normality meant in turn reaching an accord with the Hurutshe's black neighbours, a task made considerably easier after Setshele's decision to reduce friction with the SAR. Moiloa's improving relationship with Setshele is suggested by the fact that he sent the Kwena chief oxen (though this could be interpreted slightly differently)⁶⁴ and by his agreement to allow Setshele to occupy land formerly held by Mosielele at Mabotsa.⁶⁵ Furthermore reports reached Viljoen in June 1856 that Moiloa was planning to "stand by" the Kwena in the war scare of 1856. Though Viljoen dismissed the reports it was still a means by which the Hurutshe could signal their support for the Kwena during these uneasy years.⁶⁶ The agreement between the Rolong and the SAR similarly eased the tensions between the Rolong factions and Moiloa's Hurutshe. To judge from evidence

19 June 1856.

⁶³T.A. SS vol.11 r 1126/56, r 2153/58 D. Bakker (Veldcornet Marico) to C. Moll, 28 June 1858.

⁶⁴It was suggested on p.99 that this could have indicated subservience.

⁶⁵T.S. SS vol.15 r 1459/58, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 14 March 1858. The government however was not prepared to sanction Setshele occupying land in the Republic.

⁶⁶Grobler, "Viljoen", p.177 from SS vol.11, r 1113/56 Notule. Krygsraads vergadering, 9 June 1856.

given at Bloemhof later it seems that peaceful relations were also established with the Ngwaketse. The boundary between the two chiefdoms was clearly understood and, according to two informants, Hurutshe and Ngwaketse cattle used to depasture across the "boundary" in winter and summer.⁶⁷ After about a decade these Tswana polities came to see the diplomatic benefit of having close contact with African groups in the Transvaal, like the Hurutshe, who possessed a keener sense of the aims and activities of the SAR. It is no coincidence that Setshele, who had the closest and most continuous contact with the Hurutshe, is generally credited with being the nineteenth century Tswana leader with the most "accurate perception of the South African state".⁶⁸

The only African group with whom the Hurutshe did not seem to be able to patch up relations were the Tlhaping. Their differences arose after the departure of the Hurutshe from Modimong in about 1846 and their "defection" to the Trekkers. On that occasion Mahura had actually tried to prevent a Hurutshe retirement from the Taung area. In 1851 Mahura was further incensed by the defection to Moiloa of one of his "Captains" - possibly a Hurutshe subject of the Tlhaping.⁶⁹ Mahura consequently dispatched a raiding party into the Transvaal which overwhelmed the unsuspecting Hurutshe killing 50 to 100 of them. The Boer authorities sentenced Mahura to pay a fine of 2,070 cattle, but it was no more than a token act and the fine was remitted later.⁷⁰ The incident probably revealed to the Hurutshe the impotence of the Trekkers and the doubtful advantages of Boer overrule at this time.

⁶⁷Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Gaseitsiwe, pp.188-189, Evidence of Moranyane, p.329.

⁶⁸J. Mutero Chirenje, A History of Northern Botswana 1850-1910, (Madison, 1977), p.68.

⁶⁹Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Scholtz, p.222-223. This may even be a reference to Motlaadile's flight from the Taung area; T.A. SS r 290/51, Inglis to M.W. Pretorius, 3 June 1851; Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.79.

⁷⁰T.A. SS vol.3 r 290/51, Inglis to M.W. Pretorius, 3 June 1851; Agar-Hamilton, Native Policy of Voortrekkers, p.79.

The possibility of further attacks remained until in 1858 a large Boer commando attacked the Tlhaping for (wrongly) presuming them responsible for cattle raids into the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Mahura sued for peace on extremely costly terms and took steps to ensure that future peaceful relations were maintained with the SAR.⁷¹

b) New missionaries

The next most important step taken by Moiloa's Hurutshe in their quest for stability was the acquisition of new missionaries. After the expulsion of the IMS from the region the SAR authorities sought missionaries whose interests would be more compatible with their own. When Setshele asked the Republic to assist him in finding missionaries Pretorius had no doubts about writing off to the Hanoverian missions in Natal. "In their schools", Pretorius explained, "they first concentrate on encouraging the barbarians to work and on giving them a sound conception of the secular order of affairs before instructing them in the divine".⁷² Moreover the Hanoverians had little of the humanitarian zeal that the IMS displayed so conspicuously in their dealings with the Afrikaners. In 1864 the Superintendent of the Hermansburg Missionary Society (HMS) explained to Rev. John Mackenzie of the IMS that "we Hermansburgers are so deficient as politicians that we cannot dispute the supremacy of the South African Republic over the Bechuana tribes".⁷³ By mid-1860 the HMS and Berlin Missionary Societies (BMS) had divided the Transvaal for mission activities, the BMS working to the east of

⁷¹J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton, The Road to the North, (London, 1937), pp.22-26; T.A. SS vol.22 r 2473/58, J.W. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 3 December 1858. It was through Viljoen that Mahura expressed his intentions to keep peace with the Republic.

⁷²Cited in Kistner, "Anti-Slavery Agitation", p.221, from Eerste Volksraad Notule, E.R.V.105, September 1858.

⁷³Cited in Kistner, "Anti-Slavery Agitation", p.222 from IMS Correspondence, Mackenzie to Tidman, 8 September 1864.

Pretoria and the HMS to the west. Later this caused considerable friction between the Wesleyans, who were trying to find an opening in the Transvaal, and the German Mission Societies. A major difference between the HMS in the western Transvaal and the BMS in the east was that the former were usually established at the behest of African communities while the latter tended to exist in opposition to the ruling authorities in traditional societies.

In 1857 the HMS sent Schroder to join the Kwena and in 1859 two more missionaries were instructed by the Ngwato chief Sekgoma to establish a station at Shoshong. Sometime near the end of 1858 Moilola took the initiative and requested the HMS missionaries then at Litheyane with the Kwena to visit him. Three missionaries, Zimmermann, Meyer and Schulenberg arrived on the 3rd January 1859. Their first observations, typically for good Hanoverian missionaries, were on the fertility of the area and its potential for irrigation.⁷⁴ Moilola, probably on the basis of his former experience with missionaries, offered them a large site (10-15 morgen) on which to establish the mission. The Hurutshe mission was built on reserve land, later deemed state property, the only instance where the HMS did not purchase land for their stations wholly or jointly with the people they intended to serve. Consequently the HMS station was established with the full consent of the SAR authorities; in fact Viljoen met Zimmermann on a return from a hunt at the end of 1858 and discouraged a previously-held idea of establishing a mission north in Ngamiland among the Tawana.

When Zimmermann first arrived among the Hurutshe he stayed for two months with Viljoen, whose farm was "a good four hours' walking distance from Moilola's country", and was responsible for nursing Viljoen back to health after the veldcornet had been badly injured by a lion.⁷⁵ The HMS presence, reinforced by the cordial relationship

⁷⁴HMB, No.5, 1859, p.75.

⁷⁵HMS correspondence, "Affairs of Linokana Station", Zimmermann, n.d., p.I.

between Viljoen and Zimmermann, soon had its expected intentions for the SAR officials. Only three months after his arrival Zimmermann was informing Viljoen about the restlessness of the African inhabitants of the Marico on account of rumours that the Ndebele were to launch an attack into the Transvaal.⁷⁶ Moreover Pretorius's assessment of the German missionaries immediately was proved to be correct, for Zimmermann reported shortly thereafter that "Moiloa's people will only learn in work and in taking work".⁷⁷ But Zimmermann also quickly lived up to Moiloa's expectations of him as an intermediary with the SAR state, requesting guns and ammunitions for Moiloa for hunting and the protection of cattle from wild animals. "It helps the missionaries", added Zimmermann, "when people are behaving well, to give them ammunition legally".⁷⁸ It is not clear whether this request was assented to.

The preceding discussion has reiterated important points made by Bonner, Delius, Trapido and others in their analyses of the SAR state in the nineteenth century. It indicates the interlocking chain of ambiguous dependant relationships⁷⁹ between African communities, the missionaries and powerful, though often opposed, elements within the SAR state. The Marico trekkers depended on the Hurutshe as a reliable source of labour, as their eyes and ears along the frontier

⁷⁶T.A. SS vol. 25 r 2738/59, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 23 April 1859.

⁷⁷T.A. SS vol.27 r 3301/59, Zimmermann to A.W. Pretorius, 28 June 1859.

⁷⁸SS r 3301/59. It is not clear whether this request was assented to.

⁷⁹The "ambiguities of dependence" have been subtly explored by Marks in a study of twentieth century African leaders in Natal; See S. Marks, The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa; Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth Century Natal, (Johannesburg, 1986). The ambiguity arises essentially out of their structurally dependent position within the Colonial political economy and the colonial state, and the contradictory nature of the colonial order itself." (Introduction p.1)

and as a buffer against incursions from the Tswana chiefdoms to the west and north-west. As subjects the Hurutshe were expected to render these services willingly. However, uncertain of their ability to command loyalty, certain Trekkers resorted to violence to achieve their ends - an apparently irrational course of action to the Hurutshe who had accepted the conditions attendant upon formal Trekker hegemony in the region. The Hurutshe were dependant upon the Trekkers for legal recognition, but attempted to liberate themselves from the consequences of this dependance when their value to the Marico boers became evident. The missionaries in a sense were caught between two needs - to satisfy the expectations of the SAR state for missionary cooperation in controlling African societies, and to offer some protection against the worst excesses of the state. Their continued existence depended to some extent on fulfilling these contradictory expectations. However their importance to both the SAR authorities and the Hurutshe mitigated the difficulty of fulfilling these opposing obligations. The basic pattern of these relationships persisted throughout the century, though the balance of power between the various elements fluctuated in response to altered circumstances - such as increased African access to firearms and vital resources, outside intervention and to new economic developments and imperatives - which might tip the scales of power in one direction or the other.

These ambiguous and complex inter-relationships account largely for the fact that Moiloa's Hurutshe managed to weather the stormy years of early rule in the SAR. But the Hurutshe at Borutwe under Mangope did not. At Borutwe they were much closer to the Marico river and to the heart of Trekker settlement in the district. Consequently they were more exposed to Trekker exactions during this period. Numerically weak and strategically of little value to the Trekkers they had little to offer their rulers either in the guise of resistance or compensation.

Scholtz had obtained a contingent of Mangope's people by clearly duplicitous means in 1852 and he had forewarned on that occasion that "great problems" could result.⁸⁰ As it turned out Scholtz's prediction came true. In late 1852 or early 1853 Mangope's son, Kontle, fled to Setshele. The Boers then instructed Mangope to order his son back with his regiment, a command which the chief was unable to carry out. In 1856 more ill-feeling was created by the suspicion that Mangope's Hurutshe had been responsible for the murder of Nortje at Swartruggens.⁸¹ Persistent demands for labour finally forced Mangope to follow Kontle in 1858. Mangope sent ahead his young men and women together with their cattle to join Setshele. The authorities in the SAR demanded their return, to which Setshele replied, as he had done in the case of Mosielele, that they were "in his stomach". One account states that the Trekkers retaliated by capturing one of Setshele's wives as hostage for the return of the Hurutshe. Eventually however, she was released and the old people of the Hurutshe boo Manyane were allowed to join their relatives now living with the Kwena.⁸² The Hurutshe boo Manyane split up later on, one faction returning to the Transvaal.

Their flight to the Tswana chiefdoms to the west was by no means an isolated case - the most notable was the flight of the Kwena chief Kgamanyane after a public flogging administered by Kruger for refusing to provide labour in 1869.⁸³ The presence of independent and frequently related Tswana chiefdoms to the west acted both as an optional "escape route" for African groups in the SAR, particularly

⁸⁰T.A. SS r 413/52, P. Scholtz to A.W. Pretorius, 21 July 1852.

⁸¹T.A. SS vol.11 r 1059/56, Kruger to M.W. Pretorius, 11 May 1856.

⁸²See Tlhomeleng, "Bahurutshe Bo Manyana", pp.8-9; Also "Bahurutshe Ba Manyana Oral Traditions", Collected by K.D. Kgabi 1983, B.N.A.; F. Jensen "A Short History of the Bahurtshe ba Manyana", 1932, S259/10 B.N.A.

⁸³See Sillery, Sechele, p.143. Setshele absorbed groups of Bakga and Tlokwa as well.

those along the border, and helped to place a limit on the coercive capacity of the State. This withdrawal tactic was used frequently by the Hurutshe and accords with the phenomenon of the "protest migration" resorted to by Africans in Central and West Africa seeking a more tolerable form of local or colonial control.⁸⁴ Finally it is worth remarking that the authorities' attempt to repatriate Mangope's people provides further evidence of their concern for the loss of what had been a stable and compliant labour supply.⁸⁵

The first decade as subjects of the SAR proved to be an extremely difficult period for the Hurutshe, which called for resilience and shrewd leadership. Wedged, as they were, between the independent Tswana societies to the west and the Trekkers to the east, Moiloa's Hurutshe were subjected to the pressure of conflicting expectations. Moiloa clearly came to the conclusion that it was a better option to submit to Trekker overlordship rather than to take the more drastic choice of seeking protection from Tswana allies, as Mangope's faction had done. Furthermore to have fled the Transvaal would have been to abandon an excellent site for economic revival. As the decade wore on Moiloa and his advisors probably recognised that Trekker acquisitiveness was limited by a lack of real coercive power. As Legassick states in delineating the development and concept of a "frontier zone" in South Africa, "in much of the Transvaal... white settlement preceded any clear white hegemony: the settlement crept around and into the edges of non-white political communities, demanding their labour or initially appeasing them, depending on their size and location, but for a while at least recognising their

⁸⁴See A.I. Asiwaju, "Migration as Revolt: the Examples of Ivory Coast and Upper Volta before 1945", in JAH, vol.17, no.4, 1976; M.C. Mushambachime, "Protest Migrations in Mweru-Luapula 1900-1940", in African Studies, vol.47, no.I, 1988, and also contributions to Birmingham and Martin (eds), History of Central Africa, vol.II.

⁸⁵For example the compulsory labour system had caused the flight of two minor chiefs in 1851 which "could not be condoned [by the S.A.R. authorities] because of the serious shortage of labour it caused". See McGill, "History of the Transvaal", p.349 from SS r 270/51 and SS r 303/51; Flight of Chiefs Rantekwaan and Makuna.

autonomy".⁸⁶ At the same time the Hurutshe must have realised that the unexpected and violent acts which accompanied Trekker demands, though indicative of an absence of clear authority, could be damaging and were best avoided by collaboration with the SAR authorities. This in turn provided an opening for stability and the reconstruction of the polity, the necessary foundations for economic revival and expansion. These processes form much of the subject of the next chapter.

⁸⁶Legassick, "The Griqua", p.17.

CHAPTER THREE - STRENGTHENING THE POLITY, 1859-1875

This chapter looks firstly at changes in the Transvaal economy brought by the expansion of mercantile capital on the highveld, and accounts for the concomitant failure of the SAR to harness this new economic potential in the interests of the state. It then examines the way in which the Hurutshe economy accordingly was modified and altered. This is followed by a discussion of the link between increased production and renewed attempts by ruling elements, led by Moiloa, to exercise tighter control over production, particularly by the manipulation of traditional and selective use of non-traditional sources of authority. The final sections of the chapter are devoted to an appraisal of Moiloa's relations with powerful but increasingly disaffected constituents of Hurutshe society, and to relations with the SAR state, the local Boers and the missionaries. In all instances a greater stability and sense of coexistence was established by the Hurutshe with their white neighbours and rulers. In all it was a period of increasing assurance for the Hurutshe under Moiloa, both in terms of relations with neighbouring highveld societies and in terms of economic expansion.

I The Wider Economic Setting - Merchant Capital, Fiscal Instability and the Marico "Jaegersgemeenskap".

Throughout most of the 1860's the Trekker economy of the Transvaal continued to be based on hunting and pastoralism. Except in the Marico where hunting thrived, neither activity was conducted with uniform or regular degree of success. Moreover civil conflict between 1862-1864 set back what little progress that had been made. It was not a period of commercial quiescence however. Firstly the volume of trade passing through towns like Potchefstroom increased drawing more traders into the Transvaal. In 1860 the value of goods passing through Potchefstroom to Algoa Bay was estimated at £50,000 and by 1866 Potchefstroom had fifteen trade stores.¹ Cattle were

¹Zuid-Afrikaan, 4 June 1860; Transvaal Argus, 5 June 1866. See also Trapido, "Land, Office and Wealth", p.356.

exported to the Cape and Natal, "forming in 1866 one of the principal items in the export trade... serving as remittances made by Transvaal merchants",² usually either itinerant Boer traders or resident colonial traders, such as Thomas Leask.³ The price of ostrich feathers remained reasonably high and constant in the mid-1860s, fetching prices between £30 and £40 a pound. In 1864 exports of feathers totalled £25,000, of wool, £30,000, of ivory £30,000 and of cattle £48,000.⁴ In addition to this, land, as Trapido has pointed out, was becoming a highly marketable asset and the officials of the SAR, who were frequently given land in lieu of wages, were those best-placed to accumulate.⁵ By the end of 1867 the Transvaal Land and Immigration Company had been formed, along with the SAR Mining Company and the Rustenburg Land and Immigration Company, all indicative of speculative interest in the region.⁶ One can detect in the 1860's not only the quickening pace of mercantile activity but also the conditions out of which accumulation was to arise. The state however, was unable to provide the foundations for sustained economic growth. Its main limitation was that it lacked an efficient administration.

Attempts by the SAR to raise taxes, the wherewithal of better administration, met with almost no success. "Taxpaying in the Republic", noted the Transvaal Advocate in 1869, "is like kissing-goes by favour".⁷ By 1867 the SAR was in a state of chronic financial instability. The currency was depreciated and unstable and the state unable to raise any credit at all. These

also Trapido, "Land, Office and Wealth", p.356.

²Transvaal Argus, 5 June 1866.

³Leask had at least three stores in Potchefstroom and, with his sons, expanded his activities to the Marico district in the late 1860s.

⁴Transvaal Argus, 26 June 1866.

⁵Transvaal Argus, 26 June 1866.

⁶Trapido, "Land, Office and Wealth" p.356.

⁷Transvaal Advocate, 9 November 1869.

conditions of course made land the only really profitable resource. It was much to the chagrin of the English trading element in the Transvaal, whose views the Transvaal Advocate represented, that access to land was largely in the hands of officials of the government. This newspaper's frequent attacks on the positions of the Commandants and Veldcornets for corruption and nepotism convey its sense of frustration over this.⁸ The fact that the SAR lacked both unity and authority heightened the demand not only for sound fiscal policy but also for an adequate supply of labour, the late 1860s being a period of particular shortage. The trekkers thus continued to be reliant either on inboekselings, or if "they lacked the necessary property and authority to secure labour by [this] means were dependent on relationships of clientage to secure some share of the labour market".⁹

In the Marico hunting did not decline as it did in several other important hunting districts. The Marico hunters kept the links they had established and did not, like the Zoutpansberg jagtersgemeenskap, meet with African resistance to their continued hunting activities. It was an activity that continued to be dominated by a few Marico Boers but increasingly more English hunters entered the area. There was no antipathy between English and Boer hunters; in fact they formed their own jagtersgemeenskap, a fruitful alliance of English finance and Boer skills and intimacy with conditions in the trans-Limpopo. Selous, Westbeach, Baldwin and George "Elephant" Phillips all collaborated with Viljoen and his hunting partners at one stage or another. Westbeach hired a farm (aptly named "Klein Engeland") from veldcornet D. Botha which served as a staging post for hunting trips to the interior, and ended up marrying Cornelia Gronum, the daughter of a prominent Boer hunter and farmer at Mosega.¹⁰

⁸See for example Transvaal Advocate, 24 May 1870.

⁹Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.142.

¹⁰See Gronum, Boere en Jagters in ou Marico, p.60; R. Sampson, A Toothbrush in his Hat; The Story and Times of G.C. Westbeach in Central Africa, (Lusaka, 1972), pp.46-49.

There was hardly a hunter in the trans-Limpopo area who did not at some time enjoy the acquaintance or hospitality of Viljoen or the prominent Marico hunters such as Jacobs, Swart and Gronum.¹¹ Viljoen was prepared to extend his knowledge and favours even to English traders, accompanying the trader Collins to Ndebele territory in 1857.¹²

A distinction grew between the wealthier hunters, who were able to mount and profit from large scale expeditions, and those Boers of the Marico who engaged in occasional local hunting, an activity which in any event was probably impoverishing rather than profitable. Holub, on a visit to the Marico in 1875 remarked that "it was only in a few instances that we saw anything like abundance, the farmers being, as I have said, addicted to elephant-hunting and giving all their profits to that expensive amusement".¹³ On the other hand there is evidence that hunting could be a source of quick profit, the probable reason for its continuing attraction. Viljoen reported in 1857 that he wanted to go on a hunting trip because he had fallen into debt and wanted to get out of it.¹⁴ Marthinus Swart, who had accompanied Viljoen in the 1850s owned two farms in the Marico and by the late 1860s had purchased, through his profits from hunting, "several others on the frontier".¹⁵

In addition to hunting itself, trips to the interior offered opportunities for trade of which the Marico hunters took full advantage.¹⁶ Much of this trade was in firearms despite the prohibition of the sale of guns to Africans in the SAR and the fact that accusing fingers were frequently pointed at British traders (and

¹¹Grobler, "Viljoen", pp.258-269.

¹²E.C. Tabler, The Far Interior, (Cape Town, 1955), p.239.

¹³E. Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol. I, (Johannesburg, 1975 edn.) p.421.

¹⁴Grobler, "Viljoen", p.261.

¹⁵Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, p.420.

¹⁶Grobler, "Viljoen", p.258.

missionaries) for arming the Tswana. Swart, Jacobs and even Viljoen were all imputed sellers of powder and guns, and Viljoen, certainly on one occasion, was obliged to sell five guns to a party of Ndebele in exchange for oxen. Yet a further profitable enterprise for some Marico hunters was to gain employment with African chiefs as hunters; Jacobs for example hunted in the Ngamiland region for the Tswana regents Letsholathebe and Moremi.¹⁷

II The Expanding Hurutshe Economy : "Rich and friendly ...tribes"

It is appropriate now to consider the Hurutshe response to these developments. For the Hurutshe the effects of the continuing appeal that hunting offered were twofold. Firstly it ensured that the western border remained relatively trouble-free and secondly the consequent neglect of farming operations by the Boers to some extent eased the demand for labour. This in turn placed the Hurutshe in a favourable position to entrench and later expand production.

There was a further stimulus for increasing production provided by the extension of the "trade frontier" to the Hurutshe in the 1860s. This frontier advanced along two routes. The first was from Potchefstroom and Zeerust (1867), the latter becoming a booming frontier town until eclipsed by the establishment of Mafeking in 1886. The other route was along the missionary and traders' "road to the north", through Vryburg, Kanye (the Ngwaketse capital from 1852), Kweneng and through to Shoshong where it branched to Bulawayo, Ngamiland and Barotseland. In the 1860s and most of the 1870s the route to Kweneng was usually through Zeerust and the old capital of Kaditshwene (the so-called "Campbells route"), which took travellers through the eastern part of the Hurutshe reserve.¹⁸ The route to

¹⁷T.A. SS vol.6 r 699/54, J.P. Schutte to A.W. Pretorius; SS r 959/59, T. Dreyer to General van Staaden, 4 January 1856; Grobler, "Viljoen", P.258; Tlou, History of Ngamiland, p.70.

¹⁸Ngongo, "History of the Nkwatsetse", pp 154-155; Marico Chronicle, 20 April 1912. In the 1880s the SAR placed a tax on "Campbell's route" thus reducing the traffic along it. Vryburg-Mafeking then became the more established route.

Kanye however, passed right through Dinokana and drew many visitors including Holub, Gilmore, Chapman, Anderson, Baldwin and Cumming to the Hurutshe capital, several of whom traded in the town.¹⁹ The IMS missionary at Shoshong twice visited Dinokana in the early 1860s to purchase provisions.²⁰ In addition many Boers, acting as middlemen for the agencies in the small towns of the Transvaal, came to Dinokana to purchase hides, livestock or feathers. Zeerust in 1867 was described as a "new village in the vicinity of rich and friendly Kafir tribes who live in peace and carry on an extensive trade in ivory, ostrich feathers etc."²¹ The supply of "exportable produce" from the Marico and Potchefstroom district was so great that it drew traders from the Cape and Orange Free State, leading the Transvaal Argus to complain at the presence of "the Colonial sharks hovering about our borders".²² In addition the 1868 rush for the gold fields at Tati and the opening of the Marico lead mines a few years after drew more traders and speculators into the Marico. Moiloa's Hurutshe were therefore directly linked into a mercantile trade network, in some respects built on the old precolonial trade linkages, but inevitably one that pulled them closer into colonial market relations and reshaped their political economy accordingly.

The extent and diversity of Hurutshe economic activity between 1860 and 1875 is fully recorded by the missionaries and visitors to Dinokana. A few of their observations will serve to illustrate this development. On his arrival in 1859 Zimmermann described

¹⁹Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, pp 415-419; P. Gilmore, The Great Thirst Land, (London, 1878). p.213; A. Anderson, Twenty-Five Years in a Wagon, (Cape Town, 1974 edn,) pp.122-123; R. Cumming. A Hunter's Life in South Africa, Vol. I, (London, 1850), pp 237-238; Baldwin, African Hunting, p.159.

²⁰E.W. Smith, Great Lion of Bechuanaland - The Life and Times of Roger Price, (London, 1957), pp.131-133, p.168.

²¹The Transvaal Argus, 7 February, 1867. For an account of the role of merchant firms and Boers traders in the OFS see Keegan, Transformations, pp.96-97.

²²The Transvaal Argus, 21 February 1867.

this wonderful wide valley [with] Linokana just about in the centre. The land brings enormous amounts of corn as the people concentrate more on agriculture. Linokana is surrounded by many large vegetable gardens. The Bahurutshi already know how to irrigate. The Bahurutshi are generally well off, some even really wealthy, because they have their cattle farming as well as many good lands. They have brought many wagons and ploughs and most of them wear clothes. The Bahurutshe, other tribes too, make their own iron, they have smelting ovens and hammers and ... are able to make assegais, pick-axes, rings.²³

After visiting Dinokana in 1863, Behrens, supervisor of the Bechuanaland missions, reported approvingly of conditions in the town:

The Bahurutshe have so much corn as they haven't had for years. Here in the town of our Moiloa there are five wagons and about 200 oxen. You can easily imagine how much work can be done with them. In addition chiefs, deputies and all who own oxen use the plough and sow wheat, like the Boers. Hunting provides one of the main sources of food. They hunt in great numbers and shoot wild animals and ostriches, and bring back on their pack oxen - meat, skins and feathers. The skins are cured and various items are made of them, for their own use as well as for sale. The feathers are sold to dealers. Hunting is made a lot easier by guns of which there are many among these people. Here in Moiloa's stad are several thousand guns, a man without a gun is a poor man.²⁴

This level of productivity was maintained through the second half of the 1860s and into the next decade. By 1868 citrus fruits were being cultivated and transported to Zeerust. The Hurutshe it seems were able to hunt outside their reserve for the Argus reported in 1868 that "a large party of Moiloa's was lately out hunting on Transvaal ground without having, as heretofore, applied for permission to do

²³HMS Correspondence, 'Affairs at Linokana Station' by F. Zimmermann, n.d. p.6.

²⁴HMB, unnumbered, 1864, p.138.

so".²⁵ Near the end of Moiloo's period of rule hunting seemed to have declined, possibly the result of infractions such as that just mentioned, for in the mid-1870s Moiloo complained to Gilmore that he no longer had any "hunting grounds".²⁶ It is probable too that hunting would have brought the Hurutshe into direct competition with the Marico Boers, a situation that the SAR officials would have been anxious to prevent.

There was no such subsidence in agricultural activity if travellers' and missionary reports are to be believed. Good crops were reported in 1868 and 1871, following consistently above average rainfall during this period in the Marico district.²⁷ On his first visit to the Hurutshe Holub referred to them as "the most thriving agriculturalists of all the Transvaal Bechuanas".²⁸ In 1875 on a subsequent visit Holub recorded that Hurutshe

"gathered in as much as 800 sacks of wheat, each containing 200 lbs and every year a wider area of land is being brought under cultivation. Beside wheat they grow maize, sorghum, melons and tobacco".²⁹

Holub also added that irrigation had by then become a widespread practice. Holub's observations are confirmed by Gilmore who wrote of the extensive cultivation of maize and sorghum around Dinokana and the "comfortable and well-to-do" appearance of the townspeople.³⁰

²⁵Transvaal Argus, 29 July 1868.

²⁶Gilmore, The Great Thirst Land, p.213. The Argus report (cited above) also referred to the unease created by the presence of Hurutshe and Kwena hunting parties in the Transvaal, presumably another reason to restrict hunting by Moiloo's followers.

²⁷HMB, no. 12, 1871, p.243; Marico Chronicle, 13 April 1912.

²⁸Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol.I, pp.416-418.

²⁹Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol II, p.22.

³⁰Gilmore, The Great Thirst Land, p.213.

The use of wagons indicates firstly that much of this produce was transported elsewhere and traded, thus extending participation in the market economy, and secondly that certain wealthier producers were investing profits from agriculture to increase their share in the trading economy. Wagons assumed even greater significance in the period before storekeepers settled in the reserve in large numbers and bought up locally produced goods but even after this, from the 1880s, they enabled transport riders to seek markets where they could obtain better terms of trade than those offered by local traders. They became all the more crucial from 1869 when a significant new market was opened up at Kimberley by the discovery of diamonds.

The importance of the Kimberley market as an incentive for the expansion and sale of agricultural products by many African societies in South Africa and the impetus this gave to the process of peasantisation has been a major concern of historians in recent years.³¹ This perhaps has placed an unintended emphasis on the "mineral revolution" as a transformation process within many African societies, and has resulted in a current tendency to play down the significance of the diamond discoveries, even to the extent of suggesting that among some societies at least, productive expansion in the 1860s and 1870s was a consequence of "the dynamic of expansion of the old and failing pre-capitalist mode of production than from

³¹Bundy's work opened up a new landmark in the study of African peasants in Southern Africa, after which numerous local studies focussed on regions outside Bundy's area of study (which was essentially the eastern Cape and Natal) or offered a more local or specific view of communities within Bundy's terrain. See C. Bundy, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry, (London, 1979), and his earlier "The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry" African Affairs, vol.71, 1972. For "regional studies" see for example K. Shillington, "The Impact of Diamond Discoveries on the Kimberley Hinterland", in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa, (London, 1982), pp.99-118; P. Kallaway, "Tribesman Trader, Proletarian", in P. Bonner (ed.), Working papers in Southern African Studies, vol.II, (Johannesburg, 1981), pp.8-31; Wright and Manson, The Hlubi Chiefdom.

the effects of the growing capitalist one".³² Nevertheless the size of the Kimberley market, its widespread attraction for many African suppliers and its consequent spur to rural capitalisation are indisputable and it remains an important milestone in the path of agrarian transition in nineteenth century South Africa. In the western Transvaal there was a marked increase in agricultural productivity that was not just confined to the Boer population; Holub recorded in 1872 that the Hurutshe "sold what they did not require for their own consumption in the Markets of the Transvaal and the Diamond fields".³³ The well-established patterns of trade from the precolonial period and later, meant that from the late 1850s that certain Hurutshe traders were well-placed to benefit from the Kimberley market.

On the other hand the Hurutshe did not travel to the fields to seek labour during this period as did many other African polities. This is rather surprising given the point that Tswana chiefdoms north of the Vaal were migrating to the Cape from the 1840s.³⁴ A number of explanations for their late entry into labour migrancy at Kimberley can be suggested. Firstly the incentive to acquire guns was not as great as it was among Africans in the eastern and central Transvaal because they had been obtainable from Tswana-based traders to the west for at least a decade before Kimberley acquired its reputation as an arsenal for Africans throughout South Africa. Secondly the Hurutshe only began paying taxes in 1866 (payment in 1865 was delayed) and much of it was paid in cattle rather than cash. In the SAR moreover tax-collection frequently was incomplete or superficial. In

³²J. Lewis, 'The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry: A Critique and Reassessment', JSAS, vol.II, no.I, (1984).

³³Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol. 11, p.22; Naude, "Boerdery", p.137.

³⁴For example Livingstone noted in 1849 that Tswana in the Transvaal "travel 200 or 300 miles southward every year, and obtain, through the just energy of the Magistrate, at Colesburg etc. fair remuneration for their services, returning with four or

the 1860s and early 1870s there probably was little compulsion to seek wage labour in order to meet tax demands. Another credible reason for the delayed response lies in the prohibitions placed by the SAR in 1852 on Africans crossing the Vaal river and on the carrying of guns. There was therefore a risk on return from the fields that guns might be confiscated and punishment inflicted on offenders, though the Hurutshe came to realise, as did the Pedi, that it was fairly easy to evade the authorities' attempts to enforce restrictions on the importation of guns.³⁵

III Chiefly Control over Production.

There is a probability that some individuals had a far larger share in this increasing wealth than others, though there is only fragmentary evidence to demonstrate this. Zimmermann's account (cited above) where he reports that "some" Hurutshe were "really wealthy" suggests there was differentiation; furthermore Holub refers to the presence of ploughs and wagons standing outside only the "larger farms in the town." The possession of these items greatly increased the possibilities for accumulation in Tswana societies. Goody notes that the use of ploughs in African societies generally "increases the area of land a man can cultivate and hence makes possible a rise in productivity - this in turn means a greater surplus for the maintenance of specialist crafts, for the growth of differences in wealth and for developments in non-agricultural life".³⁶ Parsons concludes that wagoning, among the Ngwato, "gave certain families of notables a degree of financial independence that enabled them to push their sons up the scales of education as far as Lovedale"³⁷ (the missionary school and training seminary opened in

five head of cattle instead of one". Cited in I. Schapera (ed) Livingstone's South African Papers, pp.9-10. See also Kinsman, "Migrant Labour Among the Tswana".

³⁵Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.65.

³⁶J. Goody, Technology, Tradition and the State in Africa, Oxford, 1971, p.25.

³⁷Parson, "Khama III" p.138.

1841). The real problem lies in trying to identify which households may have been expanding production, and to determine whether they were doing so at the expense of others.

It is absolutely clear that Moiloa from his position as chief entrenched his own wealth and power. He was still able to allocate land within the reserve for habitation, agriculture and pasturage. He also increased the de facto size of his location by several means. Firstly he entered into grazing agreements with the local white farmers, by which the Hurutshe grazed cattle on six farms to the south-west of the reserve (Dam van Metsigo, Matjesvallie, Welbedacht, Nooitgedacht, Tweefontein and Stinkhoutboom),³⁸ an arrangement that later caused immense confusion and discord. Secondly he gained access to cattle posts and arable land to the west along the "boundary" with the Ngwaketse and even inside Ngwaketse territory, again a cause of later contention. Hurutshe cattle posts were estimated to be three to twelve hours walk from Dinokana.³⁹ The third means of increasing his land holdings was by direct purchase of land.

As the purchase of land by Tswana in the western Transvaal provides a distinctive means by which African people struggled to maintain a hold on the land, it is important to discuss at this point the genesis of this phenomenon. Relly has examined the way in which land purchases in the twentieth century were an important means by which Africans resisted proletarianisation.^{39(a)} However land purchases began as early as the 1860s, Moiloa, in 1867, being one of the first chiefs to buy land following possibly the example set by the Kgatla chief, Kgamanyane, who acquired land at Saulspoort in 1864. Much of the stimulation for land purchase came from the missionaries. The

³⁸This fact came to light in 1880 when a Boundary Commission tried to establish an exact boundary for the Reserve. See T A SS r 3474, Commissioner Western Border to Colonial Secretary, 27 September 1880.

³⁹B.N.A. HC 142/4, J. Good to W. Surmon, 24 November 1890; HMB, 1864, Excerpt from letter by Jensen, p.6.

39(a).G. Relly, "The Transformation of Rural Relationships in the Western Transvaal", M.A. thesis, University of London, 1972.

Advisory Committee of the HMS realised the leverage to be gained by assisting in land purchases and in 1872 decided to "use land property as a basis for the missions' rule over formerly independent people".⁴⁰ This was as much a means of establishing a hold over the community as it was an alternative source of income for the poorly paid missionaries. Land was bought under different terms and by different means. In all cases the mission acted as a trustee but sometimes land was purchased in the name of the Society, sometimes in the name of the missionary. The funds for purchase were variously raised; through contributions by the community; from chiefs' revenues; or in several instances directly from the missionaries' pockets. Where missionaries themselves purchased land they obviously sought restitution and resorted to leasing the land to their communities on a 99 year leasehold.⁴¹

Not surprisingly the practice led to bitter argument and even litigation when in 1905 the British Colonial government sought to register mission held land in the names of the rightful owners. What gave the missionaries particular advantage over their communities was that the Volksraad prohibited Africans from holding title to land, though the Executive Council was inclined to allow purchase under strict conditions. This forced Africans into the expedient of arranging with missionaries to buy land for them. Although Moiloa raised with Jensen, the missionary who followed Zimmermann, the possibility of land purchase, he in fact entered into a direct arrangement with the hunter Martinus Swart to buy a portion of the farm Matjesvallei, adjacent to the reserve, for a 100 head of cattle, in apparent contravention of the Volkraad resolution prohibiting the sale of land to Africans.⁴² Realising perhaps the tenuous nature

⁴⁰F. Hasselhorn, "Mission and Land in Southern Africa, Illustrated by the example of the Hermannsburg Mission in Transvaal and Natal", unpublished paper, University of Gottingen, 1985, p.1.

⁴¹Hasselhorn, "Mission and Land", p.2; Report re Acquisition and Tenure of Land by Africans in Transvaal, 1905, pp.20-22.

⁴²Bloemhof Blue Book, Evidence of Moiloa, p.317; Magistrate's Reports, Marico, 5/1/6, Sub-Native Commissioner to

of this purchase he tried in 1874 to get a binding deed of sale from President Burgers. However Moiloa gained nothing before his death in 1875.⁴³

If control over land was one means adopted by Moiloa to entrench chiefly authority, control over production and trade was another source of plenitude. Amongst most Tswana chiefdoms a closer regulation over trade and production by a chiefly stratum was readily apparent from the middle decades of the nineteenth century, though among other societies, the Mpondo for example, there was a decline in chiefs' control over productive activities.⁴⁴

Signs of Moiloa's attempts to direct economic activities are apparent firstly in his frequent warnings to the missionaries to refrain from trade and to purchase grain directly from him.⁴⁵ Moiloa's injunctions obviously were based on the recognition that missionary societies, particularly the HMS and BMS, held no scruples about

Native Commissioner, W. Transvaal, 11/10/1904.

⁴³T A SS vol.168 r 152/74, J. Hutten to Burgers, 22 January 1874.

⁴⁴See N. Parsons, "An Economic History of Khama's Country in Botswana, 1844-1930", in R. Palmer and N. Parsons, The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa, (London, 1977), pp.113-143; Nangati "The Bakwena State", pp.126-127. For the Mpondo see W. Beinart, The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930, (Cambridge, 1982), pp.20-21. The Tlhaping chief Jantjie Mothibi's power also waned partly as a result of individualist responses to market penetration in Griqualand West; see Shillington, The Southern Tswana, pp.62-63.

⁴⁵HMB, "The Bechuana Stations", 1864, p.105.

entering into paying enterprises, even if they impinged upon the economic domain of the communities among whom they worked.⁴⁶ He was not as successful in preventing missionary trafficking as he might have hoped, for Jensen, despite protestations to his superiors to the contrary, was roundly accused by Viljoen of being a "smous, tanner, soap-maker, farmer and postrider".⁴⁷ Moiloe also controlled the activities of traders arriving in his town. A measure of his authority in this regard was the "negative effect" his death was reported as having on trade with the white population.⁴⁸

In addition to this Moiloe, from 1865 onwards, was paid £25 per annum in reward for tax collection.⁴⁹ The use of chiefs as tax-collectors was a common practice of the colonial administrations in Natal and Griqualand West. In the Transvaal however, taxes were usually collected by the landdrosts or veldcornets and the payment of chiefs for tax collection was extremely unusual, throughout all of the South African territories. Moiloe's reward for the collection of taxes was probably the consequence of his considered loyalty to the state, coupled with an ineffectual and devolved system of African taxation that in cases forced the state into dependence on African

⁴⁶Livingstone accused Edwards of trading in ivory and karosses; see Council for World Mission Archives, Box 18, Livingstone to Moffat, 12 May 1840. In the eastern Transvaal Merensky of the Berlin Missionary Society had more credit with the Bank than the SAR; See Trapido "Landlord and Tenant", p.40. Rev. Watkins, of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, wrote that "most of [the Hannoverian missionaries] are obliged to farm in order to live... most of them are traders, all of them are farmers and each is growing rich. The greed of grain has taken hold", Wesleyan Missionary Society Archives, Box 309, Watkins to Rev J. Kilner, 17 July 1882. It should be remembered nevertheless that the Wesleyans had been frustrated in their attempts to enter the missionary field in the Transvaal.

⁴⁷T.A. SS vol.668 r 2885/82, Viljoen to Driemanskop, 28 April 1882.

⁴⁸HMB, No.12, 1864, p.194, T.A. SS r 287/77, Report of Landdrost Zeerust re. Conditions in Linokana, 13 November 1877.

⁴⁹T.A. SS vol.164 r 2038/73, M.W. Pretorius to J.W. Viljoen, 1 February 1865.

underlings.

Moiloa then both increased and controlled production and sought new means of enrichment offered through the close relationship he had forged with the SAR. Possibly the most visible, outward form of his personal power lies in his taking of eleven wives, in Holub's opinion a larger number than most of the Tswana chiefs during this period.⁵⁰ It is important now to consider which households were permitted general access to rural resources and to trade opportunities, and the extent of their reliance on Moiloa's largesse as a distributor of key resources. This question assumes importance in the light of the generally held view that in Tswana societies the pre-difagane powerholders manipulated their former powers to expand production and increase their extractive capacity in the period of early capitalist penetration. To answer this question it is necessary to refer to the specific political relations of power operating during this period.

Moiloa was a "pretender" and though the laws of succession were never fixed nor binding in Tswana Societies he could not ignore the fact that he lacked a legitimate claim to chieftainship. Realising this he gathered around him diverse groups of supporters on whom he counted to balance the scales of power in the polity. First among these were the Griqua converts whose support he had sought and acquired in the late 1830s and 1840s. As Moiloa probably anticipated they offered a number of services through their agricultural, linguistic and literate skills and provided a ready link with the missionaries and with African converts from other stations.⁵¹

Moiloa allocated them two separate wards in Dinokana and they enjoyed a measure of autonomy, in return for which they supported and

⁵⁰Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol II, p.392.

⁵¹For example an African teacher and two families followed the Griqua converts to Dinokana in about 1860. See "Affairs at Linokana Station", F. Zimmermann, p.12.

assisted the chief.⁵² Linked with the Griqua converts were the African Christians who relied on and supported Moilola. Another group around whom Moilola built his power was the immigrants, many of them non-Hurutshe, who entered the reserve in the early 1850s.⁵³ When Moilola died it was considered that the "pure" Hurutshe, mostly the supporters of Gopane, the rightful heir to Menwe, moved to Maanwane (Gopanestad) and the immigrants remained at Dinokana.⁵⁴ What this presumed ethnic division obscured was the fact that Gopane's followers generally were economically disadvantaged and sought new opportunities elsewhere. What stratification occurred therefore was between the pre-difagane and post-difagane elites, with a section of the latter beginning to transform themselves into a class of wealthier and technologically more adaptive and monetised peasantry. The extent of the reliance of this group of rising peasants on Moilola was probably very great. Moilola, as we have noted, exercised a firm control over trade and production. Furthermore in the middle decades of the nineteenth century the Hurutshe chief was the point of contact and radiation between the reserve economy and the colonial economy and consequently could determine which individuals could accumulate. From this discussion relating to Hurutshe political alignments during this period it is apparent that Moilola refashioned the Hurutshe polity along lines that differed significantly from the precolonial social formation and to try and locate any kind of class structure in the nineteenth century Hurutshe polity in terms of previous relations of production would be totally misdirected.

⁵²HMB, no.7, p.103, report by L. Harms; "Affairs of Linokana Station", F. Zimmermann, p.2. There are today a number of "coloured" people bearing the name Moilola. UWL, SAIRR Oral Archive Interview with Mr Piet Mohalelo, 9 December 1982.

⁵³T.A. SN vol.102, Secretary Native Affairs to Landdrost Marico, 15 November 1879, citing from L D 1103, "Report on Moilola Reserve".

⁵⁴E. Holub, Von der Capstad ins Land der Maschukulumbe, vol.I, (Vienna, 1890), p.125-130.

IV. Internal Tensions

It would be appropriate at this point, having reviewed economic expansion among the Hurutshe and located the forces around which this expansion took place, to turn to a consideration of domestic affairs during this period, particularly as the two issues are closely interconnected. Though dependent to a large extent on non-Hurutshe, Moiloa tried at the same time to weld his community together through a process of political involution (around the person of the chief) a crucial element of which was the re-introduction of key social institutions and practises into the community.

For example no marriages were considered legal without the passing of bogadi cattle (bridewealth payment), and the reforming of old mephato and the introduction of new ones occurred during this period. Six mephato were formed during Moiloa's reign, the largest, Matshelaphala, belonging to Moiloa.⁵⁵ Moiloa thus never went as far as Khama III did among the Ngwato who carried his "revolution" to the lengths of prohibiting initiation ceremonies, the payment of bogadi and rain-making activities. The ethnic diversity of the Hurutshe presented no real barrier to the revival of traditional ceremonial life in the community. Moiloa's neighbouring Tswana leaders were engaging in precisely the same kind of political aggrandisement through the incorporation of and control over ethnically different factions. The only difference was that Moiloa lacked the legitimacy that Setshele or Gaseitsiwe possessed, forcing him into increasing dependency on immigrant groups and into a progressively antagonistic relationship with many of the basimane ba kgosi (ward heads) attached to the ruling lineage who undoubtedly resented the growing wealth and influence of the former.

⁵⁵See Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.149; Lestrade, "Bogadi system of the Bahurutshe".

Their disenchantment began to make itself evident towards the end of Moilola's rule when a son-in-law and senior ward head named Magape openly flaunted the chief's authority. Magape lived near the Ngwaketse border and had cattle posts "across the line". Magape's challenge arose after a woman fell in a ditch and broke her hip, following which the man responsible for digging the ditch, August, was fined a head of cattle by Magape. August appealed to Moilola who felt that Magape had overstepped this authority. Moilola consequently sent some men to seize six cattle from Magape including August's beast. The matter might have quietly been set to rest had not Magape then insulted Moilola by sending him an infertile cow, and, after Moilola threatened further punishment, by appealing to Viljoen to intercede and despatching his sons to report the case to the State-Secretary in Pretoria. Magape allegedly then sought support from the Ngwaketse and from Mangope's Hurutshe across the border and it was felt that a conflict might ensue. In fact such suspicions were groundless, neither Gaseitsiwe nor Mangope being prepared to risk involvement in an affair which would obviously alarm the SAR. The authorities managed to settle the matter, though Moilola resented their intrusion into an affair that clearly lay within his jurisdiction. Even worse, Moilola was persuaded publicly by Viljoen to return the cattle, though he promptly confiscated them on Viljoen's departure. Jensen, in his report of the incident, felt that Magape "did not want to be under Moilola's law", adding that he personally felt that Moilola was entitled to punish his son-in law in this manner.⁵⁶

Moilola's domestic policy thus seems to have been a dual though contradictory one of strengthening support among "non-traditional" elements in the community while at the same time rebuilding the essential props of traditional society that had broken down during the difagane. It was extremely successful until the obvious contradictions of such a course of action came to the fore in the 1870's, to which Moilola had no answer.

⁵⁶See T.A. Landdrost's Correspondence, (LC) vol.I, statement by

V External Relations

Moiloa's external relationships with the missionaries, the local Marico Boers and the SAR authorities were equally fraught with contradiction and paradox. It says much for his leadership abilities that he was able to traverse the political terrain shrewdly enough to create the opportunities for the consolidation of his society. Moiloa thus walked a political tightrope, the tautness of which was beyond his control: it might sag in response to pressures from the Boers or his Tswana neighbours, or tighten alarmingly when affected by internal developments.

a) The Missionaries

The missionaries were accorded a sufficient degree of freedom and material security to proselytize among the Hurutshe. In addition to being granted the large site for the mission station, Moiloa ensured that they were provided with labourers to assist in the building of the church and private houses of the missionaries.⁵⁷ He was prepared to prohibit working and beer-drinking on Sundays, allowing only occasional hunting to take place on this day.⁵⁸ He and a few of his wives attended the school where he was reported as being "very industrious in his efforts to learn to read and he instructed children to attend school".⁵⁹ Moiloa also made a point of attending church regularly. All in all he was considered by Jensen to be "an excellent man, not only as a ruler but also in the way he aids the spread of Christianity..... it is a joy to be a missionary with him because he respects his teachers in all ways and protects

C. Magape, J. Magape; n.d; Native Affairs Agent to Landdrost Marico, 14 December 1874, Jensen to Scholtz, 26 April 1875, unnumbered; SS r 685/75, Scholtz to State-Secretary, 26 March 1875.

⁵⁷HMB, no.5, 1859, p.75.

⁵⁸HMS Correspondence, "Affairs of Linokana Station", p.14.

⁵⁹HMB, Report on Linokana Station, 1864, p.109.

them".⁶⁰ When necessary the missionaries were allowed to take a seat in the kgotla and were made to feel that they had some say in the running of the town's affairs.

On the other hand Moiloa refused to be baptised or drawn too closely into the affairs of the missionaries. To have done so would have meant divorcing ten of his wives and would have alienated him from a large section of the community. Nor did Moiloa attempt to force any of his followers into baptism, nor attendance at the church. Rainmakers, another element regarded as dangerously heathen by the missionaries, were allowed to practise in the reserve by Moiloa. Apart from the extraordinarily rigorous training baptismal candidates were forced to undergo, two other factors counteracted missionary advancement. The first of these, identified by Behrens, was "because the small congregation does not delimit itself sufficiently from the heathens", the second because relapsed Christians, some of whom had been "chased away" from Kuruman, tended to challenge most directly the position of converts.⁶¹ These were the kind of issues over which Moiloa was not prepared to lend assistance to the missionaries. Thus by not fully embracing Christianity Moiloa managed to keep a foot in both camps, and avoided the possibility of having his authority undermined by non-Christians, a fate which befell, for example, the Tlhaping chief Jantjie Mothibi during the same period.⁶²

The missionaries to the Hurutshe thus met with limited success - when Jensen took over he had 38 converts (about 20 of them Griquas), a decade later he had only 110 converts. In fact it was not until the 15th July 1875, an "unforgettable day" in Jensen's experience, when the first group of Hurutshe, as opposed to immigrants, were baptised

⁶⁰HMS, Report on Linokana Station, 1864, p.189.

⁶¹HMB, no.12, 1867, Report of W. Behrens, p.252.

⁶²Shillington, The Southern Tswana, pp.64-65. It was by no means axiomatic that conversion led to a loss of authority as the careers of Setshela and Khama III illustrate.

at Dinokana.⁶³ Attendance at the school fluctuated, but for long periods was low as most children were involved in domestic duties or were absent for lengthy spells at cattle-posts. As was to be expected attendance was highest from the among the Griqua wards, where 28 children were receiving schooling in 1864.⁶⁴

In return for his smoothing the path for missionary endeavours Moiloa expected the missionaries to use their skills and influence in his interest: his request to Zimmermann for guns providing an early example of this. In the period directly under review the missionaries continued to act as intermediaries between the SAR state and the Hurutshe. In 1860 Zimmermann mounted resistance, albeit rather feebly, to the compulsory labour system, on the grounds that it disrupted missionary work, only to be accused by the Boers of encouraging the Hurutshe to take shorter periods of work and to demand daily wages. He was summoned to Pretoria to the President's office, where he denied the charge and was warned not to obstruct the procurement of labour from the Hurutshe.⁶⁵ After this the missionaries stayed out of any activities which might have inflamed the feelings of the local Marico Boers, and handled affairs strictly by negotiation with officers of the state, who seemed more appreciative of their roles. The local farmers remained suspicious of the missionaries. Zimmerman experienced a nasty reminder of this fact in 1860 or 1861 when he saw some Boers in the market place in Potchefstroom, "burning on effigy of a missionary and a Kafir together accompanied by great derision and ugly blasphemy".⁶⁶

⁶³HMB, No.12, 1864, Excerpt of letter by Jensen, p.6; HMB, no.7, 1864, p.99.

⁶⁴HMB, no.12, 1867, Excerpt of letter by Jensen, p.6; HMB, no.7, 1864, p.99.

⁶⁵HMS Correspondence, "Affairs at Linokana Station" by Zimmermann, p.17. nd.

⁶⁶HMS Correspondence, "Affairs at Linokana, p.18.

In 1864 Moiloe's Hurutshe faced a new crisis. Prominent Marico Boers, particularly Casper Coetzee and his brother-in-law Diederick Coetzee, were casting around for a site for a town in the Marico district. Dinokana, with its plentiful supply of water was the obvious choice, and for several months plans were afoot to move the Hurutshe to Mabotsa, site of Livingstone's station with the Kgatla but still within Moiloe's reserve. A fuller account of how the Hurutshe responded to this crisis will be given later, but it was clearly a situation which called for missionary intervention. Zimmermann immediately objected in writing to President Pretorius and negotiated with Viljoen to prevent the proposed removal of the Hurutshe⁶⁷. The following year Jensen resumed the missionary protest and visited Pretorius to put the case for the Hurutshe⁶⁸. There was a good deal of self-interest behind the missionaries' endeavours, for not only had they erected a station in inviting surroundings but the Dinokana station, as Behrens put it, was "the key to the Bechuana tribes in the Boer republic and outside it."⁶⁹ Nevertheless it was partially due to their efforts that the removal of the Hurutshe from Dinokana was prevented.

Moiloe had cause to question the soundness of the decision to work closely with the missionaries on one occasion. This was in 1860 when several of the missionaries to the Tswana including Zimmermann, Schroder, Schulenberg (with the Kwenas) and Backeberg refused to accept the appointment of a new Superintendent, Hardeland, and were expelled from the Society. Precisely what caused the rift remains somewhat obscure though Hardeland apparently felt the Bechuana missionaries were becoming too independent from the Society and devoted more time to trading than to missionary work and he consequently "demanded their subservience" before leaving Germany.

⁶⁷Cited in Grobler, "Viljoen", p.163 from H. Rex, Die Voorgeschiedenis en geskiedenis van die Nederduitse Hervormde Gemeente Zeerust (Marico), p.171.

⁶⁸T.A. SS vol.67 r 632/65, Jensen to Pretorius, 31 May 1865; HMB, no.12, 1864, p.189.

⁶⁹HMB, "The Bechuana Stations", 1864, p.103.

However Hardeland lacked the power or the inclination to withdraw the Bechuana stations and he left the missionaries to live and work where they were. He did however cut off their support from the Society, an act which forced the expelled missionaries into an even greater reliance on trading ventures. In 1863 Zimmermann, Backeberg and Schulenberg, after trying unsuccessfully to gain appointments from Moffat with the IMS, sought re-instatement from Hardeland and travelled in person to Hermannsburg in Natal. After a period of penance they were re-appointed. In the interim Jensen, a Dane from Schleswig-Holstein, was appointed as missionary to the Hurutshe in 1864. Zimmermann finally was re-admitted in 1866 and sent to Rustenburg where he built up a large congregation among the oorlams Africans in the district.⁷⁰ Moiloa was aware of the insecurity of Zimmermann's position but there is no clue as to his reactions.⁷¹ It must however have been a cause for some concern and must have raised fresh doubts about the seriousness and fixity of missionary purpose.

On the other hand the missionaries enjoyed a sound relationship with the authorities of the SAR, even if many citizens of the Republic persisted in regarding them suspiciously, and in this sense they continued to offer stability to the position of the Hurutshe, as has already been noted. In 1863 Hohls, Hardeland's successor, visited W.C.J. van Rensburg, the acting President of the SAR and Pretorius, then President of the OFS (as part of his strategy to unite the two Boer republics). Van Rensburg informed him that the government "would under no circumstances allow in the English missionaries", and according to Hohls, Pretorius "asked me to erect stations anywhere and I could depend not only on his permission but also his protection".⁷² This mutual understanding generally was reflected

⁷⁰See HMB, History of Bethanie Station, 1880, pp.69-70; HMB, no.21, 1901, p.335, Obituary for F. Zimmermann.

⁷¹HMS Correspondence, "Affairs at Linokana", p.14. Due to Zimmermann's suspension no reports were received for 1860-1863 from Linokana Station.

⁷²HMB, 1864, p.142, Reported by Behrens.

amongst the lower echelons of both institutions though Viljoen became increasingly intolerant of Jensen, on account of the latter's growing influence over the Hurutshe and other African groups on the western border.⁷³ Viljoen, his successor as veldcornet D. Coetzee, and the Landdroste in Zeerust nevertheless were all obliged to play supportive roles to the HMS for by 1864 the IMS, after a concerted campaign of economic and political pressure, had reasserted its hold over the Bechuanaland missions. Just how strong was the IMS hold on Tswana communities outside the SAR was revealed in 1864 by the total failure of the HMS to establish itself among Mangope's Hurutshe, (now resident some 30 kilometres outside the Republic's borders) despite the chief's request to them to do so.⁷⁴ Stations like the one at Dinokana therefore provided a bulwark against further extension of British influence into the SAR. From its side the mission continued to keep the authorities well briefed about events along the border and to render assistance to the state when necessary. For example snippets of information regarding the conflict between the Kwena and Ngwato in 1863 were communicated to the Veldcornet, and Jensen assisted with the collection of taxes and the dissemination of state regulations such as the new Pass Laws of 1871.⁷⁵

b) The Trekkers

Lastly it is necessary to turn to an examination of the Hurutshe's involvement with the SAR and with their white neighbours. Some idea of these relations have been disclosed in examining internal developments and the activities of the missionaries but it is important to view them in fuller perspective, and to include an analysis of Trekker politics in the Marico in the 1860s and 1870s.

⁷³Grobler, "Viljoen", p.248.

⁷⁴A.J. Dachs, "Missionary Imperialism-The case of Bechuanaland", JAH, vol.12, no.4, 1972, pp.647-658.

⁷⁵Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol.I, p.418; T.A. Landdrost's Correspondence, vol.I, Government Secretary (N. Swart) to Landdrost Zeerust, 11 October 1872.

As will become evident, Hurutshe/SAR relations assume full meaning only in the context of black-white relationships on the western highveld at this time.

From the evidence available the Republican authorities did everything in their power to ensure that Moiloa's Hurutshe remained undisturbed, providing they met with the requirements of the state. The directly exploitative relationships frequently implicit in a Boer-dominated society were partly tempered in the case of the Hurutshe by their strategic importance and the certainty with which they could be counted on to supply labour. Moreover the need for a reliable ally in this region was underscored once again when reports of renewed Kwenas incursions in 1865 threatened to tear the tenuous fabric of order and peace in the Marico.

In July 1865 rumours of Kwenas intentions to burn and loot farms in the Marico were received by Coetzee. Probably Setshele had no such aims but on investigation Coetzee and Viljoen (now Commandant for Marico) discovered that the cause of the reports was due to Setshele's irritation over the non-payment of some of his followers who had been employed by the government in Potchefstroom in 1864.⁷⁶ The spectre of a combined Kwenas/Rolong/Kgatla attack again sent the Boers scuttling into laager for a few weeks until the real facts became clear.⁷⁷

As it turned out the matter was not easily resolved. Pretorius promised payment after the 1865 campaign against the Sotho was over, but by 1866 compensation had not been made. Setshele responded artfully by seizing 23 oxen belonging to Viljoen's sons, holding them as a ransom until the state's debt had been discharged. Viljoen then beseeched Pretorius to settle with Setshele adding that it was

⁷⁶T.A. SS vol.68 r 782/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 12 July 1865; SS vol.68 1206/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 13 November 1865.

⁷⁷T.A. SS vol.68 r 819/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 21 July 1865.

"scandalous to be in debt to a Kaffir".⁷⁸ Finally payment was made in April 1866 but even this was not sufficient to satisfy Setshele who insisted on making Viljoen wait as long for his oxen as he had waited for the payment owing to him.⁷⁹

In such vulnerable circumstances the Hurutshe became especially valued allies. On hearing the rumours, Coetzee's first act was to check on the loyalty of the Hurutshe and then to ascertain what they knew of the Kwenas' designs. Later Coetzee asked Moilola if he could provide men to guard the Boers' houses while they were in laagers.⁸⁰ Such events clearly reveal the way in which the Boer society in the Marico was shaped by dependence on local African groups such as the Hurutshe.

Two other incidents reveal the state's determination to stay on good terms with the Hurutshe, both occurring almost simultaneously with the impending fear of Kwenas-led attacks into the Marico. The first originated in a demand by Coetzee for a further 100 labourers in June 1864. Moilola wrote to Pretorius expressing his inability to provide men as so many Boer immigrants had arrived in Marico since the agreement made in 1853 to provide annual tribute in labour. He also took exception to Coetzee's threats to remove the Hurutshe from Dinokana.⁸¹ Early in 1865 the case was discussed by the Executive Council and it was decided that the compulsory labour system would be abolished and a direct tax of 2 shs. on Hurutshe not in employment and one shilling on those in labour would be imposed in its place. As has been mentioned, Moilola would receive £25 annually in return

⁷⁸T.A. SS vol.75 r 250/66, J. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 21 February 1866.

⁷⁹T.A. SS vol.77 r 476/66, J. Viljoen to M. W. Pretorius, 30 April 1866.

⁸⁰T.A. SS vol.79 r 819/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 21 July 1865.

⁸¹T.A. SS vol.57 r 482/64, Moilola to M.W. Pretorius, 13 July 1864.

for assisting in the collection of this tax.⁸²

The decision provides a good example of the way in which the "forms of exaction and administration [in the SAR] were shaped as much and probably more by local exigencies and possibilities as they were by state policy".⁸³ The change from the directly expropriatory compulsory labour system to the less efficient form of labour control through taxation suggests the weakening of Trekker domination over the Hurutshe, for the imposition of capitalist relations of production on agrarian societies is characterised firstly by the alienation of land from rural producers and secondly by gaining control over labour on the land.⁸⁴ By relinquishing its capacity to extract labour from the Hurutshe the Republican state allowed them a greater degree of control over their own productive activities. While taxation may have forced some Hurutshe into wage labour it allowed others to choose the circumstances under which they worked, (for whom they should work, for how long and when they should work) that caused minimum disruption to the organisation of production within the community. Furthermore it allowed certain households the possibility of avoiding labour obligations altogether by raising revenue through the production and sale of agricultural surplus. The massive effort needed by Colonial governments, capitalist farmers and mineowners in the twentieth century to close down these kinds of options suggests just how difficult it was to gain control over rural production. The decision therefore can be viewed as a significant renunciation of state authority over a local African population and a concomitant increase in their autonomy. To conclude this point, though the SAR might have subjected the Hurutshe it did not necessarily follow that the state could harness their productive capacity to further white Republican interests. Thus there was an observable distinction between formal and real subordination.

⁸²T.A. SS vol.164 r 2083/73, M.W. Pretorius to J. Viljoen, 1 February 1865.

⁸³Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.147.

⁸⁴Cooper, "Peasants, Capitalists and Historians", p.300.

The dropping of labour obligations suited the missionaries, a settled community enhancing their prospects for proselytization. It suited Moilola undoubtedly, and according to Zimmermann, the "natives recognise that the position of the Kaffirs in front of the law has much improved, so has their position as subjects of the government".⁸⁵

The other instance of state retraction was over the plan to build a town at Dinokana. The idea of establishing a Trekker settlement in the Marico was hatched by Coetzee in mid-1864 and he petitioned the President for permission to situate the town at Dinokana. Viljoen, significantly, opposed the idea, claiming that a majority of Marico boers shared his opinion, and even offered to provide a site for the envisaged settlement on his farm Vergenoeg.⁸⁶

Moilola used every means at his disposal to oppose the bid to remove the Hurutshe. Firstly, as has been mentioned, he urged the missionaries to protest against it. Secondly he threatened to move out of the SAR altogether rather than to accept the proposal that he move to Mabotsa. Thirdly he refused to pay any taxes in 1865.⁸⁷ It was fortunate perhaps that the question of the building of the town coincided with a deterioration in Kwen/Trekker relations which in turn accentuated Boer reliance on the Hurutshe. Consequently it would have been difficult to compel the Hurutshe to leave Dinokana if simultaneously their assistance in guarding Boer homesteads was being solicited.⁸⁸

⁸⁵HMS Correspondence, "Affairs at Linokana", p.18.

⁸⁶T.A. SS vol.57 r 953/64, J. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 21 October 1864, SS vol.92 r 1130/67, J. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 5 November 1867.

⁸⁷T.A. SS vol.67 r 632/65, T. Jensen to M.W. Pretorius, 31 May 1865; SS vol.70 r 1206/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 13 November 1865.

⁸⁸T.A. SS vol.68 r 819/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 21 July 1865. It is not possible to determine Moilola's response to this request.

The degree of Hurutshe resentment against their proposed removal was conveyed in a message sent by six Tswana chiefs (Setshela, Gaseitsiwe, Montshiwa, Mosielele, Mangope and Makhosi) which claimed that Moiloa "wishes to be one of ours instead of belonging to the Dutch. He says he is no longer under your orders as [Setshela] thought he was".⁸⁹ This, presumably, was precisely the kind of response Moiloa would have been trying to convey to the authorities. Evidently the Executive Council understood full well the repercussions which might follow the eviction of the Hurutshe from Dinokana and rejected the idea. Finally the new town was erected on the farm of Coetzee's brother-in-law, Casper Coetzee who died before it could be built. The scheme was thus completed by D. Coetzee and given the name Coetzeerust, later Zeerust. In 1871, when Marico became a separate district, the first magistrate, J. Montgomery, made his seat in Zeerust.⁹⁰

The store set by the Marico trekkers on Hurutshe assistance was revealed yet again during the Civil War of 1863-1864. The conflict arose when Pretorius' attempt to unify the SAR and OFS was challenged in the Transvaal by those who feared his machinations might provoke British intervention in the affairs of both Republics. Rival governments were created between Pretorius' supporters and the constitutional government which had forced Pretorius to resign from the Transvaal Presidency. The Marico was an area that lent its support mainly to the "revolutionary" government, headed by Stephanus Schoeman under Pretorius' orchestration. Led by Viljoen, who was further enraged by a rumour that the constitutional government intended to make the Gereformeerde Church the official church of the Republic, a party of Marico boers (the so-called Volkslaer or "army of the people") attacked Kruger's forces at Potchefstroom in January

⁸⁹T.A. SS vol.64 r 143/65, Setshela to M.W. Pretorius, 12 February 1865. This letter is signed by Setshela with the dismissive pronouncement, "Once an ally"!

⁹⁰T.V. Bulpin, Lost Trails of the Transvaal, (Cape Town, 1951), pp.113-114; Oosthuizen "Geskiendenis van Marico", pp.60-68.

1864.⁹¹ During this prolonged imbroglio rival groups of Boers rode into Dinokana to check on the loyalty of the townsfolk and, according to Zimmermann, to "mislead the kaffirs to attack and rob their opponents".⁹² Furthermore several Boers and their farmworkers sought protection in Dinokana leading to a shortage of food and an escalation of prices in the town.

Further evidence of the sectarian and disunited nature of white society in the SAR must have impressed itself upon the Hurutshe leadership, creating in turn new avenues for evading the more severe aspects of Trekker overlordship. A few years after the war ended in 1864 the Marico was pitched into new civil friction. In August 1868 Ds Lion-Cachet and a party of clerics attempted to ride into the Marico to establish a branch of the Gereformeerde Kerk in Zeerust. Viljoen turned them back at the Marico river but they returned a few days after, upon which Viljoen assaulted Lion-Cachet and one of his companions with a sjambok, attempted to ride them over with his horse and finally threw them into gaol for a short period. The Landdrost in Potchefstroom was reported to be enraged with Viljoen who began to fall out of favour with the authorities.⁹³

In addition to religious factionalism competition for public office intensified from 1871 when the Marico became a separate magistracy. The financial rewards of office holding in the Marico were only too plain to see. Coetzee, as the owner of the farm on which Zeerust was sited, sold off erven in the town to the highest bidders. He was also the agent for the Transvaal Argus and provisioner for parties en route to the Tati gold fields, advertising Zeerust as the "best route for diggers to take as there exists at all times a splendid supply of

⁹¹OHS, vol.I, pp.433-434, Orford, "J. Viljoen", p.9.

⁹²HMS Correspondence, 'Affairs at Linokana', p.20.

⁹³See Oosthuizen "Geschiedenis van Marico", pp.139-142; Transvaal Argus, 1 September 1869. Cachet, a Dutch theologian, resided in the Transvaal from 1858 to 1880, during which time he established the Gereformeerde Kerk.

both grass and water, oxen and general merchandise".⁹⁴ As veldcornet he was also in a position to purchase the best animals tended as taxes in lieu of cash by the Hurutshe.⁹⁵

Scholtz, Commandant at Lichtenburg and for a short while Landdrost in Zeerust, had by 1875 purchased no less than nine farms in the Marico, one, for 2,500 pounds, close to Zeerust.⁹⁶ In Klerksdorp the veldcornet overstepped even the excessive bounds of trekker acquisitiveness when he raised a commando and took over 100 captives from an African settlement on the Harts river.⁹⁷ ^{Consequently} when Landdrost Montgomery died in 1873 (from a fall off his horse) and Coetzee resigned the next year their posts were hotly contended. Acrimonious exchanges, petitions, counter-petitions and wild allegations fill the Zeerust records between 1874-1877; charges of incest and child murder were made against J. Hutten the acting Landdrost, in the heemraden, based on rumours spread by J. Wilsenach, one of the challengers.⁹⁸ Four Landdrosts were appointed between 1873-1876 causing the Argus to lament "Alas! Poor political Marico".⁹⁹ The result of course was a lack of clear leadership over matters relating to the African population of the district. As a result of this taxes were not properly collected between 1874 and 1876 and Moiloe tended to rely on Jensen's assistance or by-passed the veldcornet if he wanted swift resolution to his problems.¹⁰⁰ Thus Moiloe, in the last few years

⁹⁴Transvaal Argus, 15 December 1868.

⁹⁵In 1868 it was reported that Coetzee had bought three oxen for 4 pounds 10 shillings from the Hurutshe. See Transvaal Argus 8 December 1868.

⁹⁶Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette, 3 December 1875.

⁹⁷Orford, "Jan Viljoen" p.10.

⁹⁸T.A. SS vol.172 r 910/74, J. Becker to Executive Council, SS vol.172 r 1104/74, D. Coetzee to T. Burgers, 6 August 1875.

⁹⁹Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette, 23 June 1876.

¹⁰⁰T.A. SS vol.230 r 718/77, Report of Commission, 13 February 1877. When Moiloe wanted to try to get the land he had purchased registered in his name he first wrote to a local attorney

of his period of chieftainship, must have sensed the growing inability of the state to create an orderly and regularised administration.

The weakening of Trekker authority in the Marico occurred simultaneously with the SARs declining influence over the Tswana to the west. Moiloa would have been aware of the changing balance of power in the region as Britain firstly established its control over the "road to the north" and secondly, after the discovery of diamonds, secured control of the fields for the Cape and hence for Britain. Moiloa was personally drawn into these affairs. In 1870 he attended a joint meeting of the Rolong, Ngwaketse, Hurutshe and Korana leaders with President M.W. Pretorius, Commandant-General Kruger and other SAR representatives. The purpose of the meeting was to affirm the territorial integrity of the Tswana bordering the SAR. This demand was met by the stupefying counter-claim that the Portuguese Government had bought the territory from the empire of Munhumatapa (Monumatapa), who had ceded it to the SAR.¹⁰¹ In 1871 Moiloa was requested to give evidence before the Bloemhof Commission which sat to arbitrate the contested claims of the Southern Tswana, the Transvaal and Waterboer's Griquas to control over the diamond fields. British annexation of the fields and the publication of the Keate Award in 1871 which restricted Transvaal expansion westwards and ensured the unfettered extension of British control northwards were a sure sign of the Republic's waning influence. When Gilmore visited Dinokana shortly after Moiloa's death he formed the opinion that Sebogodi, Moiloa's heir, did "not love the Dutch and would gladly transfer his suzerainship (sic.) to England".¹⁰² It is certain that Moiloa shared this view and probably influenced his son's outlook.

¹⁰¹See Molema, Montshiwa, pp.60-62.

¹⁰²Gilmore, The Great Thirst Land, p.213.

This sense of a retreat on the part of the SAR was detected by several Tswana societies, giving rise to a more assertive policy of arresting Transvaal expansionism. From 1868 renewed pressure had been placed on Tswana chiefdoms when the SAR brazenly attempted to put forward claims to the Tati Gold Fields. When these were rejected out of hand by Macheng the Ngwato regent, the SAR offered protection to Macheng from his rivals. Under Mackenzie's advice Macheng opted rather to seek security from the British government. The SAR's extravagant claims thus served only to nurture further the idea of extending British protection to the northern Tswana. In 1870 the Ngwaketse felt confident enough to tear down beacons placed by the Boers (with the assistance of a party of Hurutshe labourers), which sliced off a portion of their eastern border, and, as mentioned, Gaseitsiwe attended the meeting on the Molopo river at which the southern Tswana chiefs rejected the land claims of the Republic.¹⁰³ In 1875 Khama forbade Boer hunters passage through Ngwato territory, thus preventing access to the hunting fields beyond, and sought British protection, unsuccessfully, from Sir Henry Barklay, the Governor at the Cape. Khama's action incensed the Marico trekkers who, despite threats to burn down Shoshong, were absolutely powerless to do anything about it for, as Gilmore observed, "they knew better than to try to coerce Khama, for past experience had taught them that he was not a man to be trifled with".¹⁰⁴ It would be misleading nevertheless to see this too simplistically as a sign of "the growth of a spirit of cooperation among [the Tswana chiefdoms]".¹⁰⁵ From 1854 to 1875, Setshele, in an attempt to gain a hold over Shoshong's trade, conspired to dominate affairs among the Ngwato through his control over candidates to chieftainship. From 1874 Setshele himself was faced by a challenge from the new Kgatla regent Linchwe who

¹⁰³See Ngcongco, "Aspects of History of Bangwaketse" pp.184-185, Bloemhof Blue Book, pp.186-190, Evidence of Gaseitsiwe, Mathiba and Kelebonye.

¹⁰⁴Gilmore, The Great Thirst Land, p.212. See also BPP 4141, vol.XLIII, Correspondence re. Alleged Kidnapping by Tvl. Republic.

¹⁰⁵Ngcongco, 'Aspects of History of Bangwaketse', p.167.

embarked on a prolonged struggle to gain independence from the Kwena.¹⁰⁶ Moiloa used the opportunity to prise himself free from Kwena condominium by despatching about 150 men to assist Linchwe and captured some of Setshela's horses apparently in recompense for a number of Hurutshe wagons seized by the Kwena.¹⁰⁷ Thus once the common threat of SAR encroachment on Tswana lands diminished political differences and historic grievances between these societies tended to re-surface. Generally however the ambitions of the SAR to bring Tswana communities under its domain were checked in the 1870s.

In conclusion an examination of the Hurutshe's relations with the state in the period reveals that they resorted to a range of tactics to resist Boer demands and to shape the conditions of their political and economic existence. These varied from outright refusal, to threats, delaying tactics, refusal to pay taxes and petitions to the highest officers of the state. The reactions of the Hurutshe during this period reveal some of the more covert forms of resistance resorted to by African societies facing arbitrary and repressive rule.¹⁰⁸ Their success, as has been stressed, was due in part to the historical conditions of the period which forced crucial elements in the Republican government into seeking compromises with the African populations along the Republic's western border, and also to the divided and factious nature of Boer society in the Marico.

¹⁰⁶I. Schapera "Short History of the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela", School of African Studies, University of Cape Town, pp.11-12; Truschel, "Imperial Rule", pp.45-46.

¹⁰⁷T.A. SS vol.179 r 1908/74, C. Scholtz to Landdrostkantoor, Zeerust, 8 December 1874; SS vol.196 r 2445/75, C. Scholtz to P.J. Joubert, 20 October 1875.

¹⁰⁸These forms of resistance are discussed in D. Crummey (ed), Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa, (London, 1986), and are pursued in a South African context in Beinart and Bundy (eds), Hidden Struggles, and by C. van Onselen in a number of his essays on the social history of the Witwatersrand. See C. van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914, Vols.I and II, (Johannesburg 1982).

The period between 1860 and 1875 marks a highpoint in Hurutshe political stability and economic growth. Moiloa, through presenting himself as the guardian of the "traditional" order was reasonably successful at welding the community together. The same degree of cohesion and aggrandisement was not to be reached again until after the South African War. This position was predicated upon favourable circumstances, such as access to land and water, upon trade opportunities, and upon a general extrication from the shackles of trekker subjugation, as much a consequence of changing forces of power in the region as of astute political leadership on the part of the Hurutshe rulers. Internally, despite Moiloa's efforts, it was (as later events were to reveal) a period of developing divisions within the community, between a reconstructed elite and the traditional ruling class of the pre-difagane period. Moiloa sought support from both groups, elevating non-royal, often immigrant, families to power whilst encouraging at the same time the renewal of traditional practices and the restoration of gender and generational relationships. Ultimately this brought both groups into a collision course. In addition to this, commodity production, while fairly general among the Hurutshe, was more advanced among certain groups, giving rise to a visible though never clearly developed process of rural class formation. Moiloa it seems recognised these fissures and contradictions but possibly saw no way of resolving them by the end of his rule. According to Jensen he refused to nominate an heir on the grounds that he considered none of his sons fit to rule. Holub, commenting a few years after, wrote that Moiloa favoured Gopane above his own sons.¹⁰⁹ Neither explanation is very convincing. A more plausible reason for Moiloa's unwillingness to nominate a definite heir was that he was theoretically only a regent and accordingly he may have felt uncertain about his right to designate a successor.

In July 1875 Moiloa's death became imminent. He steadfastly refused to accept conversion even on his deathbed, but in a typical gesture

¹⁰⁹Cited in Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.98, from Holub, von der Capstad, pp.126-127.

of compromise instructed Jensen to lay him in a coffin and not to bury him in a seated position as was customary. This symbolic rejection of tradition stilled the large group of mourners into unnatural silence.¹¹⁰ The State Secretary, expecting a schism in the chiefdom, instructed the landdrost to send a clerk to Dinokana to "copy down all the laws" before Moiloa died.¹¹¹ In fact he died before the order could be carried out. The relative stability the Hurutshe had enjoyed for nearly two decades, predicated upon stratagems and defences to avoid or resist the harsh political and economic demands of their new overlords, now collapsed, and a period of division, civil strife and dispossession ensued.

¹¹⁰HMS, no.4, 1875, p.221.

¹¹¹T.A. Landdrost Correspondence, vol.I, no.1115,
State-Secretary to J. Otto, 22 July 1875.

CHAPTER FOUR - PARTITION AND CRISIS - A TURNING POINT IN HURUTSHE HISTORY, 1875-1884.

Between 1875 and 1884, the Hurutshe split into two politically autonomous factions. In addition two further Hurutshe communities re-settled in the reserve. Added to the attendant problems of re-location and re-adjustment for the inhabitants was the fact that it was a period of significant political change in the Transvaal. The territory was annexed by Britain, leading to a period of confused and hesitant administration, following which a struggle for control between elements in the SAR and the British almost immediately ensued. As will be seen, some Hurutshe became ensnared in the conflict between these two white societies, with disastrous consequences. It was then a period of transition between the Moiloa years of relative unity and integration, and the rise of separate village communities that represent the modern more fragmented Hurutshe configuration. But it was a crossroads in other ways. There was a definite shift away from the cautious compromise of collaboration and assertion that characterised Moiloa's reign, to a visibly more resistant attitude on behalf of the Hurutshe leadership. The adoption of such a position ultimately led to violent conflict and the despoilation of the Hurutshe in Dinokana by forces of the S.A.R. In addition, by the 1880s developments outside the reserve began to transform more significantly relations of power and production in the region that were to alter the pattern and tempo of economic life in the latter decades of the century. This chapter however is mostly given over to an account of how the chiefdom was segmented and weakened during these years. Initially however attention must be given to the circumstances and consequences of British annexation of the Transvaal, for the tangled affairs of the Hurutshe can only be unraveled against the background of these events.

I The Annexation of the Transvaal

Annexation arose out of Secretary of State Carnarvon's Confederation Plan of 1875-1876. Its causes remain contested by historians.

Earlier arguments posit strategic motives for advancing British control into the sub-continent, or stress Carnarvon's "personal preoccupations".¹ More recently, a different and ultimately more cogent set of arguments was advanced by Atmore and Marks, and amplified by other historians in the late 1970's and 1980's. Atmore and Marks point to changing economic conditions in Britain, specifically the decline in Britain's monopoly over trade and commerce in Africa and the entry of other European competitors. In the face of this challenge it became imperative not only to lay claim to the recently discovered diamond fields in South Africa but also to channel sufficient labour to them in order to exploit their full potential. In this context the independent African chiefdoms and Afrikaner republics were seen to be a hindrance to the free flow of labour and the confederation plan was hatched to bring them under British suzerainty and to modernise their state structures in order to allow for the release of labour to the diamond fields. The creation of a unified and integrated South African economy would necessarily have to be preceded by the extension of British control to the hinterland.² Etherington joined with Atmore and Marks to present the perspective from Natal where he convincingly showed that Shepstone, in alliance with the sugar planters on the Natal coast, conceived grandiose plans to siphon labour to Natal and Griqualand West from the vast labour reservoirs of central and eastern Africa.³ Subsequently the destruction of the Zulu, Pedi, Tlhaping and Hlubi chiefdoms were all placed in the context of the

¹R. Robinson and J. Gallagher with A. Denny, Africa and the Victorians, The Official Mind of Imperialism, (London, 1961), pp.59-61; C.F. Goodfellow, Great Britain and South Africa Confederation, 1870-1881, (Oxford, 1966), p.216.

²A. Atmore and S. Marks, "The Imperial Factor in South Africa in the Nineteenth Century: Towards a Reassessment", Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, vol.3, 1974, pp.105-139.

³N.A. Etherington, "Labour Supply and the Genesis of South African Confederation in the 1870s," JAH, vol.20, 1979.

incompatibility of independent African chiefdoms with the development of capitalism in South Africa.⁴ A final piece in the jigsaw has been laid by Cope who has probed below Carnarvon's superficial rhetoric regarding the extension of "civilisation" to Southern Africa to show that Carnarvon was fully cognisant of, and responsive to, the need to centralise South Africa's various independent states and to exploit their economic potential for British gain.⁵

After annexation in 1877 Shepstone was faced with a number of pressing issues. Firstly he had to revive the neglected finances of the Transvaal and, in order to achieve this, to establish a state structure that would enable revenue to be obtained from the citizens of the captured territory. In particular the collection of taxes was a priority, as the imperial government had allocated a mere £100,000 for the administration of the Transvaal. Shepstone had acquired experience and skill as Secretary of Native Affairs in Natal and more than any other man was equal to such a task. He established a structure that in principle was similar to the Natal system whereby Magistrates in defined districts communicated directly with a Secretary of Native Affairs. Shepstone also created a Department of Native Administration to direct the functioning of the system and he appointed his son Henrique as Secretary of Native Affairs. Further definition and authority was lent to the imperial government by the appointment of Sir Garnet Wolseley as High Commissioner to Natal, Zululand and the Transvaal as well as Governor of the Transvaal.

Once the administrative edifice was in place a 10 shilling hut tax was imposed on African males in the Transvaal which, had matters run

⁴Guy, Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom; Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.246; Shillington, Colonisation of the Southern Tswana; Wright and Manson, The Hlubi Chiefdom.

⁵R.L. Cope, 'Strategic and Socio-Economic Explanations for Carnarvon's South African Confederation Policy; The Historiography and the Evidence', History in Africa, vol.13, 1986, pp.13-34.

their course, would have swelled the state's revenues. A further result of this tax would have been to force increasing numbers of Africans into wage labour in order to meet tax requirements - a clearly intended sequel to the confederation policy.

Secondly Shepstone had to try and establish peace and an element of stability among the Transvaal's population. Though exhausted financially and militarily by their conflict with the Pedi in 1876 neither the SAR officials nor the majority of the burghers necessarily accepted British intervention. Furthermore their expectations of a generous financial settlement and the holding of elections and re-convening of the Volksraad were never met. P.Joubert and Kruger, who had assumed leadership of the Trekkers after Burgers' withdrawal, travelled to Britain to put the case for the Transvaal's independence. Despite a courteous reception their protests fell on deaf ears. A year after annexation the level of discontent was rising in most sectors of Boer society. To worsen matters Lanyon, who as Governor of Griqualand West had earned himself the reputation of a tax collector without equal, was determined to maintain his standing in the Transvaal. His activities thus were strongly resented by the notoriously tax-resistant Transvaalers.⁶ Nowhere was Trekker disaffection stronger than in the Marico, where "loyalists" were harassed at their homes and British travellers warned not to enter.⁷ The Tswana of the western Transvaal and their kinsfolk across the Transvaal border were to become inevitably embroiled in this Boer-British antagonism and the culminating war of 1880-1881.

The final task facing Shepstone after annexation was to bring the Pedi under imperial rule and he consequently manoeuvred their

⁶J. Lehmann, The First Boer War, (London, 1972), pp.49-50.

⁷J. Nixon, The Complete Story of the Transvaal, (London, 1885), p.160; T.A. SS r 1659/78, V.C. Roode to O. Lanyon, 18 March 1878; BPP, C-3686, H. Campbell Johnston to Private Secretary, Feb.1883.

paramount Sekhukhune into a resumption of war early in 1878. This campaign, followed shortly by the invasion of Zululand in January 1879 stretched the resources of the civil and military authorities in the Transvaal to the utmost. Hence it was imperative to secure peace and stability in the region and to win the co-operation of African subjects in the Colony.

It is essential now to view how these developments impinged directly upon the fortunes of the Hurutshe. What becomes evident from such an examination is that, in Delius' words, "the symmetry of [Shepstone's] ideas... suffer[ed] severely from exposure to the complex realities of the Transvaal".⁸ The difficulty experienced by the British authorities in resolving firstly the Hurutshe succession crisis and secondly the division of the reserve will underscore this point. In order to place these issues into perspective it is necessary to return to the situation in the reserve in the latter half of 1875, just before annexation.

II Civil Strife

After Moiloa's death the latent tensions noted in the previous chapter came to the fore. Initially a "dual government" was established in Dinokana, some Hurutshe showing allegiance to Gopane, the son of Sebogodi, and others supporting Moiloa's eldest son also called Sebogodi. Moiloa, as previously noted, did not specifically appoint an heir. However the Landdrost, C. Scholtz, shared Holub's opinion that Gopane had been nominated as the new chief by Moiloa⁹ and accordingly he informed Sebogodi that he should accept Gopane as chief. The Republican authorities determined as early as August 1875 to appoint a commission to enquire into the dispute. Due to Burgers'

⁸Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.221.

⁹Cited in Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.98, from E. Holub, von der Capstad, pp.126-127.

absence in Britain in late 1875 (where he tried to raise capital for the construction of the railway to Delagoa Bay) and the outbreak of war with the Pedi the next year, the commission only reported in 1877. When it did it favoured Gopane's claim.¹⁰

The commission's findings did not end the schism partly because Sebogodi's followers had managed, during one of Burgers' brief visits to Pretoria, to gain the President's support for Sebogodi's right to chieftainship,¹¹ and partly because in April 1877 the Transvaal was annexed, leading to confusion and the absence of any clear authority. For the Hurutshe the effect of annexation was to delay the resolution of the secession crisis and, as conflicting demands for their loyalty were made, to place more stress on them. Though Sebogodi died in July 1877 the right of Moiloa's house to rule was taken up by Sebogodi's son Ikalafeng.

The dispute therefore slid quickly into open civil conflict. By mid-1878 most men were armed and reported to be drilling in regiments of over 300 strong. It was also reported that the opposing factions had sought assistance from Tswana allies living outside the Republic, and the inhabitants of Zeerust, ever fearful of the potential of such conflicts to intrude upon their affairs, petitioned the government to intervene to "protect the property of whites".¹² Melmoth Osborne, the Secretary to Government, informed the new Landdrost, P. Van Yperen, that the case would have to await the return of the Administrator, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, from the eastern Transvaal, where he was "carry[ing] the threat of war" to the Pedi.¹³ When he

¹⁰T.A. SS vol.211 r 1678/75, C. Scholtz to State-Secretary, 9 August 1875, SS r 118/77, Report of Commission, 13 February 1877.

¹¹T.A. SS vol.264 r 287/78, Notes re Question of Succession between Gopane and Sebogodi, by H. Shepstone(?) n.d.

¹²T.A. SS vol.308 r 3598/78, Petition from Inhabitants of Zeerust, 29 July 1878.

¹³T.A. Landdroste Reports, vol.I, M. Osborn to Van Yperen, 13

found time to attend to the dispute, Shepstone took the advice of missionary Jensen and an advocate Naude in Zeerust, and suggested a division of the reserve into equal portions. He further recommended that Gopane's people should be those to make the move. He then appointed yet another commission with instructions to divide the reserve.¹⁴

III Land Apportionment and the Question of Boundaries

On the 16th April 1879 the commissioners, consisting of the Surveyor-General S. Melville and Van Yperen, visited Dinokana, informed the two chiefs and their councillors of the decision to divide Moiloa's location and made an initial inspection, suggesting where a division of the location could be made. However, there was insufficient time to survey or accurately delimit the reserve. Neither chief expressed himself happy with the envisaged partition of land, "from which", Melville considered, "we may conclude that we succeeded in making an equitable decision".¹⁵ In all probability Melville's suggested division was made with the best of intentions towards both parties. In effect though it was a purely pragmatic decision which took no account of economic realities. Ikalafeng's people were cut off from the timber and better winter grazing in the northern end of the location, and Gopane's from the constant supply of water at Dinokana; indeed if the Dinokana villagers irrigated too frequently in winter it could lead to the drying up of the Notwane, the main source of water for Gopane's new village at Manwane.¹⁶

August 1877; Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.231.

¹⁴Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.145; T.A. Law Department (LD) 1103 AG 3062/05 "Report on Moiloa Reserve".

¹⁵T.A. SNA no.885, 1905, including Report on Commission Appointed by Secretary of Native Affairs, 24 March 1880.

¹⁶T.A. SNA no.885, Report of Commission of 1880.

Furthermore, ironic as it seems, with the location's boundary coming under scrutiny it opened up the prospect of access to land outside the reserve being permanently prevented. The former informal arrangement with some Marico Boers regarding the grazing and watering of stock had depended on an indistinct demarcation of land. The beaconing off of land thus served to destabilise relations between the Hurutshe and local farmers. In August 1880 the Commission which had decided on a survey of the location ordered that the farmers abutting the reserve should erect beacons along their land and a Government Notice to this effect was placed in the Government Gazette. This was a wholly ill-advised instruction for many of the farmers drew their own farm boundaries inside the land which the Hurutshe felt had been assigned to them. In September J.S. Moffat, son of the missionary and recently appointed Special Commissioner on the border, reported that "there are incessant disputes between the Bahurutshe and the neighbouring farmers all along the line".¹⁷ The two chiefs requested a regular survey to be made immediately by the Surveyor-General himself, expressing themselves willing to pay for it.

The sudden threat of land alienation threw all previously negotiated terms of tenancy and land usage out of the window. Cattle that Ikalafeng formerly had grazed on the farms Rietfontein and Bergvliet were now impounded by the respective owners, Swart and Van der Merwe, who claimed that the land "now belonged to them".¹⁸ Ikalafeng's followers on the other hand moved onto the farm Welbedacht, cut trees and grass, threatened the owner with axes (bylen) and reneged on a former sharecropping agreement because, in the farmer's words, they think "they are now baas on my land".¹⁹

¹⁷T.A. SS vol.306 r 3472/80, J. Moffat to H. Shepstone, 16 September 1880.

¹⁸T.A. IC, vol.2, Incoming, Melville to Van Yperen, 30 August 1880.

¹⁹T.A. IC, vol.2, Incoming, W.J. Steyn(?) to Van Yperen, June 1881.

While Moffat waited for the survey to commence various Boers tried to form private agreements about the demarcation of land with the Hurutshe. Jan Viljoen, who in Moffat's opinion had "probably succeeded in despoiling [the Hurutshe] of much ground", was one of those who attempted to negotiate with Ikalafeng, but the chief refused to attend the meeting.²⁰ Melville had few answers to the problem. He urged the Boer claimants to send in their "aantekenings" or proofs of registration but in several instances the farms had been granted to them according to burgher rights and they had not transferred the farms into their names.²¹ These Boers were equally keen that an Inspection Committee be sent to the Marico to inspect and confirm the transfer of land.²² Melville's other response was equally without merit. He suggested that the former veldcornets of the district, Viljoen, Bekker and Coetzee (two of whom were interested parties) be approached to establish the rightful owners of the farms and the points where the boundary beacons should be erected, adding that Gopane and Ikalafeng should be given the opportunity of being present during these proceedings.

In addition to problems with neighbouring white farmers Gopane and Ikalafeng were concerned about the effect of the western boundary of the reserve being delimited, Ikalafeng because he wished to retain access to cattle posts which had been established as far west as Ramatlabama in Moiloa's period, and Gopane because he wanted sufficient territory to allocate to Gaseitsiwe's son, Bathoen, as part of the need to secure safe residence so close to the

²⁰T.A. SS vol.449 r 3472/80, J. Moffat to Hicks-Beach, 26 November 1880.

²¹T.A. LC, vol.2, Incoming, Minute by Melville to Hicks-Beach, 12 November 1880.

²²T.A. LC, vol.I, Incoming, D.J. Coetzee and 17 others to O. Lanyon 30 August 1879.

Ngwaketse.²³

Lastly the Hurutshe squabbled amongst themselves because the division of the reserve cut off Gopane's faction from farms to which they had part claim. The one farm (Matjesvallei) had been purchased and paid for by Moilola, the second, Dam van Metsigo, seems to have been purchased shortly after Moilola's death, the final £40 being paid off in 1879 by Gopane's people. The issue was whether Gopane's adherents should continue to own and therefore have recourse to this land or whether Ikalafeng's followers should retain sole ownership and compensate the Hurutshe at Manoane. Moffat managed to bring the squabbling chiefs to negotiations, with Jensen acting as a kind of arbitrator but while in principle the idea of compensation to Gopane was agreed upon, the price remained disputed.²⁴

These issues must have been distracting for Moffat. He had been appointed to the western border and stationed at Dinokana on the orders of Hicks-Beach specifically to attend to the "unsettled state of affairs there".²⁵ The diffusion of tension was important because if conflict broke out in this remote district of the Transvaal the British government could not spare the diversion of personnel or troops from other theatres of war where the Pedi and Zulu were being brought under British subjection between 1877 and 1879. Although reports of Boer attempts to incite local African groups in the western Transvaal to resist British rule had been

²³T.A. SS vol.449 r 3472/80. Memo. by Melville, 26 November 1880; SNA, no.883, 1905, Dispute re Linokana and Manwane Natives, enclosing report of Surveyor Pache to G. Moodie, Surveyor-General, 2 December 1883.

²⁴T.A. SS vol.475 r 4299/80, J. Moffat to H. Shepstone, 30 September 1880.

²⁵T.A. SS vol.445 r 3199/80, Hicks-Beach to J. Moffat, 24 June 1880.

received in 1879,²⁶ it is extremely unlikely that this would have occurred. The pro-British stance of the Hurutshe and of all Tswana as far east as the Rustenburg district is frequently commented upon in despatches and official correspondence.²⁷ This attitude probably was shaped more by the frequency of random acts of violence, trespass and theft that strained Boer-Tswana relations to the uttermost²⁸ than by any notions of respect for British authority. While chiefs like Ikalafeng may have sought British acceptance in order to secure his leadership in uncertain times, not all Tswana chiefdoms displayed such conspicuous loyalty to the new regime. For example the response of the Kwenā and Gopane's Hurutshe to demands for an African auxiliary to assist in the campaign against the Pedi was strikingly poor - Gopane providing only 8 out of 25 men requested.²⁹

Moffat, in attempting to resolve the complex relationships between the two Hurutshe factions and between them and the local Boers, was bedevilled by a lack of personnel. Theophilus Shepstone's grandiose administrative plans thus amounted to little in this district. Tax-collecting, often interrupted by interfering groups of Boers, was haphazard, and in one year (1877) completely remitted.³⁰ In addition there were frequent interruptions to the surveyor's work.

²⁶Note in T.A. SS vol.449 r 3472/80, dated 7 December 1880, in J. Moffat to H. Shepstone, 16 September 1880.

²⁷See correspondence in BPP, C-2950, p.170.

²⁸See for example T.A. LC, Incoming, vol.I, H. Shepstone to Van Yperen, 10 December 1878, requesting him to look into constant reports of cattle-thefts between a Marico farmer H.C. Sephton and the Maletse. Also C. Bethal to Van Yperen, 23 March 1880 complaining about the "present deplorable confusion in the Keate Award". Also in June 1880 Montshiwa complained of thefts of cattle and squatting on his land, T.A. SS vol.445 r 3205/80, Montshiwa to Lanyon, 28 June 1880.

²⁹T.A. SS vol.308 r 3601/78, M. Osborn to Magistrate Rustenburg, 31 July 1878. See also Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.243.

³⁰T.A. LC Incoming, vol.2, H. Shepstone to Van Yperen, 7 January 1880. No.30, Shepstone to Van Yperen, 30 January 1880.

Moffat did however oversee the successful relocating of Gopane's followers to Manoane after they had reaped their crops in January 1880. As mentioned in the previous chapter most of the immigrant groups remained at Dinokana. Jensen reported that Gopane "is followed by all the Bahurutsi, while Ikalafeng has a lot of the people of Sechele, Makhosi and Gatsitsiveo... the latter doesn't have more than three Bahurutsi sub-chiefs".³¹ The effect of the uprooting must have been severe particularly as Gopane's followers appear to have been among the most disadvantaged at Dinokana, though it could be argued obversely that Gopane's faction had little to lose from resettling elsewhere. After Gopane's move the survey was meant to have been completed but the commissioners found time for only one brief visit before the Transvaal was retroceded to the Boers. Though the chieftdom had now been divided, the twin issues of land control and boundaries were far from being resolved.

The Pretoria Convention of 1881, which brought the period of annexation to an end, attempted to determine the disputed boundaries of the Transvaal by appointing a Royal Commission to define the state's borders. The most formal definition of the western boundary of Moiloa's Reserve was produced by the London Convention. It was in fact the boundary recommended by Melville in his inspections of 1879 and March 1880. This drawing of the western boundary of the reserve proved to be an added source of worry for Gopane even though it could not be formally enforced until the declaration of the Bechuanaland Protectorate necessitated some acknowledgment of a fixed boundary. More worrying however was the fact that the drawing of the line partitioning the reserve and the fixing of its eastern margin remained suspended for nearly another year.

³¹T.A. LC Incoming, vol.I, T. Jensen to Van Yperen, 16 October 1879. Makosi was the former chief at Ramotswa.

Finally on 24th March 1882, P.J. Joubert, the newly appointed Superintendent of Native Affairs, wrote to the State-Secretary Edward Bok advising the immediate survey of the Reserve. A new Surveyor, Edmond Pache, was instructed by George Moodie, the Surveyor-General, to undertake the survey and in addition was instructed to cut up the reserve into "farms" of about 3,000 morgen in size. The reason for this is not absolutely clear though Jensen interpreted it as an indication that the government wanted to reduce the size of the location by selling off sections to white farmers.

Pache did not complete the survey until December 1883. This inordinately long time was due to Gopane's refusal to accept a beacon erected by Pache in accordance with the Convention line at Schaapskuil (a beacon on the line of the western edge of the reserve between Ramatlabama and Sengoma). Gopane wanted the border to run closer to him "in order to give the whole pan to his friend Bathoen son of Gasietisiwe",³² and pointed out a pre-existing beacon to the east of the Schaapkuil beacon. On the east side the separation of land between the Boers and the Hurutshe was similarly disputed. Pache reported that his relations with the chief "were as bad as they possibly could be". Gopane's people pulled down 120 of Pache's flags, and refused to answer his request to purchase slaughter animals and a horse. Finally Gopane disallowed one of his subjects, who spoke Dutch, from taking employment with Pache. "Several times", complained Pache, "I was on the point of leaving without completing the survey".³³

After the submission of Pache's report there is no subsequent correspondence bearing on the subject so that the exact line of division between the Hurutshe factions is difficult to ascertain. However the two sections of the chiefdom are referred to as

³²T.A. SN vol.9, no.883, E. Pache to G. Moodie, 2 December 1883.

³³T.A. SN vol.9, no.883, E.Pache to G. Moodie, 2 December 1883.

possessing distinct "portions" of the reserve which presumably were understood by the reserve's inhabitants.³⁴ Theoretically then the Reserve seems to have been sectionalised but whether the separation was recognised or if the chiefs made their own arrangements about partition is, at least at this stage, not clear. The lack of further reference to this issue in the SAR records suggests that Gopane, in the short term, succeeded in blunting the state's attempts to impose an artificial division of the reserve upon its inhabitants.³⁵ Nor, if it was the government's intention to do so, were the 3,000 morgen farms sold to whites. A degree of accord between the Hurutshe factions at Manoane and Dinokana was reached in November 1883 when Ikalafeng and Gopane agreed on a price of £91 for the part share Gopane's followers had in Dam van Matsigo which now lay solely in Ikalafeng's portion of the reserve.³⁶ But the tension caused by the creation and attempted enforcement of boundaries did not diminish for at the end of 1884 the new Native Commissioner J.P. Snyman requested that the locations commission appointed under the terms of the Pretoria Convention should commence sitting at the Marico because of the "desperate conditions" there.³⁷ The non-existence of further records makes it impossible to see how, if at all, this friction was defused.

The final piece in the new demographic jigsaw in the reserve was laid in place in 1881-1882 when two factions of Hurutshe boo Manyane returned to the Transvaal under Sebogodi and Shuping, two of Mangope's sons. The cause of their return lies in the dynamics of

³⁴A memo in the archives of the Native Affairs Department for 1905 also bears this out. See No.883, Memo. by E. Stubbs.

³⁵The issue of the division of the Reserve was taken up again in 1909. See TA. Gov. vol.1206, no.50/21/09.

³⁶T.A. SN vol.9, No. 392, P. Snyman to P. Joubert, 29 November 1883.

³⁷T.A. SN. vol.11, No.8, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 28 December 1884.

Hurutshe politics beyond the Transvaal border rather than with the course of events inside the Transvaal. Mangope, who had led the Hurutshe out of the SAR in 1858, died in 1875. The next chief Kontle moved away from the Kwena and settled with the Ngwaketse. He was reputed to have been an inefficient leader, partly on account of his addiction to brandy, and was unable to retain the support of his brothers Sebogodi and Shuping who moved away from the Ngwaketse and settled with the Malete at Ramoutswa - some of whom lived across the Ngotwane river in Transvaal territory. In the early 1880s the Malete were loosening themselves from Ngwaketse hegemony and consequently, in an effort to regain control over the independent-minded Malete the Ngwaketse chief, Bathoen, attacked them in November 1881. Bathoen's added intention was to bring the recalcitrant Hurutshe chiefs back into the Ngwaketse fold. This he failed to do for Sebogodi and Shuping, probably using the disorder of the 1881 Anglo-Boer engagement as a smoke-screen, slipped back into the Transvaal with their supporters.³⁸

Sebogodi's return has found its way into recent Hurutshe tradition. An epic journey is narrated in which the scene of an encounter between Sebogodi and a leopard (which the young chief slays) was chosen as the site for their new village.³⁹ The tradition merely obscures, probably deliberately so, the fact that Sebogodi sought the protection of Gopane who allocated him a site at Motswedi where there was a small spring. The Hurutshe at Motswedi therefore owed allegiance to the Gopane faction until well into the twentieth century. Shuping on the other hand settled on a farm Hartebeestefontein, half of which was Government land, and negotiated

³⁸This account of events is taken from Tlhomolang, "Bahurutshe Bo-Manyana", pp.14-15 and Ngcongco, "History of Bangwaketse", pp 227-230.

³⁹D. Moletsane, Ishimologo Ya Motse Wa Motswedi, (King Williamstown, n.d.), pp.8-9.

to remain there with the Republican Government in 1882. A shortage of water made it a poor site for occupation and Shuping's small community eked out a precarious existence there in the next two decades.⁴⁰ Thus by 1882 the Hurutshe in the Transvaal now constituted four communities, those at Manoane (or Gopanestad) and Dinokana forming by far the most populous. They will be separately referred to as the Hurutshe ba ga Moilola, ba ga Gopane, boo Manyane and ba Shuping.

IV. Resistance and Dispossession - The Hurutshe at Dinokana

The final topic of this chapter focuses on Ikalafeng and the ba ga Moilola. This community benefitted generally from the partition, in that more land was made available to the remaining villagers, and the authorities at Dinokana had been prepared therefore to collaborate with Pache's survey of the location. But their activities during the war of 1881-1882 had antagonised the SAR authorities. While they might have avoided some form of retaliation had they retired as far as possible from official sight, in fact the opposite occurred. They were drawn into a further conflict with the state, exposing them to official scrutiny and ultimately punishment.

The conflict referred to originated in the competition between the Tshidi Rolong and Rapulana Rolong for control over the irrigable lands in the upper Molopo basin, an area well suited to the growing of winter wheat for the Kimberley market.⁴¹ Anglo-Boer hostilities in the Transvaal in 1880-1881 provided the Tshidi under Montshiwa with an opportune occasion to drive the Rapulana, long-standing allies of the Boers, from the fertile area around Lotlhakane. During this engagement Montshiwa called on certain allies for assistance, including Ikalafeng's Hurutshe, and Ikalafeng in turn dispatched a

⁴⁰T.A. SNA, vol.300, no.3629, Report on Bahurutshe Tribe under Thebe Shuping, n.d.

⁴¹Shillington, Colonisation of the Southern Tswana, pp.126-128.

regiment under his uncle Mosimanegape to join Montshiwa's forces.⁴² Ikalafeng probably saw no danger in such a move, coming as it did during the interval of latitude afforded by the collapse of government in the Transvaal, and possibly sensed the opportunity to forge a closer alliance with the Tshidi-Rolong. Moreover Ikalafeng, like Montshiwa, was also supportive of the British cause in the Transvaal. In April 1881 when hostilities between the Boers and British broke out, Moffat reported that both Hurutshe chiefs had collected money to purchase arms in Kanye, and later had offered to assist in the British evacuation of Zeerust.⁴³

Unfortunately for Ikalafeng there was no means of seeing the long-term consequences of his actions. After British withdrawal from the Transvaal, groups of Boer mercenaries, clearly unconstrained by the clauses in the Pretoria Convention intending to restrict white encroachment onto Tswana occupied territory, allied with the Ratlou and Rapulana factions of the Rolong to displace Montshiwa and lay claim to territory along the Molopo and south of it.⁴⁴ According to British intelligence Ikalafeng then was visited by a Boer official who told the chief that "he should feel the weight of their displeasure in the complete subjugation of his people".⁴⁵

Ikalafeng, fearing a counter-attack from the Ratlou Rolong or the Boers, decided to defend Dinokana by building stone fortifications around the town. Anticipating trouble, the neighbouring farmers quickly forsook their farms for safer quarters. But they did not have to wait long to return. This time the SAR forces were already

⁴²Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.146.

⁴³BPP C-2950, p.191.

⁴⁴For an account of these events see Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, pp.190-196; A. Sillery, Botswana-A Short Political History, (London 1974), pp.55-58; Shillington, Colonisation of Southern Tswana, pp.130-134.

⁴⁵BPP C-2950, p.170, J. Moffat to H.C. Shepstone, 15 April 1881.

on a war footing and Ikalafeng's actions provided them with the pretext they needed to punish the Hurutshe ba ga Moiloa for their recent interventions against the interests of the SAR. General Joubert accordingly summoned Ikalafeng to appear before him and representatives of the Ratlou to answer charges that he had assisted Montshiwa in various ways, but the chief did not attend and opted to travel to Pretoria to seek the support the British officials.⁴⁶ To worsen matters in the summer of 1880/81 the worst drought in living memory gripped the far western Transvaal during which time Ikalafeng had complained to Joubert about his cows "drying up".⁴⁷ Suggestions by Ikalafeng that his tax be postponed only provided further "evidence" in some official Boer circles of his general contumacy.⁴⁸

Consequently in February 1882 a commando was sent against Ikalafeng. The chief was arrested, the stone fortifications pulled down (and re-erected later as a "monument of peace") and the Hurutshe were fined £1,800 - which amount was meant to cover the costs of the commando. This sum being unaffordable, the commando stripped the Hurutshe of approximately 7,000 head of cattle and 4,000 sheep and goats,⁴⁹ in value considerably more than the original fine. "I never imagined", wrote Jensen, "that these people had so many cattle".⁵⁰ Two neighbouring chiefs, Gaborone of the Tlokwa and one Botman, were also fined for allegedly assisting the Hurutshe. A number of English volunteers who served on the commando reportedly

⁴⁶BPP C-3381, p.38, H. Robinson to Kimberley, 13 March 1882; p.45, Interview with Greef, Commissioner, Lichtenburg.

⁴⁷HMB, Section 18, p.106, Report from Marico District, 1885.

⁴⁸T.A. SN vol.103, no.68, Joubert to Gopane, 2 June 1882; no.69 Joubert to Van Yperen, 12 June 1882.

⁴⁹HMB, no.2, 1889, p.26, Report by G. Haccius; T.A. KG vol.4 cr 310/82, Agreement between P. Joubert and Ikalafeng, n.d.

⁵⁰Hesse Collection, Report by Jensen, 2 February 1883.

"described the rapacity of the Boers as disgraceful".⁵¹ Prominent Marico Boers were amongst those who received large sums in compensation from the sale of Hurutshe stock - J.P. Wilsenach for example was granted £667 and W. Kirstein £352. Several applications to a Commission subsequently established to investigate claims were rejected as unwarranted, which prompts suggestion that poorer Boers tried to seize the chance to help themselves to a share of this unexpected windfall.⁵² Joubert also took the opportunity to send warning letters to Setshele and Gaseitsiwe pointing to the futile consequences of attempting to resist Boer overrule - the prelude to a subsequent raid against the Ngwaketse. Writing to Gaseitsiwe, Joubert stated that he hoped that "the act of submission made by Ikalafeng and his people to the chastisement of the law will have a beneficial effect".⁵³

The devastating effects of this dispossession are easy to imagine. Nixon, who passed through Dinokana shortly before the commando ran amok in the town and again in 1883 gives a contemporary view that contrasts the conditions before and after this act of despoilation.

It took my waggon a day [in 1881] to "trek" through their fields of corn and mielies and I instituted strong comparisons between the fertile appearance of the ground allotted to the tribe and the desolate appearance presented by the gaunt homesteads of the Boers, without gardens or any kind of cultivation near them. Mr Jensen had taught them how to sow and reap and sell their produce at the best advantage. The diamond fields offered a market for their produce and when I passed through their location the Bahurutsi were, for natives, well off, possessing ploughs and waggons in plenty. Now

⁵¹This was recorded by Nixon, Story of the Transvaal, p.310. The fact that Ikalafeng was seen as a British ally, and that Nixon was an avowed British loyalist, accounts for this unusually sympathetic attitude towards the fate of an African community.

⁵²T.A. KG vVol.4 cr 390/92, C.B. Otto to Commandant-General, 26 July 1882.

⁵³BPP, C-3381, p.113, P. Joubert to Gaseitsiwe, 14 March 1882.

(1883) they have been stripped of everything, and numbers of them are reported to be starving.⁵⁴

The official records also indicate, though more dispassionately, the devastation of Ikalafeng's following. Snyman reported that money was "scarce" among the Hurutshe in 1884 and that the few remaining cattle had been sold in order to raise revenue.⁵⁵ An extension of time was granted to both Gopane's and Ikalafeng's people in which to find the taxes for 1884. Even so, Ikalafeng the following month "spoke out against the government in an arrogant and brutal manner" and repeated his intention not to pay any tax, for which he was summoned to Pretoria "to answer to this charge"⁵⁶. Whether or not Ikalafeng did travel to the seat of government on this occasion is not clear but by the end of the year only about half of the outstanding taxes were paid. Looking back on these years in 1884 Haccius recorded that they were the "hardest years faced by the Linokana natives... and the people took a long time to recover".⁵⁷

Thus the years following the Hurutshe division and the resumption of SAR authority obviously were ones of hardship. The Hurutshe ba ga Gopane and Sebogodi's and Shuping's fledgling communities were attempting to settle in their new domiciles and to come to terms with their neighbours, both white and black, and the ba ga Moilola were struggling to overcome the effects of the devastating attack of 1882/83. These tasks were made more formidable by the drought of 1882-1884 and an outbreak of smallpox in 1883 which ravaged the ba ga Gopane particularly.

⁵⁴Nixon, Story of the Transvaal, p.166.

⁵⁵T.A. SN vol.10, no.273 J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 7 May 1884.

⁵⁶T.A. SN. vol.104, p.111, J. Snyman to Ikalafeng, 29 July 1884.

⁵⁷HMB, no.2, 1889, p.26.

V. Regional developments and the Hurutshe

Hurutshe recovery was further retarded by a temporary resurgence of confidence among the inhabitants and officials of the SAR who determined again to divest the Tswana along their border of their land and to impose hegemony over them. This competition for the border lands has two sources. Within the Transvaal, as Trapido has shown, "an acute and artificial shortage of land" shaped the interests of both landless and speculator Boers in the unannexed territories.⁵⁸ From Griqualand West, the focus of interest was on the plentiful supply of timber available in Bechuanaland to "fuel the furnaces and domestic fires of the diamond fields"⁵⁹ and on the rich cattle resources of the region which could feed Kimberley's growing population. Furthermore control over these lands accorded with the SAR's general aim to lay claim once and for all to the "road to the north".

The seizure of Tswana lands was made easier by Tswana disunity which allowed the Boers the opportunity to gain the support of African chiefs to establish the Republics of Goshen and Stellaland in the greater Molopo region. To the north the expansionist thrust of the SAR focussed on the Ngwaketse and Kwenana. In July 1884 armed Boers entered Ngwaketse territory and captured 3,000 head of cattle. In a second attack the Goshenite freebooters, aided by commandoes from Stellaland and the Harts river district, inflicted a major defeat on the Ngwaketse and their Rolong allies.⁶⁰ Raids were conducted also against the Kwenana and Ngwato, and Hurutshe living along the line were plundered with no recognition of the fact that they were subjects of the SAR.⁶¹ HMS missionaries in the Marico and along the border reported in 1885 that "since the year 1875 not one year has passed

⁵⁸Trapido, "Reflections on Land, Office and Wealth", pp.352-355.

⁵⁹Shillington, Colonisation of Southern Tswana, pp.142.

⁶⁰Ngcongco, "History of Bangaketse" pp.240-241.

⁶¹B.N.A. H.C. 193, J.M. Wright (Ass. Commissioner Bechuanaland) to C.J. Rhodes, (Special Commissioner) 5 September 1884.

without war actually raging or threatening to break-out war is the foremost thing that depresses the congregations".⁶²

These events form the background to the eventual annexation of southern Bechuanaland in 1884 and the extension of British protection to the Tswana north of the Molopo in 1885. These events have been fully recorded elsewhere,⁶³ and, while warranting no detailed examination here, nevertheless were crucial to the future course of Hurutshe history. Firstly imperial expansion to the south and west of the Hurutshe secured for Britain the strategic and economic advantages of "the road to the north", brought to an end the expansionist aims of individuals in the SAR and reduced the incidence of cross-border plundering. Secondly it led to the drawing of a more definite boundary, defined by the London Convention of February 1884, which was refined and enforced by the Colonial administration in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Consequently the Hurutshe were on the verge of entering into a closer and more complex set of relations with the colonial power then establishing its presence to the west and south of the reserve.

In addition imperial intervention, as recent research has indicated, was largely determined by and made to serve the interests of mining capitalists in the Cape Colony who wished to maintain a flow of cheap labour to the diamond mining industry in the crucial years of 1881-1884 when European prices dropped and costs of production rose at precisely the same time that labour- the one commodity "open to manipulation" - was in short demand owing to conflicts in Basutoland

⁶²HMB, 1885, Report from Marico by Schulenburg and Jensen.

⁶³See for example Chirenje, History of Northern Botswana, pp.123-149, Dachs, "Missionary imperialism", pp.647-658; D.M. Schreuder, The Scramble for Southern Africa, 1877-1895, (Cambridge, 1980), P. Maylam, Rhodes, the Tswana and the British, (Westport, 1980).

and the Transvaal.⁶⁴ The Hurutshe were thus to find themselves caught up in attempts to annex the labour resources of Bechuanaland for the compounds of the Kimberley diamond fields. Thus these crucial developments, which were later to have a deep impact on Hurutshe society, have their origins in this period.

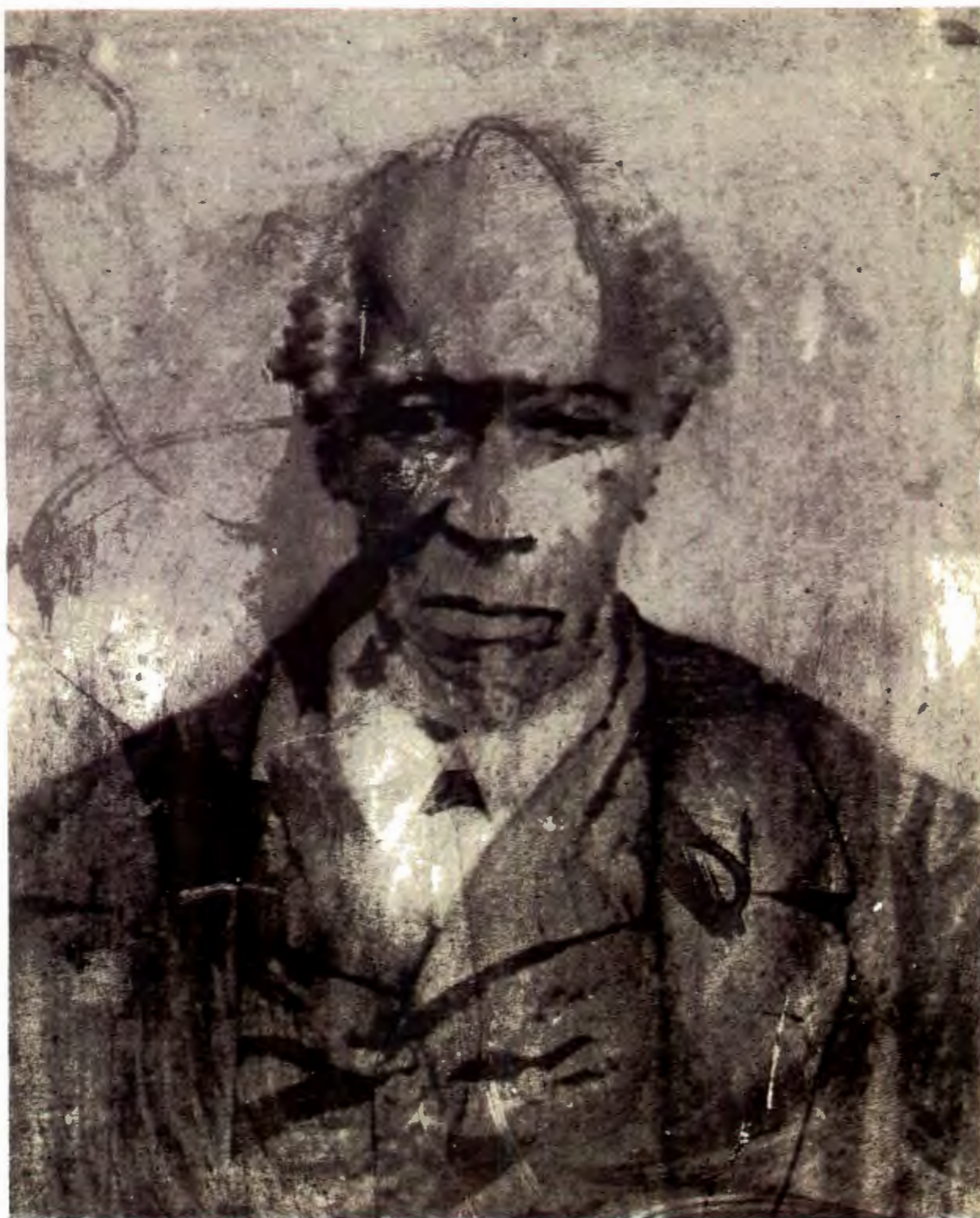
In conclusion the decade between 1875-1884 was a period which marked a transition between the essentially unified precolonial character of the Moiloa era and the divided and weakened Hurutshe polity facing further colonial and capitalist intrusion into its society. It was the combination of internal economic collapse, caused by political events within the Hurutshe reserve and in the Transvaal generally, with external pressure to control and exploit more effectively the labour reservoirs of the western highveld, that began to reshape the Hurutshe political economy in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The conflict generated by the clash of political forces with economic imperatives provides support for Beinart and Bundy's assertion that "the timing and nature of [rural] conflict must be understood against a background of changing material conditions and of new ideologies in the colonial world".⁶⁵ The next chapter examines the main features of this changing political economy.

⁶⁴Shillington, Colonisation of the Southern Tswana, pp.155-161; R. Turrell, "Kimberley: Labour and Compounds, 1871-1888" in Marks and Rathbone (eds), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa, pp.45-76.

⁶⁵Beinart and Bundy, Hidden Struggles, p.16.



Ruins of Kaditshwene, Hurutshe capital from the early 18th century.



Chief Moiloa II (1795 - 1875)
Copied from charcoal drawing, artist unknown.



Jan Viljoen, (1812 - 1893), Hunter, farmer, explorer
and veldkornet in the Marico district.



Chief Gopane (seated, second right) at Manoane c.1890



Missionary Wehrmann with missionary families at Manoane c.1890



Chief Ikalafeng Moiloa, appointed chief at Dinokana in 1877.



Chief Abraham Pogiso Moiloa, appointed chief at Dinokana in 1906.

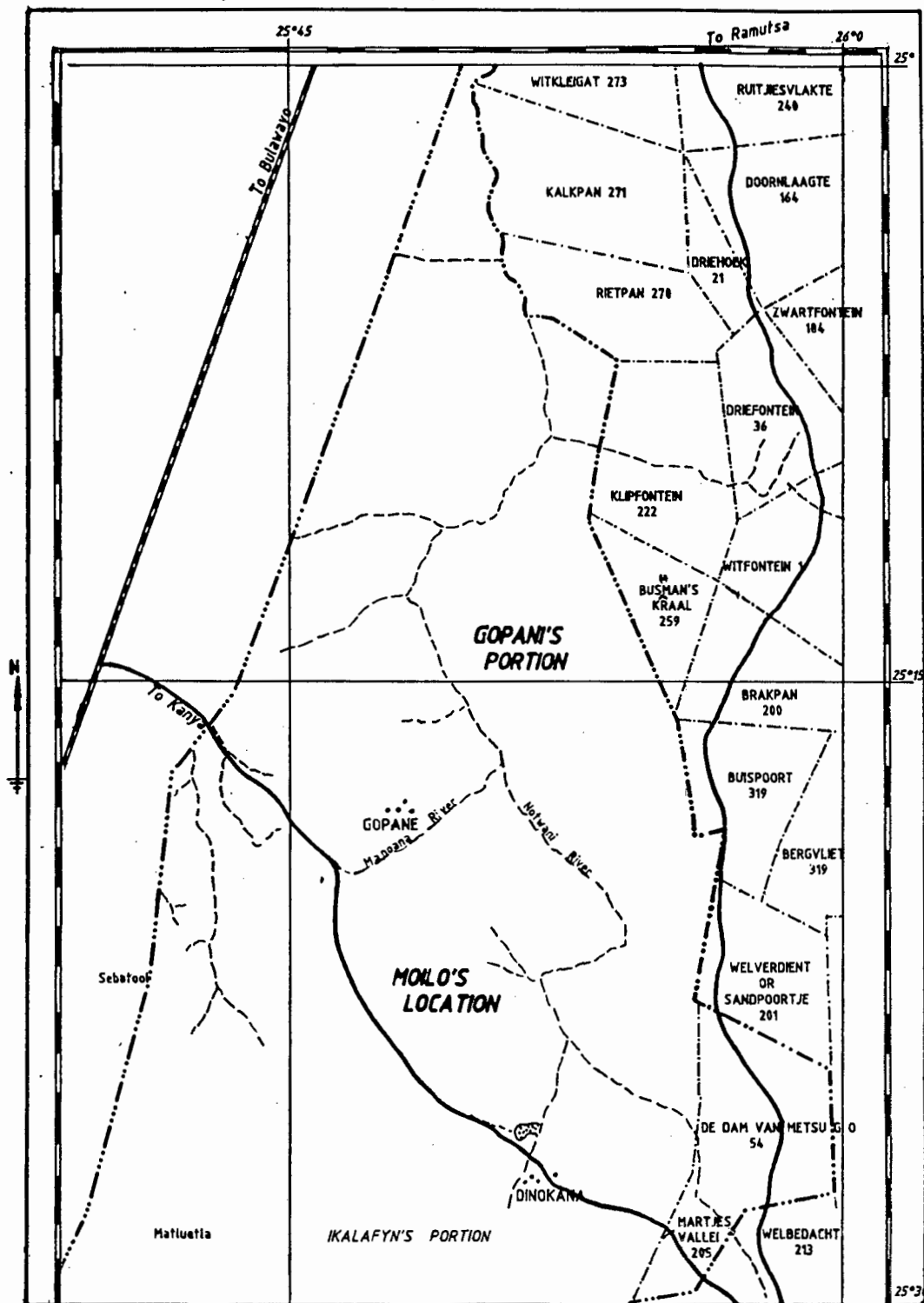
CHAPTER FIVE - THE MAKING OF THE RESERVE ECONOMY 1884-1899.

This chapter examines political, social and economic developments in the reserve between 1884 and 1899. These developments were due largely to substantial economic and political changes in the Transvaal. The Hurutshe felt the effects of these in several ways. Most important was the frequency and determination of state interventions and the activities of resident traders and concessionaires in the region. In addition ecological disasters and pressures brought to bear upon the Hurutshe by their neighbours were important factors in the making of the Reserve economy. The chapter also explores how the reserve's dwellers responded to these attempts to re-structure the local political economy. It should become apparent from this that the reserve was not an isolated entity neglected by the state, nor did it consist of a self-sufficient community. Rather the Hurutshe in the reserve entered into various relationships with the wider economy that cut across and restructured social relations and productive enterprises within the reserve.

I Political and Economic Transition in the Transvaal

The interest of the state during this period can only be understood in the context of significant shifts in the political economy of South Africa and more particularly, the Transvaal. After retrocession the new government found itself circumscribed by the political restraints imposed by the Pretoria Convention which ended the war, and by a shattered economy. The state's independence was limited by the condition that it was subject to the "suzerainty of the Queen" and by the presence of a British resident who tried to ensure, among other things, that the objectives of the previous administration in regard to African affairs were carried out. This accounts, for example, for the appointment of the previously mentioned Locations Commission to set aside adequate and clearly designated areas for African occupation, and the acceptance by the Government of the right of Africans to purchase land. In addition the boundaries of the SAR were defined by the Convention to try, unsuccessfully as noted, to prevent the westward expansion of the

MAP SHOWING MOILOA'S RESERVE AND ADJOINING FARMS (Adapted from Surveyor General's Office -1926)



KEY
 International boundary \ Reserve
 --- Fence
 --- Road
 --- River
 --- Railway line

Scale 1 English Inch to 2.347 Miles

Boers. This political impotence was matched by economic stagnation worsened by the periodic conflict of the previous five years and by the inheritance of a huge debt after the war. The Transvaal was dependent furthermore on Cape bankers for loans and on the transportation systems of Natal and the Cape.

The new government nevertheless was determined to modernise the state and to find ways of activating the economy. Its first response was to open up opportunities for accumulation among some sectors of the SAR population through a concessions policy which granted monopolies to certain companies and individuals to construct railways, distilleries and dynamite plants, and to prospect for minerals. The granting of concessions to prospectors ultimately led to the alienation of much of the land of the Swazi and Tawana of Ngamiland.¹ The other choice open to the SAR authorities was to capitalise upon the system of taxation inherited from the period of British rule.

In addition to the need to raise revenue there was an equally cogent argument for implementing a more thorough system of taxation. The economic position of many of the Transvaal burghers had become critical by the 1880s. Hunting, formerly such an important component of the Marico Boers' subsistence had declined considerably as a commercial activity, firstly because game had largely been shot out² and secondly because access to the Trans-Limpopo hunting grounds was closed to the Transvaalers following the declaration of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the granting of a charter to the

¹Bonner, Kings, Commoners, Concessionaires, pp.182-207; Tlou, History of Ngamiland, pp.117-130.

²Selous expressed this graphically when he wrote that "by 1880, all the open plains of South Africa, from the Cape to Limpopo, which had 30 years before supported vast herds, had become a dead world, an absolute lifeless waste". See F.C. Selous, "Big Game Hunting in South Africa", Journal of the African Society, vol.VIII, no.XXIX, (1908).

British South Africa Company in 1888 to operate in the lands of the Shona and Ndebele. For the Marico Boers such developments were a heavy blow; Viljoen for example struggled in impecuniosity to revive his farms in the last years of his life. The disappearance of hunting as a commercial possibility was confirmed by legislation which established proprietorial rights to game and introduced a licensing system which turned hunting into an "elite" occupation.³ The first state appointed gamekeeper, J.H. Maartens, was stationed in the Marico and was more than conscientious in his duties, particularly where licensing procedures were concerned.⁴ The full impact of the decline of hunting upon the poorer classes of Trekker society needs further investigation; it constitutes an unusual omission in view of the assumption that it was an activity "as intrinsic to Boer culture as boerdery (farming) itself".⁵ In addition to this many Boers in the Western Transvaal faced a major challenge to their control over transport riding from African competitors and to trading from a more efficient and capitalised trader class (consisting of Englishmen, European Jews and Indian merchants), who established stores in the rural areas of the Transvaal, thus eliminating the role of the itinerant Boer trader of previous years. Faced with these closing options many Boers were thrown into a greater dependence on arable farming and pastoralism, and sought state intervention to procure the labour they needed. Unfortunately for the Afrikaner rural poor, the development of mining caused the Transvaal, in Van Onselen's well-turned phrase, to "abruptly transfer its economic weight from its agricultural to its industrial leg over a brief

³J.M. Mackenzie, "The Natural World and Popular Consciousness in Southern Africa: The European Appropriation of Nature", Paper to Workshop on Culture and Development in Southern Africa, University of Copenhagen, 1988, p.11.

⁴F.J. Carruthers, "Game Protection in the Transvaal, 1846-1926", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1988.

⁵Wagner, "Dynamics of a Hunting Frontier", p.336.

period of thirty years".⁶ Facing an even more strident demand for labour from mining capital, the Transvaal government's attention to the needs of its struggling rural poor tended to wane. However its concern did not disappear altogether. As later discussion will reveal, the more bureaucratic nature of the SAR state after 1886 was intended to pacify the demands of the mine owners and rural poor alike.

In the mid-1880s two developments promised to release the Transvaal from the political and economic bondage which had retarded advancement since the 1840s. The first was the signing, in 1884, of a new Convention, the London Convention, which swept away many of the former limitations on Transvaal independence. The SAR was now allowed to conduct its own affairs in respect to the administration of the local population and in matters of diplomacy. A redefinition of the boundary allowed for an expanded western border and the definition of frontiers gave the state a greater territorial cohesion. Shortly after, in 1886, the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand offered an opportunity for economic rejuvenation on a scale never imagined possible by the Transvaal's leaders.

However on a political level these potentially regenerative developments served to isolate the Transvaal further, and to deepen old contradictions and create new ones within the state. To the west British missionary and capitalist interests acted in tandem firstly to induce the Stellaland and Goshen republics into a colonial settlement with the Cape and then, when Afrikaner resistance appeared to stiffen, to intervene directly in Bechuanaland in 1884. In 1885 Mackenzie and General Sir Charles Warren, who had led the military expedition against the Stellalanders, travelled into northern Bechuanaland gaining cessions of submission from the Tswana chiefs.

⁶C. Van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914, vol.I, pp.1-2.

In September 1885, the Imperial government accepted the division of Bechuanaland at the Molopo river; the territory to the north being proclaimed as a Protectorate and that to the south a Crown Colony.⁷ Political relations with South Africa's British territories worsened when the Transvaal refused to be drawn into a customs union and between 1890 and 1896 Kruger's government struggled to avoid being manipulated by imperial interests in Natal and the Cape. By 1895 the Transvaal had successfully secured a hold over Swazi lands, a vital prerequisite for the establishment of a railway line to Delagoa Bay and the economic freedom that this would allow. With the balance of power tilting towards the Transvaal the attitude of the British hardened and more direct and desperate forms of intervention were contemplated and finally enacted.

It was within the Transvaal however that Kruger's government was presented with an even more complex situation. As indicated previously the state was now faced with the demands of mine-owners for a new order which would allow for an effective exploitation of the country's mineral wealth. The need for a stable African working class and the concomitant need to control African rural society were essential pillars in the structure of this new order. However mineral discoveries served on the other hand to quicken the pace of speculative interest in the countryside by land companies and private individuals, who, by 1900, had purchased almost one-fifth of the total land value of the Transvaal.⁸ Except in one fairly exceptional case (on the Vereeniging Estates of Lewis and Marks⁹) there was little attempt to transform these holdings into productive farms and an increasing number of Africans entered into tenant

⁷For accounts and explanations of the extension of imperial rule in this region see D. Schreuder, The Scramble for Southern Africa; Shillington, Colonisation of Southern Tswana. Ch.6. A. Sillery, Founding a Protectorate, (The Hague, 1965).

⁸Trapido, "Putting a Plough to the Ground", p.337. See also S.A. Native Affairs Commission, 1905, vol.iv, p.427.

⁹Trapido, "Putting a Plough to the Ground", pp.336-372.

relationships or squatted on unoccupied land. The cumulative effect of rising land values, a lack of capital and a plethora of natural disasters in the 1880s and 1890s forced an even greater number of the old Boer landholding class to opt for the sharing of resources and skills with their African tenants.¹⁰ Accordingly sharecropping, which had taken root as a common contractual relationship in the preceding two decades, became even more entrenched, encapsulating more labour on the land holdings of Boer notables and land companies. Thus the competition for labour between the mine-owners and small-scale farmers intensified in the face of the advent of large absentee-owned estates and the economic viability of forms of rent and labour tenancies over wage labour, setting up a conflicting and complex relationship between all three types of proprietors and the state.

Attempts to resolve this relationship have generated a lively debate and a spate of publications regarding pre-war political alliances in the Transvaal, the origins of the South African war¹¹ and the nature of South African-imperial relations.¹² This debate logically spilt over into an examination of Milner's post-war South Africa state, evincing a similar degree of disagreement over the

¹⁰Keegan's work has clearly indicated this process. See Transformations, pp.51-95.

¹¹For an examination of the context in which the South African War occurred see G. Blainey, "Lost Causes of the South African War", Economic History Review, vol.XVIII, (1965), pp.350-366; R. Mendelsohn, "Blainey and the Jameson Raid: The Debate Renewed";, JSAS, vol.6, (1980).

¹²See A.Jeeves, "The Rand Capitalists and the Coming of the South African War, 1896-1899", Canadian Historical Papers, (1973), pp.61-63; D.Schreuder, The Scramble for Southern Africa; D.Denoon, "Capital and Capitalists in the Transvaal in the 1890s and 1900s", Historical Journal, vol.XXIII, (1980), pp.111-132. Many of the crucial arguments have been assessed by Shula Marks who in doing so resolved many of the apparent contradictions between the economic and political mainsprings of imperialism. See S. Marks, "Scrambling for Africa", JAH, vol.23, (1982), pp.97-113.

nature of the relationship between industry and the state and the extent of South Africa's transformation into an industrial state in Milner's period.¹³

In the mid-1880s however the view of the SAR government was fixed upon the less exalted picture of the Transvaal countryside where burghers had returned to labourless farms to find their African neighbours in restive mood. The post-annexation state built upon the considerably stronger administrative structure created (though never carried into effect) by the British. Old legislation was entrenched and new forms of control introduced. The regularised payment of a 10 shilling hut-tax was retained and Road, Dog and Farm taxes imposed as additional measures of extraction. Control over the movement of Africans was entrenched in 1896 through the issuing of a clearer set of pass regulations which provided a means of determining if Africans were leaving or changing employment. In 1887 a Squatters Law was introduced restricting the number of families on each farm to five families. In 1895 the law was redrawn to impose an additional tax of 2 shillings on any African who had not held employment with a white farmer in any taxable year.¹⁴

To try and enforce these regulations the pre-annexation system of control through veldcornets and landdrosts was maintained and on to it was grafted the British structure of a central Department of Native Affairs served by a contingent of native commissioners. This "uneasy amalgam of old and new" created a new category of state

¹³D. Denoon, A Grand Illusion, The Failure of Imperial Policy in the Transvaal Colony During the Period of Reconstruction, 1900-1905, (London 1973); S. Marks and S. Trapido, "Lord Milner and the South African State", History Workshop, no.8, (1979); D. Yudelman, The Emergence of Modern South Africa, (Cape Town, 1983).

¹⁴Trapido, "Landlord and Tenant". See also S.A. Native Affairs Commission, 1905, vol.iv, p.427.

official well-placed to accumulate through the holding of office.¹⁵ The energetic commissioner of Zeerust, J.P. Snyman, was no exception, though the direction of his interest shifted, as it did with the arch-profitier of the eastern Transvaal, Abel Erasmus, from direct appropriation to a speculative interest in the land market. What these measures do indicate is the concern of the administration to redistribute labour in order to appease the chorus of demand for labour from mine-owners and burghers.

As part of this wider attempt to control the African population the government clarified the regulations regarding the rights of Africans to purchase land and the procedure for registering title to land. Initially purchases had to be registered in the name of the Native Locations Commission but in 1886 the Superintendent for Native Affairs became the sole trustee for the transfer of African owned land.¹⁶ The ways in which Africans could purchase land, by contrast, were not so well defined. Missionaries, especially those of the HMS, continued to purchase land for, on behalf of, or jointly with African communities leading to confusion and argument later as to who the real owners were. Mission stations established on communally-owned or communally-occupied land were designated as 'location' land and thus were exempt from the provisions of the Squatters Law. (As the HMS Mission to the Hurutshe was located inside the Reserve the inhabitants were exempted automatically from this legislation.)

This introduction has given a background to broader forces operating on and within the post-retrocession SAR state and has offered a view of the more specific evolution of policy towards the Africans in the Transvaal. It is possible to see the emergence of a dual process in this introductory discussion. On the one hand mining replaced hunting and pastoralism as the most important form of production,

¹⁵ See Delius, "Abel Erasmus", p.185.

¹⁶ Report re. Acquisition and Tenure of Land, 1904, pp.38-68.

generating in turn new forms of social relations. On the other hand, the rudimentary government of the earlier Transvaal administration was replaced by a more bureaucratic form of state with the potential to reach out and impose its will on the country's inhabitants, and ultimately to serve the continuing interests of capitalism in South Africa.¹⁷

II The Hurutshe and the State - The Contest over Labour - ["Holding a thumb to the throat"]

For the Hurutshe the first impact of state strategy was felt in the form of unremitting demands for taxes. Coming as they did after the stock seizures of 1882, the resettlement of Gopane's followers at Manoane and a spate of drought and diseases in 1883 and 1884, the payment of annual taxes placed immense strain on the Hurutshe's dwindling resources. In mid-1884 Snyman reported that Ikalafeng owed £1598 in hut-tax arrears from 1881-1883. Although Snyman felt that the chances of recovering this sum were slim as "Ikalafeng lacks authority and his people are divided and would like to move away from him", the following year he reported that he had managed, after first issuing Ikalafeng with a summons to appear in Zeerust, to gather £452 from Ikalafeng, £252 from Gopane and £14 from Shuping.¹⁸ From 1886 the payment of hut, road, dog and farm taxes (the last for which Shuping also was liable) seem to have been paid on a regular basis. In 1892 £1643 was collected from the Hurutshe and in 1893 £2012. But in 1894 Gopane received a £75 fine for the failure of a number of his adherents to pay taxes. Gopane complained to Joubert about the

¹⁷Atmore and Marks, "The Imperial Factor", pp.242-244. Atmore and Marks state that annexation, "however abortive, foreshadowed the period of Milner's reconstruction of the Transvaal after the South African War", p.242.

¹⁸T.A. SN vol.10 sr 195/84, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 2 April 1884; SN vol.11 r 3361/85, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 24 July 1885; SN vol.11 r 2937/85, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 12 June 1885.

penalty pointing out that the defaulters were migrants who were not at home when taxes were collected.¹⁹ Snyman defended his actions by citing Gopane as the "worst offender" when it came to the payment of taxes. "It seems to me", he opined, "that chief Gopane is becoming too brutal and it is time to hold a thumb to his throat because ... he always has something to say on how the law should be".²⁰ Between 1896 and 1898, following the devastating Rinderpest epidemic, the Hurutshe at Gopane and Dinokana could not pay their taxes and in 1898 Gopane and Israel (the new chief in Dinokana following Ikalafeng's death) travelled to Pretoria to plead with the SNA for an extension of time in which to raise money for taxes.²¹ Chiefs were thus put under constant pressure to collect taxes, placing a greater responsibility for control on them, and giving rise to friction in periods when the rural economy was under stress.

Although Snyman frequently commented on the "hardship" faced in meeting tax demands²² he could not afford to allow such sentiments nor the personal difficulties he experienced in tax-collection to deter him from the important task at hand. Though the development of white owned farms was probably uneven some farmers bordering the reserve were certainly expanding operations and looked to Snyman to ensure that there was a constant supply of labour. In the mid-1890s a visitor described the Marico as "one of the best parts of the Transvaal ...[where] a few Englishmen are settled, and by the superiority of their methods and use of machinery have produced some

¹⁹T.A. SN vol.27 sr 1320/94, Gopane to P. Joubert, 25 July 1894.

²⁰T.A. SN vol.27 sr 1320/94, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 27 August 1894.

²¹T.A. SN vol.55 sr 3897/98, J. Snyman to P. Cronje, 10 September 1898, P. Cronje to J. Snyman, 20 August 1898.

²²T.A. SN vol.10 sr 273/84, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 7 May 1884.

of the finest crops of cereals in the world, and some Boers have followed suit".²³ One of the most successful of these farmers was Henry Taylor of the farm Nooitgedacht 53 who irrigated 500 acres of wheat and barley from the Ngotwane river and ran large herds on the other 4 500 acres. Yet another "progressive" farming family were the Sephtons, 1820 settler descendants and former sheep farmers from the North-east Cape, who owned two farms in the Marico Poort (Seven kilometres north of Zeerust). Ezekiah Sephton was a large employer of labour and kept about a dozen families on his farm Doornhoek. He was the target of frequent complaints from other local farmers, such as P. Jacobs of the farm Bloemfontein, who grumbled to Snyman about the refusal of Sephton's tenants (and those of two other local farmers) to accept work with him at harvest time.²⁴ There was on the other hand an increasing number of farms being bought up by land companies in the Marico, by 1900 twelve farms being held by either the Transvaal Estates and Development Co. or the Marico Exploration and Estate Co. In addition 29 farms were held by the State, and 141 registered in the names of private owners of whom two-thirds were estimated to be resident farmers. Quite a lot of land was therefore not in productive use by the proprietors and there were a number of complaints about the easy and opulent life led by squatters and tenants on some of the Marico farms.²⁵

The urgency of the labour problem in the Marico elicited a personal visit from Joubert in 1892. Accompanied by Snyman and Commandant Botha he called Gopane and one of Ikalafeng's chief advisors Piet Moilola to a meeting where, amongst other things, the dignity and necessity of working for whites was repeatedly vocalised. In an

²³F. Macnab, On Veld and Farm- In Bechuanaland, Cape Colony, The Transvaal and Natal, (London, 1897), p.178.

²⁴T.A. SN vol.28 sr 1549/94, P. Jacobs to J. Snyman, 31 March 1894.

²⁵T.A. SN vol.14 sr 820/85, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 20 November 1888; T.A. TKP vol.152, List of farms in the Marico District and Names of Registered Owners, 1900.

attempt to satisfy the discordant demands of mineowners and small farmers Joubert urged the young people "to work for a farmer first and when they are men and self-dependant they can go to the mines".²⁶ The Hurutshe chiefs were advised to bring pressure to bear upon young men to take employment, a self-defeating exercise which served only to distance chiefs from younger men who sought independence through the quicker returns of employment in Kimberley or Johannesburg. In 1892 Gopane reported that attempts to impress young men into work with the local farmers generally failed because "the young men are sly... when I send them to the farmers they desert the cattle and run away, even if things are going well for them, and do not return to the village or Kraal".²⁷ A further request was made to provide labour from the Hurutshe chiefs in 1894, and in the same year circulars were sent to all missionaries in the Transvaal urging them to cooperate with chiefs to resolve the chronic shortage of labour.²⁸ When all these appeals failed the Volksraad passed legislation in 1896 to provide for the payment of chiefs in return for labourers. Chiefs were offered rewards on an increasing scale so that those providing over 50 labourers a year could earn 5 shillings per worker. The measure certainly helped in some regions though the Superintendent of Native Affairs reported in 1897 that "the resolution ... has not brought about such a big change in the different districts".²⁹

Snyman believed that the answer to the labour shortage lay in the

²⁶T.A. SN vol.20 sr 480/92, Minutes of Pitso held with Native Chiefs in Zeerust, 10 April 1892.

²⁷T.A. SN vol.20 sr 480/92, Statement by Gopane.

²⁸T.A. CB 11/94, Circular from Superintendent of Native Affairs to Missionaries in ZAR, 27 December 1894.

²⁹Resolution of First Volksraad, article 2260 of 1896; A. Jeeves, "The Control of Migratory Labour on the South African Gold Mines in the Era of Kruger and Milner" in M.J. Murray (ed.), South African Capitalism and Black Opposition, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1983), p.145; Report of Superintendent of Native Affairs, 1897, p.2.

ruthless application of the laws regarding taxation to the extent of trying to hound the unfortunate Chief Shuping for tax arrears several years after he had left the Transvaal.³⁰ He supported enthusiastically the clause in the Squatters law imposing a sh.2 tax on Africans not in employment with whites, and suggested in 1893 that this be raised to sh.3 "in order to supply our burghers with the labour they need".³¹ He also tried to collect hut-tax from widows and on storage huts which led to a direct appeal from Ikalafeng and Gopane to the Superintendent of Native Affairs who advised Snyman to drop the idea. Snyman's response however was merely an indication of official awareness of the ineffectiveness of legislation to meet the general demand for labour in the Transvaal, an awareness that had been heightened by the implications of the Jameson Raid in which certain mine-owners and imperialists had attempted to overthrow Kruger's government. It was almost impossible to determine which Africans could be exempted from the additional tax under the Squatters Law as farmers kept few records of who had worked for them. Attempts in 1897 to remove Africans squatting on Government farms met with similar failure because squatters either relocated on other farms or opted to leave the Transvaal rather than seek work with the burghers or to take up residence in often overcrowded locations. By 2nd February 1899 Cronje, the new Superintendent of Native Affairs, conceded to the State-Secretary that it was "impossible for the Native Commissioners to comply with my instructions" regarding the Squatters' Law.³² In brief, in the Transvaal, "anti-squatting measures remained dead letters as long as

³⁰T.A. SN vol. 59, sr 5911/98, Landdrost Zeerust to P. Cronje, 20 December 1898.

³¹T.A. SN Vol.59, sr 1099/98, J. Snyman to P. Cronje, 24 March 1898.

³²Quoted in T.A. TDD vol.239, Annual Report of Transvaal Native Affairs Dept, 1904, Annexure A, Memorandum on the subject of the Squatters' Law, pp.16-17; South African Native Affairs Commission, Minutes of Evidence, p.825, Evidence of Members of Transvaal Landowners' Association.

collection of tribute from African peasants remained the easiest way of appropriating surplus".³³

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the failure of legislation to feed the labour-hungry mining industry led to the practice of many mining managers recruiting labour on their own initiative. Labour "touts" penetrated the rural areas and cajoled chiefs into providing labour gangs for the mines, often by bribing them or their local native commissioners.³⁴ These "quasi-Kaffir agents", as Snyman called them, had entered Moiloa's reserve by 1898, luring the chiefs with "promises which remain in the forgotten book most of the time".³⁵ Snyman suggested on this occasion that all applications to recruit labour should be channelled through his office rather than through the Landdrost's. Snyman's motives were not just to protect the Hurutshe, for he had established connections with certain mining companies for whom he issued labour passes, and probably wished to protect his control over recruitments in the area. There is no evidence to suggest that the Hurutshe chiefs (or Snyman) saw any opportunities to enrich themselves by agreeing to recruit men for the mines as was the case elsewhere in South Africa, especially in Bechuanaland, Basutoland and the eastern Cape.³⁶ However there is evidence of chiefly control over migrant labour in the post-war period and it is possible that Hurutshe chiefs grasped the potential benefits of manipulating their traditional controls over men in the

³³Bundy, Rise and Fall, p.204.

³⁴T.A. SN. vol.50, sr1097/98, J. Snyman to P. Cronje, 24 March 1898. A. Jeeves, "The Control of Migratory Labour", p.145.

³⁵T.A. SN vol.50 sr 984/98, J. de Beer to P. Cronje, 24 February 1898; J. Snyman to P. Cronje, 19 February 1898.

³⁶J. Kimble, "Labour Migration in Basutoland, 1870-1885", in Marks and Rathbone (eds.), Industrialisation and Social Change, pp.130-160. I. Shapera, Migrant Labour and Tribal Life, (London, 1947), pp.26-27. When the labour agent A.C. Bailie travelled to the Tswana in 1876 he reported that the "chiefs all agreed to aid the supply of labour to the mines if aided by the government", cited by Shapera, p.26; Beinart and Bundy, Hidden Struggles, p.18.

pre-war mining era.

The struggle for labour was influenced not only by the extent and determination of state intervention but also by ecological crises, as research into the formation of an African proletariat in other areas of South Africa in the late nineteenth century has so starkly revealed.³⁷ In the period under review ecological crises played a significant part in determining migratory labour trends in Moiloa's reserve. There are certain identifiable phases of migration. The first was between 1883 - 1885 following the confiscation of stock in 1882 and the drought in 1883, the second in 1892 - 1894, following the late rains and locusts, and the third, and most pronounced phase, between 1896 and 1898 following the 1896 Rinderpest epidemic, drought and the outbreak of human diseases. In July 1892 Jensen reported that the "people reaped little because of drought and because locusts came before the corn could ripen and ate most of it... that's what drives the people out to work".³⁸ The following year conditions were so bad throughout the Transvaal on account of floods, locusts and a malaria epidemic that Kruger called for a day of repentance.

The Rinderpest disease made its mark among the Ngwato in March 1896 and the first reported outbreaks among the Hurutshe occurred in late March or early April. As everywhere among the Tswana and most African communities of Southern Africa the economic repercussions

³⁷Marks and Rathbone, Industrialisation and Social Change, p.19. See especially J. Guy's contribution, "The Destruction and Reconstruction of Zulu Society", pp.167-194; C. Ballard, "The Repercussions of Rinderpest: Plague and Peasant decline in Colonial Natal", International Journal of African Historical Studies, vol.19, no.3 (1986). For a comparative view of the effects of the loss of ecological control upon African societies see H. Kjekshus, Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History, (London, 1977).

³⁸Hesse Collection, Jensen Papers, Half-Yearly Report, Jensen to Superintendent, 1 July 1892.

for the Hurutshe were severe³⁹ though possibly the extent of cattle losses has been over-estimated. Jensen estimated that only 200 head of cattle remained in Dinokana after animals had either died or been shot by the officials designated to cull diseased stock, though he later purchased cattle from cattle posts that had been unaffected by the outbreak.⁴⁰ In addition to the importance of cattle in cementing political social and economic relationships in African societies the loss of oxen for ploughing and transport riding was a cruel blow. Jensen noted that the Hurutshe were using donkeys to plough at the end of 1896. One Hurutshe informant recollected his father losing a team of oxen in Matabel^{el}and, from where he returned on foot in late 1896.⁴¹ In addition two further activities that came to a halt were the leasing of oxen to whites in Mafikeng in return for wagons, one of the new avenues of economic opportunity opened up by the growing white settlements in the northern Cape, and the profitable wood-riding trade for the Kimberley market.⁴² The immediate and most significant effect of the epidemic however, was to propel the Hurutshe into wage labour. In 1897 Jensen recorded that the "complaints" of the local farmers regarding labour shortages had ceased as the Hurutshe had sought employment with them as well as seeking work in Kimberley and Johannesburg. Snyman issued 94 passes to Africans from the Marico to travel to Johannesburg to seek work in 1897 though many more men would have obtained passes from different

³⁹For an account of the political and economic consequences of Rinderpest generally in Southern Africa see C. van Onselen, "Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896-1897", JAH, vol.XIII, no.3, (1972), pp.473-433. Shillington, Colonisation of the Southern Tswana, pp.112-113 gives an idea of the impact of Rinderpest upon the Tswana of Griqualand West and Chirenje, History of Northern Botswana, pp.252-256, gives an idea of the ravages of the disease further north.

⁴⁰HMB, no.10, 1896, p.206.

⁴¹Interview with Mr E. Montshosi, Dinokana, 18 June 1987.

⁴²Interview with Mr E. Montshosi, Dinokana, 18 June 1987. The importance of wood-riding persisted well into the 1890s. See Shillington, Colonisation of Southern Tswana, pp.102-103.

pass offices. In their desperation several Hurutshe threw themselves upon the bounty of the mission station, Jensen commenting, somewhat dispassionately, that "the only blessing Rinderpest brought was the fact that the boys came to school" and "as many heathens as I have ever had in one year became Christians".⁴³ The effects of the Rinderpest were most crippling in the bushveld regions to the north and north-west of the reserve which by 1898 was virtually denuded of human or animal life.

III Labour Migrancy and the Experience of Employment

It was argued in a previous chapter that labour migrancy was rare in Moiloa's period of rule. Even after 1882, under the impact of an increasing burden of taxation, labour demands and natural disasters, migration was by no means a central feature of the reserve's political economy. The Hurutshe continued to meet their cash requirements principally as sellers and purveyors of rural merchandise rather than of their own labour power. Gopane informed Snyman on more than one occasion that his people made a good living in the reserve and had "no need to work for any burghers".⁴⁴ Timber resources were still not depleted in the reserve and in any case the felling of trees outside the reserve occurred commonly, though it became an increasingly hazardous occupation as British control was established over the Tswana in the Protectorate. In 1890 for example the SAR authorities were forced to caution Gopane against the continual cutting of timber across the border in response to complaints from the Rev. Good about treefelling on land given to him by the Ngwaketse.⁴⁵ Four years later similar complaints were

⁴³Hesse Collection, Jensen Papers, Report for June 1896, January 1897;

⁴⁴T.A. SN vol.25 sr645/94, J.P. Snyman to P Joubert, 28 March 1894.

⁴⁵T.A. SN vol.20, Minutes of Pitso of 10 April 1892; NAB 142/2, Rev. Good to W. Surmon, 24 November 1890.

lodged by the manager of the Kanya Exploration Company against Gopane's people.⁴⁶

Most crucial however was the increase in the production of wheat and citrus fruits under irrigation. In good seasons they were sold for profit in Kimberley, in poor seasons wheat was exchanged for ground flour in the mills at Mafikeng and Zeerust.⁴⁷ In times of drought a little maize was grown under irrigation. In Dinokana certainly the ability to irrigate cushioned the community from the worst excesses of droughts and plagues. This view emerges through Jensen's frequent reports to this effect, of which one (made in 1883) serves as an adequate example. In this year he stated that:

the Bahurutse here have been blessed in material terms. They have the best land. That is why the people have learnt how to plough and use the land effectively and have become rich, especially in the purchase of cattle. People here did not suffer any lack. [Until the 1882 dispossessions] Even in times of want it is only the few poor people who suffer.⁴⁸

Even in 1897, when the community was feeling the full effects of the recent Rinderpest epidemic, locusts and drought, Snyman reported that "there are only a few farms in the district where the harvest seems to be as promising as in the location of chief Israel".⁴⁹ Labour

⁴⁶T.A. SS vol.4817 sr5145/94, G.D. Smith (Manager, Kanya Exploration Co.) to Landdrost Zeerust, 24 March 1894; G. van Niekerk, Border and Native Commissioner, Schweitzer-Reyneke to Ikalafeng and Gopane, 1 June 1894; Smith to State Secretary, 30 October 1894.

⁴⁷Holub, Von der Capstad, vol.II, p.507; Interview with E. Montshosi.

⁴⁸Hesse Collection, Jensen Papers, Report for half-year, 2 January 1883.

⁴⁹T.A. SN vol.41, sr714/97, J. Snyman to P. Cronje, 1 March 1897.

migrancy was thus often a temporary phenomenon undertaken in periods of economic catastrophe to tide the community over a taxing period. On a number of occasions Jensen noticed the increasing number of men returning to Dinokana just before harvest time, indicating the concern of migrants for a continued stake in, and control over, the rural economy during the pre-South African war period.⁵⁰

The choices facing the Hurutshe ba ga Gopane were slightly different. Wood-riding as we have seen was one route to economic prosperity. The arrival of the Warren expedition in Bechuanaland in 1885 furthermore opened up unexpected opportunities for several of Gopane's followers to find employment as transport riders. In the late 1880s, according to Holub, Gopane's Hurutshe "used every opportunity to offer transport services with whatever draft animals they had and were able to earn a considerable amount of money ... but Ikalafeng's people did different work".⁵¹ The Hurutshe ba Gopane also carried timber to Lobatse where they could obtain high prices from the British officers stationed there.⁵² Towards the end of the century the timber trade began to wane on account of declining resources, the shortage of oxen following the Rinderpest epidemic and the completion of the Kimberley-Gaborone railway in 1897 which rendered the transport rider redundant.

Consequently there was a slow but inexorable and irreversible process whereby men undertook new occupations and reacted individualistically to developments outside the reserve. New lines of divisions slowly emerged between generations as the younger men took off for periods of labour, and returned refracting very different views of the world

⁵⁰Hesse Collection, Jensen Papers, Report for half-year, 29 June 1893.

⁵¹Breutz, Tribes of Marico, p.99; Holub, Von der Capstad, vol.I, p.130.

⁵²T.A. SN vol.111, p.62, F. Stiemens to J.P. Snyman, 23 March 1898.

from their parents, and appearing, to the missionaries, insolent and independent. Even within families individuals often entered into new and significantly different ways of making a living. In the Kgomari family for example, one uncle became a messenger in the Zeerust post-office, another was in almost constant employment at Bloemhof, another was a transport-rider in Mashonaland, while his father kept cattle and made leather trousers and karosses which he sold to the local Boers.⁵³ These differing experiences must have broken or strained the connecting seams of traditional relationships in the reserve.

Women's activities do not, on the other hand, appear to have deviated much from a traditional concern for agricultural practises, yet within these there was a shift in the range of work tasks and organisational patterns of work. The irrigation and distribution of wheat and citrus became a woman's preserve, though the extent to which women maintained control over profits from surplus production is not ascertainable from available evidence.⁵⁴ There were also opportunities for women to earn cash within the reserve. Jensen for example employed two women on a full-time basis to irrigate the missions' wheat crop, another 15-20 to chase away birds from the corn fields and a further dozen women to assist in harvesting, his annual disbursements to women labourers amounting to about £60 in 1884.⁵⁵ The absence of men who were in employment at the mines presumably served to relax the traditional controls of men over women, through probably women fell increasingly under the control of chiefs, an indication of this being suggested by Holub in about 1884 when he

⁵³Interview with Mr K. Kgomari, 4 February 1988.

⁵⁴Interview with E. Montshosi; Interview with P. Nkwe, P. Moletsane, Gopanestad, 10 September 1985.

⁵⁵Hesse Collection, Jensen Papers, Report for half-year, 1 July 1884.

contrasted the large number of women in employment under Ikalafeng as opposed to Gopane.⁵⁶

Yet a further indication that women were gaining an increasing measure of independence over household heads in economic matters is suggested by Jensen's observations that women were cultivating fields at some distance from Dinokana and stayed away from the town for periods of up to three or four weeks.⁵⁷ The increasing autonomy exercised by women in agricultural matters was accompanied by a challenge to their subordinate, mainly reproductive role within society. Christianity attracted some women, either because it might induce their husbands into practising monogamy, or in the case of unmarried women because they might find Christian (monogamous) husbands.⁵⁸ Some idea of the tension in male-female relationships was suggested in a report by Wehrmann from Mancoane when he recorded that:

Many husbands believe that if women don't dance to their tune, they can simply send them away. This kind of treatment does little to better the women, their suspicion towards men becomes even more confirmed. They make use of every opportunity, if they are not treated kindly enough, to pack their bundles and return to the house of their parents, until the husband arrives to coax them back with friendly persuasion. As we have many of such rifts now, there is much work for the missionary.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Holub, Von der Capstad, vol.I, p.130.

⁵⁷Hesse Collection, Jensen Papers, Report for half-year, 29 June 1893.

⁵⁸HMB, 1887, p.87, Report from Manuane.

⁵⁹HMB, 1890, p.180, Report from Manuane.

IV Traders and Concession Hunters

For the chiefly strata new opportunities were offered by the penetration of the reserve by traders and concession hunters. That "curious feature of South African life - the Trader's store"⁶⁰ made its appearance in Moiloa's reserve as early as 1875 when a Richard Southwood of Exeter opened a store, with Moiloa's permission, in Dinokana. He was followed shortly by another Englishman named Frost. In 1881 they were both asked by Gopane to move to Manoane, which they did providing they were granted sole trading rights in exchange for a £10 p.a. fee.⁶¹ Southwood and Frost were followed in 1880 by two itinerant liquor sellers, Dickenson and Sadler.⁶² In 1895 Southwood's son William was granted a permanent stand in Manoane by Chief Gopane.

W. Southwood experienced some opposition initially from his competitors, the missionary Wehrmann and a number of local Boer "smouse" but gained the support of Gopane and two of his uncles who gave him his stand at the cost of £500. His relationship with the three men was initially good and he entered into a thriving trade in brandy and whiskey just prior to the war, even providing a room in the back of his store - the "Red Room" - where the local men could drink in peace while Mrs Southwood kept watch for troublemakers such as Wehrmann and his church warden Michael Moiloa.⁶³ (In 1897 the Volksraad legislated to prevent all sales of liquor to Africans in the SAR).

⁶⁰Macnab, Veld and Farm, p.17.

⁶¹T.A. SNA vol.455 no.216, Richard Southwood to Native Commissioner Zeerust, 22 February 1910.

⁶²T.A. SNA vol.I, Gopane to Van Yperen, 19 July 1879.

⁶³These events came to light just after the war when Southwood's right to trade was being challenged. See T.A. SNA 1125/02, W. Southwood to G. Lagden, 28 June 1902; Statement of A. Wills, W. Wills, 25 February, 1904.

These profits more than offset the bad debts which accrued in his trading business and Southwood continued his operations undisturbed until he fell out with the Hurutshe chiefs during the South African War. Two Indian traders, Karrim and Fajsbhoy, set up in Dinokana during 1897 - 1898 and an Englishman Payne forced his way into the town just prior to the war in 1899. Again they were carefully selected and entered into rent paying arrangements with the local chiefs. In 1905 the Sub-Native Commissioner in Zeerust reported that the "natives cherish the old time custom of selecting ... the persons to trade in their stadts, a custom ... which they have come to regard as one of their inherent rights".⁶⁴

The trading stores also offered opportunities for women and commoners to both sell and purchase goods and to thereby reduce their dependence on the wealthier individuals controlling the transport trade. On the other hand the storekeepers also gave credit and many of the local cultivators ran up debts with the storekeepers because future harvests were pledged against goods purchased in the shops.⁶⁵ Between 1897 and 1899 the Africans at Gopane ran up £800 worth of debts with William Southwood, and by the turn of the century chief Israel alone had accrued a £100 debt at Dinokana.⁶⁶ Chiefs and traders it seems entered into ambiguous and changeable relationships, usually caused by chiefly aspirations to control the establishment and activities of traders and their tendency at the same time to run up personal debts with storekeepers. In William Southwood's case this accounts for the sudden swing of opinion

⁶⁴T.A. SNA 1125/02, E Stubbs to G. Griffith, N.C. Rustenburg, 14 September, 1904. Karrim and Fajsbhoy paid Israel £20 p.a. for their sites, see T.A. SS r3471/98, contract between A. Karrim/A.M. Fajsbhoy and Chief Moiloa.

⁶⁵Precisely the same situation arose in the southern Tswana reserves at the same time. See Shillington, Colonisation of the Southern Tswana, p.221.

⁶⁶SNA 1125/02, Southwood to Lagden, 28 June 1902.

against him in about 1900.

The arrival of concessionaires presented an even greater financial windfall to Hurutshe chiefs and prominent men in Dinokana. Interest in the Marico as a gold-bearing district had originated as far back as 1868 with the discovery of gold ore at Malmani, equidistant between Zeerust and Mafikeng. For a while the Malmani fields entranced thousands of fortune hunters, who established a town at Ottoshoop and with equal optimism, gave its central roads the same names as those being established in the considerably more successful mining town of Johannesburg. The discoveries also drew a few Hurutshe labourers who were only half a day's walk from Ottoshoop. The Malmani fields disappointed the twenty-seven thousand diggers who flocked there because shafts could not be sunk without hitting water trapped by an underlying layer of adamantine quartz. The hopes of locating suitable gold ores did not entirely recede however and concessionaires retained an interest in the Marico, including the west of Ikalafeng's portion of the reserve where the Malmani reef ran.⁶⁷

In 1887 a J.W. Erasmus accompanied Snyman to Dinokana to try and enter into an agreement with Ikalafeng to obtain mineral rights in his portion of the reserve. Ikalafeng initially balked at the idea but after receiving a personal assurance from President Kruger that in the event of minerals being discovered he would only lose access to the limited area of the actual find, he and his Council signed an agreement whereby Erasmus would pay £150 per annum for mineral rights.⁶⁸ In 1891 a new contract was signed increasing the annual payment to £500 per annum, and transferring all the rights and

⁶⁷The first recorded application for a concession was in 1886 by a P.H. Cloete. See TA SS r 6111, 23 November, 1886.

⁶⁸T.A. SN vol.6 p.307, P. Joubert to J. Snyman, 3 March 1890; T.A. SC 16-13, Report of the Select Committee re: Petition of the Transvalia Land Exploration and Mining Company, pp.1-13, Appendices A,B, appended to JUS vol.168, 3/724/13.

privileges of the previous contract to the Transvalia Land Exploration and Mining Company, who then took over payment. While the fact of the transfer itself may have been clear to Ikalafeng he was not aware, until after the South African War, that the terms had been altered to give the company significantly increased rights to erect shops, cut wood, graze stock and draw water in the reserve. Fortunately for the Hurutshe the Company exercised none of its claims, allegedly because the Reserve boundaries were not properly defined, until 1914 when prospectors arrived to take soil samples.⁶⁹ Consequently the Hurutshe chiefs at Dinokana expressed themselves content with the arrangement. In 1897 Israel and his council wrote to the government asking for the contract to be confirmed and registered in terms of the impending Gold Act allowing prospecting on African locations. "The contract", Israel added, "is very favourable for me and my people we having already, during the last few years, received about four thousand four hundred Pounds in cash".⁷⁰ While these Hurutshe leaders may have blessed their good fortune the arrangement could have acted against their interests, and presents, as Trapido has pointed out, a typical case of the "pitfalls for the unwary" that arose out of the meshing of rural and industrial society in this period of South Africa's history.⁷¹ One last point of interest is Snyman's role in the concession. Although his name does not appear in any of the formal contracts, Erasmus' first visits to Dinokana were conducted with Snyman and the government's first correspondence granting permission to enter into an agreement with the Hurutshe cites Snyman as one of the concessionaires. Gopane avowed in an affidavit signed in 1902 that Snyman had brought potential prospectors to Mancoane prior to Erasmus' visit, including his brother Hans Snyman. Snyman also allegedly instructed Gopane

⁶⁹HMB, no. 3, 1915, p.70.

⁷⁰T.A. LD - AG, vol.118, file 4092/02, Ikalafyn Concession, Israel and Council to P. Cronje, 6 December 1897. Post-war correspondence relating to the matter is also contained in this file.

⁷¹Trapido, "Landlord and Tenant", p.58.

that he was on "no account to grant prospecting rights to anyone unless his (Snyman's) sanction had been received".⁷² It is probable then that he received some pay-off for his role in obtaining the contract.

The arrival of traders and concessionaires, together with the other new economic opportunities afforded by the enclosing capitalist economy, served not only to fragment the mould of rural life but also deepen the lines of stratification particularly that between the chiefly strata and the commoners. How much of the money earned through the sale of trading and mineral rights was distributed to the inhabitants of the stadts as a whole is difficult to determine. Some, we can assume, was invested in cattle which could have been loaned to clients to bind them into closer relations of dependence upon chiefs. This would have offset chiefs' loss of control over young men entering into wage labour and accumulating wealth outside the traditional structure of society. Some of the new bounty was re-invested in land which would have bolstered chiefs' powers of patronage. In 1889 Gopane paid off the final sum for the farm Brakpan which he had negotiated to purchase from P. Swart in 1880 for £600.⁷³ It was registered in the name of the Superintendent of Native Affairs in trust for Gopane alone, unlike most farms held in trust which were held for the "chief and the tribe". The farm added 4,000 morgen to the Hurutshe's land holdings and was utilised principally as a cattlepost.⁷⁴ Further north Shuping purchased Vinkrivier from none other than J.P. Snyman. The amount paid for the farm was £700, a fact which only came to be known a decade later. Both chiefs had to pay farm taxes on these properties as they were

⁷²T.A. SNA, Marico Magistrates' Reports, 5/1/1, Sub-Native Commissioner, Zeerust to Native Commissioner, Rustenburg, 20 November 1902.

⁷³T.A. SS vol.7080 r3118/98, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 9 April 1889; Van der Hoff and De Jongh to P. Joubert, 1 April 1889.

⁷⁴Report re. Acquisition and Tenure of Land, 1903, p.28.

not incorporated as part of the reserve. Finally the Hurutshe at Dinokana in the late 1870s purchased half of the farm Leewfontein 128, about twelve kilometres west of the Reserve, for 200 head of cattle (valued at £1000). Transfer however was not effected until the early twentieth century.⁷⁵

There were further forms of chiefly enrichment. Ikalafeng and Gopane initially were entrusted with the job of issuing passes to men travelling out of the location to seek work. Ikalafeng certainly charged for the issuing of passes and was reprimanded for doing so in 1891 by the Superintendent of Native Affairs.⁷⁶ At Dinokana certain families monopolised the irrigable or swampy wheat lands in the valley and, taking a leaf out of the book of white landowners, entered into sharecropping arrangements with poorer clients. By 1898 several Dinokana families were wealthy enough to send their sons to Lovedale in the Cape where they could receive an education superior to that offered by the local mission school.⁷⁷

Some idea of the economic and social cleavages in Hurutshe society is intimated by hut-tax returns in the late 1880s which list the number of huts on which each man paid taxes. These range from one to fourteen. There are difficulties in trying to draw conclusions from these statistics. Firstly, although the number of huts a man paid tax on might indicate the number of wives he kept this does not necessarily correlate with his personal wealth. Migrants for example may have accumulated wealth long before investing it in wives, and

⁷⁵T.A. SN vol.41 sr 120/97, J. de Beer to P. Cronje, 9 January 1897; Magistrate's Reports Marico, 5/1/9, S. Leary to W. Windham, 29 January 1909.

⁷⁶T.A. SN vol.18, sr 517/91, Telegram from J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 12 May 1891.

⁷⁷Interview with E. Montshosi, 18 June 1987; HMB, no.6, 1898, p.44. I have attempted to investigate who obtained control over these all important lands and on what basis. Montshosi (and others) claim they were the "rich men", but this gives little clue as to their origins or historic place in Hurutshe society.

Christians presumably would have only been allowed one wife. Secondly returns are only available on two consecutive years and give no idea of any changes in the distribution of wealth and thirdly it is not possible always to identify the established leaders in the Hurutshe polity. Nevertheless the listed ward heads generally had more huts than commoners (5 as opposed to 1,9). Gopane's council (six out of the ten identifiable from those signing the contract with Erasmus) owned on average six huts, and Senose, identified by Southwood as Gopane's wealthiest man, owned seven. However there are several instances of commoners owning more huts than their ward heads, some (presumed) commoners possessing up to nine or ten huts.⁷⁸ The returns are therefore suggestive of a society undergoing stratification but do not offer the opportunity for speculative comments regarding the precise areas in which wealth and power was located in the reserve. Likewise the imposition of any statistical grid over the society based on these returns (even though they cover over 3,000 individuals) would only yield fairly crude mechanistic formulations - for the reasons cited above.

A final point regarding stratification and any incipient realignment of class forces in this period is that it would be incorrect even to assume that there necessarily was consensus within classes. For example Southwood was reasonably successful at dividing the rulers in Gopane and mobilising one faction to support his claim for reinstatement against another.⁷⁹ Differing ideologies, particularly attitudes to Christianity, similarly cut across ruling sectors of the society; Gopane on one occasion astonished his followers by thrashing one of his senior councillors (a "deputy captain") and fining him and his people ten head of cattle each for forcing a young Christian woman to attend boyali, even though the chief himself never accepted baptism.⁸⁰ For several months (in

⁷⁸T.A. SN vol.12, Statistics on hut-returns 1886-1887.

⁷⁹T.A. SNA vol.48 no.1125, W. Southwood to G. Lagden, 28 June 1902.

⁸⁰HMB, 1894, Report from Manoane, p.94.

1894) some of Gopane's advisors refused to attend meetings, presumably in protest. The converse occurred just across the border where Kontle, much despised by the German missionaries, confiscated all his Christian son's cattle and allegedly sold it for brandy. Attitudes to labour migrancy likewise differed, as they did for example among Mozambican workers, leading to tensions within classes, families and between generations.⁸¹ Mr Kgomari recalled for example that fathers generally insisted that one of their sons at least should remain in the reserve to ensure the security of the family's rural assets. He recalled his disappointment as a boy of about twelve or thirteen (c. 1908) on being informed of his father's decision that he should remain at home, a disappointment that later turned to a sense of personal pride and a scorn for his brothers.⁸²

V) External Relations

Lastly this account of the dynamics and evolution of a reserve economy turns to the relations between the Hurutshe and their neighbours. This relationship had been characterised in the 1850s and 1860s both by reciprocity and contention, but tended to become more conflict ridden as competition for the region's diminishing resources became more intense. To the west relations between the Hurutshe ba ga Gopane and the Ngwaketse deteriorated sharply despite Gopane's earlier attempts to remain on favourable terms with the Ngwaketse chiefly house. Several reasons account for this growing instability on the reserve's western margins. Firstly the border laid down by the London Convention formally cut off the Hurutshe from cattle posts and lands which they had occupied since the pre-difaqane period.⁸³ Secondly while formerly the existence of a boundary might not have been an obstacle to occupying this land the

⁸¹See P. Harries, "Kinship, Ideology and the Nature of pre-colonial labour migration", in Marks and Rathbone(eds.), Industrialisation and Social Change, p.158.

⁸²Interview with Mr K. Kgomari, 4 February 1988.

⁸³HMB, 1892, p., Report by Wehrmann.

circumstances had now changed. British authorities in the Protectorate were concerned to safeguard the territorial integrity of Bechuanaland as laid down in the London Convention, a concern that was given emphasis by the SAR's known tendency to ignore agreements delimiting the extent of the Republic.⁸⁴ Furthermore much of the land on the Ngwaketse's eastern flank had become privatised; the Reverend Good in 1890 had obtained from the new Ngwaketse regent Bathoen a written agreement ceding him a 10,000 morgen farm, "Hilda Vale", on which the Hurutshe cattle posts had been located, and the Kanya Land Exploration Company had been granted a mineral concession and the right to build trading stores on sections of Ngwaketse territory.⁸⁵ Finally the nature of Ngwaketse politics itself changed after Gaseitsiwe's death when Bathoen was forced into a stronger reliance upon British missionary and imperial interests even if it was to the detriment of Ngwaketse-Hurutshe relations.

Consequently when Gopane's people attempted to maintain access to lands in Bechuanaland they found themselves in all sorts of trouble. In 1889 Good encountered the Hurutshe reaping their crops on his land. Cautioning them not to return, he allowed them to take their corn back to Manoane. However in October 1890 Gopane sent three men to Bathoen to confirm their right to plough in lands near Tirwane (part of Hilda Vale) in exchange for a heifer per year for each cattle post. When Bathoen and Good refused permission the Hurutshe took possession of the land and prepared to defend themselves if need be.⁸⁶ Good reported to the Landdrost at Zeerust, F. Wepener, that he had encountered 20 to 30 of Gopane's men under Marojwe, Moalose

⁸⁴Sillery, Botswana - A Political History, pp.62-64, p.114.

⁸⁵Chirenje, History of Northern Botswana, p.146; Ngcongco, "History of Bangwaketse", pp.258-265. Good's ethical position in accepting the farm was questioned both in the British Parliament and by the directors of the IMS, neither of whom could shake Good's belief in his right to own the land.

⁸⁶B.N.A. HC 142/2, J. Good to W. Surmon, 24 November 1890.

and Mochupe armed with guns and axes.⁸⁷ According to Good's version the men had ploughed over existing maize fields and pulled down a fenced enclosure erected by Good's labourers. Good concluded by saying that he had heard that Gopane had contacted Ikalafeng and Montshiwa to gain their support should the dispute escalate into a wider conflict, but that Ikalafeng had rejected Gopane's overtures.

Good also informed Summon, the new Assistant Commissioner for southern Bechuanaland, and the respective authorities initiated investigations into Good's allegations.⁸⁸ In his investigation Snyman revealed a greater sensitivity to the historic relationship between the Hurutshe and Ngwaketse regarding mutually beneficial arrangements over the use of arable and pastoral land. He cited Gopane's counter to Good's allegations regarding the threatening attitude of his men, explaining that the "people under Good had burnt down the cattle posts under his [Good's] own orders and burnt down our old huts next to the fields".⁸⁹ Leyds, the State-Secretary, felt that the British government was at fault because it had not properly consulted the Hurutshe and Ngwaketse when the Convention line was drawn up. Thus the SAR authorities were reluctant to act precipitously or rashly, and in the end delivered only a mild rebuke to Gopane. This has been taken as an indication by historians of the Protectorate that the SAR was actively encouraging the Hurutshe to claim land on behalf of the Transvaal, a fiction partly based on Good's private conjectures, and a failure to understand the nature of Hurutshe-Ngwaketse relations in the nineteenth century⁹⁰ or to

⁸⁷T.A. SS vol.2605 r 16077/90, J. Good to F. Wepener 13 November 1890.

⁸⁸Sillery, Founding a Protectorate, p.50, c.o. 873/90, no.403, pp.64-74, H. Loch to Lord Knutsford, 29 December 1890.

⁸⁹T.A. SS r 16077/90, J. Snyman to P. Joubert, 20 November 1890.

⁹⁰For example see Chirenje, History of Northern Botswana, p.144; Ngcongco, "History of Bangwaketse", pp.298-300, Sillery, Founding a Protectorate, p.50; The Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.150.

examine the correspondence of the SAR officials responding to the affair. Surmon's belief that Snyman deliberately was encouraging the Hurutshe in order to incite hostilities which could be used as a pretext to seize the Hurutshe reserve is also without foundation.⁹¹

From across the border the British authorities, impatient with the lack of firm response from Zeerust and Pretoria, acted swiftly to expel the unyielding Hurutshe. A detachment of 20 mounted police followed by a force of 500 of Bathoen's Ngwaketse, led by the chief, descended on Tirwane in January to find the Hurutshe had got wind of their arrival and had pulled back into the SAR. Hurutshe claims to the disputed territory were dismissed by Surmon on the grounds that "it is very late to make such a report now if it has not been made before".⁹² The loss of cattle posts and land across the line caused dismay among the Hurutshe at Gopane, Wehrmann reporting in 1891 that they "had suffered a great loss and become very crowded in" as a consequence.⁹³ In addition a small Hurutshe village at Peleng situated just inside the Protectorate's border transferred allegiance to Bathoen and the inhabitants were moved to Kanye.⁹⁴

Nevertheless this rebuff did not deter groups of Hurutshe from continuing to utilise land within the Protectorate. In April 1894 for example the manager of the Kanya Exploration Company, G.D. Smith, complained to Wepener about men from Manoane and Dinokana trespassing on the Company's land, cutting wood and "generally acting in such a way as to bring about a breach of the peace."⁹⁵ The Border and

⁹¹B.N.A. HC 142/2, W. Surmon to S. Shippard, n.d.

⁹²B.N.A. HC 142/2, W. Surmon to S. Shippard, n.d.

⁹³HMB, 1892, p.20. Report from Wehrmann.

⁹⁴B.N.A. C.O., Enclosure in Despatch No.33 G.20191, W. Surmon to S. Shippard, 17 January 1891.

⁹⁵T.A. SS vol.2457 r 5145/94, G. Smith to F. Wepener, 24 March 1893.

Native Commissioner at Schweitzer-Reyneke, G. van Niekerk, wrote to both chiefs warning them not to repeat the trespass.⁹⁶ His caution went unheeded for in October Smith complained to the State-Secretary again about treefelling and the running and theft of stock on Company land. By this time Gopane's Hurutshe had realised that the border could be used to their advantage and were crossing into the legal sanctuary of the Republic to avoid arrest or the payment of duty on imported stock into Bechuanaland, in much the same way that the Kgatla appropriated cattle from the Transvaal to the safety of the Protectorate.⁹⁷ On this occasion Snyman wrote a sterner letter to Gopane ordering him to bring all his stock, huts and cattle back into the reserve.⁹⁸

No further complaints from the Company were received, yet evidently Gopane's subjects continued to cross into the Protectorate for he admitted later to watering cattle at a pool called Legavanskloof, about 600 meters outside the Republic. In addition a number of Hurutshe ba ga Gopane received written permission in 1893 from the resident Commissioner in Mafeking to maintain cattle posts in the Protectorate, though a group which received only verbal permission was forcibly evicted by the B.S.A. Police in 1897.⁹⁹ The determination of Gopane's people to retain access to these rural resources indicates their concern to resist the imposition of property laws on formerly "free domains".

⁹⁶ T.A. SS vol.2457 r 5145/94, G. van Niekerk to Chiefs Ikalafeng and Gopane, 7 June 1894.

⁹⁷ F. Morton, "Chiefs and Ethnic Unity in Two Colonial Worlds", in A.J. Asiwaju (ed), Partitioned Africans: Studies in Human Relations Across Africa's International Boundaries, 1884-1984, (London and Lagos, 1984).

⁹⁸ T.A. SS vol.2457 r 5145/94, G. Smith to W. Leyds, 30 October 1894; J. Snyman to Gopane, 12 December 1894.

⁹⁹ T.A. LTG Box 70/27, Affidavit made by Gopane, 3 June 1904. BNA S 112 W. Surmon to O.C. BSAP Mafeking, 20 November 1897.

In 1896 however the situation was reversed when the Malete under Ikaneng (subjects of the Protectorate) laid claim to a portion of Gopane's land. The Transvaal Police intervened and arrested two of Ikaneng's men. Leyds reported the case to the High Commissioner Hercules Robinson. When informed of the arrests, Surmon suggested an investigation "so that the Natives on both sides of the line, who have gardens at the place, may know how far each are entitled to plough", a consideration he had not been prepared to grant Gopane six years previously.¹⁰⁰ However the simultaneous outbreak of Rinderpest gave added strength to the argument that the precise borderline be defined by a joint Bechuanaland/SAR commission and that a fence be erected along the line.¹⁰¹ The SAR agreed to a joint survey of the disputed territory and a British Transvaal Joint Boundary Commission under the Presidency of F.W. Panzera was appointed to decide on a definite line. The stretch of the boundary causing most dispute was that between Singoma and a point A (see map) in the northern end of the reserve where the border, instead of running along the Ngotwane river, crossed it at three points thus cutting off people on either side from access to the river. This caused the Malete and the Hurutshe to illegally enter into respectively the Transvaal and the Protectorate.

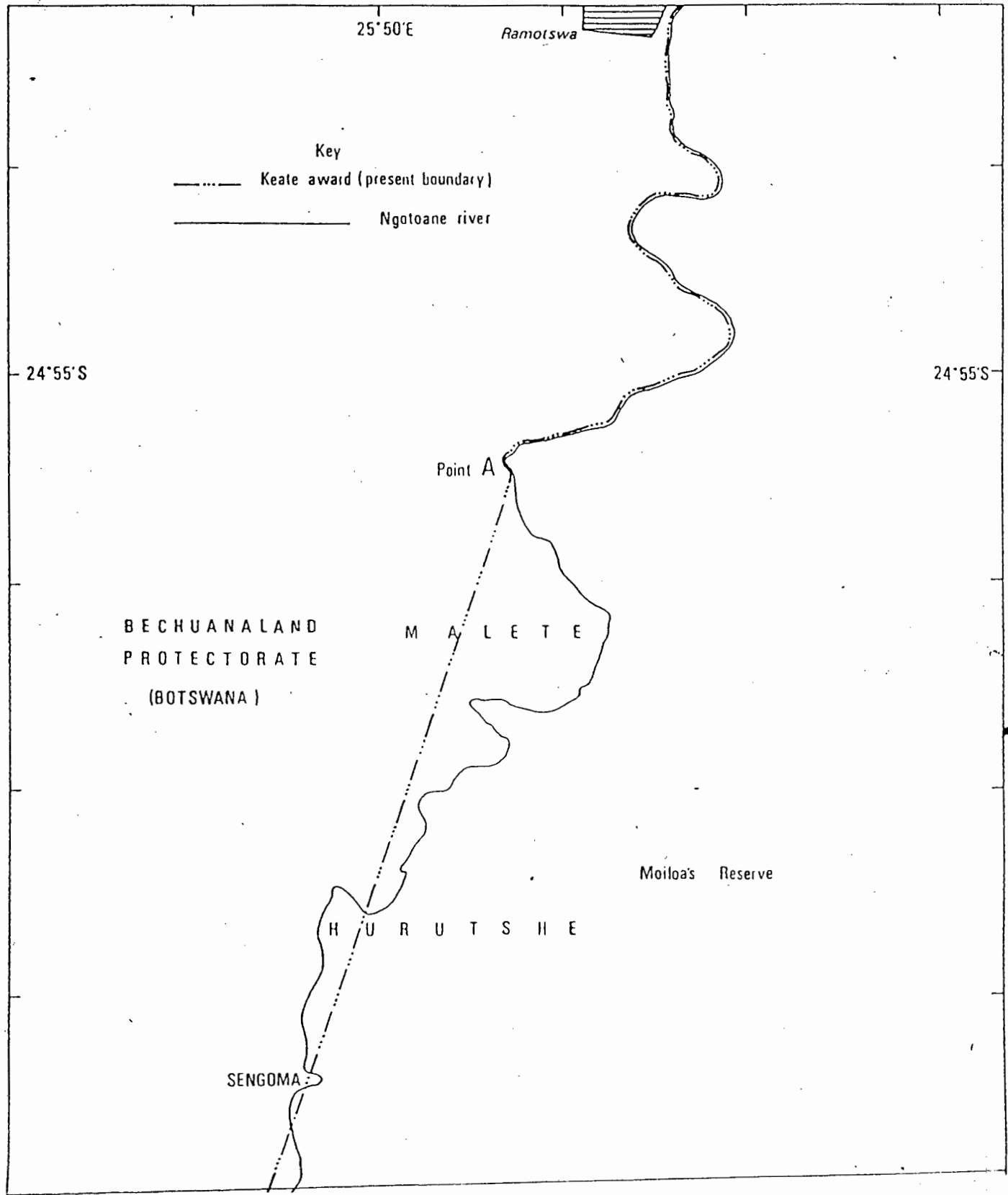
However, as the Boundary Commission did not feel competent to overrule the recommendations of the Keate Award and the London Convention, the line was retained, Panzera regretting at the same time that "we had not the power to modify that line, as I consider nothing could be more calculated to cause endless trouble".¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰B.N.A. HC 157/1, no.52, H. Robinson to F.J. Newton, 29 April 1896; W. Surmon to F.J. Newton, 14 November 1896.

¹⁰¹B.N.A. HC 157/1, no.87, F.J. Newton to Acting High Commissioner, 29 July 1896; T.A. SN vol.110, p.181, M. Stiemans to J. Snyman, 12 February 1897.

¹⁰²B.N.A. HC 157/1 Enclosure in despatch no.31, F. Panzera to Gould-Adams, 29 March 1897.

Fig 4. MAP SHOWING BOUNDARY INTERSECTION OF NGOTOANE RIVER



Nevertheless Gopane and Makhosi, the new Malete chief, were summoned to appear before the Commission and the exact points demarcating the border were shown to them. By 1898 the fence, erected jointly by the authorities, had almost been completed along the sixty-five miles between the Hurutshe reserve and the Protectorate.¹⁰³ The evolution of the boundary between the Hurutshe and the Protectorate provides palpable evidence for the way in which European powers in Africa imposed boundaries with little regard to "the essentially fluid socio-political situation prevailing in [those] localities".¹⁰⁴

This act of colonial intervention had a significant impact on the economy of the reserve as well as artificially partitioning people who had for centuries shared a common culture and historical experience. The Hurutshe did manage to retain some cultural and social links with their kinsmen over the border, though they never retained the same degree of political unity as did the Kgatla, who were also divided by the colonial border.¹⁰⁵

Shuping's community to the north of Gopane was in an even more vulnerable position. After crossing into the Transvaal in 1882 Shuping and his brother Kontle were engaged in constant cross-border raids during which ploughs, wagons, cattle and guns were looted from each other's communities. Eventually the authorities of the Transvaal and Bechuanaland collaborated to bring the feuding brothers together and a "peace" was agreed on in 1887, and stolen property

¹⁰³B.N.A. HC 157/1, no.7, Gould-Adams to Milner, 4 February 1898.

¹⁰⁴A.I. Asiwa ju, (ed)., Partitioned Africans, p.8. For an account of the evolution of this section of the boundary see J. Drummond and A. Manson, "The Evolution and Contemporary Significance of the Bophuthatswana (South Africa) - Botswana Border", in D. Rumley and J. Minghi (eds), The Geography of Border Landscapes, (London 1990).

¹⁰⁵See F. Morton, "Chiefs and Ethnic Unity in Two Worlds - the Bakgatla бага Kgafela of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the Transvaal, 1872-1966", in Asiwa ju (ed.), Partitioned Africans. The Rolong were also sliced apart by the boundary.

returned to its rightful owners.¹⁰⁶ Shuping's followers were further impeded from successfully resettling by a prolonged negotiation over what land they should occupy and on what basis it should be settled. Initially they were given half of a government farm, Hartebeestfontein 195, on which to settle. Shuping in 1888 then requested that this farm, together with an adjoining one, Vinkrivier, be granted to him as a location. Snyman supported his request but in 1892 it was refused by the government which gave Shuping the offer of purchasing (from Snyman) Vinkrivier, which he did, final transfer being effected only in 1894.¹⁰⁷

While these various negotiations ensued Shuping moved his followers onto half of Vinkrivier. His problems were by no means over. Firstly there was little water on either farm and Shuping had to sink wells, a costly affair that necessitated in addition the purchase of dynamite for soil blasting. Grazing was also poor though Shuping's people partially resolved this by moving cattle onto unoccupied government and white-owned land nearby. In 1892 however a J.J. Visser bought the other half of Vinkrivier from its original owner, Daly, an Englishman. Visser it appears tried to force Shuping to allow him access to his water in return for allowing his stock to run on his portion of Vinkrivier. Failing this Shuping should pay a heifer per cattlepost per year to the new owner. Shuping rejected both suggestions, claiming Daly had not in fact sold the other half of Vinkrivier at all.¹⁰⁸ Shortly thereafter Shuping found Visser's goats drinking near his wells which caused him further irritation.

¹⁰⁶B.N.A. HC 12/19, Enclosure in despatch no.61G, Lieut. Bates to O.C. Bechuanaland Police, 14 March 1887; Evidence taken and Agreement signed by Chiefs Shuping and Kontle before Lieut. Bates (B.P. Police) and G. van Niekerk, Commissioner South-western Border, 9 March 1887.

¹⁰⁷Report re. Acquisition and Tenure of Land, 1903, p.29.

¹⁰⁸T.A. SN vol.19 r 1433/91, F. Wepener to Superintendent of Native Affairs, 26 December 1891.

At the same time Shuping faced demands from the private owner of the other half of Hartebeestefontein for the return of allegedly stolen animals. Snyman intervened to try to resolve the disputes by trying to define the "halves" of the two farms, but he hoped in the interim that the government would buy up both farms and create the location he proposed. The friction experienced between the white farmers and Shuping persisted between 1892 and 1894, in addition to which Shuping ran foul of the authorities. Firstly Wepener took exception to the "brutal" manner in which he was treating his white neighbours and then the public prosecutor in Zeerust attempted to prosecute Shuping in 1893 for illegally charging an African (not one of his retinue) for use of land belonging to the state.¹⁰⁹

Eventually the combined weight of insecurity facing Shuping's adherents, coupled with the death of their former adversary Kontle, led their leaders to elect to return to Odi, near Gaborone in the Protectorate. This re-migration occurred in 1895 without the knowledge of the SAR authorities.¹¹⁰ Shuping died in about 1896. His son Thebe Shuping tried to get back the £100 spent on the purchase of the farm, but was deemed to have forfeited the sum. It turned out to be a stroke of good luck in an otherwise comfortless period in the history of the Bahurutse ba Shuping, for after the South African War they were allowed to resume occupation of the farm. Between 1896 and 1899 this branch of the Hurutshe augmented its strength through the incorporation of over 200 of Kontle's people.¹¹¹

The two decades prior to the South African War was a period of further adaptation internally to the demographic relocation attendant

¹⁰⁹T.A. SN vol.23 r 1307/93, F. de Villiers to P. Cronje, 19 October 1893.

¹¹⁰T.A. SN vol.41, J. Snyman to P. Cronje. 2 July 1895, appended to r 120/97.

¹¹¹HMB, 1889, p.212, Report by Wehrmann.

upon Moiloa's death, and externally to political and economic developments in the Transvaal and Bechuanaland. Earlier, in the middle decades of the nineteenth century Hurutshe responses to white rule had grown out of traditional internal social differentiation. Very few Hurutshe outside the ruling lineages accrued significant levels of socio-economic or political power. Now, the variform responses of the reserve's inhabitants cut new channels across traditional political, economic, generational and gender relationships. Perhaps the main direction of change was in the extent and range of contacts formed outside the reserve by migrants and local traders, probably most of them younger men. At the same time however the traditional authorities continued to mobilise and maintain a hold over significant elements in Hurutshe society, particularly women. Separate from these two categories was a core of converts whose numbers increased with the building of two new HMS missions at Manoane and Moeculi (Motswedi). Some communities, like Shuping's, found life in the reserve simply untenable and, pursuing a frequent Hurutshe expedient, removed themselves from the SAR.

These reactions often were complex, and did not assume an even trajectory. The traditional authorities did not simply fall back on traditional practices and ploys to maintain the allegiance of supporters, they also seized opportunities presented by the intrusion of capitalist relations into the reserve to entrench their own power and to forge new alliances. Migrant workers similarly did not expand their economic and social horizons too far beyond the reserve and made frequent backward glances to the view in the reserve. Transport-riders and progressive peasants similarly found themselves all too frequently and suddenly thrown back into a dependence on local economic undertakings to break completely from the web of social relations in the reserve. The Christian community, after years of missionary exhortations on the virtues of work and participation in a market economy, was now advised that employment on the mines led to "greed, vanity, pride, easy-living and worldliness,

dangers ... which now threaten our young church".¹¹² It was then a period of fluidity when old patterns were being destroyed and new responses were beginning to emerge, when the contradictions of traditional society based on lineage and tributary structures were giving way to struggles between new nascent classes. But whatever developments were taking place were halted or deflected by the advent of the South African War and the establishment of Crown Colony rule in the Transvaal.

¹¹²HMB, 1889, p.39, Report of visit by G. Haccius.

CHAPTER SIX - A TIME OF FLUX - THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR,
AND THE RECONSTRUCTING OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1899 - 1914

The South African war is one of the hinges upon which modern South African history turns. Especially on the highveld it swept aside a ruling class and its states; it transformed the human geography of the region, and it thrust entire communities into new political and economic relationships. The subsequent establishment of British control over the Transvaal and Orange Free State led to a period of unprecedented economic and political initiatives to transform the social order and to modernise the state, not all of which were successful. These new pressures, which are discussed in the second section, were felt and resisted by the Hurutshe, a community which by the turn of the century was enmeshed irrevocably into the South African political and economic landscape. Thus many of the features visible on the face of the Hurutshe nineteenth century political economy were etched more deeply into their society in the early twentieth. Specifically there was a general rise in productivity that both was dependent and predicated upon access to greater land-holding, a wider market and a larger degree of rural capitalisation, though countervailing forces frequently delivered fierce body blows to the Reserve's economy. The development of a more progressive Hurutshe peasantry - more commoditised and technologically advanced than before - led to a determination on their part to protect their rural base. Accordingly chiefs were looked to as the guardians of rural rights, and any assault on the institution of chieftainship was likely to arouse considerable opposition from across the social spectrum. The rising economic fortunes of a large segment of Hurutshe society was matched by a concomitant decline in the economic (and political) fortunes of the local Boer community which failed to capitalise effectively upon the efforts of the Milner government to revive agriculture in the Transvaal in the post-war period. The appearance of major aspects of the political economy of the Hurutshe in the reserve as they entered the period of "modern" South African history thus owed much to events in these immediately preceding years.

In other respects though this period can be viewed as a continuum in Hurutshe history. They had experienced British rule (albeit briefly) and the period of Crown Colony rule can be seen as the imposition of yet another regime upon them to which they were forced to make the necessary adaptations. Moreover many of the activities taking place among the Hurutshe prior to 1899 were resuscitated after the war period and continued in the early twentieth century. For many of the reserve's inhabitants the texture and tempo of life did not therefore change all that much - the important transformative developments of South African history had occurred prior to 1899 - and the Hurutshe, through essentially conservative responses, successfully safeguarded themselves against the most corrosive aspects of the transformations which were to change the pattern of rural production in South Africa in the twentieth century.

I The South African War, 1899 - 1902

The scale of this event and the considerable impact it had on many African societies demands that it be given consideration as a topic in its own right rather than a parenthetical interlude during which two white societies fought for domination of the future South African state. Moreover some of the repercussions of the war lingered on for several years and helped to shape the course of early twentieth century Hurutshe history. The causes for the conflict lie in developments which were mentioned earlier. It is not necessary to expand here upon the literature dealing with this topic, save to reiterate that the war was fought to ensure the long-term security of the gold mining industry. The "unique position of gold" Marks argues, was that it was "the money commodity necessary to underpin expanded trade" during a period of intensified European competition for markets in Africa.¹ The (still contested) degree to which various mining capitalists intervened to bring about the war and whether British aims regarding the gold-mining industry were met or

¹S. Marks, "Scrambling for South Africa", Review article, JAH, vol.23, (1982).

not, cannot detract from this essential point.

No single event has given rise to such a voluminous sub-historiography in South Africa as the misnamed "Anglo-Boer" War, yet it has been only comparatively recently that the full effects of the war on South Africa's population at large have received recognition.² Where the Tswana peoples are concerned particularly, Warwick has shown that the Kgatla, the Ngwato and the Rolong at Mafeking were deeply involved in the war. They not only performed numerous non-combatant duties for the British and Boers but frequently engaged in tasks that fell outside the ambit of their supposedly passive involvement - as spies, scouts, foragers, and occasionally in military or combatant roles. They also frequently took the initiative to attack Boer or British forces or to defend themselves from being overrun, or to plunder from unoccupied Boer farms in the Marico - Rustenburg areas.³ Morton, focussing more specifically on the Kgatla during the war period has shown how the Kgatla Chief Linchwe I used the period of military embroilment to pursue his own political and economic objectives, separate from those of the major protagonists.⁴ Despite the fact that African participation in the war is now generally held to have been extensive, there is still a need for more information, as Warwick has himself pointed out, "about the experiences of particular communities... about how communities responded to the issues of the war, the roles performed by residents in the war effort, how people's livelihoods were affected by the prevailing conditions of war, and

²This has been largely due to the efforts of Warwick and Nasson. See P. Warwick's, Black People and the South African War, 1899-1902, (Cambridge, 1983), and W. Nasson, "Doing Down their own Masters: Africans, Boers and Treason in the Cape Colony, 1899-1902" Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth Studies, vol.12, no.I, (1983) and "Moving Lord Kitchener: Black Military Transport and Supply Work in the South African War, 1899-1902," JSAS, vol.11, no.I, (1984).

³Warwick, Black People, chapters I and II.

⁴R.F. Morton, "Linchwe I and the Kgatla Campaign in the South African War, 1899 - 1902", JAH, vol.26, (1985), pp. 169-191.

how relationships between white and black communities ...developed during the period immediately before, during and after the war".⁵ A study of the Hurutshe then helps to fill one of these gaps in the mosaic of the total picture of how South Africa's various communities responded to and were influenced by the conditions of war.

A more tenuous analysis of the South African war has been forwarded by Krikler who, following an earlier suggestion by Trapido, viewed it as a period of rural class struggle between the agrarian ruling class (the Afrikaners) and the black peasantry.⁶ Krikler's argument is a stimulating though nevertheless flawed one, for while the war probably brought class antagonisms to the fore these did not necessarily divide along racial lines. The Boers cannot be viewed as a direct possessory or exploiter class, their society was both too differentiated and weak to be considered so. Similarly the Black societies, many of whom did seek to expropriate from Boer landholders, did not do so as an identifiable agrarian "underclass". Indeed it is arguable that much of the sudden booty that fell into the hands of the African rural population was appropriated by the ruling class within these groups and served to further divide rather than to unite them as an agrarian working people. Krikler's somewhat reified concept of class struggle thus fails to take account of the depth of pre-existing stratification in Boer and African societies. Again a study of Boer-Hurutshe relations between 1899 - 1902 goes some way towards indicating the complexity of this relationship under circumstances of war, and to place the events of the period in the context of the deeper time perspective provided by this study.

⁵P. Warwick (ed.) The South African War, Introduction, p.10.

⁶J. Krikler, "A Class Destroyed, A Class Restored; the Relationship of Agrarian Class Struggle to the Destruction of the Boer Landowning Class during the South African War and its Reconstitution Thereafter", University of Cape Town, Centre for African Studies Seminar Paper, 1986. Trapido's inference is contained in S. Trapido, "Landlord and Tenant", p.45.

Even before the formal outbreak of war in October 1899 the Transvaal authorities were keenly aware of the significance of maintaining military control over the Transvaal/Protectorate border region. In August Snyman undertook a brief tour of the south-eastern Bechuanaland to appraise the strength of the Protectorate's military forces. Significantly he attempted also to gauge the mood of the Tswana chiefdoms along the border and requested weapons for the Hurutshe in the reserve on the grounds that they were "eager to protect their cattle and to help the government during emergencies against any attacking power".⁷ The Boers' assumption that the far western Transvaal frontier was a crucial strategic element in the conflict proved correct when a force under Colonel Baden-Powell arrived in the Protectorate to defend Mafeking against any possible attack and to block off a possible Boer advance northwards to Rhodesia. Baden-Powell's force was given the additional task of engaging the attention of the Boer militias whilst British forces in Natal and the Cape organised themselves for the ensuing hostilities. From the Boers' position they sought to defend the frontier from an attack from British forces based in Rhodesia. Both sides then had good reasons for regarding the Transvaal's western frontier as an important theatre of operations.

Consequently in the Marico district all burghers were summoned in late September to report to Lichtenburg by P. Cronje, who had by then just been appointed as Commandant-General in the Transvaal.⁸ Here the Marico commando was organised and was sent in October to capture Lobatsi. Colonel Plumer's force from Rhodesia was stopped from any southward advance and the colonial town of Mafeking was placed under siege until May 1900. Further north, as part of a general plan to control the railway line from Bulawayo to Mafeking, the Boers made concerted attempts to lay their hands on Mochudi, Palapye and

⁷T.A. NSH vol.59, sr181/99, J. Snyman to P. Cronje, 22 August 1899.

⁸ T.A. SD.vol.112, p.612, P. Cronje to J. Snyman, 28 September 1899.

Mahalapye, plans which were thwarted largely by the tenacity of the Kgatla and the Ngwato in defending their territories from Boer molestation.⁹ Hence several dramatic episodes were played out either close to or directly within the Hurutshe homeland which were bound to affect matters among them.

Firstly the Hurutshe took the opportunity to arm themselves on a scale unprecedented since the 1840s. Much of this was at the instigation of the British. After the surrender of Cronje's forces to Lord Roberts in February 1900 the British Chief of Staff occupied Johannesburg and Bloemfontein and established a rudimentary administration over the Transvaal. The Afrikaners evacuated or were cleared out of Zeerust and Charles Levey was appointed as resident magistrate in the district in May 1901. In October Levey and a Capt. Pringle moved to Dinokana, to be of greater assistance to the military forces under Lord Methuen which were attempting to exterminate Boer commandoes, several of which had established a base in the Enselsberg area of the Marico and had on previous occasions raided Dinokana and Gopane for food supplies. Levey consequently organised for the arming of "loyal natives on this border for their protection from the commandoes and to watch for every movement towards the railway".¹⁰ The number of guns that were issued is not mentioned but after the war 249 guns were returned to the military authorities, probably significantly fewer than those issued twelve months previously.¹¹ Jensen, who maintained a rather precarious existence in Dinokana throughout the war, wrote that by October 1901 "all the blacks in Dinokana are armed".¹²

⁹For further accounts of these activities see Warwick, Black People, pp.30-51; Morton, "Linchwe I".

¹⁰ T.A. Law Department (LD) vol.22 m.952, Report by C. Levey, 20 October 1901; LD vol.21 m.590, C. Levey to Secretary, Law Department, 4 October 1901.

¹¹ T.A. Magistrate Marico 5/1/3 no.3, E. Stubbs to OC S.A. Constabulary 8 October 1902.

¹² HMB, 1902 p.99. Report from Dinokana.

The second instance of Hurutshe involvement stemmed from this sustaining attitude on the part of the British authorities. The Hurutshe, like the Kgatla (in particular), plundered openly from Boer homesteads in the Marico. This was made possible not only from the sudden bounty in guns but also from the carte blanche given to Hurutshe chiefs to do so. In late 1900 Chief Gopane was summoned to Mafeking by a Captain Harding who instructed him to loot freely from Boer farms in the district, a command which was issued again in 1901 at Manoane by a Lieutenant-Colonel Churchwood, Commander in Marico. Armed and under military orders to loot, Gopane's people took the opportunity to capture a number of cattle, horses and donkeys from the Boers - about 48 animals in all, though once again the total was probably greater as this was the figure given after the war when restitution was being made to "loyal" Boers in the Marico. However farms in the Marico district by this time had been almost denuded by the Kgatla who had been raiding consistently since 1900 and there was probably only a limited number of livestock left on white-owned land by late 1901. Two of Gopane's followers lost their lives in looting expeditions.¹³ There is only one recorded case of stock being looted by Dinokana residents during the war though after the evacuation of Zeerust in 1900 Chief Israel appropriated 14 sacks of wheat left in the town.¹⁴ Yet again this represents probably only a fraction of the total that was pillaged. After the war Gopane claimed £1460 in compensation for property allegedly commandeered by the Boers and Israel £200 for oxen which died of lungsickness whilst in the employ of the British forces. The sums claimed may have been excessive (the Native Commissioner E. Stubbs certainly sought to disallow Gopane's claim) but full restitution was probably made

¹³ T.A. SNA vol.48 no.1644, Native Commissioner Rustenburg to SNA, 22 August 1902; Statement given by Gopane to E. Stubbs at Zeerust, 11 August 1902.

¹⁴ T.A. SNA vol.46 no.1125, W. Southwood to G. Lagden, 28 June 1902.

according to policy laid out in 1902.¹⁵

A third general consequence of war was that the Hurutshe actually participated (or were forced to participate) in military skirmishes. When the war broke out the Hurutshe hedged their bets and appeared to support neither side. As the pattern of British dominance became clear they backed the emergent victors and were considered by the British to have been "loyal" from the start of the war. But this is very much a retrospective view. According to Southwood (admittedly an untrustworthy witness) the Hurutshe "leaned towards the Boers" in 1900 and were incensed at him for "leading in" Plumer's column from Ramatlabama to Mafeking.¹⁶ More reliable as evidence for pro-Boer sentiment is the fact that in March 1902 the Hurutshe leaders felt bound to petition the SNA "owing to misrepresentations or misunderstandings on behalf of some people (that we) were in disfavour with our government".¹⁷ The petitioners assured the SNA that the "confidence established between our people and the ruling authorities" would persist. Ferdinand Jensen also reported that the Hurutshe "had the reputation of being allies of the Boers".¹⁸ The Hurutshe were not alone in adopting such an attitude. Lentswe's Kgatla initially refused to be drawn into supporting the British war effort. Such a stance immediately incurred the suspicion of the British authorities who assumed any Africans not openly supporting them automatically were enlisted to the Boer cause.¹⁹ Some support for the Boers, it is safe to suggest, was located around the mission station. British suspicion and actions directed against the HMS mission stations in the Transvaal may have been excessive (many

¹⁵ T.A. SNA 5/1/6 p.269, E. Stubbs to Native Commissioner, Rustenburg, 8 October 1904; NA Circular no. 1516/02 of 11 September 1902. Also see Krikler, "A Class Destroyed", pp.18-19.

¹⁶ T.A. SNA vol.46, no.1125, W. Southwood to G. Lagden, 28 June 1902; Southwood to Baden-Powell, 28 June 1902.

¹⁷ T.A. SNA vol.25, no.775, Petition forwarded by Secretary, Law Department to SNA, 31 March 1902.

¹⁸ HMB, 1906, no.1, p.10

¹⁹ See Warwick, Black People, p.39.

stations were closed down and several missionaries and their families incarcerated on St. Helena, Ceylon and Bermuda) but nevertheless there was active support given by some missionary families to the Boers. For example Jensen's son Thomas served as a telegraphist for the Marico Boers besieging Mafeking and his son-in-law Christoph Penzhorn (also of a missionary family) served as an adjutant with Cronje and was captured at Pardeburg in 1900.²⁰ Some of the mission converts might well have taken on such pro-Boer sympathies.

Thus either by choice or coercion several Hurutshe assisted the Boers in the early stages of the war. One of Snyman's last acts before departing was to call up 40 Hurutshe men who were to report to the landdrost at Lichtenburg to guard or work on the farms of burghers in arms. More men were called up over the following six months, mainly to safeguard farms.²¹ When the British gained supremacy in the region they summoned the Hurutshe chiefs to Mafeking in the latter half of 1900 and gave instructions that the Hurutshe should prevent Boer commandos from raiding the railway line between Mafeking and Ramoutswa, a task which they were reported to have performed admirably.²² The importance of the Hurutshe to the British war effort in the western Transvaal was emphasised when Levey and Pringle moved to Dinokana in 1901 to "stiffen the resistance" of the Hurutshe who were becoming increasingly alarmed by the proximity of starving Boer commandos who viewed the good crops in the location as a potential commissariat.²³ In December 1901 about a dozen Boers rode into Dinokana to obtain food. A skirmish ensued during which

²⁰ HMB, 1902, pp.198-199; 1900, pp.109

²¹ T.A. SN vol.112, p.803, Superintendent of Natives to J. Snyman, 25 October 1899; HMB, 1900, p.108, Report from Dinokana.

²² T.A. LD vol.24, no.1885, C.Levey to Secretary, Law Department, 19 November 1900

²³ T.A. LD vol.22 no.952, Levey to Secretary, Law Department, 20 October 1901; no.1123, Levey to Secretary, Law Department, 22 October 1901.

Pringle was captured, then rescued by a group of armed Hurutshe. Six Boers were wounded, one of whom collapsed dramatically in Jensen's house where he later died. The Boers threatened to retaliate by razing Dinokana but they were too disorganised and enfeebled by this stage to carry through such threats.²⁴ No wonder then that the Hurutshe's efforts in the war were considered to have been "exemplary" by the British authorities who gave close consideration to the various requests (for compensation for example) made by chiefs after the war.²⁵

Fourthly and finally, the circumstances of war gave several individuals the chance to settle a few old scores and to exploit a number of favourable opportunities. For example a Hurutshe resident on a farm of one of the Sephton brothers, one Marruran Molotsane, had eighteen cattle looted from him by followers of Shuping's Hurutshe just across the border. On investigation the authorities discovered that Marruran had been entrusted with four cows on the departure of Shuping's retinue in 1895 but had not returned them. Such acts of intra-African expropriation confute to some extent the view of the South African war as a period of coalescing class interests when a rural African populace acted in concert to dispossess the Boer landowning class. In addition the neutrality of a number of "loyal" Boers in the Marico was acknowledged by the Hurutshe leaders who either left them alone or promptly returned looted cattle to them once their status had been made clear by the British authorities.²⁶ Immediately after the war in October 1902 the

²⁴ HMB, Report for 1902, pp 99-100.

²⁵ T.A. SNA vol.48, no.1644, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, memo. re Looted Cattle in Possession of Chief Gopane, 13 August 1902.

²⁶ T.A. SNA vol.48, no.1694, Affidavit submitted by Chief Gopane, 11 August 1902. Gopane stated in this document that "I have returned fourteen head of cattle to a Mr Theneyesen who resides near Zeerust (because).... Major Madoc (sic) advised me that Mr Theneyesen had always been loyal to the British cause".

Native Commissioner in Zeerust reported that fifteen Boer families "returned to the Dinokana Stadt and have taken up their abode there having prior to the outbreak of war been granted occupation there".²⁷ This picture invalidates the relationship of "alienation and oppression" between white and black that Krikler presents as a given reality prior to the war. It does on the other hand correlate with the view that Boer-Hurutshe relations were peppered with instances of mutual co-operation even up to the end of the nineteenth century. Not surprisingly Stubbs regarded the granting of refuge to Boer families by African societies as a "dangerous precedent".

On the other hand there was a clear instance in the Marico of the kind of revanchist attitudes that Krikler sees as surfacing in the war period. This occurred on the farm of the Hamms (a German family of missionary origins) at Abjagtaskop just after the commencement of the war when J.H.E. Hamm was shot dead by two of his farm servants who, in the company of another farm hand, proceeded to loot the farmhouse. The testimony given by witnesses at the trial after the war indicates that the act was linked to general conditions of disorderliness created by largescale Kgatla looting taking place in the northern Marico at the time.²⁸ Lastly Southwood found that the war offered several avenues to further his venality; firstly to sell arms to the Hurutshe in the reserve and secondly to acquire a contract for the sale of grain to the British garrison in Mafeking.²⁹

²⁷T.A. Magistrate's Reports Marico, 5/1/1, no.14, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 11 November 1902.

²⁸J.H.E. Hamm Collection, Argief viv West Transvaalse Geskiedenis, Q. Postma Library, Potchefstroom Universiteit vir C.H.O, pp.11-13.

²⁹T.A. SNA no.1125/02. Statement by A.J. Wills, 25 February 1904; W. Southwood to Baden-Powell, 28 June 1902.

In the whole the war brought a halt to certain developments in the Marico district. Productive activities on white-owned farms declined considerably. The suspension of farming operations and rent obligations, stock losses and rising land prices made a return to the land a significantly less attractive prospect³⁰. It took several years of determined state intervention before white agriculture was to revive and former exploitative relationships were resumed. This offered a breathing space for rural communities like the Hurutshe to gain a hold over productive resources and partially to restructure relations of production in and around the reserve. Former relationships thus took a while to emerge after the war and perhaps never carried the same degree of violence and coercion that characterised pre-war relationships between the Hurutshe and their white neighbours. As Krikler has noted the mood of the rural Transvaal changed in the years immediately following the war when African peasants and farmworkers were reported to be recalcitrant and unwilling to accept forms of authority to which they had been formerly subject.³¹ In addition the Hurutshe had forged a close relationship with the British authorities by the war's end and might have expected to receive favourable treatment, a sentiment expressed in the petition to the Secretary of the Law Department in 1902 where the Hurutshe chiefs hoped for a "continuance of the confidence established between our people and the ruling authorities".³² However the path to a new political and economic equilibrium and to further progress was slightly more difficult than the Hurutshe leaders might have thought in 1902.

³⁰See Krikler, "A Class Destroyed", pp.13-16. A very similar pattern emerged in the O.F.S. See Keegan, Transformations, pp.45-50.

³¹Krickler "A Class Destroyed", pp.10-17. See also TDD, vol.239, Annual Report for the Commissioner for Native Affairs, 1903, where Sir G. Lagden reported that during 1902-03 Africans had "practically lost all touch with the Government and were practically out of control" p.2.

³²T.A. SNA vol.25, no.772, Petition forwarded by Secretary Law Department to SNA, 31 March 1902.

II New Pressures, New Adaptations; Hurutshe Society and Economy
1902-1914

a) The Aims of Reconstruction.

Lord Milner's vision for the reconstruction of the Transvaal after the war consisted of two broad strategies. Firstly it was essential not only to restore the mining industry to pre-war levels of production but also to lay the basis for increased production through the provision of adequate labour and a firmer economic infrastructure in South Africa. Thus Chinese labour was introduced to fill the growing demand while new forms of labour recruitment were being established in the Transvaal, and considerable effort and capital was directed towards the construction of railways and the creation of a South African Customs Union. Alongside these measures the State attempted to restore agriculture by inducing British settlers to farm in the Transvaal and by re-establishing Boer farmers on the land and providing them with relief and the necessary capital to begin farming operations. The fostering of a British "yeoman" class of farmer might simultaneously reduce the numerical imbalance between Britain and Boer in rural society and might spur the Boers to greater productivity and ultimately to a sense of loyalty to the imperial power. While historians have tended to agree about the aims of the Milner government, its achievements nevertheless have been the subject of intense debate. Denoon's seminal work on reconstruction argued that Milner's programme failed to address the problems of the Afrikaner dispossessed leading them to join with Het Volk in opposition to the reconstruction government.³³ Denoon was challenged by Marks and Trapido who saw Milner's policy as successful in the sense that he set in place the main scaffolding of the capitalist edifice in South Africa that ultimately would draw large

³³D. Denoon, A Grand Illusion.

numbers of British settlers to the Transvaal.³⁴ In their view Het Volk was a willing collaborator in the advancement of British interests. Later writers, partly, if not entirely, unable to resolve these two contradictory views, have tended rather to try and separate out industrial from rural development or to focus on regional analyses which permit of both "success" and "failure" in reconstruction.³⁵

The African societies of the Transvaal figured significantly in the State's plan for the creation of a new order; indeed as Jeeves has pointed out, the Native Affairs Department answered more to the interests of mining capital than to its own government.³⁶ If white farming was to be revived and the mineowners provided with labour then it was imperative to settle Africans in clearly defined locations and to set in place the mechanisms which would effectively draw labour to the industrial centres. A Land Commission consequently was established in 1903 to look into the forms and terms of land tenure prevalent among Africans in the Transvaal and to identify the rightful occupiers of land. In 1904 a Transvaal Labour Commission began proceedings and a Native Location Commission was appointed to determine the precise boundaries of locations and to investigate claims to locations made by various chiefs in the Transvaal.³⁷

On a broader perspective the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903-1905 travelled throughout the colonies examining relations between whites and Africans particularly in regard to the separation of land and the distribution of labour, and tried to arrive at some

³⁴S. Marks and A. Trapido, "Lord Milner and the South African State", History Workshop, no. 8, (1979).

³⁵See C. Ballard, "Reconstruction and the Agricultural Revolution in the Transvaal: The Origins of State Intervention and Modernisation in South African Farming, 1902-1910", Paper to 8th Biennial Conference of the South African Historical Society, 1985; D. Yudelman, The Emergence of Modern South Africa, (Cape Town 1983), J. Bottomley, "Barren Spaces and Terrible Gnawing Hunger: The Milner Government and Reconstruction", Unpublished Paper, 1982.

³⁶A. Jeeves, Migrant Labour in South Africa's Mining Economy, (Johannesburg, 1985), pp.149-150.

³⁷These three commissions were the Report re. Acquisition and Tenure of Land, 1904, (Previously cited), the Native Location Commission of 1904-1908 and the Transvaal Labour Commission, 1904, CD 1897.

uniform "native" policy. This Commission, chaired by Sir Godfrey Lagden, Commissioner for Native Affairs in the Transvaal, strongly recommended a halt to further purchase of land by Africans, a sentiment that was passed down firmly to Lagden's Native Commissioners in the Transvaal. Furthermore Africans were obliged to register their land holdings in Trust with the Commissioner for Native Affairs, causing several African land owners to lose land because they could not substantiate their claims.³⁸ In 1905 a Supreme Court judgement reversed the law regarding the necessity for Africans to register land holdings, and a counter ordinance issued by the Legislative Council was disallowed ³⁹, renewing the confidence of Transvaal's African population in their right to continue land purchases, even in communal title, from 1906 onwards. Nevertheless the segregationist principles which infused official thinking, and the denial of franchise rights for Africans, are notable features of the reconstruction era. In this sense one needs to question the extent to which the reconstruction state introduced far-reaching changes among African societies in the Transvaal. In many respects the legislation and official thinking which ran through the SAR state permeated "Native Policy" in the reconstruction era. The only difference was that the British brought to their administration a degree of organisation and efficiency which were the hallmarks of British rule generally rather than any preconceived plan on Milner's part for the control of Africans in the Transvaal, specifically in the post-war period.

b) Relations with the Transvaal Colonial State: "A plethora of Instructions".

The State's determination to re-order relationships with the Colony's Africans is reflected quite clearly in its dealings with the Hurutshe. The degree of state interference reached an apogee in the

³⁸ S.A. Native Affairs Commission, 1903-1905, Cape Town, 1905, 5 vols.

³⁹ Transvaal Administration Reports, Native Affairs, 1905-1906 A.12.

first few years after the imposition of Crown Colony rule. British military and civil authorities had entrenched themselves in the Reserve during the War period and the first clash of interests arose out of the "dual administration" to which the Hurutshe were subject immediately after. This confusion arose out of the continued jurisdiction wielded by the South African Constabulary (S.A.C.) and the local Native Affairs Commissioner and Resident Magistrate in Zeerust (Ernest Stubbs and Colonel Levey). To add to this tangle of joint authority the Police forces at Zeerust, Lobatse and Gaborone all issued orders to Gopane's Hurutshe prompting a plea from the chief that he "did not know whom to listen to".⁴⁰ In addition to this there was a certain amount of overlapping jurisdiction between the Magistrate's Court and the Native Commissioner's Court, and instances where cases rightly should have been held in the Commissioner's Court had been heard in the former.

Complaints about the hardship of "dual control" persisted until 1906 when Windham, the Secretary for Native Affairs, ordered an investigation into various complaints received from the Hurutshe chiefs. On investigation it was revealed that the SAC appeared to be undermining the local authority of chiefs by requesting statements and evidence for alleged transgressions already reported to the Native Commissioner, by prohibiting the felling of trees, by bathing in the local water reservoirs and seducing the local girls.⁴¹ Stubbs summarised the situation in his report by stating that the Hurutshe were "exposed to a plethora of instruction at the hands of too many officials"⁴². The general unpopularity of the SAC in the Marico was summed up by a local (English) farmer who described them as "Tommies who draw 5 shillings a day and skoff, know nothing of the language, country, law or people, and prove of profit to nobody but

⁴⁰T.A. LTG (Lieutenant-Governor) vol.127, 110/69, Gopane to SNA, 15 June 1904.

⁴¹T.A. LTG vol.127, 110/114, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith (Native Commissioner, Western Division) 17 November 1905.

⁴²T.A. LTG vol.127, 110/114, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 6 March 1906.

the local storekeepers".⁴³ The activities of the SAC in the Marico district finally attracted the attention of the Governor, Lord Selborne, who instructed the SNA to issue the SAC with a clear set of instructions relating to matters affecting Africans resident in the locations. To judge from the lack of further reference to the SAC the Hurutshe did not suffer from their attentions after 1906.

Another source of disagreement arose out of measures taken by the authorities to stem animal diseases, particularly Rhodesian Redwater or East Coast Fever which swept through the region in 1904-1905. The Bechuanaland Police issued Gopane with an instruction dated the 28th May 1904 not to bring any cattle across into the Protectorate but proceeded to shoot a number of Hurutshe cattle captured at Legavans Kloof cattle post the very next day. Gopane justifiably complained that his orders to remove cattle could not possibly have been effected in a day. Lagden pressed the Lieutenant-Governor to apply for compensation on behalf of Gopane but whether the matter was taken further is not clear.⁴⁴

In the same year the government managed to convince the Hurutshe chiefs Gopane and Israel Moilola to erect a fence around the reserve, a major undertaking that required the installation of 210 miles of fencing which kept over 200 men busy for over four months. The Hurutshe agreed to pay £1,400 for the fencing which they were prepared to do because, in Stubbs' words, "they wished to save their splendid herds from being decimated by East Coast Fever".⁴⁵ A small portion between Maatjies Vallei (in the Reserve) and the white farms Nooitgedaacht and Tweefontein was left unfenced to ensure

⁴³UWL, Gubbin's Collection, J. Gubbins to B. Tufnell, 14 October 1904.

⁴⁴T.A. LTG Box 40, 70/27, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 6 June 1904; E. Edwards (Lt/Cpl. B.P.P. Lobatse) to Gopane, 25 May 1904; G. Lagden to Lieut-Governor, 15 June 1904.

⁴⁵ T.A. Magistrates' Reports Marico 5/1/6, p.137, E. Stubbs to Director of Agriculture, 26 August 1904; NAD Annual Report 1904, p.24.

the continuance of the "long-standing arrangement" regarding the free interchange of grazing between white farmers and African pastoralists in the reserve ⁴⁶. However, during the course of this construction doubts arose as to the ownership of Maatjies Vallei and the Reserve itself, (see below) and the Hurutshe labourers threatened to withdraw from the enterprise altogether while the status of their land was undecided. When it became evident that this issue could not be quickly resolved, work was recommenced. By the end of 1904 the fencing of the reserve had been completed. Certainly the move may have brought benefits for the Hurutshe in the long-term. In the short-term, according to the Native Affairs Department report for 1905, taxes in the reserve were down because of the expenditure incurred and because "several hundreds were debarred from proceeding to work to earn money for the payment of their taxes".⁴⁷

Another immediate counter effect of the fencing was to hinder the passage of livestock out of the reserve and onto drinking pools on white-owned land to which the Hurutshe formerly had access. In addition severe restrictions were imposed on the movement of livestock between 1905-1907 leading to stock deterioration in the northern parts of the bushveld in the reserve.⁴⁸ As mentioned above the fencing of the Reserve called into question its precise borders which led in turn to an unsuccessful search for documentation regarding the original land grant. When this could not be found the Reserve was registered as Government land, thus bringing it into line with most African reserves or locations in the Transvaal. This change in status did not alter the system of communal tenure which prevailed previously, though it did serve to limit chiefs' jurisdiction over trading and prospecting in the location. A good deal of irritation was also caused by the imposition by the government of further burdens upon the Hurutshe in these early

⁴⁶ T.A. Magistrates' Reports Marico, 5/1/6 p.302, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 9 October 1904.

⁴⁷ Transvaal NAD Reports 1905, p.24.

⁴⁸ T.A. SNA vol. 375 no.2559, H. Robertson (Act. Native Commissioner, Zeerust) to R.M. Zeerust, 13 July 1907.

years. Most damaging was the infliction of a one pound per annum Poll Tax on every adult male African, raised to two pounds in 1904. Polygamist males had to pay an additional amount of two pounds tax.⁴⁹ In 1904 Pass Officers were appointed in the reserve to check on the movement of Africans out of the district. The purpose of these Pass Regulations was to ensure that agricultural labour was confined within the various agricultural districts of the Transvaal, and Africans had to pay a sum of one shilling in order to receive a valid pass. In 1904-1905 the revenue from Poll Tax, pass applications and miscellaneous revenue on Africans yielded a total of £653,678, approximately £237,000 more than the profits from tax on the gold mines for the same period, and approximately a sixth of the total revenue of the Transvaal Colony.⁵⁰

In 1907 Lord Selborne, who took over as High Commissioner from Milner in 1905, embarked on a tour of the Western Transvaal. His intention was to talk with African chiefs and their representatives to curb signs of rising discontent among rural Africans, of precisely the kind being exhibited by the Hurutshe at this time. The Hurutshe travelled en masse to Zeerust where their chiefs addressed Selborne bringing to his attention various grievances for which they sought redress. They drew particular attention to the effects of the Poll and Dog taxes, and to the hardships caused by restrictions on the sale of firearms and movement of stock. In an awesomely patronising response Selbourne, billing himself as "The Great Father", stressed that he could offer little hope that essential regulations would be altered as the "white man was wiser than the natives in these matters".⁵¹ However Selborne tried to treat some of their less substantial complaints positively. The event itself provides an indication of the disenchantment experienced by the Hurutshe and the

⁴⁹ T.A. SNA vol.375 no.2554, Message from Lord Selbourne to Chiefs in Zeerust district, 6 July 1907.

⁵⁰ T.A. Enclosure in LTG vol.127, 110/115, P. Molteno to W. Churchill 19 December 1906; Transvaal Colony Reports, 1904/05, Auditor-General's Report, Annexure A.

⁵¹ Rand Daily Mail, 8 July 1907.

state's determination nevertheless to superimpose colonial legislation firmly over rural reserve-based Africans.⁵²

But the real gravamen of the petition presented to Selbourne, which in turn even more clearly indicates the government's resolution to reorganise political relationships among rural societies in the Transvaal, concerned the recent deposition of Chief Israel Moiloa in Dinokana. When Ikalafeng died in 1893 his appointed heir, Abraham Pogiso was a minor and Ikalefeng's brother Israel Moiloa took over as regent. In 1906 the government decided to re-instate Pogiso who was now old enough to take over as chief. However, Israel opposed the move on the grounds that he had "raised up seed" on behalf of Ikalafeng and produced an heir with Ikalafeng's chief wife - as Moklgatle had done in the 1840s. As this boy was only eleven years old, Israel considered that he should continue as regent for the chieftdom. However the reason for the authorities' support for Pogiso were not seen in terms of who was the legitimate ruler. Indeed Pogiso had been eligible for chiefship three years previous to the dispute but his claim had never been advanced. The underlying motive for getting rid of Israel was that he was considered "unfit" for rule on the grounds that he was a drunkard and had been either unwilling or unable to collect taxes in Dinokana over the 1904-1906 period⁵³. In addition the authorities were swayed by missionary reports of his antagonism to Christian converts.⁵⁴ If indeed Israel's claim was known to have had a basis in Hurutshe custom (as it probably was) it was overridden by the deeper need to regulate the affairs of African rural communities. In April 1906 therefore the Executive Council approved Pogiso's appointment as chief, believing that the majority of Hurutshe at Dinokana would support Pogiso's claim and that Israel would quietly relinquish authority.

⁵²See SNA vol.395, 2554/07, Petition to Lord Selbourne by Zeerust Chiefs, 6 July 1907; Rand Daily Mail, 8 July 1907.

⁵³T.A. Gov vol.1090, 50/10/07, Iagden to Selbourne, 29 January 1907; E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 29 January 1906.

⁵⁴HMB no.6, 1908, p.177, Report on "Bechuana Missions" by E. Harms.

This was not to be however. Israel's support was far greater than Stubbs had estimated. By 1907 he had managed to mobilise the majority behind him principally by representing Pogiso as a Christian who would deny his people the right to traditional practices such as bogadi and rainmaking.⁵⁵ Moreover Pogiso had maintained few links with the reserve, having been baptised by Wesleyans near Pretoria and taken employment in 1902 at the Lancaster mine in Krugersdorp.⁵⁶ For six months in 1906 a chaotic situation ensued in Dinokana, with Israel refusing to give up his duties and Pogiso trying to set up his authority. Having formally appointed Pogiso, the government had to support him and to impose its authority over the recalcitrant pretender. Israel, after unsuccessfully presenting his case to Lagden in Pretoria in July 1906, sought the advice of a local attorney, Beyers, in Zeerust, who himself was warned off from taking the case by the Commissioner for Native Affairs.⁵⁷

Israel then collected £150 from his supporters and travelled personally to Cape Town where he obtained the services of Francis Peregrino, a West African who was editor of the South African Spectator and leader of the Coloured People's Vigilance Association. Peregrino came up to the Marico district to get information on the affair, before presenting a petition to the Commissioner for Native Affairs in the Transvaal.⁵⁸ This was the state of affairs when the pitso in Zeerust was convened. Shortly thereafter the state, now pushed into a corner, opted for strong action and ordered Israel's

⁵⁵ HMB no.6 1908, p.177.

⁵⁶T.A. Gov 1090, 50/10/07, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith 29 January 1906; HMB, no.6 1908 p.178.

⁵⁷T.A. Gov 1090, 50/10/07, G. Lagden to W. Windham, 26 October, 1906.

⁵⁸NIS vol. 324, r28/75, Acting Sub-Native Commissioner Zeerust to Native Commissioner Western District, 29/01/07.

removal from the reserve in January 1907.⁵⁹ But the ex-chief and his followers continued to be a thorn in the side of the government. Israel moved temporarily to Bechuanaland but his close advisors remained in the location, for which they were subsequently imprisoned for three months. His retinue moved onto two farms, Petrusdam and a portion of Leeufontein. The former was the property of Lewis and Marks with whom the Hurutshe now entered into a condition of tenure. The latter property had been purchased in 1876 by the Hurutshe but the government was not aware of this at the time. Windham was manifestly not prepared to sanction this situation and ordered the agents allegedly acting for the owners to order their removal from the farms.⁶⁰ However by January 1908 the Hurutshe had not moved, the Zeerust Magistrate reporting that "the attitude they have now taken up is one of absolute defiance to any authority".⁶¹ Israel's people informed Pogiso that they would not return to Dinokana except if Israel were to join them.

So the impasse dragged on throughout 1908 and into 1909. Israel in the meanwhile had returned to the reserve and had been moved to the Barberton district and from thence to Frederickstad location near Potchefstroom, from where in late 1909 he applied for and was granted permission to settle in Bechuanaland.⁶² The Transvaal authorities seized on this chance as a way out of the gross miscalculation made initially by Stubbs the Sub-Native Commissioner in Marico and by Jensen who, for private reasons, had wished Israel's removal. By 1908 however the position of Israel's adherents was far more secure. The fact of their purchase of the eastern half of Leeufontein had now come to light and in August 1908 they purchased another farm,

⁵⁹T.A. SNA vol.371 no.2054, W. Windham to E. Stubbs, 27 July 1907.

⁶⁰T.A. SNA vol.371 no.2054, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 3 May 1907; SNA vol.394 no.94, W. Windham to E. Stubbs, 13 January 1908.

⁶¹T.A. SNA vol.394 no.94, J.S. Leary to W. Windham, 8 January 1908.

⁶²T.A. SNA vol.442 no.2850, W. Windham to D. Jacobs, 18 September 1909; BNA S 41/3, F.W. Panzera to J.S. Leary, 28 January 1910.

Braklaagte, next to Leeufontein, for a price of £1,500.⁶³ Israel rather shrewdly dispatched five of his elders to effect the purchase who did not disclose their association with the Hurutshe chief. Had the authorities known precisely for whom the farm was being bought they would certainly have intervened to prevent it, but the realisation did not come to light until nearly a decade later.⁶⁴ It was not possible therefore to effect their removal, and in late 1910 Israel re-joined his retinue after nearly three years of separation.

The incident sheds light on a number of significant issues. Firstly, as previously noted, the purposefulness of the state to intervene and re-arrange political structures to suit its own ends reflects the typically colonial character of administration in South Africa at this time. Conversely though, the government's inability fully to realise its plans for the Hurutshe reserve indicates the essentially weak position from which it operated. From this it could be argued that this weakness was matched by the strength of Hurutshe objection to state intervention. This resilience derived from the fact that the Hurutshe in the early twentieth century was still a relatively unfragmented community which clung tenaciously to its "traditional" rural identity, specifically its sense of political independence. The attraction of chieftaincy for rural communities under stress has been explored by Beinart in the eastern Cape context. Chieftaincy "provided the kind of institutions, and set of symbols, behind which rural people would unite at a local level and stake claims to land and communal rights".⁶⁵ In a study of the Qumbu district Beinart examines the rise of popular support for the Mpondomise chieftaincy in opposition to headmen and councillors who collaborated with the

⁶³T.A. Magistrates' Reports Marico 5/1/9, J.S. Leary to W. Windham, 29 January 1909.

⁶⁴NTS vol. 324, r43/92, R.M.Marico to SNA, 18/01/19.

⁶⁵W. Beinart, "Chieftaincy and the Concept of Articulation: South Africa, 1900-1950" Canadian Journal of African Historical Studies, vol.19, no.I, (1985), p.154.

state.⁶⁶ A similar development occurred in British Bechuanaland in the 1890s where rural decline and colonial interference occasioned a surge of support for Tlhaping chiefs and a revival of "traditional practices".⁶⁷ The way in which the Hurutshe rallied to support Israel provides yet another instance of this clinging to the chiefs. Moreover in this instance the state was less able to assert its control because it could not find an effective collaborationist base around the person of Pogiso which might have split the community and undoubtedly weakened its capacity to resist.

Lastly the incident reveals the importance for African communities in the Transvaal of being able to purchase land, for this gave Israel's people a real basis from which to mount a successful defence of their political structures. It should be remembered too that this resistance was not an isolated case. For example in an almost identical case in the same period the Bahwaduba people, a Transvaal Ndebele group near Mathibestad, had refused to accept the deposition of their chief Amos Mathibe for alleged drunkenness and illegal possession of a firearm, and took the case to the Supreme Court in 1907.⁶⁸ Clearly the new government was facing, in the six or seven years following the war, a determined political and economic initiative from many Transvaal rural Africans to transform previous relationships of dependence.

⁶⁶Beinart and Bundy, Hidden Struggles, pp.106-137. Similar observations concerning chieftaincy are made in W. Beinart, "Women in Rural Politics : Herschel district in the 1920s and 1930s", in Bozzoli (ed.), Class Community and Conflict, pp.324-354.

⁶⁷Shillington, Colonisation of Southern Tswana, pp.219-223.

⁶⁸ See E. Nthithe, "The Bahwaduba Chieftaincy and the Transvaal Colony, 1903-1907" B.A.(Hons) Dissertation, University of Bophuthatswana, 1990.

The potential for this antagonistic relationship to transform itself into direct conflict was appreciated in the Marico district and beyond. Stubbs was acute to the potential for resistance to break out among "the large and savage tribes, as these in the district, whose locations adjoin those of other large savage tribes across the border".⁶⁹ The NAD reports from 1903-1906 indicate a concern to settle the African population which in 1903 was reported as "having lost all touch with the Government and [is] practically out of control".⁷⁰ In England Percy Molteno the M.P. for Dumfriesshire⁷¹ was prompted to write to Sir Winston Churchill, newly appointed as Under Secretary of State to the Colonies, about circumstances in the Transvaal. The effects of the Squatters' Law, Poll Tax and alienation of African land were likely, in Molteno's view, to place Africans "in a position far more unfortunate than that which they occupied under the late Transvaal Government".⁷² Molteno was fearful that "our troops in the Colony... would have to bear the brunt of any rising which might occur from extreme harsh treatment" of Africans in the Transvaal - an evident comparison to resistance recently mounted in Natal by chief Bambatha to the imposition of a Poll Tax similar to that in operation in the Transvaal.

A final conflict between state and traditional authorities arose over the question of traders and control over traders in the reserve. It was noted in the previous chapter that the establishment of traders set up a number of conflicting and ambiguous relationships between chiefs, traders, commoners and the state, all of which remained

⁶⁹ T.A. LTG vol.127, 110/114, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 13 June 1904.

⁷⁰ Transvaal NAD Annual Report for 1903, p.2.

⁷¹ Molteno was the son of Sir John Molteno, the former Cape Prime Minister. His sister was Betty Molteno, an active member of the Aborigines Protection Society and Anti-Slavery Society.

⁷² T.A. Enclosure in LTG 127, 110/105, P. Molteno to W. Churchill, 19 December 1906.

unresolved and indeed were further complicated during the period of Crown Colony rule. In the early twentieth century most of these problems coalesced around the person of William Southwood. In 1902 chief Israel objected to Southwood's presence at Dinokana. No clear reasons were furnished by the chief but it was probably because he was in debt to Southwood and at this time was forging closer links with Indian traders in the Stadt. Stubbs supported Southwood's removal, ostensibly on the grounds that Southwood had a reputation for selling liquor in the reserve, though subsequently it came to light that Stubbs had been influenced by his clerk to grant a General Dealer's license to a relative (of the clerk's) in place of Southwood. Stubbs later was obliged to refuse this application but Southwood in the interim was banished from Dinokana. In 1904 however Israel and some of his council suddenly expressed a desire for Southwood's reinstatement. Stubbs and the Native Commissioner for Rustenburg, C. Griffith, objected strongly to this, alleging that Southwood had offered Israel a £300 bribe and that Southwood had gained the chief's support by satisfying his well-known predilection for brandy. This was probably a correct surmise for Southwood still had a store at Manoane (site of the infamous "Red Room") and had managed to circumvent the regulation banning him from Dinokana by obtaining a Travelling Trader's license, valid throughout the Transvaal, which allowed him to sell in the stadt from the back of his wagon. Initially Israel's petition for Southwood's reinstatement was refused but Griffith was obliged finally to grant a General Dealer's License in 1905 realising it was the only way of "bringing him (Southwood) to some extent under my jurisdiction".⁷³

These events not only soured the already deteriorating relationship between officials of the Native Affairs Department and Israel but also led to a schism in the chiefs council at Dinokana, several of

⁷³T.A. SNA vol.46, C. Griffith to Acting SNA, 7 February 1905; Magistrates' Reports, Marico, 5/1/6, p.328, E. Stubbs to W. Southwood, 4 November 1904.

whom wanted Southwood permanently out of their section of the reserve. More significantly it led to greater official control over trading activities and the introduction of a more uniform policy regarding trading in African areas throughout the Transvaal.⁷⁴ The authorities' concern was not confined to getting reputable traders and to limiting chiefs' jurisdiction over trading matters but also to ensure that Indians and Russian and Polish Jews, in Stubbs' view, "the lowest types of trader", did not compete with English traders in the reserves.⁷⁵

c) Economic developments in the Hurutshe Reserve.

The most noticeable aspect of post-war western Transvaal economic developments was the rush to purchase land by Africans and the dominance of rentier interests which allowed Africans to attach themselves as tenants to large areas of land in the region. These two processes of acquisition and gaining access to land have been clearly documented⁷⁶ and it is not necessary to establish them in any further detail. The Hurutshe, as has been stressed, had been alert to the possibilities and the significance of land purchases from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century further purchases were made. In 1908, as has been mentioned, Israel's supporters purchased Braaklagte, thus securing them a permanence to the land.⁷⁷ In 1902 the Shuping faction of

⁷⁴See T.A. TKP, vol.96, Article 45, 1904.

⁷⁵ See T.A. SNA vol.46 no 1125, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 14 September 1904; SNA vol.291 no.2997 E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 3 September 1903. It was estimated by John Gubbins in 1904 that Jews comprised about a third of the population of Zeerust. See Gubbins Collection, J. Gubbins to B. Tufnell, 7 November 1904.

⁷⁶See Relly, "Rural Relationships"; Bundy, Rise and Fall, pp.197-216.

⁷⁷ This faction of the Hurutshe's fight for a measure of political autonomy continues at present in the form of resistance to incorporation into the modern "homeland" of Bophuthatswana. See The Star, January 12, 1989.

the Hurutshe who had returned to the Protectorate in 1898 re-migrated to the Transvaal settling on their old farm at Vinkrivier. In 1906 they purchased the eastern portion of the farm Hartebeestfontein 195, adjoining Vinkrivier, which was incorporated as part of the reserve. It was purchased by the new chief, Thebe Shuping, in community with his 1,500 followers for £700 from the government.⁷⁸ These were the only two farms purchased by the Hurutshe in the first decade of the century. During the course of 1904-05 all title deeds were transferred to the Commissioner for Native Affairs in trust for the Hurutshe communities. Except in one case (where the transfer of the farm Leeufontein could initially not be traced) there were no problems surrounding these transactions and no disputes arose between the Hurutshe and the HMS about ownership of the farms as it did in other parts of the Transvaal.⁷⁹

Access to land and cattle ownership provided the basis for a surge in productivity between 1904 (after the virulent East Coast Fever had begun to abate), and 1910. In 1905 the Hurutshe produced nearly 23,000 of the 25,000 bushels of wheat grown by Africans throughout the Transvaal. In addition, 13,500 muids of mealies were grown by Africans in the Marico and 12,000 bushels of oats out of a total of 16,608 for the whole of the Transvaal.⁸⁰ In 1906 Jensen reported that "we have already had good rains, the fields are cultivated, everything is green and promises to yield a good crop".⁸¹ This impression of the fertility of the Hurutshe reserve was confirmed in the same year by John Gubbins, a progressive "yeoman" farmer settled at Malmane, who, on a visit to the district observed that "all along

⁷⁸T.A. SNA vol.300 no.3629, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 6 February 1906.

⁷⁹T.A. Magistrate's Reports Marico 5/1//6, p.296, E. Stubbs to H. Lofthouse (Attorney) 21 October 1904; Report re. Acquisition and Tenure of Land, 1904, pp.67-68.

⁸⁰Transvaal NAD Annual Reports, 1905, p.91, Appendix no.12.

⁸¹ HMB no.8, 1907, p.353.

this valley of the Notwani... you see the women at work in the mielie fields ... weeding .. where the land can be irrigated they grew tobacco, figs, fruits of all sorts, melons and so on, it seemed to be a fertile and most well cared for place".⁸² Stock returns, though notoriously inaccurate, showed a significant increase in cattle holding in these years, leading to a shortage of boys for cattle-keeping duties in 1908.⁸³ In 1910 the Marico Native Commissioner's report mentioned that:

cattle .. are each year improving their quality by introducing a better class of bull ... The bushveld is splendid for winter grazing. All kinds of stock retain their condition during the whole year. There has been no outbreak of East Coast Fever or any other contagious or infectious disease amongst horned stock Wheat is grown on irrigable lands at Linokana and Schuilpads. At these two places the Natives are improving their methods of farming and using better class machinery and manuring the lands. If the season is a good one the grain is exported to Johannesburg ... The natives use their wagons and oxen for transporting their produce to the Zeerust railway station".⁸⁴

The accessibility of the Johannesburg market caused by the extension of the railway line to Zeerust in 1904 opened up new opportunities for Hurutshe peasant production though in about 1908 over production of citrus fruits led to a sharp fall in prices. Mr Montshosi recalled cutting back on agricultural activities in this period in response to falling prices caused by competition between Hurutshe producers.⁸⁵

⁸² Gubbins Collection, J. Gubbins to B. Tufnell, 3 February 1906.

⁸³ Transvaal NAD Annual Reports, 1904, 1905, Appendix no. 4; HMB, Report from Manokane, 1909, p.146.

⁸⁴ Blue Book on Native Affairs, 1910, Union of South Africa, UG17-1911 pp.38-39.

⁸⁵ Interview with Mr Montshosi , Dinokana, 18 June 1987.

This steady growth was matched by an inability on the part of white farmers both in the Marico and throughout the Transvaal to increase production to meet the needs of industry. Some British yeoman farmers did settle in the Marico and the more successful of the pre-war white farmers attempted to pick up where they had left off in 1899. Three families arrived from the Cape to farm in the Marico but found dryland farming and the general shortage of water in marked contrast to conditions at the Cape.⁸⁶ Even farmers like John Gubbins, the archetype of Milner's progressive class of agriculturalist, battled against unknown conditions and a shortage of capital and labour. Land was also in short supply as much of it was "divided up into little bits in the hands of many Dutch owners or .. held by big companies especially Sammy Marks".⁸⁷ In 1905 it was estimated that 1060 Africans were squatting on unoccupied white farms in the district.⁸⁸ If such an exceptionally innovative individual as Gubbins struggled to maintain a hold on the land, it is not surprising that poorer Afrikaner farmers were plunged into indigence after the war, despite the fact that Milner was solicitous to their needs. Within one generation the same Marico Afrikaner families who in the 1870s and 1880s had forged economic security around the holding of land and office had been reduced to working for wages with more prosperous white farmers like Gubbins.⁸⁹

The findings of the Transvaal Indigency Commissions highlighted the factors which had led to poverty in the first decade of the century.

⁸⁶ T.A. SNA vol.441 no.2726, A. Wynand, D. Jacobus and J.C. de Waal to Native Commissioner, Zeerust, 13 August 1909.

⁸⁷ Gubbins Collection, J. Gubbins to R. Gubbins, 6 March 1906.

⁸⁸ T.A. Magistrates' Reports Marico 5/1/6, p.479, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 1 March 1905.

⁸⁹ Gubbins Collection, J. Gubbins to B. Tufnell, 21 May 1910. This applied to the Kirstein's and Ludick's who in 1910 were employed by Gubbins.

Even before the war it was suggested that a great proportion of the agricultural population in the Marico and in other places in the Transvaal was declining into indigency worsened by the results of the Rinderpest epidemic. The war, as has been mentioned, further set back agriculture. Post-war revival was hampered by East Coast Fever, plagues, droughts in 1902-1903 especially, and by inadequate compensation for war losses. Land prices had risen with the opening up of new rail routes into the distant districts of the Transvaal - as high as £75 per morgen in some cases. Land holdings were too small and farmers in the Marico clung to cultivating winter crops in the pockets of water courses available to them, instead of stock farming, the only line of activity that appeared payable. Finally the fact of a chronic shortage of labour in the Marico permeated all witnesses' accounts to the Commission.⁹⁰ It would be apt to recall at this point Bundy's view that Africans in the Transvaal "were more able to resist demands for their labour, especially labour in unattractive circumstances" precisely because they were able to secure "a measure of extra economic leverage after the [South African] war".⁹¹

Even after the victory of Louis Botha's Het Volk party in 1907, and the subsequent attempts by this government to legislate against squatters in the interests of modernising Afrikaner farmers, the situation did not significantly improve for them. The formation of the Transvaal Land and Agricultural Bank and Agricultural Bank of South Africa enabled farmers in the Marico to tide over the bad seasons and replace their losses from East Coast Fever without having to pay high interest rates, but even so the Marico magistrate reported the general failure of the "back to the land" policy that

⁹⁰See T.A. T.G. 11- 1908, Minutes of Evidence to Transvaal Indigency Commission, 1906-1908; pp.363-364; T.G. 13 1908, Report of Transvaal Indigency Commission pp.8-13.

⁹¹ Bundy, Rise and Fall, p.208.

the formation of the Land Banks had hoped to advance.⁹² It has been suggested that the failure of the state in the decade after 1902 to address the question of poverty in the Western Transvaal contributed to the militancy of this region in the 1914 rebellion.⁹³

Even if one were to allow that the extent of African prosperity and white pauperisation may have been overestimated the general pattern points towards an increasing economic distinction between certain classes of Africans (on the one hand) and Afrikaners (on the other). The first result of this was that proletarianisation, to use Bradford's expression in reference to the situation in the South African countryside roughly a decade later, "hung like a sword of Damocles over the bulk of white masters and black servants alike, infusing their struggles with considerable hatred and despair".⁹⁴ While rentier arrangements and the emergence of a black tenancy where they existed helped to diffuse this tension, in the western Transvaal (especially those areas north and west of the co-called "maize triangle") the division between white and black occupied land was much starker and local white/Black relationships became more conflict-ridden as African communities purchased more land. Possibly the clearest enunciation of this struggle over land is in the form of a letter from M.W. Viljoen (son of the great hunter) who urged the new Prime Minister, Louis Botha, to use the dispute between Isreal and Pogiso as a pretext to seize Dinokana. Then, Viljoen pointed out:

"The government will have the Paradise of

⁹²See Report of Agricultural Land Bank of South Africa, 1912, U.G. 34-1913; Report of Transvaal Land and Agricultural Bank, 1912, UG47-1912; T.A. JUS 96 1/566/1, Annual Report of Marico Magistrate 1911.

⁹³ See J. Bottomley, "The South African Rebellion of 1914; The Influence of Industrialisation, Poverty and 'poor whiteism'", Paper to African Studies Institute, University of Witwatersrand, 1982.

⁹⁴Bradford, "A Taste of Freedom", p.60.

Marico in hand, where at least 165 [white] families can easily live. This is the first, last and only chance which the government has now, to ever get the ground back... If your honour should succeed in this our government will be a great step nearer to overcome (sic) the great poverty question".⁹⁵

The second outcome of this Black prosperity was that the vacuum in the production of staple foodstuffs for the industrialising centres of the Transvaal was filled by African producers like the Hurutshe. The state accordingly was loth to take steps which might undermine the productive capacity of this African peasantry. Research on the growth of an African peasantry, its innovativeness and durability, are by now centrally established in the framework of South Africa's historical writing. (See Introduction). The fact that the Hurutshe provide a conspicuous example of a reserve-based African community rising to meet the demands of the market and the state has been frequently demonstrated in this history. Nevertheless, without labouring the point, it should be noted again that sectors of Hurutshe society were quick to respond to the particular transforming features of early twentieth century Transvaal and South African history. This response, it should be further noted, was not a once-only reflex reaction to new opportunities, that was followed by a smooth trajectory of transition to a successful peasantry. It was made complex by sudden new economic opportunities, by changing markets, by competition, by state pressures, by entrenched features of precolonial relations, and by the tide of natural disasters and epidemics to which the area was prone. Each developing stage of new circumstances and intercessions created new lines of division and social alliances within the society and forced a reconsideration of the nature and range of contacts made with broader political, social and economic agencies and forces outside the reserve.

⁹⁵ T.A. SNA vol.378 no.3099, M.W. Viljoen to L. Botha, 31 August 1907. This request was politely refused.

d) Social Structure and Social Relations in the Reserve

In the first decade and a half of this century chiefs struggled to preserve the same degree of authority and control over their people as they had enjoyed previously. The particular concerns of the new administration and its intention to penetrate and, if necessary, to sunder traditional chiefs from their adherents led to the emergence of more sharply defined strategies. Israel, as already recounted, chose to oppose, whilst his rival Pogiso was essentially a government appointee. Gopane, after a short period, chose to co-operate. When he died on the 11th October 1904 Stubbs reported that "in the death of Gopane, the State, as well as his subjects, has sustained a great loss, for there was no more loyal, obedient and upright chief in the Transvaal.. he always respected the white man and did all he could to assist the farming community in the way of inducing his boys to go out and take service".⁹⁶ The clear division of the chiefdom into four sections (for convenience the Moilooa, Gopane, Shuping and Braklaagte communities) with differing relations with the state not only fragmented chiefly responses but contributed also to intra-Hurutshe squabbles. The old issue of the division of the reserve between the Moilooa and Gopane factions was one source of such recrimination eventually inviting the state's intervention.⁹⁷ In 1903 the Hurutshe of Manyane who had placed themselves under Gopane in 1882 attempted to break away from the old chief's control, threatening to purchase land near the Marico river and in so doing precipitating a minor crisis.⁹⁸ This faction cited Gopane's objection to the construction of the Zeerust - Lobatsi telegraph line

⁹⁶T.A. LTG vol.126, 110/71, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith n.d. Similar points were repeated by the SNA in his annual report for 1905. See Transvaal Native Affairs Dept. Annual Reports, 1905, p.4.

⁹⁷T.A. SNA vol.300, Minute Paper no.883, 6 October 1905.

⁹⁸ HMB, no.2, 1904, p.49; Report by F. Jensen.

across his territory⁹⁹ as an example of his poor qualities of leadership.

The creeping tentacles of British control began to restrict the range of privileges exercised by chiefs over the allocation of trading rights and passes, and recruitment for the mines. This limited chiefs' capacity to manipulate traditional dues and obligations to accumulate wealth which could have been channelled into capitalist enterprises.¹⁰⁰ In 1903 trader's licenses had to be issued on the recommendation of the various district Native Commissioners. Responding to the measure (which he had personally long advocated) Stubbs recorded that under the old custom "an immense amount of autocratic power [by] chiefs [was] wielded over the trader, who was entirely at the mercy of their whims and caprices". The new system Stubbs continued was "very necessary although a salient innovation and calculated to cause discontentment among the chiefs".¹⁰¹ Despite the continued illegal payment of chiefs by traders - as Windham at the time himself acknowledged, "it will go on as everybody knows" - ¹⁰² the new regulations did slowly close down this source of revenue for chiefs.

The twin concerns of labour recruitment and the issuing of passes were clarified and more closely regulated after the war. The Witwatersrand Native Labour Association was reorganised in 1900 to try and achieve complete control over the recruitment of labour, and the Native Recruiting Corporation, established in 1912, tried to

⁹⁹ T.A. SNA vol.76, no.2595, Postmaster-General to SNA, n.d.

¹⁰⁰ Other Tswana chiefs were transforming themselves into a class of local entrepreneur in these years. See for example, Q.N. Parsons, "Khama and Co. and the Jousse trouble, 1910-1916," JAH, vol. 16, 1975, pp.383-403.

¹⁰¹ T.A. SNA vol.119, no.760, memo by E. Stubbs re. Trading Rights and other Privileges, 1903.

¹⁰² T.A. SNA vol.119, no.760, W. Windham to C. Griffith, 21 April 1903.

tighten the Chamber of Mine's monopsony in the face of competitive recruiting.¹⁰³ The 'touts' of the 1890s slowly became a thing of the past, thus limiting chiefs possibilities for entering into private contractual agreements with them as co-called "runners". In addition licensed recruiting by chiefs was prohibited by 1910. It is probable however that Hurutshe chiefs retained some measure of control over the way African labour was mobilised for employment at the mines. As Jeeves has observed chiefs and headmen "were often the real operators of the [recruitment] system",¹⁰⁴ though of course the nature and extent of chiefly involvement, because it was never recognised in the official record, cannot be clearly determined. According to one informant, chief Rampeile who succeeded Gopane in 1907 (after a short regency by a relative), was active in recruiting labour for the Robinson Central Deep Mines, later part of the Crown Mines amalgamation,¹⁰⁵ a practice which was considered widespread in the western Transvaal.¹⁰⁶ Africans from the western Transvaal and the Protectorate tended to seek employment at De Beers and Koffiefontein mines in Kimberley at the turn of the century, leading to a concerted effort on behalf of the Chamber of Mines to divert the flow of labour to the reef.¹⁰⁷ The easiest way to have achieved this would have been to have entered into arrangements with chiefly authorities though the evidence for this again remains elusive. In

¹⁰³ See Jeeves, Migrant Labour, Introduction, Chapter Four.

¹⁰⁴ Jeeves, Migrant Labour, p.156. As Jeeves has explained the migrant labour system emerged as much out of African resources to proletarianisation as from legislation imposed by the state in the interests of capital.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with A. Molefi, P. Mokgatle; Motswedi, 9 September 1985.

¹⁰⁶ See S.A. Native Affairs Commission, 1903-1905, evidence of G.G. Munnik, p.489.

¹⁰⁷ See Report of the Transvaal Labour Commission, with Minority Report, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, 1903, evidence of C. Goodyear, p.285; S.A. Native Affairs Commission, 1903-05, evidence of J. Ellenberger, p.235.

1906 it was documented that 1,576 men from the Zeerust district were employed at the Reef Mines though figures indicating migrancy from this district were particularly imprecise as many men crossed into the Protectorate and boarded the train from Lobatsi for employment either at Kimberley or the Reef.¹⁰⁸ Thus in 1910 only 250 new recruits were registered through the Native Commissioner's office in Zeerust. But the total number of migrants from the district must have been higher than this. The significant point is that rural authorities, if they did not enter into alliances with capitalist enterprises, may have tried to impose labour arrangements in opposition to the private interests or designs of their adherents.

For individuals who wished to avoid or by-pass traditional authorities the gradual removal of pass-issuing privileges from chiefs eased their efforts in this regard. As has been mentioned previously, in the post-war period laws 22 and 23 of 1895 which confined labour within agricultural districts on the one hand and regulated the movement of African labour to the mines on the other, were systematically applied.¹⁰⁹ All legislation governing migrant labour on the mines was consolidated in the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911, which in addition to trying to restrict the activities of private recruiters, required workers to have a registration certificate which acted as a pass¹¹⁰. Under such circumstances the issuing of passes by chiefs represented something of an anachronism. In 1904 pass officers consequently were appointed in the reserve, partly also to check for the illegal entry of refugees from South

¹⁰⁸Transvaal NAD Annual Reports, 1906. Appendix no.3; Blue Book on Native Affairs, 1910.

¹⁰⁹D. Hindson, Pass Controls and the Urban African Proletariat, (Johannesburg, 1987), pp.22-23.

¹¹⁰ Hindson, Pass Controls, p.24.

West Africa into the Transvaal.¹¹¹ Evidence on the activities of these pass officers (and indeed a sense of the dynamics of pass controls in rural districts) is rather scanty. By 1910 however the issuing of all passes out of, or into the district, were being handled through the Sub-Native Commissioner's office.

However it would be incorrect to assume that the traditional powerholders forged links or alliances with either the state or private agencies that necessarily were detrimental to the interests of their adherents. They could be interpreted as strategies to protect or preserve the identity of the community and to secure its roots in precolonial structures of society. As studies in the rural history of the Transkei have revealed, traditional authorities frequently sought links with progressive national movements and organisations operating essentially outside the reserves¹¹² when faced with state interference or intrusion by external agencies. On the other hand the Transvaal's colonial regime's reliance on chiefly collaborators permitted unpopular or illegitimate local authorities to seek out the protective mantle of colonial overlordship in exchange for other favours. As a number of studies on resistance have pointed out though¹¹³, collaboration assumed many guises in the period of African colonial history, often masking the real intent of African leaders to preserve a measure of local autonomy and social cohesion in the face of colonial and capitalist penetration. Thus ruling groups responses were frequently ambiguous - the "price of survival in a contradictory world"¹¹⁴ and frequently susceptible to

111 T.A. LTG vol.126, 110/81, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith.

112 Beinart and Bundy, Rural Struggles.

113 A. and B. Isaacman, "Resistance and Collaboration in Southern and Central Africa", International Journal of African Historical Studies, vol.10, no.I, (1977); Crummey (ed.), Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest; S. Marks, The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa, (Johannesburg, 1986).

114 Marks, Ambiguities of Dependence, p.14.

change. As Beinart and Bundy observe in relation to the Eastern Cape, "perceptions of authority and the value of alliance changed, and were affected by shifts within the broader political economy".¹¹⁵

A significant feature of Hurutshe society during the years following the war up to 1914 was that certain chiefs, the more successful peasants and/or Christians began not only to engage in more commoditised activities and transactions but slowly became linked into broader cultures and movements. In a sense these groups were to form the nucleus of a progressive elite in Hurutshe society in the later decades of the century. The common denominator of this emergent elite was a desire for education - on their own terms. In 1904 Thomas Jensen recorded that "many of the young people here are going to the Cape Colony and to Lovedale to learn how to speak English and other things",¹¹⁶ a tendency which the Lutherans tried to counteract by improving the quality of their own schools. This had little effect however for by 1910 a missionary source cited that some Hurutshe had opposed the establishment of a HMS station at Leeufontein because they wished for an English school run by English missionaries who would more easily obtain government funding.¹¹⁷ On his visit to Dinokana in 1906 Gubbins observed that it "was quite the fashion ...to go about with a book" and that a number of Hurutshe had left to attend school at Vleeschfontein, in the north-east of the Marico district, where the Jesuit Fathers had established a station among a small Kwena community, and were offering "the best procurable" education in the Marico.¹¹⁸

These kind of pressures and choices bear some resemblance with the

¹¹⁵ Beinart and Bundy, Hidden Struggles, p.28.

¹¹⁶ HMB, no.2, 1904, p.18.

¹¹⁷ HMB, no.7, 1911, p.211, Excerpt from "Report on the year 1910".

¹¹⁸ Gubbins Collection, J. Gubbins to B. Tufnell, 3 February 1906.

way Africans in East and Central Africa attempted to control and influence the nature of their educational facilities and opportunities.¹¹⁹

Allied to this seeming rejection of the Lutheran church was the gradual appeal of Ethiopianism which began to be embraced by certain individuals from about 1905. This movement sought to capture the sentiments of African Christians who considered that missions and European education undermined African customs and traditions and denied Africans the opportunity of taking their rightful place in the Church hierarchy. In the eastern Cape Ethiopian leaders in 1903 had spearheaded opposition to the local councils on the grounds that they would not express the "interests of the people" as they would be filled by state appointed headmen. So successful were they in mobilising opinion that many headmen even swung to opposing the council system.¹²⁰

It was due to such achievements that the British officials in Zeerust conspired to keep Ethiopianism out of the district. The HMS was particularly grateful for this. In 1906 Missionary Lange in Manoane apprehensively reported that "the Ethiopians are campaigning energetically for their cause and in order to win followers they try to create dissatisfaction among the existing communities".¹²¹ The political undertones of Ethiopianism were made clear when in 1905 the American-based African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Transvaal Native Vigilance Association, both of which were establishing themselves in the Marico and Rustenburg districts in 1904-05, were signatories to the petition by the Native United Political Associations of the Transvaal Colony challenging the current

¹¹⁹These are discussed by Terence Ranger, in "African Attempts to Control Education in East and Central Africa, 1900-1939", Past and Present, no.32, (1965).

¹²⁰Beinart and Bundy, Hidden Struggles, pp.114-118.

¹²¹ HMB, 1906, p.357, Report from Manoane.

prohibitions on African purchase of land.¹²² By 1905 copies of the Constitution of this organisation had surfaced in Dinokana, and contributed towards official concern that "from various parts of the country ...Agitators are busy among the Natives, poisoning their minds against the government and the domination of the White man".¹²³

The passing of the 1913 Land Act caused much "indignation and dissatisfaction" in the Reserve. The chiefs pressed Jensen to give evidence to the Beaumont Commission appointed to investigate the possibilities of setting aside more land for African occupation. Jensen wrote that all the chiefs in the Marico had joined the South African Natives Congress which was co-ordinating opposition to the Land Act. "What this organisation does indicate", added Jensen, "is that the natives here are slowly but surely waking up and that they are not prepared to accept everything the white population is doing to them".¹²⁴ It is evident then that the nascent Hurutshe rural elite was linked into organisations which were giving expression to the interests of the growing national African petty bourgeoisie of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.¹²⁵ Another form in which new ideologies may have been infused into the reserve was through the migration of African groups with longer or harsher exposure to colonial forms of rule. In the period between 1902-1907 about 60 Mfengu and Herero families settled in the reserve.¹²⁶ Stubbs felt that the immigration of "the more advanced

¹²²Transvaal NAD Annual Report for 1905, Annexures B and G - Native Locations in the Transaal, p.24.

¹²³T.A. PM vol.38, no.81/2/1907, H.L. Struben - to Acting Lieutenant-Governor 10 April 1906.

¹²⁴ HMB, 1915, p.82, Report by Jensen for 1913.

¹²⁵ See A. Odendaal, Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912, (Cape Town, 1984).

¹²⁶ T.A. SNA vol.353, no.406, C. Griffith to W. Windham, 2 July 1907; HMB, no.7, 1907, p.142 Report by Jensen. The Herero had participated in the rebellion.

and skilled Mfengu would conduce to the progress and general advancement of the Hurutshe".¹²⁷ The ultimate form of this progress probably was as much political as it was economic in nature.

Conversely at the other end of Hurutshe society precapitalist social structures and interests had a significantly opposite influence on ideology and consciousness. This is perhaps not surprising for capitalist development, as has been often pointed out, had a contradictory effect upon precapitalist forms, both breaking down and recreating the society it encountered. Missionary records in the first decade and a half of the century confirm without a doubt the resilience of precapitalist forms such as boqwera and bojale, rainmaking ceremonies and the activities of traditional diviners. In 1912 the director of the HMS mission, Haccius, reported from Moilooa's reserve that "while there is hardly any mission work to be done with some of the major tribes in the Magaliesberg district there is plenty of it here for there are still many heathens [whose] customs are still very powerful".¹²⁸ A measure of the enduring strength of "traditional life" is suggested by Abraham Pogiso's decision to renounce his dependence on the mission in an attempt to win support from the predominant non-Christian majority, a move which threw him out of favour with the missionaries and to some extent with the government.¹²⁹ "Modernisers" and "traditionalists" co-existed alongside each other, though individuals mobilised around these

¹²⁷T.A. Magistrate's Reports, Marico, 5/1/6 p.273, E. Stubbs to C. Griffith, 11 October 1904. Stubbs also felt that the Mfengu help bolster Abraham Pogiso's fragile position in Dinokana at that time. Ranger's point regarding the falsity of attributing qualities to ethnic groups like the Mfengu is well taken, yet the Mfengu arrived with a longer history of exposure to skills and to colonial rule than the Hurutshe. See R.Ross(ed), Racism and Colonialism: Essays on Ideology and Social Structure (The Hague, 1982).

¹²⁸ HMB, no.12, 1912, p.356, Excerpt from "Travel Reports by Mission Director."

¹²⁹ HMB, no.5, 1910, p.137, Report by F. Jensen.

categories for different purposes and ends, often changing sides when circumstances demanded, a consequence largely of the contradictory aims of capitalist and colonial penetration.

To sum up the major points made in this chapter one may argue that the years between 1899-1914 were filled with new challenges attendant upon significant shifts within the Transvaal and South African politics, challenges which forced the Hurutshe to take new initiatives to protect their local rural economy and precolonial identity. At the same time this entailed an engagement with the wider economy and society, for once the break with precolonial forms of production had been made, there was no return. The wider and deeper this association became, the more acute became social divisions, and the greater the disjunction between the dynamic features of precapitalist society and the essential features of the new productive activities geared to the accumulation of new commodities. It would seem that Hurutshe society in the early twentieth century was in a process of transition towards the capitalist mode of production but that the crucial and elusive point of transition - in Guy's formulation the point where commodity production had become an end in itself rather than for re-investment in the productive and reproductive capacity of women -¹³⁰ had certainly not been reached.

Though it might appear that a rural community like the Hurutshe was in a sense moving in opposite and contradictory directions it should be submitted that the general intent was the same; namely to entrench security, to ensure production and to realise the best possible options in a context of state action directed towards taking charge over African rural society. Whilst the black tenant farmers of the southern highveld prolonged the period of their survival on the land by sharecropping relationships, the Hurutshe of the western Transvaal

¹³⁰ Guy, "Analysing Pre-capitalist Societies", p.37.

decelerated the force of preoletarianisation and cushioned themselves against the more deleterious of state attempts to precipitate rural capitalism through laying hold to productive land and through judicious and essentially particularist responses to the labour market. Even after further land purchases by Africans outside scheduled areas were forbidden by the passing of the 1913 Natives Land Act - one of the most significant though by no means conclusive acts of state intervention on behalf of capitalist interests on the land¹³¹, Jensen recorded that "our people still now have enough space for agriculture and animal husbandry for years to come".¹³² This situation in fact was improved upon slightly by the decision of the Beaumont Commission to add 92,000 morgen to the scheduled 125,000 morgen in the original reserve.¹³³ The productive base of the Hurutshe reserve was still very much intact.

¹³¹ Keegan's research especially has been directed towards a conclusive rejection of the idea that the 1913 Land Act brought all forms of black tenancy to a halt. See T. Keegan, "The Sharecropping Economy, African Class Formation and the Native Land Act of 1913 in the Highveld Maize Belt", in Marks and Atmore (eds), Industrialisation and Social Change.

¹³² HMB, no.3, 1915, p.82.

¹³³ See UG 19-1916 Report of Natives Land Commission, 1916, vol.I p.45; UG 23-1918, Report of Natives Land Committee, Western Transvaal. Much of this extra land included the various farms purchased by the Hurutshe over the previous four decades.

CONCLUSION

In 1957 a majority of the Hurutshe mounted a sustained campaign against the authorities of the Union of South Africa who in 1956 declared that African women should carry reference books. Women in the reserve publicly burnt their reference books (or passes as they were more commonly known), Hurutshe migrants returned from Johannesburg to strengthen the protest and large numbers of Hurutshe rallied behind Abraham Moilola, their chief in Dinokana. The police moved in to quell the revolt, leading to intimidation, violence against the women, and to mass arrests of the resisting elements. The Hurutshe, with the support of sympathetic organisations and individuals, took to defending their actions and interests in the courts. Ultimately however their resistance was crushed, their chief deposed, and more compliant chiefly authorities were installed in the reserve. The episode earned the Hurutshe a place in the history of rural opposition to the apartheid state in South Africa, and it is for this act that they are best known.¹

An aspect of the revolt which perhaps has attracted less attention and analysis is the degree of intra-Hurutshe conflict. Certain chiefs, supported by a small but powerful rural bourgeoisie - consisting of successful farmers, shopkeepers and state officials - supported the state. They became targets for attack and many were threatened with their lives, had their houses burnt and were forced to flee the district. I have argued elsewhere that these events need to be seen in the context of a long-standing struggle between Abraham, supported by and representing the interests of a threatened peasantry, and the Hurutshe bourgeoisie who, in alliance with local officials wished to destroy the integrative character of chieftaincy

¹For accounts of this resistance see C. Hooper, Brief Authority, (London 1960); J. Fairburn, "Zeerust: a Profile of Resistance", Africa South, vol.2, no.3,(1958); A. Manson, "The Hurutshe Resistance in Zeerust, 1954-1959", Africa Perspective, no.22(1983); T. Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, (Johannesburg 1983), pp.274-278.

which Abraham embodied.² This strife had its origins in the 1920s, became more pronounced in the 1950s and erupted into open conflict during the resistance.

The 1957 revolt reveals both continuities and discontinuities with the Hurutshe past. On the one hand they resisted because they had certain resources to protect which they felt to be threatened. Elsewhere by the 1950s rural Africans found their rural base to be severely diminished and there was little in fact to defend. On the other hand however the Hurutshe did not act in concert, and it is evident that by 1957 their society was a lot more fragmented than it was in 1914. Certain chiefs moreover had transformed themselves more thoroughly into a class of local ^{petty} capitalists with divergent interests from those of the mass of their subjects.

This work has traced Hurutshe history to 1914, prior to the more fundamental state interventions into African rural life represented by segregation, betterment, the apartheid era (with its quest for submissive authorities), and the "homeland" system founded on the Reserves. Nevertheless any understanding of later Hurutshe history rests inevitably upon a clear perception of the earlier period of this community's history which this thesis has set out to provide. The main features of Hurutshe history are drawn in this conclusion.

The precolonial period up to the early nineteenth century is difficult to describe or analyse with certainty. The Tswana-speaking community which was forming itself into the Hurutshe clustered around the junction of the Marico/Crocodile rivers in the late sixteenth century. Unlike many African communities in the next two hundred years the Hurutshe did not move any real distance from this core area

²A. Manson and J. Drummond, "The Transformation of Moiloa's Reserve in the Western Transvaal: Politics, Production and Resistance in a rural setting, 1919-1986", paper to History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, 1990. See also J. Drummond, "Changing Patterns of Agricultural Land Use and Agricultural Production in Dinokana Village, Bophuthatswana", Paper to 26th Congress of the International Geographical Union, Sydney University, 1988.

of settlement. Between about 1650 and 1700 the Hurutshe seem to have enjoyed a period of unprecedented political and economic power. Like so many "Iron-age" communities on the highveld however, their cohesion and strength was undermined by fission and probably by ecological decline, drought and competition for scarce resources. From the mid-eighteenth century there is clearer evidence for resurgence in Hurutshe power based on a need to capitalise upon new trade opportunities attendant upon European settlement and trading activities at the Cape and Delagoa Bay. The social and political disruptions caused by competition in trade, a demand for labour and another severe drought terminated in the cataclysmic events of the so-called difagane.

Most of the Hurutshe were displaced from their homeland and, in smaller groups, pursued an uncertain and in cases an ambulatory existence either along the Harts river or north of the Molopo. Two decades of exile followed during which time they were forced into dependency upon more powerful groups inhabiting the western highveld. Furthermore the particular conditions of this region between 1838-1848 which produced a contest for legitimacy and ascendancy among the Trekkers, the Griqua, the missionaries and rising Tswana societies, compounded Hurutshe insecurity and helped to delay the return to their homeland. In 1848 the Hurutshe removed themselves from Tlhaping hegemony and placed themselves under the jurisdiction of the Transvaal Trekkers who exercised a fragile control over the central highveld. This move placed them under a regime which exhibited a qualitatively different and more complicated form of authority.

The crucial difference lay not so much in the sheer callousness of Trekker overrule -- frequently an expression in itself of an inability on the part of the Republican state to establish a systematic and efficient system of exaction -- as in the inherent inequalities which characterised a system of production based on the alienation of the essential resources of land and labour. Thus the quest for political autonomy and economic stability, the overriding prerequisites for survival and expansion, was retarded and impeded by

Hurutshe impoverishment on the one hand and by Trekker assertion and acquisitiveness on the other. The fact that the Hurutshe had been ensnared into greater dependency upon the Trekkers by having voluntarily entered into an agreement to supply labour and tribute in return for a grant of land made their position all the more tenuous.

Not surprisingly the first decade of Hurutshe history under the SAR was a remarkably torrid period. The fledgling community was obliged to render labour and tribute to the Boers, who frequently raided and captured women and children who were apprenticed (ingeboeked) for longer periods of service. The abundance of water and irrigable land near the Hurutshe centre at Dinokana drew envious stares from some local Boers who schemed ways to get their hands on it. In addition the Hurutshe, whose location abutted the territory of the powerful Kwena and Ngwaketse chiefdoms to the west found themselves ground between the millstones of Trekker expansionism and Tswana resistance. Thus during the early 1850s it was certainly doubtful if there was any security or future to be gained from living in the SAR and one Hurutshe faction, under Chief Manyane, taking advantage of the escape route offered by the presence of the powerful and related Tswana chiefdoms to the west, removed itself from the jurisdiction of the SAR.

The majority remained in the Republic where slowly conditions began to improve. Several reasons can be advanced for this increasing stability. Firstly relations between the SAR and their Tswana adversaries (the Kwena especially) changed for the better essentially because the respective military capacity of both protagonists was mutually recognised and respected and because the powerful hunters' faction in the Marico, led by Jan Viljoen, realised that the continued profitability of hunting depended on access to the northern interior which was controlled by Tswana chiefdoms. Thus peace returned to the Marico by the late 1850s. Secondly the authorities in the Marico came to value the presence of the Hurutshe as a buffer against their independent African neighbours and to recognise their potential role as intermediaries with them. Thirdly the Hurutshe, who had lost the LMS missionaries who had been attached to them in

1848, managed to gain the services of the state-approved German missionaries of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society in 1859. Through their contacts with the SAR state the missionaries brought the Hurutshe more security, as well as a greater economic capability. Finally it was the astute leadership provided by the Hurutshe regent Moiloa which significantly helped the community to gain a breathing space in the latter half of the 1850s. While Moiloa initially certainly was forced to play a collaborative role, he was able to manipulate Trekker dependence on him to prise himself and his followers away from Afrikaner hegemony.

Consequently the basis for the strengthening of the Hurutshe chiefdom had been laid by 1860. Not only had they established more stable relations with their white and black neighbours but they had adequate landholdings (which they augmented by the purchase of private farms), excellent water resources and were increasing in numbers and political cohesion. From about 1860 to his death in 1875 Moiloa was able to build on these features. During this period the Hurutshe economy was placed upon a sounder footing and the polity welded into an even more cohesive political entity under Moiloa who had reached the peak of his personal power.

The economy grew by leaps and bounds during the 1860s as frequent missionary and travellers' accounts testify, leading to the generous though no doubt trustworthy conclusion that they were "the most thriving of all the Transvaal Bechuanas"³. In addition to an increase in the production of traditional foodstuffs, (such as sorghum and varieties of melons and pumpkins), maize, wheat and citrus were extensively cultivated under irrigation and transported for sale in the Kimberley market from the early 1870s. Moiloa, making use of his powers as chief, not only captured a share of this growing wealth, but also rewarded his followers, mainly immigrants, with the necessary resources to increase production.

³Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, vol 1, pp. 416-417.

Moiloa's decision to bolster his support among families with no attachment to the traditional ruling class obviously created a tension which the chief tried to alleviate by restoring and developing essential features of the traditional order. While Moiloa was reasonably successful at balancing the interests of royal and non-royal elements in his society during his lifetime the essential contradictions of such a strategy became graphically apparent after his death when the chieftdom was plunged into civil conflict.

There was a lot less ambiguity about Moiloa's external relations. Though cautious and respectful for the Republican authorities, he set definite limits as to what could be expected of himself and his followers. He refused to provide labour in excess of the original agreements made with Viljoen the veldcornet, he refused to relocate his main village, and he threatened to withhold support for the Marico Trekkers in times of crisis. His efforts to extricate his adherents from the harsher aspects of Boer hegemony were made easier by an increasing reliance placed upon the Hurutshe by the Republican authorities and by the divided and indeterminate nature of Boer overrule in the Marico district. Similarly Hurutshe/Tswana relations became clearer and more stable in the peaceful years of the 1860s and 1870s. The unique position occupied by the Hurutshe and their close relationship with the SAR made them useful allies to the Kwenā and Ngwaketse, and Moiloa it seems was able to reduce the extent of Hurutshe dependence on the northern Tswana. Finally in his dealings with the missionaries Moiloa was able to prescribe the limits of what was acceptable in terms of proselytisation and interference in the affairs of the community.

When Moiloa died this period of economic expansion and political cohesiveness came to an abrupt end. About half the population led by Gopane, who commanded the support of the adherents of the royal Hurutshe house, refused to accept the leadership of Moiloa's sons. In all probability the Hurutshe might have resolved this problem internally by resorting to the established precedent of separation. But the situation became critical when firstly the Republican authorities and then later, and somewhat belatedly, the British

attempted to impose their solutions to the schism upon the chiefdom. Thus the internal and external configuration of events served to prolong the political crisis in the reserve and between 1875 and 1884 the Hurutshe were fractious, unsettled and unwilling to accept interference in their affairs, particularly where the division of the reserve and the delineation of its boundaries were concerned. Even more harrowing was the Boer sacking of Dinokana in 1882 for support rendered to Montshiwa's Rolong in their conflict with the pro-Boer Ratlou and Rapulana factions of the Rolong. This episode reduced the Hurutshe ba ga Moiloa to a state of near indigence while their attackers enriched themselves significantly from the booty looted from the town.

The timing of these events is significant, for it left the Hurutshe particularly vulnerable to capitalist penetration at a time of heightened imperial intervention in the affairs of the Tswana and a determination on the part of Cape capitalists to increase the flow of labour from Bechuanaland to the diamond mining industry. Thus a combination of political and economic pressures served to loosen the precapitalist social and economic organisation of the Hurutshe. Like several other African chiefdoms in South Africa, the Hurutshe in the 1870s and 1880s were pulled into a closer relationship with the forces of capitalist production.

Consequently the following decades were notable for the extent and range of economic inroads into the reserve. These took two forms; firstly through initiatives to increase the capacity of the SAR state to raise revenue and provide labour for the mining industry, and secondly through the efforts of traders and concessionaires to harness the surpluses and potential natural endowments of the reserve for private gain. This was not a one-way process however. Chiefs and commoners sought means of participation in new economic ventures and extended the nature and range of their contacts outside the reserve. Chiefs at the same time entered into partnerships with outside forces, not only to realise greater profits, but also to exercise a degree of control over such intrusive elements. It was a period when precolonial social, political and economic relations were

significantly reshaped though by no means destroyed. Finally, a marked consequence of colonial expansion was the degree to which colonial authorities demarcated, privatised and regulated access to land on the Hurutshe's western boundary. This had the deleterious effect of limiting economic contacts and activities upon lands which had formerly been accessible to some of the Hurutshe.

These developments were temporarily brought to a halt by events in the wider South African region, as the forces of British imperialism took by military means what they could not capture by political guile or economic coercion. The Hurutshe, like many Tswana chiefdoms, found themselves centrally involved in this conflict, finally lending their support to the British. While some Hurutshe took advantage of the war period periodically to appropriate cattle from Boer farms and to sever relations of dependency with white farmers they did not commit themselves to any concerted "class war" upon Boer landowners. However, the subsequent return of defeated and impoverished Boers to the land did give the Hurutshe more power in their relationships with white landowners, though the balance was redressed to some extent by the determination of the Milner government to settle and support this class of agriculturalist after the war.

Nonetheless the post-war state, though intent on rebuilding the agricultural base of the Transvaal colony and on establishing capitalist production and relations in the countryside, largely failed to meet its aims. The weak foundation of capitalist agriculture gave added incentive and opportunity for groups of African producers in the Transvaal to expand production for the colony's urban community, and there was a surge in marketable agricultural output from the Hurutshe in the post-war years. At the same time the numbers of immigrants leaving the reserve appeared to increase, though imperfect statistics make it difficult to assess whether the increase in migrancy was significantly greater in the post-war period. Similarly the reasons for labour migrancy are elusive, but all indications point to the fact that men sought employment not out of dire need but to raise cash for re-investment in the local rural economy.

If on the one hand there were fewer restraints on the development of peasant production in the reserve, there were on the other definite checks placed on the political scope of chiefs and commoners alike. The basic framework of British colonial control was in place even before the war's end, and the Hurutshe found themselves increasingly subject to surveillance and superintendence by various colonial authorities. The need to adapt new strategies to deal with these firmer measures introduced by the new government occupied a good deal of the ruling group's time in the immediate post-war period. An especially notable reaction of the Hurutshe during this period was a rise in support for the institution of chieftainship which was seen as central to the maintenance of access to land.

It is also apparent that the reserve's inhabitants were becoming increasingly interlinked with the wider political and economic forces beginning to shape the modern South African state by the start of the second decade of the century. The forms of these contacts varied according to the class, gender and generational cleavages which marked early twentieth century Hurutshe society. Young men, women, migrants, rich and poor peasants, chiefs and elders sought varying forms of accommodation with the new state. Even in the fairly remote Hurutshe reserve a nascent rural bourgeoisie sought wider educational and political contacts with organisations representing the interests of their class. These cleavages, not so apparent perhaps in the early part of the century, emerged more prominently in the class antagonisms of the middle decades of the century.

It is possible then, to point to some outstanding general features of Hurutshe history between 1848 and 1914. Firstly it is apparent that from 1848 the Hurutshe society had undergone significant changes that fragmented the mould of precolonial structures and relationships. But in other important senses political, economic and social features of the precolonial landscape remained in place. Political authority was vested in and maintained through the authority of chiefs and ward

heads⁴, communal tenure ensured that chiefs controlled land distribution, production took place within the homestead, and pastoralism was central to the reserve's economy; even more critical was the fact that cattle were central to marriage arrangements, to fertility and to the realisation and control of labour power. Precolonial social cleavages continued to exist alongside new divisions forged by the process of proletarianisation. By 1914 the structure of Hurutshe society displayed a complex imbrication of features of both the precapitalist and capitalist formations.

Secondly it becomes evident from a study of a rural community like the Hurutshe that it is impossible to define at what stage the forces of capitalist production dominated the social formation. Furthermore it becomes clear that capitalism made its mark on the Hurutshe intermittently depending on the timing of developments in the capitalist world and the relative cohesiveness of this society at specific periods of capitalist intrusion. At times it is even arguable that the forces of capitalist production were rolled back or at least kept in check. There is much validity in Guy's observation that as "the movement towards proletarianisation took place pre-capitalist social influences continued to have a significant bearing on ideology, consciousness, social structure and historical development"⁵, especially, it might be added, where Africans retained a considerable degree of territorial integrity.

In many respects the trajectory of Hurutshe history was similar to that of other African societies in South Africa. Its course was effected by the penetration of merchant capital in the early to mid-nineteenth century as it was by the mineral revolution of the last quarter of the century with its insatiable labour wants, and Milner's attempts to reconstruct the political economy in the interests of mining capital in the early twentieth century. Yet throughout these developments it managed to retain a resilient

⁴This is very apparent from Lestrade's anthropological data collected in the 1920s.

⁵Guy, "Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies", p.33.

precapitalist base which enabled a peasantry to emerge and remain buoyant until the 1950s.

Consequently the Hurutshe, unlike many African rural societies at the start of this century, appeared to have avoided the phenomena of outright destruction and reconstruction which would have allowed for the continuation of selected precapitalist features useful for the maintenance of a cheap labour system. This is not to imply that the community was untouched, but rather to suggest that its material base by 1914 had not been eroded to the same extent as some African societies elsewhere in South Africa. Divisions of class, gender and generation similarly were premised significantly upon precolonial relations, and class struggles were expressed in the historically specific forms that characterised precolonial society - for example flight, desertion and withdrawal from the productive cycle.

Thirdly it seems that the issue of regionality has significant bearing upon the relative cohesion which the Hurutshe enjoyed. Except for the Marico river valley they inhabited an area not marked to any great extent by the development of white commercial agriculture. Local labour demands were never as vociferous as they were in parts of Natal, the eastern Transvaal or the Cape. White farming remained a marginal activity and farmers battled to alter productive or labour relationships in their favour. In short most existed in the "miserable backwater of transition" that characterised white farming in parts of the country that were marginal, isolated or distant from markets. Periodically the threat of complete dispossession did add a more desperate aspect to relations between the Hurutshe and their white neighbours and intensified the struggle for resources. But the tide of white settlement and claims only lapped around the borders of the reserve, the harshness of the Marico bushveld forcing it to recede to within the more hospitable and agriculturally more favourable 500 mm isohyet that meanders across the western highveld. Thus the Hurutshe could settle at the well-watered southern end of the reserve and could utilise land contiguous to the reserve or across the Bechuanaland border for grazing their cattle. This offered a safety valve for land pressure within the reserve.

Fourthly, in order to preserve this status quo, it is apparent that the Hurutshe displayed a wide range of political responses across the spectrum from resistance to accommodation. The relative success (or failure) of these varying tactics at different times has been examined in this work. The regional factor again becomes an important determinant of Hurutshe resistance politics. The imperfectly controlled and demarcated border allowed the Hurutshe the opportunity to retreat beyond the de jure or de facto range of the instruments of white authority and coercion. If forms of resistance to white rule have been an enduring, and until recently, little understood feature of South African history, it should be recognised that co-operation and accommodation was as frequent and as successful a way of blunting colonial and capitalist advance - as a study of the Hurutshe reveals. In an era when negotiation and tactical alliances are so much a part of the political agenda it is opportune to examine the timing, nature and relative advances made by African societies choosing such courses of action in the past.

In 1914 the Hurutshe stood at the threshold of modern South Africa history. The act of Union created the potential for uniform legislative intervention in wider South African affairs. The 1913 Land Act symbolically represented the beginning of a process of legislative intervention which would shift "organising authority[to] the white employer of labour"⁶. The Beaumont Commission of 1916, the Native Affairs Administration Bill of 1917 and the Report of the Native Land Committee (Western Transvaal) of 1918 all indicated the state's concern for the further division, allocation and control of land. The First World War period represented a transitional stage, for, in Grundlingh's estimation the "spread of capitalist relations in the countryside as a result of favourable conditions generated by the war accelerated [the] process [of the decline of the African peasant] and ultimately served to envelop rural Africans in a world neither of their own making nor of their own choosing"⁷. These

⁶Keegan, Transformations, p.192.

⁷A. Grundlingh, Fighting their own War: South Africa's Blacks and the First World War, (Johannesburg, 1987), p.100.

developments fundamentally were to reshape African life and experience, although, as recent research has indicated, their impact was initially muted by financial and bureaucratic limitations.

However it was a world the Hurutshe were to face with considerably more security than other African societies. Not only had they land, but the relatively small number of tenants on white-owned land in the Marico meant that evictions under the Land Act were sporadic, and, until later in the century when African communities were removed en masse from white land, the Hurutshe reserve did not suffer so severely from the effects of overcrowding nor the attendant socio-economic distress which characterised many African reserves at the same period⁸. It was also a world which certain social groups continued to protect and cling to, either by dint of conservative and cautious reaction or, as the events of 1957 revealed, by open defiance; strategies which had served them well in the past. The Hurutshe reserve was rapidly transformed from the 1960s.⁹ Nevertheless their earlier success in laying hold to productive resources, especially land, and their subsequent determination to prevent these resources from being stripped away from them, together with the development and intensification of commercial arable farming within their reserve served to prolong Hurutshe existence as an independent and economically active rural community until the mid-twentieth century. It was this economic potential which some Hurutshe sought to preserve and others to monopolise that largely accounts for the cause and course of the 1957 Hurutshe revolt.

Blacks and the First World War, (Johannesburg, 1987), p.100.

⁸This view is confirmed by T. Lodge in Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945, (Johannesburg, 1983), p.274.

⁹In this sense the reserve's deterioration fits into the pattern suggested by Simkins, who places the collapse of reserve-based agriculture in certain areas of South Africa in the 1950s. See C. Simkins, "Agricultural Production in the African Reserves of South Africa", JSAS, vol.7, (1981), pp.256-283. See also Manson, "The Hurutshe Resistance", p.64.

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- 5) OTHER
- 6) NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

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