

**Lefebvrian Analyses of the South Africa-Botswana International Border  
and Borderlands**

A thesis submitted to

Department of Environmental and Geographical Science  
in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Ernestina Seanokeng Nkooe (Nkxern001)

Faculty of the Humanities

University of Cape Town

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Ernestina Seanokeng Nkooe (NKXERN001)

## Abstract

International borders and borderlands are geographically organized political spaces which are primary objects of geographical research. This cluster of geographic border spaces embody the territorial dimensions of Lefebvre's scholarship which are critically under advanced and not readily appropriated in political geography. To address this gap, I advanced Lefebvre's spatiology and rhythmological science territorially for the critical analyses of South Africa's international border with Botswana, and its Batswana inhabited borderlands along the North-West Province, Southern District and South Eastern District respectively. Through a qualitative methodological design of spatial rhythmology underpinned by ethnographic as well as archival techniques, I made the following discoveries pertaining the political geography of Tswana populations straddling the international border of South Africa and Botswana at A1 and A2 border gates.

I found that (a) the A1-A2 border-gated region of South Africa and Botswana is a territorial polyrhythmia in which the African society of Batswana are the dominant culture. (b) The A1 cross-border gates and borderlands of South Africa and Botswana are dominated by the Tshidi Barolong of Kgosi Montshiwa I, whose prehistoric dynasty is divided between the North-West Province and Botswana's Southern District, while the minority Batlounge of Kgosi Shole are ensconced by the transnational Tshidi Barolong. (c) Political relations between the Barolong of Botswana and the Batlounge of South Africa are eurhythmic however, the territorial specter of Apartheid and Bophuthatswana interstate histories threatens eurhythmic relations between South African Barolong and the Batlounge of Greater Mahikeng, with arrhythmia. (d) There are no tangible cross-border governance structures and interstate relations between South Africa and Botswana despite a high degree of spatial integration and cross-border social interaction. (e) South Africa's international border with Botswana is an asymmetrical fracture line and monumental state space comprising superimposed spaces of accessibility, non-synchronized temporal rhythms, relatively fixed junction points and permanently established places of abode inhabited by a variety of Batswana. (f) The geopolitical spatial practices and asymmetric spatial rhythms of the international border of South Africa and Botswana produce binary border regimes which are directly influenced by interstate variations in their respective international border management practices and migration policies.

These findings have significant implications for the Lefebvrian understandings of the contemporary political geography of the Batswana inhabited cross-border region of Southern Africa. Furthermore, the findings enhance the critical need for international border policymakers in the African sub-region to make empirically informed decisions pertaining interstate governance of territorial fracture lines, and the co-management of cross-borderlands with territorial societies that inhabit them.

**Keywords:** Batswana; Borderlands; Bophuthatswana; Botswana; Henri Lefebvre; International Borders; Political Geography; Territoriality; Territory.

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- Kgosi Motshegare
- Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality Spokesperson
- Mmakgosi Besele II Montshiwa<sup>1</sup>
- Mmakgosi Moroka of *Sekgopi* house in Thaba Ncho
- Ratshidi Traditional Council of Barolong in Mahikeng
- Rre Mekgwa of Montshiwa Cultural Village
- Seleka Traditional Council of Barolong in Thaba Ncho
- Seoke<sup>2</sup> Family of Southern District
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- Botswana National Archives and Research Services

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<sup>1</sup> The royal matriarch of the Botswana based Barolong boo Ratshidi passed away early 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The patriarch Rre Seoke passed away late 2022.

- Free State Provincial Archives
- Good Hope Southern (sub) District Council
- Lobatse Town Council
- Mafikeng Museum
- National Library of South Africa
- North-West Provincial Archives
- North-West University Campus Archives
- Rolong Land Board Institute
- Sol. T. Plaatje Museum and Library

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**Dedication**



*For Seanokeng*



## Table of Contents

Plagiarism declaration	iii
Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Dedication	vii
Figures	x
Conceptual formants	x
Tables	x
Optic formants	xi
Acronyms	xii

## Chapter 1: Henri Lefebvre and Geographical Limology: An Introduction

1.1	Henri Lefebvre: an under examined territorial spatiologist and rhythmologist	1
1.2	Research problem	2
1.3	Research justification	4
1.4	Research aim	4
1.5	Research objectives	5
1.6	Key questions	5
1.7	Research argument and assumptions	5
1.8	Study area: a geographic delimitation	5
1.9	The demographic profile of the study population	6
1.10	Research design and methodology	8
1.11	Thesis organization	11

## Chapter 2: Political Geography, Theoretical Limology and Henri Lefebvre: A Review of Literature

2.1	<i>Introduction</i>	13
2.2	Political geography and theoretical limology: a disciplinary distinction	13
2.3	Towards epistemic redress by means of spatial architectonics: a global overview	18
2.4	Territory and the territorial debate in political geography	21
2.5	Territorial borders, frontiers and borderlands	27
2.6	Territorial border methods and fieldwork in political geography	33
2.7	Lefebvre's spatiology and spatial rhythm: an introduction	38
2.7.1	Lefebvre's social spatiology: a territorial appropriation	39
2.7.2	Lefebvre's political state theories	41
2.7.3	The territorial framework of geographic border regions	43
2.7.4	The territorial spatial triad	46
2.7.5	The territorial spatial rhythm	48
2.8	Lefebvorean geographical limology in Africa: a spatial architectonics interpolation and contribution	53
2.9	<i>Conclusion</i>	56

## Chapter 3: The Prehistory and Colonial Production of the Batswana Inhabited Border Region of Southern Africa

3.1	<i>Introduction</i>	57
3.2	The territorial geography and spatial rhythms of pre-historic Batswana	57
3.2.1	The end of a macro-regional nomadic era: Tswana immigration and permanent	61

	settlement in Southern Africa	
3.3	Batswana's land-use model: a spatial framework for territorial organization	67
3.4	The aspatial border producing practices of late 19 <sup>th</sup> century Batswana	74
3.5	The European border production of bounded Tswana regions	77
3.6	The birth of a modern nation state and society of Botswana	81
3.7	The production of Bophuthatswana Bantustan	86
3.7.1	The death of Bophuthatswana and emergence of the North-West Province	94
3.8	<i>Conclusion</i>	96

#### **Chapter 4: Spatial Rhythmanalysis: A Methodology for Cross-Border Fieldwork**

4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	98
4.2	Spatial rhythmology and transnational fieldwork	98
4.3	Ethnographic field entries and departure in the A1-A2 cross-border region	99
4.4	Primary data production by spatial ethnographic immersion	106
4.4.1	Ethnographic interviews and documents collection	106
4.4.2	Lefebvre's geometric and optic formants	107
4.4.3	Empirical optic formants	108
4.5	Transnational historical archives	111
4.6	Ethical considerations, positionality statement and study limitations	112
4.6.1	Research ethics in qualitative doctoral research and education	113
4.6.2	Ethics 'dressage' and the lived experience of cross-border fieldwork in SADC REC	114
4.6.3	My Lefebvrian and geographic positionality in the SADC study area and international border society	117
4.7	Research limitations and the weakness of the territorial research design	120
4.7.1	Theoretical limits	120
4.7.2	Methodological limits	120
4.7.3	Ethical limits and data access	121
4.7.4	Technical and technological limits	121
4.8	<i>Conclusion</i>	122

#### **Chapter 5: The A1-A2 International Junction Points of South Africa and Botswana**

5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	123
5.2	The South Africa-Botswana international border: a geopolitical interstate space	123
5.3	Botswana junctions points: A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate	126
5.4	South Africa's junction points: A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Skilpadshek	129
5.5	Time organized spatial practices of the South Africa-Botswana international border	136
5.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	141

#### **Chapter 6: The A1-A2 Places of Abode in South Africa and Botswana**

6.1	<i>Introduction</i>	142
6.2	Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality: a subnational border region of the North-West Province	142
6.3	The interstates production of Botlounge	146
6.4	The A1 Borderland of Greater Mahikeng	152
6.5	South Eastern District: The A2 Urban Borderland of Lobatse-Peleng	157
6.6	Southern District and the A1 subnational border region of Borolong	161
6.6.1	The international border production of Borolong	166
6.7	<i>Conclusion</i>	170

## **Chapter 7: The Territorial Polyrhythmia of the South Africa-Botswana Border Region: An Analytical Discussion**

7.1	<i>Introduction</i>	171
7.2	The temporal spatial rhythm analysis of the Botswana inhabited SADC border region	171
7.3	The A1-A2 cross-border gates and cross-borderlands of South Africa and Botswana	173
7.4	The relevance and significance of Lefebvrian scholarship and empirical approaches in geographical limology	176
7.5	<i>Conclusion</i>	178

## **Chapter 8: Henri Lefebvre in Geographical Limology: A Conclusion**

8.1	<i>Introduction</i>	180
8.2	Recap: study aim, objectives, questions and research assumptions	180
8.3	Study contributions on general terms	181
8.4	Recommendations and areas for future research and development	186
8.5	<i>Conclusion</i>	187

<b>References</b>	189
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<b>Appendices</b>	206
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Appendix A - Field introduction letter	206
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Appendix B - A1 Border Fee (BURS)	207
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Appendix C - BNARS terms and conditions	208
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Appendix D - Lobatse Town Council appointment request	209
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### Figures

1.1	The South Africa-Botswana study area and cross-border society	6
1.2	The political geography of Bantustan Homelands in South Africa	90
1.3	The A1-A2 cross-border study area of South Africa and Botswana	139
1.4	The international and internal borders region of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality	144
1.5	The A1 border gates of South Africa with Botlounge borderland	147
1.6	The A1 cross-border gates of South Africa and Botswana with transnational Rolong and subnational Botlounge borderlands	153
1.7	The A2 cross-border gates of South Africa and Botswana with Lobatse-Peleng borderland	158
1.8	The A1 cross-border gates of South Africa and Botswana with Borolong borderland	162

### Conceptual Formants

1.1	Lefebvre's (1991) territorial framework for geographic border regions	44
1.2	Lefebvre's (2004) spatial rhythm	49
1.3	Asymmetrical spatial regime of the South Africa-Botswana international border	108
1.4	The A1-A2 international border rhythmograph	110

### Tables

1.1	Demographic profile of the study population and key informants	8
1.2	Passport extracted A1-A2 cross-border data	109
1.3	A quantitative summary of A1-A2 international border crossings	110

1.4	Temporally organized spatial rhythm of the South Africa-Botswana international border	137
-----	---	-----

### Optic Formants

1.1	Spatial distribution and geographic organization of precolonial Batswana	63
1.2-1.3	Pre-colonial spatial organization and settlement geography of Tswana society	68
1.4	<i>Sekgopi</i> : A 1910s self-built Western style house of Dr SJ Moroka in Thaba Ncho	70
1.5	21 <sup>st</sup> century Tlhakong and its commodified orographic border	72
1.6-1.7	Researcher produced pottery	73
1.8	Parliament Precinct of the Republic of Botswana in Gaborone	82
1.9	Incomplete low-cost housing construction in Mmabatho	95
1.10-1.11	The A1 Ramatlabama junction points of South Africa (left) and Botswana (right)	101
1.12-1.13	Ethics of care in practice: collective repurposing of time-worn and fire scorched furniture	102
1.14-1.15	Ramatlabama River stream in Greater Mahikeng (left) and integrated Lobatse traffic circle (right)	102
1.16	Spatial arrhythmia during cross-border fieldwork	103
1.17	The internal border between the North-West Province and the Free State Province	143
1.18	Relict architecture: Montshiwa Cultural Village	145
1.19	Mafikeng Museum Building	146
1.20	Mixed land-uses and the rural rhythm of daily life in Borolong borderland	163
1.21	B202 secondary road of Borolong borderland to Kanye	165
1.22	Pre-independence self-built housing units in Borolong	168

## Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
AUBP	African Union Border Programme
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BDF	Bophuthatswana Defence Force
BMA	Border Management Agency
BMC	Botswana Meat Commission
BNARS	Botswana National Archives and Research Services
BURS	Botswana Unified Revenue Service
BW	Botswana
CBD	Continuum for Boundary Dynamics
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DM	District Municipality
ERA	Elements of Rhythmanalysis
EU	European Union
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LB	Land Board
LG	Local Government
LUD	Lobatse Urban Development
LUDP	Lobatse Urban Development Plan
LURP	Lobatse Urban Regeneration Plan
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MLM	Mahikeng/Mafikeng Local Municipality
NDP 11	National Development Plan 11
NDP 2030	National Development Plan 2030
NIDs	National Intergovernmental Departments
NMMDM	Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality
NWP	North-West Province
POE	Port of Entry
QGIS	Quantum Geographic Information Systems
REC	Regional economic community
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SANNC	South African Natives National Congress
SAPS	South African Police Services
SARS	South African Revenue Services
SD	Southern District
SDDP	Southern District Development Plan
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SDILUP	Southern District Integrated Land-Use Plan
SED	South East District
SER	South Eastern Region
SMP	State Mode of Production
TA	Tribal Authority
TL	Traditional Leader
UDM	Umbrella for Democratic Change
US/USA	United States/United States of America

## Chapter 1

### Henri Lefebvre and Geographical Limology: An Introduction

#### 1.1 Henri Lefebvre: An Under Examined Territorial Spatiologist and Spatial Rhythmologist

Anyone who does not know and understand who Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) was and what his scientific scholarship is and is not, should start with Stuart Elden's (2004a) *Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible*. Lefebvre was an anti-colonial and anti-capitalist French scholar of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Elden, 2004a). He was a French political party activist, creative artist and musician, a taxi driver, a music director at a radio station, a Christian Nietzschean, a lover of women and keeper of none (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 1991; Elden, 2004a, 2004b; Merrifield, 2008). Lefebvre was an enigmatic human being born in "Hegetmau" or "Hagetmau", a small village "just outside the Pyrenees" on the southwestern border of France and Spain, a year after Friderich Nietzsche's death (Hollingdale, 1969; Harvey, 1991:425; Lefebvre, 1991; Elden, 2004a:2, 2004b; Merrifield, 2008). More important than anything else, Henri Lefebvre conceived and founded two sciences that are well-established in the world and in geography (Merrifield, 1993, 1995; Elden, 2001, 2004a; Brenner and Elden, 2009). Lefebvre ([1974]/1991:404) conceived and established *La production de l'espace*/The Production of Space, a qualitative (social) science of space, that is, a "spatiology" and "spatial analysis", of the (social) uses of space in its qualitative properties, and the politics of space users and inhabitants.

The Production of Space is a globally renowned *magnum opus* that was English translated in 1991 by Donald Nicholson-Smith. It is widely celebrated and well established in Anglophone geography, a discipline in which Lefebvre has the most impact and "detractors" (Merrifield, 1993, 1995; Stewart, 1995; Elden, 2001:811; Elden, 2004a; Goonewardena, et al., 2008; Brenner and Elden, 2009). Lefebvre ([1992]/2004:3,100) also founded another "science, a new field of knowledge [*saviour*]: the analysis of rhythms; with practical consequences...rhythmanalysis". Rhythmanalysis "does not constitute a separate science" from the spatiology of The Production of Space which in turn requires a *rhythm* analysis to complete its exposition (Lefebvre, 1991). The two sciences are separate yet unified. Each constitutes and is constituted by different modes of analysis which rest on an arsenal of (qualitative) spatial theories, multi-dimensional conceptual frameworks, concepts, terminology, unifying methods, and philosophically underpinned methodological strands which are under examined and not very well developed in political geography—a territorial branch of geographical research (Minghi, 1963; Prescott, 1987; Rumley and Minghi, 1991; Christopher, 2002; Megoran, 2006; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Koch, 2023).

Originally published posthumously in 1992, *Éléments de rythmanalyse: Introduction à la connaissance des rythmes* is Lefebvre's last work or book which first appeared in English in *Writings on Cities* "edited and translated by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Kofman", while "The Rhythmanalytical Project" chapter was "translated by Imogen Foster...in Key Writings" (Elden and Moore, 2004:vi). Geography thus owes much to these scholars and Stuart Elden and Gerard Moore who in 2004 published a comprehensive English translation *Elements of Rhythmanalysis: space, time and everyday life*. Lefebvre's (2004) Rhythmanalytical Project and the Attempt at a Rhythmanalysis of Mediterranean Cities are two research projects included in Elden and Moore's (2004) translation of rhythmanalysis.

These works were undertaken in 1986 and 1985 by Lefebvre in collaboration with Catherin Régulier and are included in the brief yet conceptually dense rhythmanalysis. The social theory of spatiology is that (social) space is a (social) product constituted by the coming together of as well as social overlaps between spatial practices (perceived space), representational space (lived space) and representations of space (conceived space) (Lefebvre, 1991). With rhythm the generally accepted hypothesis is that everywhere a space, time and expenditure of energy interact there is rhythm (Lefebvre, 2004). This Lefebvrian Batswana borderlands study of South Africa and Botswana contributes towards the expansion of unknown yet very interesting, narrowly established body of geographical scholarship engaged with the territorial production and advances of spatiological Lefebvre (Elden, 2004a; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Teufel, 2014; Scorgie-Porter, 2015; Silberman, Tilly and Ward, 2012; Zajc, 2019). Add to this, the non-geographical scholarship of Brighenti and Kärholm (2018) which critically examines Lefebvre's (2004) non-geographical musical rhythmanalysis and its conceptual musical triad of melody-harmony-rhythm, towards a territoriology of rhythms and melodies in everyday spatial activities.

Fisher's (2013) social historical research on the Lefebvrian production and rhythmanalysis of 20<sup>th</sup> century twin cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez straddling the infamous US-Mexico international border, along with Zajc's (2019) territorial appropriation of Russia's 'phantom borders' in frontier studies with Lefebvre's (1991) spatiological spatial triad, are examples of non-geographical application of and intellectual engagement with Lefebvrian scholarship I delineate as examples to further establish and distinguish my Lefebvrian contributions in *Anglophone* and *African* political geography. The niche and privileged demand for Lefebvre oriented territorial geographers in Africa by critical humanities scholars of the Africa-Europe Group of Interdisciplinary Studies (Nugent and Engel, 2010) further enhance the value of this original piece of doctoral work. Given my autonomous fusion and study of the spatiology and spatial rhythmanalysis for an African border and borderlands analyses, I reimagine and introduce Lefebvre as a methodological spatiologist and spatial Rhythmologist since his unitary scholarship leads to the production of the Lefebvre provisioned spatio-rhythmanalyst and Rhythmologist (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004).

The combination of spatiology and rhythmanalysis is ultimately a fusion of two different strands of analytical sciences which require a thinking of geography and history, space and time, including rhythm and the production of space, together than separately. This fusion resulted in the research study title 'Lefebvrian analyses' than analysis because of the use of these two types of analytical frameworks which are rooted in two different yet overlapping scientific fields of spatiology and the advanced space and music rhythmanalysis with their respective epistemological traditions. I conceptually appropriate Lefebvre's (1991) social (qualitative) spatiology (science) of the production of space as a territorial study of society, a new spatial sociology of sorts and social spatiology for all sciences including geography and more broadly, the humanities and social sciences.

## 1.2 Research problem

The study's research problem is addressed on two overlapping planes which are used to circumnavigate the study's identified and perceived knowledge gaps I aim to fill. The first plane on which the study's problem is situated and gap addressed is the theoretical plane and the second one is the empirical plane. Despite the global notoriety, establishment, and

influence of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiology and rhythmanalysis, or spatiological rhythmanalysis, in geography, Lefebvre's spatiological rhythmanalysis remains underdeveloped in the vibrant branch of geographical research known as political geography. This perceived condition is further supported by Brenner and Elden (2009) and Elden's (2001, 2004a, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c) seminal scholarship on Lefebvre in Anglophone geography where Lefebvre has the most detractors who delimit areas of geographic work within which Lefebvre's scholarship can be examined, appropriated and advanced. This *status quo* serves to peripheralise non-European intellectual representations of Lefebvre's global scholarship. It inhibits appropriation of Lefebvre's ideas, and further perpetuates the urban bias of Lefebvre's scientific scholarship in geography (Elden, 2001; Elden and Morton, 2016). There is also a well-established under examination of, and perceivable disengagement with, Lefebvre on territorial terms in political geography by political geographers. According to Brenner and Elden (2009) and Elden (2010a) political geographers are not interested in examining Lefebvre's territorial dimension and approaching international borders and borderlands theorisation with Lefebvre. This results in the invisibility of Lefebvre's intellectual footprint in Anglophone as well as African political geography where international borders and borderlands research is concerned.

The established speculation is that Lefebvre's scholarship, along with the physical fragmentation of geographic space by international and internal borders alongwith the institutional compartmentalisation of disciplinary knowledge into discreet parcels, is dominated by what Lefebvre (1991) calls the *ideologically dominant tendency* that is "rife in Anglophone geography" (Shields, 1999: viii, in Elden, 2001:811; Elden, 2004a). This tendency sets up "mental barriers and practico-sensory frontiers" in knowledge production where "geographers" are given "their own place in the sun...in accordance with the social division of labour" (Lefebvre, 1991:81). Such a tendency requires immediate redress by reversing it via Lefebvre's (1991) 'spatial architectonics' perspective of the unitary theory, de-Westernisation—which is to say, Africanisation or decolonisation—as well as de-urbanisation by international borders and borderlands as per the nature of this research context (Kipfer, Saberi and Wieditz, 2012; Elden and Morton, 2016). Lefebvre's (1991:11, 64, 418) unitary social theory concerns itself with "theoretical unity between 'fields' which are apprehended separately" while spatial architectonics aims to "recapture the unity of dissociated elements" by "breaking down such barriers...that are at present indiscernible", so as to "contribute towards the reversal of the dominant tendency". This means an engagement with "great theoretical struggles" of coloniality and the ideologically dominant tendency on the one hand, and decoloniality and its Afro-centric and non-geographic border epistemologies on the other.

With this study I advance and introduce Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) unknown and underexamined spatiology of *The Production of Space* and *Rhythmanalysis* into geographical debates on international borders and borderlands. On the empirical plane, there has not been an updated study of the Batswana inhabited border landscape between South Africa and Botswana since Drummond and Manson's (1991) critical analyses of the early 1990s Bophuthatswana and Botswana international border landscape with its focus on the subnational border dynamics of then Transvaal (South Africa) based Bahurutshe of Kgosì Moiloa in the colonially delimited settlement of Moiloa Reserve. With this Lefebvrian study I add to and advance from Drummond and Manson's (1991) critical subnational borderland



study and intra-Tswana states' analyses. I adopt Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatial architectonics perspective which seeks to bring the "discipline of geography...into conversation with work from across the humanities and social sciences" because that is where anthropological and historical knowledge about Batswana are located (Amoore, 2011:64-65). With these identified gaps, I aim towards a Lefebvrian analyses of the international border and cross-borderlands of South Africa and Botswana, to advance debates on international border theorization and borderlands conceptualization on the one hand. On the other hand, I pursue the objective of re-establishing Batswana as critical social units of international border analyses in political geography. Doing so helps advance geographic knowledge on and different understandings of the Southern African border landscape that is interestingly perceived as a rarely studied and hence not well-known geographical border region (Alper and Brunet-Jailly, 2008; Zeller, 2013).

### 1.3 Research justification

There are roughly six million Batswana in central south Africa who are partitioned by a single international border of South Africa with Botswana. This Batswana society dividing international border along with the four borderlands straddling it on either side, are not well-known empirically, nor are they theorized and conceptually analyzed with Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiology and rhythmanalysis in political geography. Existing studies have looked at various topics for research in the broader Regional Economic Community (REC) of Southern African Development Community (SADC). For example, some scholars focused on the development of a cross-border tourism economy, the changing spatial patterns of international migration flows between South Africa and Botswana for labour and HIV/AIDS mitigation, policy integration of informal economic actors in African Union vision 2063 for borderless movement, Covid-19 impacts on international borders and the national security complex of Botswana, border control of foot and mouth disease underpinning spatial delimitation, the African languages profile of the SADC border region, the ecological and economic resourcefulness of spatial development initiatives for integrated transport corridors for peacebuilding, along with transfrontier conservation areas between South Africa and its neighbouring countries (Lucas, 1985; Drummond and Manson, 1991; de Beer et al., 1999; Tanner, 2004; Crush, Williams and Peberdy, 2005; Ndhlovu, 2008; Ngcangcela, 2014; Manyane, 2017; Moyo and Nshimbi, 2019; Rogerson and Rogerson, 2019; Ookeditse, 2020; Mgoran, 2021).

None of the cited studies engaged the Southern African border region with Lefebvre. Nor did these studies centralise and seek to advance our political geographic knowledge of Batswana of South Africa and Botswana as critical units of cross-border analyses save for Ngcangcela (2014) and Manyane (2017) whose studies focused on transboundary tourism along South Africa's international border with Botswana along the North-West Province.

### 1.4 Research aim

To examine and explore the international border of South Africa and Botswana along with four Batswana inhabited borderlands that straddle it, using Lefebvre's spatiology and rhythmanalytical science.

## 1.5 Research objectives

- To import and advance my territorial appropriation of Lefebvre's under examined scholarship in political geography
- To re-territorialize Batswana as the primary social unit of geographic border studies
- To determine the political spatial practices along with the political spatial rhythms of South Africa's international border with Botswana and their respective borderlands

## 1.6 Key questions

- How were Batswana of Southern Africa organized in space prior to the colonial establishment of South Africa's international border with Botswana?
- What are international borders and borderlands in political geography?
- How does Lefebvre conceive and empirically approach international borders and borderlands?
- What are the political spatial practices and spatial rhythm of the international border between South Africa and Botswana?

## 1.7 Research argument and assumptions

While very few critical scholars confirm my perceived observation pertaining the palpable lack, or invisibility of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) intellectual footprint within geographic scholarship (Brenner, 1999; Elden, 2001, 2004a; Brenner and Elden, 2009), I contend that political geography is the most apt discipline to house and advance Lefebvrian discourses in ways that would replenish the subfield of border studies. I argue that without a critical engagement with Lefebvre, geographical border studies *en tout* limits itself to routine border theorizations and asocial territorial abstractions that are not grounded in empirics. With this study I subject Lefebvre's (1991) under examined territorial dimension to a critical *trial by space* based on the following research assumptions

- Lefebvre's spatiology and rhythm analysis overlap geographic border scholarship despite its lack of advancement and intellectual appropriation by political geographers
- Pre-historic Batswana had territorial conceptions of space and practical utility of borders in their multiple dimensions.
- The sub-regional landscape of South Africa and Botswana is a highly mobile interstates' space composed of distinct spatial locations and temporally organized places constituted by superfluous flows of energies.

## 1.8 Study area: geographic delimitation

The research study area and population identified for the study is a cross-border/transnational region inhabited by roughly 400,000 Batswana straddling South Africa's North-West Province and Botswana's Southern District and South Eastern District. Given the 1,178km<sup>2</sup> length of South Africa's international border with Botswana and its 15-official cross-border gates<sup>3</sup> that are accompanied by an unknown number of cross-borderlands, my study is limited to two cross-border gates and four cross-borderlands straddling the border (Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 1972). The two cross-border gates identified from the 15 are the

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.botswana.co.za/Self\\_Drive\\_Holiday-travel/botswana-border-times.html](https://www.botswana.co.za/Self_Drive_Holiday-travel/botswana-border-times.html) accessed 11 March 2024 for availability.

A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek of South Africa and Botswana.

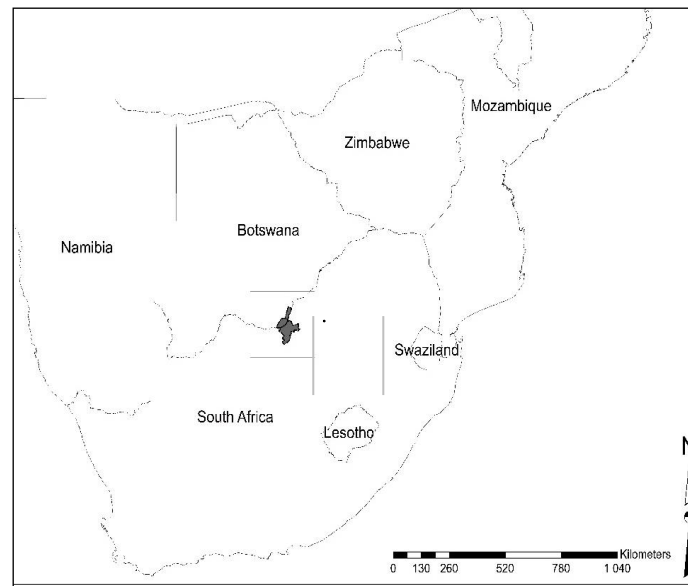


Figure 1.1. The South Africa-Botswana study area and cross-border region. Source: Mpho Gegana.

These two border gates are located roughly 60km from each other along the border, yet they are in proximity to the four unknown cross-borderlands of Batswana straddling the international border on either side. At the A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama border gates of South Africa and Botswana are Greater Mahikeng and Botlounge/Ramatlabama of the North-West Province, along with Borolong/Ramatlabama borderland of Botswana's Southern District. Lobatse-Peleng borderland is the only borderland located in Botswana's South Eastern District of the A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek border gates without an overlapping borderland in South Africa within a 30km radius from the study sites. Political geographic scholarship has not returned to this study area since the first territorial entry of Batswana in geographical limology in the early 1990s by Drummond and Manson (1991). It is therefore the purpose of this study to add to the existing body of scholarship on the historical evolution of the Bophuthatswana-Botswana border landscape, and to advance it within political geography through Lefebvre's marginal yet critical territorial scholarship.

### 1.9 The demographic profile of the study population

Since Batswana are the social majority of inhabitants residing along the South Africa-Botswana international border and borderlands, it is important therefore to present their demographic profiles for multiscale comparative analyses and where they may not be well known. Further, geographical literature instructs researchers to not ignore but rather note demographic data along with cultural profiles and political clout of their borderlanders (Minghi, 1963; Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Brunet-Jailly, 2005). This perspective is in line with Lefebvre's (2004) hermeneutical 'social-body' centric "paradigm of rhythmological study" which challenges the spatial Rhythmologist and/or rhythm analysts to not lose sight of the bodies of human beings informing their research since all social space proceeds from them (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004:48; Simonsen, 2005; Brighenti and Kärrholm, 2018). According to the 2011 census and the mid-year 2020 statistical report, South Africa has an estimated population of 51,8 and 59,62 million inhabitants of whom around 51.1% are female and

roughly 5,43 million are elderly citizens<sup>4</sup> (Republic of South Africa, 2012). According to Statista.com<sup>5</sup>, South Africa has roughly 47,454 million Africans to 4,444 million Whites. From the 47,454 million Africans, about 4,109,953 are Batswana who from since antiquity inhabit four out of nine provincial regions of democratic South Africa. From the 4,1million Batswana of the North-West Province about 314,394 Batswana are concentrated in the provincial capital city of Mafikeng which is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality [NMMDM] and the Mahikeng Local Municipality [MLM] (MLM, 2014; NMMDM, 2017). According to the District Municipality's IDP, the provincial capital of the North-West has a population of roughly 889,108 inhabitants (MLM, 2014; NMMDM, 2017). Within the MLM are the A1 Ramatlabama borderland of the Batlounge which exists within the geographic region of the greater borderland of Mahikeng (MLM, 2014; NMMDM, 2017, 2020, 2021). This unknown micro-borderland has a population of less than 9000 Tswana inhabitants located roughly 18kms north of the Barolong dominant borderland of Mahikeng (MLM SDF, 2013; MLM, 2014).

Greater Mahikeng and Botlounge are two out of the four border settlements of interest for this Lefebvrian research. Botswana has a national population of approximately 2,024,904 inhabitants of whom more than 97% are Setswana speaking Batswana from whom 54.4% are female (Republic of Botswana, 2017). There are sprinkles of non-Tswana Africans in Botswana including an even smaller population of white citizens who account for less than 0.01 per cent of Botswana's national population<sup>6</sup> (Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Flovén, 2001). From the 2 million Batswana of Botswana, there are about 189,863 to 197,767 inhabitants living in the Southern District [SD] while an estimated 114,021 are residents of South Eastern District [SED] bordering South Africa's international border with the North-West Province (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005, 2017; Rogerson and Rogerson, 2019). Of the 197,767 inhabitants of SD, approximately 47,477 are the Barolong who inhabit the country's smallest geographic space that is in the administrative jurisdiction of Good Hope Southern (sub) District Council (Republic of Botswana, 2005). Of the 47,477 Barolong who are dispersed across more than 35 interconnected villages in the SD, at least 10,865 inhabit Ramatlabama/Borolong, a border settlement located at the southern edge of Botswana and northern edge of South Africa's territorial borderline (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005, 2017). This A1 border gated settlement is the third of four border settlements which I subject to a comparative Lefebvrian analyses with the other border settlements and the two sets of border gates that interfere with them.

The SED has a population of 114,021 inhabitants out of which roughly 30,883 are inhabitants of Lobatse-Peleng borderland in the jurisdiction of Lobatse Town Council which has a district population of 85,014 (Republic of Botswana, 1997, 2017, 2018). Lobatse is inhabited by a mixture of Batswana including Barolong, Bangwaketse, Bahurutshe, Bakwena and Bangwato, who share the borderland with religious groups of Islamic and Christian bent

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.statssa.gov.za> accessed 13 July 2022

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1116076/total-population-of-south-africa-by-population-group/> accessed 10 August 2023.

<sup>6</sup> There is no demographic data on Botswana's latest census on the white population although some records approximate Botswana's white population to be roughly 3000. See <https://www.statsbots.org/bw/> accessed 15 March 2024.

(Republic of Botswana, 1993, 1997, 2018). Lobatse-Peleng is thus the fourth and final borderland of research interest for this Lefebvrian study. Table 1.1. is a micro reflection of the earlier communicated macro differences in Setswana population dynamics between South Africa’s Batswana population in the North-West Provincial capital and their Botswana counterparts. Research participants were identified ethnographically based on their professional roles and social statuses in the study area and researched population.

<b>Participants Information</b>	<b>Population in Greater Mahikeng, Republic South Africa</b>	<b>Population in Southern-South East Districts, Republic of Botswana</b>
Borderland population	314, 394	41,748
Total number of participants	25	16
Female-male ratio	8/15 (<100)	8/8 (100)
Barolong	14	13
Batloung	7	0
Non-Rolong/Tloung Tswana	2	3
Non-Tswana	2	0
Age:		
61+	8	4
50-60	8	1
40-49	7	1
30-39	3	3
<29	1	7

Table 1.1. Demographic profile of the study population and key informants<sup>7</sup>.

### 1.10. Research design and methodology

Research is commonly understood as a systematic investigation involving data collection and analysis required to adequately interpretate, understand, describe, predict, or control phenomena, and to ultimately empower researched societies (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Every research according to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) must thus have a working paradigm with clearly defined methods and methodologies without which there is no further basis for research study. Methods are understood as techniques, instruments and or analytical tools researchers use to practice their craft and analyze data (Bryman, 2008). Instruments of data collection include questionnaires, surveys, interviews, purposive sampling and observations, while analytical tools include statistical techniques which are commonly used in quantitative research and thematic content analysis from unstructured interviews obtained through ethnographic participant observation and case studies which are often sidelined by positivistic methodologists on the one hand, and political geographers on the other (Bryman, 2008; Megeran, 2006; Palinkas, et al., 2015; Ames, Glenton and Lewin, 2019; Koch, 2023; Walther, et al., 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Table modified from Berry, S.S. (2001:107). *Chiefs Know Their Boundaries: Essays on Property, Power, and the Past in Asante, 1896-1996*. Social History of Africa.

Methodology is according to Scott and Marshall (2009:467) always understood in reference to methods and the “general approach to empirical research of a particular discipline”. For others, it is perceived as the study of employed methods and the uncovering of practices and assumptions of those who use different kinds of methods (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2008). This study is situated within the qualitative paradigm of Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) qualitative spatiology and spatial rhythmanalysis which I manifested in the deployment of ethnographic participant observation, the case study approach, unstructured interviews, documents collection, and photography which are analyzed through Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) theoretical, conceptual, and empirical paradigms of rhythm and spatial architectonics. The major differences between quantitative and qualitative research are that the former’s research occurs in strictly controlled environments, depend on large scale quantitative analyses, researcher remoteness from researched subjects so as to attain scientific objectivity through computerized statistical modelling for generalizability and validity of results (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2008; Ames, Glenton and Lewin, 2019). The latter research occurs in the natural geographic setting of researched populations where the researcher has no control over phenomena and relations unfolding in the observed environment in which they must physically immerse themselves to gain deeper insights and understanding of their subjects and politics of everyday life (Lefebvre, 2004; Bryman, 2008; Nurani, 2008; Atkinson, Okada and Talmy, 2011).

It is therefore important not only for scholars to understand the epistemological and ontological paradigms shaping a researcher’s choice of methods and methodology. It is equally important to understand the geographic context, intellectual tradition and historical period in which researchers undertake and produce their work (Sartre, [1956]/2001; Lefebvre in Elden, 2004a; Heidegger, [1953]/2010). Lefebvre’s (1991) spatiology of *The Production of Space* concerns itself with the qualitative uses of socially produced space and the politics of the space’s users and inhabitants. It is interested in the qualification of the mundane from the spatial perspectives of human users and inhabitants of space whose social bodies are and were historically ignored, abandoned, fragmented, and highly abstracted by the coloniality of Western philosophy and its scientific *humanitas* (Lefebvre, 1991; Mignolo, 2009, 2011; Teufel, 2014). Through a rhythmanalytical paradigm, the methodical spatiologist must thus unify and qualify that which was fragmented, quantified, and neglected by the ideologically dominant tendency. With this study I “stress the *use* of” international border and borderlands spaces along with their “qualitative properties” which are concealed in the social politics of the representational users and inhabitants of the South Africa-Botswana border region (Lefebvre, 1991:404; original emphasis).

Everywhere a space, time and expenditure of energy interact there is a rhythm (Lefebvre, 2004). Rhythm is according to Lefebvre and Régulier (1985, 1986) in Elden and Moore (2004) “a theory and method” which requires the Rhythmologist to adopt inter and transdisciplinary perspectives (Lefebvre, 2004:15). From a disciplinary standpoint, a Lefebvorean scientist—functioning either as a spatiologist and or Rhythmologist or both—is thus a general specialist who should embody specific general traits that define their methodological identity or positionality. They should not be restricted to the disciplinary field of labour in which and from which they contribute towards the production of academic knowledge. The Lefebvorean methodologist is therefore not be confused for a disciplinary specialist such as a “psychologist...sociologist...anthropologist, nor economist” however,

they straddle “each of these fields” and are further “able to draw on instruments that specialists use” through “a transdisciplinary approach” that must be raised “in relation to these different sciences” (Lefebvre, 2004:87). Similarly, I am not a specialist ethnographer, historian, anthropologist, political geographer or an exclusive urban geographer. I am what Lefebvre (1991:38) describes as “a certain type of artist with a scientific (geography) bent” who together with “scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers, and social engineers...identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived”. Lefebvre’s spatial Rhythmologist and spatiologist thus have

...nothing in common with...a metaphysician or theologian because their deeds and acts [*gestes*] relates to reason...without going as far as...a positivist...[the rhythmologist is] someone who observes: an empiricist...[who] changes that which [he or she] observes... close to the poet, or the man [and woman] of the theatre (Lefebvre, 2004:25; original emphasis)

Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) spatiological Rhythmologist is thus artistically inclined, qualitative, empirical, inter as well as transdisciplinary in their research outlook. Key to the method of rhythmanalysis is that the Rhythmologist must borrow data, techniques, analytical and technological tools used by specialists across various disciplines including their biophysical living body which they must instrumentalise in research production (Lefebvre, 2004). For this qualitative study ethnographic immersion, discourse analysis, photography, historical archives and my lived (representational) body were drawn from for my autonomous inquiry into the Batswana populated border region of South Africa and Botswana to understand this society’s territorial dynamics. Briefly, history’s archival method is adopted in this study as a well-established research method among historians, historical geographers, frontier scholars and anthropologists (Webb, 1979; Leonardo, 1987; Prescott, 1987; Harris, 2001; L’Eplatteneir, 2009; Mills, 2013; Ongoiba, 2014). Since geographic scholars ignore Lefebvre’s historical dimension (Elden, 2004a, 2010c), I adopt the historical perspective and archival method to reimagine Batswana’s unknown prehistory and history on spatial terms. I attained this posture to further understand Batswana’s relationships with each other, the material geographic spaces they inhabit inter alia their spatial organization and cultural politics vis-à-vis the international border that separates them.

I used a digital camera for the physical landscape photography of the A1-A2 international border gates and borderlands for visual illustration and de-distancing—Heidegger’s (2010) term denoting the removal of physical distance between ideologically and geographically remote and distant things and people. Photography is adopted as a well-established method in geographic data production used also for the analysis of spatial changes and illustrative textual analysis (Sidaway, 2002; Megoran, 2006; McCusker and Ramudzuli, 2007; Rose, 2008). Ethnographic immersion by participant observation is a key technique of qualitative data collection used in this study for the generation of primary data such as unstructured interviews, textual data such as fieldnotes, interview transcripts, photographs, maps and other graphics (Wolfinger, 2002; Nurani, 2008). Ethnographic immersion in the natural settings of the studied population over a period of time is known to yield distinct insights about the studied populations, thus adding further towards the development of required spatial and cultural competencies of the researcher (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Herbst, 2000; Megoran, 2006; Atkinson, Okada and Talmy, 2011).

Ethnographic data are thus not readily waiting to be plucked from the field as Megoran (2006) rightly argues. They are “fashioned and influenced by the research methods” adopted by individual researchers (Megoran, 2006:625). Ethnographic techniques thus seek to understand parts of the world of the researched ontically, that is, as they are “experienced and understood in the everyday lives of the people who actually live them out” (Cook and Crang, 1995:2 in Megoran, 2006:625). From a Lefebvrian (2004:21, 23) perspective this means garbing myself in the “tissue of the lived” among Batswana of South and Botswana’s cross-borderlands, as well as conceived spaces of the international border environment of the study area, to “give account of this [social] relation” between different social-spatial as well as temporal rhythms. Despite ethnography’s unpopularity among political geographers and social scientists (Herbert, 2000; Megoran, 2006; Koch, 2023; Walther, et al., 2023), I deployed the eclectic method of ethnographic immersion by participant observation under the paradigm of Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) spatial rhythm analysis. Lefebvre’s under explored spatial rhythm is deployed in this study as the most “appropriate tool...to complement discursive and representational studies” (Megoran, 2006:627).

Discourse analysis as documents collection was deployed as a complementary strategy to ethnographic immersion. It primarily involves the physical collection of secondary data—such as official documents, newspapers, archival materials inter alia, which are transcribed, translated and triangulated for analysis and validity (Gill, 2000; Wiles, Rosenberg and Kearns, 2005; Hitchings and Latham, 2020). For this study a digital voice recorder was used for field interviews with the 41 key respondents. These interviews were manually translated from Setswana to English and later transcribed manually for the identification of thematic patterns and general inconsistencies among various respondents, the literature and my own empirics which I subjected to Lefebvrian analyses. For the sake of space, I elaborate on this study’s rhythmological methodology inter alia research ethics concerning each borrowed technique for data production, my positionality statement as well as limitations of the study in succeeding chapters of the thesis.

### *1.11. Thesis organization*

Following this introductory Chapter 1 is the unorthodox review of a vast body of predominantly geographical literature and to a certain degree, non-geographic scholarship on international borders and borderlands research with and through Lefebvrian lens in Chapter 2. Here, I delineate the obfuscating corpus of the geographic subfield of international border studies from frontier studies inter alia, and thematically outline some of the key issues of interest in Anglophone and African political geography concerning theorizing, conceptualization, and empirics. Integrating Lefebvre’s scientific discourse with existing scholarly debates as a contribution to literature, I gradually align some of the unknown yet overlapping epistemic perspectives of the spatiology and spatial rhythm analysis with major debates concerning the territorial integrity of political geography *en tout*. Alongside this, I engage the critical notion of the ‘territorial trap’ amidst borderless world thesis and postmodernist relational thinking inter alia, decolonial border epistemologies of the humanities and their potential value to political geographic scholarship.

To enable the study to answer some of its historical questions aligned to the objective of spatializing Batswana through a rhythm analytical framework of spatial architectonics which is further informed by frontier studies perspective, I delve into the pre-history and historical



reimagination of this border society's territorial practices and practical utility of aspatial and spatial borders in Chapter 3. This chapter is an experimentation with Lefebvre's spatial architectonics which enables me to circumspectly import a US-based frontier perspective with the epistemic geo-body politics of knowledge production, decolonial border thinking and the coloniality of *Dasein* to demonstrate the political geographic production of Botswana's contemporary border landscape vis-à-vis geographer's historical and contemporary theorization and conceptualization of territorial spaces that is so lacking in contemporary geographic scholarship. Following the historical chapter is the narrative style methodological Chapter 4 which makes a special contribution to an empirically neglected area of political geographic fieldwork in international border regions. I advance Lefebvre's spatiological rhythmology empirically in the A1-A2 cross-border gated region of South Africa and Botswana whilst addressing issues of ethical concern, researcher positionality and Lefebvrian limitations of the study's design and outcomes with the relevant literature.

Given the spatial as well as social distinction between international border gates and borderlands of South Africa and Botswana, I separated the analytical findings for each space given the perceived intellectual bias against the borderlands in the reviewed geographical literature chapter. Chapter 5 as a result, is the first of two empirically informed chapters to represent this study's general findings concerning the African international border and its A1-A2 cross-border gates of South Africa and Botswana where I experiment with Lefebvre's statist notions of the State Mode of Production and the New State Form introduced in the literature review. Chapter 6 focuses on the empirical findings on the A1-A2 cross-borderlands of South Africa and Botswana which further reveal an interesting layer of pre-historic as well as historical continuities of some political traits and spatial relations among Botswana in the contemporary era.

I further discuss the findings of chapters on comparative terms with each other relative to the literature debates and thematic issues of interest to this Lefebvrian study in Chapter 7. Here, I reinstate Lefebvre's hypothetical assumptions about the spatial arbitrariness and illusion of international borders for the anthropologically congruent geographic society of Botswana living in different spatial locations along the partitioned spatial region of 400,000 Setswana speakers. Following this chapter is a succinct summary of the study's key findings and Lefebvrian contributions in Chapter 8. I contrast and reinstate what was initially explored and presented in Chapter 1, that is, research questions, literature, aim, assumptions and objectives, with the study's findings. I conclude the chapter with a set of recommendations and the delimitation of future areas for consideration by territorial scholars prior to the final closing remarks of the study.

## Chapter 2

### Political Geography, Theoretical Limology and Henri Lefebvre: A Review of Literature

#### 2.1 Introduction

This study builds on my master's dissertation about the Lefebvorean analysis of the production of a contested public space in Johannesburg. It illustrates an interdisciplinary leap from urban geography to political geography on the one hand, and the intellectual transition from urban geographic Lefebvorean research to a new and different territorial Lefebvorean engagement on the other hand. In this study I fused Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiology of *The Production of Space* and *Elements of Rhythmanalysis* scholarships for the analytical exploration and production of knowledge concerning the South Africa-Botswana international border and its Botswana inhabited borderlands which, similar to Lefebvorean scholarship, are also not very well known and under researched in political geography. With this inexhaustive analytical review I hope to establish and advance Lefebvre's under examined territorial dimension and unknown scholarship in political geography. To achieve this, I integrate Lefebvre's territorial scholarship with—as well as contrast it to—existing theoretical debates and analytical research trends shaping political geographical scholarship in the Global South and Global North. This in addition to spatializing the cross-border society of Botswana whose international border dynamics are unknown and still trapped in the abstract closet of non-analytical conceptualization three decades post their interdisciplinary entry in political geographical research. With this chapter and study, I bridge the political geography established—and researcher perceived—disciplinary gap in the under advancement of Lefebvorean border thinking in general.

This chapter is organised as follows. Section 1 begins with a delimitation of the sub-disciplinary context of political geography and its distinction from the territorial science of international borders and borderlands called theoretical limology inter alia, frontier and regional studies. Section 2 provides a global overview on key academic developments of the last two decades which sought to bridge historical intellectual gaps between Anglophone and African border scholars in political geography, the humanities, and social sciences through a globalist framework of Lefebvre's (1991) spatial architectonics. Section 3 introduces the key terms and theoretical definitions of select territorial concepts, theoretical debates and methodological issues shaping Anglophone and African political geography while Section 4 introduces and delimits this study's Lefebvorean contributions and advances in the territorial sub-discipline particularly for the African region and sub-region under investigation. I place the study's research area and cross-border society of Botswana in geographical context in section 5 prior to my reiteration of the significance of the study and its Lefebvorean contribution in section 6 which concludes the chapter.

#### 2.2 Political geography and theoretical limology: a disciplinary distinction

International borders, frontiers, borderlands, and boundaries are state-centric political spatial objects of theoretical interest in political geographic research (Minghi, 1963; Webb, 1979; von Houtum, 2000; Brunet-Jailly, 2009). Literature indicates that international borders and frontiers are central to political geography because of the close relationship that exists between Westphalian nation statehood, sovereignty, territory, and the societies over

whom political states of the international community exercise power (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Newman and Paasi, 1998; Rudolph, 2005; Storey, 2017). International borders, borderlands and the territory of nation states they demarcate have a long tradition in political geography and its subfield of critical geopolitics (Megoran, 2006; Paasi, 2012a; Koch, 2023). This therefore leads me to conceptualize the geographic subfield of political geography and the study of international borders and borderlands<sup>8</sup> which Kolossov (2005:1) coined as “limology”, as *geographical limology*. Geographical limology is further perceived and conceptualized by Makkonen and Williams (2016:355) as an offbeat “branch of regional studies”.

International borders are legal and administrative multiscale systems. They serve as palpable expressions of the relationship between the academic discipline of geography and the politics of the international state institution *qua* territorial sovereignty (Minghi, 1963; Rumley and Minghi, 1991; Newman and Paasi, 1998; Christopher, 2002; Brunet-Jailly, 2009). Geographic scholars in the Global North and Global South are unanimous about the multidisciplinary character of limology which geographers do not hold a monopoly over but continue to play a critical role (Johnson and Jones, 2011; Ramutsindela, 2019). The academic growth of theoretical limology is attributed to the various disciplinary contributions from law, migration studies, international relations (IR), anthropology, history, geography, political science and so forth (van Houtum, 2000; Kolossov, 2005; Brunet-Jailly, 2005, 2009; Blandy and Sibley, 2010; Johnson and Jones, 2011; Jones, 2011; Golunov, 2014; Song, 2018; Ramutsindela, 2019; Walther et al, 2023). These academic disciplines constitute the social sciences and the humanities which straddle geography in its physical and human inter-sub-disciplinary dimensions. At the same time, these fields benefit from the *historical* spatial developments of regional frontier societies and ongoing geopolitical spatial delimitations along with social reorganization of state controlled physical territories (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Sen, 2020; Paasi, 2022).

The longstanding ‘*territorial*’ contributions of geography and political geographers towards the theoretical advancement of “limology” as an independent science of international borders and borderlands, is perceived as one of geography and political geographers’ “special contributions” (Prescott, 1987:12; Parker, 2006; Kolossov, 2015:1). Indeed, it was “within political geography” that Friedrich Ratzel and Richard Hartshorne established what can also be called territorial limology as a critical sub-field of political geographical research and scholarship (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Ramutsindela, 1993; Paasi, 2012a; Sevastianov, Laine and Kireev, 2015:6). Geographical limology constitutes what Minghi (1963) refers to as territorial science or geographical border studies. Similar to Kolossov (2015), Brighenti and Kärholm (2018) introduce the term *territoriology* through their *territorial* appropriation of Lefebvre’s (2004) *music* rhythm analysis, to refer to the relational aspect of the multidisciplinary field of territorial science in which political geography plays a dominant and critical role.

Sen (2020) makes an interesting disciplinary distinction between geographical border studies and an overlapping discipline called frontier studies which is rarely mentioned and explicated in reviewed geographic limology scholarship. According to Sen (2020) and

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<sup>8</sup> I use the disciplinary terms such as geographical limology, geographical border studies and territorial border studies interchangeably throughout the chapter and study, to refer to the political geography of international borders and borderlands.

Webb (1979) frontier studies specializes on the understanding of the political history and the historical evolution of geographic frontier regions with little to no interest in the political influence of existing international borders on the surrounding human and physical geographic frontiers (Prescott, 1987). Attempts to summarize the state of scholarship in “frontier studies” have led to intellectual division among scholars in anthropology, history, geography, and archaeology (Parker, 2006:77). The lamented ideological replacement of frontier studies with a stronger re-emergence of political geography and the growing significance of politically functioning international borders led frontier scholars in eastern and western Europe, to question the disciplinary relevance of frontier studies on the one hand, and the frontier concept on the other (van der Vleuten and Feys, 2016). Territorial concepts such as frontier, the Great Frontier, and the western European Metropolis for example, characterize the geographically contingent historical field of frontier studies. Webb (1979:405) rightfully identifies historians and anthropologists as disciplinary stewards and “ancient historians” of regional frontier studies (Sen’, 2020).

In the geographic context of African scholarship on borderlands and international borders western anthropologists and historians have contributed significantly to the advancement of territorial limology studies for geographic borderlands in ways that often negate the theorization and critical conceptual analyses of the international state apparatus of the border, and the actual political geography of the border settlements for the social ethnographic and the historical. I provide evidence of this later in the chapter. Both frontier studies and geographical limology were established and conceived in western Europe as well as the United States of America (or US) between the 17<sup>th</sup> to late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Coplan, 2010a, 2010b). Based on frontier and geographic border scholars, frontier studies predate political geography (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Ramutsindela, 1993; Paasi, 2012a). Webb (1979) locates the evolution of the frontier concept in US history. Through the abstract concept of the Great Frontier and its extra-territorial relationship with the urban metropolitan core of western European powers—such as Great Britain, Germany, Holland, Spain and France which constitute The Metropolis—the US was birthed as an autonomous North American frontier society and space (Boggs, 1940; Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987).

Webb (1979) further argues that the frontier concept should be imported and appropriated with heedful circumspection, to borrow from Heidegger (2010). In other words, scholars outside of the North American and western European tradition and political geographic regions should exercise intellectual caution in their contextual application and analytical appropriation of the frontier as a Western concept and geography embedded sociological construct. Similar to the geographic concept of territory, the frontier concept is contextually polysemic (Webb, 1979; Sen’, 2020; Paasi, 2022). The spatial ontology and social meaning of a frontier in Latin America is according to Webb (1979) somewhat confused and radically different from Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American conceptions and geographic experiences of the concept. Similarly, Sen’ (2020) moots the stark differences in application and conceptualization of the frontier concept in Russia’s geopolitical history and theoretical debates contra postcolonial politics of western Europe and the US on Russian geopolitical landscape and research traditions. In a European context, a frontier is not a geographic zone of varying width and length as so described in the US context. It is but a linear border between two nations represented by a thin line of the international border on political

geographic maps (Sen', 2020). A frontier in European context is thus a closed border that implies no transgression, no overlaps and no cultural contact between separated polities and their respective geopolitical units (Webb, 1979) whereas in the African frontier studies context, the frontier is a relational geographic zone where different ethnographic groups meet for the circulation of cultural and socioeconomic exchanges (Griffith, 1996; Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996). In the US-Canada context a frontier line—or French *frontière* and Spanish *frontera*—is a relational line of geographic division between the two North American nation states however, as one moves southwards to the US-Mexico border region one experiences an international border separating two different geopolitical, economic and cultural worlds (Webb, 1979; Coplan, 2010a, 2014). According to Webb (1979) the frontier-international border distinction between the more Anglophone region of North America and its less Anglophone southern counterpart with Mexico, means that in the North American context frontier lines exist within the international borders of both Anglo-American countries. There, frontiers are undiscovered spaces and moving (expanding) imaginary lines which invite further exploration than serving as stop-lines between different political jurisdictions/administrations (Webb, 1979; Baud and van Schendel, 1997; Parker, 2006; Elden, 2010; Sen', 2020). A US frontier in this regard is not a boundary nor border since it does not bind nor signify any spatial limit rather, it is an open invitation for transgression and exploration according to Webb (1979).

In a Spanish context the *frontera* refers to both international borders and frontiers (Parker, 2006). Whereas eastern European frontiers are perceived as static and immobile historical relicts which are presumably permanent, western Europe perceives international borders as clear-cut straight lines, geometric/Euclidean, or Cartesian space separating two or more geographically contiguous territorial administrations (Webb, 1979; Brenner, 1999; Sen', 2020). From this review of definitions, a border and frontier are polysemic units whose meaning changes with regional geographic context. For this study, I adopt the concept of the international border as a thin line on geographic maps which is used geopolitically in practice to separate and distinguish between two or more sovereign nation states. In African geographic limology, dynamics concerning conceptual definitions and disciplinary understandings of frontiers as geographic subject matter are not readily engaged by political geographers of the continent. Rather than be preoccupied with frontier definitions and disciplinary distinction from geographic border studies, African frontier scholars challenge territorial scholars in Europe and Africa to bridge existing knowledge and operational gaps between themselves since the two regions are bound to experience similar challenges and opportunities concerning sub-regional integrated developments of their respective European Union (EU) and African Union (AU) interstate regions (Asiwaju, 1992, 1993, 1996; Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996a, 1996b).

The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century colonization of Africa by western Europe indeed produced theoretical inconsistencies and stark differences in scholarly traditions of Anglophone and African geographical limologists who rarely engage frontier studies perspectives in their respective bodies of work. Outside of the frontiers studies debate, Brenner (1999) argues that many political geographers engage the 'historical' dimension of international borders *en passant*. African colonization by The Metropolis meant the scientific under development of geographical limology for intellectual appropriation, advance and production by African

scholars (Tlostanova and Mignolo, 2006; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2009, 2011). This meant political geography if not geography overall was in the African context politically under developed and predominantly Anglophone (white) in intellectual as well as demographic representation (see Wellings and McCarthy, 1983; Lemon, 1991; Hammett, 2012). A little over a decade ago Christopher<sup>9</sup> (2002:48) described political geography as a “small but vibrant section of geographical research” in [southern and south] Africa which is beginning to gain intellectual traction on comparative terms with US and western European political geography. The under development of geographic border studies in Africa meant the continent which the colonial Global North adorned with more than 100 international borders in less than a century of colonization, suffers from theoretical peripheralization in territorial border knowledge production (Nugent and Engels, 2010; Coplan, 2010a, 2010b, 2014). As a result, it is and should be the mission of African ‘territoriologists’, to borrow from Brighenti and Kärholm (2018), to relocate territorial Africa from the intellectual margins of broader analytical discourses on borders to the center such that Africa’s international border regions are conceived as critical sites for border theorizing and conceptual analyses, rather than empirical sites for data harvesting with little theoretical import (Coplan, 2010a, 2010b; Moyo, 2018; Ramutsindela, 2019; Walther, et al., 2023)

Despite global and interregional differences in Anglophone and African geographical limology, Webb (1979) urges territorial scholars to transcend established disciplinary boundaries of limology, critical geopolitics, frontier studies and political geography. According to Webb (1979:412) frontiers and international border students must be prepared “to break academic fences set up in universities to separate so-called fields of knowledge” by crossing their own country as well as academic discipline’s borders for the study of human societies of interest to them. Interestingly, what Webb (1979) proposes for students of the frontier and the international border is what Lefebvre (1991) refers to as spatial architectonics, a theoretical framework premised on a unitary theory of social, mental and physical space in which academic fields of study invested in the social, abstract (symbolic) and concrete dimensions of space are unified rather than apprehended separately. Furthermore, the spatial architectonics perspective seeks to reverse the ‘ideologically dominant tendency’ of knowledge division (Lefebvre, 1991). I return to and seek to advance Lefebvre’s (1991) under examined and unknown spatial architectonics perspective in geographical limology scholarship as a way of situating this unorthodox Lefebvorean border and borderlands study, or Lefebvorean limology, in an autonomously discovered geographic sub-field of limology research.

Webb’s (1979) frontier studies perspective echoes contemporary trends in Anglophone political geographic scholarship which reflects a global desire among political geographers to critically integrate and engage with non-geographical scholarship from the humanities and the social sciences because of the hyper complexity, context specificity, multiscalar character and changing social and political meanings of international borders (Amoore, 2011; Johnson and Jones, 2011; Paasi, 2011a; Sevastianov, Laine and Kireev, 2015; Ramutsindela, 2019). For this current study, it means breaking tradition with conventional practices in political geographic research, Lefebvorean thinking, and border theorizing. This in a multidisciplinary field like limology where various disciplines have a stake, Rumford

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<sup>9</sup> Maharaj, B. 2021. Obituary – Professor AJ Christopher (1939-2021). *South African Geographical Journal*, 103(3):420-421.

(2006) and Newman (2003, 2006) argue against the tendency for uncritical cross-disciplinary pollination within political geography which is a difficult and challenging undertaking which involves the autonomous learning of other disciplines' territorial lexicons and epistemic traditions which ignore theoretical positionalities. Furthermore, the political dispositions of different scholars who under the post or cross-disciplinary era, are often ignored since their often lumped together as disparate thinkers who tend to undermine the territorial base and space dimension of international borders within geographic scholarship (Elden, 2001, 2010a; Ramutsindela, 2013; Paasi, 2022). The discourse turns towards a grounding of Lefebvre's (1991) spatial architectonics framework as an extension of contemporary trends towards sub-disciplinary fusion in both African and Anglophone scholarship particularly where Africa—as the territorial research context of this study—is concerned.

### **2.3 Towards epistemic redress by means of spatial architectonics: A global overview.**

To negate the intellectual dominance of the West inter alia, the uneven global production of theoretical geographical limology in contrast to the historically colonized Global South and its relatively young subfield, a few notable developments occurred in the last 20 years between territorial border scholars in the US, western Europe and Africa, to bridge the political knowledge gaps created during Africa's colonization by the West. These developments occurred as a means of epistemic redress. Roughly 17-years ago in 2007/8 the European Science Foundation launched a transdisciplinary research think tank for Africa called the African Borderlands Research Network or ABORNE<sup>10</sup> (Coplan, 2014). The goal of ABORNE is to position Africa as a “center and not a periphery in border studies' broader analytical discourses” (Coplan, 2010a:1, 2010b; Nugent and Engel, 2010). Interestingly, territorial Africa within the geographic tradition of Anglo-American as well as African scholarship, is empirically well-established as a region with the highest number of international borders (109 in 2023), a region with a declining number of violent territorial conflicts and international border disputes which some scholars believe are a direct consequence of Western colonization inter alia (Boggs, 1940; Minghi, 1963; Prescott, 1987; Ramutsindela, 1993, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2019; Moyo, 2016, 2018, 2020).

Emergent political geographic scholarship on interstate atrophy in the border regions of Syria-Iraq borderlands (Akdedian and Hasan, 2020), the technological analyses of the international boundaries correlation with interstate warfare and political state violence in the borderlands of North and West Africa (Radil, Irmischer and Walther, 2022), ideological practices of witchcraft and state formation in Central Africa (Leonardi, Storer and Fisher, 2021) as well as territorialization by inter-regional separation in Ghana (Penu, 2023) including the Borderlandization of the Golden Horn of Africa (Marsai and Szalai, 2021), are further examples of research that illustrate the emergence, rather than marginalization of the post, neo or de-colonial continent as central to broader territorial discourses. Further, these sub-regional theoretical and analytical discourses negate the emergent perception of non-geographic Anglophone border scholars in the *Journal of Borderlands Studies* for example, who opine that Africa's international boundaries organized sub-regions and their borderlands are relatively unknown and rarely studied (Alper and Brunet-Jailly, 2008; Zeller, 2013; Coplan, 2010a, 2010b, 2014). The global effort for territorial epistemic

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.aborne.net/> accessed 15 February 2024.

redress is not only indicated by the establishment of ABORNE but also, by the publication of new critical African scholarship in the flagship human geography journal of *Political Geography*. This gesture ensures that African sub-regions and their Middle East counterpart will no longer be conceived as “two large white spots” which usually occupy an unusual “spot on the West’s cognitive map” (Lonsdale, 1981:143; Sevastianov, Laine and Kireev, 2015:9). Following the ABORNE launch was the 2008 humanities Africa-Europe Group of Interdisciplinary Studies (AEGIS 3) conference which was hosted in Leipzig, Germany, for the scientific purpose of ‘Respacing Africa’ (Nugent and Engel, 2010). The key message from the AEGIS 3 conference was that the territorial “re-spacing” of Africa—which is also perceived as part of the broader discourses on the ‘spatial turn’ in the humanities as well as the social sciences—would truly be realized if Africa’s *humanitas*, to borrow from Mignolo (2009, 2011), are directly engaged with political geographers/political geography whose territorial border thinking and borderlands conceptualizations are founded on Lefebvre’s (1991) epistemological scholarship of *The Production of Space* (Ramutsindela, 2001:178; Nugent and Engel, 2010).

The demand for a Lefebvorean political geography and Lefebvorean political geographers for the territorial theorization of Africa’s contemporary political geography, is an interesting development and explicit intellectual demand from the humanities scholars. The demand is interesting because it comes from the humanities scholars than political geographers and political geography where Lefebvorean scholarship is rarely studied and advanced. Indeed, AEGIS 3 scholars recognized the territorial import and currency of Lefebvre’s (1991) geographically under examined and non-appropriated scholarship of *The Production of Space* because one cannot undertake any spatial analysis in any academic field of study without first contending with Lefebvre as the intellectual pioneer of multiscalar, multitemporal territorial space, state and society thinking (Brenner, 1999; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a; Zeller, 2015). Interestingly, African political geographic literature does not indicate the existence of an exclusive Lefebvorean political geographer compared to western Europe and Anglo-American contexts where on the one hand, a diverse cohort of elite Lefebvorean political geographers produce radical territorial scholarship in a Lefebvorean flagship journal *Antipode* inter alia, advancing Lefebvre’s ideas territorially in *Progress in Human Geography* and *Political Geography* for example.

On the other hand, is another larger group of Lefebvorean detractors who within the Anglophone geographic tradition of urban geography have set up intellectual limits and spatial boundaries around which Lefebvre’s borderless scholarship within human geography and its sub-branches of urban and political geography cannot go beyond or above (Shields, 1999 in Elden, 2001; Elden, 2001, 2004a, 2010a, 2010b). Furthermore, the Western colonization of Lefebvorean scholarship and its urban geographic confinement means that Lefebvre’s scholarship in Anglophone and African political geographic scholarship is limited to a type of Eurocentric appropriation and application to an extent that African intellect and non-urban geographic scholarship for example, cannot appropriate, challenge and advance Lefebvre’s scholarship to various horizons and dimensions never before explored (Kipfer, Saberi and Wieditz, 2012; Elden and Morton, 2016). This latter group of Lefebvre conscious yet detracting political geographers is according to Shields (1999) in Elden (2001) rife in Anglophone geographic scholarship. These scholars are palpable manifestation of what Lefebvre (1991:81) refers to as the ideologically dominant



tendency because they have set up “mental barriers and practico-sensory frontiers” in disciplinary and Lefebvrian knowledge production such that “geographers” have “their own place in the sun...in accordance with the social division of labour”. Engaging such a dominant ideological tendency could help us understand the lack of Lefebvrian appropriation in political geography alongside the lack of Lefebvrian political geographers in Africa and various areas of research and knowledge which this current Lefebvrian study aims to address and advance. There is an area within geographical limology scholarship I seek to contribute. Sassen (2013) accurately notes Brenner and Elden’s scholarship as one of the most theoretically advanced and significant to engage and advance further within critical political geography. What makes these geographers’ niche scholarship theoretically outstanding is their explicit territorial engagement with Lefebvre’s radical politics, political scholarship, interdisciplinary value for human geography and philosophy, *inter alia*.

I expand on this body of work in the succeeding sub-section of the chapter as a means of further situating this study in geographic context while I outline its simultaneous contributions to geographic limology and Lefebvrian scholarship. Among African political geography literature reviewed here, Ramutsindela’s (2001) rarely engaged territorial Bantustan scholarship emerges as part of the elite and niche scholarship that implicitly harbors elements of Lefebvrian thinking. Taken together with this current study—*inter alia* the sub-disciplinary demand for Lefebvrian political geographers in Africa by AEGIS 3 humanities scholars—Ramutsindela’s (2001) body of work indicates that the emergence and operation of Lefebvrianism in African political geography at any geographic scale of borders and regions is plausible. It is therefore not surprising that even for 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa and its cross-disciplinary territorial border discourses, “political geographers” are expected to be “at the forefront of border studies” and territorial respacing (Prescott, 1987:12). However, the lack of Lefebvrian engagement and territorial appropriation in political geography is cause for critical concern and creative redress despite global efforts towards epistemic redress and calls for the de-Westernization and de-urbanization of Lefebvrian scholarship by the post-colonial West.

Political geographic scholarship therefore reveals an interesting trend that represents a global shift towards, as well as implicit demand in territorial studies for, what Lefebvre (1991) calls a unitary theory of space and the attainment of theoretical unity between separately apprehended academic fields and their socially divided border scholars who are geographically dispersed. The unitary theory and theoretical unity between limology fields including Lefebvrian scholarship, is packaged in the abstract framework of Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial architectonics perspective. Spatial architectonics is Lefebvre’s (1991) ideologically disruptive yet epistemologically unifying theoretical framework that calls for the establishment and advance of a unitary theory of space through theoretical unity between separately apprehended fields of scientific study. Spatial architectonics further calls for the critically engaged reversal of the ideologically dominant tendency that keeps scholars in isolation and creates analytical confusion. Spatial architectonics demands scholars to transgress their own international as well as disciplinary (including interdisciplinary) boundaries at various levels and spatial scales as earlier noted by Webb (1979). The fragmentation of border knowledge production and desire towards legible cross-disciplinary

unity is described by border social scientists as the “institutional marginalization currently on display” (Walther, et al., 2023:2). Spatial architectonics is thus a theoretically dense rhythm analytical chapter that Unwin (2000) perceives as Lefebvre’s most complex contribution that is not readily discernible nor understood. This is because Lefebvre’s (1991) Spatial Architectonics chapter in the spatioLOGY is a roadmap to and scientific expression of a sophisticated synthesis between *The Production of Space* and *Elements of Rhythmanalysis*. As Lefebvre (1991, 2004) critically states, the two sciences are complementary social spatial sciences which overlap to an extent that the production of space requires a rhythm analysis to complete its intellectual exposition.

#### **2.4 Territory and the territorial debate in geographical limology**

Territory, international borders, frontiers and borderlands are key concepts and building blocks of political geographic research (Minghi, 1963; Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Christopher, 2002; Ramutsindela, 2013). Each of these territorial concepts in social practice represent distinct political or state produced physical spaces which serve as palpable manifestation of political geography’s relationship with—as well as theoretical interest in—the nation state, territory and the human society over which the nation state claims sovereignty (Rudolph, 2005; Megoran, 2006; Storey, 2017; Paasi, 2022). Of these four key terms, territory was until recently, the most under developed or least engaged term that lacks analytical clarification in political geography despite Prescott’s (1987) claim that territorial theorizing is one of political geographers’ outstanding and unique contributions. Paasi’s (2022) view is that territory is regaining traction in contemporary scholarship since no other discipline can engage territory and space like geography and geographers can (Lefebvre, 1991; Brenner, 1999; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a; Antonsich, 2011; Sassen, 2013; Ramutsindela, 2013; Paasi, 2022). In response to Elden’s (2010a) critical theorization of territory argued through a historically informed and highly abstract Lefebvrian consciousness, Antonsich (2011:2) argues that few political geographers in the Global North and Global South critically engage and or seek to advance the “territorial debate”.

Literature suggests that territory and territoriality are geographic concepts which were once left for IR, critical geopolitics, political as well as socio-biological scientists to develop philosophically (Agnew, 1994; Jacobs, 1997; Brenner, 1999; Megoran, 2006; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Paasi, 2012a). IR scholars for example, conceived territory as a passively experienced static unit, an empty geographic container of the state whose international borders are fixed and unchanging (Rudolph, 2005; Elden, 2010b; Newman, 2010; Agnew, 2015). The geographical assumptions of IR scholars and political scientists meant the emergence of state centrism or statist thinking which colonised if not dominated most of social science thinking about territory (Brenner, 1999). There are two major geographical assumptions of IR which reproduce statist thinking or Agnew’s (1994:56) “territorial trap” in geographical limology. Agnew’s (1994) territorial trap is an abstract phenomenon that most political geographers according to Brenner (1999), Brenner and Elden (2009), Elden (2010a) and Newman (2010) for example, avoid and ignore instead of engaging critically for thinking territory through, and to offer analytical clarity on territory’s relationship with territoriality from historically contingent and geographically situated perspectives. IR’s first major geographical assumption that secretes territorial trap thinking is the notion that space is a static platform than a product constituted by social relations which as Brenner (1999) and

Sassen (2013) argue, leads to territorial fetishization of space and analytical confusion of territorial units. The second assumption concerns the conception of state territoriality under statist thinking which often leads to methodological territorialism wherein all spatial forms and geographic scales are perceived as bounded territorial units (Brenner, 1999; Newman, 2010; Nugent and Engel, 2010; Paasi, 2022).

Despite efforts to critique such assumptions in human geography, social science scholars still misconstrue state territory and territoriality as “a realm of stasis...a pre-given, unchanging platform upon which social action occurs” (Brenner, 1999:41; Elden, 2010a). Arguing with Lefebvre (1991), Brenner (1999:46) raises the contention that the territorial trap of state-centrism in border studies has infiltrated other academic fields outside IR and geopolitics, “to various modes of anthropological, sociological and economic analysis” where “the concept of the state is not explicitly deployed”. State-centric epistemology has indeed infiltrated even contemporary geographic thinking and its territorial approbation of Lefebvre’s scholarship. Brenner (1999:46) engages the ideologically dominant tendency in the social sciences arguing that anthropology with its “focus on bounded, territorialized cultures” alongside sociology with its “focus on geographically fixed societies and communities”, are expressions of state-centric epistemology - or territorial trap thinking – which requires mental transcendence beyond cross-disciplinarity. Negating the apparent state-centrism characterising Anglophone and African political geography does not entail a denial or marginalization of the state’s continued political and spatial relevance in the territorial organization of social life (Brenner, 1999; Paasi, 2011a; Ramutsindela, 2013).

An anti-statist epistemic position according to Brenner (1999), means a rethinking of state territoriality and political space through and with the territorial trap in the age of intensifying cultural, technological and economic globalization (Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a; Newman, 2010; Sassen, 2013). Nonetheless, within geographic literature territory is perceived on two planes: as a first order philosophical problem over international borders, and or a second order problem to international borders (Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c; Antonsich, 2011). This theoretical disposition means there is an inseparable yet distinguishable relationship between territory and international borders which is not always clearly delineated. Ramutsindela (2013) comes close to explicating the distinction between territory and international borders through the metaphor of a photograph in its frame. Through the transactional perspective of the ‘region-border’ nexus, Ramutsindela (2013) suggests that in some instances the frame, which is signified by the international border in this regard, does not matter as much as what is and what it framed (the photo as region

To this I add that statist thinking in geographical scholarship in the global West and Africa, is perceived in the abstraction and subordination of the borderlands to the theoretical analysis of interstate borders outside of their immediate impact and influence on surrounding areas flanking them as per Boggs (1940), Minghi (1963), Webb (1979) and Prescott’s (1987) traditional frontiers-minded political geographic scholarship. Despite their analytical confusion, territory and territoriality are polysemic, are not mutually exclusive and are analytically conflated concepts (Brenner, 1999; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a; Sassen, 2013). According to Paasi (2022) territory is both an abstract and physical geographic term, while Brighenti (2006) perceives territoriality as a virtual dimension of territory conceived in similar vein with Amore’s (2011) virtual border thinking. For Jacobs

(1997:121) territoriality is not virtual but “a bounded area, territory”. Sack (1983) perceives territoriality from a human and statist perspective suggesting the concept to infer a social and political relationship of power that is discoursed through international borders which delimit state sovereignty over a controlled physical area and people.

Brighenti (2006:67) further adds that territoriality is “a disposition to act, to react according to given patterns under specific conditions” however, Anderson and O’Dowd (1999:598) regard territoriality as “a spatial strategy to effect, influence, or control resources and people by controlling an area”, similar to Sack’s (1983) social statist theorization of territoriality. For Ramutsindela (2019:351) territory is “a defining feature of the state” outside of which the state as we know has no existence. On political science and political geographic terms, territoriality is understood as an integral aspect of spatially organized social life which has become bundled with state sovereignty as an essential characteristic of the modern interstate system instituted at a global scale in 1648 through the Treaty of Westphalia (Brenner, 1999; Rudolph, 2005). Brighenti (2006:68) avers that territory - more than territoriality - is a physical space that is “excerpted and circumscribed in view of a set of tasks to carry out”, while Champollion (2007:55) moots territory as a concept that “implies thinking about...the...limits, continuities, and reconstructions of territories”. Agnew (2008) and Mbembe (2000:261) further conceive territory as an ethical dwelling area defined by “the intersection of moving bodies” which are in turn defined by “sets of movements” taking place within the boundaries of territory. Murphy (2022:27) interestingly contends that contemporary thought “demands an increasingly sophisticated engagement with the sticky concept of territory”.

Whatever the case, territory is a multidimensional concept, a physical geographic area endowed with natural resources and is further inhabited by people hence, its social and cultural dimensions described by Paasi (2009a). Territoriality is more complex. Elden (2010a:801) conceives it as the “condition or status of territory rather than a mode of operating toward that territory” such as defined by Sack (1983) and Brighenti (2006). State territory is thus the judicial geopolitical space that evokes international law, international relations and critical geopolitics, all of which converge upon the sub-regional locality to influence and transform the nature of relations in the socially inhabited and international borders partitioned geographic territories. Interstate territory and territoriality are based on power differentials, sovereignty, international borders and legal jurisdiction over people and resources (Sassen, 2013; Ladino, 2017; Storey, 2017). Though dense in theoretical content for political theorizing that is not readily discernible, the territorial debate is an interesting niche area that requires “new modes of analysis that do not naturalize state territoriality and its associated” Euclidean view of space-as-container, geometric, quantitative and positivist (Brenner, 1999:40; Paasi, 2009a, 2012a; Ramutsindela, 2013, 2019).

Territory and territoriality are therefore not mutually exclusive. Indeed, political geography scholarship inter alia, modern social sciences, cannot avoid the territorial trap of state-centric thinking. This is because of the long-established inviolability of the sovereignty of the nation state and its global international system of borders which are a prime area of multiscale research in political geographic scholarship. According to scholars, the absolute intellectual and analytical avoidance of the territorial trap fetishizes and marginalizes the territorial trap which ironically secretes statist thinking and analytical confusion of the territorial concepts which spatial architectonics must seek to clarify. While few critical political geographers

advance the territorial debate to varying degrees, even fewer engage territorial debates with Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship that at the cusp of the "intersection of state and territory" in what Elden (2010a) refers to as a post-Lefebvre political geography and territorial studies (Sassen, 2013:26). This *Anglophone* Lefebvrian political geographic scholarship challenges territorial scholars with spatial thinking on Lefebvrian terms in interesting ways that somehow does not inspire the necessary and or required engagement from political geographers in the Global North and Global South. Geographic limologists are thus urged by both Lefebvrian political geographers and Lefebvre (1991) to not take space for granted, or as a given in society or as a "self-evident" concept because of the hyper complexity of space (Elden, 2010a:800). Using the preceding discussion as background for this chapter and the study, I introduce and advance Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship of the spatiology and rhythmology in geographic literature through the philosophical construct of Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* which reduces quantitative as well as intellectual distances between ideologically remote and distance places, points or societies including temporalities. Both Lefebvre's (1991) spatial architectonics and Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* require the embodied intellectual mind of the spatial analyst/scholar/scientist, who must operate rhythmanalytically to also unify separately apprehended spatiology and rhythmanalysis.

The lack of territorial appropriation and fusion of Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalysis with the spatiology in political geography limits the inter- and transdisciplinary scope of Lefebvre's scholarship to statist theorizing that fails to grasp the multiple dimensions of Lefebvre's territorial thinking and empirical approaches to international borders and borderlands. Drawing on literature on Lefebvre's (1991, 2004, [1995]/2011) scholarship, I introduce what I perceive as Lefebvre's unorthodox and under explored theoretical as well as conceptual approaches to the notion of the state and its political theorizing, territory, international borders and their related border functions from non-geographic perspectives. Starting with Lefebvre's (1991) unorthodox engagement in *The Production of Space* (and *The PoS* from hereafter) with Karl Marx's philosophical question concerning a spider and whether it can be said to work (labour) or produce work, Lefebvre (2011) in *Introduction to Modernity* introduces us to a shellfish (a snail) which he observed in a small garden of a timeworn house in 1960s Pyrenees village undergoing capitalist urban development. The snail is for Lefebvre a social producer of its own space which is first the protective encasing of the hard physical shell that is attached to its spineless body. As a social producer of its own body's space, the snail is also a producer of its own territorial or geographic space within the domestic context of the garden that is attached to the old residential abode.

Taking a critical analysis of the snail Lefebvre asks a problematic question that is relevant for socio-spatial thinking, political theorizing and social practice. What happens to the snail, asks Lefebvre (1991, 2011), when its physical relationship with its hard shell is severed such that the amoeba like body of the creature is separated violently from its immediate spatial habitat? Leaving us to use our imaginations for the answer, Lefebvre urges us to think critically about the nature of social producers of space and the practical consequences of their often unnatural and violent separation from the material spaces they produced and produce in any scalar environment or temporality. This perspective is important for this study's territorial context and social unit of international border and borderlands analyses. What of the Marxist spider mentioned earlier? Lefebvre (1991) answers Marx's social and classist philosophical question with space. According to Lefebvre, a spider much like the snail invests substantial amounts of

time labouring away for the production and extension of its material body's space of the web in its own spider determined geographic setting or location, and the spider produced architectural or geometric pattern of the web. Going a step further, Lefebvre argues that a spider observed this way is capable of spatial production, spatial orientation as a type of territory marking, as well as geographic/directional orientation of its body through the space of its body secreted web.

Using what Lefebvre (1991, 2004, 2011) refers to as social gestures [*gestes*], the spider and the snail produce their bodily space and micro-scale territory in geographic space through a relational system of social gestures using the biological means given to the living creatures, and their bodies in space over a temporal spectrum that is in tune with its own rhythms. Both creatures are social beings or what Heidegger (2010) refers to as spatial *Dasein* since they are beings-in-the-world that can move up and down, turn to the left or right, move up or down surfaces and spaces. Shifting from an animal science perspective so to speak, Lefebvre (1991) applies the spatial architectonics framework to draw from the micro-biological sciences to advance an apolitical spatial border thinking which he perceived through the phylogenetic process of spatial cavity formation. According to Lefebvre (1991:176) the process of cavity formation entails the material development of a translucent membrane whose border function is "to separate within from without", such that what is enclosed inside is more important than what is outside. By its natural design, the translucent membrane mimics a US frontier and or an international border whose functions are to protect the relational processes affecting the formation of the cavity whose membrane border is laced with porous orifices throughout. These intentional spatial openings permit the free flow of movement, information, and energy exchanges between arbitrarily partitioned inside-outside sub-regions of the cavity (Lefebvre, 1991).

Within the spatial context of the membrane partitioned cavity, the free flows of information, content and energy across the border of the translucent membrane, render the membrane's barrier functions obsolete and artificial since cavity formation requires no discrimination of contents and energy flows between the enclosed inner and outer sub-regions of the formed cavity. Despite the spatial significance (not to say superiority) of the inner formed spatial units from the outer ones, the porous border permits "traffic back and forth, so far from stopping" the mass flows (Lefebvre, 1991:176). Furthermore, the superfluous energy flows and movements tend to "increase and become more differentiated, embracing both energy exchange...and information exchange" which the organized process then secretes as "varied forms, structures and functions" (Lefebvre, 1991:176).

How then does this biological frontier border membrane dynamic measure up to social and political contexts of international borders with state partitioned geographic areas in which spatial and cross-border movements are politically policed and legally regulated? What does it mean that the inside sub-region is more important than the outside in cross-border interstate analyses undertaken for this study for example, and in geographical scholarship more generally? Is there really an outside and inside in the context of international borders and the sub-regions they separate? Drawing on Ramutsindela's (2001) border-region nexus and its framed photograph metaphor, I deduce that what Lefebvre (1991) suggests in the context of spatial cavity formation rings true since the delimited inner sub-regions of the cavity—or inhabited geographic regions—are perceived as more important for analyses than the outer sub-regions. I contend however that in an African geopolitical context where unknown pre-

historic free flows of social energies and bodily movements of a culturally homogenous African society were abruptly and violently disrupted, the significance of the inside-outside (rather than domestic-foreign) dialectic is relative. As a result, methodological territorialism and the statist territorial trap thinking would thus become an impossibility for this study to adopt as its empirical and abstract disposition.

Where territorially situated social spatial *Dasein* in the animal kingdom utilize their God given limbs and bodies to produce their own spaces, people as territorially situated spatial *Dasein* in the human kingdom are also social producers of space since they are capable of orienting space and themselves geographically in space with the biological bodily means and mental faculties available to them. Adopting a multilayered spatial architectonics perspective, Lefebvre (1991) engages anthropology in anti-colonial fashion that is intellectually pro as well as geographically biased towards pre-colonial East African agropastoralists of Kenya to help us understand territoriality and the production of space as a relational social act that was first lived before it was conceived. Lefebvre (1991) territorializes this pre-historic territorial society of the Masai agropastoralists of Kenya through the conception of absolute space vis-à-vis the Africa colonizing abstract space of the interstates system of the West. The latter space according to Lefebvre (1991) and geographic scholars is dominant over the former space because it has consolidated earth's territory at the global scale from since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Brenner, 1999). This pre-historic anthropological perspective is important because it is where spatial analysts of Lefebvorean bent should begin their theoretical as well as empirical observations of societies they examine.

Indeed, Lefebvre's scholarship contends that any analyses of space and anthropologic society must engage that society's pre-history and history since that is where and how a society's spatial practices are perceived and can further be concretely analysed and understood (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). Lefebvre's anthropological spatial architectonics approach suggests that space on general terms is first biomorphic before it is statist and conceptualized by space doctors. All social space according to Lefebvre's (1991) spatiology proceeds from the living biophysical bodies of social human and animal inhabitants who produce themselves and their respective multiscalar spaces in space over varied temporal periods. All living social creatures according to Lefebvre (1991) are energy deployments in space which through the means given to them have capacity to territorially ascribe different markings in space that delimit certain geographic spaces. Through livestock herding and seasonal migration of both the pre-colonial Masai herders and their livestock, spatial marks and borders represented by footpaths on the ground emerge as indicative signs of what Lefebvre (1991) perceives as qualitative border producing practices which were dominant in pre-capitalist societies before the advent of modern (Western) technology and cartography which became the universal archetype for technocratic spatial subdivision using beacons and maps (Lefebvre, 1991).

Lefebvre's apolitical anthropological perspective on pre-colonial African territoriality reveals an important perspective that so often escapes Anglophone political geographic as well as territorial Lefebvorean thought. However, it is equally important to acknowledge the emergence of critical voices in Anglophone scholarship which contend for the decolonial appropriation as well as de-urbanization of Lefebvre's scholarship on the one hand, and the recognized Global South orientation of Lefebvre's scientific scholarship in geography and Marxist sociology (Kipfer, Saberi and Wieditz, 2012; Elden and Morton, 2016).

With heedful circumspection this African Lefebvorean geographical limology sets in motion spatial architectonics and Heideggerian de-distancing of spatial *Dasein* to simultaneously Africanize or de-Westernize as well to territorialize Lefebvre's urban bound geographic scholarship, while bringing into conversation non-geographic literature with orthodox political geography as part of the study's original contribution. This cross-sectional synopsis of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004, 2011) spatial architectonics perspectives on territory, the production of space and border functions is important for geographic thought to ponder and contend with if we are to broaden our understanding of territory and the social production of space outside of statist, social constructivist, and positivist perspectives which entrap or confine territorial thought. To conclude, Lefebvre's unorthodox spatial architectonics perspective concerning the spider, the snail, the agropastoral Masai of pre-colonial East Africa along with the translucent micro-biological membrane of phylogenesis has "operational utility" for the theoretical explication and conceptual analyses of political geographic borders in the context of organized social life (Lefebvre, 1991:176).

## **2.5 Territorial borders, boundaries, frontiers, and borderlands**

Much like the physical and abstract concept of territory and the territoriality of the global interstate system, international borders are the hallmark of modern state sovereignty which is central to political geographic analyses and theorizing (Agnew, 1994; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a; Antonsich, 2011; Sassen, 2013; Moyo, 2016; Ramutsindela, 2019; Paasi, 2022). International borders and boundaries are territorial terms which are not readily discernible and sometimes conflated with frontiers. International borders are understood as abstract geometric state lines represented by beacons, fences or walls which act to maintain political separation between two or more nation states, while indicating the spatial limits of each state's sovereignty (Prescott, 1987; Rumley and Minghi, 1991; Ramutsindela, 1993; Newman and Paasi, 1998; Adesina, 2019; Ramutsindela, 2019). Adesina (2019) provides an analytically confusing distinction of frontiers as geopolitical regions straddling both sides of an international border, similar to geographic definitions of borderlands. For Parker (2006) international borders than frontiers, are political tools for social organization and spatial division which differentiates administrative, political, military, and juridical limits of nation states at various scales influencing in turn citizenship, identity politics and international migration (Newman, 2006; Paasi, 2009a, 2012a; Sassen, 2013).

A border bounds or indicates a spatial limit (Parker, 2006; Adesina, 2019). Literature is unanimous about the artificiality of international borders - than frontiers - as social constructions conceived and produced by human beings who have a tendency for spatial partitioning from the domestic level of the residential habitat to the macro-scale territorial organization of nations (Leimgruber, 1991; Rudolph, 2005; Paasi, 1999a, 2009a; Jones, 2017; Storey, 2017). International borders<sup>11</sup> are integral instruments of the global political system of nation states. Social constructivists have advanced understandings of borders beyond their political science, IR and critical geopolitical definitions. There is a conception of the interstate system of international borders as social institutions and relational processes through which various players act, interact and impress competing meanings, functions,

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<sup>11</sup> I use the terms international borders and borders instead of boundaries or boundary throughout the study to refer to clearly demarcated geopolitical and juridical lines on maps as well as on the ground separating two or more nation states whilst also indicating the spatial limits of each state's sovereignty.



iconographies, spatial plans and projections in their superimposed temporalities (Ramutsindela, 2013; Paasi, 1999a, 1999b, 2009a, 2022).

International borders are thus complex “political spaces” that are polysemic, ubiquitous, and no longer “stable empirical entities” (Brenner, 1999:47; Paasi, 1999a:3; Newman, 2003; Agnew, 2008). Their political functions are to geographically mark and differentiate juridically between border separated territories where ideological lines of ‘them and us’, ‘here and there’, ‘foreign and domestic’ are drawn (Paasi, 2009a, 2011b, 2012a; Hardi and Uszkai, 2017). Anglophone and African political geographers inter alia regional social scientists, delimit regionalism and new regional geographic studies as subsidiary areas of territorial research (Paasi, 2001, 2002, 2009a; Ramutsindela, 2013, 2015; Walther, et al., 2023). New regional political geography is interested in the formation and political transformation of interstate region-borders in Africa as well as the subnational cultural identities formation in the Europe of regions post-Soviet Union. This scholarship conceives boundaries-bounded regions as socially constructed geopolitical spaces of social thought, action and lived experiences “characterized by the upsurge of...geohistory, relationality, performativity, or topology” (Salter, 2011; Ramutsindela, 2013, 2015; Paasi, 2001, 2002, 2009a, 2022:9). Regions are dynamic territorial spaces that are neither static nor given entities in societies (Tschofen, 2009).

A major contribution of regionalism in political geographic thought and social science research is the ongoing sub-disciplinary appropriation and intellectual defense of ‘the territorial’ which is increasingly saturated by relational thinking, postmodern aterritorial borders, as well as neocapitalist relations of economic globalization which negate the material space and intellectual significance of territory, international borders and state territoriality (see Brenner, 1999; Ramutsindela, 2013; Moyo, 2020; Paasi, 2011a, 2011c, 2012a, 2022). While international borders are understood as formal state institutions that are political markers of social-spatial differentiation, Ramutsindela (2013) argues that both the physical region and geopolitical border are involved in different ways in the production of various spatial formations without being co-deterministic. Territorial state spaces such as international borders, regions, frontiers, borderlands and territory are thus politically enacted spaces which change with time and are readily transgressed by various social actors who do not always recognize nor respect the legal framework of state bounded spatial organization (Agnew, 2008, 2015; Ramutsindela, 2015; Moyo, 2018, 2020).

Borderlands are a distinct unit of territorial space that Adesina (2019) perceives as mutually exclusive with international borders. Borderlands are conceptually associated with US definition of frontier settlements because of their geographic location which straddles international borders (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987). Political geography defines borderlands as human inhabited residential areas in proximity to international boundaries, or “geographical regions” flanking a political borderline (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Gregory, et al., 2009:53; Adesina, 2019). For Asiwaju (1992:47) borderlands are “subnational areas on both sides of the binational line of demarcation” where “cross-border regional development” conceptualized as “spatial integration” in the European context, or as sub-regional economic integration in Africa, occurs (Hardi and Uszkai, 2017:12; Moyo, 2018, 2020).

Hansen (1981) in Asiwaju (1993:10), Rogerson and Rogerson (2019), and Hardis and Uszkai, (2017) defines borderlands as “subnational areas whose economic and social life is directly

and significantly affected by proximity to an international boundary”. Newman (2006) adopts a cultural perspective on borderlands as frontier zones in which various groups and cultural identities are separated and differentiated spatially through processes of legalized exclusion and alienation (Sassen, 2013). For Akdedian and Hasan (2020) as well as Fernández-Casanueva (2020), borderlands are much more than subnational areas straddling or near to international borders. Borderlands are for these scholars, dynamic transnational spaces whose geometric correlation to international borders is defined by borderlanders’ ability to physically exploit and socially access international borders for their own uses (Akdedian and Hasan, 2020; Fernandez-Casanueva, 2020). In other words, borderlands are active geographic sites for the expression of border competence and performance of each social member of the partitioned societies within a territorially bounded space that is always relationally transgressed and transformed (Lefebvre, 1991; Ramutsindela, 2013; Paasi, 2022). Mbaye (2015:21) supports this view by arguing that borderlands are a “social practice” that require contextualization, localization and situational analysis grounded on existing border “networks and local communities”.

Agnew’s (2008) ethics approach conceives geographic borderlands as moral social ‘dwelling’ while Johnson, et al (2011) sift through postmodernist debates in search for ‘the border’ in political geography while the borderlands are neglected. In the social sciences, Walther, et al (2023) bemoan the near irrelevance and lack of academic institutionalization of border studies after 45-years without engaging the analytical discourse of territorial borderlands as distinct spatial typologies of interstate spaces. Within political geography borderlands are poorly theorized vis-à-vis interstate international borders that directly affect them. Considering such trends, Parker (2006) ascribes this perceived *status quo* within political geographic scholarship as a practical consequence of political anthropologists and frontier historians who developed non-statist ethnographic methods for the empirical studies of borderlands (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Sen’, 2020). According to Parker (2006) anthropologists treated geographic borderlands as political regions where new cultural communities developed around international borders, whilst historians redefined the frontier as places of meeting where geographic and cultural (social) borders overlap.

Despite their non-political geographic disposition, historians and anthropologists agree that borderlands are the material definition and expression of a geopolitical transnational space (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Asiwaju, 1992, 1993; Sen’, 2020). Newman and Paasi, (1998:189) add to this discourse stating that traditionally, political geography was predominantly “nontheoretical” more than it was empirical and positivist in its evolution (Kolossof, 2015). This situation remained until a call was made in the early 2000s concerning the generation of a unifying border theory or theories which political geographers responded to and settled unanimously as a futile exercise given the hypercomplexity, historical as well as geographic specificity of international borders inter alia (Brunet-Jailly, 2009; Paasi, 2009a, 2011a, 2012a; Sevastianov, Laine and Kireev, 2015; Szary, 2015). Another call for a general theory of borderlands was made in the early 1990s by Rumley and Minghi (1991) however it is a critical call that is yet to be answered and engaged by contemporary political geography scholarship. More than three decades later, border social scientists opine the fact that less than 10% of the 100 papers reviewed in the *Journal for Borderlands Studies* engaged theoretical issues (Walther, et al., 2023). Nonetheless, political geographers responded to the disciplinary challenge as earlier noted. Theirs was a mission to

establish common ground for border theorizing, borderlands conceptualization, and systematic methodological frameworks (Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Newman, 2003, 2006). The matter of a single grand border theory was explored and settled on the basis that a single border theory cannot suffice nor is it desirable due to (a) the individuality of states, their historically contingent and context specific power relations, and (b) the multiple dimensions, geographic scales, functions and changing meanings of international borders which make the attainment of a single border theory problematic (Rumford, 2006; Brunet-Jailly, 2009; Paasi, 2011a, 2011b, 2012). Scholars nonetheless agree that despite the non-feasibility of a single border theory for all territorial sciences, the situation does not prohibit theoretical developments nor introduction of new theories and alternative conceptualizations to appear (Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Kolossov, 2005; Kurki, 2014). To these debates I introduce Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) unitary theory of space and the general theory of rhythm and its practical analysis, to theoretically conceptualize and closely examine a southern African international border region inhabited by Batswana. Theoretical as well as practical conceptions of international borders have from the 20th century influenced the production of geographic or territorial border studies (Minghi, 1963; Rumley and Minghi, 1991; Kolossov, 2005, 2015; Letlape, 2021).

The historical production and ongoing reproduction of international borders and borderlands research knowledge as the domain of the Global South is perceived as an issue for contestation by Global South scholars. Ramutsindela's (2019:350) assertion that "border studies are predominantly North-centric" means that the production and reproduction of theoretical perspectives shaping territorial studies have been imported and hence adopted to influence and shape Africa's interdisciplinary geographic border studies. As a young and vibrant subfield of geographical research, African border studies in political geography suffers from under theorization and under conceptualization. My observation is that political state theorizing and interstate analyses of post-colonial Southern Africa's international borders and borderlands for example, is the domain of very few political geographers such as Ramutsindela (2001, 2013), Moyo (2018, 2020), Mogende (2020) and Mogende and Ramutsindela (2020). These scholars argue against the 'failed state' discourse of, say, Herbst (1989) and Robinson (2002) whose non-political geographic as well as territorial analyses of the continent does not capture the sub-regional variations of state failures and successes. Others have characterized African political geography in the broader context of the interdisciplinary development of South(ern) Africa's human geographic subfields which under various successive geopolitical states, lacks theoretical rigour due to its colonial and apartheid depoliticization, post-apartheid parochialism, and intellectual disengagement with Anglophone scholarship (Wellings and McCarthy, 1983; Lemon, 1991; Christopher, 2002; Hammett, 2012)

African geographical limology, the territorial social sciences and humanities are also the scientific domain of what Lefebvre (1991) calls the phallic male principle of masculinity. I am not aware of female scholars in African political geography who are at the same intellectual level as female border scholars in the Global North such as Sassen, Staeheli, Amilhat-Szary, Katz and Koch among others. As a result, there are no border perspectives in African political geography advanced by female political geographers of colour, or *the anthropos* to borrow from Mignolo (2011). For this reason, I could not find published geographic border literature conceived by *anthropos* female political geographers in Africa

to cite. Indeed, the Afro-parochialism, pessimism, and chauvinism that Asiwaju (1992, 1993) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) caution against, remains. The regional parochialism of Africa's political geography in lieu of its relatively young emergence, prevents it from further engaging the philosophical scholarship of critical social scientists.

The non-geographic yet territory and international borders critical scholarship of Mignolo's (2009, 2011) decolonial border epistemology and its *humanitas-anthropos* dialectic, Mignolo and Tlostanova's (2006) notion of the zero point of observation and knowledge theoretical conc which I closely associate with Maldonado-Torres's (2007) Manichean misanthropic skepticism and its coloniality of *Dasein* thesis inter alia, Mbembe's (2000) critical space and time (*historical*) theorization of African territoriality and state sovereignty. Concerning Maldonado-Torres's decolonial appropriation of Heidegger's (2010) spatial rhythm analytical *Dasein*, Hull (2023:242) conceives the being of Maldonado-Torres's (2007) coloniality of *Dasein* from a metaphysical philosophical perspective that is underpinned by "the decoloniality theory of *Grupo Modernidad/Colonialidad*", in its Sartrean phenomenological dimension. With a strong emphasis on its social dimension and the epistemic politics of its philosophical representation in its abstraction, Hull (2023:242) negates Maldonado-Torres's (2007) coloniality of *Dasein* arguing that "it leaves everything exactly as it found it", for decoloniality theory that is. Similarly, Hull's (2023) philosophical social analysis of Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* in its coloniality appropriation by Maldonado-Torres (2007), aligns with Elden's (2004a) critical submission from a Lefebvrian political geographic perspective, that Heidegger's (2010) *Dasein* is too philosophical and hence an obsolete abstraction.

I argue against Hull's (2023) thesis from a Lefebvrian metaphilosophical perspective that Maldonado-Torres's (2007) coloniality of *Dasein* in fact can and does leave something for decoloniality theory on the one hand, and political geographic border thinking on the other hand *when* as well as if it is considered alongside its Manichean misanthropic skepticism. From a Lefebvrian political geographic perspective I disagree with Elden's (2004a) critical philosophical conclusion that Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* is nothing more than a hyper conceptualized philosophical entity without concrete essence, an identity, gender or sex. In his seminal scholarship of *Being and Time*, Heidegger (2010) makes it clear that the philosophical construct of *Dasein* is first and foremost cosmic in its spatial rhythm analytical ontology (Lefebvre, 2004).

Secondly, *Dasein* is a concrete spatial being-in-the-world that assumes the material form of a subjective I (*res cogitas*), ordinary human beings like myself who are conceived as "ordinary *Dasein*" and historically "colonized *Dasein*" capable of geography, time and energy dependent territorial movements on earth, social bodily orientation in space and of space, speech/language, thought and action (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004; Hull, 2023:242). There is also the conscious of my non-academic as well as intellectual positionality as per Heidegger's (2010) spatial ontological notion of the scientific *Dasein* and the non-scientific *Dasein* which with a Lefebvrian spatiology and spatial rhythm analysis could help explain the inexplicable intensity of what Hull (2023:250) refers to as "ontological anxiety" I perpetually experienced in the production of this Lefebvrian study. This theoretical discovery and integration of non-geographic scholarship with political geographic research by way of Lefebvre reveals an interesting layer of complexity, intellectual currency and philosophical sophistry of Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* in its various appropriations

and its tangible contributions to territorial knowledge production and advancement. African political geography as such mimics Anglophone political geography in its theoretical prioritization of interstate borders and conceptual subordination of geographic borderlands which are often theorized ontically within “the autochthonous practices of space” (Mbembe, 2000: 262). According to Mbembe (2000) African border scholars have simplistic understandings of the roles of international borders in African history which leads to profound intellectual misunderstandings of the role of colonial borders outside of endogenous conceptions of space. Mbembe’s (2000) critical spatial and temporal analysis of African borders, state sovereignty and territoriality ignore the fact that what may appear as simplistic misunderstandings of the political history and colonial geography of Africa’s international borders, is actually an erroneous history of European frontiers and European borders in Africa (Boggs, 1940; Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987). Geographic borderlands remain a concrete abstraction in Mbembe’s (2000) critical text similar to Ramutsindela’s (2013, 2015) analytical region-border theorizing of South Africa and Southern Africa’s regional Security Complex.

An engagement with critical social theories from the humanities and social sciences challenges and disrupts Anglophone dominance and influence in border thinking. Further, it enables the rethinking and “re-writing” of “geographic frontiers...from the perspective of territorial epistemology” by African geographic limologists (Mignolo and Tlostanova, 2006:214). Furthermore, incorporating the humanities and social science philosophical perspectives might help advance geographical limology debates into the realm of cross-disciplinary theoretical intercourse. Such an intercourse would mean creative as well as critical political geographic engagements with the coloniality of *Dasein*, the prevalence of the territorial trap of IR and the ‘colonial trap’ of African borders—whose functions are to reproduce statist epistemologies of territoriality and state space which fetishize geographic thought (Brenner, 1999; Mbembe, 2000; Agnew, 2008; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Paasi, 2011a, 2012a; Fouche, 2020). I respond to and engage with Maldonado-Torres’s (2007) colonial conception of Heidegger’s (2010) spatial *Dasein* with the anti-colonial scholarship of Lefebvre’s (1991) *The PoS* without negating the social fact of the ideological and political Manichean misanthropic skepticism. This ideological framework of the coloniality of *Dasein* is premised on the claim that only the Anglophone human thinks and the African, Asian and or Latin American Others/subalterns, do not; that only the spatial being-in-the-world or spatial *Dasein* of Europeans matter (Mignolo and Tlostanova, 2006; Mignolo, 2011).

The coloniality of Being/*Dasein* and its Manichean misanthropic skepticism questions and casts doubts upon the intellectual capacity and the “very humanity of colonised people” (Maldonado-Torres, 2007:245). The misanthropic skepticism is a powerful theoretical perspective that underpins Ramutsindela (2019) and Moyo’s (2020) political geographic contributions to the decolonial territorial border debate in African research. The coloniality of *Dasein* and its Manichean misanthropic skepticism are at the root of Western philosophy and hence the *ego cogito*’s intellectual abandonment, neglect, and ignorance of non-Western social bodies in the *humanitas* (Lefebvre, 1991; Mignolo, 2011). Coloniality and colonialism are two interrelated concepts denoting political processes and territorial experiences which Anglophone geographic scholarship does not have to contend with (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987). Emerging Russian frontier scholarship interestingly brings

western European colonization of eastern Europe into the territorial and colonial debates (Paasi, 2011a, 2012a; Sen', 2020). The territorial border tradition of Mignolo's (2009, 2011) decolonial border epistemology parallels emergent trends in regionally variant African political geographic scholarship which, interestingly, counter Mignolo's theoretical disposition for absolute intellectual delinking with the Global North and its colonial *humanitas* or scientific *Dasein*, to borrow from Heidegger (2010).

Decolonial border epistemologies according to their proponents cannot be Euclidean, Cartesian nor Marxist in their articulation and production (Mignolo, 2011). These contested epistemic paradigms of the Global South instead advocate intellectual delinking with the *humanitas* with a theoretical focus on the so-called "reservoir of ways of life" (Mignolo, 2011: 275) The path to the geopolitical reservoir lies in the cultural or ethnographic prioritization of the so-called disqualified social "modes of thinking" of the *anthropos* Other within broader analytical discourses (Mignolo, 2011: 275). Elsewhere, philosopher Hull (2023) From a Lefebvrian perspective, decolonial border thinking aligns with Lefebvre's anti-colonial scholarship which laments the ideologically dominant tendency of the contested *humanitas* which has "betrayed the body" by participating "in the great process of metaphorization that has *abandoned* the body; and...*denied* the body" (Lefebvre, 1991: 407; original emphasis).

Indeed, decolonial border epistemological literature overlaps in some parts with Lefebvre's anti-colonial scholarship in as much as it diverges with Lefebvrian scholarship on the principle of delinking, especially given Lefebvre's (1991) rhythm-analytical paradigm of spatial architectonics *inter alia*, efforts towards epistemic redress between the Global North and Global South. Similar to Lefebvrian spatiology and the paradigm of rhythmology, decolonial border thinking and its epistemic politics are premised on a pedagogy of the body which serves as foundational base that goes beyond philosophy, beyond discourse and beyond the theory of discourse (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2009, 2011). That Maldonado-Torres' (2007) coloniality of *Dasein* is conceived phenomenologically on Sartrean terms outside of its hermeneutical rhythm of space, time and motion practices, creates room for advancing an anticolonial Lefebvrian (space and rhythm) appropriation of Maldonado-Torres' (2007) coloniality of *Dasein*. This in turn advances theoretical debates in African geographical limology scholarship in a different direction intellectually.

## **2.6 Territorial border methods and fieldwork in political geography**

There is an interesting section of pragmatics-oriented scholarship in political geographic limology scholarship that is significant for our understanding of generic methods and methodological practices informing theoretical geographic limology. The undertaking of political geographic research on international and or subnational borders and borderlands entails the adoption and adaption of practical standards and procedures supported by a range of theoretical and conceptual frameworks informing the study. Conceptual frameworks are theoretically informed analytical tools which have a close relationship with geographic border methods and methodological strategies (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Newman, 2003, 2006; Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2008; Nemeth, Nemeth and Kaisto, 2013; Ramutsindela, 2013; Hardis and Uzskai, 2017). I identified four interdisciplinary frameworks from the critical social sciences which are relevant for

illustrative and comparative analytical purposes alongside this study's Lefebvrian conceptual frameworks. The four frameworks are Parker's (2006) Continuum of Boundary Dynamics (CBD), Baud and van Schendel's (1997) double-triangle of power in a borderland, Brunet-Jailly's (2005) interdisciplinary framework and Newman's (2003) theoretical framework of power and borders. These overlapping yet distinguishable frameworks are geographically grounded in the consciousness of the territorial spaces and societies subjected to conceptual examination. They were conceived as guiding tools for the undertaking of empirical work in international border regions in response to the call for the creative analytical liberation of geographic borderlands—more than the international border—“from the conceptual closet” (Rumley and Minghi, 1991:1).

Briefly, Brunet-Jailly's (2005) interdisciplinary framework consists of four analytical categories which political geographic border analysis must consider and incorporate in fieldwork. These analytical units are (1) economic global markets and (2) cross-border governance structures which must be perceived through their multiscalar vertical and horizontal interstate organization, (3) the socio-cultural identities and (4) political clout of everyday international border inhabitants (Brunet-Jailly, 2005). Parker's (2006) CBD is configured around classification of relational and spatial border sets constituting the territorially organized border regions under investigation. According to Parker (2006) the relational border sets which must be acknowledged in border analysis are social and political in nature and include demographics, religion, culture, language, economies, and so on, while the spatial border sets include topography, geography, geology, environment, hydrological systems, climate and so forth. Geographic border analysis should not omit any of these border sets in its theorization and conceptualization of political geographic border regions. Parker's (2006) CBD is also useful for helping scholars gauge the regime of international borders on a matrix scale that determines if a border region functions like a frontier (closed, hard) or a border (soft, open).

Baud and van Schendel's (1997) double-triangle of power is a practical framework of social history for the conceptual statist analysis of frontier regions and political geographic borderlands. This empirical framework prioritizes the *historical* study of the territorial evolution and transformation of a single international border region from the sociological perspectives of cross-border populations constituting the interstate space *inter alia*, their respective sub-regional political elites and their border partitioned sovereign states (Baud and van Schendel, 1997). According to the conceptual model, cross-border populations are the main social underpinning in any transnational or cross-border region. Therefore, it is important to understand cross-borderland societies non-statist, mundane roles, in the social context of the interstate territorial transformation of the inhabited or underpinned borderlands landscape but on spatial historical terms (Baud and van Schendel, 1997; Brenner, 1999).

Newman's (2003) interdisciplinary framework of power and borders compels border analysts to focus on an understanding of the border regime through an empirics informed critical analysis of the researched region's interstate policies on border administration and international migration management. International border management politics are perceived as the fourth stage of an international border's evolution following its abstract allocation on the one hand, and its concrete delimitation and demarcation on the other hand (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Sassen, 2013; Sen, 2020).

Understanding an international border's statist management practices inter alia, administrative procedures, is significant if not "critical to our understanding of how borders are managed and the extent to which they are more or less permeable to movement", as well as to temporally organized spatial rhythms (Newman, 2003:17). Various aspects of each interdisciplinary framework will be subjected to a Lefebvrian *trial by space* as I import some of their elements into this study. Indeed, fieldwork in traditional and contemporary geographic limology is paramount and must always be governed by conceptual frameworks which in turn shape the research design of the study.

Fieldwork is a practical aspect of theorizing and analytical conceptualization. It must therefore be undertaken intentionally through a combination of transdisciplinary techniques and analytical tools learnt, modified, and used by the research fieldworker (Peil, 2013). Fieldwork must first be *a priori* in the sense that fieldworkers must be subject to academic "training in history and political geography" with "a strong" emphasis on the "historical and anthropological" dimensions of the border area(s) of interest (Prescott, 1987:38;44). This non-negotiable standard is supplemented by the conceptual frameworks presented earlier which unanimously agree that the historical and social dimensions of border research are as significant as the political statist dimension of interstate borders and their contested functions, spatial practices, or regimes. My entry into political geography is by way of Lefebvre coming from an urban geographic background without any prior exposure to, and undergraduate or postgraduate academic training in, the geographical subfield of territorial border studies, critical geopolitics, history, frontier studies and social anthropology.

Through an autonomous critical exploration and engagement with Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) territorial dimension encrypted in the scholarship of the spatiology and rhythmanalysis, I was able to discern with great difficulty and theoretical errors, the disciplinary distinctions, traditions and extremely difficult language/lexicon of each respective territorial field for the Lefebvrian analyses of this study's Botswana inhabited borderlands. Drummond and Manson's (1991) critical historical geopolitical analysis of the border-region of central southern Africa and its understudied Tswana society plays a significant role in fieldwork debates for an ethnographically underpinned African political geography. Theirs is a critical piece of scholarship that textually engages with the social underpinning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Bophuthatswana-Botswana international border landscape without negating the border's evolution and influential social-spatial impact on the formation of the subnational borderland and border culture of the Bahurutshe of pre-democratic South Africa.

The depth and ethnographic richness of the geographically under examined scholarship makes Drummond and Manson's (1991) research a noteworthy transdisciplinary contribution to the broader analytical discourses of African territorialization, and the re-spacing of Botswana in African as well as Anglophone geographical limology with very little attention towards the conceptualization of the subnational geographic border settlement of the Bahurutshe of South Africa. Cultural profiling of border societies appears to be a long-forgotten area in African political geography that Ramutsindela's (1993) foundational scholarship for example, once engaged critically and rapidly evolved away from. For Drummond and Manson (1991) the *Setswana* language dimension of the African inhabitants of the Bophuthatswana-Botswana international border landscape was explicitly acknowledged as a fundamental ethnographic marker of the researched border population where their demographic data was not readily available. With this empirical Lefebvrian



study, I advance territorial analyses of the *Setswana* language speaking cross-border society of Batswana straddling the contemporary international border of South Africa with Botswana, three decades after Drummond and Manson's (1991) territorial entry of this under researched African border society in political geography. The purpose of political geographic fieldwork in international border regions is thus a salient dimension of study without which international territorial border theorizing and borderlands conceptualization remain an abstraction (Baud and van Schendel, 1997; Brunet-Jailly, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2006, 2010; Mogiani, 2022).

Ethnographic fieldwork is identified for this study because it aligns with the empirical spatial rhythmological framework of this Lefebvrian geographic limology. Ethnographic fieldwork is distinguished by its focus on a single study area and cultural group observed in their natural geographic setting (Nurani, 2008) and 'lived time' to borrow from Lefebvre (2004). In border studies, ethnographic fieldwork aligns with the dimensions of previous conceptual frameworks as well as with the established standard procedure and prerequisite academic subjects. Ethnographic fieldwork in context entails the study of "different peoples...their ways of life and thought", while "building theoretical models to explain these differences" (MacRae, 2006:116). For Megoran (2006) ethnographic incorporation in geographic fieldwork implies "the study of the everyday lives of border communities" which effectively infers the social study of "the state...power...and political practices of quotidian life at international borders" (Megoran, 2006:628; Hope, 2009; Lambert and Reiss, 2016; Woodworth and Joniak-Lüthi, 2020).

Given the established non-theoretical nature of ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Hammersley, 2008; Nurani, 2008; Atkinson, 2013), ethnographic human geographers such as Megoran (2006) and Herbert (2000) concur that fieldworkers should have a preexisting theoretical and or conceptual framework prior to entering any study area for archival, social anthropologic and spatial fieldwork. Researcher participant observation is a key feature of the ethnographic method. It requires research immersion—as opposed to distancing—in the everyday social lives of studied communities in their physical geographic contexts over a period of time (Spry, 2001; Wolfinger, 2002; Blackman, 2007; Nurani, 2008; Atkinson, Okada and Talmy, 2011; Gellner, 2012; Mendez, 2013; Lee, 2017; Fraser, 2018). Qualitative ethnographic fieldwork in international border regions is multiscalar and multi-sited meaning, it transcends the territorial trap of methodological territorialism and methodological nationalism (Nugent and Engel, 2010; Fraser, 2018).

In geographical limology, ethnographic fieldwork is critically noted as an indispensable part of the territorial research process and discourse on method and methodological practices (Minghi, 1963; Harris, 2001; Mills, 2013; Peil, 2013; Mogiani, 2022). Despite its disciplinary relevance and oscillation in political geographic research, ethnography is not the only practical method that geographers can deploy for primary and secondary data production however, it is one of many that are deployed across the sub-branches of geographical research (Herbert, 2000; Megoran, 2006; Teufel, 2014; Leonardis, Storer and Fisher, 2021). Since ethnographic participant observation is time intensive and temporally challenging, its popularity among political geographers is receding. According to geographic literature, political geographers are increasingly becoming empirically neglectful of ethnographic field immersion by participant observation because of the quantitative time intensive nature of the method, fulltime work pressure, family

responsibilities, financial resource challenges and so on (Katz, 1994; Herbert, 2000; Megoran, 2006; Fitzgerald, 2006, 2010; Woodworth and Joniak-Luthi, 2020; Koch, 2023). Nonetheless, Megoran (2006) and Herbert (2000) among others, argue that the ethnographic method is critical and invaluable for political geography scholarship despite its perceivable avoidance by geographers. Neglecting ethnographic approaches to fieldwork means a shallow engagement with—and negation of—the border populations as the main social underpinning influencing territorial changes and politics of those border regions. Interestingly, Megoran (2006) argues that political geography and hence political geographers are best suited than anthropology and hence anthropologists, to advance ethnographic techniques further because our uses of ethnography differ in epistemic representation and theoretical analysis from those of orthodox ancient historians of frontier regions and geographic borderlands (Herbert, 2000; Megoran, 2006).

In their empirical practices geographers are not restricted to the “totemic disciplinary centrality” plaguing anthropology (Megoran, 2006:627). This is because space, society, the state, and territory are geography’s central terms however, the prevalence of state-centric territorial absolutism *inter alia*, methodological nationalism, restrict geographic thought and practice. These elements keep geographic thought under the “iron grip” of the territorial trap of statist thinking which impresses itself “on the social imagination” (Brenner, 1999:40). Neither political geographic scholarship nor frontier studies literature provide an indication of the quantitative measure of the duration of time required in and for cross-border and cross-disciplinary fieldwork in international border regions. For example, academically trained scholars such as Katz (1994) narrates an ethnographic period of a decade spent in the research field in an African border region while Teufel (2014) notes 2-months qualitative ethnographic fieldwork in the Görlitz-Zgorzelec urban borderlands of west Germany and Poland for the Lefebvrian analysis of the social production of this intercultural European border society’s cross-border civil society. Leonardis, Storer and Fisher’s (2021) longitudinal, ethnographically multi-sited and geographically macro-scale transdisciplinary research in the South Sudan-Uganda- Congo border region is also another example. Philosophical statist analyses and positivist ethnographic techniques have on the one end led to the dominance of textual (desktop) and social interpretivist approaches rather than in “time-consuming fieldwork among border-people” (Megoran, 2006; Teufel, 2014:218).

The disinvestment in the anthropological, historical, and social dimensions of international border research is said to contribute towards the on-going ‘de-peopling’ of geographic border studies (Megoran, 2006; Antonsich, 2011; Teufel, 2014). Political geographers are therefore required to “return to the field” in the era of backyard ethnographies which require shorter time frames for fieldwork than the traditional anthropological duration of 12-months (Megoran (2006:622; Isaacs, 2013; Zulfikar, 2014). In addition to the omission of the temporal logistics of ethnographic fieldwork in political geographic literature, ethical considerations in political geographic fieldwork need robust engagement. Bonnin’s (2010:181) cross-border fieldwork in politically unstable cross-borderlands of Vietnam compelled him to adherence to statist protocol at multiple scales in the study area, “first at the central state level, and then...at provincial, district and commune levels”. This was a non-negotiable condition set by powerful stakeholders of the Vietnamese international border environment. Given that literature lacks a critical and explicit discourse on fieldwork

ethics one cannot help but ask how well prepared are political geographic fieldworkers for entry into their backyard (or distant) ethnographic sites for data harvesting relative to their demographic and political profiles? I expand on this peripheral yet central issue in geographical limology scholarship in succeeding chapters of the study. For now, I introduce Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) territorially under examined—as well as intellectually under appropriated—inter and transdisciplinary scholarship of the spatiology and spatial rhythm as this study's contribution to the academically diverse body of literature on state-centric international borders and borderlands and Lefebvrian scholarship in political geography.

## 2.7 Lefebvre's Spatiology and Spatial Rhythm: An Introduction

Henri Lefebvre's (1901-1991) scholarly entry, scientific establishment and unequal or non-isorhythmic advances in geographic research and philosophical practices is first credited to the historic English language translations of Lefebvre's 1974 'La production de l'espace' and 1992 'Éléments de rythmanalyse' by British translator Donald Nicholson-Smith in 1991, and British political geographer Stuart Elden with translator Gerard Moore in 2004 respectively. The English language/Anglophone access to Lefebvre's Francophone written and published scientific *oeuvres* was a welcomed critical development that is celebrated within geography throughout its various human geographic subfields which underwent radical transformation in their incorporation of Lefebvre's scholarship in the geographical *humanitas* (Harvey, 1991 in Lefebvre, 1991; Merrifield, 1993, 1995; Steward, 1995; Unwin, 2000; Elden, 2004a). Anglophone appropriation of Lefebvre's (1991) magnum opus *The Production of Space* (and *The PoS* hereafter) by Anglophone human geographers created overtime the emergent of the ideologically dominant tendency that determine the nature of theoretical application of Lefebvre's *The PoS* in urban geography for example, the degree of intellectual appropriation and level of spatiological analysis, as well as the interdisciplinary division and compartmentalization of Lefebvre's unitary science of space and its advanced rhythmanalytical counterpart (Elden, 2004a).

Consequently, Anglophone geographers' intellectual monopoly on Lefebvre's scholarly sciences in geographic scholarship led to the emergence of so-called Lefebvrian detractors who overlap the realm of the ideologically dominant tendency Lefebvre's (1991) spatial architectonics wishes to negate and reverse (Shields, 1999 in Elden, 2001; Elden, 2004a). My autonomous and non-exhaustive review of the scholarly landscape of African political geography yielded no reference of a documented history pertaining the theoretical evolution and scientific advances of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship. This is a big gap that is critical and challenging to attempt to fill with this general study. Moreover, the niche opportunity to contribute towards the Africanization of a predominantly Global North-centric, territorially underdeveloped, and urban geography confined Lefebvrian scholarship (Elden, 2001; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Kipfer, Saberi and Wieditz, 2012; Elden and Morton, 2016). Despite the established disciplinary significance of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship of *The PoS* and *Elements of Rhythmanalysis*—ERA, rhythmology or rhythmanalysis from here onwards, Lefebvre's unitary body of philosophical scholarship is under examined and unequally under advanced in political geography among political geographers and critical geopoliticians.

Save for a few critical Anglophone and African political geographers Anglophone and African political geographers do not theorize international borders and state territoriality with Lefebvre. The prevalence of the ideologically dominant tendency in Anglophone dominated Lefebvorean scholarship in geographical limology means that Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) territorial perspectives and contributions in political geography—as well as critical territorial humanities of Africa—are not well known and are generally not well established. This research advances and reunifies Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) human geography established critical scholarship from its under examined hence marginal territorial dimension. My autonomous territorial appropriation, interpretation, and application of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship is informed by my autonomous study and incorporation of Jean-Paul Sartre's ([1956]/2001) phenomenological scholarship of *Being and Nothingness* from a time thinking perspective, and Martin Heidegger's ([1953]/2010) hermeneutical scholarship of *Being and Time*, from the social perspective of its rhythm analytical spatial *Dasein*. I studied these two pieces of interesting theoretical scholarship on spatial being, time and nothingness to better understand Lefebvre's conclusive remarks about the two texts for didactic direction to the spatiologist and rhythmologist who advances Lefebvre's scientific scholarship in geography as their rightful academic field of international division of labour.

In Elden (2004a) Lefebvre subjects the two philosophical discourses to critical analysis or trial by space against his own scientific *oeuvres* because the critical analytical futures of The PoS and ERA together and separately hinge upon them. Following a critical comparative analysis of Sartre's (2001) phenomenological discourse with Heidegger's (2010) hermeneutical scholarship, Lefebvre recommends his scholar in higher favour to the latter scholarship because as I deduced, the former scholarship negates the social body, its space, its very being (ontology) and rhythm. Add to that, Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) hermeneutically underpinned spatiology with its unitary spatial architectonics framework of theoretical unity than disciplinary segregation inter alia spatial rhythm, is more and better aligned with Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* whose geographic social practices of de-distancing seek to bring *Näschte* that which is remote or distant (Heidegger, 2010). With this study I offer a distinctly African, autonomous and unorthodox intellectual representation of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) territorial dimension in political geographic research to a geographical subfield where very few studies and scholars have made critical contributions. I now turn towards a Lefebvorean introduction of the spatiology and its political state theories for advancing geographical limology scholarship.

### **2.7.1 Lefebvre's social spatiology: a territorial appropriation**

The PoS is a metaphilosophical inter and transdisciplinary scientific *oeuvre* Lefebvre (1991:404) calls “spatiology”. Spatiology is a qualitative (social) science of space and spatial science of society interested in the uses of socially produced space, and the representational politics of politically marginalised and disadvantaged groups classified as ‘users and inhabitants’ (Lefebvre, 1991). Territorially, Lefebvre's spatiology calls for the epistemic production of geographic border research in which the representational politics of international border users and borderland inhabitants become the *raison d'etre* for analytical theorizing and empirical work. As critically noted by Rumford (2006:155) geographical border theorization must make a critical “attempt to understand the nature of the social”

than uncritically restate state-centric border epistemologies which negate the social and its historicity. I approached Lefebvre's (1991) spatiology from 'Plan of the Present Work' and 'Spatial Architectonics' chapters where Lefebvre (1991:9) bemoans the failure of Western epistemological-philosophical thought to furnish space-oriented academic disciplines and their scholarly doctors of space with (a) a unitary or cross-disciplinary science of space and (b), a spatial theory that "represents the political...use of knowledge" and its critical integration into the studied society's modes of spatial production. The PoS has an established critical theory that views (social) space as a (social) product because all social space proceeds from biological social bodies of people and animals whose spatial practices are theoretically analyzed and empirically observed through ethnographically grounded techniques steeped in the social history of the researched societies (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). Lefebvre's space as such is thus not disciplinary. It is not necessarily geographical, anthropological, political scientific, historical, demographic and or philosophical. Instead, Lefebvre's (1991) social space supplements existing fields of study, especially geography as the ideal and historic disciplinary home of the territorial concept of space.

Lefebvorean space is biomorphic before it is physical geographic, political and scientifically abstracted. Its geography is spatially located and discovered in the physical bodies of poorly dispositioned *anthropos* in Western philosophical sciences due to their European colonization. Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) space is therefore not space as conceived by geographers, demographers, architects, anthropologists, and sociologists. It has its origins in the cosmological realm, that is, the extra-terrestrial space of physical scientists, astrologists and the supernatural divine (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004; Heidegger, 2010). On territorial terms, Lefebvre's (1991) space is three dimensional. Its biomorphic ontology occupies the *social* or anthropological hence ethnographic dimension conceived as the representational space of empirical scholars in human geography and ethnography (Lefebvre, 1991). The mental/abstract and physical dimensions of Lefebvre's (1991) social-body space are signified by the *physical* and *abstract* disciplines which are in the domain of geographic and natural sciences, mathematics, planning, and psychoanalytical sciences.

Lefebvre's (1991) space is thus constituted by multiple academic fields of study because of its multiple dimensions and multiscale characteristics. As a result, Lefebvre's space affects and is affected by a great variety of scientific *Dasein* that must be "accounted for by a unitary theory" (Lefebvre, 1991:13; Lefebvre, 2004; Heidegger, 2010). Scientific *Dasein* according to Heidegger (2010) are academically established fields of study—or Mignolo's (2009, 2011) *humanitas*—which are similar to those constituting theoretical limology including geography. Scientific *Dasein* also include Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship of the spatiology and rhythmanalysis which are well-established in human geography, planning, architecture, sociology and so on, yet, are gravely under advanced in political geography and under appropriated territorially (Merrifield, 1993, 1995; Elden, 2001, 2004a; Goonewardena, et al., 2008; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Heidegger, 2010). Lefebvre's (1991:420) unitary social theory of space, as also noted critically by Brenner (1999) and Elden (2010a), therefore negates and rejects the trivialization, conflation, and uncritical conceptions of space "as understood by geographers, economists, and others (Brenner, 1999; Elden, 2010a).

Every society produces a space that is in accordance with its temporally defined mode of production. According to Lefebvre (1991) socialists produce socialist space, capitalists produce urban spaces, artists produce their own creative spaces and intellectuals produce the abstract space of academic knowledge and so forth. When we speak of space it is therefore space as it is directly lived (social) or representational, perceived (spatial practices) and as conceived (mental) or as abstract representations (Lefebvre, 1991). Lefebvre's (1991) social space is constituted by relational social actions of individuals and groups in societies "who are born and who die, who suffer and who act" (Lefebvre, 1991:33). It is thus not a work of a specific period in history for a society to produce its own space in which it achieves territorial form. The territorial production of social space is an ongoing process that is time sensitive. All social space is political because there is a politics of social struggle for space (Lefebvre, 1991; Elden, 2004a).

Lefebvre's space is political because its territory has been consolidated at a global scale by the international state system and its spatial apparatus of international borders which in turn makes political space institutional because its production occurs through the deployment of sovereign violence of the modern nation state as the dominant space in any society (Lefebvre, 1991; Brenner, 1999; Paasi, 2011a). Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship as earlier noted temporally de-distances between pre-historic and post-historic/neocolonial intellectual traditions shaping inter and transdisciplinary territorial scholarship of the Global South and the Global North. The latter geographic world region constitutes an ensemble of historically colonized and arbitrarily partitioned territorial regions such as Africa, Latin America, Australia and Asia. These are Oriental regions are global scale representational space which was institutionally dominated "by Europeans – by Spain, England, Holland and France" whose political spatial practices reproduced the colonized geographic regions of the *anthropos* as economically weaker nation states of the philosophically under advanced *ego conquirro* of the *anthropos* (Lefebvre, 1991:276; Mignolo, 2009, 2011). In the remaining subsections of the chapter, I introduce elements of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) under examined political state and space theorizing inter alia fieldwork linked conceptual frameworks as part of this study's contribution.

### **2.7.2 Lefebvre's political state theories**

Despite the current inaccessibility of Lefebvre's political state scholarship of *De l'Etat* in Anglophone political geography, Lefebvre (1991) deposited remnants of his political state thinking in *The PoS*. Lefebvre opens with the profound admission that Karl Marx made little to no advances towards the establishment and development of a political theory or general social theory of politics (Maguire, 1978). There is according to Maguire (1978:151) "no ultimate institutional definition of politics" developed by Marx however, Lefebvre (1991, 2001) fills and advances this gap. Marx took a class-based approach towards political state theorizing. According to Maguire (1978) Marx identified the birth of a modern state as a product of an elite sphere of civil society in European society. Marx perceived this elite social class as the "evil" bourgeoisie because of its close relationship with the modern nation state machinery which ironically constrains the capitalist interests of bourgeois elites from developing "along the right lines" (Maguire, 1978:6). Lefebvre (1991) conceives the Western bourgeoisies as the dominant abstract space which constitute

political elites, technocratic subdividers, capitalists, special type of artists with a scientific bent alongside scientific specialists who are in thrall to the state machinery. This society tends to subject societies to a process of “transubstantiation” or formal homogenization without homogenizing the dominated representational space of marginal users and disadvantaged inhabitants (Maguire, 1978:7; Brenner, 1999; Brenner and Elden, 2009).

For Marx, this elitist state is thus a social construct that politically overinflates its significance such that modern states are the Sun around which earth-bound human societies revolve, instead of products of social relations states claim territorial sovereignty and political superiority over (Maguire, 1978; Lefebvre, 1999; Brenner, 1999; Paasi, 2022). From Marx, Lefebvre (1991) departs with state theorization from the perspective of the Hegelian state which Lefebvre distinguishes from Marx’s bourgeois state because of its subordination of time to space. Hegelian state model is a representation of a political institution of power that imposes or exalts itself over territorially organized societies. Lefebvre’s (1991:224) anti-Hegelian state is constituted by a territorial ensemble of the so-called “monumental space” of international borders which Lefebvre further conceives as palpable expressions of the political principle of state sovereignty and its hallmark *spatial* framework of power. Lefebvre (1991) argues that the state’s framework of power is territorial and or spatial because it is in the monumental space of international borders that the geographically embedded sovereignty of the geopolitical interstate system is hinged.

Any political analysis and territorial theorization of the interstate global system without/outside of the territorial spatial framework of that state is but an empty abstraction (Lefebvre, 1991; Brenner, 1999; Elden, 2010a) The neo-globalist interstate system is a colonial institution which advances the interests of the racially diffuse regional elites and reflects “the general egoism of civil society” and the ideological hegemony of the elitist middle classes in territorially organized capitalist societies (Maguire, 1978:9; Baud and van Schendel, 1997; Brenner, 1999; Lefebvre, 1991, [1972]/2001). Lefebvre (2001) as a result anticipates the global reemergence of the obsolete Stalinist state model which predates the ‘new state form’ (*forme étatique*). For Lefebvre, the Stalinist state model must be considered for its historical relevance since its reemergence in different forms and across various geographic regions, means the reemergence of extreme political violence that is distinctly territorial. This European state model is therefore important to advance in geographical limology because contemporary political state “theorizing depends upon it” (Lefebvre, 2001:770).

The focus on a Eurocentric state model negates Mignolo’s (2009, 2011) negation of Eurocentric *humanitas* and its epistemic border politics since the Stalinist state model is rapidly replicating itself in every part of the interstates organized world. Political geographic scholarship is interestingly void of political theorization while political theorists lack spatial or territorial theory (Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a; Ubi, 2010). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century political geographic scholarship and territorial border studies in social sciences are purportedly disengaged with European state models and politics such that recent territorial conflicts witnessed the world over in eastern Europe with the Russia-Ukraine war—inter alia the 2023-2024 Israel-Palestine genocidal conflict over a small territory of

the Gaza strip which Murphy (2022) mentions *en passant*—were not reflected in latest paper submissions *Political Geography* post-Johnson et al's (2011) critical editorial by Global North political geographers to the same flagship journal (Walther, et al., 2023). Lefebvre (2001) thus challenges territorial border scholars to theorize and or conceptually analyze their respective 21<sup>st</sup> century nation states from the perspective of the Western state model of Stalinism which is reemerging beyond the borders of eastern Europe to the Middle East and perhaps Africa. This is important because the post-Westphal Soviet state model and its past territorial regime is perceived as “the prototype...modern State” that is reemerging in historical and geopolitical significance (Elden, 2004a:220). In addition to the Stalinist state model Lefebvre introduces the State Mode of Production (*le Mode de Production Étatique*) or SMP which he further aligns with as well as analytically distinguishes from the New State Form (*le forme étatique*) by means of the dual accommodation of relational and territorial processes which are fundamentally shaped by neoliberal economic markets which directly affect the nature of geopolitical borders and their theoretical representation in scholarship.

The SMP is closely associated with the ideology of “political decolonization” while the New State Form addresses apoliticism or the negation of politics in spatial discourses which concern the “transformation of everyday life” (Elden, 2004a:221; Lefebvre, 2001:784). The SMP is closer to political geography because its spatial framework of power unfolds within the abstract and concrete institutional space of “the nation-state” (Lefebvre, 1991; Elden, 2004a:224). As such, the political state space (*l'espace étatique*) of the SMP must always be conceived from the global perspective of “the world system of states, the global or world system” whose political geography is organized around—as well as held together in space by—the monumental space of international borders (Lefebvre, 1991; Elden, 2004a:225). This means the multiscalar territorial qualities of the SMP and New State Form are and must be at the center of political interstate theorization despite relational processes of rapid economic globalization and their associated borderless world theses that seek to negate the territorial significance of state space and its territorial organization of social life via monumental spaces of international borders. Lefebvre (1991:412; emphasis added) in conclusion argues that contemporary state-centric epistemologies must contend “with space on a world scale...as well as with *all the spaces subsidiary to it, at every possible level*”. In other words, geographic subnational as well as transnational spaces of the borderlands alongside their international border straddling ethnographical societies, should not be treated *en passant* nor subordinated in intellectual import over state-centric theorizing for the advancement of geographic limology scholarship.

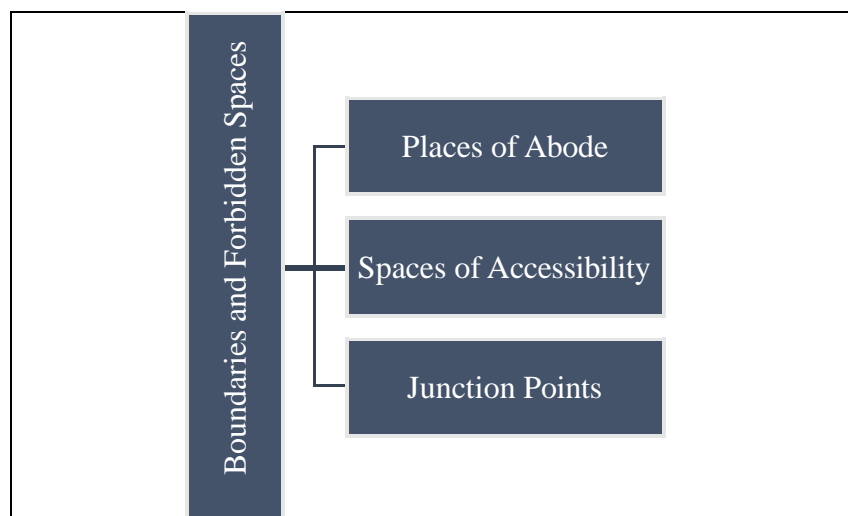
### **2.7.3 The territorial framework of geographic regions**

In addition to Lefebvre's post-Marxist SMP and New State Form political theorizing, Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiology and rhythmology scholarship has at least three overlapping inter and transdisciplinary conceptual frameworks which are overlooked in political geographic scholarship. The first two analytical frameworks are found in the scholarship of the spatiology while the last one is in theoretical rhythmanalysis which further doubles up as a practical method. These conceptual frameworks are analytically distinct yet integrated abstract tools which according to Lefebvre (1991) are generalizable



and hence applicable to all geographic border regions. This further means these methodological conceptual frameworks are appropriate for intellectual appropriation by cross-disciplinary doctors of space—as theoretically demonstrated by Brenner and Elden (2009) territorial appropriation of Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial triad vis-à-vis Brighenti and Kährholm’s (2018) territorial appropriation of Lefebvre’s (2004) music rhythmanalysis. Most importantly, Lefebvre (2004) states with confidence that his conceptual frameworks are indeed valid for all territorial rhythms.

Starting with Lefebvre’s (1991) spatiology, this scholarship has a nameless conceptual framework I call the territorial framework of geographic border regions. This framework is organizational. It represents the political geographic organization of the multiscale global state space and its subsidiary spaces and societies. International borders in spatiology scholarship are abstract political lines on geographic maps, as well elusive monumental global state space which gives the impression of physical geographic as well as anthropological incongruence where there is in fact continuity. Lefebvre (1991) recognizes that international borders are represented in space by fences, walls and beacons. He also acknowledges the established artificiality of international borders in agreement with geographic scholarship. Lefebvre goes further to intellectually appropriate international borders as abstract ‘fracture lines’ because despite their human artificiality, the concept of a geographically broken and porous political border is closer to the underlying dark truth about the nature of interstate borders.



Conceptual formant 1.1. Lefebvre’s (1991) territorial framework for geographic border regions.

International borders are also rhythm and rhythmanalytical because everywhere a space, time and expenditure of energy interact there is rhythm (Lefebvre, 2004). There is no rhythm without the coming together of physical space, location, and motion (Heidegger, 2010). Any conception of space without considerations for time in its multiple dimensions and energy in its broad sense are empty abstractions (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). The geo-technical and political spatial allocation, delimitation, and demarcation of international borders according to the spatiology, brings into existence a distinct rhythmic organization of space that is territorial. For Lefebvre, the immediate establishment—that is allocation,

delimitation, and demarcation—of international borders anywhere in the world produces a distinct set of territorial units which together constitute a territorial polyrhythmia. The first of these units are '*forbidden spaces*'. These spaces occupy the realm of regional studies, regional social scientists, and regional political geographers. Forbidden spaces are partitioned by international borders or interstate fracture lines that separate and mark each sovereign region's spatial limits. Forbidden spaces are further inhabited by societies of people who are daily users of international borders as well as permanent inhabitants of the borderlands whose permanently established settlements are conceived as '*places of abode*'.

Places of abode are geographically variant residential settlements that flank international borders whose political spatial practices, or political barrier functions, are to keep the geographic places of abode—along with the citizens of forbidden spaces—together and separated in space as part of the spatial contradictions secreted by social relations of power (Lefebvre, 1991). Places of abode are the geographic borderlands and new cultural frontier settlements flanking international borders. They are also constituted by sub-regional border populations inhabiting them as well as the broader context of forbidden places which as Baud and van Schendel's (1997) double-triangle of power in a borderland allude, are also inhabited by regional elites. Lefebvre asserts that the immediate establishment of international borders and their relationship with toponyms of partitioned forbidden spaces and their residential places of abode, deserves analytical inquiry. Furthermore, the geotechnical establishment of international fracture lines leads to the interstate production of physically integrated '*spaces of access*', or accessibility spaces, through which "large-scale infrastructure" projects which are centered on logistical systems and infrastructure are deployed to facilitate daily uses and movements within and across border regions (Lefebvre, 1991; Brenner and Elden, 2009:365).

Integrated spaces of accessibility are thus the *raison detre* for the production of international borders organized political geographic regions. With international borders comes the notion of international migration which helps us to better understand an international border's regime, management practices and administrative functions. According to Lefebvre (1991) the cross-border movements of people between and across various sets of forbidden spaces and residential places of abode which are further interconnected by integrated spaces of accessibility, are determined by statist regimes which are spatially concentrated at the '*junction points*'. Junction points are "relatively fixed points" along demarcated geographic fracture lines through which interstate political spatial practices/border functions – and their sub-regional rhythms of everyday life – are politically as well as professionally managed (Lefebvre, 1991:88). In geographic and anthropology literature Lefebvre's territorial junction points refer to international migration checkpoints, or border gates (Prescott, 1987; Coplan, 2010a; Sassen, 2013; Moyo, 2020). Junction points are not abstract fracture lines on maps but abstract points along the fracture line. These relatively fixed points are politically controlled and technologically surveyed "places of passage and encounter" where "access to them is forbidden except on certain occasion of ritual import" (Lefebvre, 1991:193; Slatter, 2011).

Junction points are not separate from the fracture line of interstate sovereignty. They are the territorial heart of political geographic border regions which is connected directly to the arteries of fracture lines. Through this intricate connection, interstate regimes and everyday life of border populations are incessantly monitored and regulated in their various flows in different directions and time, to enable the convergence of various interstate and non-state border actors who perform “the dominant geopolitical narratives of statecraft” and sovereignty (Slater, 2011:66). Lefebvre’s (1991) territorial framework of geographic border regions altogether constitutes what I call a territorial polyrhythmia. Its political geography is composed of interstate paraphernalia such as monumental spaces of fracture lines and junction points which co-exist alongside borders partitioned residential places of abode and forbidden spaces which are further held together as they are kept apart in space by cross-border road transportation infrastructure and systems. As products of violent interstate systems, Lefebvre’s (1991:193) territorial junction points are practical sites for the operationalization of interstates violence/sovereignty, violent confrontation and “friction” between border populations, their sub-regional elites and neighboring countries as forbidden territories.

#### **2.7.4 The territorial spatial triad**

Lefebvre’s (1991) analytical spatial triad of *spatial practices* or perceived spaces, *representational spaces* or directly lived (absolute) spaces of users and inhabitants, and *representations of space* of conceived and abstract space of conceptual scientists, planners, the state, capital, technocratic spatial subdividers, social engineers, philosophers, and special type of artist with a scientific bent, is a well-established conceptual framework that is under appropriated in political geography. The spatial triad is constituted by three overlapping spatial dimensions noted above, two of which—the representational space and representations of space—are always in unitary dialectical opposition (Lefebvre, 1991). None of these three dimensions of space should be subjected to analysis in isolation of the other. Nor should the dimensions be conflated with each other. Each dimension of the spatial triad contributes in different ways to the production of space in accordance with each dimension’s social qualities and spatial attributes which are further influenced by various historical periods under investigation (Lefebvre, 1991). Relations between the tripartite moments of the spatial triad are never stable, nor readily discernible or simple however, they are “not always generally unknown” (Lefebvre, 1991:46).

On territorial terms, representations of space are the interstate political space of monumental fracture lines and their relatively fixed junction points while representational space are the realm of geographical borderlands and their social populations whose spatial practices and rhythm must be analyzed empirically (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). Spatial practice or the *Raumimagination* in accordance with Zajc’s (2019) frontier studies appropriation of Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial practice, is a complex dimension of the spatial triad which is in fact three-dimensional because it embraces interstate production and non-state actor reproduction of geographic border regions, their multiscale locations, and spatial border sets characteristic of each society’s formation. Society’s spatial practices are directly lived (representational) before they are conceptualized (conceived) by the speculative primacy of representations of space which cause socio-spatial practices of representational space to disappear along with social life (Lefebvre, 1991). Spatial practices are perceived as

territorial spaces of accessibility described in the earlier framework of forbidden territories, places of abode and relatively fixed junction points along international fracture lines. Spatial practices ensure continuity of movements, spatial integration, some degree of cohesion between partitioned sub-regions and facilitates social life. This cohesion implies the guarantee of spatial competencies and performances which apply to each border society and each member of that border society's relationship to the international border and borderlands which "can only be evaluated empirically" (Lefebvre, 1991: 38). Indeed, "the spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space...in a dialectical interaction" by producing it slowly and through mastery, it appropriates it (Lefebvre, 1991:38).

Under capitalism, spatial practices embody a close association within perceived space between routinized daily reality and urban reality framed within an integrated network of routes and physical transport infrastructure which paradoxically secrete urban geographic spaces characterized by the most extreme forms of separation between places and societies it purports to and are designed to link together (Lefebvre, 1991). Brenner and Elden (2009) appropriated Lefebvre's (1991) spatial practices as 'territorial practices' which are closely allied with the analytical unit of physically integrated spaces of accessibility in the territorial framework of the spatiology. Territorial practices are concrete sites for everyday contestations of power, for access to the produced interstate space and its planned mega-infrastructure projects which increase spatial integration (Brenner and Elden, 2009). Zajc's (2019) phantom borders appropriation of Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad in the Russian context perceives the space of territorial interstate practices as the *Raumimagination* – a concept denoting the interstate relations of territorial sovereignty and political space production which directly influences the geopolitics of regional state spaces. Silberman, Till and Ward (2015) conceptualize Lefebvre's territorial spatial practices simply as a territory, or locale.

While representational spaces or the *Raumerfahrung* to borrow from Zajc (2019) are directly lived and symbolic spaces of users (marginalized) and inhabitants (disadvantaged), absolute space is the representational space made up of fragments of nature located at physical geographic sites appropriated for their intrinsic qualities (Lefebvre, 1991). Absolute space is a product of social relations. Further, in its character, absolute space is political, religious and cultural-geographic since it is produced from "bonds of consanguinity, soil and *language*", (Lefebvre, 1991:48; emphasis added). As a relativized and historical space that has become dominated by abstract space, absolute space lives on territorially even though it is "gradually losing its force, as substratum or underpinning of representational spaces" (Lefebvre, 1991:49). Its center or affective kernel is the *res cogitans* and spatial *Dasein* with an ego, dwelling, house including a cemetery, a church or public space (Lefebvre, 1991). As the analytical realm of territorial places of abode which further serve as methodological sites for cross-disciplinary fieldworkers, representational spaces embrace "the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time" hence, it is "directional, situational... relational" because lived spaces are "essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic" (Lefebvre, 1991:42).

As human geographic spaces, borderlands are lived spaces that are multiscalar and redolent with imagery and symbolic/totemic elements. As a result, their source of information lies in the territorial history and pre-history of a studied people, and “the history of each individual belonging to that people” (Lefebvre, 1991:41). According to Silberman, Till and Ward’s (2015) territorial appropriation of the spatial triad, lived space concerns itself with geographic politics of international border users and borderland inhabitants who move through the integrated spatial region with *non-savoir* (informal) ethnographic knowledge of the partitioned social space. This is the politically dominated as well as theoretically subordinated space in society as well as in political geographic thought (Lefebvre, 1991). According to Lefebvre (1991) representational spaces are the theoretical domain of an eclectic ensemble of academic specialists from various fields of study inter alia, “some artists...a few writers and philosophers, who describe and aspire to do no more than describe” (Lefebvre, 1991:39). On the social side of everyday life, lived space embodies complex symbolisms which are sometimes coded and often linked to the “clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art” (Lefebvre, 1991:33).

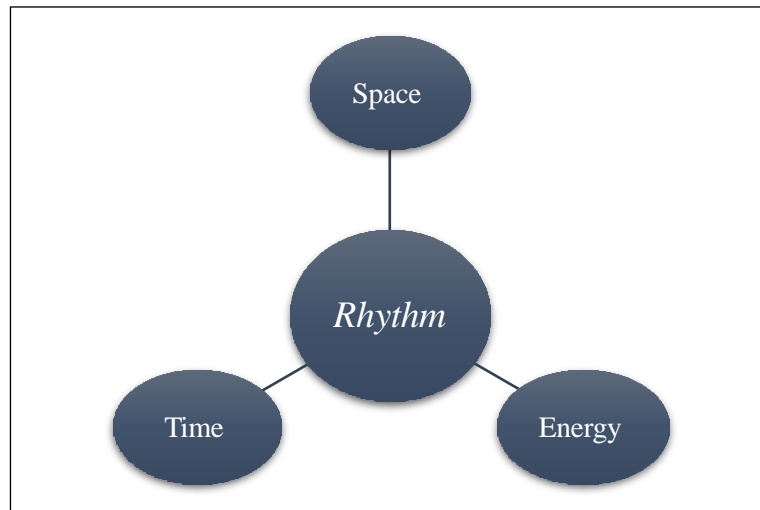
Representations of space on the other hand is perceived by Silberman, Till and Ward (2015) as the bureaucratic and technocratic space of distanced experts with little to no experiential understandings of representational territories or absolute space of borderlands. Representations of space or the *Raumgestaltung* according to Zajc (2019), is underpinned by grassroots practices which combine ideology and knowledge within social-spatial practice. As conceived spaces, state borders are not defined by the disappearance of nature’s green space nor by the great empty spaces of the state and the military (Lefebvre, 1991). Conceived spaces are instrumental political state spaces which are manipulated by all kinds of authorities and further concerns the silencing of the social users and inhabitants (Lefebvre, 1991). As abstract space, international fracture lines and their associated junction points presuppose the ontology of a spatial economy that valorizes “certain relationships between people in particular places....and thus gives rise to connotative discourses concerning” the character of these places (Lefebvre, 1991:56). Distinctions between the perceived-lived-conceived dimensions of the spatial triad must therefore always be separately apprehended in the abstract first before they are empirically analyzed against each other.

Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial triad should not be imported, used nor appropriated solely at the level of theoretical abstraction without grasping the concrete. Should the framework fail to grasp or apply to the concrete it will lose all analytical force which would cause its disciplinary and territorial import to be “severely limited, amounting to no more than that of one ideological meditation among others” (Lefebvre, 1991:40). In essence, the spatial realms of the lived (representational), the perceived (spatial practice) and the conceived (abstract representations) should always be interconnected in ways that allow individual members of observed societies—along with the analytical researcher—to move and oscillate in-between their distinct dimensions with ease as a matter of logical necessity.

### **2.7.5 The territorial spatial rhythm**

Lefebvre’s (2004) three-dimensional conceptual framework of rhythm is not established in

geographic limology scholarship. The framework is a product of the inter and transdisciplinary scholarship of rhythm analytical science, which is described by Lefebvre as an advanced science, a new field of knowledge with the theoretical proposition that everywhere space, time and expenditure of energy interact a rhythm occurs (Lefebvre, 1991; Elden, 2004a). Rhythm analysis (or ERA) entails a thinking of space/geography and time/history together and separately in ways that also bridges the gap between scientific and creative thinking (Lefebvre, 2004). ERA “does not constitute a separate science” from the spatiology of The PoS as such therefore “it must continually be related to practice” (Lefebvre, 2004:69). There is no territorial spatial rhythm analysis without the consideration and interaction of space, time and social energy uses inter alia, repetition, movement, returns, duration, “stops, silences, blanks, resumptions and intervals in accordance with regularity” (Lefebvre, 1991; Lefebvre and Régulier, 1985 in Lefebvre, 2004:78).



Conceptual formant 1.2. Lefebvre's (2004) spatial rhythm

Rhythm enters territorial discourse when “time is connected with location and motion” (Baud and van Schendel, 1997; Heidegger, 2010:407; Konrad, 2015). Where there is being or Heidegger’s (2010) *Dasein* —as the Being (ontology) of *human* beings and or being-in-the-world—there is space, movement and changes that occur therein (Lefebvre, 1991; Heidegger, 2010). We can thus say where there are international borders and borderlands for example, there is the physical being of human beings/*Dasein* within and underpinning these interstates organized territorial paces. The spatial *Dasein* of borderlanders is the focus and goal of spatial rhythmology framework because the paradigm of rhythm analysis is in the geographically situated social body of international border users and inhabitants of the places of abode (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). The analytical framework of spatial rhythm is constituted by four interrelated concepts which supplement the three rhythm organized units, or conceptual elements of space-time-energy. The four analytical concepts are polyrhythmia, arrhythmia, eurhythmia and isorhythmia (Lefebvre, 2004). Together, these analytical concepts constitute the theoretical framework of rhythmological study.

Similar to the overlapping dimensions of the spatial triad discoursed earlier, one cannot analyze rhythm in isolation of these four concepts which must further be considered in

relation to each other to avoid empty abstractionism (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). In addition, no element of rhythm should “be conflated nor separated from one another” in geographical border analysis (Lefebvre, 1991:12, 2004). Polyrythmia in rhythm analysis refers to a state of wholeness within distinctly complex biological and political geographic systems composed of a bundle of diverse rhythms of individual organs that collectively makes up the whole (Lefebvre, 2004). A social body and or territorial space is polyrhythmic if it is constituted by a variety of intricately interrelated parts whose various functions or spatial practices work together and differently to make the polyrhythmic entity work. When the social body that underpins the territorial framework of geographic cross-border regions gets along with neighboring interstate institutions and their sub-regional elites such that the border region is relatively peaceful than warring, then eurhythmia is experienced however, when there is strife, wars and upheavals of any kind, arrhythmia sets in (Lefebvre, 2004).

Territorial arrhythmia refers to a geopolitical situation which can be lethal and leading towards fatal desynchronization of the social body or stasis atrophy in political geographic regions under study. The situation in the Middle East, parts of Africa and eastern Europe, are contemporary global and regional examples of what Lefebvrian arrhythmia looks like in practice as an element of the historical reemergence of the anticipated Stalinist SMP. In such geopolitical contexts, the goal of rhythmic intervention would be to “strengthen or re-establish eurhythmia” through advocacy for diplomatic peacebuilding relations and ceasefire treaties (Lefebvre, 2004:68). Arrhythmia fragments rhythm. That is, it fragments space, time and the social uses of energy which for this territorial study is assigned to the realm of international migration. Consequently, the breaking down of spatial rhythm by arrhythmia reproduces the ideologically dominant tendency of territorial fragmentation, state-centric epistemologies, as well as socially polarizing political geographic divisions which Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) spatial architectonics and the musical rhythmic concept of the tied-staccato<sup>12</sup> aim to reverse and re-unify respectively.

Isorhythmia refers to a state of near absolute geo-rhythmic equality or territorial equivalence between contrasting or similar social bodies/territorial units (Lefebvre, 2004). Isorhythmic cases are very rare and few because no two territorial societies or international borders and borderlands are ever the same/identical, and perfectly equal on political, geographic, economic and demographic terms, for example. An alliance is however required between polyrythmia, eurhythmia and isorhythmia to secrete political harmony or social accord between different non-isorhythmic territorial units, while arrhythmia singlehandedly produces friction and conflict (Lefebvre, 2004). The goal of rhythm analysis—and the spatial rhythm analyst—is to seek preventative measures against arrhythmia once it is understood as such, rather than to provide a cure for it (Lefebvre, 2004). Space is a key concept of rhythm that is treated in-depth in the spatiology scholarship while time and expenditure of energy are amplified in the advanced scholarship of rhythm. Rhythmic thinking in geographical limology is lacking and with this research I advance rhythm into political geography because “questions of space must not be separated...from questions of time” inter alia, human migration across international borders

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<sup>12</sup> Lefebvre’s (2004:58) music rhythm analytical concept of the “tied-staccato” denotes the separation of distinguishable melodic notes from each other which are then brought together and linked “as closely as possible without confusing them” through a *ligature* – a line or something that binds, ties or connects.

and within borderlands (Brenner, 1999; Elden, 2004a:186; Megoran, 2020; Murphy, 2022). When space is evoked, we must immediately indicate or identify what occupies the observed space. Time as Elden (2004a:152) critically notes, transforms space into “yet another attribute to be historically analyzed”. When we evoke time, we must note what changes in the observed space and how it has changed. When the notion of energy is evoked, we must immediately declare that energy is deployed in space “in relation to ‘points’ and within a time frame” (Lefebvre, 1991:12; Lefebvre, 2004).

Under the political theory of the SMP, nuclear energy “animates, reconnects, renders time and space conflictual” as a result, energy is a broad, multidimensional and polysemic unit of territorial analysis (Lefebvre, 2004:60). Lefebvre interestingly left remnants of time thinking to the phenomenological scholarship of Jean-Paul Sartre and the hermeneutical scholarship of Martin Heidegger to further explicate, since “relationships between force (energy), time and space are problematical” for the spatiology, geographical limology, social sciences and or rhythmanalysis to resolve by themselves (Lefebvre, 1991:22). Thus philosophical “questions of space must not be separated...from questions of time” (Elden, 2004a:186). Paasi (2022:10) adds that space and time should not be separated from each other in territorial analysis since both units are directly involved “in the making of regions and bordering”. Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) space and time differ from Hegel’s space and Marx’s time (Merrifield, 1993, 1995). Just as Hegelian space has nothing in common with Nietzschean space “so Nietzschean time...has nothing in common with Marxist time” (Lefebvre, 1991:22).

Lefebvre’s space and time are closer to Heidegger’s (2010) historical hermeneutics in which space entails a time transcending transition which is not readily distinguishable from time itself and yet it is time (Lefebvre, 1991). Time is thus perceived as truth and a measure of space while space in its truth is conceived as time through which the ontology (Being) of space or spatial *Dasein* reveals itself, and is itself revealed (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004; Heidegger, 2010). According to Lefebvre (1991, 2004) and Heidegger (2010) time is bound up with location and motion as such it cannot be conceived in isolation from the territorial and anthropological dimensions of border regions. Time is “at once fleeting, ungraspable...and grasped...timed chronometrically” (Lefebvre, 2004:51). In addition to Western philosophy’s abandonment and intellectual neglect of the dominated social body/representational space of users and inhabitants as the *anthropos*, Lefebvre (1991:130) moots that Western philosophy “left...the poorest of indications” when it comes to inscriptions of time in space. Sartre’s (2001) philosophical time thinking, and conceptualization of temporality enters the discourse for its critical contributions in territorial border studies of geographic bent. Sartre’s (2001) qualitative conception of time is organized around four analytical categories classified as pre-history (the unknown and distant past), modern history (the written past), the present (the now) and the future (the destination).

Sartre’s (2001) temporal unit of the past is a dual category of time that no longer is, such as pre-history and history. However, historical explorations of the past under Western colonialism brings the past into the present thus making it come alive (Sartre, 2001). Sartre’s (2001) time is rhythmanalytical because it “implies a certain memory” that lives on in the embodied recollections and iconographies of those affected by territorial states politics of international borders which often divide similar or different human cultures into



different or single sovereign territories (Lefebvre, 2004; Paasi, 1998, 1999a, 2009a). Sartre's temporal dimensions are also not isolated from each other and or neatly compartmentalized.

According to Sartre

the past can indeed be conceived as being in the present, but by making it such we have removed all ways of presenting this immanence...The past indeed can haunt the present, but it can not be the present; it is the present which is its past. Therefore, if we study the relations of the past to the present in terms of the past, we shall never establish internal relations between them (Sartre, 2001:89)

Sartre (2001) exposes the complexity and sophistry of time thinking in ways that suggest temporal de-distancing with spatial architectonics to unify and bring closer various temporalities that would allow us to establish internal relations between them. We are thus compelled to study the past in our relative present as it is perceived and conceived, rather than to drag the past into the present as though its political relations are still relevant or ongoing. In the context of post-colonial Africa, the generally unknown pre-history and known colonial history of the continent enables this Lefebvrian study to examine the prehistoric territorial past of a pre-existing international border society in the present as it is and was, and to further bring its distant past and vague history closer to the present for the sake of mental dismantling and reversal of the ideologically dominant tendency and its analytically conflated representations. The present and the future are temporal dimensions which for Sartre (2001) *are* and *are yet to be* respectively. The present indicates a dual spatial existence outside (*res extensa*) of oneself (*res cogito*) where the past no longer is and the future is what is not yet. The future is thus "the continual possibilization of possibilities" which "does not correspond to a homogeneous and chronologically ordered succession of moments to come" (Sartre, 2001:105). The future as such cannot be timed chronometrically and as a result, the rhythm analyst does not bother themselves with futuristic projections and or prophetic predictions (Lefebvre, 2004).

For Heidegger (2010) time *en tout* is a becoming which transitions from spatial Being to nothingness and vice versa. Becoming, as Heidegger (2010) further notes, is a dual process of coming into existence and passing away on the one hand, and where the phenomenological dialectic of being and non-being cross over the being of time on the other hand. Analytical intelligence must therefore associate temporality with rhythmic terms such as growth, maturation, and aging, all of which cannot be dissociated from spatiality (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) three-dimensional spatial triad and spatial rhythm frameworks are not reducible to a normative Hegelian schema of thesis-antithesis-synthesis (Unwin, 2000; Elden, 2004a; Lefebvre, 2004). Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) analytical spatial rhythm and spatial triad differ from Hegelian and Marxist binary dialectics because they are trialectical triadic frameworks which do not aim for a grand synthesis even though they synthesize (Elden, 2004a; Lefebvre, 2004:12).

According to Lefebvre, a proper synthesis of his spatial trialectical frameworks can only be possible if or when "the most powerful of 'syntheses' – that of Hegel...Marx...and Nietzsche" are brought into intellectual confrontation with each other (Lefebvre, 1991:406). As Lefebvre (1991:228) critical notes, these frameworks are appropriate for the study of

territorial border regions because such global state spaces “mobilizes triads, tripartite conflicts or connections”. In an effort to retain the relevance of Marx’s *Capital* ([1867]2008) as well as preserve its place in contemporary geographic thought, Lefebvre (1991) spatialized the capital trinity “of land-capital-labour” with his rural rent sociology because the rhythm-analytical capitalist framework “cannot remain abstract” and must thus be re-imagined “within an equally tri-faceted institutional space: a [territorial] space that is first of all global” (Lefebvre, 1991:282).

## **2.8 Lefebvorean geographical limology in Africa: A spatial architectonics interpolation and contribution**

African political geography is different from Anglophone political geography in theoretical analyses, conceptual representation and research approaches to international borders and borderlands because of colonial politics by the latter nation states during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early to late 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. As far as South(ern) Africa is concerned, we can speak of political geography as an academically established sub-field of geographic scholarship that is relatively young, “small and vibrant” in contrast to its Anglo counterpart (Christopher, 2002:48). Despite this situation, Africa is a well-established territorial region in the imagination of the global West. The continent was established as far back as the 1940s in Anglophone geographic scholarship as the world’s most European partitioned region with a record high 103 to 109 international borders and countless clusters of unknown and rarely mapped or conceptualized cross-borderlands (Boggs, 1940; Webb, 1979; Herbst, 1980; Prescott, 1987; Asiwaju, 1992, 1993; Ramutsindela, 1999). Africa’s territorial politics begin with the arbitrary (distanced/remote) partitioning of Africa’s physical geography by international borders at the infamous Berlin Conference of 1885. In this historic context western European states allocated various proportions of African territory without accurate scientific and empirical knowledge of the region’s physical geography, ethnographic landscapes and precolonial forms of territoriality (Mbembe, 2000; Moyo and Nshimbi, 2017; Foucher, 2020; Moyo, 2020).

Add to that, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century colonization meant intellectual under development of political geographic scholarship which has resulted in the Western dominance of territorial knowledge production. This means apart from the known political history of the Berlin Conference and post-colonial territorial conflicts in various parts of the continent, the political organization and political geography of 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa is not well established. Africa is the world’s second largest territorial landmass with the world’s second largest demographic body of more than 1.2 billion inhabitants dispersed across 55 known member states of the African Union (African Union [AU], 2020a, 2020b, 2023). This makes Africa a very special place and space in territorial debates and territorial sciences including political geography and critical geopolitics. The 1960s established institution of the AU was first called the Organization of African Unity (OAU) before it was appropriated in the 2000s (Herbst, 1980; Ramutsindela, 1999; Moyo and Nshimbi, 2017; AU, 2020a, 2020b; AU Handbook, 2023). Similar to the EU of integrated border regions, the AU is a suprastate political institution that is responsible for the territorial governance of international border regions, scientific production of territorial border and borderlands knowledge including historical and GIS mapping through the AU Border Programme, and statist reproduction of territory and territoriality in Africa.

Through the Abuja Treaty of 1991 the AU established the African Economic Community (AEC) to “propel Africa into the desired future” of continental integration along with “the promotion of economic, social and cultural development...that would increase” endogenously driven self-sufficiency (Moyo and Nshimbi, 2017:2; Moyo, 2020; AU, 2020a, 2020b, 2023:7). Through the AEC, the AU established eight regional economic communities or RECs to drive sub-regional economic integration and to enforce the inviolability of Africa’s colonially inherited political geography of international borders and their non-isorhythmic sovereign state institutions (Moyo and Nshimbi, 2017; AU, 2020a, 2020b; Moyo, 2020; AU Handbook, 2023). On its own the AU cannot and does not account for Africa’s SMP or New State Form. The institution has relegated that political responsibility to the eight RECs which are spread unevenly across five main geopolitical blocs or economic sub-regions which are geographically incongruent. The five primary sub-regions upon which Africa’s political geography rests are the Northern, Eastern, Western, Central and Southern African blocs (Ramutsindela, 1999; Moyo and Nshimbi, 2017; AU, 2020a, 2020b; Moyo, 2018, 2020; AU, 2023).

The eight RECs of the five blocs consist of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). These sub-regional RECs<sup>13</sup> service and are further inhabited by multitudes of human populations which are spatially distributed across the partitioned 55-member states of the AU which are further conceived as salient geopolitical “pillars of the AU” which are bent towards the creation of “a common [capitalist] market” (Moyo, 2020; AU, 2023:18). SADC along with ECOWAS, IGAD, COMESA, AMU and EAC RECs for example, have received substantial cross-disciplinary research attention over the years despite the view that the African continent is under researched in, or peripheral to broader analytical discourses, or that its subnational borders receive little attention compared to international borders (Herbst, 1989; Alper and Brunet- Jailly, 2008; Coplan, 2010a, 2010b; Mavungu, 2012; Zeller, 2013; Ramutsindela, 2019).

Moyo (2016, 2018, 2020) and Moyo and Nshimbi (2017) researched the international border of South Africa with Zimbabwe along with Botswana to theoretically analyze the character of economic labour migration, AU vision 2063 policy exclusion of non-state actor led informal economies for the attainment of equitable economic integration inter alia, decolonial border thinking. While SADC states’ territoriality is scrutinized on comparative terms with EU’s external fortress borders, Moyo (2016, 2018, 2020), and Moyo and Nshimbi’s (2017) scholarship neglect the borderlands. Elsewhere in territorial anthropology, Dederling (2006)

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<sup>13</sup> The political organization of the AU’s 8 RECs does not accurately correspond with the region’s political geography. For example, Uganda is included in both EAC and COMESA RECs while Egypt is omitted from the AMU REC and included in the CEN-SAD and COMESA RECs. Same goes for Kenya which is included in both COMESA and EAC while Somalia is included in COMESA, CEN- SAD, EAC and IGAD RECs.

provides a frontiers studies perspective of early 20<sup>th</sup> century German colonised South West Africa (Namibia since 1990) and British colonised South Africa. Dederling (2006) sought to document the practical impacts of Western nation states on pre-established spatial patterns of African migration where new political geographies of border secreted frontier zones and borderlands were birthed out of struggle, resistance, and warfare along riparian border systems of the Orange and Kunene Rivers (Coplan, 2010a, 2010b, 2014). This Lefebvorean geographical limology is situated in the SADC REC which consists of at least 15-member states inhabited by roughly 250 million inhabitants who are unevenly distributed in-between the hinterlands of the respective member states, and their colonially established international borders.

The multitudes of cultural cross-border populations and their borderlands are not well documented (Asiwaju, 1992,1993; AU, 2020a, 2020b, 2023). Of the 15 nation states comprising the SADC border region South Africa and Botswana are of Lefebvorean interest to this geographical limology research. These two countries are non-isorhythmic on spatial-geographic, demographic, and political-economic terms however, both countries are isorhythmic on cultural terms where Botswana are the main social underpinning secreting the international border study area between South Africa's North-West Province and Botswana's Southern District and South East District. I elaborate further on this situational introduction as a contribution to geographical scholarship on the one hand, and Lefebvorean advance in political geography on the other. Despite Zeller (2013) and Alper and Brunet-Jailly's (2008) categorical claim that SADC countries such as South Africa and Botswana are rarely studied and not very well known in contemporary international borderlands studies, a non-exhaustive review of geographical and non-geographic research in territorial scholarship on SADC reveals a contrary view. The earliest if not first global entry of the South Africa-Botswana international border and borderlands African study in Anglophone geographical limology is recorded in Rumley and Minghi's (1991) classic editorial titled *The Geography of Border Landscapes*.

In the classic editorial scholarship that is under examined in African geographical limology, political geographer James Drummond and political historian Andrew Manson, conceived an ethno-politically distinct interdisciplinary border analyses of the Afro-regional profile as well as Western economic significance and historical evolution of the British allocated and later Afrikaner state appropriated international border of apartheid South Africa (Drummond, 1991; Drummond and Manson, 1991; see also Ramutsindela, 1993, 1998, 2001). Key to this discourse is the explicit analytical historical explication of the production of the colonial political geography of, as well as critical geopolitical relations between, international border partitioned territories of the African society of Botswana in 20<sup>th</sup> century Bophuthatswana and Botswana cultural border landscape (Drummond and Manson, 1991). As per the trend in Anglophone political geography, international borders are well-established politically and theoretically in geographical research than borderlands which are ethnographically and historiographically neglected.

The historical evolution of colonial international and administrative borders of South Africa vis-a-viz Botswana, including aspects of micro-regionalism from the policy perspective of informal economic practitioners of the South Africa-Zimbabwe-Botswana cross-border sub-region, and potential for cross-border tourism economy development, have been extensively researched (Drummond and Manson, 1991; Ramutsindela, 1993, 1998, 1999, 2013, 2019;

Rogerson and Rogerson, 2019; Moyo, 2016, 2018, 2020). Furthermore, the SADC REC in which this Lefebvrian analysis is situated, continues to be reimagined from political ecological perspectives through conceptual ‘peace parks’ which serve as territorial units informing the politics of transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) which are further explored politically for their peace building potential, promotion of environmental sustainability and socioeconomic development of affected borderlands (Hanks, 2003). With this study I seek to contribute towards the re-peopling and re-culturing of territorial border studies by subjecting the contemporary geopolitical region of South Africa’s North-West Province and Botswana’s Southern District and South Eastern Districts, to an autonomous Lefebvrian trial by space.

## *2.9 Conclusion*

The purpose of this review chapter was to establish and advance Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) under studied spatiology and rhythmology in political geographic scholarship where Botswana inhabited cross-borderlands of South Africa and Botswana are rarely studied. Four key issues of significance are worth noting in summary of the conclusion of this unorthodox Lefebvrian review of geographical limology scholarship. First, Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) scholarship of the spatiology and rhythmology aligns with both Anglophone and African political geography on the notion that international borders—alongside bounded territorial regions—are political state spaces which are central objects for geographic inquiry however, such spaces cannot be solely left to geography and political geographers to explicate. Second, where geographic scholars sought a general grand border theory or theories with which to explicate the production and political functions of international borders at various spatial scales, Lefebvre (1991) advocates for theoretical unity instead, to reverse the ideologically dominant tendency that fragments both space and knowledge by way of spatial architectonics. Third, theoretical traditions and epistemic politics of African political geographic scholarship are intellectually affected and unequally shaped by the politics of colonialism and economic globalization which create a cross-disciplinary chasm within political geography, the social sciences, and humanities.

Interestingly, scholars have called for and are accordingly calling for the advancement of Lefebvre’s scholarship for re-spacing African border studies, as well as for driving the global project forward for epistemic redress between Global North and Global South territorial scholars inter alia, the de-Westernization and de-urbanization of Lefebvre’s scholarship by way of spatial architectonics. Fourth, the global shifts in Anglophone geographic scholarship towards non-geographic perspectives help to anchor Botswana in territorial border studies of geographic bent in such ways that are supported by established methods in political geographic research and emergence of interdisciplinary conceptual frameworks which enhance the value of non-geographic perspectives in contemporary political geographic scholarship. Fourth and lastly, there is an established urgency in niche Anglophone geographic scholarship which the critical humanities scholars of African border studies amply, to establish Lefebvre territorially in political geography. As a result, it would take the efforts of critical political geographers together with critical humanities and social scientists to critically study Lefebvre together, think territory on spatial architectonics terms with Lefebvre in an effort to advance conceptualization and possibly theorization of international borderlands which would warrant a reconfiguration of the methodological debate in Africa across various academic disciplines, and in Anglophone circuits where Lefebvre’s detractors are rife.

## Chapter 3

### The Pre-history and Colonial Production of the Batswana Inhabited Border Region of Southern Africa

#### 3.1 Introduction

Roughly six million Batswana in central south Africa are divided by a single international border between South Africa and Botswana. The aim of this research is to use empirics to theorize and conceptually analyze the contemporary border region of the two countries to help answer research questions about Batswana's territorial organization in the border region prior to as well as post the establishment of the international border that separates them geographically, socially and politically. The purpose of this chapter to re-establish Batswana and their unknown territorial dynamics in political geography. I deploy Lefebvre's unitary framework of spatial architectonics to integrate and bring into this geographic conversation non-geographical Batswana scholarship and perspectives to help us understand the production and organizational politics of this African border society's space. This chapter is organized around seven sections of interest to the research aim, key objectives and questions under investigation. I introduce Batswana territorially in section 1 in terms of their geographic origins and pre-historic nomadic rhythms of spatial migration which I reimagine through the US concept of a frontier society.

To substantiate the study's assumptions about Batswana's spatial consciousness and practical conception of boundaries, I introduce an unknown three-tiered spatial model of land-uses conceived and used by the pre-historical society of Batswana for territorial organization and spatial production in central south Africa in section 3. The pre-history of spatial deterritorialization of Batswana under *Difecane* is introduced in section 4. I reimagine Kgosi Mzilikazi and his military regiment of Matebele through the notion of the coloniality of *Dasein* and its Manichean misanthropic skepticism. I transition to section 5 on account of the spatial relations of deterritorialization by Western European powers and Batswana's responses to them in section 5. In section 6 the focus shifts to the international boundary production of Botswana in 1966 and of Bophuthatswana in 1977 with emphasis on the territorial birth, growth and death of Bophuthatswana. Section 7 concludes the chapter with a summary of key insights and contributions.

#### 3.2 The territorial geography and spatial rhythms of pre-historic Batswana

Batswana are an ancient society of human *Dasein* with territorial roots and geographic origins in Africa. Molema<sup>14</sup> (1920) describes Batswana—historically written as Becoana and Bechuana—as a society in existence for more than 2000 years AD. For Mogodi-Plaatje<sup>15</sup> ([1916]/2007) the spatial *Dasein* of precolonial Batswana is exclusive to Africa. Meaning,

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<sup>14</sup> Silas Modiri Molema was a European qualified medical doctor who became a critical figure in Tswana society, politics and scientific research. Dr Molema was “a premier spokesperson for African nationalism in both Bechuanaland and South Africa for almost four decades...a vocal member of the B.P Advisory Council since 1921...a leading figure in the African National Congress of South Africa” (Parsons, Henderson and Tlou, 1995:176).

<sup>15</sup> Solomon Tshekisho Mogodi-Plaatje (1876-1932) was educated in mission schools. He was a critical intellectual figure in Tswana and European societies. He was the first Secretary General of the African Native National Congress (See Voss, 1995; Midgely, 2000; Asmal, 2007; Sabata-Mokae, 2010).

Batswana society is found nowhere else in the world outside of Africa. Writing from an anti-colonial perspective birthed in response to the *existentielle* being of the coloniality of *Dasein* on the one hand, and the need for its relational (epistemic) and territorial (geographic) negation and or reversal on the other, Mogodi-Plaatje (2007:68) reinforces territorial claims on Batswana's continental origins stating, modern "history does not tell us of any other continent where the Bantu lived besides Africa". In this case and contrary to Webb's (1979) Eurocentric views, modern European historians cannot be depended upon to give us accurate information about the formation and origins of pre-colonial Africans whose unestablished frontiers traditions and societies predate those of the West. We can however look to and depend upon the canon scholarship of non-geographical Tswana scholars such as Molema, Mogodi-Plaatje and Leseyane who produced geography unexamined scientific *oeuvres* on the pre-history and political history of Batswana, Tswana<sup>16</sup> studies, political geography and ethnography.

Molema (1920) takes an interesting stance informed by Heidegger's (2010) philosophical constitution of the existential *Dasein*. According to Molema (1920:3) any scientific studies about "any particular people on any part of the globe" must philosophically contend with the question of location or geography, that is, why people are where they are, and the methodological question of "how they come to be there". This Lefebvrian border and borderlands research lends itself to spatial and ethno-sociological perspectives advanced by Mogodi-Plaatje (1995, 2007) and Molema (1920). Despite his assertion of location as a reference and point of departure to any social science Molema (1920) does not look to geography and geographers for answers to ontological questions of the spatial location of *Dasein* rather than existential Being of the *Dasein* of human beings. Molema (1920:3) instead calls on "the scientifically inclined mind" to acquaint itself with anthropology and "especially its division of ethnology"—defined as "the study of the origins and relations of different races of man". Thus, before social studies can furnish answers to geographical questions about the location and Africa origins of the homo sapiens *Dasein in toto* and the African *Dasein* in particular, they must first engage anthropology and ethnology. These disciplinary and methodological prerequisites echo the prerequisites outlined in frontier studies and political geography for limology by Webb (1979), Prescott (1987) and Megoran (2006).

Molema (1920:3) further argues that ontological questions about the being of non-Western *Dasein* must "remain unanswered...for all time" until Western anthropology resolves and settles its skepticism not only about the being *human* and human *being* of non-Western peoples of the world. Western anthropology or the *humanitas* must settle their skepticism about the location and origin of the *Anthropos* "in Africa" (Ibid). Molema (1920) thus puts forth the proposition that if the geographic skepticism remains unresolved and unsettled, then we can accept the advanced speculation of the alien and extra-terrestrial origins of Batswana hence African 'man' as conceived by the imperial *eco cogito* of the *humanitas*. However, before that can happen anthropology—defined as "the study of the human race"—must indicate to us from "whence" human beings and Batswana originated and immigrated to Africa from and indicate the periods of the alleged Africa immigration by polyrhythmic

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<sup>16</sup> Following Mohlamme's (1999) historical writings on Bakgatla ba Kgafela, I omit the prefix Ba- in Batswana in some places to refer to the Tswana where it is semantically correct to do so. This applies to all sub-cultural groups of the Batswana such as the Barolong, Bakwena, Bangwaketse, Bahurutshe and or Batlhako who refer to themselves as such than as Rolong, Kwena, Tlhako and Ngwaketse.

bundles of pre-historic African civilizations (Molema, 1920:3). When it comes to Batswana, theirs is an Africa rooted territorial origins dating back two millennia. Their geographic positionality along with temporal location of their spatial being is in the *Dasein* of Africa which I perceive architectonically through Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiological rhythm.

The territorial profiling and geographic positionality of Batswana is important to establish from the onset since these are spatial and social categories of the being of Batswana which are negated, questioned, and denied by Western philosophy (*humanitas*), its coloniality of *Dasein* and Manichean misanthropic skepticism which placed Batswana along with all peoples of Africa, Asia, North and South Americas and Australia in the Sartrean frame of non-beings, "non-body", "subhumans", and '*inboekeling*' which created an under developed class of nations and political geographic regions of weak and failed nation states (see Anderson, 1887 in Breutz 1953b; Prescott, 1987; Breutz, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991:407, 2004:52; Morton, 1992; Maldonado-Tores, 2007; Mignolo, 2009, 2011). According to the *humanitas* of the ego cogito, Batswana are an alien people with extra-terrestrial origins (Molema, 1920; Hammond-Tooke, 1974). Prior to their permanent geographic settlement in central south Africa, Batswana were nomads who in their heterogeneous or polyrhythmic quality resided in various parts of Africa among other Africans who were different in culture, language, religion and ontology for unknown lengths of time (Molema, 1920; Ellenberger, 1912).

According to Setswana scholarship Batswana were not always found in their contemporary region of central south Africa or SADC REC. A long time ago around the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD Batswana lived in various parts of Africa among other civilizations with different cultural traits. For example, pre-historic Batswana once upon a time lived in Egypt among Arabs (Wainwright, 1943). They also lived in Ethiopia among the Nubians, in the Great Lakes Region as well as Central Africa prior to their permanent settlement in and inhabitancy of the Setswana established cross-border region constituting South Africa (SA) and Botswana (BW) (Wainwright, 1943; Matthews, 1945; Ngcongco, 1979; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Edge and Lekorwe, 1998). Once settled in central south Africa Batswana established their first permanent frontier settlements across vast tracts of land constituting a territory which was pre-inhabited by a sparse population of monogamous San or Sarwa, Balala and Bakgalagadi whom Batswana conquered and colonised (Molema, 1920; Russell, 1976; Mautle, 1986; Leseyane, 1995). Rre (Mr) Mekgwe was a Motswana inhabitant and key informant with non-*savoir* (informal) yet *connaissance* (true) knowledge on Batswana. He recalled his geographic pre-history as far back as the Great Lakes noting that Batswana "came from the Great Lakes of Nyasaland...we call it Malawi today...between 1350 and 1400" (Rre Mekgwe, *interview*, 2018 July 20).

The Great Lakes is the closest we get from central south Africa to a Western frontier appropriation of Batswana in their pre-colonial frontier tradition and as a frontier society. Theirs was a superfluous spatial rhythm of unbounded migration and spatial experiences of unbounded time. Everywhere a space, a time and expenditure of energy interact there is rhythm and where there is space, there is also being, *Dasein* (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004; Heidegger, 2010). Batswana occupied demographically diverse social spaces in north, east, central and Great Lakes regions of Africa inhabited by polyrhythmic bodies of other African cultures and religions constituting the respective civilizations inhabiting contemporary Horn of Africa's EAC, AMU, and CEN-SAD RECs. It can thus be deduced that (a) pre-colonial Batswana were macro regionalists and (b) the continent was not as empty and devoid of



social contents and biological life as the West conceived it to be. Batswana were territorial nomads whose spatial and temporal rhythms of migration prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> century were necessarily macro-scale and in their own inconceivable time. As far as I am aware, it is not known how Batswana lived in these macro regions of Africa, how long and where. It is also not well known what the actual causes for Batswana's nomadic spatial practices were, the nature of their spatial organization and relationships with each other as well as with the other nations they lived amongst contra, the physical geographic settlements they inhabited.

There is however something that is known about a sect of Batswana who lived in Egypt among Arabs, for example. Wainwright (1943) identifies Barolong as such a sub-branch. According to Wainwright (1943) the subnation (sub-*morafe*, singl., sub-*merafe*, pl.) of Barolong lived in Egypt around the 8<sup>th</sup> century as indentured labourers in Arabia because of their natural gift as specialist ironsmiths (Ellenberger, 1912). According to Wainwright (1943) Barolong were specialised captives whose service to Arabs was the production of iron weapons of various kinds for Arabic states and military. Molema (1920) and Ellenberger (1912) support Wainwright's (1953) prehistoric observation with ethnographic evidence from the Barolong. For example, it is recorded that Barolong once had an enigmatic king known as Morolong I who was closer to a deity than a royal patriarch. King Morolong then founded Barolong in their polyrhythmia and they grew in fame or notoriety as quality ironsmiths whose craftsmanship was unrivalled at the time. Barolong's ironsmith trade as an integral part of their subcultural identity, led to the birth of King Morolong I's son who was named Nôtô (*hammer; tshipi* or iron) from whom Barolong adopted their first totemic identity and its associated slogan '*ba bina tshipi*', that is, those who revere—and not dance—the iron (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920; Matthews, 1945; Mothusi II, 2015; Maitso, 2018).

Kgosi (*king, chief*) Jeffrey Kgetlheng Montshiwa III of the Barolong boo Ratshidi or the Tshidi-Barolong, affirmed this insight with a rich oration of the lineage of Kgosi Morolong I who is responsible for the formation of the Barolong sub-branch of Batswana. As a key informant, Kgosi Montshiwa III shared insights on Barolong's prehistory with dates that contradict published scholarship by at least 4 centuries from the time of Kgosi Morolong I. The king stated that

King Morolong lived in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries...there's no prior recorded history of his whereabouts, or parents. He had children named Morolong, Nôtô, Morara, Mabe, Moloto, Mabeo, Tshesebe, Monyane, Mabudiwa, Masepa, Setlhare, Mokgopa, Mathibela and Tau. When Kgosi Tau II died, he had these sons: Ratlou, Tshidi, Makgetla, Seleka and Rapulana...these had their own followers and established their own kingdoms (Kgosi Montshiwa III, *interview*, 2018 September 28)

Rre (Mr) Mekgwe added to this narrative with a slightly different take on the number of children born to Kgosi Tau II. He stated that "Barolong's last chief was Tau [II] who bore four sons: Ratlou, Tshidi, Seleka and Rapulana – the stubborn one from Lotlhakane" (Rre Mekgwe, *interview*, 2018 July 20). Despite having what Lefebvre (1991) calls *non-savoir* (informal knowledge) with potential to constitute *connaissance* (true knowledge), neither Kgosi Montshiwa III or Rre Mekgwe could give an account of social life in the era of Nôtô, and or geographic relations in and emigration from the Great Lakes Region by Barolong. In

the same way those with *savior* knowledge or the Logos fail to. Nonetheless, Matthews<sup>17</sup> (1945) speculates that demographic push factors and other local dynamics shaping the Great Lakes Region at the time, might have caused Batswana's departure from the natural resources abundant space. The prevalence of the tsetse fly, ecological competition, natural geographic secession for less populated space, famine and drought were according to Matthews (1945), plausible factors pushing Batswana and the Barolong sect, southwards of the continent through series' of organized 'great treks' as separated in time by two to three centuries between various subgroups of Batswana nomads (Molema, 1920).

What is evident from the prehistoric territorial and anthropological profile of Batswana is that Batswana are human (*Batho Dasein*) with origins "in Africa" (Molema, 1920:3). They are not extra-terrestrial beings and or a biological error from a failed divine or human experiment. As aptly stated by Leseiyane (1991:5) "*ga se kwa ntle ga lebaka [ga] re ne re ttholwa re le Batswana*", meaning, Batswana are and were created purposefully for a reason. Mogodi-Plaatje (2007:68) qualifies Leseiyane's existential ontological viewpoint with a territorial dictum stating European written "history does not tell us of any other continent where the Bantu lived besides Africa" despite European's geographic skepticism. Add to this Molema (1920) directs his criticism of the ideologically dominant tendency of European "middle class mind...middle class culture", "middle-class public servants and soldiers" along with the "reading public", to tell us from where the Tswana negro came and how they arrived on the continent since the West conceives them as non-human *beings* of alien origin, instead of as part of the *homo sapiens* to which Europeans belong (Lonsdale, 1981:142-143; Prescott, 1987:243; Leseiyane, 1991; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995:11).

### **3.2.1 The End of a Macro-regional Nomadic Era: Tswana Immigration and Permanent Settlement in Southern Africa**

The macro regionalism of nomadic Batswana prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> century tempts the mind to conceive them as a great frontier people in the sense of the Great American Frontier which as Webb (1979) notes was an unknown terrain that was unclaimed by states, not colonially produced yet sparsely inhabited by primitive Red Indian civilizations which were conquered. Most importantly, the Great American Frontier was about man conquering nature through settlement and industry establishment than other men (Webb, 1979). Pre-historic Batswana were a frontier people/society because they ventured far out from the unknown geographic frontiers of north, east, central and Great Lakes regions of Africa in search of a frontier space to settle and reproduce themselves and their physical geography in on permanent basis. Their unknown settlement geographies in Egypt or Central Africa, Ethiopia and the Great Lakes Region for example, accept classification and qualification as 'secondary settlements' in the modern sense of the frontier studies concept due to locational, environmental and demographic push factors hypothesised by Matthew's (1945) which prohibited Batswana from establishing primary settlements in Egypt or Ethiopia.

A US frontier perspective in this regard helps us to better understand the spatial and cognitive logic informing Batswana's nomadic tendencies throughout the continent in ways that advance the anti-Afro pessimistic viewpoint of the existence of harmonious and unified

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<sup>17</sup> Zachariah Keodirelang 'ZK' Matthews was a prominent Tswana scholar as well as an anti-colonial and anti-apartheid activist who was blood relatives with Mogodi-Plaatje who was also related to Dr Modiri Molema.

African societies pre-European scramble for Africa established through spatial partitioning and geographic fixing of modern state boundaries. A US frontier and frontier studies perspective in this Botswana context sheds light on social motivations behind Botswana's permanent physical departure from and absolute geo-body delinking with the once inhabited pre-historic regions of Africa in which they were an indentured class as far as the available pre-history of Barolong goes. Botswana entered southern Africa via the Zambezi River in a series of three great migrations separated in space by two to three centuries between major sub-groups (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920). This is a powerful insight which reveals a great deal about the rhythm of time in prehistoric Africa and Botswana's lived spatial experiences of it. I found a literary manifestation of the temporal and philosophical dimension of pre-historic Botswana in Leseyane's (1991) *Letlhaku Le Le Gologolo*. This piece of Setswana written critical scholarship illustrates the back as well as the inside of the *thinking* mind of the Tswana, to paraphrase from Mogodi-Plaatje (1995) expression, to raise the consciousness of Botswana to the European destruction of their Setswana culture, language, customs, and traditions under the political weight and "spread of European ideas" and capitalist Westernisation (Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995:11; Mgadla and Volz, 2006).

In *Letlhaku Le Legologolo*, meaning, an ancient branch [of knowledge], Leseyane<sup>18</sup> (1991) introduces us to an enigmatic Motswana figure he refers to as *Mogologolo* (ancient one). *Mogologolo* was a *non-savoir* philosopher who dedicated his unquantified lifetime to thinking about the nature of being (ontology), the nature of a human being (psychology; behavioralism) as well as that of wildlife, nature, Batlhako (society) and the physical geography he inhabited, critically observed, and fully immersed himself in to produce *connaissance* knowledge that Leseyane (1991) captured and critically analyzed with impressive explanatory and interpretative power in Setswana. Although they are not the focus of the study and chapter, the 14 proverbs (*maele; diane*) conceived by *Mogologolo* and further written and philosophically decoded with critical explication by Leseyane, are abstract structures which various polities of Botswana adopted and internalised for their social governance and order. Two such proverbs are worth noting *en passant*. These are 'O se bone majwe go sa kopane, bosigo a kopana' and 'motho ga a itsewe e se naga'. The first proverb was conceived by *Mogologolo* after deep observation of the dispersed spatial layout of Tswana settlements and the nature of in-time information dissemination among the polities in dispersed settlements by their traditional leaders, that is, *dikgosi*.

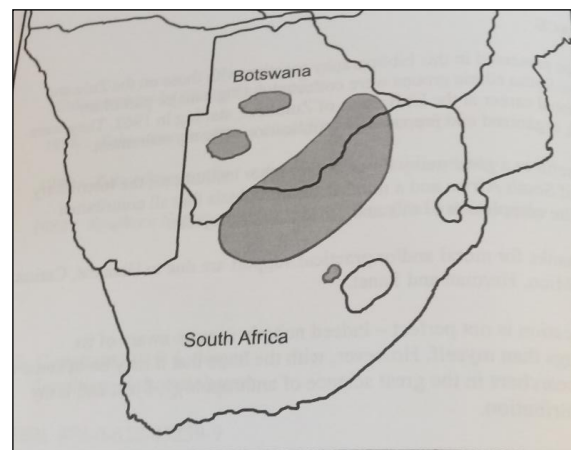
After discerning the spatial relationship between sparsely located settlements and the transfer or circulation of timely information between them, *Mogologolo* arrived at the proverb which in its coded language and English translation states that we must not look at physical rock outcrops that are spatially fixed and dispersed phenomena in space and assume that these inanimate formations do not meet or come together. According to *Mogologolo*, such rocks in the social sense move and meet under the cover of night. In other words, rock outcrops symbolised dispersed geographic settlements which are established in space. Since residential settlements and rocks do not move in the natural as a man, animal or insect move,

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<sup>18</sup> P. Leseyane was a critical literary Setswana scholar of the Batlhako stock. He was an educator at Mableskraal Primary School in Tlhakong and an author to several books which he co-authored with Dutch Reformed Church missionaries and Dr E.S Moloto of the University of Botswana (Andrzejewski, Pilaszewicz and Tyloch, 1985).

*Mogologolo* appropriated chiefs as symbolic representations of the fixed rocks which represent their established settlements. In this proverb, Tswana chiefs as de-distancing *Dasein* are the rocks that gather from their respective remote areas, to meet at night in secret places to share intelligence on wars, politics and other news affecting their polities such that by dawn, a *pitso* or public assembly, would be called for by *dikgosi* to disseminate latest news from distant lands (Molema, 1920; Leseayne, 1991; Maitsapo, 2018). It is for this reason that Schapera (1965) dedicated a critical piece of scholarship titled *Praise-Poems of Tswana Chiefs* to capture the ingenuity of Batswana’s traditional leaders whose subjects perpetually showered them with performative poetry, dance and song, and sometimes, criticism cloaked in carefully worded poetic metaphors.

The second proverb is more psychoanalytical and environmental in the behaviouralist sense. It was conceived after *Mogologolo* spent time thinking about the nature of the being (ontology) of people in their spatial *Dasein* or being-in-the-world according to Heidegger (2010). With heedful circumspection of what was at hand in his immediate surrounds *Mogologolo* deduced that the nature of a human being can never be perfectly understood and known in the absolute sense because human beings and the being of humans changes rapidly and drastically so compared to that of animals and physical space of nature. With that *Mogologolo* concluded that ‘*motho ga a itsewe e se naga*’, meaning, a human being cannot be fully known and mastered in the same way as we can know the untamed wild space of nature whose changes occur in the context of its natural cyclical rhythms (Leseayne, 1991). Reverting to the organized and time separated immigration of Batswana in southern Africa, scholars place this once nomadic society’s arrival in SADC between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920; Wainwright, 1943; Breutz, 1958; Mothusi II, 2015; Kgosi Montshiwa III, *interview*, 2018 September 28).



Optic formant 1.1. Spatial distribution and geographic organization of precolonial Tswana regional geography. Source: Naser<sup>19</sup> (2012)

<sup>19</sup> This source was lost in the 2021 Jagger Library Building fire as a result, I am unable to reproduce its citation in the reference list.

The photographed map above indicates the permanent settlement patterns of Batswana in central south Africa between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. This pattern of geographic spatial distribution persists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century SADC REC where SA and BW are member states. These periods therefore serve as historical indicators of the opening and closing of the Tswana frontier which must have occurred between 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries compared to US frontier processes and experienced tradition which is said to have opened and closed between early 17<sup>th</sup> century to late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Webb, 1979). In his literary conception and representation of what he explicitly refers to as a “human geography” of Batswana, Mogodi-Plaatje<sup>20</sup> (1995:23) dates Batswana’s pre-colonial permanent settlement “between Central Transvaal and the Kalahari Desert” to have been well-established by 1720. This date corresponds with Kgosi Montshiwa III’s dating of Barolong dynasty “to 1760 with Kgosi Tau II who passed away the same year” (Kgosi Montshiwa III, *interview*, 2018 September 28). Morton and Hitchcock’s (2014) investigation of the hunting practices of Batswana in the Kgalagadi sub-regions after the 1600s, suggests that Batswana were long-established in the SADC border region by the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries such that by the 17<sup>th</sup> century their spatial impact on the sub-regional landscape and society was tangible.

Once in the pre-Central Transvaal sub-region south of Molopo and Limpopo Rivers, and the Kgalagadi Desert sub-region north of the Molopo and Limpopo Rivers, Batswana established their permanent settlements within the organizational framework of existing natural or apolitical and non-statist physical geographic boundary systems of riparian, orographic and Desert borders (Ellenberger, 1912; Native Affairs Department of the Union of South Africa, 1915; Molema, 1920; Drummond and Manson, 1991). The first subgroupings of Batswana to enter central south Africa were the Barolong and the Bafokeng who were later joined by Bahurutshe who are said to have either been the parent body of the Barolong or that Barolong seceded from them once in southern Africa (Molema, 1920; Matthews, 1945; Mpotokwane, 1974). These *merafe* were politically autonomous entities or “tribes” within an entity of the society from whence it derives its social form and Setswana body (Schapera, 1965:1, 1970; Ramsay, 1991; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991). Indeed, although their composition is constituted by hierarchical social systems of patriarchal chiefs and their agnatic kin within respective dynasties, Batswana *en tout* are an autonomous social body without a paramount King, Lord, Emperor or overseeing ruler (Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995).

Each polity in the Tswana social body has its own king who oversees their autonomous *morafe* and its politically independent and geographically dispersed settlements. Each polity is composed of distinct sub-*merafe* and their individual royal chiefs with their organized traditional councils (*makgotla*, pl., *lekgotla*, singl.), wards (*dikgoro*) and the headsmen (*dikgosana*) (Breutz, 1958; Schapera, 1970; Tlou, 1974; Maylam, 1980; Roberts, 1985; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Tlou, 1998). In their territorial settlement within nature’s framework of ‘good boundaries’ such as Molopo and Limpopo Rivers along with the

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<sup>20</sup> In her Setswana written PhD in African Languages, Pooe (2019) conducts a postcolonial analysis of Mogodi-Plaatje’s (1995) *Mhudi*. Pooe (2019) criticizes Mogodi-Plaatje for writing *Mhudi* in English than Setswana since it was about Batswana and for Batswana. Key in Pooe’s (2019) thesis was acknowledgement of Mogodi-Plaatje’s Setswana omitted surname of Mogodi which was Western appropriated for Plaatje thus denying Plaatje’s Tswananness or Tswana (African) identity. I therefore cite Plaatje’s *oeuvres* as Mogodi-Plaatje in acknowledgement of his cultural identity and ontology as Motswana.

Kgalagadi Desert, Batswana self-organized in space in accordance with their hierarchically stratified anthropological *merafe* and spatial preferences. A small yet powerful cohort of Batswana settled “north of the Molopo River” in a geographic region defined by a harsh desert environment of the Kgalagadi to establish their secondary frontier settlements on a permanent basis (Molema, 1920; Drummond and Manson, 1991: 220; Denbow and Thebe, 2006). The rest of the Batswana sub-branches overlapped the Desert sub-region and crossed the Molopo-Limpopo Rivers to establish primary settlements southward and hence producing a borderless regional geography of Southern and Northern Batswana (Chirenje, 1977; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Denbow and Thebe, 2006). This form of social organization around good (natural) boundaries became the skeletal spatial architecture informing the Batswana settled border region such that the locality south of the Molopo border constituted ‘twice as many Tswana speakers’ who by the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were recorded as simply numerous, and by the 21<sup>st</sup> Southern Batswana are enumerated at four million with their Northern counterparts enumerated at 2.1 million (Matthews, 1945; Schapera, 1952; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; National Development Plan [NDP] 11, 2017-2024; Statistica.com).

The porous spatial situation between natural boundaries partitioned and self-organized minority north and majority south Batswana resulted in a high “degree of interaction and migration” across the borders and between Batswana in similar fashion to Lefebvre’s (1991) phylogenesis membrane boundary (Drummond and Manson, 1991:220). The degree, frequency and intensity of social interaction and spatial migration cross-riparian boundaries formed an integrated Tswana region and type of regionalism that was unbound in space and by time until the 1966 hardening and militarisation of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century allocated administrative and veterinary Western states border which as Drummond and Manson (1991:221) critically state, fundamentally changed and remodelled “relations of production and power” between the two polities. Centuries prior to their modern states domination and international boundaries fixing and separating, the frontier society of Batswana had to first conquer and subdue the central south Africa and pre-occupied African region. Batswana frontier tradition did not immigrate to and permanently settle in a sub-regional geographic space that was devoid of the spatial being of *Dasein* because where there is space there is Being hence, there is no *Dasein* without space and no space without a Being, a material substance, and biological life forms.

Batswana inhabited a pre-occupied region north and south of riparian borders thus negating the dominant Eurocentric view of pre-18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century Africa as “an El Dorado of unknown resources”, lifeless, empty, inhabited by the barbaric and uncivilized because of the well-established European “lack of knowledge about the nature of African geography, politics, and society” (Herbst, 1980; Prescott, 1987:243; Ramutsindela, 1999; Fouche, 2020). Frontier Batswana settled in a physical geographic region that was sparsely inhabited by the *Dasein* of the ancient population of the San or Bushmen, along with the Bakgalagadi whom various sects of Tswana society dominated territorially, assimilated culturally, appropriated their arts and crafts, and dispossessed them of their innumerable herds of cattle and other livestock (Molema, 1920; Breutz, 1958; Leseyane, 1991; Mautle, 1986; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995). Following their successful domination and subjugation of both territory, beast, San and the Kgalagadi with whom they intermarried (Breutz, 1958; Mautle, 1986; Ratshidi Traditional Council, *interview*, 2016 November 11), Batswana went on to produce their own

regional geography that was in fact a cultural frontier that was wide and inviting further exploration, permanent settlement, and territorial production as pre-colonial absolute space. The location of absolute space is in fragments of nature “at sites...chosen for their intrinsic qualities”, for example, “cave, mountaintop, spring, river” (Lefebvre, 1991:48). Transposing this description of absolute space, Batswana’s uneven spatial distribution north and south the Molopo-Limpopo was a planned process to which much thought was given to the identification of specific sites with intrinsic qualities within the borders of the Kgalagadi Desert and Central Transvaal sub-regions of Northern and Southern Batswana respectively. Scholars identify royal traditional leaders of Barolong, Bakwena, Bahurutshe, Batlhako and Bangwato for example, as key figures in decision-making about every sphere of pre-historic Tswana life including the identification of physical sites for geographic habitation and agropastoral spatial practices (Molema, 1920, 1966; Tlou, 1974; Comaroff, 1974; Silitshena, 1974; Chirenje, 1978; Roberts, 1985; Leseyane, 1991; Gulbrandsen, 1993; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995; Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Ramsay, 1998; Maitsapo, 2018; Mogende, 2020).

The absolute space of territorially naturalising Batswana was a site of cultural performativity of sacred rites and rituals accompanying settlement production of absolute space. Leseyane (1991) and Breutz (1953a, 1953b) provide examples where Tswana chiefs identified sites for residential settlement where rituals were performed in a kraal by medicine men (*dingaka*) who used *dithhare* (charms) to secure and protect the site from unclean spirits and curses (Molema, 1920; Maitsapo, 2018). Molema (1966) adds the great Rolong chief and patriot Kgosi Montshiwa I—the great grandfather of Kgosi Montshiwa III who succeeded his father, Kgosi Balepile II Montshiwa whose father was Kgosi Lotlamoreng I Montshiwa who was also the father of Kgosi Besele II Montshiwa, father of Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa in the Tshidi dynasty—as an astute territorial planner who helped the colonial British settlers identify an appropriate site to lay out their English town of Mafeking within the sphere of his inalienable abode called Mahikeng – the place of rocks (Matthews, 1945; Breutz, 1955a; Ratshidi-Barolong Traditional Council, interview, 2016 November 11).

Similarly, for the Seleka branch of the Barolong, it was Kgosi Moroka I who in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century sent a small regiment (*mophato*) with two missionaries from the London Missionary School (LMS) more than 700km south on foot from Mahikeng to Thaba Ncho, an orographic border region of the kingdom of Basotho founded by Kgosi Moshoeshe, to ask for land with qualities that can support residential and agropastoral practices for the Rolong in an effort to create distance between bellicose Matebele and themselves (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920; Matthews, 1945; Breutz, 1955a, 1955b; Muller, 1981b; Ramsay, 1991; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995; Morton, 2008, 2013). As products of Tswana chiefs, absolute spaces of Tswana regions became what Lefebvre (1991:48) aptly describes as “civil and religious” spaces that were “political in character” since they “preserved and incorporated bloodlines, family, unmediated relationships” informed by “the bonds of consanguinity, soil and language”. Batswana’s representational spaces thus refers to those spaces that are produced by Tswana peasants who are part of an agropastoral society of spatial users and inhabitants whose production of absolute spaces were secured territorially in toponyms such as Thaba Ncho, Mahikeng, Tlhakong, Ramotswa and Lehurutshe as examples.

Indeed, the subjugation of a sparsely populated frontier region by Batswana guaranteed a permanent end to their nomadic spatial practices. This end of an era of nomadic life presented unto them virgin opportunities to secrete their own permanent spaces in the north and south

of Molopo-Limpopo Rivers, to self-organize within the borderless terrain of the settled frontier region, to increase in subcultural diversity, chiefdoms and demographic sizes by conquest, secession and through high degrees of unfettered social interaction and spatial migration.

### **3.3 Batswana's Land-Use Model: A Spatial Framework for Territorial Organization**

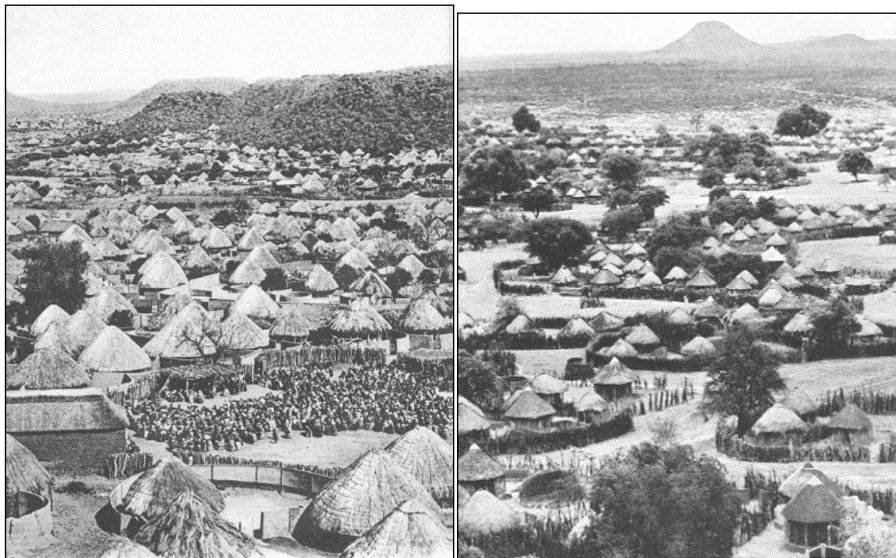
The permanent geographic settlement of Batswana north and south of Molopo-Limpopo Rivers provided the society with an opportunity to secrete primary settlements as a means of demonstrating their spatial competencies and performances developed over many centuries in Africa prior to their immigration to southern Africa. After identifying and producing absolute spaces formed from bonds of consanguinity, African soil and Setswana language, Tswana chiefs laid out and determined what was conceived in the absolute space with what was lived and perceived. It is a well-established fact in literature that Tswana chiefs operated at the level of abstract space as absolute space. According to Mogodi-Plaatje (1995), Molema (1920), Edge and Lekorwe (1998), Mogende (2020) and others, Tswana chiefs commanded every sphere of social life including site identification and analyzes for various land-uses such as residential (*motse*, singl., *metse*, pl.), cultivated farmlands (*masimo*) and pastoral lands (*meraka*, pl., *moraka*, singl.) (Denbow and Thebe, 2006).

Tswana chiefs determined the repetitive linear rhythms for agropastoral social practices which they aligned with cosmic or cyclical rhythms. They were commander-in-chief of the military arms of their polities whom they were also in charge of entrusting to experienced members of society to socialise into patriotic and morally upstanding subjects through 'bogwera' (male) and 'bojale' (female) institutions which were often located away from common settlement areas to allow various age regiments (*mephato*) to attain the necessary competencies to defend society and territory, as well as contribute towards a healthy reproduction of social space at the domestic level of the household (Molema, 1920; Chirenje, 1978; Ramsay, 1991, 1998; Tlou, 1998; Denbow and Thebe, 2006; Mgadla and Volz, 2006; Maitso, 2018). Furthermore, chiefs were known for being judges, heads of state, spiritual leaders, law makers, chief political negotiators, anti-colonial activists, and excellent diplomats on the global scale of modern international politics, and international relations with the Western European Metropolis (Molema, 1920, 1966; Chirenje, 1978; Mangope, 1978; Maylam, 1980; Dubbeld, 1992; Parsons, Henderson and Tlou, 1995; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2007; Mogende, 2020).

In their production of geographic space and expression of human territoriality, Northern and Southern Batswana conceived a unitary tripartite spatial model of land-use for territorial organization and spatial reproduction uniformly across natural boundaries such that every Setswana settlement had a "tripartite" spatial pattern separate from the *masimo* and *meraka* which when considered with residential abodes, constituted a uniform and unitary whole that expressed an individual *morafe's* irregular geography and delimited territory *in toto* (Comaroff, 1989; Pistorius, 1997a, 1997b; Parnel and Mabin, 1984 in Siyongwana, 1998; Denbow and Thebe, 2006:12). This two-dimensional spatial triad of land-uses is transposed onto Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad of the spatiology for conceptual legibility and analysis. Since the residential settlements of Batswana straddling the cross-border line of the rivers are lived spaces of inhabitants and users, they were produced in tripartite layout which fits the realm of representational space on the one hand, and the realm of spatial practice on the other



hand since settlements were and are sites for the reproduction of social relations of production along with division of labour.



Optic formants 1.2-1.3. Pre-colonial territorial organization and settlement geography of Tswana society. Source: van der Wiel (2012).

The *masimo* (cultivated lands) and *meraka* (pastoral fields) with their cattle posts occupy the realm of the abstract representations of space by virtue of their physical remoteness from the perceived daily life and social space of the villages, as well as their geographic distances from each other such that *masimo* and *meraka* land-uses and spaces did not overlap. I raise the speculation that Tswana chiefs are and were responsible for the conception and execution of the two-dimensional three-tiered land-use model for territorial organization and spatial production in alignment with *dikgosi*'s well-established nature as innovators. The Tswana spatial model for land-use meant that a single polity and its chief owned territory in which delimited residential and agropastoral spatial practices or land-uses were allocated and determined by the king. This meant that all the livestock of a respective village along with the chief's personal livestock were kept and tended as communal property at cattle posts far away from agricultural fields and even further from residential lived spaces as such qualifying agropastoral spaces as abstract economic space of perfunctory labour and Setswana *dressage*.

In their capacity as territorial planners, Tswana's chiefs conceived the binary spatial triad to help order their polities irregular and borderless spatial geography resulting in the production of representational absolute spaces where economic social practices and their zoned areas "were located outside the villages in compact blocks...several miles in extent" where "many different families have adjacent holdings" (Molema, 1920; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991:15; Morton, 2013). Indeed, Comaroff (1974), Schapera and Comaroff (1991), and Gulbrandsen (1993) concur that Tswana villages were located a substantial distance away from agropastoral fields which were further apart from each by 8-10km or more. "Barolong Farms" (Drummond and Manson, 1991:233) for example, is a pre-colonial absolute space whose spatial practices were zoned for agriculture and pastoral grazing. The location of this absolute representational space is roughly 30km from Geater Mahikeng, the traditional settlement of Barolong in South Africa's North-West Province. The consideration of the territory of Barolong under the traditional land-use model spans the riparian boundary

systems and sub-regions of Northern and Southern Batswana. With the advent of the European boundary which was first allocated in 1897 and demarcated by 1910, the autonomous territorial organization of Barolong and their precapitalist modes of spatial production and social reproduction were radically changed and dramatically affected (Drummond and Manson, 1991). I show the impacts of this state boundary on traditional land-use patterns of Barolong in Chapter 6 as part of my study's contemporary analysis of the state boundary transformed borderland of Greater Mahikeng in the contexts of BW (northern Molopo-Limpopo Rivers sub-region) and SA (southern sub-region of Molopo-Limpopo Rivers). For the sub-region of Northern Batswana, Silitshena (1976, 1978) notes how the introduction of the British state boundary influenced internal and chief rhythmical spatial migration patterns to cattle posts.

In the Kweneng District of BW for example, the state border altered the morphology of the settlement geography and demographic dynamics of border straddling Bakwena who in response to the changed nature and scale of their geopolitics could no longer afford to travel several days on foot en route to cattle posts. As a result, some of these agropastoralists began to secrete residential settlements informally and illegally within territories zoned for socio-economic uses and thus changed the spatial geography and social dynamics of the sub-polity (Silitshena, 1976, 1978). This African model for land-use negates contradictory analysis and observations by Schapera and Comaroff (1991:40) and Denbow and Thebe (2006:12) who in their respective historical periods of writing suggested that "one or more kraals for livestock" occupied the centre of Tswana villages which were built "around a central animal corral or kraal situated in front of the most senior homestead". In essence, these scholars advanced and imposed a Eurocentric/colonial spatial model of residential land-uses known in archaeology as the Central Cattle Pattern which negates the unitary Afrocentric three-tiered model of tripartite and physically distanced land-uses.

Nonetheless, the spatial production and social reproduction of Tswana villages was made possible by the coming together of agropastoral spatial practices together with the territorial soil and Setswana language which interacted together at various times towards the production of the irregular settlement and agropastoral geography of Batswana and their chiefs determined cyclical-linear rhythms. The demographic variations and hierarchical settlement organization of each Tswana village across riparian borders represented the highest form of human territoriality and territorial organization (Molema, 1920; Schapera, 1952, 1974; Comaroff, 1974; Roberts, 1985). Tswana settlement sizes varied in demographic size from 50 to 500 inhabitants in some organized clusters, and 1000 to 10000 in other locations (Molema, 1920; Schapera, 1963; Denbow and Thebe, 2006). Each triadically laid out village was a micro reflection of the macro-organization of the social body of Batswana with its politically autonomous as well as geographically independent units with uniform compositions, arrangements, and hierarchical institutions (Molema, 1920; Roberts, 1985; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; Pistorius, 1997a, 1997b).

Villages constituted a constellation of many families and household units which secreted the architectural dimension of Tswana settlements and hierarchical spatial organization in which members of the royal family occupied the core of the settlement than a kraal or cattle holding place, while the agnates and close relatives occupied the outer core and ordinary peasants and cultural outsiders seeking refuge or voluntary assimilation into Tswana society occupied the

outer most parts of the semi-concentric zoned villages (Comaroff, 1974; Comaroff, 1980; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; Maitso, 2018).



Optic formant 1.4. *Sekgopi*: A 1910s self-built Western style house of Dr Moroka in Thaba Ncho. Source: Nkooe.

Pistorius's (1997a, 1997b) archaeological spatial analysis of Bakwena villages asserts this observation. Using Setswana appropriated abstract dimensions Pistorius (1997a:194) describes the spatial layout of these villages as "characterised by a tripartite division" of geographic space such that "the *kgosing*" is the "central part of the village occupied by the *kgosi*" and further flanked on both sides by an inner core called "*fa gare*" which has its own dimensions of high and low directional points defined as "*ntlha*<sup>21</sup> *ya godimo*" and "*ntlha ya tlase*" typically occupied by royal agnates. In essence, a typical spatial plan and layout of a geographically established village would have at its core or traditional metropolis the houses of royal families who signified elite spaces of authority that commanded a high degree of non-dictatorial power and influence over its outer core that functioned as an inner core which buffered the zone of *kgosing* which was further flanked on either sides and or to its upper and lower sections by middle to lower class compartments governed by the chief's agnates. This archaeological spatial analysis of Bakwena villages negates the Central Cattle Pattern thesis which may have come into effect much later in southern Molopo River sub-region in response to external forces of deterritorialization ravaging the 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape and society.

Furthermore, the hierarchical organization and geographic lay out of Tswana villages was not always homogeneous, uniform, absolute identical and equal, or isorhythmic. Like Tswana society, Tswana settlements had minor deviations which were relative to each spatial unit's distinct subcultural qualities, totemic representations, linguistic variations, geographic location and social practices (Breutz, 1953a, 1953b, 1958; Schapera, 1952, 1970, 1974; Roberts, 1985; Breutz, 1989; Maylam, 1980; Somolekae and Lekorwe, 1998; Morton, 2008, 2011; Maitso, 2018). Since their permanent settlement in southern Africa, Batswana increased their demographic base by voluntary and involuntary assimilation of other non-Tswana groups such as the Mahlangu clan of the Ndzudza sect of *Kgosi Moselekatse* or King

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<sup>21</sup> Pistorius (1997a: 194) originally (mis)spells 'ntlha' (direction) as "*ntlha*" and 'tlase' (lower, bottom) as "*thlase*" which I circumspectly quoted in their correct Setswana spelling.

Mzilikazi who founded the AmaZulu seceded *morafe* of Matebele or amaNdebele who emerged as a ferocious militant society in southern Africa that threatened and deterritorialized Batswana on a macro scale between late 1790s to early 1800s (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920; Matthews, 1945; Ngcongco, 1979; Maylam, 1980; Muller, 1981a, 1981b; Mautle, 1986; Breutz, 1989; Gulbrandsen, 1993; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995; Morton, 2008, 2011, 2013). In addition, Northern Batswana such as Bakwena and Southern Batswana such as Bakgatla absorbed Tswana refugees from various branches of the society into their geographical abodes during the 1850s where many polities were scattered in a ‘mass of floating humanity’ fleeing the ravages of the Sand River Convention of 1852 and its unethical social system of Batswana *inboekeling*e as an institutional political economy of Tswana slavery in Western Transvaal (Ramsay, 1991; Morton, 1992, 1998, 2005, 2010, 2012).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, neighbouring regional outsiders such as Angolans, Zimbabwean, Transvaal, and Namibian Africans fleeing apartheid state persecution of the 1980s were accommodated as political refugees and asylum seekers in post-independence BW (Schapera, 1971; Okihiro, 1973; Ramsay, 1991; Osei-Hwedie, 1998; Mohlamme, 1999; Morton, 2005, 2008). This in addition to their cultural subordination of the San and their intermarital affairs with them made and makes Batswana a highly differentiated polity whose spatial practices and representations in space reflected this complexity of differentiation in various ways. Batlhako are Setswana assimilated clan of Mahlangu from the Ndzudza sect who seceded voluntarily from the Matebele social body and geography in the Tshwane-Pretoria subregion of South Africa (SA) in the late 1760s to early 1800s, to reappropriate themselves culturally and geographically at the peak of *Difecane* among the Bakgatla ba ga Kgafela under Kgosi Pilane of Pilanesberg District and Bakwena of Kgosi Sechele I in the Rustenburg-Marico Districts (Ngcongco, 1979; Breutz, 1953a, 1953b, 1958, 1989; Mohlamme, 1999; Kgosi Shole, *interview*, 2019 May 11).

The malleable social body of Batswana is indeed the spatial *Dasein* that de-distances by making room and creating space for other spatial-beings-in-the-world to be or exist. Once they stripped themselves of what I reimagine as the African *coloniality* of the *Dasein* of Kgosi Mzilikazi, the micro-polity of the Mahlangu delinked their geo- and -body politics of spatial production permanently from their pre-historic founding father and his violent misanthropic skepticism towards Batswana. The Mahlangu then integrated voluntarily with and among the very Batswana society their colonising founder sought to annihilate, assimilate, and territorially dominate. Interestingly, Mogodi-Plaatje (1995) dedicates an entire chapter to the boldness and courage of Queen Mnandi, one of King Mzilikazi’s favourite wives who in retaliation to her husband’s thirst for Tswana blood, ran away for months and found refuge among Batswana and with *Mhudi*, the intelligent and strong female principle that survived the massacre of her people and destruction of place by Matebele warriors.

Around the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the self-appropriated and semi-nomadic Mahlangu cum Batlhako settled with their trio of related traditional leaders such as Kgosi Mabe, Kgosi Leema and Kgosi Matutu who identified a geographic site in the orographic border sub-region they called Tlhakong and Motsile respectively (Breutz, 1953a, 1953b; Leseyane, 1991; Coertze and de Beer, 2007). On the eastern escarpment of the orographic border of Tlhakong, Batlhako laid out their society’s space by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The ideologically dominant tendency of Dutch evolved Afrikaners changed and appropriated Batlhako’s conceived toponym of Tlhakong to the derogatory term of “Mabieskraal” and

“Mabe’s Location at Mabeskraal” to denote the subhuman status of Batlhako as a reflection of the Manichean misanthropic skepticism of the Republican Boers of Transvaal (Breutz, 1953a:286).



Optic formant 1.5. 21<sup>st</sup> century Tlhakong and its commodified orographic border. Source: Nkooe.

Furthermore, the Afrikaner abstracted Batlhako’s traditional and inalienable absolute space of its ethnographic quality by emptying it of its African *Dasein* in their circumscription and representation of it as a kraal (*lesaka*) to denote the non-body and non-being of Batlhako’s *Dasein* which are further reduced to non-human livestock belonging to Mabe in a kraal than an actual geographical place of residential settlement. Nonetheless, this three-centuries old sub-branch of Tswana society survived de/reterritorialization by external as well as internal forces of Matebele and the Afrikaners (Morton, 2008, 2011). Interesting, Kgosi Mzilikazi could not perceive himself in the misanthropic skepticism of Afrikaners who he referred to as ‘red skinned Bushmen and dogs’ after his successful expulsion from Transvaal and Kgalagadi sub-regions of Batswana by Barolong and first-generation interior settlers of Hendrik Potgieter into Zimbabwe where he established Bulawayo (Moffat, 1856; Molema, 1920; Matthews, 1945; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995; Morton, 2008, 2011).

In their undeniable though doubted architectural skill and craftsmanship, Batlhako secreted their society’s space in Tlhakong. The housing quality of self-built homes of Tlhakong were on the one hand lauded by Theal ([1887]/1969:13-14) as “vastly superior...with perpendicular walls...a central circular room, with three or four apartments outside, each being a segment of a circle...surrounded with an enclosed courtyard...as spacious and comfortable as the cottage of an ordinary European peasant”. On the hand, their stone wall architecture, and geometrically perfect wooden kraals were perceived with contempt by Anderson (1887:37-38) in Breutz (1953b: 11-12) who lamented that

...extensive kraals must have been erected by a white race who understood building in stone and at right angles, with doorposts, lintels and sills, and it

required more than kaffir skill to erect the stone huts, with stone circular roofs...Kaffirs have never been known to build huts with stones or make fences at right angles.

Had Mogodi-Plaatje's (1995) English written *Mhudi* been published in 1887, perhaps Anderson (1887) might have appreciated the material facts which stated that Batswana built houses on a regular basis as a perfunctory spatial practice among men, women and children who took great care and pride in producing and decorating these architectural representations of space (Molema, 1920; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995). Breutz (1953a, 1953b) further conducted fieldwork among inhabitants of European and African bent residing in stonewalled Tswana polities. These informants confirmed that earlier Batswana used stone enclosures in their settlement layout and housing design during the 1500s to 1830s. Further archaeological evidence of their concrete structures was found at Thabeng, Setlagole, Dithakong in the Molopo Reserve of Mafikeng District and Modimong near Taung where Bahurutshe once lived long before the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Breutz, 1953a, 1953b; Manson, 1992). In addition to architectural excellence, Batswana were also renowned for their pottery, basket weaving and clothing production (Grant, 1968; Shaw in Hammond-Tooke, 1974; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995; Denbow and Thebe, 2006; Thebe, et al., 2009).



Optic formants 1.6-1.7. Researcher produced pottery. Source: Nkooe.

Batlhako's social organization and settlement layout therefore diverges from the traditional Setswana settlement pattern of the Bakwena villages for example, where there are accessible semi-concentric zones reflecting class structures and relations to royalty located at the village core. In Tlhakong, the village core of the traditional council and royal members of Kgosi Mabe, Kgosi Matutu and Kgosi Leema, is located at the steep edge of Motsitle mountain while the various wards of non-agnatic households flank it in a south-eastern direction in the village section called Mosidi which is in fact the traditional site for Tlhakong. The members of the royal family reside in the far outer cores of both the capital ward of Mosidi and *kgosing* while ordinary households with no direct relationship with the royal house or *kgosing* such as my maternal and paternal household, occupy a privileged location in the upper Leema Section of the village within the immediate inner sphere of *kgosing*, Motsitle Hill, economic activities,

schools, the Methodist Church, the main road, the post-office, and Mosidi Section. Over and above the settlement geography of Batlhako, this Batswana recognised society whose totem is the elephant (*tlou*) due to their opulence in the precolonial sub-region and deep observation by *Mogologolo*, secreted its own society of Batlounge—people of the place of elephants—from the branch of Kgosi Leema whose sect of Batlhako reside in Tlathlaganyane roughly 20km or so from Tlhakong. The Batlounge are further located in the deep hinterland of Putfontein-Botshabelo however the political upheavals of the 1970s and 1980s in apartheid SA triggered the territorial relocation from Putfontein to the military border line of apartheid SA's international border with BW: a hypercomplex geopolitical situation to which the discourse turns. Between Tlhakong, Tlathlaganyane and Putfontein-Botshabelo emerges the irregular physical geography of Batlhako, their territorial organization and autonomous social reproduction in a borderless riparian sub-region. What is not well-known about Batlhako of Tlhakong is the location of their agropastoral fields which are not located in the village but talked about *en passant* as things that are far removed and remote to the contemporary society whose residential abode are rapidly mimicking modern styles of urban and suburban areas.

### 3.4 The aspatial border producing practices of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Batswana

Prior to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century allocation of the British state border over northern and southern Batswana sub-regions, pre-Victoria era Batswana had clearly defined conceptions and utility of not only natural good borders around which they secreted their space and themselves in southern Africa inter alia architectural borders. This society had a clear conception and use of aspatial boundaries which they used to draw distinctions from each other in the same body, delimit their citizenship to respective sub-branches and to differentiate between themselves and neighbouring *merafe* of African descent such as Basotho. Mgadla and Volz's (2006) critical literature of Setswana written, and English translated prehistorical discourse of letters published in an English founded Setswana newspaper called *Mahoko a Becoana*, reveal and confirm this assumption. With this literary discourse Mgadla and Volz (2006) and Volz (2007) contribute towards the anti-colonial and decolonial body of work advanced by Mogodi-Plaatje (1995, 2007), Molema (1920, 1966), Lesevane (1991), Pooe (2019) and this Lefebvrian study for example, by representing “debates, discussions and disputations going on” in the minds of Batswana so as to understand “the thoughts and actions of this emerging African elite” whose discourse provides “rich and novel perspectives on the encounter between Europeans and Africans, as seen from the angle of the latter” (Mgadla and Volz, 2006:x; Volz, 2007).

Since southern Africa's history of its African populations was introduced to scientific research by Western scholars in their multi and transdisciplinarity, they perceived Setswana and Sesotho together with Sepedi as part of the same linguistic family contra the Nguni family cluster which comprised of isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiSwati and isiNdebele who comprised the Bantu of Southern Africa (Molema, 1920; Ndhlovu, 2008, 2013). To their auditory senses, Western scholars perceived and experienced “the Tswana language” of Batswana along with the Sesotho of Basotho as “closely related” in sound hence leading to spatial archaeological and anthropological analysis of Batswana not as such but as the Sotho-Tswana (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920; Huffman, 2001; Denbow and Thebe, 2006: 10; Morton, 2008, 2013). Schapera (1952:1-2) for example defines Batswana as a “cluster of the Sotho group of Bantu-speaking people...a division of the Sotho group of Bantu speaking people”. Elsewhere Schapera and Comaroff (1991:8; emphasis added) concede to their little knowledge they had

about Basotho stating, “nothing definite is known about the origins of the Sotho peoples *to whom the Tswana belong*” however, “the conventional view is that they [Batswana] separated from the main body of Bantu-speaking peoples somewhere in the vicinity of the Great Lakes of East Africa”. Basotho’s origins are traceable temporally as well as territorially through Batswana as the primary African culture and society underpinning the anthropological basis of Basotho and their Sesotho language which as Denbow and Thebe (2006:15) *sound* closely identical at the auditory level but are in fact extremely different, hermeneutically speaking. On physical geographic terms, Basotho and their Sesotho language and culture, are ‘South Africa’ originating *morafe* found mainly in the Free State Province of South Africa and Lesotho (Molema, 1920; Coplan, 2010a, 2010b). Lesotho is the traditional absolute site of the pre-1820s established kingdom of Basotho founded by Kgosi Moshoeshoe who amassed an inconceivable physical mass of a *Difecane* deterritorialized migrant and free-floating proportions of African humanity comprising large polities of Bafokeng and Bakwena of Tswana stock south of Molopo River with fragments of Nguni society made up of the Zulu and the Xhosa (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920; Molema, 1995).

Kgosi Moshoeshoe saw this floating and multidirectional social mass of a polyrhythmic Bantu and rounded them up, drawing them to himself to establish a new nation nestled among the cold climate sub-region Maloti mountains, the Drakensburg Mountain range, Thaba Ncho (Mount Black), Thaba Bosiu, and the Orange River (Molema, 1920). Kgosi Moshoeshoe’s early 1850s century Basotho regiments were so good they defeated British and Dutch Afrikaner forces so well that their victory triggered the Western conception and institutionalisation of the 1852 Sand River Convention which further created and shaped geopolitical (not to say ideological) unity between Boer-Britton against the Basotho of then Oranje Vrystad Republiek and British Cape (Molema, 1920). Furthermore, Basotho auxiliaries were later deployed along the military borderline of British SA for their excellent horse riding however ongoing racism against Batswana of the borderline caused them to temporarily withdraw from the pre-1910 colonial state border (Makgala, 2004).

The principles of the Bloemfontein Sand River Convention were that Africans had no legal right to purchase arms and gun powder for self-defence, and that the British could not interfere and intervene in Afrikaner treatment of Africans within its misanthropic sphere and frame (Molema, 1920; Morton, 1992; Gulbrandsen, 1993). This racist treaty was extended to all Africans of the sub-regions including Batswana whose traditionally territory lay north of the Free State. By the time the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 transpired in the Greater Mahikeng subregion, Basotho men of Lesotho and the Free State found themselves in a geopolitical dilemma. On the one hand they desired and hungered for action in the so-called White Man’s War or the European War of the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century however, they had little to no ammunition to participate. On the other hand, they feared participation in the global war because of the geographic distance and location of the political play from Sotho-lands which raised among them the fear of Boer aggression against their unprotected families should they joined the European War against the Dutch-Boer (Molema, 1920).

Basotho and Batswana are thus different *merafe* which have extremely different social, temporal, and geographic origins. Batswana do not come from Basotho instead; Batswana are the building block and at the heart of the spatial *Dasein* of Basotho along with fragments of the Nguni who attributed clicks to their Setswana independent Sesotho speaking nation of SA. To thus speak of and write about Batswana as the ‘Sotho-Tswana’ is to confuse the two



anthropological groups which are only clustered together by audio similarity in their languages. Interestingly, Drummond and Manson (1991) do not suffer from anthropology and archaeology's ethnographic confusion. They perceived the Bahurutshe dominant border region south of Molopo River ontically. For them, the Kgosi Moiloa native reserve study site of the Bophuthatswana-Botswana border landscape was "inhabited by the Tswana, a group of Bantu-speaking peoples" (Drummond and Manson, 1991:219).

Returning to the notion of aspatial boundaries utility and consciousness, Mgadla and Volz (2006) documented, edited and translated more than 100 Setswana written letters by late 1890s Batswana from every spatial location north and south of the Molopo River including Lesotho and the Free State Republic, to show how these silenced users and inhabitants interpreted and reflected on their temporal experiences of Westernization and European colonisation from a grassroots level. Batswana are a homogeneous society made up of polyrhythmic sub-branches such as the Batlhaping, Bakwena, Bahurutshe, Barolong, Bangwato, Bangwaketse, Bakgatla and Batlokwa who also reflect the top 8 main branches of Tswana society, Setswana language and culture<sup>22</sup>. Batswana's subcultural diversity or social polyrhythmia coupled with spatial variations of Setswana dialect was more pronounced through a discourse on identity such "Setlhaping" was perceived, lived and conceived by Batswana as "the language of the Batlhaping, and the Barolong boo Ratshidi" speakers of Serolong (Mgadla and Volz, 2006:xliv).

Language was used as a social border, a marker of social difference and differentiation between a Tlhaping-us and a Rolong-them for example. Linguistic variations in Setswana revealed the geographic location or profile of dialect speakers such that Sekwena and Serolong are dialects of Bakwena and Barolong who inhabit frontier settlements north and south of Molopo-Limpopo Rivers, while Setlhaping and Sengwaketse is the dialect of Batlhaping and Bangwaketse found in the north and south of the same region but in different spatial locations from those inhabited by Barolong and Bakwena. An anonymous author to *Mahoko a Becoana* submitted the below letter negating their misappropriation by European *humanitas* and ego cogito

Even though Europeans group us together as "the Tswana", we are ourselves a variety of different nations and languages. There are Batlhaping, Barolong, Bakwena and Bangwato...not [to] mention the many nations of the northeast... We have many variations in our language. If I am a Motlhaping, I will laugh at...Bakwena and Bangwato, as if they have a speech impediment...Europeans found that we have no fixed language...the languages do not compete (Anonymous, 1883 January, in Mgadla and Volz, 2006:7-9)

Rre Mekgwe (*interview*, 2018 July 20) contributed to this identity discourse whilst ignoring the element of the aspatial border uses of Setswana dialect, "we Batswana are so different" yet "we are one people, north and southern Batswana". An anonymous author also added that "when we hear a Mokwena speak, we laugh in happiness and when a Mongwaketse tells a story, we understand him (Anonymous, 1883 June, in Mgadla and Volz, 2006:11). The

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<sup>22</sup> See Molema, 1920; Schapera, 1952, 1963; Mpotokwane, 1974; Breutz, 1958, 1989; Tlou, 1998; Ratshidi Traditional Council, *interview*, 2016 November 11; Rre Mekgwe, *interview*, 2018 July 20; Mmakgosi Besele II Montshiwa, *interview*, 2018 September 08; Kgosi Montshiwa III, *interview*, September 28.

Batloung of Kgosi Shole share the same sentiments shared by Kgosi Sechele I concerning their sub-cultural identity and distinction from each other stating that they “are not Barolong” despite their common language and pre-historic bonds (Ramsay, 1998: 66; Batloung Traditional Council, *interview*, 2018 September 12). One author lamented the British appropriation of Tswana orthography which the British sought to change and appropriate as they conceived it rather than how Batswana spoke and lived it. The author opined, “I am very concerned. I assumed that our [Sesotho written Setswana] Bible was printed as it is because the missionaries had not quite grasped our language [Setswana]...now they understand our language and speak it very well. So, I am surprised that they are removing the letters” (Sebotseng, 1890 in Mgadla and Volz, 2006:33). What Sebotseng (1890) in Mgadla and Volz (2006) lamented was the Sesothofication of written Setswana which involved the removal of common letters in Setswana such as ‘g’ and ‘d’ and replacing them with ‘h’, ‘l’ which is not how Motswana speaks regardless of spatial dialect.

Batswana are thus a spatial and aspatial boundaries conscious frontier society whose boundary dimensions extended to and start from their respective chiefs. Batswana’s aspatial boundary practices derive from the *social* space of their traditional leaders. Tswana chiefs, their name and totemic representations are the *raison d’etre* for sub-branches of Batswana, their expression of territoriality, aspatial and architectural borderworks. As noted earlier, Barolong were founded by the enigmatic Kgosi Morolong I. Similarly, Bahurutshe are products of Kgosi Mohurutshe who birthed three sons named Kwena, Ngwato and Ngwaketse who ceded from the Bahurutshe and established autonomous polities of Bakwena, Bangwato and Bangwaketse comprising the top 3 branches of Tswana society in BW (Molema, 1920; Mpotokwane, 1974; Tlou, 1974, 1998; Morton, 2010, 2012). Tswana chiefs thus emerge as not mere heads of traditional states they headed. They were also the border around which Tswana *merafe* were bound and formed, dynasties delimited, citizenship was attached, membership was guaranteed or readily challenged, sovereignty and territoriality were invested and whole settlements moved, relocated and reproduced.

The chief in Tswana society was a moving, social frontier in space flanked and surrounded by his subjects, council of agnates, military (*mephato*) and alliances. The chief in this regard is not readily inseparable from his subjects who are not always bound to him. In conclusion, the aspatial boundary uses among Batswana, their ethnic differentiation and territoriality around a mobile social chief as territory negates Drummond and Manson’s (1991) modern boundary analyses that “ethnic borders that now characterise much of the southern African geopolitical landscape did not exist before the nineteenth century”.

### **3.5 The European Bordes Production of Bounded Tswana Regions**

Nearly four decades prior to the 1897 geometric allocation of the Keate Award over the riparian cross-border regions of Northern and Southern Batswana, the central south Africa African landscape was a melting pot of incessant migration in response to intra-racial and interracial deterritorializing warfare for territorial control as well as international boundary disputes between Batswana and Matebele under the *Difecane*, the British and the Afrikaner for political autonomy of the latter from the former, British and Afrikaner against Africans and Afrikaner Boers against Batswana (Molema, 1920, 1966; Muller, 1981; Prescott, 1987; Morton, 1992; Gulbrandsen, 1993; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995; Mohlamme, 1999; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2007, [1973]/2020). During the 1850s various subsets of Batswana found themselves in high

pressure situations to defend their borderless geographic regions and societies from absolute annihilation by the Boer Republicans of Transvaal and Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) (Ramsay, 1991; Morton, 1992; Gulbrandsen, 1993). According to Molema (1920, 1966) Barolong and Batlhaping were the first Batswana to dispute the arbitrary geometric allocation of the international border in their borderless territories with overlapping natural resources in response to Boer encroachment. The 1852 Bloemfontein Sand River Convention between the British Cape colonial administrators and Dutch-Boer Republicans of the Orange Free State, Transvaal, Goshen and Stellaland sub-regions of South Africa, mark a salient period in regional Tswana politics that is more than “a tiny time fragment in the nation’s total period of existence” (Okihiro, 1973:111).

The 1850s represent “some of the most crucial” moments in Batswana history *in toto* and for “Bakwena history” in particular (Okihiro, 1973:111; Ramsay 1991). The Sand River Convention was an anti-African political Western regime of racist spatial practices “consistent with the general policy of Boers” which drew no distinction between African friend or foe (Molema, 1920; Mohlamme, 1999; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2007:107). After a century and a half post their 1652 mercantilist settlement in the Cape of Good Hope region, Hendrik Potgieter’s Dutch-Boers trekked the interior frontier of the borderless Batswana-Basotho hinterland region of the Free State and Lesotho in Thaba Ncho (Molema, 1920; Theal, 1969; Muller, 1981a, 1981b; Prescott, 1987; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995). Potgieter’s Boers were territorial refugees who in response to their resistance to British suzerainty, found asylum in Thaba Ncho among Africans who lived in relative eurhythmia with each other from the 1810s to 1852 (Molema, 1966; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995). In Thaba Ncho Batswana of Kgosi Moroka I and the Boers formed an inter-racial political alliance to permanently rid the interior of a common and more powerful enemy who overpowered them individually on separate occasions and terrorised the hinterland region south as well as north of the Molopo River and Kgalagadi Desert (Moffatt, 1856; Molema, 1920, 1966; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995).

The interracial alliance yielded fruit. Kgosi Mzilikazi and his misanthropic Matebele were forced out of central south Africa regions to the Zambezi River where he established key settlements and terrorised the Shona of the region called Rhodesia or Zimbabwe (Moffatt, 1856; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995). Eurhythmia (peace) was restored once more from extended periods of deterritorializing arrhythmic relations and spatial experiences, but this was a short-lived experience since as *Mogologolo* in Leseyane (1991) concluded that ‘*motho ga a itsewe e se naga*’. Following the death of Hendrik Potgieter in early 1850s, arrhythmia quickly set back in it in the hearts and minds of the Dutch-Boers under new leadership (Muller, 1981a, 1981b). Afrikaners quickly reneged on the verbally established peace treaty by Hendrik Potgieter with Barolong and neighbouring Basotho Kings. Afrikaners and British parties battled Basotho who defeated them. Concerned about the possibility of drawn-out battles and losses against Basotho, the Western conspired and conceived the Sand River Convention treaty of 1852 between themselves to prohibit any African nation from obtaining arms and gunpowder for military defence in the face of unprovoked hostility and deterritorializing spatial practices of the bellicose coloniality of Dutch-Boers (Molema, 1920, 1966; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995, 2007). Under the Eurocentric unity framework of the Sand River Convention, various populations of Batswana along the society organizing and separating riparian borderline without barrier effects were subjected to inhumane and institutionalised capitalist system of *inboekeling* (slavery) in which Boers had entitlement to do with Batswana as their

black hearts desired. Under the *inboekeling* system, little children, young girls, boys, men and women belonging to various *merafe* of Batswana along the unsettled and unallocated central south Africa African region were violently abducted and turned to ill-treated serfs who once they reached old age were released back to their estranged families by the Dutch-Boer households and bourgeoisie (Morton, 1992; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2007). The British endorsed *inboekeling* system was the highest expression of the racist attitude of the imperial ego cogito which was boldly exercised in its sadistic tendency of the Manichean misanthropic skepticism such that it was common culture for Afrikaners to rape Tswana women residing in cross-border regions and elsewhere, to burn the sexual organs of little Tswana girls with hot iron and to rape heavily pregnant women in their homes without political consequences and moral conscience (Morton, 1992; Gulbrandsen, 1993; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995; Makgala, 2004; Bolaane, 2013; Guy, 2017).

This despicable and inconceivable evil practice was resisted on various fronts by sects of Batswana such as northern Bakwena, southern Barolong and Batlhaping, while other sects such as southern Bakwena, Bahurutshe and Bakgatla accepted their inhumane subordination and dehumanization (Breutz, 1953a; Morton, 1992; Gulbrandsen, 1993; Morton, 2008). Bakwena of Kgosi Sechele I north of the riparian borderline put up a formidable fight against the terrorising rhythm of Boers in defence of territory and society between 1852 and 1854, a historically defining period Ramsay (1991) calls the Batswana-Boer War. The territorial and existential warfare of 1852-54 was won by Bakwena who built spatial border walls with orifices for their English acquired and bought muskets to operate effectively through (Ramsay, 1991). In addition to conceiving a special class of geographic border post settlements which were inhabited by immigrant and displaced African populations, these settlements were used politically to serve as spatial buffers with which Bakwena of South East District defended their territory and society against Boer encroachment and settlement (Okihiro, 1974; Ramsay, 1991). The Boer laagers during this period ignored and violated the Hendrik Potgieter peace treaty along with other boundary delimitations set by the British concerning Tswana inhabited territory (Drummond and Manson, 1991).

In their northward migration to the interior of south Africa “with their wagons, their families, their cattle and other belongings” the Dutch-Boers had political motive “to establish a social condition in the interior under which they might enslave the natives without British interference” (Theal, 1967; Muller, 1981b; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2007:107). As noted by Molema (1966) the boundary violations of the 1897 Keate Award by the Boers of Transvaal and the Free State were uninhibited to a point where the Boers secreted two micro-republics of Stellaland and Goshen on Rolong fertile lands in the heart of Kgosi Montshiwa I’s country of Mahikeng constituting “the greater Molopo region” (Maylam, 1980; Drummond and Manson, 1991:225). This spatial terrorism led to unstable and hostile relations which resulted in the assignment of symbolic names to Boers such as red faces, “white bushmen” and “unnatural Kiwas” by oppressed African groups (Okihiro, 1974:111; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995:188; Ramsay, 1998). By this time, political consciousness of Western state boundary producing practices was formed among Tswana scholars and their European counterparts. In his critical political legal analysis of the spatial and social impacts of the Land Act of 1913 and its implications for Batswana and African society in general, Mogodi-Plaatje (2007:36) lamented the constitutionality of the Native Land Act on the basis that it secreted “a sort of kraal in which all the natives were to be driven, and...were to be left to develop their own lines...to drive

them back into barbarism”. Such kraals became the native reserves which characterized the Western boundaries delimited African geography under Western European colonialisation of 1910-1948 (Molema, 1920; Maylam, 1980; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Siyongwana, 1998). The debordering impact of the Land Act and its secretion of the native reserves geography on pre-historic borderless regions of Batswana pushed the *Anthropos* “away from their own lines” of spatial liberty and civilization to arbitrary and abstract lines of Western forces which did not perceive nor see them as part of the colonised African space (Mogodi-Plaatje, 2007: 36).

By the mid-1880s the territorial frame of Western states instituted bad (political) spatial borders at various spatial scales with which to annex Greater Mahikeng as a British Bechuanaland bounded to the north by the Bechuanaland Protectorate, to the east by Transvaal, southwest by the Cape Colony and to the west by German South West Africa (Breutz, 1955a, 1955b). “Afrikaner Trekkers” of the 1850s struggled to delimit and demarcate their own territorial boundaries in the frontiers spaces of Tswana polities and as a result, they were heavily resisted by Bakwena among others who without British assistance prevented Boer encroachment and settlement in the Limpopo Valley (Drummond and Manson, 1991:221). There are several examples of Tswana societies successfully resisting their own colonisation against the abstract space of Westerners and absolute space of *Difecane* as expressions of capacity for military defence. 1820s Thaba Ncho noted earlier is one Seleka-Rolong example. Kgosi Montshiwa I’s single-handed defeat and permanent eviction of Matebele militia of Kgosi Mzilikazi from Kgosi Bathoen I’s Bangwaketse country is another example from the Tshidi-Rolong sect (Lobatse Urban Development Plan [LUDP] 1, 1997-2003).

Another example on a more international scale is that of the three Tswana kings who led a deputation to Western European Metropolis of London Batswana call ‘*Mmamosadinyana*’ (Little Woman) denoting the British Queen, to ask for territorial protection from Boers and non-interference of British administrators in the social and spatial affairs of the chiefs over their protected people and territory (Molema, 1966; Maylam, 1980; Maundeni, 1998). Barolong’s critical in the outcomes of the 1899-1902 Anglo-Boer War is another example of Batswana’s political flair, military organization and territorial relevance (Mogodi-Plaatje, 2020). Southern Batswana in the 1899-1902 only participated in the war because it was happening on their territory which needed protection and defence. And it was based on the verbal understanding that the British would honour their word for protection and territorial autonomy such as enjoyed by their northern counterparts but that never materialised (Molema, 1920; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2020). The ideologically dominant tendency of Afrikaners and English society in SA continues to ignore Batswana’s pivotal role in the so-called White man’s war, European War, or great South African War, which when acknowledged is reduced to that of mere “non-White auxiliary troops” (Molema, 1920; Theal, 1969; De Cock, 1981: 332; Mohlamme, 1999; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2020).

Barolong are thus worth their weight in southern African politics and border studies at multiple geographic scales (see Bishop, 1988). Bakwena are perhaps the only *morafe* to successfully defend territory and society against Afrikaners through planned political border walls, the acquisition of guns and the geographic production of immigrants inhabited border post and agricultural settlements which as Silitshena (1976) notes, were immediately dissolved with the neutralization of the Boer threat north of the Molopo River. Elsewhere the

Boers sought to cause strife between sub-sects of Batswana. According to Drummond and Manson (1991:221) some Boers lured Batlhaping by helping them understand the meanings behind Western boundary dynamics and offered to help them “establish a boundary along the Western edge of Hurutshe reserve” which their Bangwaketse neighbours removed since they did not recognise its sovereignty. By 1910 several administrative boundaries based on British proclamations over the Bechuana sub-regions were “administered from the Imperial Reserve in Mafeking, a colonial town in the Crown Colony, which in 1895 was incorporated into the Cape Colony and thus in 1910 became part of the Union of South Africa...until 1966” (Breutz, 1955; Drummond and Manson, 1991:225).

The Western European partitioning of Batswana’s southern African region was a multiscalar global and sub-regional affair undertaken in London and parts of SA among the white parties who excluded Batswana from territorial decision-making that affected their political localities. For example, the Pretoria Convention of 1881 was conceived by the British to confer “self-government but not complete independence” to the Dutch settled Boers of the ZAR and Orange Free State which operated under Cape rule (Du Plessis, 1981:275; Drummond and Manson, 1991). The London Convention of 1884 was convened to restore the ZAR place names and Republican state sovereignty which meant that the Afrikaners were free to execute their anti-Africans policy and have a monopoly on violence over African space and society within their territorial framework of power (Molema, 1920; Du Plessis, 1981; Muller, 1981b; Mogodi-Plaatje, 2007). All this happened at the meso-level of Batswana sub-regions while the Berlin Conference of 1881-85 partitioned the continental region at a macro-scale. The lack of British protection south of Molopo River meant that the southern Batswana were set up to inherit a “more complicated...situation” than their northern counterparts who from 1895 were legally annexed and recognised as an administrative Bechuanaland Protectorate (Maylam, 1980; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; Comaroff, 1991:78; Maundeni, 1998).

### **3.6 The Birth of a Modern Nation State and Society of Botswana**

In 1966 the northern Molopo-Limpopo Rivers sub-region of Northern Batswana occupying the northern Kgalagadi Desert was produced as a new modern nation state of the international system called the Republic of Botswana (BW) on September 30 after 71-years of life spent as indirectly colonised subjects of the British Protectorate (Dubbeld, 1992; Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Mogende, 2020). With a national population of roughly 2.1 million Batswana comprising Bakwena, Barolong, Bangwaketse, Bangwato, Batlokwa and Bahurutshe for example, Northern Batswana gained absolute independence from the British and the sub-regional geography of what once a borderless territory and an administrative British Protectorate was reconfigured once more into the contemporary geographic unit known as ‘Botswana’ – a Setswana toponym for a geographical place of the Tswana (Denbow and Thebe, 2006; Makgala, 2021). With new sets of international boundaries to guard and secure their sovereignty spatially and a new modern nation to develop from scratch apart from social and political intercourse with the Southern Batswana of apartheid SA, the modern nation state began working towards colonial delinking from 1950s to independence (Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Makgala, 2021).

Decolonialization occurred in BW post-independence through the formulation of new modern national identities and iconographs, development of new currency, a parliament with a

modern constitution where presidents emerged as the new modern leaders from traditional stock, and the development of a military army including physical infrastructure where there was none (Dubbeld, 1992; Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Mogende and Ramutsindela, 2020). BW is a modern state in which Setswana language and culture are dominant. From since 1885 the Northern Batswana region fell under the *de jure* and *de facto* racial prejudices of British administrative colonists who Makgala (2004:11) describes as comprising “hunters, travellers, traders, missionaries and later, the colonial government”. After decades of racial tolerance—among ordinary Batswana and their European counterparts—and racial intolerance perpetrated by European states towards Africans, the ideologically dominant hegemony of racism was politically reversed in the northern Molopo-Limpopo Rivers region from after 1945 World War II, by a select multi-racial Committee on Racial Discrimination between 1962 and 1963 (Makgala, 2004).



Optic formant 1.8. Parliament Precinct of the Republic of Botswana in Gaborone. Source: Nkooe.

The post-1850s Boer situation in apartheid SA continued in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to influence BW’s national security position, ethical stance, diplomacy and boundary control systems in its landlocked position at the intersection of regional economic trade and dependence on SA’s infrastructure links (Parsons, Henderson and Tlou, 1995; Somolekae and Lekorwe, 1998; Tlou, 1998; Denbow and Thebe, 2006; Makgala, 2021). Post-1966 Botswana is often contrasted in geographic size to Texas or France (Beaulier, 2003; Denbow and Thebe, 2006). As a post-colonial Republic, BW conceived new sets of iconographies embedded in the country’s national flag, Setswana national anthem, African currency (*Pula*) and the adoption of the Zebra under first DBP President Khama as an emblem of peace and racial harmony within the boundaries of BW and beyond (Mogende and Ramutsindela, 2021). Botswana came into being in response to the geographically uneven process and movement of Western decolonisation in various parts of Africa from roughly the late 1950s right through to the 1990s to the 2000s.

The pre-historic and historic political geography of BW was fundamentally shaped by Bechuanaland Protectorate regionalism of British empire and was further strengthened and solidified (fixed) in space with political independence (*Boipuso*) and self-government (autogestion) in the landlocked region of SADC REC (Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Osei-Hwedie, 1998; Beaulier, 2003; Mogende, 2020). With a total length of 3500km of land-based

international borders shared with South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola, coupled with a pre-history of uninhibited cross-border migration and degree of high social interaction with Southern Batswana sub-region, BW inherited a pre-existing territory delimited by colonial British, German, Smithsonian and apartheid states. International boundaries, frontiers and regional security complexes of these colonising powers secreted frontier international borders with “wide geographical” zones that the BW state “had no control” over (Maundeni, 1998; Osei-Hwedie, 1998:429; Mogende, 2020). The lack of boundary control and international migration management systems was further exacerbated by the lack of a modern defence force or army where there used to be traditional regiments (Le Roux, 1999). Osei-Hwedie (1998) and Le Roux (1999) note that BW’s defence forces were conceived a decade post-independence in 1977, for international boundaries management. This period coincides with the political emergence of an apartheid fragmented Southern Tswana state called Bophuthatswana which had no international borders of its own nor a coherent geographic framework that subscribes to the territorial integrity of sovereign nation states (Drummond and Manson, 1991; Jones, 1999a, 2000; Makgala, 2021).

BW’s international boundaries became porous and were porous for a long time not because of a lack of knowledge about boundary allocation, delimitation and demarcation. Batswana’s prehistory and modern political history tells us that Batswana had the necessary spatial competencies to engage aspatial and spatial borderworks in the production and reproduction of territory. The country’s borders were porous, as they still are to-date, because of the abovementioned factors inter alia prehistoric factors of phylogenetic boundary functions of riparian, orographic and Desert border systems Batswana organized themselves around. There was never a reason for northern and southern regions of Batswana to manage and facilitate cross-boundary dynamics in pre-historic time however post 1966 northern region of Batswana was forced to govern and defend their territory and national security by establishing military control over its international borders while it fought to liberate neighbouring states from racist regimes of SA and Rhodesia (Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Osei-Hwedie, 1998; Denbow and Thebe, 2006; Parsons, 2008; Mogende, 2020; Makgala, 2021).

Makgala (2021) agrees that BW’s diplomatic regionalism in the project for liberation of African states from English and Afrikaner racist regimes was a knife’s edge existential and ontological experience which always threatened BW’s territorial sovereignty and national security. Drummond and Manson (1991) note that between 1977 and early 1990s BW engaged in series’ of diplomatic relations with apartheid SA about Bophuthatswana’s demands for recognition and lack of interest in incorporating it in BW’s spatial frame (Drummond and Manson, 1991; Makgala, 2021). This along with Bophuthatswana’s unethical political manipulation of apartheid state’s border functions of the A1 Ramatlabama border gate as retaliation to BW’s lack of recognition and hostile foreign policy (Drummond and Manson, 1991; Dale, 1993; Kotze, 1988; Osei-Hwedie, 1998). Furthermore, BW’s foreign policy on Bophuthatswana led to arrhythmic diplomatic relations which caused further strife between the two sub-region’s apartheid fragmented social body since the latter was not a sovereign state (Makgala, 2021).

Several political parties such as Botswana People’s Party and the Bechuanaland People’s Party were formed in the late 1950s and were later reformulated as Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) by independence (Dubveld, 1992; Parsons, Henderson and Tlou, 1995; Maundeni, 1998; Ramsay and Parsons, 1998). The BDP won BW’s first democratic elections



of 1966 and continues to remain in power despite emergence of political factions within post-Khama and Masisi administration BDP, political dissent and factionalism within minority opposition coalitions which are well documented in BW's newspapers and research (Makgala, 2004; Seabo and Molebatsi, 2017; Basimanebotlhe, 2018a, 2018b; Gabathuse and Dube, 2018; Mokwena, 2018; Rakanyane, 2018; Mogende, 2020; Makgala, 2021). According to Parsons, Henderson and Tlou (1995) BW's emergence in the international community was a social and politically disruptive process of lengthy negotiation and dialogue among Batswana. This transformation of space and society was dialogued and discoursed in-depth by traditional leaders and emergent presidential elects who interestingly came from royal stock of Bangwato. *Dikgosi* and their modern Tswana politicians reached an understanding about power and the type of political leadership required for the newly emergent nation state and its new governance structures, economic, military and juridical institutions which are well recognised as part of the global state system to which BW belongs (Otlhogile, 1998a; Ramsay and Parsons, 1998; Somolekae and Lekorwe, 1998; Mogende, 2020).

Despite BW's democratic and non-racial Constitution having its roots in colonial British policy, Molotsi (1998) notes that BW's Constitution recognises *magosi* and *segosi* as the pre-historic yet still functional social bedrock upon which modern BW is founded. Indeed, political recognition and institutional incorporation of *dikgosi* in BW's modern institutions and nation state is manifested by *Ntlo ya Dikgosi* (House of Chiefs) (Otlhogile, 1998a; Denbow and Thebe, 2006; Mogende, 2020; NDP 11, 2017-2024). Prior to BW's independence, its Bechuanaland Protectorate border with its southern neighbours was controlled by the administrative colonial state which in the late 1880s established a small force called "Bechuanaland Protectorate Border Police (BBP)" to patrol the borderline since colonial administrators were unwilling to commit British taxpayers money to service and directly manage the Protectorate (Makgala, 2014:13). The Bechuanaland Protectorate Border Police were perhaps the first organized institution of the state conceived to police cross-border rhythms along the border line, followed by the SA Defence Force under apartheid which converted the administrative, veterinary, and political functions of the 1910 settled international border into those of a lethal frontier that electrocuted man and animal indiscriminately (Drummond and Manson, 1991; Guy, 2017). This border regime forced BW with its established defence force to secrete the regime of its border as a closed and hard political space towards apartheid SA (Makgala, 2014).

The hyper militarisation of the apartheid state border and its violent security complex was not only felt at the statist scale. It was also experienced in its brutality at the level of everyday life. From since the era of *inboekeling* during the 1850s, to the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century British Bechuanaland Protectorate era, Batswana women were raped by apartheid border police and their children abducted into slavery while others were subjected to sadistic practices along the blue-line frontier of SA and BW (Morton, 1992; Makgala, 2004; Bolaane, 2013). In its demilitarized era, BW's borderline with democratic SA is a matter of social interest to the national security of the country where newer boundary related challenges such as human trafficking, contraband, drugs smuggling and currency peddling inter alia, are chief issues of political concern (Kraai, 2018; Masokola, 2018; Xinhua, 2018; The Botswana Gazette, 2022). Furthermore, the global Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 refocused health as a critical area of concern and national security which necessitated temporary closures of the country's international borders and border gates to migration and commercial flows since it

was determined that the arrhythmic Covid-19 spread by human contact (Ookeditse, 2020). With the coming into power of the BDP in 1966, BW joined the AU instead of apartheid SA's regional security complex which apartheid Bophuthatswana was not a part (Kotze, 1988; Osei-Hwedie, 1998; Ramutsindela, 2013; AU, 2020a, 2020b). BW also stripped itself of all things British and colonial except its founding Constitution and political model (Mogende, 2020). BW delinked with and from its colonial core by changing and appropriating the toponym of its new society's political geography while retaining pre-colonial social relations of kinship and cultural identification (Osei-Hwedie, 1998; Denbow and Thebe, 2006; Mogende, 2020). The most significant decolonial act was Northern Batswana's abandonment of the British sterling and pound currencies for their own currency they call *Pula* (P) which means rain in Setswana.

According to Dubbeld (1992) and Edge (1998) BW *Pula* was the beginning of the production of the nation's new modern iconographies. *Pula* was the adopted currency name championed by the royal state President Seretse who interpreted it as an expression of "hope and a belief that [BW] will win in the end and...good luck will be with [BW] in the future" (Dubbeld, 1992:47). Batswana as stated and shown earlier in the optic formant of BW Parliament, identified the zebra under President Seretse as its leading animal on the coat of arms because no other faction among the top eight branches of BW's Batswana reveres the zebra (Edge, 1998). Furthermore, the zebra's black and white stripes along with its non-aggressive nature symbolised peace and unity (Mogende and Ramutsindela, 2020). As shown in the pre-history of Batswana, Batswana are a creative and rhythmanalytical society. President Seretse's efforts to build a comprehensive repertoire of the new modern state's iconography led him to look to music, singers and music composers to produce BW's national anthem. Under the instruction of the royal president, BW's presidential cabinet identified seven music composers of Tswana bent to write seven songs which BW's national choir sang to an audience of about 500 members to decide on the main song for adoption as national anthem (Dubbeld, 1992).

Unable to choose, Kgosi Seretse asked BW's radio stations to "play all seven pieces three times every day for three days" so that Batswana can "listen, decide and write to or phone the radio station to say which one they want" (Dubbeld, 1992:47). Ultimately, it was *Lefatshe la Rona* (our land) composed by K.T Motsete that became the national favourite and Batswana of BW shouted in cheer, *Pula!* as the song was sung for the first time on 30 September 1966 during the lowering down of the British colonial flag and raising up of BW's decolonial flag symbolising international sovereignty (Dubbeld, 1992). Interestingly, Bophuthatswana adopted and plagiarised BW's national anthem on the first stanza lyrically and melodically. While there were no power wielding Afrikaners and British inhabitants in post-1966 BW, Northern Batswana continued in their production of space and reproduction of society within the confines of their malleable yet fixed international and internal boundaries whose impacts and influences on established and pre-existing residential places of abode is not well known nor well captured in literature on post-independent BW and post-Bophuthatswana North-West Province of SA.

Some spatial practices pertaining spatial bordering are continued by ordinary inhabitants at a household level of everyday life in modern day BW of Northern Batswana. Batswana in BW engage boundary making practices as part of their daily gestural relations of spatial marking and orientation. For example, private homeowners and businesses often place notices in newspapers to update neighbours of planned land-use changes which might affect them. If a

homeowner or business desire to erect a wall or fence around their property or change land-uses of their private property from residential to commercial, they publicly announce it in newspapers to mitigate against opposition and to create a discourse around the nature of the spatial partition and or land-use development (Sebati, 2018). Since its independence and liberation struggle against apartheid SA, the BW-Bophuthatswana and North-West Province-BW boundary dynamics have inspired the emergence of scholarship that contributes towards our understanding of state building, common culture, cross-border economy, cross-border tourism, spectre of Bantustans and the state of international relations between these two countries (Jones, 1999, 2000; Ramutsindela, 2001; Manson and Mbenga, 2012; Ngcangcela, 2014; Manyane, 2017; Makgala, 2021).

None of these references however engage with borderlands and borderlanders dimensions of these geopolitically changed Northern and Southern Batswana subnational and international states polities. BW has made interesting advances towards its own academic development with the conception and publication of its research journal called *Botswana Notes and Records* by Botswana Society. Its first volume published was a short and sweet 2-pager by Kgosi Seretse Khama (1968) who applauded the publication as a knowledge place for growing the country's scientific base. In the first volume Sir Seretse Khama (1968:1) makes the intellectual and political statement that "the amateur has contributed greatly to the knowledge of Africa" despite their deterrence from mainstream and high impact factor journals which may not always be suitable with the amateur's writing style and audience. As a result, Kgosi Khama (1968:1-2) opens the nationalist journal to any and every interested scholar and lover of knowledge to add to as well as take from the journal's inter and transdisciplinary ensembles of *savoir* and *connaissance* knowledge.

According to the former and late president, "if what you have written adds to the knowledge of Botswana, the country and its people will consider it for publication" because the journal is where one would find something of research interest on the "history, plants, insects, archaeology, language...anthropology" and I add political geography, of BW. What is most profound about the Batswana journal is that it is a nationalist affair that has cut-off Southern Batswana and other Tswana polities beyond the boundaries of SA and BW from being included in the knowledge economic space of BW as part of a broader transnational society Batswana. It is the hope and aim of this chapter and thesis to bridge the research gap between Batswana of BW and those of SA, to advance a direction in political geography that leads to a thinking and reconceptualization of Batswana on transnational terms at state and society levels through international borders and borderlands.

### **3.7 The Production of Bophuthatswana Bantustan**

Bophuthatswana was conceived in 1977 by the apartheid state of SA to be lived and perceived as a territorial representational space for Southern Batswana subjected to the modern political leadership of apartheid appointed Kgosi Lucas Manyane Mangope (1932-2018) as President. What makes Bophuthatswana an object of critical interest to political geography is its gross violation of modern state rules for territorial possession and exercise of the political principle of sovereignty expressed through international borders. We do not know what transpired with Southern Batswana between the decade long period BW's 1966 independence and Bophuthatswana's 1977 establishment or pronouncement by the royal president of Hurutshe bent. What we do know is that Bophuthatswana was an unpalatable and

inhumane apartheid creation that survived for 17-years without any national, regional and international recognition of its sovereignty (Drummond and Manson, 1991; Jones, 1999, 2000; Ramutsindela, 2001; Manson and Mbenga, 2012; Makgala, 2021). The physical geography of Bophuthatswana was highly irregular because it was spatially incongruent, highly fragmented and without any resemblance of state territory and territoriality because it was conceived on a bedrock of the territory dispossessing 1913 Native Land Act, Group Areas Acts of 1950 and 1960 and Urban Areas Acts that controlled African urbanisation and urban migration to white cities (Muller, 1981; Drummond, 1991; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Lemon, 1991; Ramutsindela, 2001). Bophuthatswana is a Setswana toponym that means a place for the assembly or gathering of Batswana.

In its apartheid conception and representational appropriation by President Mangope, Bophuthatswana was one of four political geographic units known as the TBVC which comprised the geopolitical category of Bantu Homeland States (Drummond, 1991; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Jones, 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Ramutsindela, 2001; Makgala, 2021). The TBVC was a sub-territorial acronym for the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Vhenda and Ciskei Bantustans that were collectively produced and politically conceived by apartheid statemen to function arbitrarily as pseudo-‘independent’ African Homelands (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1-2848, col.5393-8112; Drummond, 1991; Jones, 1999a; Ramutsindela, 2001; Manson and Mbenga, 2012; Makgala, 2021). Apartheid SA perceived Batswana along with every other African nation within its territorial frame of power as illegal immigrants without citizenship and territorial belonging in apartheid SA since they were ideological foreigners of peripheral ‘independent’ Homeland states (Jones, 2000; Manson and Mbenga, 2012; Makgala, 2021). The territorial reorganization of Southern Batswana space and society depended on the state actors’ manipulation of pre-existing traditional relations of the subcultural autonomy and autogestion among southern Batswana (Muller, 1981).

From their inception, apartheid Homelands or Bantustans were created as part of the political spatial strategy and ideologically dominant tendency of the apartheid state to fragment space and society through policies instituting land dispossession, social polarization, and balkanization of African polities into incoherent and economically underdeveloped micro-spatial polities without territorial integrity. According to the Bophuthatswana Minister of Population Development for Bophuthatswana the spatial balkanisation of pre-historic southern Batswana by apartheid SA was a multiscalar transnational project to reorganize the Tswana body *en tout* into “(a) the Batswana of Bophuthatswana, (b) the Batswana of SA and (c) the Batswana of Botswana” (Molatlhwa, 1988:10 in Bophuthatswana Institute for International Affairs, 1988). These territorial dynamics meant a multiscalar, trans-regional production of Batswana of Bophuthatswana within the territorial framework SA and outside of it. The pseudo or rather arbitrarily independent Southern Batswana of a non-sovereign Bophuthatswana was strategically created by the NP state to antagonise a sovereign BW and to give to the Western world the illusion of political liberty, rights, neighbourliness, and territorial autonomy to Africans under its sphere of power and economic influence (Jones, 1999a, 1999b; Makgala, 2021).

While Northern Batswana were recognised citizens and denizens of post-1966 BW, their Southern counterparts had no citizenship in apartheid SA and were forced to take up arbitrary citizenship in a spatially fragmented Bophuthatswana and its unitary decision-maker (Batloun Traditional Council, *interview*, 2018 September 12; Makgala, 2014).

Bophuthatswana's aspatial geography was made up of six or seven spatially incongruent micro-political units in which an overwhelming mass of Batswana and their spatial migration practices were contained and limited to these bounded micro-spaces within the spatial framework of the apartheid state which at the same time placed them outside of it (Drummond, 1991; Drummond and Manson, 1991; Jones, 1999a). Once the NP ascended to power in 1948 it deepened the acute lived experience of spatial dispossession, geographic fragmentation, and social segregation within SA such that Southern Batswana were confined to the boundaries of their immediate residential settlements (Muller, 1981). As the dominant space in society, the NP state explained the logic of apartheid policy as a political tool and territorial strategy

...designed...to consolidate the homelands...in order that the majority of Blacks could live and work in their homelands...to reduce the preponderance of Black people...in the White areas...[because] if they got economic power, they would inevitably get political power (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1300).

The apartheid strategy adopted "Bantustanization" as its state mode of production (SMP) and political spatial practice geared towards territorial dispossession of African lands under extreme forms of racism and deprivation imaginable (Ramutsindela, 2001:175). In the context of the Middle East, Bantustanization is geopolitical process that is experienced in the middle east in the Israel-Palestine territorial conflict. In its military power, the Israeli state force has over the decades deployed an often-violent political strategy of tactically encroaching Palestine territory to the West Bank of Jerusalem and the Jordan River, forcibly resettling Palestinians in so-called *cantons* or Bantustans until all territory falls in the control of the Israeli state<sup>23</sup>. Bantustans or cantons are statist constructions of interest to political geographers and social scientists even long after their spatio-political dismantling. Under apartheid, the NP controlled the production and distribution of maps (Christopher, 2002). Since the NP had a territorial monopoly on maps, it dominated the social process and geotechnical aspects of boundary production within apartheid's sovereign framework of power (Parnell, 1986; Christopher, 2002; Guy, 2017).

Bophuthatswana was the brainchild of apartheid that was "imagined and rooted within the contradictions of apartheid discourse itself" (Jones, 1999a:581; Ramutsindela, 2001; Nel and Drummond, 2017a). Its president, Kgosi Lucas Mangope was 'a dog of the Boers', to use Lawrence and Manson's (1994) harsh metaphor, as far as the NP state blindsided and grossly manipulated him into believing that he was a president of a sovereign state without a uniform physical geography and international borders to delimit and demarcate the spatial limits and hence shape of the pseudo-sovereign territory of traditionally autonomous southern Batswana who did not elect him. Bophuthatswana was annexed to Kgosi Mangope without a map and in its fragmented seven micro-political spatial units in 1977 under the Bantu Administration Act (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1-2848, col.5393-8112; Drummond, 1991; Drummond and Manson, 1991; O'Malley<sup>24</sup>, 1993; Jones, 1999a, Maitso, 2017). Not only was Bophuthatswana a non-sovereign and pseudo state, but southern Batswana never elected Kgosi Mangope for their political leader. It took the coming together and working together of three traditional leaders to secure their prehistoric region and some degree of political

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<sup>23</sup> See <https://www.middleeasteye.net> accessed July 2021.

<sup>24</sup> O'Malley interview with Kgosi Mangope on 27 September 1993. Available at <http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index> accessed 10 April 2024 for availability.

autonomy under British protection in the colonial geography of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. It did not take a single chief or single political actor but a collective of Batswana in their political and intellectual strengths to create and build the BW republic we know. In Bophuthatswana, Kgosi Mangope was an isolated actor leading a massive body of Batswana who were not on board with his deluded politics of a trans-regional state of Batswana while he was too ignorant and too poisoned by apartheid statesmen to discern reality on the ground especially given his anti-ANC stance, pro-apartheid outlook and poor judgement of BW's political discord and lack of diplomatic relations with himself and the false state he was misled to believe he governed<sup>25</sup>. As noted by Kgosi Mosetlhi of Borolong in BW, "all African states and territories did not recognise Mangope, including Botswana" (Kgosi Mosetlhi, interview, 2018 September 18). Mmakgosi Moroka of Thaba Ncho added that

...the Boers used to give [Mangope] a false sense of power so that people can say Bophuthatswana was a free place. So that whites can safeguard their enclaves for a racially segregated territory. [Mangope] sold us out. He was a sellout...I was not prepared to follow him and his tyrannical government (Mmakgosi Moroka, interview, 2016 April 20)

Despite the southern Batswana's lack of political support behind their apartheid appointed leader, significant proportions of southern Batswana voted for Kgosi Mangope's Bophuthatswana Democratic Party (BDP) which later became United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP) after 1994 (Jones, 1999). Those that resisted the BDP were according to Paul (1992) instantaneously ostracised and subjected to SA Defence Force or SADF and Bophuthatswana Defence Force (BDF) harassment for voting for the ANC while the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU) was also banned from operating within the fragmented micro-borderlands or cantons of the apartheid state. Mmakgosi Moroka, one of the five wives of Dr S.J. Moroka who was ANC's first treasurer in the 1940s-50s, explained the political context under the sham administration of Kgosi Mangope's non-government

Mangope did not like this family like the Boers. We were moving all around for the ANC...I was born to a staunch ANC member, and I got married to a staunch president of the ANC, Dr S.J. Moroka...the Boers never thought I would give ANC activists sanctuary. I sent some [ANC activists] to papa Moroka who also sent them to his farms in Lesotho. I worked underground...since in 1976 [Boers] were now killing children and youth. Others came here at night to distribute ANC pamphlets. I used to accommodate [Nelson] Mandela and [Walter] Sisulu when Mandela was a youth league for Dr Moroka, and Sisulu the secretary general. I have pictures of Mandela and my children in that house we call *Sekgopi* (Mmakgosi Moroka, interview, 2017 March 10; emphasis added)

The apartheid state strongly believed in the morality and legal righteousness of its wicked political scheme against Africans and Batswana. The NP believed that through the production of micro-spatial cantons within their racist territorial frame, they were showing neighbourliness to Batswana of Bophuthatswana by confining their movements to the physical geography of their residential settlements from which all spatial practices such as

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<sup>25</sup> F.W de Klerk objected against Bophuthatswana's fake independence, calling it a "tragic situation". Batswana and general African populations of SA were denied "any option by this Government" to choose rather than to accept the given 'sham' decision of a sham independence (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.6979-6980).

pastoralism and agriculture were to also be conducted (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1-2848, col.5393-8112; Muller, 1981b, 1981c). The Bantustanization of southern Tswana territory and borderless physical geography of triadic land-uses that included tripartite settlement patterns, secreted “politically unpalatable” geopolitical micro-regions in the BTVC Homelands (Drummond, 1991; Ramutsindela, 2001:175-176). The degree of the Manichean misanthropic skepticism and coloniality of *Dasein* coursing through the veins and the political heart of the NP state was inconceivable. According to F.W de Klerk (1977:6980) the Bantu Bill was legislated state to “take [Africans]...by the hand...as good neighbours, help [them] with [their] development...growth and the promotion of that which is its own” and the way to achieve that was “to grant independence to the Tswana people” while asphyxiating them at every turn as though it was the 1850s again (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1-2848, col.5393-8112; Muller, 1981a, 1981b).

The *Bantu Administration Act of 1951* was one of many institutionalized pieces of legislation conceived by apartheid SA to manage African migration, urbanization, and spatial confinement of Africans in the cantons of Bophuthatswana (Drummond, 1991). As a result, the plight of Bophuthatswana for political recognition was ignored by the international community and independent regional states like BW because the sub-territorial homeland was a political orphan and a bastard child of the apartheid regime (*The New York Times*, 1990; Drummond, 1991). Accordingly, Bantu Homelands were politically, and socially impractical, artificial and territorially illogical apartheid constructs whose statist “processes” were “associated...with sham independence” (Parnell, 1986:203; Drummond, 1991; Ramutsindela, 2001).

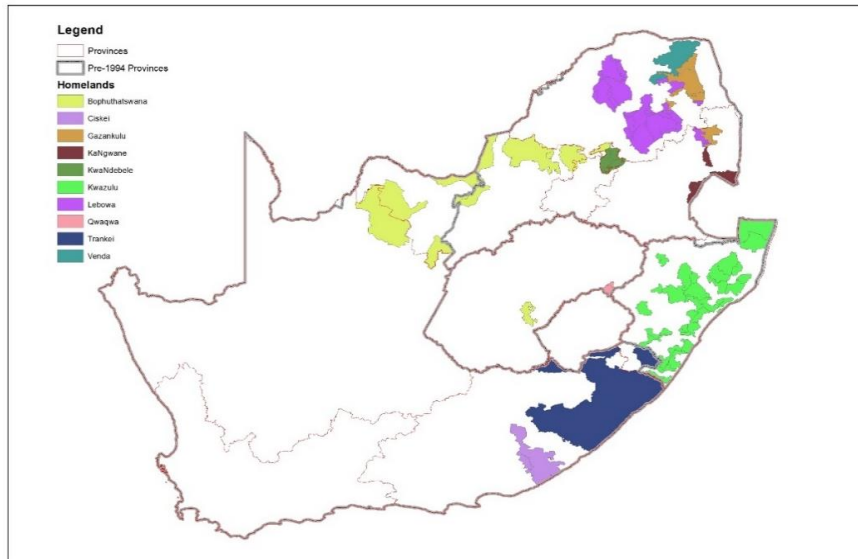


Figure 1.2. The political geography of Bantustan Homelands in South Africa<sup>26</sup>. Source: Charles Barker.

For Trapido (1987:22) in Ramutsindela (2001:180) “sham or not, the Bantustan policies had...created ‘new facts’” which will always need theoretical and analytical reconceptualization (Jones, 1999a,2000; Ramutsindela, 2001). One of the Bantu Administration Act’s policies was to not have any African representation in the white

<sup>26</sup> I credit Dr Charles Barker for the reproduced homelands map of SA pre-1994.

parliament and state. As a result, canton state departments of Bophuthatswana were filled with several white actors who supervised and manipulated installed political actors to ensure that the “Bantu control over Bantu areas” was in line with territorial guidelines of apartheid (Muller, 1981b:487). Kgosi Mangope thus operated with the poisoned idea that the Tswana canton was a natural geographic fact that was rendered illegal and arbitrary by the establishment of the border. Kgosi Mangope lamented the political reality to which he was severely blinded. In an online published interview with O’Malley in 1993, Mangope argued that Bophuthatswana had “not been created by the apartheid system, [or] apartheid policy, as is generally alleged” because “we [Southern Batswana] are one people with Botswana people. We are divided by an artificial boundary”. Kgosi Mangope obviously grasped the wrong end of the boundary stick since his gaze was misdirected to BW’s sovereign borders rather than apartheid state’s blue frontier lines which further blurred his perception of the political geography of Bophuthatswana.

Kgosi Mangope did not have political and legal access to the apartheid state space because he was a *de jure* foreigner, a political child of apartheid and an ideological island (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1-2848, col.5393-8112; Muller, 1981a, 1981b; Lawrence and Manson, 1994; Jones, 2000). He acquired an already delimited, highly fragmented and socially segregated spatial framework that “was not going to have a contiguous territory” since it was pre-reorganized under the Land Act of 1913 to dispossess “1.7 million people” and “roughly 1 million [more]” Batswana of their traditional territories (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.6981). Strangely enough, the spatial peculiarity of the illegal and immigrant statuses of Southern Batswana within the political framework of the apartheid state meant that “an extension or part of SA’s policy of separate development or “apartheid” will keep “the TBVC states” at a perfunctory level as “integral parts of SA” (Kotze, 1988:15). Despite his numerous political, historical, boundary, social and geographical errors because of his isolation and blind faith in the Afrikaner’s venomous speech, lethal borders and lethal action against southern Batswana and other Africans in general, Kgosi Mangope managed to govern an apartheid canton and its socially divided body politic for 17-years.

In that 17-years Kgosi Mangope made tangible economic as well as cultural successes of the canton which was both hailed and hated by its non-Tswana producers for developments which superseded the other three cantons and some independent states in Africa (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1-2848, col.5393-8112; Jones, 1999). For the apolitical southern Motswana on the ground, Bophuthatswana was a real nation with its own iconographic representations of space such as Setswana written newspapers, navy blue and orange striped flag with a leopard, coat of arms and a national anthem. Bophuthatswana was perceived and lived as it was conceived by the apartheid state however, it was transformed into a productive and functional representational space of Southern Batswana who in their political disunity benefitted from tarred road constructions, lighting infrastructure, cultural institutions such as Mmabana and public taps for water supply in rural environments. From its seven main micro-borderlands, Bophuthatswana was further subdivided into 13 sub-units comprising agricultural villages and industrial nodes such as Ditsobotla, Thaba Ncho, Rustenburg and Mahikeng (Watson, 1980; Murray, 1984; Francis, 1999; Jones, 2000). Bophuthatswana was thus a spatial formation whose fragmented design made it a type of



fortified political entity with loosely defined borders<sup>27</sup>. Apartheid SA continued the political spatial practices of the Union state government of British SA which “in its strategic aims” acted explicitly towards “the removal of every obstacle” and “the total elimination of what is different” (Lefebvre, 1991:371). The apartheid state was thus a political institution that used territory and political history of racial colonisation and land dispossession as technical tools to oppress, suppress and asphyxiate “whatever is conceived...and strives to emerge” within its spatial framework of power (Lefebvre, 1991:371).

Ba-phuthatswana were the differential space that was excluded from the imagery of the dominant centre. Bophuthatswana and its Tswana denizens endured and arose “on the margins of the homogenized realm” of apartheid “in the form of externalities” (Lefebvre, 1991:373). These spatial and human externalities were directly lived Bantu Homelands with pseudo sovereignty and no international boundaries. This was a radical departure from BW, a country that was neither surrounded nor borderlanded in by apartheid ‘frontier borders of deprivation’ to borrow from Ramutsindela (2001). The reduction of the majority Black people in white SA was a territorial practice indicative of apartheid’s juridical, political and spatial frameworks of power which sought to homogenize differences by making a “*tabula rasa*” of African bodies and their associated physical geographies (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.1-2848, col.5393-8112; Muller, 1981; Lefebvre, 1991:343). Apartheid statesmen were also clear in their politics which took the position that

Government policy will not alleviate or eliminate any of the areas of potential conflict in SA but [it] can only aggravate them and convert them from domestic areas of conflict into international areas of conflict...the basic policy of the NP is to make nations independent. It is the Black nation and not a piece of land that we are making independent. It is the Tswana nation that we are making independent. ...we...have asked the Government to involve itself in the redrawing of the boundaries, to reconsolidate, to be more generous, and to go beyond the 1936 settlement...[to decide] where Blacks and Whites live, where Tswanas and White South Africans are going to have to live...the Government has made it quite clear that there will be no effective political rights for Tswana or other citizens living in the so-called White areas of [SA]...we would accept the principle of independence carved out of [SA]...this Bill [to grant independence status to Bophuthatswana] is not going to be in the interests of any section of the [white] people of [SA] and...we shall oppose [its] introduction (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.6972-6974)

Several issues are worth noting from the above Hansard. Firstly, the NP state had absolute power over the mode of spatial production (SMP) and territorial *modus operandi* over African-Tswana space and society without the latter’s participation and consultation. The apartheid SMP concerned itself with the production of historically contingent and geographically specific political spatial practices which guaranteed capitalist and industrial growth for the few. In addition, the apartheid SMP meant strict maintenance and management of capitalist growth on all spatial scales with suppressed autogestion and prohibited African political organization (Muller, 1981). The consolidation of the Bantustans by a redrawing of territorial boundaries meant that boundary producing practices were exclusive to and the monopoly of the dominant space in society. Even though this chapter and thesis do not seek a

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<sup>27</sup> See Stuart Elden’s (2016) Blog retrieved at <http://www.hir.harvard.edu/territory-without-borders/> accessed 16 January 2017.

post-mortem analysis of the apartheid SMP, I acknowledge it as “*the significant event of the twentieth century*” with practical consequences for the sub-regional development and integration project of Southern Africa (Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Brenner and Elden, 2009: 369; Ramutsindela, 2013). The racist SMP of the apartheid state “provides the basis for understanding fascism” alongside “Stalinism...Western liberal-democratic models...and European social democracy” which are at work in the AU sub-regions (Brenner and Elden, 2009:369). The unilateral state redrawing of British native reserve boundaries overlaying the southern Tswana region inter alia, “the [political] fabric of the Bantu Authorities Act” meant purposeful de-humanisation of Batswana and the spatial whitening of SA hinterland regions from so-called Black spots (Drummond, 1991:370). In apartheid SA every African polity including Southern Batswana under the dominion of the NP government, were racialised Others, cultural non-beings and non-bodies. I call this process by the ideologically dominant tendency and the political hegemony of its white bourgeoisie, *de-Bantufication*. In apartheid SA Southern Batswana were subjected to de-humanising practices and relational processes of what Heidegger (2010) and Lefebvre (2004) call *thingification*.

Both thingification and de-Bantufication responded to deterritorialization, territorial absolutism and territorial nihilism of Bophuthatswana cantons and their de-Bantufied Bantu. Sociological thingification and political de-Bantufication of an African Bantu were the *sine qua non* for racist regimes and internal conflicts over territory and borders

In every one of those respects, in the law as it stands, the necessary power can be used in respect of persons who are Bantu, or Bantu companies. However, in every case-in terms of this Bill-the amendment deletes the reference to Bantu or Bantu persons, and this means that all these powers, of which I have given a brief indication, can be exercised in respect to institutions, undertakings and persons other than Bantu persons...here again in every case the *reference for the necessity for the person concerned to be a Bantu is deleted...[and] non-Bantu interests, non-Bantu capital and the control of non-Bantu affairs in the homelands is being introduced*. This is a welcome change...It is a new milestone in the history of the development of the Bantu homelands...*non-Black people will now be given an opportunity in a junior capacity...to use their skills and capital for the development of the homelands* (Parliament. National Assembly, 1977: col.6174-6176; emphasis added).

Despite the pre-historic and well-established self-sufficiency of Batswana, the skepticism of the NP state led them to believe Africans lacked the mental capacity and industrial sophistry to manage a capitalist economy, they cannot understand Western industry let alone govern a modern political state and its national society as global institutions (Muller, 1981b, 1981c; Spies, 1986). The degree of apartheid abstraction makes Afrikaners active participants “in the great process of metaphorization” in which the spatial *Dasein* of the Southern Batswana was incessantly betrayed, abandoned, ignored, denied, emptied of human content and *thingified* (Lefebvre, 1991:407). Southern Batswana were in the minds of apartheid statesmen and their bourgeoisie non-people and non-things with no Being. Lefebvre’s (2004:7) critique and notion of “the thing” or Heidegger’s (2010) *das ding* negates colonial thingification of human beings by homogenising forces of abstract space. De-Bantufied Bantu in this case represented a pure, non-Black (and not to say white) identity that is symbolic of geographic materiality without social attributes and hence black spots that needed spatial demographic change and appropriation by territorial whitening or gentrification.

The identities of thingified and de-Bantufied cultural people cannot escape “all besetting terrors” of “conquest and colonisation” which clash and crumble with alienation (Lefebvre, 1991:416). To even refer to the Bantu – people of African descent – as non-Bantu and non-Black people reveals the degree and depth to which Afrikaners hatred for the Bantu was entrenched. How then did Kgosi Mangope miss this big picture from 1977 to 1994? How did he allow himself to go to bed with vipers that used him instrumentally to shake down spatial boundaries fortified BW to force it into its racist regional security cluster? According to Kotze (1988:21), “Botswana excluded itself from the Southern African Regional Tourist Commission, to which only SA, Lesotho and Swaziland belong”. BW was the only country that apartheid SA had no representatives or embassies in (Kotze, 1988; Edge and Lekorwe, 1998; Osei-Hwedie, 1998; Maundeni, 1998). It is alleged that BW resisted all diplomatic relations with the racist state, that international relations between the two countries were forced by apartheid SA which “tried to persuade Botswana to participate in some...forum for discussion...including security...but to no avail” (Kotze, 1988:21; Osei-Hwedie, 1998). How then did Kgosi Mangope’s 1977 apartheid established canton respond to its political conception as a destructive instrument to infiltrate and hence colonise northern Batswana territory which was equally under pressure from a racist English regime of Ian Smith operating to the north of its international border with Zimbabwe?

Drummond and Manson (1991) provide an insightful analyses of BW’s consistent rejection of Bophuthatswana while downplaying the racist politics of the apartheid state in the grand scheme of things. A racist politics which Northern Batswana resisted at all costs and Southern Batswana had no other spatial option or alternative from. As a result, apartheid politics and Afrikaners coloniality of *Dasein* are and have always been the major political differences between northern and southern Batswana of BW and SA respectively. Canton production, its thingification and de-Bantufication resemble the territorial process of Borderlandization advanced by Marsai and Szalai (2021) in their analysis of the demographic shifts and cultural change occurring in the borderlands of Somalia. In their East African context, Borderlandization is a political social process in which historically Somali inhabited border regions are rapidly replaced by Arabs whose occupation of Somali territory secretes new political dynamics of territorial conflict and the import of new politics of the Gulf into the Somali borderlands.

For this Southern and South African context, Borderlandization is isorhythmic with Bantustanization. After 17-years of non-being, the apartheid tool for racially motivated spatial gentrification succumbed to an inevitable territorial death. From its ashes emerged a democratic state of SA where Africans were recognized as political members, national citizens and inhabitants of a territorially reconfigured SA without cantons and with the ANC party at the helm of the new state apparatus in 1994 (Ramutsindela, 2001; Makgala, 2021). In the place of Bophuthatswana’s borderless, geographically incongruent micro spatial locations emerged a geographically congruent provincial region of the North-West Province which excluded the Thaba Ncho island which was Free State Province incorporated (Jones, 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Manson and Mbenga, 2012).

### **3.7.1. The Death of Bophuthatswana and Emergence of the North-West Province**

Bophuthatswana’s territorial death in 1994 coincided with the death of the apartheid state that conceived it (Jones, 1999a, 2000; Ramutsindela, 2001). Its millions of Southern Batswana

were however never lost nor culturally appropriated into any other racial or cultural grouping under the democratic state government of the ANC. Since 1994, literature on the territorial incorporation of Bophuthatswana in democratic SA along with its rebirth as North-West Province were produced not from the representational perspectives of Southern Batswana who dominate but from its statist politics, imagery, tourism potential and practices of the new provincial region vis-à-vis its failed ethno-political rhetoric and territorially disintegrated pseudo-statist dynamics (Drummond, 1991; Jones, 1999a, 2000; Ramutsindela, 2001; Manson and Mbenga, 2012; Drummond and Nel, 2017a, 2017b; Scherf, 2021). Bophuthatswana was debordered in 1994 and re-configured in the new boundary organized political geography which consolidated all frontier regions of Afrikaner strongholds in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, along with all the British holdings whose regional colonial geography and frontier maps ignored the boundless regional and political geographies of various African populations on the ground and within the spatial confines of their sacrosanct boundaries.



Optic formant 1.9. Incomplete low-cost housing construction in Mmabatho. Source: Nkooe.

Despite his eloquent speeches in *A Place for All*, Kgosi Mangope still lost his solitary political war for true independence, BW and world recognition and regional relevance against geographic facts of having no physical territory, no territorial map, no sovereignty of state and no international borders (Drummond and Manson, 1991). In its 17-year life span Bophuthatswana never joined the AU because it was not recognised for its pseudo-state status and for its political control and production by apartheid SA. A decade after its establishment, Bophuthatswana had produced an urban space such as Mmabatho which served as the capital of Bophuthatswana situated less than 8km away from post-colonial Mafeking which in turn functioned as Mmabatho's legislative and administrative centre, in the pre-historic territory of Mahikeng which Bophuthatswana ignored and neglected during its lifecycle (Molema, 1966; *The Jerusalem Post*, 1990; Jones, 1999a, 2000; Nel and Drummond, 2017a, 2017b). Across Bophuthatswana's micro-polity of Thaba Ncho, Kgosi Mangope built a large shopping complex and an industrial enclave which led to more than 80% of the Afrikaner population of the surrounding frontier of the Orange Free State to vote for incorporation in the non-statist entity "in a referendum at the end of 1982" (Murray, 1984:46).

In the Greater Mahikeng, Kgosi Mangope built the iconic University of Bophuthatswana (North-West University) from the ground up with Batswana funds including the sports stadium, Mmabatho Palms Casino and Hotel along the N18 towards the A1 Ramatlabama border gates of SA and BW, several affluent residential suburbs such as Lonely Park, Units 3, 5 and 6 along with the world's number 1 rated music recording studios known as Bophuthatswana Recording Studio (BRS) inter alia Sun City resort and Game Parks in Bojanala District Municipality of the North-West Province, much to the aggravation of Bakgatla (Manson and Mbenga, 2012). The boundary that Kgosi Mangope was led to believe was artificial was very real. It was still real but not politically divisive in 1897, after its geographic demarcation in 1902 to 1910 as a veterinary boundary. By the late 1950s the administrative and borderless boundary began to take on a new function of geopolitical division and modernist delimitation of statist distinctions between north-south Tswana polities and their Western borders entrenched sovereignty. The canton of Bophuthatswana was lured into a politically futile preoccupation with the world and BW to recognise it as a sovereign state despite territorial facts which Kgosi Mangope ignored and was blinded to by the apartheid state which allowed him artificial control over their A1 Ramatlabama border gate (Drummond and Manson, 1991). Post-British Mafeking lost its so-called Britishness under apartheid which appropriated it into yet "another platteland town" of the North-West Province (Drummond, 2017a:8).

Elsewhere Jones (2000:26) theorized the post-Bophuthatswana relict space of the province as "identitary" since its redrawn subnational political frontiers were delimited through a political spatial practice of shifting the geo-body of its Batswana denizens "to the [non] periphery through binary dualisms of social space". The late 1980s incorporation of British Mafeking to Bophuthatswana indicated the degree of racism within the white institutions. This territorial incorporation was for economic reasons and spatial convenience than a decision based on sound political logic. It also meant the appropriation of Mafeking to Mafikeng and then to Mahikeng according to its appropriate Serolong dialect (Bophuthatswana, 1980; Parnell, 1986; Bophuthatswana Institute for International Affairs, 1988; Gordon, 1988; Ratshidi Traditional Council, *interview*, 2016 November 11; Nel and Drummond, 2017a). It is from this long, segregated and hypercomplex geopolitical history, prehistory, anthropology, and political geography of Batswana that this study seeks a contribution.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter contributes towards the advancement of geographic border knowledge about the pre-colonial society of Batswana whose nomadic spatial practices led them from the AMU, EAC and CEN-SAD RECs to SADC between 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries where their frontier tradition and nomadic tendencies found rest in central south Africa by the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Once settled in SADC Batswana utilised natural borders alongside their traditional leaders' conceived three-tiered spatial model of land-uses through which they secreted territory, produced their own primary settlements and cross-border sub-regions as well as their social relations and spatial bodies. Further, pre-historic Batswana utilised aspatial boundaries to distinguish themselves from each other and African nations, as well as to delimit their citizenship and belonging to respective sub-branches. The advent of international boundaries superimposed on the deterritorializing experiences of *Difecane* created a multiscalar melting pot of catastrophic event and temporary alliances that led to the geopolitical partitioning and spatial separation of Tswana sub-regions where the existential threats from their unprovoked

white settlers and neighbours shaped the future course of independent Northern Batswana's closed foreign policy and national security policy towards their apartheid oppressed Southern Batswana of Bophuthatswana who under their apartheid appointment, lacked recognition and hence sovereignty. While scholarship on BW-Bophuthatswana, North-West Province-BW and SA-BW border regions advances our disciplinary statist understandings of the subregional geopolitical situation affecting six million Batswana, the literature makes little to no advances towards our understanding and conceptualization of the sub-region's border population dynamics, their spatio-cultural politics and representational theorising or conceptualisation. This chapter and research contribute towards a Lefebvrian understanding the SA-BW cross-borderlands and the representational politics of their borderlanders since ordinary Batswana and their settlements are the social underpinning of the researched study area.

## Chapter 4

### **Spatial Rhythmanalysis: A Methodology for Cross-Border Fieldwork**

#### ***4.1 Introduction***

One of the thematic topics discussed in the literature is that of declining method and methodology in political geography, and the lack of methodological strategies for social sciences to generalise theory informed fieldwork in international border regions. I outlined Lefebvre's contribution towards that discourse through the introduction of Lefebvre's (2004) spatial rhythmanalysis into the debates. The purpose of this chapter is to bridge and fill the gap in methodology debates with Lefebvre's inter- and transdisciplinary spatial rhythmology in the A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek cross-border gates along South Africa and Botswana's colonially established international border. In this chapter I provide a narrative style representation of my autonomous adoption and application of the spatial rhythmological approach during fieldwork in 2016 and 2018.

Using an autoethnographic style of writing, I reintroduce the cross-border study area and cultural society of Botswana discoursed in the previous chapter as I perceived, directly lived, and experienced it through fieldwork. In addition, I outline the ethnographic strategy deployed to supplement or ground spatial rhythmology, alongside the adaption of photographic tools, archives, discourse analysis and my body, to produce and collect required sets of data to help answer the study's questions and to further attain its aim and objectives. I draw on ethics literature to situate my adapted techniques, directly lived experiences and processes within the ethical in which I delineate my Lefebvrian, geographic as well relational (cultural) positionality in the designated international border area and society. I conclude the chapter with a reinstatement of the chapter's purpose and contribution to debates on cross-border fieldwork in political geography.

#### **4.2 Spatial rhythmology and transnational fieldwork**

Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) rhythmanalytical and spatiological paradigms are no different from traditional research paradigms in which ontology, epistemology and methodology are building blocks. Paradigms are theoretical and conceptual frameworks which according to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) are intellectual structures or models influencing the ways in which knowledge is studied and interpreted. Research paradigms shape and inform research methods which are understood as techniques researchers deploy for practicing their craft (Bryman, 2008). These techniques can be instruments of data collection such as surveys, questionnaires, observation, structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews, ethnographic immersion, discourse analysis/documents collections, archives including analytical tools of data analysis such as statistical techniques (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Methodology is understood as the study of adopted research methods and the discovery of their practices including underlying assumptions of those who use these methods, the validity and credibility of their produced data (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2008). Without a clear grasp of theory defined and situated research paradigms, projects have no basis for undertaking further research, delimiting methods and engaging literature (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006).

Like method and methodology, Adom, Husein and Agyem (2018) and Kivunja (2018) concede that theory, theoretical and conceptual frameworks are often used interchangeably

even though they mean different things and play different roles as components of research paradigms which give projects academic integrity. Rhythmology is thus the technique or method which I adopted and adapted in the production as well as analyses of the various data sets required to fill the gaps on contemporary Batswana of the SA-BW international border and borderlands whose territorial dynamics are not very well-known nor well-conceptualized in political geographic research. Rhythmanalysis is a time, space and energy intensive method, a “time honoured labour” whose methodological strategies embrace qualitative and quantitative techniques which can be adapted by the Rhythmologist to suit their research design and objectives (Lefebvre, 2004:16).

Rhythmology is distinguished from other methodologies by its utility of existing methods from other sciences which further allow the rhythmologist to borrow data, empirical techniques and analytical tools from without neglecting the researcher’s body as metronome (Lefebvre, 2004). Considered alongside Lefebvre’s (1991) spatiology, Lefebvre’s (2004) spatial rhythmology distances itself from other methodologies that either resemble a system or seek systematic analysis b (Elden, 2004a; Schmid, Stanek and Moravánszky, 2014). This chapter is therefore a representational representation of my autonomous appropriation and deployment of Lefebvre’s spatial rhythmology for fieldwork in the A1-A2 cross-border region of SA and BW and their respective borderlands.

### **4.3 Ethnographic field entries and departure in A1-A2 cross-border region**

I entered the study area of SA’s Greater Mahikeng borderland of the North-West Province and BW’s Southern District and South Eastern District on the 9 July 2018 from Bloemfontein in the Free State Province of SA by road using my privately owned vehicle which I insured for cross-border fieldwork prior to my departure. I found a temporary research base in Mmabatho at Kwa Mothakga where I paid monthly rent for a single room with shared private amenities. In 2016 I entered the field from Rustenburg using my private vehicle via Bloemfontein and resided in Mmabatho for a week at Thatch Haven as my research base for subnational fieldwork. The study area was easily accessible by car, on foot and public transportation from both sides of the border however the key places in between the borderlands and across the border were extremely far apart from each other. The A1-A2 junction points of SA and BW were apart by at least 60km while they were closest to each other in their geographic pairing in a single site. In other words, the A1 Ramatlabama border gate of SA was physically closer to A1 Ramatlabama border gate of BW, while the A2 Pioneer Gate of BW and A2 Skilpadshek border gate of SA were also much closer to each other. The A1-A2 cross-border places of abode where also closer to each other at respective border gates than across the borderline, they were also unevenly spatially distributed with cohorts of various Batswana residing in them in different geographic arrangements.



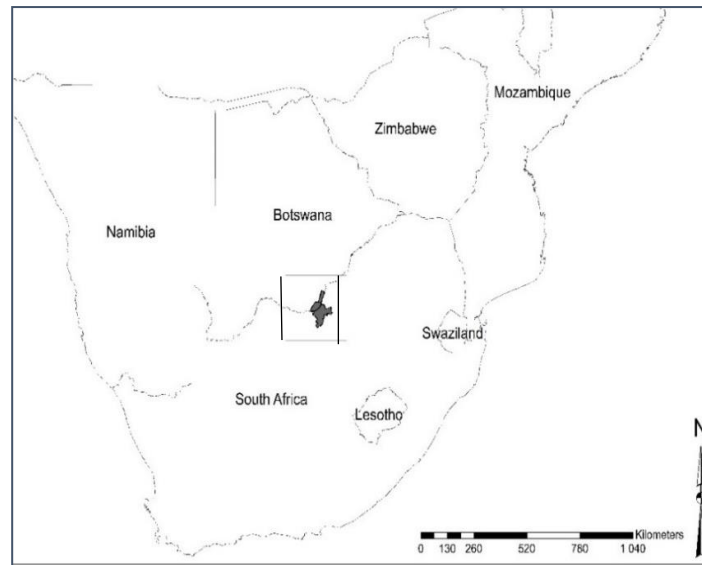


Figure 1.3. The A1-A2 cross-border study area of South Africa and Botswana. Source: Mpho Gegana.

Since I had no prior social experience of Botswana of Greater Mahikeng and Botswana nor prior geographic exposure to the cross-border region prior to this study, I was subject to an overwhelming sensation Chughtai and Myers (2014) refer to as ‘thrownness’ into the unknown empirical field of asymmetric power dynamics which was located ‘out there’ from my normal reality (Katz, 1994; Staeheli and Lawson, 1994). With roughly 97-days allocated for fieldwork in study area and society “to observe and participate in the cyclical events that occur”, I covered great physical distances by car which was instrumental for facilitating field rhythms and de-distancing dispersed multi-sited locations constituting the cross-border study area and Setswana dense border society (Lee, 2017:268). The car in this regard was a critical instrument for mobility in a sparse and vast international border environment. In addition, the car hastened my developmental processes of acquiring ethnographic spatial knowledge and cultural competencies about the study area and social population for data production and analyses. In BW, I resided in the A1 Ramatlabama borderland of Borolong-Ramatlabama with the Seoke family where I contributed in-kind as well as financially to compensate the family for hosting me for the duration of fieldwork.

I resided in Good Hope with the royal family of Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa by invitation of the king’s late mother, Mmakgosi Besele II Montshiwa following my car accident and loss of personal mobility in BW late August 2018. I then resided in the affluent suburb of Block 9 outside Gaborone city at a Bed and Breakfast for a week in September 2018 to continue Lobatse-Peleng based fieldwork in BW using the country’s subnational transportation systems for daily commuting between A2 border gated Lobatse-Peleng and Gaborone’s Block 9. By the time I experienced spatial arrhythmia on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2018 I had covered 5,221km distance between SA and BW’s places of abode and junction points. This is roughly 521kms more distance than SA’s total length of land borders. This logistical dimension and experience are worth noting for future border researchers and fieldworkers who might be undertaking fieldwork for the first time in a cross-border region without a solid plan and back up for mobility. This aspect of my field experience is important because it reveals the actual physical demands of the delimited study area on the physical body of the border worker with a car.

By the end of July and towards August my body and feet were experiencing fatigue and stress from perpetual driving under abnormal conditions for research. Had I not had the car to begin with, I doubt that I would have managed to develop the necessary spatial knowledge and cultural competencies required within the limited time frame I had at my disposal in lieu of inefficient and irregular cross-border public transportation between SA and BW and subnational public transportation between respective borderlands which are and were not always in proximity to each other.



Optic formants 1.10-1.11. The A1 Ramatlabama border gates of South Africa (left) and Botswana (right) Source: Nkooe.

The photos above illustrate the spatial plan and architecture of A1 border gates of SA and BW via the N18 of North-West Province to the A1 national road of BW. There were no issues of ethical concern or national security brought to my attention at any of the border gates concerning photographic practices outside the territorial space. I reproduce these institutional and abstract spaces of power to show the spatial composition of these spaces, their location and design relative to each other and where they might not be known. A component of transnational ethnographic spatial immersion in, or ‘walking around’, previously unknown physical landscape of the frontier study area and its cultural cross-border populations of Batswana, meant that aspects of biographical (non-academic) life became intertwined with “those who actually live at borders” since my focus and interest were on the data production and Lefebvorean analyzes of both sides of the international border (Baud and van Schendel, 1997; Fitzgerald, 2006, 2010; Gellner, 2010:10). This meant garbing myself rhythmically with “the tissue of the lived...to catch a rhythm and perceive it within the whole, in the same way non-analysts, people, perceive it” (Lefebvre, 2004:21).

I grew close relationships with the Seoke family and the Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa royal family that hosted me in BW’s Southern District. Drawing from the principle of ethics of care in fieldwork (Sanjari, et al., 2014; Steinert, et al., 2021), I intervened in the Seoke family household dynamics in non-pathological ways to appropriate a symbolic space evoking memories of trauma for the elderly headed family of two with four grandchildren aged 4 and 18 years at the time of fieldwork. One evening after sharing a meal, I asked the family what happened to their time-worn furniture in the living room that it had black marks all over it. The head of the family, Rre Seoke took a moment to share insights of the accidental fire that nearly cost them their youngest grandchild.



Optic formants 1.12-1.13 Ethics of care in practice: collective repurposing of time-worn and fire scorched furniture. Source: Nkooe.

Since a Rhythmologist is allowed to “intervene in the everyday. Without claiming to change life” but to improve society in some way, I asked the family’s permission to appropriate their aged and fire torched wooden furniture to help them forget and no longer see the arrhythmic reminder that visibly upset their household dynamics (Lefebvre, 2004:26). With their blessing I woke up the next day to purchase small materials for refurbishing the family’s main display feature including other older furniture with the voluntary assistance of the family’s grandchildren who were excited by their active participation in the creative work that was completed just in time for the family’s wedding celebrations late September 2018 (see above). This is a measure of the study’s impact on society in the context of ethics of care during fieldwork.



Optic formants 1.14-1.15. Ramatlabama River stream in Greater Mahikeng (left) and the integrated Lobatse traffic circle (right). Source: Nkooe.

Photography enabled me to produce visual data illustrating the geographical and human inhabited landscapes of BW and SA’s residential places of abode under conceptual investigation where written descriptions fell short. The above images indicate an aspect of the A1 Greater Mahikeng borderland with the iconic and ecologically withering away Ramatlabama River stream coursing through the traditional rural settlement of the Tshidi-Barolong of Kgosi Montshiwa III on the left, while on the right, is the post-industrial urban landscape of A2 Lobatse-Peleng with a signpost depicting the spatial degree of integration between SA and BW. These images are important visual aids for de-distancing and

illustrating the spatial geographies and differences of comparatively analyzed borderlands in real-time. Photography is a popular tool used in cross-border research and is known among geographers who utilise its method in geographic research for data production, illustrative purposes and ethnographic or quantitative analysis of spatial relationships between various objects, their location, and their morphology over time (Ramutsindela, 1993; Meinhof and Galasiński, 2000; Jekle, 2004; Megoran, 2006; McCusker and Ramudzuli, 2007; Rose, 2008; Liebenberg, 2009). Despite Lefebvre's (2004:36) submission that "no camera, no image or series of images...can show rhythm", I demonstrate the contrary with this study. Everywhere a geographic space, a time and social energy uses interact, a rhythm occurs. Rhythm can be captured in its motion and immediacy which are retained in still frames because what is important about photographs as visual formants is what is photographed, a rhythm. Rhythms captured photographically in this study reveal depth and have flesh contrary to Lefebvre's (2004) views. Furthermore, they de-distance between unknown, remote and under conceptualised places of abode and Setswana culture that lacks visual representation in political geography. Photographs are used and incorporated in the research to reflect my spatial 'being there' in the field to borrow from Maldonado-Tores's (2007) definition of Heidegger's (2010) hermeneutical and rhythmanalytical *Dasein*.



Optic formant 1.16. Spatial arrhythmia during cross-border fieldwork. Source: Nkooe.

As earlier noted, I experienced logistical difficulties and mobility challenges after my car accident on the A1 national road in Gaborone on 27 August 2018 since "difficulties never cease" for the Rhythmologist (Lefebvre, 2004:21). Even though this field experience was a first to happen to me in my life and for research, it was not unique. Pathological phenomena often occur during fieldwork in cross-border environments (Bonnin, 2010). Cowlshaw (1997) for example, experienced mechanical failure with a university sponsored vehicle during fieldwork in Australia's Northern Territory of Kathrein. Fortunately, the borrowed car was soon replaced by Cowlshaw's (1997) university to continue fieldwork. Bonnin (2010) had a field companion and a driver similar to Ramutsindela (1993) who had a driver for his MA fieldwork in the Northern Transvaal border region prior to SA democracy. Despite the mobility arrhythmia and lack of field assistants and companions, I adapted to the traumatic experience and continued data collection and production in spatially integrated yet geographically dispersed study area and society through available cross-border and subnational public and private transportation systems. This further enhanced my perception

and understanding of the geography of the study area from a logistical perspective. The purpose of this research is thus to analyze the SA-BW border region using Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiology and rhythmanalysis to determine the region's political spatial practices and spatial rhythms inter alia, the empirical objective to re-instate Batswana as critical social units for boundary analysis. Through the spatial rhythmology framework of ethnographic spatial immersion in the natural setting of the studied, archives, photography and documents collection as discourse analysis, I was able to retrieve and produce sets of primary and secondary data to enable our empirical understandings and my Lefebvorean analyses of the Batswana underpinned border region of SA and BW at A1-A2 border gates and their four cross-border gated residential settlements of Botloug, Borolong, Greater Mahikeng and Lobatse-Peleng.

I sourced qualitative data such as unstructured interviews with groups of traditional authority representatives and individuals such as kings of respective sub-*merafe* involved and identified in the study area and their individual household members. Interviews and document collection are empirical strategies used in qualitative research including ethnography and geography for data production (Herbert, 2000; Hammersley, 2006; Nurani, 2008; Hitchings and Latham, 2020). This category of informants was identified and solicited for data pertaining to their cultural history and pre-history, politics and practices on the one hand, and their perceptions of and relationship with the international border. The other category of interviewed informants included an immigration officer at A2 Skilpadshok border gate to shed light on the boundary's functions, politics and temporal rhythmic dynamics, a spokesperson for Ngaka (Dr) Modiri Molema District Municipality for insight on international and subnational boundary dynamics in the Greater Mahikeng borderland. Other informants such as the Lobatse Town Council planners, Good Hope (sub) Southern District councillors, Mafikeng Local Municipality manager and Rolong Land Board Principal Secretary for example, opted to go off record whilst retaining their participation and sharing important official documents.

Document collection as discourse analysis is always based on "principles of qualitative data production and analysis" (Altheide, 1987:65). Furthermore, "a rhythmanalyst...compares documents" and works with people as "clients, patients" (Lefebvre, 2004:22). It was therefore fitting from a rhythmology perspective to enlist the ethnographic technique of document collection to fill knowledge gaps and answer key questions raised by the study. The ongoing participation of research informants in the study meant that data production and collection were not solitary exploits undertaken by the Rhythmologist. Fieldwork was a collaborative exercise which involved contributions of different knowledges, information, and data towards the research. Photography, a digital camera, and digital voice recorder were used at various times during fieldwork to collect and hence produce required primary data to answer the study's research questions about spatial organization of Batswana in the study area and the production and reproduction of the contemporary international border relative to Batswana. All digitally recorded interview and photographic data are and were stored at various places in different formants, and later transferred to one secure location on the external hard drive that is in my possession. The rest of the physical data acquired through documents collections are stored in a large plastic container that remains in my possession.

Since the majority of recorded group and individual interviews were conducted in Setswana and in the natural geographic settings of the informants, I manually transcribed and translated the textual data to English for Lefebvorean analyses. I did not use coding as a technique for

ethnographic and rhythm analytical content or thematic analysis for interview transcripts and official documents because coding is a quantitative tool which in no way “represents the full extent of coding for qualitative research” (Cope, 2010:282). Furthermore, I used unstructured interviews than structured interviews which are often conducted by quantitative researchers who use surveys, lab-controlled experiments, tests and questionnaires for statistical analysis using SPSS or regression analytics (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2008). For the Rhythmologist, discourse or ethnographic content analysis refers to “information and communication” that “pass through rhythms...across groups: the family, village or town, institutions, religions” and where “rhythms are continually found” (Lefebvre, 2004:43). Furthermore, a Rhythmologist must undertake unstructured interviews in the field as per Prescott (1987) and Webb’s (1979) traditional empirical approaches but from an existential ethnographic perspective since “the being of man is grounded in language” hence “we are a dialogue”, and “Dialogue and its unity underlie our *Dasein*” since “the philosopher speaks of dialogue, not of communication” (Lefebvre, 2004:49)

I did not use GIS for spatial analysis of study area and society in the same way Mountz (2011) applied it alongside qualitative participatory action research method for boundary analysis. I used Quantum GIS or QGIS qualitatively to produce maps of the different aspects of the cross-border study area for representational or illustrative purposes than for boundary analysis in chapter 6 of this thesis. These basic maps are part of this study’s original contribution towards the visual formant of the cross-border study area which was last mapped more than 30-years ago by Drummond and Manson (1991). My own body as metronome was also drawn from for qualitative data concerning boundary functions or spatial practices and organizational rhythm which could only be harnessed by direct participant observation in the border environment through uses of its A1-A2 border gates. This phenomenological spatial experience enhanced my understanding of the border and was triangulated with either country’s border management and migration management policies and practices for informed analysis. Purposive population sampling of the study area’s society occurred post-fieldwork rather than prior. I enlisted purposive sampling to contain and delimit volumes of data to enable me to synthesize and extract analytical richness from collected documents and transcribed interviews (Ames, Glenton and Lewin, 2019).

I delimited responses from 41 key informants inter alia archival materials and collected documents to “compare and contrast, to identify similarities and differences in the phenomenon of interest” as qualitative triangulation (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000; Gill, 2000; Wiles, Rosenburg and Kearns, 2005; Palinkas, et al., 2013:2). One interview with Kgosi Shole was conducted telephonically and hence remotely from the field in 2019 through a technique called ethnography in absentia for insights about his under researched Batlounge’s prehistory, political history and spatial politics in the study area (Lee, 2017). The sampled population of 41 respondents does not include politicians or statemen of BW and SA who could not be reached nor accessed for their inputs. The sample population is also exclusive of A1-A2 regional border managers of BW and the SA Minister of the Department of Home Affairs who failed to respond to the research invitation by email or respond to semi-structured questions via e-mail. All data were subjected to qualitative Lefebvorean analyses using the conceptual spatial triad of representations of space, spatial practices and representational space; the conceptual spatial rhythm of space-time-energy; the unitary social theory of spatial production and its analytical framework of spatial architectonics, the political theory of state mode of production (SMP) and New State Form, alongside my representational experiences and perceptions of the boundary area under investigation.

The discourse turns to the presentation of data produced during 2016 and 2018 fieldwork in the SA-BW border region to help the research achieve its Lefebvrian aim and objectives with Batswana objectives.

#### **4.4 Primary Data Production by Spatial Ethnographic Immersion**

##### *4.4.1 Ethnographic interviews and documents collection*

Through a period of roughly 97-days allocated for transnational ethnographic fieldwork in the SA-BW study area at A1-A2 cross-border gates and their four residential places of abodes, I conducted a total of 41 unstructured group and individual interviews with a diverse cohort of key informants constituting the multiscalar boundary environment. Most of the audio recorded interviews were conducted in Setswana and were later manually transcribed and translated into English for further analyzes and triangulation. Language was never an issue of concern because I autonomously developed my previously under developed Setswana language and comprehension competencies prior to undertaking the study and engaging fieldwork. The few informants in BW who expressed the desire to not go on record, roughly less than 10% of the sampled population, were the most helpful and important since they shared official documents that are not readily available nor accessible electronically and yet containing critical qualitative and quantitative data about the nation state of BW in general and the boundary and subcultural dynamics of its A1 Southern District and A2 South East District straddling the SA borderline along the North-West Province.

This process did not happen instantly. It took time to establish social rapport and trust, repeated visits, and unstructured engagements with various individuals and groups in BW for them to volunteer the data used for this academic study. Some data such as newspapers for example, were bought and other were given for free. I used these newspapers from BW for a contemporary insight into the country's daily bordering practices and cultural dynamics of interest to the study. Below is a list of official documents of SA and BW concerning the shared international border, its respective borderlands and their distinct border populations. The data were and are extremely useful in the study for answering raised questions and assisting the study to achieve its aim of conceptual and theoretical analyzes of the SADC region's unknown, under examined and under conceptualized cross-border landscape. All official documents of SA were retrieved from the internet while all of BW's official documents were retrieved through transnational ethnographic immersion.

- Mafikeng Local Municipality Spatial Development Framework of 2014
- Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality Integrated Development Plans of 2017, 2019-2022
- Republic of Botswana: Immigration Act of 2011
- Republic of Botswana: Land Policy of 2015
- Republic of Botswana: Lobatse Urban Development Plans of 1993 and 1997
- Republic of Botswana: Lobatse Urban Regeneration Plan of 2018
- Republic of Botswana: National Development Plan 11 of 2017
- Republic of Botswana: Southern District Development Plan 6 of 2003
- Republic of Botswana: Southern District Integrated Land-Use Plans of 2005
- Republic of South Africa's Border Management Agency Bill of 2016; Immigration Policy of 2016, White Paper on International Migration of 2017 and Border Management Agency policies of 2015 and 2022

The data contained in these documents is dense and rich. It is used discriminately to answer some key questions about the boundary and intracultural dynamics between SA and BW based Batswana, and to inform my Lefebvrian analyzes of their not well-known human relations and political geographies of their spatially variegated borderlands. These documents are cross-referenced and triangulated with interview data alongside reviewed literature and my lived experiences of the study area during fieldwork for validity and credibility.

#### 4.4.2 Lefebvre's geometric and visual formants

As a self-conceived spatial Rhythmologist, my abstract mind and physical social body was an important vessel, instrument and instrumental for cross-border fieldwork as well as for data analyzes, interpretation, and overall production of this geo scientific *oeuvre*. From the very *Dasein* of my spatial being I produced primary data as a contribution to geographical studies on the African boundary experience. This mental and conceptual data was possible because of transnational ethnographic spatial immersion in the study area which compelled me to engage boundary producing practices through international migration at A1-A2 border gates of SA and BW. Through irregular participant observation in border uses as part of the everyday life of border communities straddling the fracture line, I conceived what Lefebvre (1991:285) classifies as “formants” to graphically capture my autonomous experiences and perceptions of the border from the perspective of a representational user and temporary inhabitant of the international border environment.

This ethnographic technique of representational space fieldworkers was important for building my boundary competencies and spatial knowledge about the geographic relationships between deceptively incongruent places of abode and congruent junction points, boundary functions and management regimes, chronometric organization of the boundary's spatial practices and immigration policy frameworks of the two states involved in the borderline. Without this practical process, it would have been difficult and impossible to continue this work given my lack of formal training in and academic education on international borders and borderlands, political geography, Tswana history and anthropology. Formants refer to a conceptual term in music that Lefebvre (1991) uses to classify, categorize or distinguish between various types of data on philosophical terms. Lefebvre identifies and distinguishes between the geometric formant, the visual (optical) formant and the phallic formant. The geometric formant refers to the realm of Euclidean space which philosophical thought treats as absolute and empty of *Dasein*. This formant reduces three-dimensional triads to binary two-dimensional entities represented on paper by plans, maps and “any kind of graphic representation or projection” (Lefebvre, 1991:285).

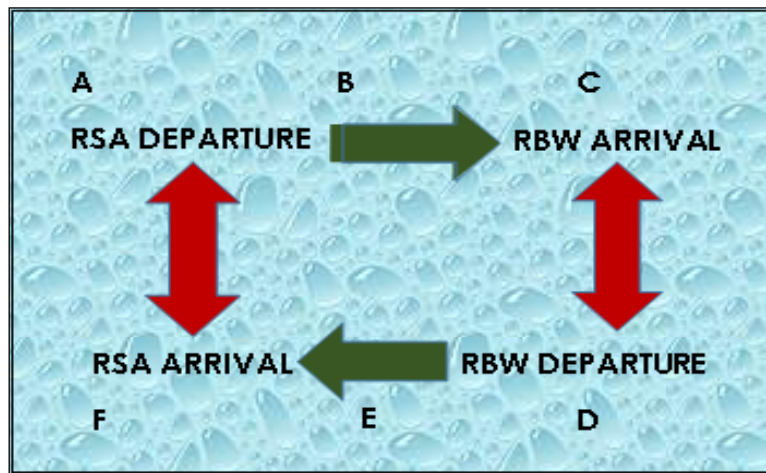
The optical or visual formant embodies the logic of visualization and the visual realm on creative terms. The visual logic of the optic formant to which photography, the border rhythmograph, boundary processes and passport table belong, informs social practice and is further dependent on textual data (written word) “and the process of spectacularization” where “the visual gains the upper hand over...other sense...leaving the field to line, colour and light” (Lefebvre, 1991:286). The last of the trio of musical formants is the phallic formant. This formant symbolizes and represents “force, male fertility, masculine violence” also including the brutality of state power discharged through the army, police, policy and bureaucracies which “instigates...spatial practice” (Lefebvre, 1991:287). The A1-A2 cross-border environment of SA and BW is a landscape dominated by the phallic formant. From the female dominant immigration officers of BW who embody state bureaucracy and state



violence, to places of abode under the jurisdiction of various traditional councils which are mostly patriarchal save for Botlounge's matriarchal traditional council of Kgosi Shole, to subnational state actors across the boundary including political geography scholars and scholarship. The dominance of the phallic formant in this regard subordinates the female principle to its spatial practices including in research.

#### 4.4.3 Empirical Optic Formants

The below formant is a conceptual representation of the asymmetric spatial boundary management and migration processes shaping the character of the SA-BW international border as I directly experienced it via the A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama and A1 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek of SA and BW.



Conceptual formant 1.3. Asymmetrical spatial regime of the South Africa-Botswana international border. Source: Nkooe.

The graphic illustration along A-C indicates my point of departure from SA and arrival in BW via A1 border gates. Points D-E indicate my point of departure from BW back to SA via the same border gates. Migration processes between the two states are asymmetrical meaning, they do not overlap nor touch. This asymmetry is replicated or perpetuated at A2 cross-border gates of SA and BW. I used my SA passport as a valid, credible, legal, and international state document that grants access and passage to forbidden places and the border apparatus. I used it to chart my international migration experience ontically during boundary operating times at variously times of the day and weeks. This lived process led me to the production of the Border Rhythmograph for the same A1-A2 cross-border gates. The primary data from border rhythmograph include data on my duration (length) of stay in respective borderlands of either country, number of border crossings over the course of fieldwork, rate of border crossings or border crossing frequency for 11 July 2018 to 29 September 2018. This data helped me better understand and analyze the border's management, administrative and political regimes. The symbols on the table depicting my cross-border movements are briefly explained.

The (✓) indicates border processing by immigration officers at A1-A2 border gates of the two countries. This symbol (■) indicates no border crossing while the (○) indicates non-processing by SA immigration upon return from BW which exposes an underlying issue of border security on the SA side and my lack of awareness of the immigration process upon return for at least five times.

Border Crossing Dates	A1 Ramatlabama Border Gate <b>SA</b>	A1 Ramatlabama Border Gate <b>BW</b>	A1 Ramatlabama Border Gate <b>BW</b>	A1 Ramatlabama Border Gate <b>SA</b>
<i>11-31 July 2018</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Arrival</i>
11	✓	✓	✓	○
17	✓	✓	✓	○
18	✓	✓	✓	○
31	✓	✓	✓	○
<i>01-27 August 2018</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Arrival</i>
01	✓	✓	✓	○
05	✓	✓	✓	✓
06	✓ x2	✓ x2	✓	✓
09	▪	▪	✓	✓
14	✓	✓	▪	▪
15	▪	▪	✓	✓
20	✓	✓	✓	✓
22	✓	✓	▪	▪
23	▪	▪	✓	✓
24	✓	✓	✓	✓
27	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>01-28 September 2018</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Arrival</i>
01	✓	✓	▪	▪
02	▪	▪	✓	✓
03	✓	✓	▪	▪
<i>06 September 2018</i>	<i>A2 Border Gate</i>	<i>A2 Border Gate</i>	<i>A2 Border Gate</i>	<i>A2 Border Gate</i>
09	▪	▪	✓	✓
18	✓	✓	▪	▪
19	▪	▪	✓	✓
21	✓	✓	✓	✓
27	✓	✓	▪	▪
28	▪	▪	✓	✓

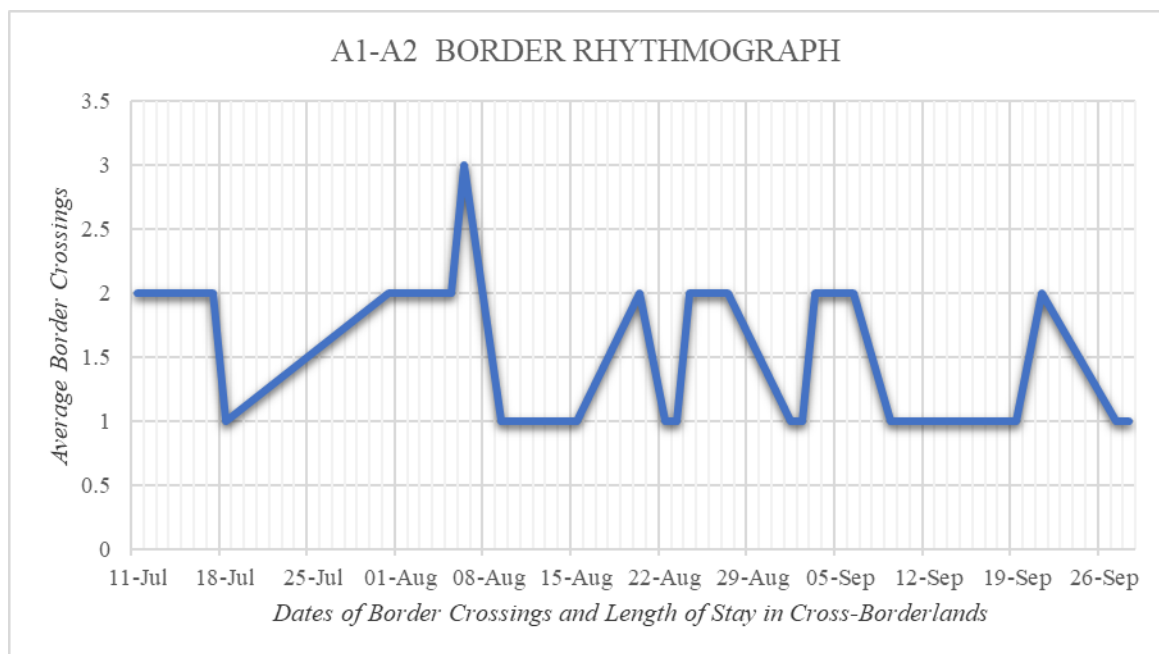
Table 1.2. Passport extracted A1-A2 border data Source: Nkooe.

At this juncture, it is important to note that I crossed the international border at the A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama border gates of SA and BW more frequently than A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek since A1 junction points and places of abode overlap the boundary, and the A2 border gates do not have an overlapping borderland in SA within 30km radius of Lobatse-Peleng and A2 Skilpadshek. As a result, low rates of human migration were experienced in the A2 border region of SA and BW than A1 border region. The pivot table below shows the total number of border crossings I undertook as part of my ethnographic participant observation. The table is followed by another optic formant I call the border rhythmograph which charts the spatial rhythm of my international migration practices.

<b>Border crossing dates</b>	<b>Monthly frequency of border crossings</b>
11-31 July 2018	7
1-30 August 2018	18
1-29 September 2018	13
<b>Total border crossings</b>	<b>38</b>

Table 1.4. A quantitative summary of A1-A2 international border crossings. Source: Nkooe.

The border rhythmograph is an analytical tool that enabled me to delimit specific “temporalities and their relations within wholes” (Lefebvre, 2004:24). The border rhythmograph is in part a geometric and optic formant which I conceived autonomously. Graphics such as the border rhythmograph are part of the rhythmologist’s border data. It is an important contribution to boundary conceptualisations and especially for the rhythm analyst who as Lefebvre (2004:22) opines must be able to “recognise representations by their curves, phases, periods and recurrences...without omitting the spatial and places”. My border rhythmograph illustrates the spatial pattern and rhythm of my cross-border spatial practices between SA and BW, at various times of the day during 2018 fieldwork. It also shows my uses of the international border and borderlands since I wanted to know how they are, understand how the border gates works, what the architecture, rhythm and spatial plans of the border environment were and are, including those of the identified places of abode defined by them. This rhythmic body produced data helps the study achieve its general Lefebvrian aim, objectives and key questions alongside empirical objectives and key questions centered around Botswana of SA and BW. It is the hope of this work to see improvements and utility of a border rhythmograph in future border research to advance debates on boundary conceptualization and methodological paradigms.



Conceptual formant 1.4. The A1-A2 international border rhythmograph. Source: Nkooe.

Through research spatial practice of ethnographic immersion, I secreted the rhythm analytical chart above to also indicate what the border’s signature, rhythm and relationships to

surrounding places might look like. The spike in the border rhythmograph between 1 and 8 August 2018 indicates the time I crossed the A1 border gates three times because of the creative *oeuvre* at the Seoke household which resulted in the high frequency in border crossing. The long stroke between 18 July and 31 July 2018 represents a period of stay in Greater Mahikeng where I worked among Barolong and Batlounj in-between their distinct spatial locations, diverse traditional and multiscalar modern institutions which served as authoritative sites for secondary and primary data mining.

#### **4.5 Transnational historical archives**

Historical archives are interesting because they expose the distance between methods of political history and political geography in border studies including my under examination of Lefebvre's historical dimension proper. As a result, I borrow history's archival method and situate it in rhythmic space because the interaction of a space, time and used or motional energy produces rhythm, a time-honored labour and process. Archival fieldwork is rarely mentioned and elaborated upon in political geography, and it does not help that Lefebvre's archives are social, alive, representational, and discovered in and as the study of the prehistory and history of researched societies of people whose spatial practices are discerned empirically through abstract means. Archival methods are time consuming, space specific, geographically situated and energy intensive (Harris, 2001; Mills, 2013). Archival data include a wide range and genre of materials and artefacts such as newspapers, published and unpublished research, letters, non-academic books, maps, photographs, videographic and audiovisual materials, treaties, Hansards, ethnographies and oral histories among many other items (Leonardo, 1987; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995, 2007; Ongoiba, 2014).

Within historical geography, the archives can be approached ethnographically as sites for encounters with the people, place and events of 'the past and pre-past' on Sartrean terms. Historical geographer Harris (2001) describes archives as imaginatively dead historical sites filled with ghosts of a people long forgotten waiting for the historian or archival fieldworker to encounter them. Lefebvre's (1991) archives are different. They are not immobile or in buildings of institutions and organization. Spatiological approach to archives is based on an engagement with representational space at the level of absolute space where their pre-history and history are geographically located and temporally situated. Archival spaces and data are ethnographically lived representational spaces outside controlled environments of national and international archival institutions. Borderlanders are natural sites for conducting and procuring archival as well as ethnographic fieldwork hence. Despite this Lefebvrian difference, archives are interesting sources of data collection, consumption and unexpected encounters. While undertaking archival fieldwork in the Free State Provincial Archives of SA I discovered a handwritten Setswana letter with its English equivalent in a small brown box and envelop after several days of searching archival data of the province for SA boundary, territorial politics and Batswana related information.

I stumbled upon a Setswana hand written and signed peace treaty dated 1866 by Kgosi Moroka I of the Seleka sub-branch of the Barolong for consideration and acceptance by the Boer President of the captured Republicanised Basotho territory of the Orange Free State of the time, President Brandt of post Sand River Convention Bloemfontein. The peace treaty letter was accompanied by its English equivalent stamped which was concluded with official seals and signatures. The letter was aged and discoloured but still intact. It was in A.31-41. AANWINS NO.31-41 and its content verified its validity as Mafoko a Kgosi Moroka I. Even

though this important finding is outside the scope of the North-West Province-BW situated border and borderlands study it is worth noting for future research and archivists working on Free State boundary dimensions and territorial treaties and politics of Basotho under British colonisation and Afrikaner states domination. One day during urban archival fieldwork at Wits University's Cullen Library for the Lefebvorean master's research on Mary Fitzgerald Square I encountered a speaking spirit I could not see but only hear with my human ears. The speaking spirit instructed me to leave the intimate space of international historical archives within Cullen Library, to head straight to the back of the wall of fully stocked bookshelves to retrieve a book at my eye level upon reaching the destination. I did as I heard and as I was told by the spirit that speaks. The obedience led me to discover Solomon Mogodi-Plaatje's (1916) hardback *Native Life in South Africa* with a Preface by Bessie Head.

Unfortunately, I did not find the SA Hansards of 1977 on Bophuthatswana, c.1977-1994 at North-West Provincial Archives and North-West University Campus Archives of Mmabatho and Mafikeng. I found them in Cape Town instead at the National Libraries of South Africa following the aftermath of the fire that ate through a wealth of data sources, literature and technology encased at UCT's Jagger Library Building. Perhaps as a contribution I can donate a copy of my original hardcopies of Bophuthatswana Hansards to North-West University Campus and Provincial Archives. This contribution can also extend to BW's History Department at the University of Botswana (UB) and BNARS if the nation state and academic society is interested. Archives are geographically sparse, ubiquitous, polysemic, dispersed and rhythm analytical. I consulted the below archival institutions and organizations for pre-historic and historic data on Northern and Southern Batswana of central south Africa, the SA-BW international border and A1-A2 situated cross-borderlands of BW and SA. I did not have a structured archival fieldwork experience informed by history or geography. I approached archival fieldwork through ethnographic immersion informed by Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiological architectonics and rhythmology.

- Botswana National Archives and Research Services (BNARS)
- Free State Provincial Archives
- North-West Provincial Archives
- North-West University Campus Archives Unit
- The Jagger Library of the University of Cape Town (UCT)
- The National Library of South Africa

#### **4.6 Ethical considerations, positionality statement and study limitations**

Research ethics and research positionality are crucial components of research which are not always known, understood and well enacted within the confines of doctoral studies and hence supervision. The choices of research methods adopted by doctoral students reflect their socially situated positionality in the research study, design and study site and population for example (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Vanner, 2015; Holmes, 2020). We cannot begin to understand research adopted methods and methodologies if the social, academic/professional and intellectual positions and profiles of researchers are not known and made known and clear by researchers relative to their researched population, study area and sampled society, subject matter, fieldwork, data management, security, integrity and analysis (Berg, 2016). As also expressed in the reviewed literature, academic training in political geography, anthropology and history is just as important but it is lacking in contemporary frontier and

border studies. In my doctoral candidacy, ethics and the positionality of my scientific *Dasein* in the SA-BW Lefebvrian border and borderlands study came into full view at the tail end of the research. These two elements of research *dressage* are divorced from methodology discourses and boundary epistemologies of political geography. Very few political geographers produced and discoursed their positionality ethnographically and with Lefebvre in their chosen border regions of study. This subsection is an opportunity to address and reflect on my overall positionality and account for the ethical integrity of this study based on used data collection and data analysis methods under the paradigm of spatial rhythmology. Their limitations are discussed considering the overall research.

#### 4.6.1 *Research ethics in qualitative doctoral research and education*

Ethics are an integral part of doctoral research and pedagogy. As such they must be inculcated into the consciousness of candidates throughout the life cycle of their studies by their supervisors and research institutions (Berg, 2016). Ethics belong to a branch of philosophy that thinks about “the conduct of people and...the norms or standards of behaviour of people and [their] relationships with each other” (Scott and Marshall, 2009; Akaranga and Makau, 2016:1). In academic research, ethics refer to sets of “moral principles undergirding the design and execution of research projects that involve” the observation and recordings of researched people’s lives regardless of the methodological paradigms of projects (Sanjari, et al., 2014; Zhang, 2020:299). Whether a doctoral study falls in the quantitative, mixed approach and or the qualitative tradition, all research must account for its compliance with ethical standards and experienced challenges, or lack thereof (Bitter, et al., 2020). Key to the discourse on research ethics are issues pertaining to methodologies of data sourcing, credibility and validity of analyzed data, plagiarism, data fabrication, confidentiality breaches and exploitation of research participants (Griffith, 2008; Sanjari, et al., 2014; Akaranga and Makau, 2016; Berg, 2016; Fleming, 2018; Zhang, 2020).

For Bitter et al (2020) and Berg (2016), research must be presented in transparent fashion by research candidates who must indicate the measures taken to guarantee the safety and security of their chosen respondents, guard against exploitative power dynamics, respectful treatment of participants and protection of their privacy while illustrating research beneficence, a degree of social justice and or social relevance of the study (Steinert, et al., 2021). Even though ethics are often treated *en passant* in methodology or research design sections of their studies, and approached as once-off administrative checklists students must autonomously manage and understand, they are a critical part of the scholarly development process and doctoral graduate attributes that candidates must show cognition of (Griffith, 2008; Akaranga and Makau, 2016; Berg, 2016; Zhang, 2020). Elsewhere university bodies in the form of Research Ethics Committees (RECs) and Institutional Research Boards (IRBs) oversee practices related to research ethics and establish policy frameworks for ethical guidelines to be adhered to (Better, et al., 2020; Steinert, et al., 2021).

Research ethics are therefore more about the researcher’s understanding of what constitutes ethical research conduct during and post fieldwork. It is about research candidates understanding of administration requirements, data management practices and ethics policy about research in predominantly social environments without any emphasis on the geopolitical landscapes within which doctoral candidates conduct fieldwork. As argued by Bitter et al (2020) and Steinert et al (2021) it is important for research institutions to consider

political geographic environments their candidates undertake empirical studies in because the political, socio-economic, and cultural dynamics of these places have an impact on ethics, researcher experiences and fieldwork. Above all, supervisors and “stringent supervision” are salient elements perceived and understood as critical in doctoral research processes without which, the academic quality and ethical integrity of the overall becomes problematic (Sanjari, et al., 2014:1; Steinert, et al., 2021).

#### 4.6.2 Ethics ‘dressage’ and the lived experience of cross-border fieldwork in SADC REC

Literature on frontier studies and political geography outlines the importance of prior academic training to be obtained in history, political geography, ethnography, and anthropology for fieldwork in any border study. However, very few contemporary scholars make note of researcher positionality while ethics in border fieldwork are not given any attention. Academic training in border studies is isorhythmic with Lefebvre’s (2004:39) “dressage” or *le dressage* because it involves both formal and informal training. Ethics literature states that *dressage* in ethics must occur throughout the life cycle of a doctoral candidate’s research under the guidance of a supervisor and ethics policy of the candidate’s research institution (Griffith, 2008; Sanjari, et al., 2014; Berg, 2016). This subsection is a summary of my ethical processes which I experienced within the fieldwork period in the hopes of situating the ethical integrity of the study and its data collection strategies in context. I started this work in 2016 as a fulltime doctoral candidate at the University of Cape Town, in the Western Cape Province of SA, while I was a fulltime staff member at the University of the Free State or UFS in Bloemfontein.

The geographic remoteness prior to the Covid-19 outbreak implied a logistical and mental challenge I had not planned for nor anticipated from fieldwork and ethics related literature. I grounded and developed this study with a generic understanding of UCT’s 2016 *Faculty of Humanities: Guidebook on Research Ethics Involving Human Participants*. When I commenced this study with UCT, I was simultaneously a fulltime lecturer at the University of Free State (2016-2019), then a temporary resident of Mankweng as a contract lecturer at the University of Limpopo (2020-2021), before settling in Gqeberha/Port Elizabeth from late 2021 where I am a lecturer at the Nelson Mandela University. These dynamics were a recipe for disaster since I had no research fellow at UCT, the University of the North-West or the University of Gaborone where I conducted fieldwork. I read the UCT research ethics and understood it a priori however it was arbitrary since it does not explain in detail the variation of ethical consideration for cross-border fieldworkers in Low to Middle Income Countries, or LMICs, such BW and SA, where the personal security and mental wellness of the researcher should ideally be more pronounced over and above field participants but is instead completely omitted.

Research ethics literature indicates that a combination of geopolitical as well as psycho-analytical factors should be taken into serious consideration by ethics policies instead of leaving doctoral candidates to figure out if not completely forsake their own protection and self-care in the field. Things such as the natural environment or climate of the study area, the psychological makeup of the studied population, the levels of economic development or impoverishment, political stability, social unrest and institutional dynamics of the border environment, are some of the noted elements that research ethics scholars identify as factors which can impede access to fieldwork on the one hand, and cause significant harm to the

exposed fieldworker in the form of fatigue, mental burn out, trauma, threats to physical health and personal insecurity (Bitter, et al., 2020; Steinert, et al., 2021). I read two or three articles on cross-border fieldwork however they made little sense. I had no reference to draw from nor a scholar to liaise with in preparation of the fieldwork and during the fieldwork, except my remote supervisor. As a result, I neglected myself completely during fieldwork because of the normative practice to over prioritize research participants' needs, security, confidentiality, and mental well-being over the researcher's. With the 93-days that were allocated as research leave to undertake the self-funded fieldwork in 2016 and 2018 between SA's Greater Mahikeng and BW's SD and SED, I experienced a variety of personal and technological challenges that nearly cost me the fieldwork, the research and my life.

To begin with, I spent most of my fieldwork in socio-economically impoverished borderlands of SA and BW which were Greater Mahikeng and Borolong of the transnational Tshidi Barolong. I stayed in a bed and breakfast in Mmabatho where I shared private amenities with other and many different strangers who like me also inhabited the accommodation temporarily for a variety of reasons. In Borolong, I spent most of my time traversing the rural border settlement which does not have many flushing toilets. I was thus exposed to pitlatrines in both SA and BW for most parts of the fieldwork which led to the contraction of a urinary tract infection, UTI several weeks post-fieldwork. Had I known about the socio-economic living conditions of my cross-border study population, I would have taken precautions to take anti-UTI medication while in the field to mitigate the body infection that negatively affected my health. In addition, I had a serious car accident whose trauma I immediately shoved to the back of my mind because the Gaborone archives and the rest of the fieldwork was at stake. Furthermore, I lost half of my photographic data when my digital camera got stolen less than two weeks post-fieldwork.

Furthermore, I was exposed to intimidating relations of power and exploitation where I was mocked and harshly spoken to by the North-West University's Library head for not knowing a national university library policy about researchers uses of other university libraries outside of their home institutions. In another case, I was given an unprofessional treatment by an official that agreed to the recorded interview however, as soon as the interview commenced the respondent changed in demeanour and body gesture. She later went on to become rather aggressive and slightly condescending. Elsewhere, I was perceived as a source of financial relief to my impoverished hosts in Borolong. That was exceptionally difficult at the emotional level because ethics policy always warns about not making financial promises to participants but nothing on how to protect myself from financially needy participants who perceived me as a well-resourced fountain of foreign currency flow despite my consistent in-kind gestures during fieldwork and post.

All these factors including my absolute research isolation from UCT and any other scholar in border studies, amalgamated into a grave mental condition that threatened my ability to progress, my personal life and physical health all at once. I was not empowered nor supported in anyway about self-care, dealing with the trauma of car accidents in foreign lands when I had not once been involved in a car accident in my country, the loss of irreplaceable and non-replicable photographic research data, the gnawing pressure of absolute loneliness, perpetual migration, and never-ending job-and-financial insecurity. What I managed to do well was to complete a mandatory Data Management Plan which required further details about my ethical considerations for research participants, data collection strategies/tools, data storage and data



security as per the research ethics policy. Even after submitting this detailed plan, I had no room for dialogue with my supervisor or research institution about it to ensure concrete understanding. There was still no room for dealing with the mental stress that came with the loss of irreplaceable data on the part of the researcher than what the researcher should do to guarantee data security and efficient data management without further asking about the data management competencies, or prior experience, of the researcher.

In the field I informed all potential participants at the border gates and in the cross-borderlands of the academic nature of the study and their value-add to it. I then asked for their permission to partake in the production of the research since the study's qualitative rhythmological design requires it. I was overt with my doctoral candidate identity to respondents however, I quickly swapped it with a non-titular 'research student from UCT' because I noticed how the doctoral positionality affected candidates' behaviour and perceptions of me. I informed every participant of the right to withdraw from study as per standard practice and still asked permission to record our meetings or take photographs with key informants each time the need arose. Most interviews that I conducted with the 41 key participants were conducted in a language of their choice which was Setswana. Most participants in BW declined to go on record but proceeded to share vital information and documents to help advance the study. Each interviewee consented to using their real names than pseudonyms. I kept the real names of participant royal families for academic purposes and where I saw fit, I used professional descriptors for the spokesperson and immigration officer that consented to go on record for the study.

To adjust to the tempo of the Batswana of BW, I switched names (not identities) from Ernestina to *Seanokeng*<sup>28</sup> for access to the traditional and modern institutions governing BW's border dynamics and society because the name Ernestina was a barrier on this side of the border. As soon as I adopted Seanokeng, I was immediately granted access to operate within the jurisdiction of Southern (sub) District Council of Good Hope and its Rolong Land Board which oversee territorial and social matters concerning Borolong borderland and border society of BW. This narrative is shared in context of ethics literature in cross-border fieldwork to help future fieldworkers in SADC plan their fieldwork better and with concrete insight as to what could go wrong and what they need to be alert to from their side as a means of researcher ethical consideration. I contend that UCT's humanities research ethics policy should be reviewed to be inclusive of researcher *dressage* for fieldwork in unsafe and not well-known geographic border territories. This must also place emphasis on [female] researcher safety and security, physical health and mental wellness, how to manage exploitation by participants including power dynamics in which the researcher is the dominated party than the dominant hence exploitative agent.

Ethics scholars concur with me that doctoral policy on research ethics and practices can be improved if it allows candidates to shed "light on [field] experiences in a more comprehensive, and potentially representative manner" (Steinert, et al., 2021:18). Crowley-Henry (2009) adds to this stating, field experiences of researcher should "be recorded and

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<sup>28</sup> Seanokeng is Setswana for a thing or non-human creature that goes to the river; a creature that is going to the river. It does not refer to "the one who fetches wood" as noted by Mothoagae (2015:4) since the one is a human *Dasein* and not a thing and, fetching wood is different from going to the river.

included” in their research because they are “integral components” and “moving perspectives” which shape and inform the outcomes of the overall study (Holmes, 2020).

#### *4.6.3 My Lefebvorean and geographic positionality in the SADC study area and international border society*

Ethics in research practice is associated with the researcher production and formulation of the so-called positionality statement. A positionality statement explains the degree to which a researcher’s demographic profile, personal beliefs, philosophical as well as political views shapes and shaped their choice in subject area of study, geographic study site and population and the research (Vanner, 2015; Holmes, 2020). Positionality statements are normative practice in qualitative as well as political geographic research yet as Holmes (2020) argues, the concept and pedagogic purpose of outlining one’s positionality in doctoral research is not always understood. Positionality statements are critical in ethnographic research which go hand in hand with reflexivity and identity (Megoran, 2006; Vanner, 2015; Holmes, 2020; Wilson, Janes and Williams, 2022). According to Holmes (2020) positionality statement requires researchers to state their world views pertaining to the subject area under investigation, the study population and its geographic context inter alia, ethics. For Wilson, Janes and Williams (2022) positionality is an identity related phenomena that refers to a researcher’s adopted position within a given study. It is therefore closely related with reflexivity, “a form of critical thinking” about the identity and positionality of the researcher which is “a necessary prerequisite and an ongoing process” of identifying, constructing, critiquing, and articulating positionality (Holmes, 2020:2; Wilson, Janes and Williams, 2022:44).

Positionality has fixed (static) and subjective (fluid) categories because scientific Dasein are not value-free (Heidegger, 2010; Vanner, 2015). The fixed aspects of positionality are political demographic categories such as sex, race and nationality on the one hand, and subjective categories such as political views, life histories and ethnographic lived experiences on the other (Holmes, 2020). At the level of empirical studies, Holmes (2020) states that positionality is better understood via the ethnographic dialectic of ‘insider-outsider’ and its ontological equivalent of the emic-etic continuum (Megoran, 2006; Koch, 2023). The ethnographic insider-outsider debate hinges on the argument that a researcher’s cultural affiliation with a researched group gives them insider privileges whereas outsiders are perceived as non-members of the studied group (Vanner, 2015; Holmes, 2020). This statement is obviously not true in all cases as literature reveals (Vanner, 2015; Holmes, 2020) In my research experiences in a Tswana dominant international border environment of SA and BW I had no special privileges to access key sites and people cross-border simply because *ke* (I am) Motswana.

Similarly, Megoran (2006) notes how he, a British male, was treated much better by regional elites of Ferghana Valley than his researched populations who are inhabitants of the study area. Ethnographic insider-outsider extends to professional communities of practice such in a situation noted by Wilson, Janes and Williams’s (2022) who described themselves as paramedic insiders and at the same time academic outsiders in their profession because of their PhD candidacy. The same applies for academia. Despite my decade long service at various academic institutions of SA, my incomplete PhD status does not fully make me a member to a profession I already feel alien from. This affects how established scholars relate

with me and vice versa. It is also the reason I omitted this professional identity altogether in fieldwork even though it found its way in the writing. Megoran (2006) was fortunate enough to teach at various institutions in his study area which helped me develop the necessary linguistic competencies that further elevated his experiences among the researched. The ethnographic insider (emic) and outsider (etic) dialectic influences data production and overall research outcomes. According to Holmes (2020), an ethnographic insider's view is emic if it is perceived and presented within the cultural framing of daily terminologies<sup>29</sup> of the studied groups used meaningfully to reflect their true voice. The outsider etic view is "situated within a realist perspective" that "describe differences across" as well as within cultures (Holmes, 2020:5). Furthermore, outsider-etic accounts are often written using scientific terminologies intended for scholars to enable the researcher to detach themselves from subjective bias and "prejudices of the social groups they study" (Holmes, 2020:5).

Qualitative and ethnographic researchers will always be etic outsiders by virtue of their academic (intellectual) position relative to the studied group, and they will always be emic insiders by virtue of their ability to penetrate familiar or unfamiliar social groups under investigation for scientific purposes (Uddin, 2011; Vanner, 2015; Woodworth and Joniak-Lüthi, 2020). Cultural insiders are thus researcher with common cultural attributes with researched populations whereas cultural outsiders are researchers with different values, beliefs and knowledge to researched communities (Suwankhong and Liamputtong, 2015). The emic-etic view is often distorted since people of different cultural backgrounds can share common religious and or political beliefs while those perceived as similar can have totalling opposing views (Holmes, 2020). Scholars are thus advised to shy away from making incorrect assumptions about the situatedness of researchers vis-à-vis the researched based on ethnographic and demographic profiles of researchers (Vanner, 2015; Wilson, Janes and Williams, 2022). I add geography as a fourth factor in positionality statement for serious consideration.

Literature leaves positionality declarations to research candidates to circumnavigate reflexively with stringent supervision throughout the life cycle of their research. For example, Holmes (2020) notes how researchers manipulate or rather negotiate their etic positionality according to the situation they find themselves. In one instance, a research scholar can opt to drop their professional or academic title in fieldwork to make themselves relatable, or they can switch their identities from PhD candidate/clinical researcher to paramedic and vice versa depending on whether they are with researchers or paramedics (Wilson, Janes and Williams, 2022). Key to this process is that candidates must be made aware of it from the beginning of their studies to the end. Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiology and rhythm analytical sciences does not require Rhythmologist to formulate positionality statements, declare political positions and engage the emic-etic ontology characteristic of ethnographic research.

Despite Lefebvre's anti-positionality statements of relational declarations with regards to the researched population and geographically delimited study area, I subordinate Lefebvre's instruction to engage reflexively with my social, intellectual and geographical positionality to explain how my Africa rooted social *Dasein* and Lefebvrian orientation influenced the research process in terms of its design, choice of study area and study population, as well as the territorial subject matter of international borders under Lefebvrian investigation.

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<sup>29</sup> See Chapter 3 of this thesis along with *Mahoko a Becoana* by Mgadla and Volz (2006).

As noted in the preface of this thesis, I undertook this study because of a lack of disciplinary knowledge about Batswana, that is, how and why Batswana of SA and BW came to be citizens of these two different nation states. The analytical speculation was that the international border had something to do with it however I had no prior boundary studies knowledge let alone political geography *dressage* and education. Furthermore, I realised that Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) unitary scholarship was visibly scarce in the discovered interdisciplinary field of geographical limology compared to urban geography. Therefore, I pursued this study to bridge these experienced social and scientific knowledge gaps in ways that would advance Lefebvrianism on territorial terms and help re-establish Batswana as critical social units for boundary analysis in political geography.

Concerning my territorial, cultural and political (national) identities, I am first and always African. I was born in Bophuthatswana time and space to a small sect of Batswana called Batlhako of Tlhakong, to a family of married Christian parents who were in mining and education. Despite growing up among Batswana of Tlhakong in a Setswana speaking household where I spoke Setswana and still do, I was Setswana illiterate. I could not read nor understand written and sometimes spoken Setswana. In 1994 Bophuthatswana was dissolved. In its place a new province of a democratic SA with a different/new flag and national anthem were pronounced thus changing the status of my political identity and national identification. I knew of the *Dasein* of BW however it was more imaginary than real since I understood that Bophuthatswana was greater than BW based on the toponym alone.

It was not after completing the urban masters with Lefebvre that I challenged myself to develop Setswana competency and literacy in preparation for this *oeuvre*. It so happened that on the last day in the field with Kgosi Montshiwa III of the Tshidi Barolong, I was subjected to a trial by space. After concluding the recorded interview with the Rolong king, the royal patriarch invited me to a stroll around the traditional site of the grand border settlement. He led me to a circumscribed space with a concrete monument with Setswana inscriptions detailing the historic events that took place on that site. The king asked me to read the inscription. With confidence I began to orate the stone writings with clarity and understanding. Following this unsuspected test, the king expressed his pleasure with my Setswana literacy because had it not been there, the king stated that he would have regretted the time he spent with me for this study. Being Motswana did not privilege me at all in the fieldwork and in my autonomous study of Tswana anthropology, political geography, and political history.

What Lefebvre (1995) refers to as a female principle falls in the demographic category of sex or gender as identified by positionality literature. My sex was a limitation as far as traditional institutions of BW and SA were concerned. I was not interested in feminist discourses in the A1-A2 cross-border study area and society, nor was I looking for feminist dimensions in the cultural or statist boundary environment because of the dominance of the phallic formant in the actual cross-border environment, and scholarship. My intellectual positionality influenced my autonomous reading, appropriation and uses of Lefebvre which I supplemented with authoritative yet marginal if not unknown Tswana scholarship inter alia, Sarte's (2001) phenomenological time conception and Heidegger's (2010) hermeneutical spatial *Dasein* whose being is space and is found in the space of living and rhythm-analytical human beings.

## 4.7 Research limitations and the weakness of the territorial research design

Undertaking this research project in political geography using the A1-A2 cross-border landscape of Botswana was a rewarding and extremely stressful experience riddled with difficulties which as Lefebvre (2004) notes, never end for the Rhythmologist. I outline and summarise four overlapping areas that had an impact on the research process and outcomes.

### 4.7.1 Theoretical limits

This Lefebvrian border and borderlands study was limited in intellectual rigour and depth because of the lack of existing studies in geographical limology and elsewhere who have used Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) rhythm-analytical spatiology for boundary theorizing, conceptualization, and empirical analyses. This *status quo* impeded theoretical development to some level without negating the advanced conceptual analyses of the study which are more tangible and sensible than the abstract theories of political geography. The academic lack of le dressage in political geography, history and social anthropology posed a significant limit which I overcame by means of Lefebvre's (1991) spatial architectonics which enabled me to see the disciplinary dimensions of each prerequisite field of study throughout the development of this work. That made it possible for me to connect with Anglophone scholarship that argues for the import of more perspectives across the humanities and social sciences, while in the African context I was able to connect with decolonial border epistemologies and trends in the humanities in search for Lefebvrian political geographers to territorialize post-colonial Africa. The lack of Lefebvre's intellectual footprint in African political geography vis-à-vis Anglophone political geography is both a significant limitation and opportunity which this study seeks to address and hopefully, overcome.

### 4.7.2 Methodological limits

In addition to the lack of Lefebvrian studies in political geography for the analysis of boundary dynamics, I was limited by the lack of comparative empirical studies conducted on Botswana of SA and BW. Drummond and Manson (1991) for example, engaged desktop analyses of the then Bophuthatswana-Botswana border landscape with subnational focus on "the Hurutshe people whose reserve lay along the margins of the ZAR and whose Western boundary was also the Transvaal-BP border" (Drummond and Manson, 1991:226). The lack of comparative case studies for the SA-BW international border and cross-borderlands affected the outcomes of this research since it has no original studies in political geography to compare itself with besides Drummond and Manson's (1991) critical classical scholarship.

Since ethnography is proven to be relatively "rare" and scarce "amongst political geographers", I had no conception of the number of cross-borderlands or places of abode and junction points (border gates) to explore for analysis, the length of time I will need in the vast geographic landscape conducting fieldwork which included archives (Megoran, 2006:626). At some point I identified too many borderlands in BW than SA and my supervisor asked me to reconsider a balanced scale and so I ended up with four. Without any ethnographic political geography, I could reference from SADC, I adapted and reimagined Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatiological rhythm-analysis to fit this study's design. Fortunately, Lefebvre's (2004) rhythm is both a method and theory that is inter and transdisciplinary. It allowed me to fuse and integrate different elements from various academic disciplines for an empirical strategy that would support fieldwork in lieu of the study's main aim, key objectives, and

questions. I limited my interviews with key informants to 41 after identifying key actors needed to help the study answer pre-historic and anthropological spatial questions not readily available in published research.

#### *4.7.3 Ethical limits and data access*

Because of the ethical policy for researchers to respect the choices of their empowered participants and not coerce anyone to partake in the study, this relational aspect of fieldwork posed significant limits which affected the analysis and outcomes of the study. For example, in BW I struggled to access to the regional border managers of A1-A2 junction points for their insights on their boundary dynamics internally and internationally with SA. Onsite immigration officers at A1-A2 border gates of BW were also reluctant to participate in the study citing that only regional border managers had authority to address researchers. The perpetual physical absence of regional border managers, mutability of immigration officers, the lack of email correspondence by BURS in Gaborone, limited the study in its cross-border analyses and knowledge of BW's boundary thinking and politics. Similarly with SA, I failed to get email correspondence from the minister of the Department of Home Affairs about the country's boundary policies, regime and other operational dimensions related to cross-border governance and the place of subnational and transnational borderlands in SA's immigration policies and NDPs. The loss of photographic data posed a limit on conceptual terms since I use photographs not only for illustrative purposes but also for anthropological/historical archives.

#### *4.7.4 Technical and technological limits*

While the A1-A2 border rhythmograph shows continuity of international migration practices along A1-A2 junction points of SA and BW well after 27 August 2018, it does not explain the influence of loss of personal mobility on the research. The spatial arrhythmia meant that I could not traverse as much territory as I could, and that I could not physically access the country's archives in Gaborone at BNARS which also required a lot of time. This meant that whatever lists I made up to that far in my fieldwork journal for identified archival material, could not be accessed to enrich the prehistoric and post historic analysis of pre-boundary and post-boundary dynamics experienced by Batswana north of the Molopo-Limpopo Rivers. This further translated into a rather thin section on BW's pre- and post-1966 territorial dynamics which also involved Segosi and magosi a Batswana such as Kgosi Lotlamoreng I Montshiwa whose Rolong of BW are of serious interest in the study. To add to this was the uncommunicated non-functionality of BNARS technologies which interestingly Mogende (2020) also experienced.

On the upside, this spatial arrhythmia enabled me to develop spatial competencies for the uses of cross-border public transportation between and within the respective borderlands. I also gained a different perspective about spatial integration through transportation corridors as a type of spatial regionalism that is unfolding in SADC. The burning of the Jagger Library Building of UCT in 2021 was another tragedy that cost this study a wealth of textual data on Tswana ethnographies, historical materials and on Africa's international boundary dynamics. I recovered some of these fire torched references from the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) during my temporary residence in Cape Town to mitigate these limiting gaps.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter sought to explain and discuss the Lefebvrian methods and methodological frameworks applied in the transnational fieldwork undertaken in 2016 and 2018 at the A1-A2 border gates and places of abode of SA and BW. Through the rhythmic strategy of borrowing techniques, tools and data from the ethnographic, historical, photographic and discourse analytical social sciences, I strung together a framework for the utility of Rhythmology as a spatial methodology for cross-border fieldwork to supplement lack of *dressage* and under supervision in various areas of research development. I adhered to overt techniques that aligned with ethical protocol and standards for working with human participants. I also generated primary or original data such as ethnographic interviews, geometric and optic formants which I utilise for analyses. My geographic, social and intellectual positionality influenced the study at various stages and despite geographic and cultural association with the study population, I did not receive automatic accesses to people and places.

Furthermore, Lefebvre's spatial rhythmology requires further research, development, and examination because it holds promise for addressing method and methodological challenges characterising contemporary border studies in political geography and the social sciences. My under preparation for fieldwork yielded some meaningful insights about the two-sided nature of power asymmetries in the field where I felt overpowered, intimidated, exploited at times and disconnected from my home institution and department. Indeed, doctoral candidates in the LMICs face a myriad of challenges which are often ignored in institutional research policies on ethics and doctoral programmes on offer. With this chapter, it is my hope that future candidates and university RECs can begin a discourse on balancing expectations and power dynamics between humanities researchers and their human participants because some African researchers may not always be in positions of power and authority over their not always powerless and vulnerable research populations.

## Chapter 5

### The A1-A2 International Junction Points of South Africa and Botswana

#### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present my findings on the functions and character of the international border of South Africa (SA) and Botswana (BW) from the empirical and policies perspectives of its two comparable yet separately apprehended A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek junction points. The objective of the chapter is to determine the political spatial practices and spatial rhythms of the international border between these two Botswana inhabited nation states. With this chapter I lay the foundation for a Lefebvrian theoretical conceptualisation of the southern African international border considering its historically complex spatial, political, colonial and veterinary evolution in the SADC region.

#### 5.2 The South Africa-Botswana international border region: A geopolitical interstate space

The international border of SA and BW has a long history of changing political functions, character and meaning in central south Africa. This spatial history spans at least two centuries from since its geometric delimitation in 1897, to its final formalisation, consolidation, and institutionalisation in 1910, eight years after the so-called Anglo-Boer or SA War of 1899-1902. This international border is one of 109 identified fracture lines constituting the political geography of Africa. Fracture lines are a term coined and favoured by Lefebvre (1991:317) denoting boundaries or boundary which Lefebvre perceive as “too weak a word” since they obscure essential points of spatial differentiation and frontier zones organization by class, race and *Dasein*. Fracture lines are invisible and highly irregular lines which better reveal the true contours or political isobars “of the ‘real’ social space lying beneath its homogeneous surface” (Lefebvre, 1991:317). What type of social space is lying beneath the homogeneous surface of the highly political states space of the SA-BW fracture line 126-years later in space? The SA fracture line with BW separates a human society of roughly six million Setswana speakers which it partitions into separate geopolitical units of the two sovereign states with an unequal number of Botswana, majority of whom are in SA.

To understand the contemporary spatial practices and spatial rhythms of the SA-BW fracture line, one must first establish it as a unitary abstract space. The SA-BW international border region is a global political state space that is organized and reproduced through a myriad of overlapping international and subnational borders as well as demographic boundaries interacting at different geographic scales and different times to produce monumental space. As a global states space of BW and SA, the border region commands an authority of political sovereignty within the respective countries partitioned spaces. This sovereign authority is invested in the ontic being of the geographic international border which not only safeguards and delimits the sovereignty of either state but, it acts to asphyxiate that which appears to threaten it and that which looks different from it. As a result, the SA-BW borderline can be understood as the spatial expression of state sovereignty safeguarded by the political framework of state power which is underpinned by space and hence spatial.

As a political space, the SA-BW fracture line is not a product established by actions of sole statist actors, legal apparatus and uses of superfluous force and violence oriented towards social space. The borderline is thus a “representation of space” demarcated on the ground for



social transformation by submerged “representational space...and its basic resource” (Lefebvre, 1991:245). The approximately 15 cross-border junction points defining the spatial geography of the political fracture line allow contemporary African inhabitants of the transnational space to assert the line’s political centrality “at the core of the *orbis terrarium*” through the border gates and their imperial way which “marks the sacrosanct enceinte off from its subject territories, and allows for entrance and exit” (Lefebvre, 1991:245). The representation of this space as I have showed in Chapter 4 and elsewhere in this chapter, is dual and asymmetric in character. On the one side of its BW representation the fracture line is a closed space that is set apart from the neighbouring SA side of the same borderline and hence is fortified in contrast to its SA counterpart that is relatively open, desires cross-border streamlining of its boundary and migration management systems and policy frameworks with surrounding countries except BW (Republic of South Africa, 2015, 2022). This contradictory spatial relationship secreted by the fracture line is a result of neighbouring states’ inconsistencies influenced by the political history of their relative regional security complexes during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Continuity here is perceived in BW’s absence from SA’s One Stop Border Post (OSBP) model pilot similar to when apartheid SA was denied and rejected by BW in the 1980s to be a part of its regional security complex since BW was a frontline state against racist regimes of Ian Smith and apartheid SA (Kotze, 1988; Maundeni, 1998; Osei-Hwedie, 1998).

Political power of SA and BW state governments thus are responsible for harbouring these immanent contradictions in space which they control further through regulation of state flows and surrounding agglomerations. Here as we will shortly see, both states are heavily involved in the performativity of their respective sovereignties through deep involvement in the spatial rhythmic consolidation of not only spatial practices of the international fracture line but also of the entire territorial polyrhythmic ensemble in space. Both states are furthest from withering, atrophy or relinquishing power to their subregions including business sectors, city-regions, transnational superstructures as per Lefebvre’s (2001) New State Form conceptions. What is perceived and discoursed by the SA-BW fracture line and monumental abstract space both African states, their bureaucratic and political apparatuses intervene incessantly and continuously in the central south Africa African frontier sub-region of the Batswana. BW and SA use the fracture line in its instrumental quality to intervene at all levels of their partitioned societies’ lives and “through every agency of the economic realm” (Lefebvre, 1991:378).

Politics in these two states have become a serious profession in which state apparatuses such as the states and political party machines have become institutional entities secreting the border as a type of elitist space through which the interests of the regional elites, states and border populations converge in their distinct attributes and characteristics to reproduce the territorial polyrhythmia constituting the multiscalar international boundary environment. The SA-BW international border engages the political practice of asphyxiating that which opposes it because the international states that depend on it for power and territorial sovereignty over their national geographic spaces have dominion over the national societies that they represent. Every modern society is subject and subjected to the political spatial practices of their national state governments that they find themselves in. In the case of SA and BW the Western conceived and delimited Euclidean space of the spatial border sought to make a *tabula rasa* of the social body of the Afro-Tswana who were radically different on race, culture and conception of territory, the state and borders, from their Western conquerors of British and Dutch origin. The process and practice of asphyxiation by the international border manifested in 1852 through the Sand River Convention which disempowered Batswana through institutionalised political economy of slavery and further dispossessed

them of their territories and labour to a significant degree. Bakwena of Kgosi Sechele I put up a strong fight by resisting deterritorialization and asphyxiation by British and Afrikaner nation states which sought to exterminate and subordinate Batswana from their inalienable and natural boundaries adorned absolute spaces of SA and BW. Native laws inter alia Urban Areas and Group Areas Acts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century continued to perpetuate the asphyxiation using abstract Laws. For SA Batswana border asphyxiation continued well into the late 1970s to early 1990s with post-British Afrikaner National Party state having absolute control and sovereignty over substantial portions of Southern Africa. SA Tswana were compacted into unproductive and highly fragmented geographic micro-borderlands without any international borders and hence no political sovereignty.

For Batswana of BW, territorial sovereignty and political independence was granted by the British post their protection during the late 1950s towards the mid-1960s. Batswana of BW as a result escaped spatial asphyxiation by the international border in 1966 once they formally recovered their social autonomy and natural right to autogestion and co-gestion as a new modern nation state emerging from firm foundations laid throughout the pre-historic and Protectorate periods in which traditional leaders or dikgosi were the dominant space in society than modern politicians of the recognised Botswana Democratic Party (BDF) championed by the Hurutshe ceded Ngwato branch of the royal Khama family. With their extremely different political histories, organized states of BW and SA are similar in respect to the international border that both separates and conjoins them. They are similar because the states command the lived and the perceived as they conceive them. In other words, how the inhabitants of BW and SA live, interact with each other in respective spaces, their relationship and access to resources including state space, is determined by the states based on their own imaginations and representations of their own political sovereignty, territory and national state which are all contained within the boundaries of the international border that separates and connects them.

The simultaneous practice of spatial division by connection and connection by division is a paradox of spatial practice which as Lefebvre (1991: 38) notes “includes the most extreme separation between the places it links together”. Furthermore, the paradoxical tendency of spatial practice as a third dimension of Lefebvre’s spatial triad, and the spatial practice of the abstract space of the SA-BW international border, create the illusion of geographic and social incongruency where there exist an ambiguous and unambiguous continuity. What the interstate space of the SA-BW border region further reveals is that the border is an absolute abstract space endowed with sovereignty hinged on a spatial framework of power. In its dimension as abstract space, the international border of SA and BW is an institutional states space that is deeply political and is inherently geographical. Given its paradoxical spatial practice the SA-BW international border gives off the illusion of geographic incongruity where there is in fact continuity. In the case of SA’s North-West Province to BW, the study area is found to be geographically and culturally congruent despite the border’s political functions to separate and differentiate between the two geographic units and their distinctly Tswana populace.

### 5.3 Botswana junction points: A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate

The Republic of BW shares at least 15 junction points<sup>30</sup> or “points of entry” (PoE) with the Republic of SA along the 1,170km length of the fracture line of the North-West Province (Immigration Act, 2010:3; DHA, 2015). BW’s *Immigration Act of 1998* and its revised *Immigration Act of 2010* are the dominant representations of state space informing BW’s immigration control and international border management practices. Since they are identical, I use the 2010 gazetted Immigration Act to discern BW’s border producing practices or borderworks to discern its boundary’s regime and spatial rhythm. Officials in BW government confirmed that the country lacks a comprehensive international migration or immigration policy that is distinct from the revised *Immigration Act of 2010*. The Immigration Act is thus the legal and administrative framework of BW’s territorial border policy. BW’s *Immigration Act of 2010* does not give an account to produce the border, the spatial distribution as well as place names of any of its PoEs including the two junction points A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate.

Fragments of information are however scattered in various official documents from the government of BW such as the National Development Plan (NDP) 11 of 2017-2023, Land Policy of 2015, Southern District Development Plan (SDDP) 6 of 2003-2009, Lobatse Urban Development Plan (LUDP) 2 of 2003-2009 and Lobatse Urban Regeneration Plan (LURP) of 2017-2024. According to the Land Policy of 2015 there is a Boundaries Act, CAP 03:01. This Act “commenced in 1892” as a legal framework “enacted to define the boundaries of Botswana” (Republic of Botswana, 2015:9). The Lobatse Urban Regeneration Plan (LURP) mentions the international border relative to its internal location described as “boarded on the East by the international boundary with South Africa” (Republic of Botswana, 2018:3). According to the NDP 11 of 2017-2023 the sovereign state “shares borders with Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia and Zambia” Republic of Botswana, 2017:5) while elsewhere the Bangwaketse dominant SD is described as a subnational territory “bordered to the north by Kweneng District, to the south by the Republic of South Africa (RSA), to the east by South East District, and to the west by the Kgalagadi District” (Republic of Botswana, 2003:1).

Beyond the directional boundary descriptions of BW in SADC and relative to SA, none of these official documents shed more light about the country’s boundary definition, functions and territorial conceptions. As a result, the *Immigration Act of 2010* is analyzed as an important statist framework of power through which state borderworks are discoursed. Accordingly, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship under the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs is responsible for migration control and management inter alia “fostering cordial relations with other countries through information exchange on issues of migration” (Republic of Botswana, 2003:94). The mandate of the Lobatse based national department of immigration is to process applications for citizenship, passports and residential permits by residents and foreigners alike (Republic of Botswana, 2003). Despite lacking textual information on BW’s international border regime and management practices, the organization of the country’s international border environment is made explicit in the *Immigration Act of 2010*. According to the Act, there are several key state actors involved in the production and reproduction of state space, state territoriality and the international border. These include a diverse mixture of border officials, government ministers and High Court judges. This is the

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<sup>30</sup> I use the terms: border gates, abstract space, fracture line, PoE, POE and junction points interchangeably to refer to the A1-A2 border gates and the international border which I distinguish as from the state as conceived representations of space.

dominant space in BW society which determines what is perceived and lived with what is conceived. This is the space that subjects inhabitants of the country and users of the country's space to its political spatial practices such that whatever is perceived as a threat to the nationalist ideologies and territorial practices of the dominant space is immediately made a *tabula rasa* of. The roster of representations of state space is diverse. These are composed of border professionals who are defined in Part I: *Preliminary*, Section 2: 'Interpretation' of the *Immigration Act of 2010*. These actors include an authorised officer, Director, immigration officer, immigration consultant, the Board and Commissioner. These state actors play different roles in the statist border framework, at different levels of society and to varying degrees of power.

Part II: *Immigration Procedures*, Section 4: 'Point of Entry' of the Act, outlines the roles of each state actor and the various procedures they must follow, implement and reenforce. This section applies to migrants as well. For example, immigrants/emigrants are expected to formally cross BW's borderline at designated PoEs as "specified by the Minister by order published in the Gazette" and migrants must "on arrival at a point of entry" present themselves "immediately to an immigration officer" for inspection, migration data capturing and processing (*Immigration Act, 2010: 4 (1)(a)(b)*). An immigration officer in this regard is "a person appointed under section 3" such as "(1) The Minister, (a) an immigration officer and (b) an authorised officer" employed by the state "to perform the duties set out under this Act" (*Immigration Act, 2010:3*). Immigration officials and authorised officers are empowered by section 5(1) of the Act. An immigration officer may subject a legal/documented migrant border user to thorough examination "for the purpose of ascertaining whether the person (a) is or is not a prohibited immigrant; or (b) is liable to removal from Botswana under section 8" as per section 4(1)(b) (*Immigration Act, 2010:4(5)*).

Immigration officers may subject border users to a thorough cross-examination if they suspect the legal status of the migrant and or the authenticity of their travel documents. Should the official be dissatisfied with the immigrant's responses, documentation, or legal standing, Part V: *Prohibited Immigrants* (Sections 41-49); Part VI: *Undesirable Immigrants* (Sections 50-51) and Part VII: *Miscellaneous Provisions* (Sections 53-60) of the old and new *Immigrations Acts of 1998 and 2010*, are immediately evoked. Under these rules and procedures, police officers, border security, immigration officials, authorised officers including the President of the Republic of BW, are well empowered to deport and prohibit undesirable migrants at airports and land based PoEs. Only under certain state rules can migrants transgress formal rules for geographic entry and departure at other locations other than the designated A1-A2 border gates. These migrants are however of a special and elite class. These elite migrants are part of what Baud and van Schendel (1997) refer to as the sub-regional elites in borderlands. This elite cohort of border users may and can with the written consent of Director of immigration, cross, enter and depart BW from anywhere without that boundary action being deemed in contravention of the immigration Act.

The Director in this regard is "any person holding the public office of Director of Immigration", or "a member of a class of persons authorised by the Minister by order published in the Gazette", (*Immigration Act, 2010: 4*). Most people must enter or depart BW legally through A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate, and others under special written permission can enter/depart elsewhere and it is not an illegal entry or departure. This latter group of elite migrants are exempt from subsection 4 (1)(a)(b) of the Act. Anyone else not exempt under conditions listed in subsection 2 (a)(b) of the Act presents a political liability which would induce the state to press criminal charges starting with hefty fines "not

exceeding P10 000, or... imprisonment...not exceeding 10 years, or both” if found to be in contravention of the Act (*Immigration Act, 2010:4(4)*). From the ordinary cluster of daily migrants is another social differentiation which give an indication of BW’s territorial border. There is a special category of undesirable migrants which BW describes and perceives as a stain on its moral fabric which must be contained. Undesirables include people with criminal reports, mental and health issues, foreigners with poor economic disposition, unpardoned prisoners, sex workers, children and spouses of prohibited immigrants and any person “who, in consequence of information received from a reliable source is declared by the President to be a prohibited immigrant” (*Immigration Act, 1998, 2010:17 (41) (c)*).

In Part V: Section 50 (1)(e), “a person is an undesirable immigrant and his or her entry into or presence within Botswana is unlawful if he or she...is a prostitute, or a person who lives or has lived or knowingly receives or has received any part of the earnings of prostitution or has procured another person for immoral purposes” (*Immigration Act, 2010:20 (50)(1)(e)*). Any undesirables found at the border and interior of the country may be subject to two weeks detainment, or sent to the nearest prison by police officers, authorised officers, immigration officials, the Director and even the President (*Immigration Act, 2010*). Prohibited immigrants are liable to “a fine not exceeding P10 000, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years, or both” (*Immigration Act, 2010:19(47)*). In terms of judgements made against undesirables by the President, “(1) a person shall not have the right to be heard before or after a decision is made by the President in relation to that person under this Act” and “(2) a person (1) shall not have the right to demand any information as to the grounds of such a decision nor shall any such information be disclosed in any court” (*Immigration Act, 2010:19 (48)(1)(2)*). BW’s border control through the *Immigration Act of 2010* reveals a new state form and state mode of production (SMP) of the country. That migrants lack democratic rights to information that directly affects them is a hallmark of the silencing of users by abstract space. Besides the subtle totalitarianism displayed in BW’s immigration Act there is a concealed economic dimension of border usage that is not made explicit in the policy.

For example, I learnt from fieldwork that BW has border processing fees for private, public and commercial motorists. On my first boundary crossing and uses via A1 border gates I was asked by the Botswana Unified Revenue Services (BURS) for P152 (R207) because I was a first-time border crosser. This after facing a rather hostile frontier and lengthy administration process of filling three sets of paperwork each requiring detailed information on my reasons for entry, residential address in BW including stand and phone number of my hosts, length of stay, mode of transportation, vehicle registration number, colour, model, my age, ID and Passport number, race, nationality, marital status and so on. This was the same experience and same process for each time I used the A1-A2 border gates of BW. An experience I always dreaded because it was not always hospitable. I much later after studying the Immigration Act of 2010, became aware that that border experience and militant style migration management was part of BW’s border regime and state mandated functions. Because of the border’s closed regime and economic dimension, the border gates also served as sites for currency conversion with each entry at the A1 border gate while paying P52 (R70) per car entry. Since I could not find audience with BW’s regional border managers, on site immigration officers at A1-A2 border gates and BURS officials at Gaborone, I sought insights on BW’s border practices from a senior immigration official at A2 Skilpadshak who gave the following explanation:

We are trying...to promote travel and tourism in [SA], so we do not charge at the border gate...Very few Batswana from SA come to [BW] through A2 border gate...P52 is for

private motors, for trucks. What would you prefer? For the state to make money or people to make money? Most people come to [BW] to look for fuel yet, a motorist pays or parts with P152 for first time crossing and P52 afterwards before filling up on [BW] petrol because it is cheaper. It is a fallacy...[BW] is a sovereign country like [SA]. It means they do their own things their own way and so do we...we do not want to abuse our power but there are repercussions...we want these Batswana with their Pulas to have it easy from the border at the competitive economic level... South Africans don't lose anything by not going to Botswana! They [Northern Tswana] will always come to [SA] as long as we do not make it difficult (Senior Immigration Officer, personal interview, 2018 September 20).

This insight reveals an interesting element of cross-border capitalism and its rhythmic definition of BW's border regime. Everywhere a space, time and expenditure of energy interact there is rhythm. This rhythm is however asymmetrical since it is not produced, practiced, imposed and experienced on the SA side of the fracture line by ordinary border users and motorists. It matters in terms of migration flows that substantially smaller cohorts of Southern Batswana and South Africans in general frequent BW far less compared to Batswana of BW with their Pula currency remaining strong over the SA Rand. These sets of incoherent yet cohesive state regimes secrete the political boundary as an asymmetric fracture line whose divergent spatial practices enforce each other separately since they do not overlap or touch, without creating a chaotic and incoherent border environment.

#### **5.4 South Africa's junction points: A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Skilpadshek**

The A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Skilpadshek are two of 15 land-based junction points or "Ports of Entry" making up the country's hypercomplex and multidimensional international border environment (Republic of South Africa, 2015, 2016a:5, 2016b:3, 2022). SA has a hypercomplex and multidimensional set of international borders on land, along its coast (maritime) and in the air. According to the Border Management Agency (BMA) policies of the country, SA has an estimated 72 official junction points or ports of entry (POEs) from which 53 are land-based (Republic of South Africa, 2015, 2022). SA's international border environment constitutes 1.2 million km<sup>2</sup> of air space, 4,471km length of land borders, 3,924km length of maritime borders and roughly 35 undesignated or informal junction points between SA and Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, BW, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique (Republic of South Africa, 2015). The sheer geographic scale, quantitative size and diversity of international borders reveals SA's political geography of international borders to be exceptionally complex, highly professional, and highly specialised in contrast to land-locked BW and its 15 land-based border gates along a single border with SA and some aviation boundaries represented by a handful of airports.

From the more than 50 known landbased POEs of SA and 15 PoEs between SA and BW, I focused on the A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Skilpadshek along the 1,770km long fracture line straddling the North-West Province and BW. SA's POEs were redefined and reorganized yet again from the military lethal state functions under apartheid to demilitarised spaces of democratic national security and economic development under the ANC state led government (Steinberg, 2005; Guy, 2017; Letlape, 2021). With the 2009 conception of the BMA the Home Affairs Department was tasked with the national and international management of the country's multidimensional, hypercomplex and extensive global state space (Republic of South Africa, 2015; Motsoaledi, 2019). To better understand the contemporary organization, management and regime of the country's international border, I analyzed SA's Green and White Papers on International Migration of 2016a and 2016b. SA's International Migration

Policies (IMPs) are shaped by the country's political history of British colonialism and anti-African apartheid states policies of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Considered together with the country's BMAs and Immigration Act of 2002, the IMPs are statist representations of space that provide the legal and administrative framework of state borderworks. Since conceived statist space determines what is lived and perceived with what it conceives, democratic SA is conceived itself as:

A major international player in various international (multilateral and bilateral) platforms...a major destination and tourist hub for the continent and the world...a platform for investment...attracts tourists from all regions of the world...a global player in certain areas of the sciences and the arts...a nation and a state. (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:14, 2016b:5)

This conceptual territorial definition reveals an interesting new state form and SMP which operates at subnational, regional (continental) and international (global) scales. As such it would be upon the state to decide its own scales of operation, that is, is it more transnational than nationally focused? The global outlook of the country from the IMPs is neocapitalist, creative economy and political knowledge economy driven. Democratic SA perceives itself as an investment platform first than a political sovereignty and a geographical place. It seeks the attention of the global tourist before consolidating its internal and SADC regional politics as a sovereign state that inherited a racist and powerful sovereignty that wreaked havoc within SADC from since the 1850s to 1994. With a murky nationalist framework, SA perceives itself as a haven for refugees thus leading to a "high number of individual asylum seekers" whom despite the neoliberal border policy are said to be "in line with the African Union 2063 vision" (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:14). A bizarre feature of SA's IMPs is their overt approach to be inclusive to all foreign and domestic nationals of the world and Africa including expatriates.

According to its IMPs, SA's migration policy "must enable South Africans living abroad to contribute to national development priorities", and at the same time, "it must be oriented towards Africa...contribute to national building and social cohesion" (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:17). It is not yet clear how the country achieves these multiscale and extra-territorial relations given the lack of cross-border cooperation or governance with neighbouring countries. SA's immigration policy at the border level is contextualised in the legal framework of the *Immigration Act of 2002*. Similar to BW's Immigration Act of 2010, SA's Immigration Act of 2002 outlines rules and procedures for migrants, as well as outline key actors and their jurisdiction within SA's hypercomplex and monumental boundary environment. Where boundary transgressions are concerned, neither SA's IMPs and Immigration Act reward deviant migration with outright imprisonment or hefty fines. Neither does SA classify *de jure* and *de facto* African foreigners as 'undesirables' compared to BW's *Immigration Act of 2010*. The IMPs are however against the scourge of human trafficking, circulation of contraband, smuggling of people and goods including counterfeit products which are deemed undesirable social practices characterising roughly 4000 kilometres of land borders and their respective formal and informal junction points (Republic of South Africa, 2016a, 2016b; 2017).

This degree of porosity fits Lefebvre's (1991) notion of a fracture line because that is what porosity entails. It entails that the line though solid on geographic maps is not so solid in practice. It is fractured, broken and filled with orifices that permit seamless movements and exchanges between boundary demarcated units which perceive such flows indiscriminately as

undesirable, problematic and illegal. To better govern the generally porous borders IMPs distinguish between “border management, international migration” and “migration management” at POEs (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:5, 2016b:3). As a space that safeguard state sovereignty SA IMPs and Immigration Act barely define the international border. The boundary is instead ontically and vaguely defined as “the national borders of the Republic” (*Immigration Act, 2002:6*). SA’s IMPs distinguish the country’s regime along two functions: border management and migration management. Border management refers to “the government functions of immigration, customs and excise, and policing, with the aim of controlling and regulating the flow of people and goods across a country’s border in the national interest” (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:5). These functions involve “the facilitation of authorized flows of persons, including businesspeople, tourists, migrants and refugees, across a border and the detection and prevention of irregular entry of non-nationals into a given country” (Republic of South Africa, 2016b:3).

Everywhere a space time and expenditure of energy interact, a rhythm occurs. The management of state functions pertaining migration as well as the facilitation or regulation of cross-border flows reveals the SA’s states involvement and dominance in the rhythmic boundary producing practices in which human and non-human traffic is tightly regulated in a highly porous border environment to prevent irregular entry non-nationals and circulation of contraband. The South African Revenue Services (SARS) through customs and excise units has a role in the spatial rhythms of the SA border. Migration management in contrast “encompass numerous governmental functions within a national system for the orderly and humane management of cross-border migration...a planned approach to the development of policy, legislative and administrative responses to key migration issues” (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:5, 2016b:3). Migration management is thus the social or human dimension of the SA border regime that is regulated by the state while border management is the capitalist dimension of the border that facilitates flows of commercial goods including regulation of elite migrants such as business investors and tourists.

Both border and migration management are abstract state practices that address two sides of the same coin, that is, the international border. An understanding of both state functions brings *Näschte* the nature of the border’s regime. Given the planetary scale of the country’s border environment, it is not easy to discern intergovernmental and intragovernmental state relations and organization. It is not clear which state departments have jurisdiction on boundary management and which have jurisdiction on migration management. in terms of which state departments are responsible for the management of cross-border migration on the one hand, and the management of the international border.

Similar to BW’s immigration policy, SA’s IMPs state that all POEs are “designated by the Minister in the RSA where all persons have to report to an immigration officer before entering or leaving the country” (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:5, 2016b:3). The PoEs such as A1-A2 border gates of SA are brought in as geographic sites for migration management. The geographic location and political functions of SA border gates are defined by the Minister of Home Affairs in accordance with the Immigration Act of 2002. According to the Act, immigration officers are appointed by the Director-General of the DHA under the same Act. Their duties are to permit entry/exit and inspect migrants in transit. The Commissioner of SARS can also affect border management and migration regimes at various POEs through Customs and Excise mandate. The International Health Regulation can also assign any part of the state line as designated entry or departure point while “other State entities have similar mandates relating to their spheres of control” (Republic of South Africa,



2016a:35). This makes for a highly complex and multi-governmental international border environment managed by a variety of state actors. This raises questions concerning information sharing and the rate or speed at which border changes in one POE are effectively communicated to relevant systems and actors in other POEs. What are the implications of such a complex structure on border management and migration management functions of the state? Any authorised state actor according to the Act can change the political spatial practices and spatial rhythms of any part of the international border by changing one or two elements affecting the border's management practices.

Despite numerous state actors in the country's border environment, the Immigration Act identifies the Minister of Home Affairs as the authority to assign functions to and change rhythms of, or disband, a POE altogether. The DHA Minister is the dominant space in border environment. They can assign or appropriate certain functions of POEs at specific sites along the lengthy international border with BW. In addition, the DHA Minister can determine the number of junction points or change and appropriate them altogether. The DHA Minister is endowed with political powers to appoint a chairperson and deputy chairperson for the Immigration Board which the Minister can dissolve at will on the condition that they organize a new Immigration Board within 90 days (*Immigration Act, 2002*). The Minister is thus not a unilateral actor. He or she operates within a large scale multidisciplinary and multistakeholder environment and so they must consult with the Immigration Board—composed of the Director-General of the DHA, Head of Immigration Services, representatives from organized labour, business *inter alia* five specialists and experts in immigration law, procedures, and management—before effecting changes in border management and migration management policies and practices.

The Minister is also empowered to delimit the jurisdiction of respective state organs, set the direction for immigration policy and practice, and change the number, geographic location and size of the country's junction points including their operational times (*Immigration Act, 2002*). In this way, the SA side of the fracture line is conceived as a border in constant motion even though its line on the ground and maps is fixed, its production and reproduction is not. This analytical observation further negates Lefebvre's (1991) conception of border gates as fixed points because in Africa the border gates move. They move along the body of the fracture line. Sometimes they might not move at all or all at once, other times others may be annihilated and or relocated altogether to another part of the fracture line while new points emerge on land, in the air and along maritime zones. This part therefore continues the traditional Ratzelian state thinking on international boundaries and state institutions as living organisms with an epidermis. The POEs/PoEs of the SA-BW borderline are legal spatial orifices like sweat pores that open to release trapped heat and water from sweat glands when the body heats up and close shut when it freezes.

Likewise, SA-borderline with BW, the one side is open to release of a lot of hot steam and energy and the other is closed shut because the temperature is cold and kept cold. Border gates are not mere professional and technocratic sites for state management practices and legal enforcement or performativity of sovereignty. Lefebvre (1991:193) agrees with the data and literature that junction points or POEs are “often places of passage” for migrants of various classes with various reasons for border uses including commercial and trade elements. At the same time, Border gates are also places of encounter with state apparatus in full throttle where “access to them is forbidden except on certain occasions of ritual import” including “declarations of war or peace” (Lefebvre, 1991:193). Fracture lines are indeed a knife's razor edge upon which issues of war and life, death and peace, freedom and

incarceration are hung. As earlier noted, the DHA Minister is responsible for the appointment of immigration officers whose roles are to manage migration rhythms of the border by enforcing formal procedures of entry into and exit from SA at the A1-A2 border gates. In addition, immigration officers are charged with the responsibility of informing disgruntled border crossers of their human rights to submit written complaints to the Director-General or Minister of DHA where they may be found in contravention of the 2002 Immigration Act. Immigration officers must examine the legal standing of migrants including authentication of their legal documents before permitting or prohibiting entry or departure. Immigration officers were deployed in the border environment of SA in 1992 by the DHA - a government ministry which under apartheid was responsible for the execution of racially discriminatory laws against Africans while providing the necessary border services to white inhabitants (Letlape, 2021). It comes as no surprise that SA's IMPs want to shed that part of the border environment from its democratic body in the language of globalization, cosmopolitanism, and moral responsibility towards historically disadvantaged Africans within and outside the country's international borders.

According to the Immigration Act, no citizen and foreigner is allowed entry or departure without relevant documentation and recording of their immigration and emigration from the Republic (*Immigration Act, 2002*). Failure to adhere to these rules and procedures results in a denial of entry or exit, imprisonment of about 12-24 months, and a fine of R8000 if found with fraudulent documents, or R20,000 if found to be in contravention of all governing rules and procedures (*Immigration Act, 2002*). I departed SA to BW for the first time on 11 July 2018 via A1 POEs. On arrival at immigration, I presented my Passport and provided any other information I was asked by immigration officers with computers. With each question responded to them inputted the data on the system. I proceeded to SARS Customs where I had nothing to declare. My passport was stamped, and I was cleared to proceed to BW. I drove a short distance towards the A1 Ramatlabama junction point that is characterised by a wild vegetative zone that acts as a territorial buffer between the two cross-border gates which are intercepted by the defunct transnational railway line.

In the earlier stages of my border crossings my SA departures stamps were not consistent with my SA returns. Baffled by the inconsistencies on my SA passport, an immigration officer asked me about those discrepancies by indirectly probing me about my border movements. After listening to my explanation, he deduced that I bypassed immigration for those few times on return and suggested I return to immigration to explain my migration issue so that immigration can re-stamp my returns properly to correspond with emigration dates. The officer further deduced that his colleagues at the end of the process were negligent in their critical assessment and evaluation of my passport. This incident illustrated the notion that boundary porosity is not only at informal sites along the border but also at the junction point where some entities compromise national security and border policing by not being consistently diligent with formal border users. As earlier stated, SA IMPs are global and neocapitalist in their regional outlook. Add to that, they indicate a neo-colonial desire for SA border management and migration management state functions to delink with the coloniality of apartheid state border policies and practices. As a result, SA is embarking on a high-risk path to liberate its IMPs and DHA from the lethal and militant ideologies to those embracing globalization, the global tourist and a depoliticized, professional, multidisciplinary and multistakeholder boundary environment.

After the drawn-out implementation of the BMA which was initially conceived in 2009 for the comprehensive post-apartheid management of SA's territorial space, the entity was

formally launched in 2016 at a staggered pace (Republic of South Africa, 2015). Hot on its heel is the adoption of the so-called high-risk political strategy of the One Stop Border Post (OSBP) model which the SA state pursues as a way of reconceptualising its fracture line—since the model is limited and delimited to land-based POEs and borders—and improving systems and processes more on the border management side of things than migration management (Republic of South Africa, 2017, 2022). The high-risk OSBP model is a Western concept that is applied in the EUs internal border region of Schengen Area where intra-regional trade is apparently high due to the OSBP model of boundary management. In the AU the OSBP model is perceived as an innovative solution to experienced logistical problems due to the inefficiency of current border systems and processes, and a lack of coordination across various RECs of the 55 member states of the AU (Barka, 2012; Khumalo, 2014; Khumalo, 2015; Odero, 2020; Republic of South Africa, 2022).

One of the key reasons why the OSBP model is sought by SA is because SA's numerous border departments fail to integrate vertically and horizontally thus making effective governance of the international border environment difficult (Republic of South Africa, 2016a). According to the 2022 BMA report by the DHA, SA's international border environment comprises a total of 53 land-based junction points managed by at least five state organs tasked with the legal enforcement of immigration laws and migration policies at border crossings, and an additional 10 state organs tasked with boundary management in response to the hypercomplex geography of SA's land, maritime and aviation boundaries and their 72 PoEs. Former Minister of the DHA Mr. Malusi Gigaba<sup>31</sup>, predecessor of Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, once confirmed that SA has no memoranda of cooperation or cross-border agreements with any of its six neighbouring countries which include BW. There is however a proactive programme of engagement in place according to the former Minister, to enable the alignment of border systems, capacity sharing, knowledge exchanges and training of personnel. Dr Motsoaledi has since noted six POEs as problematic and in need of stricter policing. None of the six identified POEs include the A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Skilpadshek junction points. It is SA's understanding that the OSBP model will help increase border efficiency and improve the management of its land-based international borders. What the OSBP model aims to achieve is the enhancement of economic trade flows without compromising national security and revenues (Republic of South Africa, 2016, 2022).

The OSBP model will thus either supplement or complement existing migration and border management policies and practices or collapse them altogether if the geopolitical context and national security complexes of the SADC member states within which SA is a major part, is not critically accounted for. The OSBP represents a novel idea from a border efficiency perspective however it needs further political geographic research than economic and logistics research because I perceive it to tread on dangerous grounds if it is not adapted to the geopolitical situation of SADC. In Africa it is said that poor or weak migration and border management systems hamper movement of commercial vehicles up to a month whereas in the EU this backlog is usually about 12-days long (Barka, 2012). Odero (2020) also notes significant temporal and economic improvements in ECOWAS REC boundary dynamics since the adoption of the OSBP model for example. In its application in SA the OSBP “requires that the border agencies of each state involved...apply their national laws in the territory of the adjoining state” by giving such agencies “extra-territorial jurisdiction”

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<sup>31</sup> SABC Television interview with Mr Gigaba conducted by Chriselda Lewis on “BW-Zimbabwe border jumpers to SA at Grobler's Bridge Border Post” available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wx--x1UDS6U> last accessed 10 April 2024 for availability.

(Republic of South Africa, 2016a:37, 2022). This is the nature of the high-risk neoliberal approach of SA towards its own spatial territoriality and the sovereignty of its geographically smaller and demographically less complex, smaller neighbouring states. The political risk of the OSBP model is its implication that any state can exercise force and impose its constitutional laws beyond its geographical borders for the sake of eliminating border bureaucracy and administrative processes known in the continent for causing temporal delays at POEs.

While extra-territorial sovereignty holds promise for peacebuilding in war torn border regions and economic regional development of the AUs RECs, it is disturbing politically for its extra-territorial nature which BW might not entertain anytime soon. Extra-territorial jurisdiction refers to an “established legal principle of public international Law” which states that “the national laws of a state generally apply within the territory of that state” (Republic of South Africa, 2022:26). In the OSBP context however, SA is willing to adopt a geopolitical strategy that is developed on borderless movement of goods and people in EU Schengen Areas. Perceived as a radical “paradigm shift” in borderworks and reimagining state territoriality, the SA government desires to extend extra-territorial jurisdiction to geographic places outside the spatial limits of its jurisdiction, into the spatial limits of another sovereignty (Republic of South Africa, 2022). Of course, SA understands that this is not a one-man’s show and that there must be a legal border agreement and joint technical teams in place to facilitate such a move. However, SA fails to understand that only weaker states around it or under its sphere of influence such as Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique, can be coerced and persuaded to allow a very different political sovereignty to determine “applicable and non-applicable jurisdictions in the OSBP geographical area” to enable border officers from affected countries “to carry out their applicable national laws in a CCZ [common control zone]” (Republic of South Africa, 2022:26).

A pilot study of the OSBP was undertaken at the SA-Mozambique border along the Lebombo–Ressano Garcia junction points (Republic of South Africa, 2016a, 2022). While the actual results of that pilot are not yet known, SA plans to extend the ideology of extra-territoriality to Lesotho and Swaziland precisely because of their landlocked positions and out-bound exports which transit through SA (Khumalo, 2014; Khumalo 2015; Republic of South Africa, 2016a). BW is interestingly not included in SA’s OSBP pilot studies however, its geographic places of abode are identified by SA as material sites for the exploration of extra-territoriality in BW. This might be problematic given old SA’s long political history of threats to BW’s national security and deadly plots to undermine its sovereignty. BW’s sense of nationalism is strong, and its closed frontier and inward-looking territoriality perceived through its hard border regime might cause it to tighten its boundary management and immigration laws against ordinary migrants from SA with strong ties in BW. SA’s imported ideology of extra-territorialization needs circumspect consideration and circumspect diplomacy when it comes to BW especially if there are no existing cross-border agreements between the country and BW. BW’s borderlands are still part of BW’s territorial framework. Their geographical location at the spatial edges of BW’s sovereignty do not make them game for extra-territorial experimentation.

The BMA concedes that neighbouring countries must first agree on the OSBP model through bilateral agreements which through a further establishment of several other administrative units, must work on harmonising and simplifying rules and procedures without compromising human rights (Republic of South Africa, 2022). The transport corridors underpinned OSBP model is applicable to land based PoEs. Its mission is to champion gradual shifts from the

current asymmetric two-stop model where commercial and human traffic between two countries are subjected to competing processes and rules which extend duration of processing goods and people within SADC REC. Further, the OSBP will streamline and homogenise boundary and migration management practices and policies in single or both directions of the fracture line such that the asymmetrical becomes symmetrical (Republic of South Africa, 2022). Outside of the BMA and IMPs, there is nowhere else that geographical places of abode are mentioned in their ontic essence. In the same way they are not mentioned in BW's Immigration Act of 2010 and boundary related documents. SA's IMPs acknowledge its residential places of abodes and their resident populations *en passant* and BW's Immigration Act of 2010 does not. Places of abode or borderlands are not perceived by the state apparatus as mundane residential spaces of Botswana. Borderlands are instead conceived in positivist terms rather than ethnographic as "community border crossings" and "communities along the border" (Republic of South Africa, 2016a:38, 2022:8).

SA's lengthy borderline with BW has numerous places of abode that are directly affected by spatial orifices of the border that permit the flows and circulation of clandestine migration and other criminal elements. Sadly, SA-BW and AU (2020a, 2020b, 2023) perceive borderlands not as human habitats where everyday life happens. In Africa geographic borderlands are military sites for state defences, state violence, human trafficking and conflict. They are not perceived in their ordinariness where they are peaceful, as quiet residential places inhabited by babies, children, old and young men and women, professional sites for research and economic investment instead of extra-territorial jurisdiction. The 2022 BMA policy document downplays the significance of dense human population of Botswana straddling the SA-BW borderline as the only fracture line within SADC and between SA and BW with the highest number of border gates. Vaguely citing only one pilot study at an obscure junction point located at Tshidilamolomo in the North-West Province south of BW's border, SA IMPs encourage the thriving of subnational borderlands which are further recognised as sites for informal social, political and economic practices including trafficking and smuggling (Republic of South Africa, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2022).

The BMA, IMPs and the OSBP model are abstract state tools deployed in the state borderworks and expression of sovereign territoriality which in SA's case, is leaning towards the extra-territorial or what I call borderless sovereignty. It is still unclear how the OSBP model implementation will work in SADC and how many more state departments and professional staff are going to be created, if the number of land POEs will increase and if migration management and current traditional (dyad) two-stop order posts systems and structures will yield any tangible joint border agreement or cross-border governance policy frameworks where they have proved insufficient from since 1994 (Steinberg, 2005; Guy, 2017; Letlape, 2021).

### **5.5 Time organized spatial practices of the South Africa-Botswana international border**

When we evoke a space, we must immediately state that energy is deployed in that space. When we evoke time, we identify what changes therein and how because everywhere a time, space and expenditure of energy interact a rhythm occurs. The SA-BW is a fracture line that oozes a garland of rhythms. Its rhythms are temporal, spatial, migration and non-human movement, not to mention linear (regular migration and border movements) and cyclical (natural days of the week, peak hours and seasons etc). Time is one of three elements of spatial rhythm analysis which holds promise for spatial border thinking since spatial rhythms are everywhere where international borders and borderlands are. Time in this regard is not

conceived from the economic and freight perspectives of trade and commerce but from the lived perspective of the borderlands in lieu of state conceived time for boundary operations on a regular basis. This dimension is fascinating because human migration though temporal is not bound by time but is restricted by space, boundary space that is governed by various rules and protocol that differentiates between border crossers. With time consciousness, as an underexamined element in geographical limology, we get a glimpse of how time is used effectively, differently and strategically by states, regional elites and border populations of SA and BW to rhythm the borderscape and borderworks of the transfrontier border region. To enable the study to determine the general spatial rhythm of the international border of SA and BW relative to each state's subnational places of abode, I sought the below data for enlightenment since I did not know the operating times of A1-A2 border gates.

SA-BW Junction Points	Operating Times
<b>1. Pont Drift–Mashatu</b>	8am-16pm (8 hrs)
<b>2. Platjan</b>	8am-16pm (8 hrs)
<b>3. Zanzibar</b>	8am-16pm (8 hrs)
<b>4. Groblersbrug/Martins Drift</b>	6am-22pm (16 hrs)
<b>5. Parr's Halt–Stockpoort B</b>	8am-18pm (10 hrs)
<b>6. Sikwane–Derdepoort B</b>	6am-19pm (13 hrs)
<b>7. Tlokweng Gate–Kopfontein</b>	6am-00am (18 hrs)
<b>8. Ramotswa–Swartkoppie</b>	6am-22pm (16 hrs)
<b>9. Pioneer Gate–Skilpadshek (A2)</b>	6am-00am (18 hrs)
<b>10. Ramatlabama–Ramatlabama (A1)</b>	6am-22pm (16 hrs)
<b>11. Phitshane Molopo</b>	7am-16pm (9 hrs)
<b>12. Bray</b>	7am-16pm (9 hrs)
<b>13. Makopong</b>	8am-16pm (8 hrs)
<b>14. McCarthy's Rust</b>	6am-18pm (12 hrs)
<b>15. Middleputs</b>	7:30am-16pm (8 hrs:30 mins)

Table 1.4. Temporal spatial practices and temporally organized spatial rhythm of the South Africa-Botswana international border<sup>32</sup>.

The table above lists the 15 junction points along the borderline of SA's North-West Province and BW. These 15 PoEs/POEs indicate the Setswana, Afrikaans and English toponym of respective junction points straddling the 1,770km long fracture line of SA and BW. From the 15-land based PoEs 7 operate for 12 to 18 hours per day. From the 7 only 2 operate 18 hours a day, another 3 operate for 16 hours a day while nearly 5 operate for 8 hours a day. The assumption and speculation are these operating hours are indicative of the busyness of individual border gates relative to their proximity to residential places of abode and location within the cross-border transportation framework of spatial integration as a type of regionalism and region building/development. The A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek of Lobatse-Peleng and the Tlokweng Gate-Kopfontein to Gaborone are the only two junction points along the SA-BW political line operating 18-hours a day while the A1 junction points of Ramatlabama are one of three POEs operating 16-hours a day after Ramotswa-Swartkoppie and Groblersburg/Martins Drift. The border operating times allocated per junction point are state conceived, as such they determine the times in which border populations can engage the

<sup>32</sup> Data retrieved from [https://www.botswana.co.za/Self\\_Drive\\_Holiday-travel/botswana-border-times.html](https://www.botswana.co.za/Self_Drive_Holiday-travel/botswana-border-times.html). Last accessed 10 April 2024 for availability.

border during its open hours and disengage it at various places after its closing hours. We can thus say the SA-BW is not a fully open 24-hour operating border since it does not have any 20-hour and 24-hour operating border gates on either side. Understood this way, we can better discern the temporal spatial rhythm of the border by analysing its migration operating times. We can also determine its political spatial practices by evaluating its boundary frameworks, policies and combining them with practice. A negative side to not having a 24-hours operating border gate and fracture line is that the regulated times are restrictive on mobility and migration. It could also be the underlying cause for irregular border crossings because things happen in life and sometimes you need to be in SA from BW and vice versa by a certain time and often one can get closed out and closed in as I experienced. I was once delayed in BW where I rushed to the border gate however, the immigration and BURS processing time caused me to return to Borolong that night where I was up all night looking at the bright lights of Greater Mahikeng from across the invisible fracture line of a dark and silent rural borderland.

The other time I came from BW to SA on the last day of fieldwork and following a wedding in Ramatlabama-Borolong at the Seoke family abode. The groom's best man offered to transport me across the border in time for my general departure from North-West Province and back to the Free State Province since I had already lost my car by then. We unfortunately crossed into SA very late, and the best man was forced to spend the night in SA because it was just after 10pm and the distance from Mmabatho to A1 border gates is roughly 20-30 minutes. Repetitive cyclical rhythms delimit linear rhythms of international migration. For example, one cannot expect to cross the A1 or A2 border gates of SA and BW after 10pm and 12pm respectively. You would have to wait for daylight to return before engaging the repetitive linear cycle of migration again. I consulted with the senior immigration officer at A2 Skilpadshak for an understanding of the chronometric organization of the border and the state actor explained<sup>33</sup>

Border time [for A2] is set by the Lobatse community at large. They asked for an increase in operation time since they felt disadvantaged by the boundary operating time. The Lobatse District and Border Society of Botswana took it up with their President, who took it up with the South African President, and both came to a decision. We [immigration] then received the instruction to adjust A2 border gate operating time as per the two Presidential heads of states' agreement. It was first working 7am-7pm, then it was 6am-10pm then it was 6am-12pm. There are also other influencing stakeholders like customs and hotels seeing economic value of flows and human migration management. There is nothing border officials from both sides can do to influence border hours. Only border communities if they feel like it. They must speak loudly and make a noise all the way up through their Traditional and Local Authorities, which report to Ministers and Office of the President in Botswana and South Africa (Senior Immigration Official, personal interview, 2018 September 20).

Several interesting insights are gleaned from the response. First, there is a coming together of representational space and representations of space in time over the spatial functions of the political border in BW or on the BW side of the line. Here, the often-dominated space in society took a dominant role of determining the border's operating time hence aligning with literature on borderworks which states that boundary producing practices are not the sole domain of the state. Furthermore, it takes a spatial triadic perspective of borderscape to

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<sup>33</sup> The unedited English recording of the interview is digitally saved/archived as 180906\_0113\_Folder A 04/23\_WMA on the SD card of the digital recording device used.

appreciate the production and reproduction of the SA-BW border environment as the coming together of lived space, conceived space and the perceived space of spatial practice which Lefebvre (1991) describes as always antagonistic between the lived and conceived. The conceived time of the SA-BW in this regard is determined as directly lived and perceived by Lobatse-Peleng border inhabitants who persuaded the often-dominant state space to yield to their demands to appropriate the border's state times to lived time. Second, the representational spaces can interfere with political spatial practices of representations of space and influence its political spatial rhythm of the border and the region in general. The conceived space in this regard instead of perceiving the temporal appropriation of its sovereign and inviolable state space as a threat to its abstract homogeneity, welcomed it instead. Third, users and inhabitants in the case of A2 junction point of Lobatse-Peleng in BW are therefore not silenced by the conceived statist space instead, the former partnered with other state actors such as the Lobatse Town Council of South East District and a variety of border agents to change and appropriate A2 junction point's operating times from 12-hours, to 16-hours and finally to 18-hours to accommodate their non statist needs. This is extremely interesting and important to think about further.

It is not only the ordinary users and inhabitants having significant influence over the temporal dimension of the state border, but also Lobatse situated businesses that can intervene. Fourth and last point, both traditional and modern leadership in BW came together with border populations to discourse about a social need for extended border operations which were further elevated to the heads of state for review and practical implementation. What is remarkable about the asynchronistic chronometric organization of the borderline through its A1-A2 junction points of SA and BW, is that the antagonistic dialectic of representational space/borderlands and representations of space/border in the spatial triad does not hold where clock-time is concerned. I can safely deduce that eurhythmic (harmonious) relations exist between the two dimensions of the socially produced abstract space of the international border in its symbolic asphyxiation and dictatorial as well as neocapitalist tendencies, which do not upset the natural social order of border populations through stifling boundary management practices and policies. As lived space which is often said to disobey formal rules and reject its appropriation by conceived space, Lobatse-Peleng breaks the mould in this regard. Here we see representational space following statist protocol and working together within the rules of the conceived space to attain its own representational objective for longer operating hours at the A2 border gate.

Three times Lobatse-Peleng inhabitants changed and appropriated their border gate's temporal rhythm without disrupting its normative spatial functions. I enquired with the regent of the Barolong in BW's SD about the relatively short operating times of the A1 border gate compared to the A2 border gate. Kgosi Motshegare stated underlying issues of political hesitancy on the part of the Mahikeng provincial government to extend border times to allow for ongoing migration and social integration between Borolong and Greater Mahikeng since these two places of abode are two parts of the same Tshidi Rolong chiefdom and dynasty of Kgosi Montshiwa I. Kgosi Motshegare also noted how political will to effect changes must come from SA's border population if it has political clout such as that enjoyed by BW society:

We can desire to have this [A1] border open 24-hours because it is very busy but, we'll never know what they say on the other side. The border officials know how busy this border is because we always inform them of what is happening. We advise the government through ministers through House of Chiefs in Parliament. I can also meet



ministers and have a *pitso* here and tell him or her that we want this or that (Senior Immigration Official, personal interview, 2018 September 20)

On the SA side, traditional authorities in Greater Mahikeng do not have this privilege because they are conceived in their national Integrated Development Plans [IDPs] of the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality [NMMDM] as powerless, obsolete, and arbitrary (NMMDM, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021). I asked SA immigration officer why the A2 border gate submission by border inhabitants of Lobatse-Peleng was a success, the state actor noted capitalist differentials

In Skilpadshek, SA money speaks louder. When it comes to customs income our income is bigger than A1 Ramatlabama... we relocated to this amazing, landscaped, green border gate with air conditions in 2013. This border is the one that is recently redesigned. I don't have ceramic tiles at home, but I have [them] at work! It is the only one that is like this...Here [pointing to a section and direction] is where people pass and not trucks, and the commercial traffic is on the other side so you cannot even hear their noise. The space is well designed...environmentally friendly and designed with advanced technology and lighting...

Indeed, the A2 Skilpadshek POE is a well-designed border gate with ample room for private motors, commercial vehicles and pedestrians to move about freely and with little interference and contact with other transitory bodies and vehicles in the space. Commenting on the idea and lack of 24-hour operating POEs, the state actor reenforced what Kgosi Motshegare intimated earlier

24-hour operation depends on both countries and politics than policies. Even if citizens want something different than what the elites purport their representational societies want. Money as enticement and source of corruption ruins things...national relations of diplomacy and undermines peace and national security. It is good for business that Botswana appreciates [Pula] currency to the South African Rand. Botswana is a beef supplier, but it still buys our beef (Senior Immigration Official, personal interview, 2018 September 20).

This insight along with earlier insights on the SA and BW A1-A2 border gates and border policies, support's Lefebvre's (1991) analysis of international boundaries and junction points. According to Lefebvre (1991: 193) international borders and their POEs/PoEs will always and "naturally have different aspects according to the type of society" that secretes or produces them. SA and BW are two very different societies culturally, ideologically, economically and politically, whose historical past, present and unknown future are invested, communicated, negotiated, changed and contained in their respective and asymmetrical border frameworks, boundary management practices and regimes, omissions from sovereignty undermining conceptual practices proposed by the OSBP model, and superfluous flows of human and non-human energy exchanges across the borderline. Indeed, SA and BW can pave a way for Africa's first 24-hour operating border based on demands from respective borderlands and other political and capitalistic interests at various spatial scales to reshape the region's highly mobile border environment into one of effortless and round the clock borderless movements. Furthermore, time in the spatial context of the geopolitical and political geographic border of SA and BW cannot be liberated analytically nor studied ethnographically *en bloc* since the standing of time as it relates to space is a philosophical problematic that is yet to be clearly defined (Lefebvre, 1991).

I asked the highly articulate state actor about his cultural positionality in the SA-BW border environment as well as the source of his non-formal (*non-savior*) knowledge. He said:

I am from Rustenburg, Sunrise Park not from Mahikeng. We go to meetings with borderlands traditional leadership and local councils. I did not know all these areas before. I am constantly travelling cross-border. From my first-time meeting with [Tswana] royals I learnt a lot about Batswana [more] than Botswana and South Africa (Senior Immigration Official, personal interview, 2018 September 20).

### **5.6 Conclusion**

SA and BW are two very different nation states that share an international border and 15 border gates between them via the North-West Province of the former country. More than that, these neighbouring states share a population of roughly six million Batswana between them, majority of who straddle the fracture line of the hypercomplex, monumental global state space of SA and BW. Both countries have different political approaches to international boundary management and migration policies which are translated in the practico-sensory space as extremely asymmetrical spatial practices and spatial rhythms which the SA government desires to indirectly harmonise and streamline through the OSBP model that undermines national security and territorial sovereignty of its weaker neighbouring states which it identified as part of its pilot. Interestingly BW does not feature in the list of pilot case studies SA desires to explore the notion of extra-territorial jurisdiction by. Given the relative under development of BW's immigration policy coupled with the lack of access to BW's state apparatus on border matters concerning the A1 Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate, these analyses lacked crucial data that is omitted and absent from the country's legal framework of its 2010 Immigration Act.

## Chapter 6

### The Batswana Inhabited A1-A2 Places of Abode

#### 6.1 Introduction

There are nearly 400,000 Batswana living on either side of the international border separating South Africa from Botswana. This chapter is a representational conceptual and ethnographic analyzes of four unknown and under conceptualized geographic borderlands of SA and BW situated along the A1-A2 international border gates. I aim to liberate these places of abode<sup>34</sup> from the conceptual closet (or under conceptualization) by delving into the (social) production of each society's directly lived space so that it can be known how Batswana live, what their subcultural profiles and political clout are, and the nature of their spatial organization in the cross-border settlements relative to the statist fracture line and A1-A2 junction points that interfere with them. The purpose of this chapter is to also show what changed and how it changed in the cultural *la voisinage*, and what is continued and discontinued in contrast to the spatial pre-history and post historiography of Batswana relative to the international fracture line discussed in Chapter 3.

#### 6.2 Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality: A Subnational Border Region of the North-West Province

Tripartite Ramatlabama is a semi-rural representational space of the Batlounge. Batlounge are anthropological offspring of the Batlhako of Tlhakong who reside in the Bojanala District Municipality of Rustenburg in the North-West Province. On cultural terms, Batlounge are *de facto* subjects of Kgosi Gustav Gobusamang Shole who has sovereign authority over the social-spatial body of the Batlounge of Greater Mahikeng in SA. Also known as Ramatlabama and what I call Botlounge<sup>35</sup> from here onwards, the lived space is a subsequent border since it was produced after the inhabitants' resettlement in the political space of the established A1 border gate which immediately transformed it into a permanently established place of abode which straddles the fracture line of SA and BW on the SA side. Territorially, Botlounge is situated in democratic SA territory within the political spatial framework of the North-West Province which constitutes the former Bophuthatswana capital of Mmabatho and former British town and Bechuanaland administrative center of Mafeking in Greater Mahikeng. Before delving into the socio-spatial production of Botlounge borderland, I must first establish the broader organizational political geography of the North-West Province within which Botlounge and Greater Mahikeng places of abode are situated.

Botlounge and Greater Mahikeng are situated in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMDM). The District Municipality (DM) is one of four DMs governing various jurisdictions of the North-West Province. The NMMDM is further composed of five independent Local Municipalities (LMs) which the Mahikeng-Mafikeng Local Municipality (MLM) is one (NMMDM, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021). The DM and MLM are provincial arms of national government and are further managed under the political governance structures of the ANC ruling party.

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<sup>34</sup> I use the conceptual terms residential or geographic places of abode, representational space and directly lived space interchangeably with borderlands or border settlements to refer to residential spaces in proximity to international borders and border gates.

<sup>35</sup> Botlounge is Setswana toponym for the geographic place of the Batlounge.



Optic formant 1.17. The internal border between the North-West Province and the Free State Province. Source: Nkooe.

In terms of the DM's physical geographic and demographic sizes, NMMDM occupies a spatial area of roughly 28,114km<sup>2</sup> to 28,206km<sup>2</sup> with a human population of roughly 850,688 to 961,960 inhabitants (NMMDM, 2017, 2021). These inhabitants are further spread unevenly across 103 to 198 villages, 103 municipal wards, 21 townships and roughly 8 intermediate or secondary towns and cities comprising 268,099 households where at least 640,000 inhabitants live in poverty, 17% of the total District population reside in urban areas and 83% reside in rural areas on traditional lands (Nel and Drummond, 2017a, 2017b; NMMDM, 2021). Based on these spatial demographics dynamics the DM is a rural subregion with a large rural population. The DM has substantially low populations of English and Afrikaner inhabitants who are enumerated at 32,000 in a subregion of more than 850,000 Batswana (NMMDM, 2021). Setswana in the DM is spoken by more than 88% of the District population meaning, Batswana are the *de jure* and *de facto* dominant culture and society in NMMDM and MLM.

Despite their demographic and cultural dominance in the DM, the Tswaneness<sup>36</sup> of the international border region of SA is ignored, denied and abandoned by the ANC-led provincial state space governing the subnational Setswana-centric region at various spatial scales. This political spatial practice constitutes cultural denialism of sorts in the democratic region. This Setswana denialism is manifest in the blatant omission of traditional leadership and their pre-historic institutions of governance from the District municipality IDPs and local municipality's spatial development frameworks (SDFs) affecting rural constituencies who fall under the *de facto* jurisdiction of Tswana chiefs and their surviving traditional institutions. For example, NMMDM IDPs of 2017, 2019 and 2021 conceive Traditional Leaders (TLs) as historical footnotes, obsolete, with no place and relevance in a democratically governed space and society.

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<sup>36</sup> I borrow this ontological term from Jones (1999) regionalism discourse and from Pooe's (2019) Setswana written PhD in African Languages and Literature, to denote an ontological Tswana consciousness and ethnocentric identity.

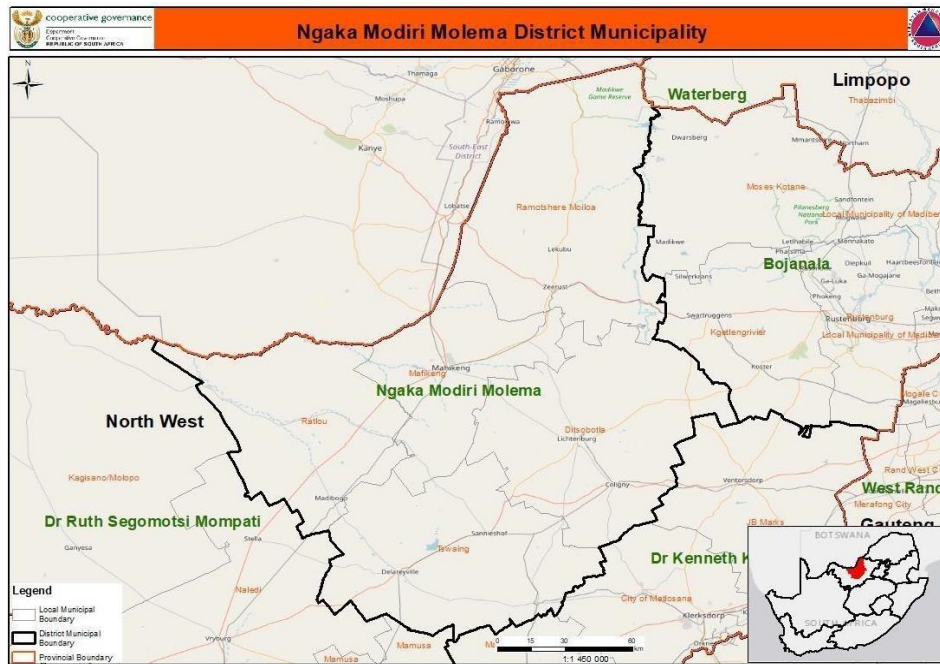


Figure 1.4. The international and internal border region of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. Source: NMMDM IDP (2021-2022 :26).

The TL’s roles in the DM and LM are defined under the heading *Representatives of the House of Traditional Leaders* in various IDPs. Under the heading are five state appointed representatives of chiefs in the DM who at the time of research were “Kgosi Suping S.V., Kgosi Montshiwa J.K., Kgosi Masibi M.J., Kgosi Matlaba R.V and Kgosi Lencoe E.I” (NMMDM, 2017:38). The five TLs are appointed on a five-year rotation basis and are often “allowed an opportunity to address the Council” instead of engaging critically with the conceived space of the DM and LM towards the reproduction of their residential places of abode (NMMDM, 2021:58). No further information is provided about the TLs roles in the DM and MLM. Nor is further ethnographic information about the TLs sub-cultural profiles relative to their geographic constituencies shared also including the demographic weight and political clout of each constituency, along with degree of participation of TLs in decision-making and spatial planning processes which directly affect them. Elsewhere in the IDPs the dominant space cites a lack of territorial disputes between TLs without research evidence. More disturbing is the fact that the DM does not recognise nor perceive the role of TLs as legitimate and practical.

According to the DM IDPs, TL participation in its modern structures is perfunctory and not statutory. Representation and participation of TLs in their own self-governance and co-management, or autogestion and co-gestion respectively, is artificial and arbitrary. In other words, it is “not gazetted” (NMMDM, 2021:60). What is instead prioritized is the Khoi-San community whose demographic dynamics and geographic location in the Tswana border region are unknown. The anti-Tswana representations of state space indicates that it “recognized senior Khoi-San leaders” to assign “personal jurisdiction over their communities” as a matter of priority (NMMDM, 2021:60). Furthermore, the conceived space states that “the legal existence of the Traditional Leaders structures as envisaged by the Traditional Leaders Framework Act, has expired” therefore, the structures of Tswana TLs “will be reconstituted when the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act comes into effect” (NMMDM, 2021:60). The alienation and silencing of Tswana TLs and their Batswana negate the DM’s political claims of fostering “a practical intergovernmental relations mechanism to

plan, budget and implement jointly...cooperative governance (NMMDM IDP, 2021:3). Joint cooperative governance in this regard is exclusive of pre-historic traditional institutions of governance as representational spaces of Tswana users and inhabitants in the DM's political geography. The lack of ethnographic awareness and cultural ignorance of Batswana and political disengagement with their TLs may be attributed to their administrative state functions which are geared towards provision of basic service delivery and municipal budgeting, than social and political co-governance. As noted by the statist actor:

As a District, we're a water service authority...we provide water and sanitation related services to all five local municipalities: Ratlou (Setlagole), Mahikeng, Tswaing (Delareyville), Ramotshere Moilwa (Zeerust) and Ditsobotla (Lichtenburg, Coligny) Local Municipality...[including] fire services and disaster relief...we only service four regions except for Mafikeng. Mahikeng is an executive Local Municipality, so they have their own fire and disaster relief services (NMMDM spokesperson, personal interview, 2018 July 12)

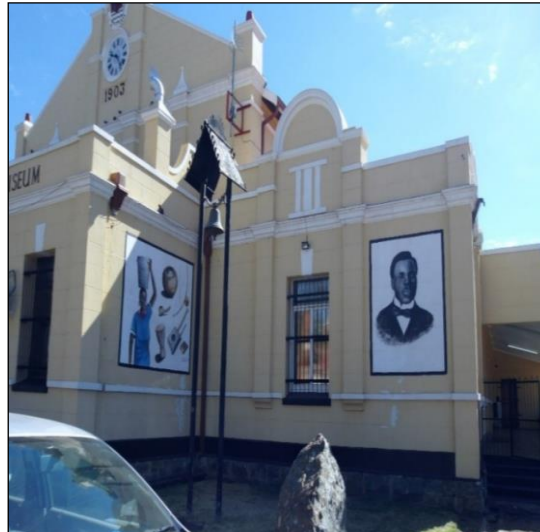
Despite the abstract administrative functions of the DM and its jurisdictional dissociation with the MLM sub-space and society, several spatial economic projects have been conceived to boost local economic development of the DM and LM. These include Agriculture, Culture and Tourism (ACT), the rejuvenation of Village, Township, Small Dorpie (VTSD) and Reconciliation, Healing and Renewal which are all tied together in the unknown Afrikaner slogan of "Saamtrek and Saamwerk philosophy" (NMMDM, 2017:9). Mahikeng's creative landscape of musicians, cultural events organizers and artists is excluded from the 'saam trek saam work' philosophy. The creatives and artistic in the subregion are not identified as catalysts for local economic tourism development which is also not listed in the DM IDPs and MLM SDF as a contributing or existing sector to exploit and invest in *inter alia* manufacturing, agriculture and government services (MLM SDF, 2014; Scherf, 2021).



Optic formant 1.18. Relict architecture: Montshiwa Cultural Village. Source: Nkooe.

These observations are supported by existing research that highlights the viability and sustainability of a cultural tourism economy in Mahikeng where the annual Mahika Mahikeng Music and Cultural Festival is perceived as the vehicle to establish a strong creative tourism economy in the border region (Nel and Drummond, 2017a; Scherf, 2021). Scherf (2021:86) aptly notes that although the Setswana music and cultural festival of Mahika Mahikeng is isolated and under developed, it overlaps the DM's "Mahikeng Rebranding, repositioning and Renewal Programme". Looking into the DM of Batswana through the lens of art, we acquire a sense of continuity from prehistoric times in which Southern Batswana and their geographic regions were infamous for their artistic excellence which is relegated to the historical dustbin of irrelevance in the contemporary context. I observed a lot of creative sites of interest in Greater Mahikeng including a post-colonial

Mafikeng Museum with Mogodi-Plaatje’s painting on the exterior walls. This artistic representation is similar to yet another painted feature wall circumscribing the Kgosi Lotlamoreng I Montshiwa Dam. That wall is a representational celebration of the political and public intellectual roles played by the geography under examined African scholar along with the several chiefs of the Barolong whose faces found expression on the creative wall. In the same space as the museum, I found a colonial war memorial without Batswana names inscribed in the roll of honor.



Optic formant 1.19. Mafikeng Museum Building. Source: Nkoee.

These architectural representations of space illustrate the fetishism of Western history and the survival of its colonial spirit in the post-colonial and post-apartheid Tswana region. The very museum that Mogodi-Plaatje’s upper torso is painted upon, contains little history and archival artefacts of Batswana compared to the wealth of Anglo-Boer War regalia and history that trivializes Batswana’s political role in that iconic battle of 1899-1902. This observation is supported by the DM’s submission that the postcolonial space encases a “rich history [of] Anglo-Boer War” (NMMDM, 2019:32). Despite its ignorance of local factors and a tangible Setswana culture, the DM is well positioned within an integrated spatial framework of District Corridors such as the N4, the Platinum Corridor and Western Frontier Corridor which it conceives as a “gateway to the broader SADC region” (NMMDM, 2019:17-18).

### **6.3 The interstate production of Botlounge**

Botlounge—the place of the Batlounge—is a geographically fragmented yet socially unified borderland constituted by three micro-settlements collectively known as Ramatlabama. Botlounge is called Ramatlabama because of its spatial location near the fracture line and A1 junction points of SA and BW. The three micro-lived spaces constituting Botlounge are 600, Miga and Ikopeleng. Borolong was established between the 1970s to early 1980s through three cycles of forced migrations or *dikhuduego* from the interior of apartheid SA to the current location of the former Bophuthatswana canton in Rolong territory (Batlounge Traditional Council, personal interview, 2018 September 12; Kgosi Shole, personal interview, 2019 May 11). The territorial resettlement of Batlounge from Putfontein to A1 Ramatlabama border gates temporal spatial migrations produced a unitary tripartite (in three-parts or triadic) geographic settlement pattern for Botlounge laid out at the physical edges of SA and BW’s territorial limits. Botlounge features less in the DM and MLM policy documents. Where it is conceived, it is perceived in the spatial context of integrated road

networks through which a developmental community library<sup>37</sup> was built to inculcate reading among unspecified youth inter alia, Botlounge is mentioned *en passant* via the tourism development of Botsalano Game Reserve situated in the vicinity of Botlounge (NMMDM, 2019).

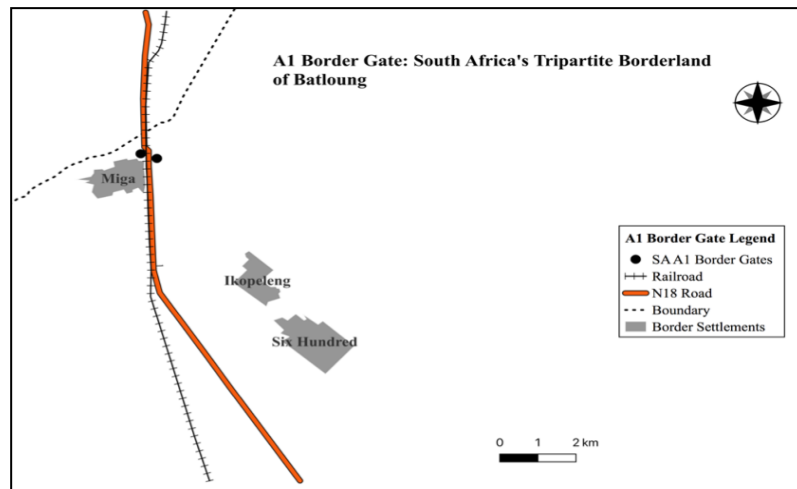


Figure 1.5. The A1 border gates of South Africa with Botlounge borderland. Source: Nkooe.

Demographically, Batlounge are a small social body relative to the other three places of abode. The MLM SDF of 2013 estimates Botlounge's population at 8,262 from an estimated 297,595 Barolong inhabitants of Greater Mahikeng. The demographic size of each micro-lived space varies substantially with 600 having a population of roughly 4,104 inhabitants while Miga and Ikopeleng have demographic sizes of 2,177 and 1,980 respectively (MLM SDF, 2013). These statistics are expected to change significantly with the 2022 census. The spatial organization of Batlounge across three geographically fragmented places of abode, reveals continuity of traditional or prehistoric settlement patterns of Batswana. Traditionally, Tswana settlements were often laid out triadically in space within the spatial framework of the land-use model used by Tswana chief to organize territory by allocating separate land-uses or spatial practices to each. Apart from agropastoral fields, residential settlements had a tripartite spatial plan and an irregular physical geography that was constitutive of the two agricultural and pastoral lands which were often situated far away from the residential abodes. Furthermore, the largest settlement in geographic and demographic size would always be where the chief and traditional institutions of their polity were resident.

Botlounge therefore agrees with Lefebvre's (1991) analysis that pre-historic social spaces and their antecedent modes of social production do not completely disappear under capitalist development nor with time. These social spaces and their traditional or primitive modes of precapitalist reproduction survive and endure. To gain insight about their spatial production, organization and social reproduction in Greater Mahikeng I probed Kgosi Shole for answers and he stated the following:

Our relocation came from Pretoria (SA) to Bophuthatswana on state land than Barolong territory...in 1977 Ramatlabama was established...We came in groups of three. Everything was chaotic...there were groups of Batlounge who asked for themselves to be relocated [from Putfontein, Botshabelo] so that we can immediately settle somewhere

<sup>37</sup> Botlounge community library is in Miga and not in 600 as suggested by the NMMDM IDP of 2019.



where we would want. Their settlement is called *Ikopeleng* because they asked for themselves before they were to be forcibly removed from traditional lands in the hinterlands. The *Ikopeleng* branch of the Batlounge are perceived as cowards or *magwala* for voluntary relocation. Second group was *Miga-Omega*. Even in Putfontein we had a *moraka* called Miga and the community still reproduced the same name here in Ramatlabama. *Six Hundred* (600) is the last settlement. It is so called because it had 600 households at the time of its first census of the early 1980s (Kgosi Shole, personal interview, 2019 May 11)

The response reveals a salient feature of borderlands Lefebvre (1991) instructs us to be mindful of. That is, the relationship between international borders at various scales, and the toponymy of the residential geographic sites which are directly affected by these boundaries. According to Kgosi Shole *Ikopeleng*—Setswana for ask for yourselves—was the first planned border settlement established by a small sect of the Batlounge prior to their forced removal from Putfontein, Botshabelo in the interior Transvaal. This subgroup the king perceives as cowardly were the first to emigrate and resettle about 10km from the borderline while the rest of the Batlounge remained behind with their king or *kgosi*. Shortly thereafter, the second group immigrated and resettled in a territory closest to the SA-BW fracture line and A1 border gate to reproduce a planned settlement they called Miga-Omega in memory of lost territory they also called Miga-Omega. 600 was the third and final settlement that was established to complete the reterritorialization of Batlounge on Rolong territory. As the king stated, 600 is so-called because the first household survey undertaken during the 1980s enumerated six hundred households in the current location of the core lived space of the Batlounge. 600 is the largest settlement on geographic and demographic terms from the other two completing its tripartite geography.

Despite the social production of Botlounge as a planned representational space of Batlounge, Batlounge's political geography is a product of 20<sup>th</sup> century statist territorial practices. Kgosi Shole's Botlounge is a product of conceived space. Its production at the A1 border gate was facilitated by the deterritorializing political spatial practices of the SA apartheid state and Bophuthatswana pseudo-state in their struggle for territorial control and spatial whitening in Southern Batswana inhabited regions south of the Molopo-Limpopo Rivers. Shortly after Northern Batswana's political independence from the British in 1966, apartheid SA concocted Bophuthatswana as a political tool to agitate and undermine BW's sovereignty and national security. Internally, the apartheid state used Bophuthatswana to speed up its territorial plans for emptying territories inhabited by Africans and perceived by the racist regime as black spots of de-Bantufied Bantu in need of racial cleansing and territorial gentrification. Besides their geopolitical location south of the SA-BW border, Batlounge still perceive themselves nostalgically as immigrants "from around the Lichtenburg area" (Parnell, 1986:205). Parnell's non-ethnographic political geography of Mafikeng incorrectly assigns two additional settlements to Botlounge's tripartite geography.

According to Parnell (1986:205) Batlounge developed "five villages 10-20 km from Mafikeng...known collectively as Ramatlabama". Despite Parnell's inclusion of two more settlements into the geographic frame of tripartite Botlounge, Kgosi Shole and his matrilineal traditional council recognise and claim *Ikopeleng*, *Miga* and *600* as their *de facto* and *de jure* social spaces. Botlounge is thus the subcultural jurisdiction of Kgosi Shole that lies within the international and internal borders of Greater Mahikeng. Botlounge was established in Greater Mahikeng 83-years after the Keate Award allocation and delimitation of the now demarcated boundary of SA with BW. It was established at the A1 border gate roughly 14 years after Northern Batswana's colonial independence, and roughly 14 years before the territorial and

political dissolution of the Bophuthatswana canton. It represents an interesting subnational borderland where the various conceived spaces and their conflicting spatial practices together with the active involvement of its inhabitants resulted in its own production. Even though they claim cross-border relations in Zambia and other parts of BW, there are no immediate settlements and sub-*merafe* of Batlounge across the border in BW's Southern District (SD) and South East District (SED). Batlounge's politics in Rolong territory are worth mentioning. There is a strong sociological consciousness of 'us-them', 'here-there' and ethnographic insider-outsider among Batlounge and the Barolong of the grand borderland which secretes the subregion as a cultural frontier. Barolong are spatially and socially distanced from Batlounge by a physical distance of 15-20km. This situation resulted in a sustained relation of spatial and social decay between the Barolong and Batlounge which produced arrhythmia between the two autonomous sub-*merafe* of Southern Batswana who share a political (national) identity and hence citizenship. To shed light on their intercultural politics, Batlounge Traditional Council stated the following:

Bophuthatswana government relocated us here [from SA Transvaal]. Barolong were not involved in our territorial settlement since it was a [Bophuthatswana] state decision along with the apartheid government to allocate us this territory. This tribal council was established around 1978/9, or 1981 when Kgosi Shole was appointed paramount chief...we don't know Mangope's aim with the border relocations...the Barolong did not understand or accept anything about us...we were about to be citizens of Bophuthatswana while we were still in South Africa. We [had] to carry Bophuthatswana passports and IDs...Now we are under Barolong or in their territory, but *we are not Barolong but Batlounge* (Batlounge Traditional Council, personal interview, 2018 September 12; emphasis added)

Kgosi Shole (personal interview, 2019 May 11) added:

The Traditional Council saw the land here and liked it. It was transferred to us in 1982. We were moved before [Bophuthatswana] independence but 600 was conceived after independence of Bophuthatswana. Some people lost property and decisions had to be made for on their behalf. It was only the apartheid government and the Batlounge without Bophuthatswana and the Barolong. Everything was discussed in Mafikeng not as the capital of North-West or Bophuthatswana but as Mafikeng of Northern Cape territory. Only after Mmabatho incorporated Mafikeng did we become Bophuthatswana citizens and territorial people, no longer *de facto* South African.

The responses reveal a high degree of political complexity at work in the Botlounge-Barolong subnational borderland. Several states played influential roles in the production of border gated Botlounge add to that the absence/presence of Bophuthatswana, indirect involvement of apartheid state and absence of Barolong council from territorial resettlement plans and negotiations with Batlounge. Given the state organized production of Botlounge, the borderland resists conceptualization as a "rebellious borderland" because there was no political party or national population helping Batlounge resist their forced removal and contested citizenships (Baud and van Schendel, 1997:228). It is important to understand and explore the politics of border inhabitants since they enable a wider understanding of boundary dynamics beyond state centric abstractions. An important revelation about Botlounge is the strong element of arrhythmia which the conceived space of the subregion denies and cannot perceive. There is a brewing legal and financial battle between Batlounge of Kgosi Shole and Barolong of Kgosi Montshiwa III for territorial autonomy and the right to difference. Because of their historical settlement in Greater Mahikeng without the consent of Barolong during the 1970s to 1980s, Barolong want to usurp and assimilate Batlounge in the subcultural fabric and ideological

space of Barolong. Kgosi Montshiwa III wants cultural sovereignty over Batlounge. Should it not happen, Kgosi Montshiwa III want the Batlounge to financially compensate Barolong for occupying Barolong territory 'illegally' without the consent of the royal Montshiwa dynasty.

Kgosi Montshiwa III explained:

We [Barolong] are going to claim Ramatlabama because it is our land...we did not question [Batlounge's resettlement] that much...if the land claim judgement favours us, then those Batlounge of Kgosi Shole would be our sub-tribe...we don't know if that tribal council can agree...they can compensate us for the land but, they also cannot be resettled elsewhere...that border cannot shift and never will (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 28)

Kgosi Shole counters Kgosi Montshiwa III's territorial claims for financial compensation and against their cultural annihilation with a forceful reinstatement of his cultural sovereignty and difference:

In 2000 we signed and received a territorial settlement agreement - the land title deed with the South African government. They [Barolong] will have to buy it or us out of it. They can tell us to return to Putfontein and we will not. Both SA government and Barolong will have to compensate us. We will not agree to acculturation or incorporation on ideological terms and based on traditional ways of doing things. *We are not Barolong*. We are extremely different from them. *They are over there and we over here* (Kgosi Shole, personal interview, 2019 May 11; emphasis added)

The political strife between the two paramount chiefs reinforces the observed notion of Botlounge as an arrhythmic cultural frontier. Prehistoric Batswana were accustomed to intracultural colonisation as well as voluntary and involuntary assimilation practices. Where such political moves were not desired by the targeted populations, the sects simply ceded and resettled elsewhere among other *merafe* that were similar or different in culture and language from it hence the notion of prehistoric Batswana as frontiers people. In the case of Barolong with Batlounge the two sub-*merafe* are locked in space by political state boundaries and are socially stuck with each other. Batlounge cannot secede from the territory in any direction and resettle elsewhere if they want to avoid existential threats to their very *Dasein* on ideological ontological and cultural terms by a relatively eurhythmic (peaceable) yet arrhythmia inducing Barolong. Besides the de/reterritorialization dynamics inter alia intra-cultural politics of Batlounge with Barolong, Botlounge is an integral part of Batlounge's territorial identity.

Botlounge consolidated from the early 1980s to become a fully-fledged residential dwelling to borrow from Agnew (2008). Both chiefs appear to accept each other's social presence and permanent geographic settlement in the border region. Despite their conflicting and morally concerning politics both chiefs have something in common. Both chiefs are marginalised and silenced by the dominant spaces in society such as the NMMDM and MLM. Kgosi Shole and Kgosi Montshiwa III have strictly limited roles in the organization of social life, territory and border producing practices in Greater Mahikeng. This institutional arrangement makes them obsolete leaders since the conceived space prevents them from autogestion, that is, co-management and co-production of their territorial and societal spaces as per tradition. Batlounge Traditional Council shed light on their obscure incorporation in provincial structures of government:

We were appointed by the royal family that appoints representatives. The chief has 60% voting rights and the [local] municipality has 40% control over this tribal council... Government...give us a workshop on administration. It is on us to know how a servant woman of the community must act and behave so it becomes easier for us to know how to act...Heritage was a big deal in our village, and it dissipated. ...we celebrated the day [heritage] and brought our ornaments, cooked food and brewed beer but, since the chief's mother passed away, all of that stopped...We saw and did Setswana things that embraced the Batlounge culture in colourful ways (Batlounge Traditional Council, personal interview, 2018 September 12)

Despite conceived space having 40% control over Kgosi Shole's Batlounge, its jurisdiction goes as far as administrative tasks rather than advancing the qualitative projects of interest to the Batlounge which lie in the domain of lived space. Kgosi Shole's voting rights or power in MLM are arbitrary. Kgosi Shole is further restricted to the LM state level and excluded from DM structures is excluded from the LM structures. Taking the discourse to the ontic border that also serves as the geographic limit for settlement expansion where Botlounge is concerned, I probed Kgosi Shole for his border perception and attitude. Kgosi Shole intimated that:

The boundary's spatial challenges are not yet visible on our social lives and economic activities. Our problem is increasing activity of border jumpers between the two countries separated by a fence, from since the 1980s. Batswana [of BW] transgress easily...we find them [in Ramatlabama] without official documents. There were some Batswana trapped this side by the border's hardening in 1966 so we had to adopt them as our citizens. Mahikeng was their capital (*moshate*) and [Borolong Farms] was *meraka* and, people are not cows, you know? You cannot split them like that but it happened. We do not control them, and we try to positively intervene by assisting [BW] nationals to apply for correct paperwork if they live and work among us, so that they can go back home to their loved ones (Kgosi Shole, personal interview, 2019 May 11).

Kgosi Shole negates conventional views of borderlands as geographic places whose social lives and economic activities are directly affected by an international border. For Kgosi Shole, the fracture line's material influences are immaterial hence the king perceive the political line ontically and less so ontologically. Nonetheless, the spatial fracture line is an object with a physical existence which is readily transgressed and must necessarily be transgressed since it affects more than 5 million Batswana between SA and BW. Batlounge are yet to experience the international border's effects on a variety of fronts as their society grows, more land is going to be required for infrastructure developments to meet increasing demands for spatial expansion. The fact that Batlounge are subnational instead of transnational might also influence their chief's boundary perceptions and social attitude that discerns the porous character of the SA-BW fracture line. Kgosi Shole's ethical adoption rather than hostile deportation of Northern Batswana into his geo-body of Batlounge changes the nature of the arrhythmic frontier he has with Barolong into a eurhythmic one with Northern Batswana.

The social adoption of Northern Batswana into Batlounge's places of abode means Botlounge is not a homogenous sub-cultural space of Batlounge because it is a social polyrhythmia. Since the spatial pattern of Botlounge deviates from the traditional spatial model for separate and distanced land-uses for residential places of abode (*metse*), cultivated lands (*masimo*) and pastoral/grazing fields (*meraka*), I asked Kgosi Shole if he has agropastoral fields of social practice since Botlounge is a primary settlement without green fields for cultivation and livestock grazing:

My cows and *masimo* are in Putfontein not in Ramatlabama. I have a large territory. I want to do something with it...preserve and conserve my people's traditions, natural resources economy, cultural institutions, and missionary buildings (Kgosi Shole, personal interview, 2019 May 11)

The king's response reveals that A1 Botlounge is an absolute residential dwelling with little to land zoned for continuity of agropastoral activities between and within its three planned representational spaces which are extremely different in geography and prehistory from the representational space Barolong. Farmlands and livestock breeding are an integral aspect Setswana culture *in toto* and identity. Botlounge is further conceptualised as a territorial heterotopia since it is an autonomous borderland within a borderland.

#### **6.4 The A1 Borderland of Greater Mahikeng**

There is a wealth of scholarship in anthropology, political history, African Studies, the arts, ethnology, and geography on and about Greater Mahikeng: as a frontier borderland of SA, traditional home of Barolong of Kgosi Morolong I, a historical stage for the 1899-1902 Anglo-Boer War, a dual urban polity and a potential site for the establishment of a sustainable creative economy among many other topics I highlighted in Chapter 3. In this chapter, I sift through existing scholarship alongside my empirics to extract the contemporary boundary dynamics of this geographically vast and historically rich Setswana dominant landscape. As earlier noted, Greater Mahikeng is the democratic capital city of the North-West Province in the jurisdiction of the NMMDM and MLM provincial and local governments. It is a resilient pre-historic, postcolonial, post-Bophuthatswana and post-apartheid border region constituted by an ensemble of rural, semi-rural and urban geographic settlements inhabited by approximately 300,000 inhabitants majority of whom are Setswana speaking Africans (MLM SDF, 2013; Nel and Drummond, 2017a, 2017b; NMMDM, 2021). In the contemporary era, the Barolong Traditional Council of Greater Mahikeng are no longer the dominant space in the Tswana society and subregion. They are subordinated to the statist spatial practices of their DM and LM of democratic SA.

As the new dominant space in Rolong spatial society, the ANC-led DM and LM perceive its subregion's cohorts of TLs and hence their rural constituencies as perfunctory, artificial, and arbitrary entities. This observation is substantiated by the DM state actor who explained the institutional as well as multiscale geographic organization of the bounded region:

This District has 5 local municipalities under its jurisdiction. We are situated in Mafikeng but there is a Mahikeng Local Municipality which services wards in communities, so the constituencies are...placed at MLM. In terms of the District, it is an intergovernmental relation perspective; we coordinate governance structures. The District is the mother-body that is comparable with Bojanala District Municipality in Rustenburg region. MLM caters only to the Mahikeng territorial jurisdiction not the town. Mahikeng has 35 wards, it has the town, villages, locations, units and so forth. These structural changes have been there since 1996 (NMMDM Spokesperson, person interview, 2018 July 12)

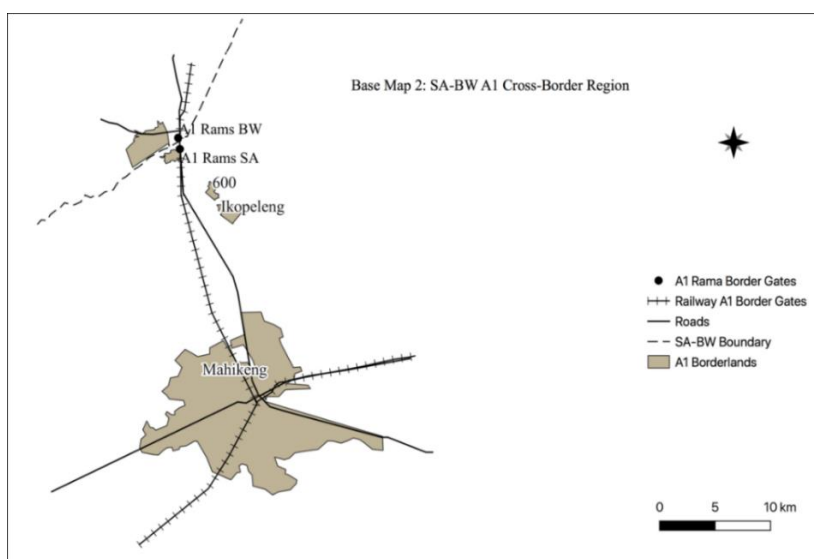


Figure 1.6. The A1 cross-border gates of South Africa and Botswana with transnational Rolong and subnational Botlounge borderlands. Source: Nkooe.

As can be seen in the spatial illustration above, Mahikeng settlement is a large territorial and demographic unit compared to tripartite Botlounge, transnational Borolong and to an extent, the subnational borderland of Lobatse-Peleng. It is also the biggest demographically and the oldest establishment from the four places of abode at A1 and A2 border gates. Traditionally, Mahikeng communally owns substantial proportions of the DM, a portion of BW's territory via Borolong and the entire LM area that is inclusive of Botlounge. For these reasons, I refer to this Rolong borderland as Greater Mahikeng since it envelopes vast territories and has a significantly large society of more than 250,000 inhabitants who are silenced, ignored and abandoned in their Setswana specificity and ethnocentricity by the dominant space of an ANC-led DM and LM. I probed the DM actor about the provincial state's boundary producing practices:

Demarcation boards delineate where territorial regions begin and end. The border to [BW] is in Mafikeng. That border belongs to SA, but it is in the land of Mafikeng. All those borderlands there [Botlounge] are under Mahikeng jurisdiction. That space towards the border is a no man's land. It is Mafikeng land...The House of Traditional Leaders works together with the District and Local Municipality structures in terms of jurisdiction of that locality (NMMDM Spokesperson, personal interview, 2018 July 12)

What is evident from the state's conception of the border region vis-à-vis borderlands is that TLs such as Kgosi Shole and Kgosi Montshiwa III are artificially installments. Their powers are of no purpose to their representational constituents because the TLs have no political leverage and voting power in the subregion's decision-making body despite political claims of collaboration. The entities that are responsible for managing boundary affairs, social relations of reproduction and spatial developments in Greater Mahikeng are professional physical planners, urban managers, politicians, social engineers, technocratic sub-dividers, and capitalists of all sorts. Kgosi Montshiwa III explained the power asymmetries at work in a diplomatic fashion:

We work with government. There's a Traditional Leadership Act that we derive our powers from...We are apolitical, but we support the government in power, and we have the right to vote. The Law dictates that traditional leaders must be part of municipal

councils within their areas of jurisdiction. I'm a member of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. Around here, there's other chiefs like Kgosi Shole of Ramatlabama, and Kgosi Seatlhore of Rapulana in Lotlhakane...they are in Local Municipality, and [I am] in the District Municipality (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 11)

The Tshidi-Rolong Traditional Council were less diplomatic about their relegation to archaic and arbitrary realms of political decision-making which in their eyes is a gross deviation from prehistoric and post-historic tradition:

We're affected by the democratic municipality because the chieftaincy or *bogosi* falls directly under the political administrative powers of the [MLM] and [NMMDM]. It's killing us. It's difficult to do anything with them because they treat us hand in glove. There's a lot of corruption. Sometimes the municipality imposes itself over territories that are not theirs, territories that they found here that are very close to the villages and they just take the land, do what they want without consulting us, marginalizing us (Ratshidi Traditional Council, personal interview, 2016 November 11)

There is no practical and functional partnership between TLs and provincial state institutions. In fact, the former are relics in the imagination of the latter. Kgosi Montshiwa III shed some light on these unexamined power differentials in the borderland:

The role that traditional leaders play in the provincial Council is small...those people who are elected to Council...can break into a caucus if they have disagreements... we [TLs] can't do that because we are so few; three or four...we are forced to accept [Council] decisions even if they affect our territories [negatively]. They will just write and say you've participated without taking your voice into consideration so, you're easily overpowered...We've taken this issue up with the National House [of Traditional Leaders] to redefine our roles so that we have weight and real power in Council...We are above politics, and we can't afford to vote blindly (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 28)

SA TLs are peripheralized in territorial decision-making processes as well as issues of concern and interest to their constituents by provincial state governments and their institutions. This compared to TLs in BW whose subregional chiefs are entrusted with handling more 70% of BW's criminal and civil court cases with maximum efficiency. We can thus say SA TLs are passive actors in the borderworks and borderscape production of Greater Mahikeng. In SA, the prehistoric spatial practices of *dikgosi* are asphyxiated and made a *tabula rasa* of not by the abstract fracture line that divides them into northerners and southerners, but by the representations of state space that determines what is lived and perceived with what it conceives. While Kgosi Montshiwa III acknowledges the palpable loss of agropastoral territory called Borolong Farms in BW, he holds firmly to the cultural sovereignty he commands over the Barolong of SA and BW who recognise his sovereignty. The loss of agropastoral territory came with heavy demands on his personal life which he established in BW. Since he is an important political figure in the royal dynasty of Kgosi Montshiwa I, Kgosi Montshiwa III sacrificed his private life for the social good of *his* Barolong:

Our territory was cut in more than half and we had to decide... [Kgosi Lotlamoeng II Montshiwa] has his jurisdiction in [BW] and I have mine here... I am senior over him. In 2000 I left the job [in BW] because there was conflict with the regent back home. When my father died, they wanted [Kgosi] Besele II to leave [BW] and rule in Mahikeng. He

could not come this side...because of the border...It was in Bophuthatswana time and Mangope took a unilateral decision to appoint that person [Setumo] as a permanent ruler of the Ratshidi Barolong in Mahikeng. He [Mangope] crossed his lines. Barolong lay low for a while...there was strife until the people had enough courage to say they do not want Mangope's appointment of the regent. (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 28)

The omission of Barolong from territorial negotiations with apartheid SA about Batlounge's resettlement in Rolong territory becomes a little clearer from the king's response. The political decision was indeed a poorly conceived political error by apartheid Bophuthatswana which together with the Pretoria based apartheid state were excluded from territorial talks with Batlounge, according to Kgosi Shole. *Bogosi* (kingship) and *segosi* (chieftainship) are divinely ordained from birth in a royal family even if modern state politics and politicians interfere with them. *Dikgosi* are divine appointments that cannot be escaped nor ignored by those in their lineage since they directly affect the lives and destiny of the royal families and many generations of constituents that are linked to them. In this regard, we can say the chief is more powerful and more central in the social reproduction of his society and organization of his territory than a fracture line. Kgosi Montshiwa III recalled the difficult decision he had to make when his turn came to ascend the cultural throne:

The royal family was divided on this issue...they would come to my workplace in BW, asking me to come take my rightful place since they didn't want my predecessor to continue in power. I told them I'm not interested since this was becoming bothersome...people came to advise me...I might not want to be *kgosi* but what about my children since this chieftaincy [is] their hereditary legacy? I was further convinced that somethings are more important than [money] because if you have this family lineage and society responsibility and you leave it out, [you] will lose integrity (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 28)

Kgosi Shole also experienced something similar. He was an emerging professional in the administration sector in the health department of pre-democratic SA. He was a young man who enjoyed travel and leisure however, the premature death of his father coupled with the space relocating interstates violence of the late 1970s to 1980s, forced him to occupy the royal throne in his early 20s and forfeit the rest of his life for the social good of Batlounge. Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa of BW is not exempt from this dramatic life experiences and demands on male heirs to the existing and enduring royal dynasties of various Batswana. Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa is a Law alumnus of the North-West University/University of Bophuthatswana. From 2015 to 2019 he served as an active member of BW's parliament and a leader of a minority opposition party. To allow him space and time to pursue his passion for modern politics, Kgosi Motshegare was appointed regent (*Motshwarela kgosi*) of BW's Tshidi Barolong in the absence of Kgosi Lotlamoreng II. According to his late mother, Mmakgosi Montshiwa II Besele, Kgosi Lotlamoreng II's health began to deteriorate drastically. His mother and regent believe that he became sick because he occupied the wrong seat and space of power. Kgosi Montshiwa III intimated his positionality in the matter as supreme patriarch of the Barolong, stating:

when the [BW] politicians asked him to leave his chieftaincy, they had to ask me for him and I gave them the blessing. He's been sick so, we asked him to return home to his throne and forfeit his career in modern politics (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 28)



While the lives of postmodern Tswana chiefs of SA and BW differ markedly from their forefathers, they remain unchanged in some ways. Where the border is an immaterial reality to the international and subnational Batlounge, it is for the transnational Barolong a spatial necessity that must be crossed and is crossed regularly in response to their prehistoric kinship relations cross-border, socio-cultural events, religious activities, and family affairs. When Kgosi Montshiwa III was installed as paramount chief for Greater Mahikeng in 2002 for example, it was his uncle, Kgosi Besele II Montshiwa father of Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa, who clothed him with leopard skin in the absence of the installed chief's father, Kgosi Kebalepile II Montshiwa. This meant cohorts of ordinary and royal Barolong from BW had to traverse the A1 border gates *en masse* in support of this revered tradition in Setswana. Despite boundary influences on the autonomous and transnational Montshiwa dynasty, Kgosi Montshiwa III takes his subcultural responsibility seriously in Greater Mahikeng. In his authority as a cultural custodian of all things Rolong in the region, Kgosi Montshiwa III has set his eyes on the toponymic appropriation of some sites such as schools and recreational areas under his de facto jurisdiction.

He explained:

There were schools named after chiefs like Lotlamoreng, Kebalepile...North-West government was counting schools...they came to ask me what to call these new schools called Boingotlo Middle School and Kebalepile High School in Montshiwa Township. I told them they must name the latter school Kgosi Kebalepile High School because no one would know what or who Kebalepile is. I suggested to the department that all schools named after chiefs must have a title and integrity that starts with 'Kgosi'. Even for Lotlamoreng Dam which is named after my grandfather. That's my grandfather and so it must be renamed Kgosi Lotlamoreng Dam...it is not Letlamoreng but Lotlamoreng Dam. I've engaged the national department of treasury and provincial department of tourism to come up with funds to revive it. So, within a year or two...will be running (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 28)

The uses of Setswana names have a qualitative meaning and symbolic currency for Batswana who are not included in the states' imagination of 'saam trek saam werk' policy of the subregion. For schools, roads, Districts, university campus residences and recreational spaces to be renamed after iconic Tswana figures such as Kgosi Montshiwa and Solomon Plaatje, has potential to bridge cultural, political, geographic and research gaps among Northern and Southern Batswana such as Barolong who have shared customs, ideologies and traditions. For example, in Pitsane (BW) there is a secondary school named Lotlamoreng Secondary School which one of the Seoke grandchildren of the Leshomo clan in Borolong attended during the time of this research. I asked the grandchild and her siblings if they knew who Lotlamoreng was in general and in relation to them in particular. Their answer was a unanimous no. I took opportunity to enlighten them with the little knowledge I amassed at that time. Unfortunately, despite their sub-cultural unity Barolong of SA and BW are not politically close knit within and across their geographic borders.

Kgosi Motshegare (personal interview, 2018 August 20) explained:

Our problem is that we don't communicate nor work together to know how many we are but, we know where we are. We work together on formal occasions cross-border but our relationship could be improved. There's a small group this side [BW] that wants to have a Barolong Reconciliation Day, to find out how we can put our differences aside and rebuild ourselves...it might be difficult since we're geographically scattered all over the

place. We [in BW] have about 45 tribal authorities with their smaller courts under the jurisdiction of this primary Tribal Council [in Good Hope]

Despite their intracultural politics, Barolong have deep geographic knowledge about their members despite clear demographic knowledge on how many of them there are across BW and SA, and other surrounding states outside the scope of this research. Barolong are a proud and historically dominant subculture among the Batswana that still prides itself of iconic moments in their world history which modern historians often deprive them. In the heart of the residential homes ensconcing the Tshidi-Rolong Traditional Council along the meandering and ecologically polluted Ramatlabama River stream, is a circumscribed war memorial with Setswana inscriptions about Rolong people, history and totemic representation. It is a site of heritage that is not included nor celebrated in the DM and LM's representations of space for heritage tourism development. In addition to this war memorial is the under examined and inviting [Kgosi] Lotlamoreng I Dam which in its abandonment encases within the walls of its physical geography, a constellation of sacred archaeological space, ecological and green recreational space, a large and lengthy stone wall, bold statues of strange human figures and hiking trails. This site is also politically revered by Kgosi Montshiwa III's Council as a geopolitical site where "the Boers were killed by the British and the Barolong" (Ratshidi Traditional Council, personal interview, 2016 November).

### **6.5 South Eastern District: The A2 Urban Borderland of Lobatse-Peleng**

Lobatse is a colonial British established town in BW's South East District (SED). It was according to the Lobatse Development Plan of 1993 and Lobatse Urban Development Plan 1 of 1997 of the Republic of Botswana, established in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century during the development of the transregional railway line from Mafikeng to Bulawayo. Lobatse is built on physical territory that was once inhabited by a variety of precolonial African nations such as Kgosi Moiloa's Bahurutshe, the Shona religious group of the Zezuru, Barolong of Kgosi Montshiwa I and the "Bakgwateng...before they were defeated by the Bangwaketse" and later expelled by colonial regimes of SA (Republic of Botswana, 1997:10). At a 126-years old in 2023 Lobatse is according to the subnational border city's 2018 Urban Regeneration Plan, one of BW's oldest border settlement whose current regeneration plans are geared towards sustainable urban settlements, accessibility and permeability (Republic of Botswana, 2018). Lobatse is situated 70 km south of Gaborone. Its political geography is defined by "the international boundary with South Africa" to the south east, and "by freehold farms...to the North, South and West" (Republic of Botswana, 2018:3). Administratively, Lobatse is part of the larger South Eastern Region [SER] which according to the Lobatse Urban Development Plan 2 of 2003-2009, comprises Kgatleng, Kweneng, Gaborone, Jwaneng, SD and SED (Republic of Botswana, 2003).

Lobatse is a fascinating border town nestled between scenic orographic boundaries and geological formations such as the Lobatse Volcanic Super Groups, the Transvaal Super Group and the Waterberg Super Group (Republic of Botswana, 2003). Lobatse's built environment rests on volcanic sedimentary and igneous rock outcrops comprising "the Lobatse Volcanic Group and Transvaal Supergroup" where "a north-south fault traverse parts of the planning area through Woodhall I & II" in which large quantities of gold and uranium "exist in the Black Reef Quartzite conglomerate of the Transvaal Supergroup" (Republic of Botswana, 1993, 1997:3-5, 2003). The geological and topographic character of Lobatse pose serious technocratic challenges and spatial limitations for advanced spatial development and

urban growth planning by the Lobatse Town Council (Republic of Botswana, 1997, 2003, 2018). Together with the conceived transregional railway line, the riparian border system of Peleng River—which forms part of Lobatse’s main surface drainage system—is known to have a substantial influence on Lobatse’s spatial plans and morphology (Republic of Botswana, 1993). Lobatse is an international border town that occupies a geographic area of 40km<sup>2</sup> with a population of roughly 29,689 inhabitants (Republic of Botswana, 2018).

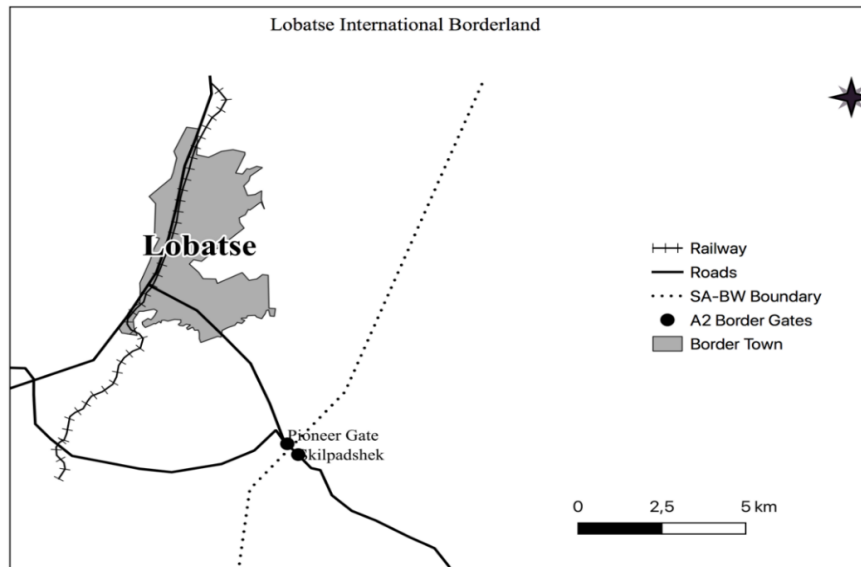


Figure 1.7. The A2 cross-border gates of South Africa and Botswana with Lobatse-Peleng borderland  
Source: Nkooe.

Much like Botlounge, Lobatse is a subnational international borderland. Its settlement does not overlap the SA-BW borderline at A2 cross-border gates. There is no other human settlement within a 10-30km radius from the SA-BW fracture line and its A2 border gate on the SA side. This borderland organization differs markedly with A1 border gate dynamics which are spatially congruent and continuous across the countries fracture line. Even though Lobatse is subnational, it is strategically positioned within BW’s integrated spatial framework of the “Trans-Kgalagadi highway Corridor” which runs from Mozambique to Namibia via the Platinum Corridor of the North-West Province (Republic of Botswana, 2018:4). The Trans-Kgalagadi Corridor is a political economic artery of BW which provides “strategic access from Lobatse to international markets...and the Southern African hinterland” (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2018:4). Lobatse is a conceived representational place of abode that was historically produced by the British for white inhabitants and users. The border town was racially segregated between the white urban core and the peripheral township of Peleng which was British conceived for the majority Tswana population of SED (Republic of Botswana, 2018).

In its colonial spatial conception, the physical space occupied by Lobatse border town was spliced up into pieces of private property by the ideologically dominant tendency of British South Africa Company (BSAC) under John Cecil Rhodes, which claimed large blocks of territory as white own freehold farms in 1889 (Maylam, 1980; Republic of Botswana, 1993). From this spatial accumulation, two racially exclusive, spatially divided, racially stratified, and socially segregated geographic settlements were birthed on iron-grid plans. The one settlement was for Batswana and the other for whites (Republic of Botswana, 2018). The former settlement was conceived as “Lobatse proper” since it comprised freehold farms and BC Thema suburbia while “the township of Peleng” was conceived as a poorly developed

“squatter community” (Republic of Botswana, 1997:38; Makgala, 2004). The established representational spaces were Lobatse town center and BC Thema which were formally laid out in 1909 and 1922 respectively however, it was in 1897 when British colonialist “pushing northwards with their [638km] railway line...from Mafikeng...between Ramatlabama and Ramokwebana”, established the colonial town” (Republic of Botswana, 2018:10). The railway was used by colonial town planners as a political tool, an “edge and...dividing line between two major parts of the town” which “although closely juxtaposed, [were] completely different in character” (Republic of Botswana, 2018:10). Indeed, the railway line’s oxymoronic spatial practices were to maintain the colonial *status quo* of extreme separation and proximity between Batswana of Peleng township and British inhabitants of Lobatse. The border township of Peleng has since been reappropriated by democratic Lobatse Town Council which integrated the historically segregated and under serviced African space with the colonial white urban space of Lobatse. Racial politics and racialized spatial planning were defining features of BW’s political geography until the 1940s (Republic of Botswana, 1993, 1997, 2018).

Peleng was thus produced for political use as a labour reserve for English inhabitants and a strategic English buffer settlement against Afrikaner territorial encroachment. This pattern of spatial production mimics prehistoric settlement relations of the 1850s where Kgosi Sechele I conceived several political border settlements to protect his Bakwena society and territory in the SED against Boer encroachment. The modern-day *le voisinage* of Peleng is at first indistinguishable from Lobatse since the two are well integrated geographically and socially. Peleng is a postindustrial mixed land-use residential space that is roughly 7km from the A2 junction points of SA and BW. Large tracts of open green and public space abound in Peleng, along with a youthful population that always makes representational uses of these conceived public spaces. The geographic location, settlement structure and orographic topography of post-industrial Peleng is a breath-taking site and sight to behold. There are colorful and spacious houses in Peleng which are constructed on a steep hill with narrow, meandering tarred roads lined with street lighting and a ton of luscious trees, vegetation and plants. Viewed from the street level below, Peleng’s residential and geomorphic landscape evokes an image of a well serviced and decongested Brazilian *favella* on much smaller spatial and demographic scales.

Despite its conceived conceptualization as “an overspill”, Peleng’s seamless *geographic crocheting* with Lobatse by the neocolonial Lobatse Town Council de-distanced the material realities of racial planning along with fragmented temporal rhythms of Lobatse and Peleng into a single, coherent unitary whole (Republic of Botswana, 1997:7). The urban planning phenomenon I call geographic crocheting that occurred in Lobatse with Peleng compels me to refer to the A2 borderland as Lobatse-Peleng than just Lobatse. Lobatse-Peleng is an upbeat and decolonized representations of space and representational space whose spatial practices must be discerned through a further study of its palpable urban geography, planning and architecture. In addition to the geographic crocheting of Lobatse-Peleng the highly urbanized subregion inspired a new geographic identity of Tswana inhabitants from “different ethnic groups” to blend “into one cultural group that adheres to the dictates of urban life” (Republic of Botswana, 1997:10). In this context, sharp lines of ethnocentric division where inhabitants clamor around sub-categories of Ngwato, Hurutshe, Kwena, Rolong, Ngwaketse or Kgalagadi, do not exist. There are urban Batswana in Lobatse-Peleng who relate to each other in the border space as urban inhabitants rather than as sub-cultural groupings.

According to the BW's National Development Plan 11 of 2017-2023, Lobatse-Peleng enjoys a position of supremacy despite its downward shifts within BW's national settlement system. This shift emerged in response to the production of the post-colonial country's new urban centers such as Gaborone and Jwaneng which dramatically changed internal migration patterns, rate of urbanization and spurred on the social-political cry and demand for the decentralization of Lobatse-Peleng's economic functions, juridical privileges, and scientific assets to other sub-regions of the country (Republic of Botswana, 1993, 2017). The 1966 territorial loss of Mafeking as the administrative center for the Northern Batswana of Bechuanaland Protectorate elevated postcolonial Lobatse to a status of capital city of under the government of Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) state prior to the Batswana production of the spectacular capital city of Gaborone and its affluent residential fringe suburbs like Block 9. As critically noted by the country's Southern District Integrated Land Use Plan of 2005 and the Southern District Development Plan 6 of 2003-2009 official policy documents, the economic basis of Lobatse-Peleng was the meat processing industry which reflected the country and society's cattle herding tradition and pastoral *Dasein* as an integral aspect of Setswana society.

The infamous Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) was established in Lobatse between 1952 and 1954 (Republic of Botswana, 1993, 1997). The BMC is an enduring economic sector that contributes towards national employment and the ongoing spatial and economic development of Lobatse-Peleng. The current economic monopoly of the BMC by Lobatse has caused arrhythmic tension among Tswana farmers in Maun and Francistown who argued for the spatial economic decentralization of the BMC functions from Lobatse to their remote and economically ailing sub-regions (Mosikare, 2018). The BMC arrhythmia worsened between 1986 and 1987 and it nearly "led to a stagnation of the town's economy" or what Lefebvre (2004) calls total desynchronization (Republic of Botswana, 1993, 1997:24). Despite its internal disputes for spatial redistribution of economic and administrative functions, Lobatse's BMC is conceived as a key heritage or historical site. The BMC played and continues to play an important role in the national development plans and political economy of BW (Republic of Botswana, 1997, 2017, 2018). Lobatse-Peleng is described as "the place where it all happened or started" and, "no other town in Botswana can claim to have so many sites of...historical importance within its immediate environs" (Republic of Botswana, 2018:11). Despite its heritage significance, political economic value and palpable urban dimension, Lobatse-Peleng is still a Tswana border town. It has traditional institutions and traditional leaders who are mostly based in Peleng yet are firmly established within the jurisdiction of Lobatse Town Council and BW's Constitution (Republic of Botswana, 2018).

The postmodern lived space of Lobatse-Peleng is on a broader scale strategically positioned as "the gateway to South Africa" (Republic of Botswana, 1993:9). Its integrated transnational road networks form "a major link with South Africa" however, Lobatse's spatial importance "as a road-based border town" is said to decline "with the...prominence of the Tlokweng border post and the completion of Selebi-Phikwe-Zanzibar Road" (Republic of Botswana, 1993:12). Nonetheless, Lobatse-Peleng is an important social space whose spatial patterns of migration along with their economic rhythms influence the developmental trajectory of the SED and the country. For example, in 1964 Lobatse-Peleng's population was roughly 7,613. By 1971 it increased to 11,936 and by 1991 it was 26,050 (Republic of Botswana, 1997). 2013 projections estimated population growth rates of 49,385 and 53,785 (Republic of Botswana, 1993). These fluctuating and steadily increasing population dynamics coupled with internal migration patterns bring new challenges for housing, employment and land in a topographically limiting and changing urban border environment (Republic of Botswana,

1993, 1997, 2018). Within the political economic spatial framework of BW, Lobatse-Peleng still commands the scope for subnational and transregional integration. Large scale private sector investment plans called “Lobatse 2000” are in motion to boost Lobatse’s functions (Republic of Botswana, 1997:35, 2018:3). BW’s “closeness to South Africa...and the easy accessibility to the north by the developed road network”, inspired Lobatse 2000 which in turn is conceived as the engine for sustainable economic development (Republic of Botswana, 1997:35). Lobatse 2000 is a road networks based micro-regionalism that is also extra-territorial. The Lobatse 2000 has a road network that is 1,604km in length connecting Gaborone to Walvis Bay and thus “shorten the travelling distance between Johannesburg and Windhoek by approximately 400km” (Republic of Botswana, 1997:36). Lobatse 2000 is expected to boost the ailing tourism industry of BW at subnational levels via the ‘Ramatlabama - Gaborone and Trans Kgalagadi Highway’ (Republic of Botswana, 1997, 2005, 2018).

### **6.6 The Southern District: A1 Subnational Border Region of Borolong**

Ramatlabama<sup>38</sup> is a representational space of Barolong that is also called “Borolong” or “Barolong Farms” (Schapera, 1952:2; Republic of Botswana, 2003:10,12). It is an intriguing and interesting rural border settlement located in BW’s Southern District (SD) (Republic of Botswana 2003, 2005). Borolong’s production in space coincides with BW’s independence and the hardening of the colonially administrative and veterinary British established border. To understand Borolong we must find understand the broader political geographic framework within which it is situated. Borolong is located within a web of integrated road networks and overlapping internal and international borders of BW’s SD. Culturally it is ensconced by Bakwena, Batlounge, Bakgalagadi and Bangwaketse to the east, south, west and north respectively. Geopolitically, Borolong is ensconced by the SA-BW border and A1-A2 border gates to the south. To its west, east and north, Borolong is delimited by internal Land Board boundaries which are administrative and fluid. Borolong is interwoven into the conceived fabric of BW and SA by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century British established railway line, the contiguous N18 and A1 primary roads of SA and BW, and the B202 secondary road that courses through the settlement (see map).

Borolong is located in BW’s sixth largest subregion of SD which has an estimated landmass of 26,876km<sup>2</sup> or 26,776km<sup>2</sup>, and a rapidly increasing demographic size of 119,653 inhabitants in 1981, which became 147,389 in 1991 and by 2001 it was 171,652 and as of 2011 it peaked at 197,767 inhabitants (Republic of Botswana 2003, 2005, 2017). SD is ensconced by subnational borders of Kweneng District to the north, Kgalagadi District to the west, SED to the east and to the south, the international border of SA and BW. Like the NMMDM of SA, SD is a rural region. Its physical geographic land organization is 99.2% or 98.8% tribal (communal) land, and 0.8% or 1.2% state owned land (Republic of Botswana 2003, 2005). According to BW’s Land policy of 2015 a great “majority of Batswana...depend on communal land for grazing”, and energy for lighting and cooking which, “due to non-exclusivity of [land] rights under a modern land use system, “suffer degradation” (Republic of Botswana, 2015:15).

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<sup>38</sup> I use Borolong instead of Ramatlabama throughout the chapter and thesis to reduce conceptual as well as toponymic confusion between and about the A1 SA-BW Botlounge and Borolong Tswana cross-borderlands which are called Ramatlabama, together with the A1 SA-BW cross-border gates which are also called Ramatlabama.

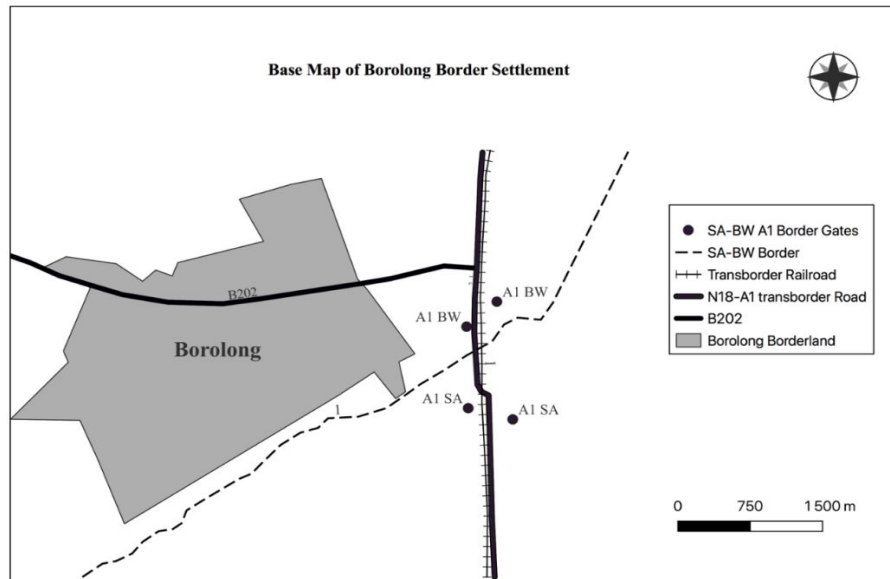


Figure 1.8. The A1 cross-border gates of South Africa and Botswana with Borolong borderland  
Source: Nkooe.

There are no freehold farms or private lands in SD. The existing pattern of land tenure is managed through the SDILUP which is gazetted under the Tribal Land Act/Policy of 2008 (Republic of Botswana, 2003). The dominant sub-cultures in SD are the Bangwaketse followed by the substantially smaller Tshidi-Barolong inter alia the Sarwa and the Lala (Ibid). According to the SD, there are roughly 197,767 inhabitants residing in compact settlements comprising 93 villages of varying geographic and population sizes, and few towns whose growth is dependent on constant internal migration flows (Ibid). Despite the high number of villages to towns and cities in SD, the subregion's settlement geography is still firmly established on prehistoric organizational land-use model of three-tiered settlements (*metse*) and physically distanced cultivated lands (*masimo*) and pastoral grazing fields with their cattle posts (*meraka*) (Republic of Botswana, 2005). Borolong emerges in the SD' territorial framework as an economic and spatial anomaly that is not easy to service and develop because of its border influenced historical production as a residential settlement (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005). SD has three main settlement typologies. These are agro-towns, dispersed settlements, and modern commercial settlements, similar to 1852-1854 settlement types of Kweneng District examined by Silitshena (1976, 1978). Borolong's settlement pattern is conceived as dispersed (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005). It is also perceived as a habitat with a settlement pattern that is unlike any other settlement in the sub-District.

Borolong's spatial pattern deviates from the undisrupted triadic spatial pattern of land-uses shaping BW's contemporary geography of human settlements. Borolong's colonial border origins affected its geographic functions so much so that traditionally separate spatial practices, or uses of zoned blocks of land for agropastoral and residential functions co-exist and coincide in the border produced village (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2009). Despite the spatial oddity of Borolong BW's land policy describes physical geographic changes in the "traditional land use system of residential, pastoral and arable" land-uses "to contemporary uses such as multi residential developments, integrated farming, game farming and agro tourism" as phenomena worth noting for contemporary spatial planning (Republic of Botswana, 2015:1). These modern changes are mostly evident in Gaborone and Lobatse-Peleng than SD where Borolong Farms and its sub-*morafe* are situated. Originally, the place of abode known as Borolong Farms or Borolong, was initially the personal possession of

Kgosi Montshiwa I who conceived it as an economic space for agropastoral land-uses for the social good of his pre-19<sup>th</sup> century Barolong. Kgosi Montshiwa I acquired the territory from the Bangwaketse of Kgosi Bathoen I long before the border's Euclidean allocation and delimitation as a Keate Award in 1897. Long before the boundary's colonial evolution as an administrative boundary of the 1895-1910 British Protectorate and a veterinary space to regulate the spread of foot and mouth disease that was associated with livestock. The land was acquired and worked long before the hardening, demarcation, and political definition of the international border by 1966. It is therefore not surprising that Borolong is conceived as a farmland and is inherently rural because its spatial underpinning and land-uses were never meant for residential habitancy but for chief determined linear rhythms of agropastoral practices.



Optic formant 1.20. Mixed land-uses and the rural rhythm of daily life in Borolong borderland. Source: Nkooe.

The image above illustrates this analytical observation. Livestock breeding and herding are agropastoral practices conducted on private residential property in Borolong. In Borolong residential settlement land-uses by Barolong were forced onto the agropastoral site by decolonial boundary politics of the 1960s. As stated by Kgosi Montshiwa III, Mmakgosi Besele II Montshiwa and Kgosi Motshegare earlier, decisions had to be made and very quickly about the BW territory since the boundary directly swallowed the agropastoral spaces while leaving the rest of the residential space and society behind SA. Therefore, sects of the Barolong had to be allocated across the border to preserve the land in the possession of the Montshiwa dynasty even it meant sub-dividing the dynasty and separating sovereignties in line with statist sovereignties on the ground. Housing and population encroached the green space of agropastoral activities for the sake of not losing the spatial inheritance however this meant that Barolong of BW had to find new ways of living and organization which meant sharing residential space with livestock and conducting farming where the settlement; a total deviation of prehistoric way of life and spatial relation that was not experienced under British Protectorate borders.

The above illustration captured this agropastoral spatial rhythm in motion as part of the daily routine, division of labour and daily life of the Seoke household. Goats are the dominant livestock in Borolong than cattle, sheep or chicken. The little goat kraal (*lesaka*) in the image delineates pastoral spatial land-use from the adjoining residential land-use thus creating the illusion of extreme separation of land-uses or spatial practices where there is none. Goats in Borolong are the dominant livestock however when compared to the rest of the SD, cattle “constitute the bulk of the livestock...totaling 302,325 or 60.2% of the livestock population”



(Republic of Botswana, 2005:90). This means there are more livestock (cattle in particular) in SD than there are people/Batswana. Interestingly, more than 90% of SD's cattle is sold to Lobatse's BMC for processing and redistribution, while 10% is sold to domestic butcheries within SD. Wildlife population compared to domestic animals is lower in the SD. Its steadily declining population consists of Springbok, Hartebeest, Ostriches, Baboons and Kudu (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005). The rest of the SD is opulent with cattle, goats, "forests, wildlife, rangeland, veld products and mineral resources...with limited soils suitable for arable agriculture" (Republic of Botswana, 2015:1). Borolong Farms is recognised as the only territory in SD with good soil for agricultural purposes (Republic of Botswana, 2003). This then proves that Kgosi Montshiwa I correctly identified and zoned the acquired region for the correct spatial practices since he understood soil and land fertility. Kgosi Montshiwa I had territorial aptitude, was a good spatial planner and a great patriot and chief of the Barolong (Molema, 1966).

Despite their minority status and territory in Ngwaketse country so to speak, there is no indication of social arrhythmia or cultural frontier between Barolong and Bangwaketse for territorial claims about the country's smallest territorial holding with the District's richest soil surveyed for commercial agriculture/farming. There is also no legal contest against Barolong of Borolong from other Batswana including their government about their legal ownership and spatial claims of territorial ownership. Economically and socially, SD has an estimated population of about 42,362 inhabitants who are economically active while 32,431 are employed (Republic of Botswana, 2003). There is no fisheries economy despite the District's riparian drainage systems. In Borolong, roughly 8,783 inhabitants—isorhythmic with Botlounge's demographic size—are employed from a population of 47,477 Barolong (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005). This data paints a bleak economic picture of Borolong as a poor rural borderland within an economically rich SD. Integration of Borolong via roads, the railway line and cross-border public transportation systems create opportunities for the impoverished and relatively young Borolong population. The Trans-Kgalagadi Highway and Lobatse 2000 are two macro-scale projects acting as catalysts for Borolong's sustainable development and territorial management.

Accordingly, the intentional spatial integration of BW's political geography through interconnected road networks like the A1, B202, Trans-Kgalagadi Highway, Lobatse 2000 and the railway are a welcomed development that is "according accessibility and facilitating the development of different parts of the Districts, neighboring districts and other parts of the country" (Republic of Botswana, 2005:121). The A1 Road is a highly ranked road that connects SD to Lobatse and Gaborone. It is a primary road to which the A2 and B202 are secondary. The accident-prone A1 Road provides a "regional link from Ramatlabama to the northern parts of country through Lobatse" where on average "about 1000 vehicles" commute daily "between Ramatlabama and Lobatse" (Republic of Botswana, 2005:124). This means there is a high degree of mobility within and between BW's border Districts. The A2 Trans-Kgalagadi Highway functions as a "major inter-regional link" and "international linkage between [BW] and Namibia...Angola...South Africa and Mozambique" (Ibid).



Optic formant 1.21. Borolong B202 secondary road to Kanye. Source: Nkooe.

This high degree of subregional and transregional integration by roads and rail, secrete a hypercomplex space of geographically interconnected multiscalar spaces of accessibility which transforms the rural SD into a practico-geographical conduit for flows of “traffic...and conveyance of goods locally, regionally and internationally” (Republic of Botswana, 2005:124). The B202 road is a conceived representations of space that was called into production by the representational space of the SD for the purpose of making movement possible. This action is similar to the action taken by Lobatse-Peleng inhabitants petitioning their conceived spaces to extend the international border gate’s operating times at A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek in the SED. These relational dynamics between conceived space and lived space in BW and for SD in particular shows the vitality of Batswana’s political clout in the border region, a trait which is seriously lacking in SA’s Greater Mahikeng. Indeed, “communities in the Southern District” desired “tarred roads...to overcome difficulties resulting from...poor state of roads in some parts of the District” (Republic of Botswana, 2005:127). The B202 links A1 Borolong to SD’s administrative capital of Kanye via Good Hope<sup>39</sup> and Mmathethe. The spatial practice of the B202 is to link “Barolong farms and the northern parts of the country” (Republic of Botswana, 2005:126) rather than oppress and asphyxiate them.

In addition to spatial developments projects, the commodification of BW’s spatial heritage of natural landscapes, geological resources, Setswana culture, archaeological sites inter alia, is perceived as a viable economic strategy for tourism as “one of the engines of economic growth” in the face of declining wildlife populations and wildlife tourism (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005, 2015:15). Politically, the SD has a well-organized and conceived subnational governance structure with clearly defined institutions and their respective territorial jurisdiction within BW’s institutionalized spatial framework of power. According to BW’s policy documents, the Southern District Council [SDC] is SD’s main governing body. With its headquarters at Kanye—which is the SD’s administrative and commercial center—and Jwaneng, the SDC has secondary centers like Moshupa, Good Hope and Mabutsane which also have their respective sub-District Councils (Republic of Botswana, 2003). These institutions are together conceived as Local Governments (LGs).

<sup>39</sup> Ngcangcela (2014:77) incorrectly refers to Good Hope as “Goodwood” in their transboundary tourism study.

The LG structures are decentralized arms or representations of the state at District, sub-District and community levels. The LG is further composed of four Local Authorities (LAs) comprising District and City/Town Councils, Tribal Administration (TA), District Administration (DA) and Tribal Land Boards (TLBs) (Republic of Botswana, 2003). Their responsibility is “to ensure efficient operation of local government with Ministry of Local Government as the parent Ministry of all four Local Authorities” for a “prosperous, productive and innovative Botswana” (Republic of Botswana, 2003:163). Within this organized matrix of SD’s political governance structures, the TA and TLBs are of interest for Borolong in Good Hope Southern (sub) District Council. The SD is governed by two TLBs whose statutory spatial and social mandates are to (a) grant land rights to spatial users and inhabitants of SD, (b) to facilitate land allocation and (c) delineate/authorize land-uses which the conceived TLBs deem appropriate. The two TLBs at work in SD are the Ngwaketse Land Board (LB) and the Rolong LB (Republic of Botswana, 2003, 2005). Both LBs are governed by the Tribal Land Act (TLA) of 2008. The TLA empowers professional actors in the TLBs to undertake political spatial decision-making and facilitate territorial conflict resolution. TLBs oversee SD’s spatially networked and conceptually hierarchized cluster of 93 villages inhabited by more than 170,000 inhabitants from which less than 35% are Barolong of Good Hope who inhabit BW’s smallest territorial unit with a mixed land-use pattern.

### 6.6.1 The international border production of Borolong

Borolong—the place of the Barolong—was as noted earlier an agropastoral field and hence absolute representational space of pre-historic and pre-colonial Barolong of Kgosi Montshiwa I. The subregion was primitively accumulated by Kgosi Montshiwa I as personal possession for the social good of his communal and agropastoral society of the Tshidi-Barolong who resided in Greater Mahikeng (Republic of Botswana, 1993). Kgosi Montshiwa I possessed the expansive territory as part of his vision for the geographic expansion of his chiefdom and for the sole use of agropastoral activities. The precapitalist and spatially segregated agropastoral spatial practices were salient building blocks of Rolong and broader Tswana society (Landau, 1984; Plaatje, 1995). This territory was not empty prior to Kgosi Montshiwa’s possession of it. As noted by Lefebvre (1991), every space is already in place before the deployment of its actors in it because where there is space there is *Being/Dasein* and there is no *Being* without a space. Borolong territory was not born from traditional US frontier traditions. It was not bought, conquered or negotiated.

Borolong territory was given in kind to Kgosi Montshiwa I by Kgosi Bathoen I because he asked for it in exchange for his military service to the latter against the bellicose Matebele of Kgosi Mzilikazi who once occupied the Ngwaketse country (Republic of Botswana, 1993). From since then, Barolong owned that portion of Ngwaketse country to a point that post-1852 Kgosi Montshiwa I and a few of his followers retreated there for refuge among Bakwena and Bangwaketse to wait out territorial warfare and statist violence in SA (Matthews, 1945; Molema, 1920, 1966). The actual physical production of Borolong predates the geopolitical production of modern BW. We can thus refer to Borolong as a representational and absolute space *par excellence*. It is a space of language and speech or *Dasein*, born out of bonds of consanguinity, Setswana language and African soil. Borolong was developed by Barolong from the ground up with little statist intervention. Kgosi Montshiwa III explained:

Once the border was established [BW] attained independence and sovereignty. Barolong in [BW] said they cannot be ruled from another country [SA]...That side [BW] was Barolong farms and here [Mahikeng] was home. Our territory was cut in half, and we had to decide (Kgosi Montshiwa III, personal interview, 2018 September 28)

Mmakgosi Besele II Montshiwa, the late mother of Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa, added:

[Kgosi] Lotlamoreng I ruled both sides of the border before 1966...later he divided his two sons to rule over the Barolong before and after the border between [SA] and [BW] was laid. He sent [Kgosi] Kebalepile II [father of Kgosi Jeff Montshiwa III] to rule and remain in Mahikeng until his death in 1972...he then sent [Kgosi] Besele II [father of Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa] to Good Hope where he died in 2002 and lies buried (Mmakgosi Besele II Montshiwa, personal interview, 2018 September 8)

The paramount chief of the time, Kgosi Lotlamoreng I Montshiwa, exercised his sovereign authority to make territorial decisions about splitting his once unitary Tswana chiefdom and chieftainship in two in response to the imposed and arbitrarily delimited international border of SA. The production of Borolong was a Tswana affair that was non-statist. Kgosi Motshegare added a different perspective to this social border history:

Kgosi Lotlamoreng II's father was reigning this side until [Kgosi] Kebalepile II decided to allow his brother to rule this side while he remained ruling that side to accommodate the border...the border involves two nations (Kgosi Motshegare, personal interview, 2018 August 20)

According to the regent, Pitsane was the traditional economic hub and agricultural site for Rolong food production. Mme (Mrs.) Seoke, together with her late husband, Rre (Mr) Seoke recalled the early days of the border and how it coincided with their meeting while undertaking what Plaatje (1995) calls perfunctory work in SD situated *masimo* and *meraka* of Greater Mahikeng

We met in 1962 in the farms of Ramatlabama. We worked there. We got married in 1965. We were not aware of the looming independence. I was from Good Hope and he was here in Ramatlabama. It was still Bechuanaland Protectorate before the three chiefs went overseas to ask for *boipuso* [independence]...this land was called Botswana...we were no longer ruled and colonised by *mma-mosadinyana* [imperial Britain] (The Seoke, personal interview, 2018 September 18)

The Seokes went on to further explain the origins, toponym and genealogy of Ramatlabama

There was a man called Kgagane Leshomo-a-Konopi. We are in the territory of Kgagane Leshomo-a-Konopi. When he got older, he gave his brother, Mangweng Leshomo-a-Segau-a-Makaba, the reigns. With time others were given the reigns until a non-royal blooded person overtook the reigns because the existing sons feared for their lives. Many people came until Rre Mosetlhi took the reins until just yesterday [18 September 2018]. Now, the *tikologo* [territory] is being returned to its rightful heirs hence the new paramount for Ramatlabama...in November [2018] ...we will get official letters from parliament installing him as a petty chief. He will not wear a leopard blanket because he is not paramount. Only the likes of [Kgosi] Lotlamoreng and [Kgosi] Jeff Montshiwa (The Seoke, personal interview, 2018 September 18)

I asked the married couple if they had any *pitso* or *lekgotla* in Mahikeng about the partitioning of their society and inalienable agropastoral territory

We don't know why and how the border came about. Then came a thing called a passport. So, when I cross the border, I have to produce this passport to cross. Before the border, there was a small gully that we crossed by foot. Pitsane-Molopo and Mabule are settlements on both sides of the border. People ask for salt from their neighbours on a daily basis despite the border. *They talk across the border*. Here where we are, were grazing fields of cattle livestock, crops and other such facilities. We walked back and forth between these places after harvesting. The crop would be dropped off in large quantities by cars and carts to Mahikeng. Tomorrow it would be the same thing. People's homes in Mahikeng are still there. Others are renting them out, others are selling them and others their children live there. *We lost that territory*. We live with our livestock at home because livestock theft is rife. We share small territory for livestock, houses and crop farming (The Seoke, personal interview, 2018 September 18; emphasis added)

There is a clear consciousness of the border in the minds of BW's Barolong even though its politics are not so clear. Despite this awareness, the ontic space of the border remains immaterial for inhabitants whose houses are directly affected by the geopolitical divide. Neighbours relations are not distanced nor are they silenced or asphyxiated by the abstract space of the border and its statist spatial practices. Neighbours instead de-distance and negate the international border and its barrier effect. That neighbours "talk across the border" flips the sociological script of 'us-them', 'here-there', 'foreign-domestic' among Barolong, their SA counterparts and their SD neighbours. The border is never ignored nor never recognised by either side since it is fully recognized in the daily and organized gestural systems of the African *Dasein* who discourse across it without having to physically crossing it for the exchanges of daily household goods and gossip.



Optic formant 1.22. Pre-independence self-built housing units in Borolong. Source: Nkooe.

From this perspective "daily life in borderlands" is not limited to people's ability to physically "cross the border legally or illegally" (Baud and van Schendel, 1997: 220). It is expanded to non-border crosser's ability to talk across the invisible fracture line, exchange ideas and information *inter alia* asking for salt to season food, without going through customs or immigration control via designated junction points. Borolong is thus a borderland of action and interaction, where Tswana *Dasein* with lips and ears call back and forth to each other in full view of dyadic abstract states space which overlays the symbolic spaces it partitions. The hardening of the border towards BW's independence disrupted and destroyed Rolong social structures, spatial form and land-uses. The Seokes interestingly played a critical role in the spatial planning and settlement production of BW's territorially incorporated Barolong Farms

We were asked to plan and identify sites for school, tribal council, cattle kraal, the post office, special houses that you see there [pictured above] and the clinic. All the houses in Ramatlabama were established by us as the Village Development Committee (VDC) working together with the District Council. We were not paid because it was voluntary, and I was the chairperson. This primary school was also built by us and was officially opened in 1965, the clinic as well. There were no church buildings and people congregated at their homes (Mme Seoke, personal interview, 2018 September 18)

Borolong is BW's smallest bounded territorial unit allocated to the country's smallest *morafe*. The subnational TLB boundaries of the Bangwaketse and the Bakwena of SED flank Borolong to the north and east respectively while the SA international border with BW envelopes and marks the territorial edge and spatial limits of the subcultural society to the south. Borolong's geographic size is an estimated 946 km<sup>2</sup> and is inhabited by at least 43.000 inhabitants of whom roughly 10,865 are situated on 34km<sup>2</sup> of land making up Borolong. The micro-territory is spatially managed by the Rolong LB and politically governed by Good Hope Southern (sub) District Council. Borolong is set to undergo a process of "tribalization" rather than de-tribalization (Republic of Botswana, 2005:14). Tribalization in this context refers to a formal process where farmland is changed and appropriated into a conceived village proper. This process is expected to make "Ramatlabama [a] State Land" whose addition to the state land roster would increase the areal size of Good Hope (sub) Southern District to 980km<sup>2</sup> (Ibid). The spatial increase might trickle down to Borolong whose spatial situation borders the acute because of rapidly increasing competition between three land-uses for space in addition to a rapidly growing and extremely youthful yet unemployed population surviving on 34km<sup>2</sup> piece of land.

Interestingly, the Rolong LB is exploring the idea of collaborating with the Ngwaketse LB to cede portions of the latter's territory by moving its internal boundary northwards in the hopes of accommodating Borolong overspill. Despite the tabled process of and proposal for territorial and internal boundary negotiation between SD's dominant TLB institutions, life on the ground continues to get hard and the future is looking rather bleak for Barolong of Borolong. Rre Seoke lamented:

Morolong in [BW] does not have land. Ngwaketse has a lot of land, from Jwaneng to Mabule is Ngwaketse territory...we were required to carry a black passport internally for the Rolong-Ngwaketse [LB] border...The land belongs to the state that allocates tribal councils and [LB] committees in these territories to demarcate land and land-uses...There's no restrictions. We can settle anywhere. We can build homes and settle in Ngwaketse territory or Kwena or Kgatleng; wherever we desire and prefer if there's opportunities there...[LB] works with tribal council...[VDC] is for spatial development and I'm the land overseer. There's no space here [Borolong]. [LB] can't come and say there's a place for a home to be built...they have to consult with me since I work with the VDC since 1987. I was also a herd man [*modisa*] until 2007 when the villagers asked me to assist [LB] since I have territorial and land-use expertise on Ramatlabama (Rre Seoke, personal interview, 2018 September 18)

The territorial knowledge of Rre Seoke was accumulated over several decades of cattle herding. His *savior* knowledge was in his lifetime sought after by conceived space of the TLB which requires specialist knowledge to aid them in their statist functions allocating and delimiting sustainable land-uses in Borolong. The Seokes along with their traditional leaders that came before them inter alia Batloug and Barolong of SA, are repositories "of non-formal knowledge (*savior*)" that bear "potential true knowledge (*connaissance*)" (Lefebvre, 1991: 407).

## 6.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided an analytical synopsis of four Batswana inhabited places of abode at A1-A2 border gates of SA and BW's international border. Oscillating between the spatial complexity of the cross-border lived spaces are I discovered continuities and discontinuities between the residential places of abode. Each border settlement has its own political history and prehistory, politics, sub-regional geography, architecture, and demographic dynamics that make them non-isorhythmic despite their generally isorhythmic cultural *la voisinage*. In BW's A1-A2 places of abode, inhabitants have a palpable political clout compared to SA's inhabitants at A1 border gate whose political clout is indiscernible due to asymmetric power relations and the place of traditional leadership in modern institutions and policies of Greater Mahikeng. As result, arrhythmia abounds in SA borderlands between Barolong and Batlounge while eurhythmia dominates Borolong and Lobatse-Peleng borderlands of BW. While the TLs in BW enjoy the respect and trust from their modern counterparts, TLs in SA are perfunctory, silenced and have artificial powers. Furthermore, the international border is a fracture line which despite economic investments for border guards, military patrols and border policing, is transgressed symbolically on daily basis by boundary partitioned neighbours who de-distance and hence negate the spatial separatist, divisive and differentiation effects of the wall-less border by simply talking across it.

## Chapter 7

### **The Territorial Polyrythmia of the SA-BW Geographic Border Region: An Analytical Discussion**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to bring together the analytical findings from the previous two chapters into a single discussion in an attempt of a general synthesis of the study's main findings. I first discuss the Batswana underpinned SADC border region in its contemporary production relative to literature concerning its pre-historic as well colonial border dynamics. The actual border dynamics of the A1-A2 international border study area and cross-border society are comparatively brought into the discussion considering contemporary geographic limology scholarship where I further highlight some of the study's interesting empirical as well as theoretical contributions. I focus the discussion on a brief analytical discussion pertaining to the implications of Lefebvrian epistemologies and empirical traditions for this Southern African study and in political geography research on international borders and borderlands. I conclude the chapter with a summary of its key objectives and insights.

#### **7.2 The temporal spatial rhythm analysis of the Batswana inhabited SADC border region**

Batswana are an ancient anthropological society of Setswana speaking Africans who for more than two millenniums, lived in various subregions of pre-historic Africa as a nomadic frontier society before permanently settling in south central Africa of contemporary SADC REC of the AU a few centuries prior to European colonization by international borders. Through spatial architectonics, I found that the SADC based Batswana of SA's North-West Province and BW's SD and SED, were as they still are, the international border region's main social underpinning, to borrow from Baud and van Schendel (1997). As the main social underpinning in the political geographic border region of the two non-isorhythmic African states, Batswana directly and indirectly affected the territorial formation and transformation of the European allocated, delimited, demarcated and African managed international border region. Despite their poorly understood territorial role in the production of territorial places of abode straddling the north and south of the international border, Batswana were not always partitioned in this space by international borders, nor were they governed in the same place by interstate institutions.

Chapter 3 of this study established Batswana as a 'space and borders' conscious frontier society whose pre-modern or pre-capitalist modes of spatial production and social reproduction were anchored on the social actor of their politically autonomous kings or chiefs or *dikgosi*. As accurately noted and captured in Mgadla and Volz (2006) ethnographic letters of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Batswana, this African society bound itself in space first with aspatial cultural borders of the Setswana language—which was deeply influenced by the geography of various sub-*merafe* who use spatially variant linguistic dialects of Setswana—to define and distinguish themselves from each other. In their territorial production of pre-21<sup>st</sup> century SADC border region, Batswana further bound their sub-national political identities to the spatial *Dasein* of their respective kings such that the *morafe* of the Barolong, the Bakwena, the Batlounge and the Bahurutshe for example, derived their national belonging and malleable sub-cultural identities to those of the enigmatic King Morolong I, to Kwena as the eldest son



of the enigmatic Mohurutshe who ceded from the parent 'tribe' anthropologically speaking to found his own people, to Kgosi Shole from the agnatic lineage of Kgosi Modisane of Batlhako of Tlhakong and Tlhatlhaganyane, and to the gender misunderstood royal called Lehurutshe (Molema, 1920; Schapera, 1963; Mpotokwane, 1974; Breutz, 1989; Kgosi Shole, personal interview, 2019 May 11). Spatially, Batswana emerged as a territory cognizant frontier society which through its geographically, socially and judicially innovative chiefs, embodied in social practice a two-dimensional three-tiered land-use model for territorial production of their permanent residential abodes in the pre-Victoria era SADC border region, the physical geographic organization of communally own space as well as societal organization and division of labour. This was the key highlight or discovery of this spatial architectonics study which helped to validate the study's research assumption about Batswana's abstract social consciousness of space and borders prior the arrival of western space orienting and society rearranging Cartesian international border of SA.

Through Lefebvre's (1991) unitary spatial triad of representations of space, spatial practices and representational space, I managed to discern Batswana's under examined land-use model which as I discovered in Chapter 6 of this study, is still intact for the majority of Batswana in BW's SD and SED save for the Barolong of Borolong in Good Hope. South of the international border, Batswana's pre-historic two-dimensional land-use model is permanently annihilated due to the severity of colonial as well as apartheid territorial dispossession and political domination by successive abstract spaces of the racist European nation states. These interstate systems of the West sought to make a *tabula rasa* of Batswana of SA and along the natural riparian border line of the Molopo-Limpopo Rivers, through a variety of anti-African land and urban acts, racial segregation laws and dehumanizing political practices under the *inboekeling* system of the 1850s that institutionalized the slavery, rape and abduction of Batswana women and children by the Manichean misanthropic skepticism of the West.

Batswana's spatial land-use model as an organizing framework for the territorial production of Tswana society and physical geographic space meant the geographic holdings of territory for each sub-*morafe* south and north of the riparian border line that helped shape the pre-colonial organizational settlements production, free flows of territorially unbounded human movements as well as population distribution of Batswana in south central Africa, were quite large. For the Barolong of Greater Mahikeng and Borolong for example, the land-use model evolved in a temporal context such that the permanent residential place of abode for the sub-*morafe* of Batswana was in present day Mahikeng while the spatially separated and physically distanced agropastoral land-uses were situated more than 25kms away from the original settlement in present day Borolong. The Keate Award establishment of the international border of British then Afrikaner states international border which Drummond and Manson (1991) critically analysed on intra-racial as well as non-empirical historical and political geographic terms ethnographically, permanently transformed and adversely affected Southern Batswana's territorial relationship with space, borders and their social relations with the counterparts of Northern Batswana.

As such, the SA-BW international border region agrees with literature in the direction of the political obliteration of pre-existing ethnographic arrangements and physical geographic organization of Tswana space as a result of the scientific, social and political ignorance of colonial Western states' domination, reterritorialization and appropriation of Tswana space and society.

### 7.3 The A1-A2 Cross-Border Gates and Cross-Borderlands of SA and BW

Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) scholarship of the spatiology and methodology of rhythm analysis offered interesting insights into his territorial dimension. Lefebvre's theoretical conceptualization of international borders as fracture lines with junction points, and the geographic borderlands as permanently established residential places of abode that emerge with the immediate establishment of international borders, was critically applied in the analyses of this study's Botswana underpinned cross-border region of SA and BW. The A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama junction points with their places of abode and the A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek were empirically investigated for Lefebvrian appropriation and rhythm analytical territorial analyses. These findings which are articulated in Chapters 5 and 6 of this study, are an advancement from Drummond and Minghi's (1991) political geography and political history contribution in Botswana inspired or focused geographic limology. Where Drummond and Minghi's (1991) study focused on a single subnational borderland of the colonial and pre-democratic A2 Skilpadshek junction point of SA, this Lefebvrian study focused on BW's A2 Pioneer Gate junction point and its associated subnational borderland of Lobatse-Peleng in SED, as well as A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama junction points and cross-border settlements of BW's SD and SA's Greater Mahikeng with Botlounge and their respective border societies as part of the interstate territorial polyrhythmia of the study area.

In addition, Drummond and Manson (1991) interestingly analyzed the then Bophuthatswana-Botswana international border landscape through the statist geopolitical framework of an internationally recognized and territorially sovereign BW of 1966, and its counter pseudo-state or canton of Bophuthatswana in its gravely fragmented geographic state as territory of six or seven micro-borderlands without international borders nor regional as well as internationally recognized sovereignty (Mangope, 1978; Parnell, 1986; Drummond, 1991). In this study, I analyzed these historic geopolitical dynamics rhythm analytically to an extent that in Chapter 3 as well as Chapter 5 of the study I attempted a transtemporal statist analyses of the politically transformed international border region of SA and BW in light of its pre-colonial, colonial as well as apartheid pasts which revealed a much deeper, complex dynamic to the Lefebvrian analyses of this society's multiscalar, multitemporal and culturally homogeneous Tswana *la voisinage*. The availability of cross-border demographic data and more importantly, the attainment of official state documents pertaining the international border's management, administration and ongoing appropriation by the dyad states of SADC, revealed the political character of the statist space as asymmetric in its binary regimes, and as asynchronously temporally organized along its 15 or so junction points between SA and BW's North-West Province where nearly six million Botswana are directly affected.

Historically, Drummond and Manson (1991) analyzed the border evolution prior to its hardening as a political geographic and sovereign global state space with economic consequences, and as Ramutsindela (2015) further noted, significant implications for the security complex of the democratically settled AU sub-region. The interstate border was first allocated by the British Commissioner Keate in 1897 to manage a territorial conflict between self-naturalized Dutch-Afrikaners of the Boer Republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and the various sub-*merafe* straddling the Molopo-Limpopo riparian border systems inhabited by cohorts of Barolong, Bahurutshe, Batlhaping and Bakwena. According to Molema (1966) this was Botswana's first recorded territorial conflict not among themselves since they had a clear territorial framework guiding and delimiting the boundaries or spatial

limits of their residential abodes as well as agropastoral holdings, but between themselves in their relative autonomy and the territory encroaching abstract or representations of space of the Boer Republics. To further substantiate the geographic knowledge ignorance of the West as also captured in traditional political geography and US frontier studies literature, the Euclidean space of the arbitrarily allocated Keate Award, was dully contested and renegotiated by various kings of Batswana to the point where its geometric straight line representation, together with its conceived geographic location in space were changed and appropriated to mimic the natural architecture of pre-existing riparian border systems. This does not prohibit the stronger Boer Republicans to continue encroaching onto Tswana territory in the interior of SA's Batswana inhabited spatial locations including the borderline of its riparian systems that organically organized Batswana into the Northerners and Southerners long before any territorial border establishment.

In the contemporary interstate space of the fracture line and its administrative A1-A2 junction points and residential places of abode, the abstract line that was once conceived by the colonial British administrators as a livestock disease containing (veterinary) tool in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to early 20<sup>th</sup> century, evolved into a human migration regulating political instrument of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century apartheid SA and independence BW states framework in which the non-statist Bantustan of Bophuthatswana was but a political invention by apartheid SA to colonize a sovereign BW. As a result, political trust between SA and BW was severed at the state level than at a cultural social level among Batswana of the two countries. Furthermore, a critical analysis of the democratic SA's international border management and migration policies reveal a disturbing threat to this sensitive political history through its introduction and implementation of the extra-territorial One Stop Border Post (OSBP) model which instead of promoting eurhythmic relations between SA and BW, promotes the potential for arrhythmia. The nature of the ensuing political arrhythmia stems from the BMA's (2015, 2022) international border management strategies which suggests an encroachment on BW's sovereignty including territory through the streamlining/homogenizing of international human migration administration and management of non-human cross-border movements to do away with existing dualism of the border's regime. Interestingly, SA is not in direct political conversation with BW however, the latter state policies infer a strong potential to experiment on BW territory by encroaching on its residential places of abode as sites for the OSPB model pilot.

This interstate political arrhythmia is further translated at a cross-border level of representational space of the borderlands and their inhabitants in SA's Greater Mahikeng and BW's SD and SED. At the political level of Batswana borderlanders whose heterogeneous sub-cultures of the Batloug, Barolong, Bangwaketse and Bakwena among others, are the dominant underpinning of the territorial global state space. Between the Batloug's tripartite borderland of Greater Mahikeng and Barolong's late 1950s to 1960s residentially transformed agropastoral space of Borolong in BW's SD, are eurhythmic relations that do not touch nor overlap the international fracture line that so closely divides these two autonomous sub-*merafe* of Batswana into those of SA and BW geopolitically. Interestingly, Batloug of Kgosi Shole are adamant of the lack of cultural, spatial as well as historical non-overlaps between them and the Barolong of BW whose border settlements are within 0km of each other. This relational condition might be offset by the Batloug's non-Tswana origins *in toto* and *en tout*. Indeed, according to ethnological, literary as well as historiographic literature on Batswana

inter alia, empirical interview data of 2018 and 2019, Batloun are off shoots of Batlhako who are a distinct sub-*morafe* that venerates the elephant (Tlou) within the Tswana body. This sub-*morafe* was originally Nguni, belonging as such to the Matebele nation founded by the AmaZulu ceded chieftain, King Mzilikazi. As the Ndzudza of the Mahlangu clan as noted in Chapter 3 of this study, the small cohort voluntarily seceded from Matebele to self-assimilate into the sociological as well as physical geographic body of Batswana whom King Mzilikazi along with King Shaka Zulu sought to make a tabular rasa due to their coloniality of *Dasein* and its Manichean misanthropic skepticism at work during the *Difecane* internecine era. After three centuries of life in SADC as Batswana, Batlhako are a complete Tswana people that managed to secrete a sub-national body of the Batloun with distinct traits from other sub-groups within the Tswana body. Their adoption of the elephant totem came after much philosophical thought by their enigmatic *Mogologolo* whose conception of spatial and aspatial proverbs negates the colonial myth of Batswana's lacking intellectual capacity and or philosophical density amongst other things identified in SA historical literature and political state's Hansards of 1977.

From a Heideggerian perspective Botloun and Borolong cross-borderlands of the A1 junction points of SA and BW represents what the spatial *Dasein*'s de-distancing practice stands for. In as much as Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* aims to reduce abstract and relative geographic distances between remote places, societies and things in space, it also reveals that sometimes the objects that are objectively closest to each other are in fact the most remote from each other. It thus the work of Lefebvre's (1991) spatial architectonics and Heidegger's (2010) spatial *Dasein* to discern these geographic anomalies by unifying them in practical analyses and clarifying their obfuscating representations in space on cultural as well as political geographic terms. While the A1 border-gated Batloun and Borolong sub-cultural polities are eurhythmic and distant despite their absolute proximity to each other and the fracture line with binary regime junction points which further define their borderlands, the A1 Batloun and A1 Barolong of Greater Mahikeng are heading towards territorial arrhythmia. A lack of critical research investment in the Greater Mahikeng border region and provincial capital of the North-West, reveals that sub-national policy documents which are conceived space in this regard, ignore and silence not only the voices and demands of Batswana of the international province, but also their respective traditional leaders.

Contrary to the political dynamics of constitutional BW and its House of Traditional Leaders who from since 1966 were and continue to be a critical social asset to the postmodern state, SA's Kgosi Montshiwa III and Kgosi Shole among several others, are excluded from the decision-making processes of territorial significance to their shared region. Furthermore, the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMDM) policy documents do not conceive of any social arrhythmia between the various traditional leaders and among the traditional leaders and themselves. As such Lefebvre's (1991) binary dialectic of the representations of space and representational space of spatial practices comes into play rather explicitly at the inter-state levels of the SA municipalities in ways that is not experienced nor perceived with Northern Batswana and their modern institutions which they co-exist on isorhythmic terms with. Due to the transtemporal perspective, the Batloun and Barolong of SA borderlands in Greater Mahikeng are caught in an academically unknown yet legal battle for territorial belonging and the right to sub-cultural autonomy where the latter group impresses its demands on the former for financial restitution and more extremely, sub-cultural annihilation

by assimilation. This disturbing and intricate political relation is a result of the 20<sup>th</sup> century interstate historical developments in which apartheid SA and Bophuthatswana facilitated the ethically problematic discourse of spatial whitening by forced removals in which Batlounge were forcibly relocated from their original hinterlands of Botshabelo-Putfontein to the territorial edges of the SA international borderline during the late 1970s to early 1980s. In that process the Barolong of Kgosi Montshiwa were bypassed in consultation by both states in their territorial relocation of Batlounge to Greater Mahikeng. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Batlounge and Barolong who are situated roughly 20kms apart from each other in the same local and district municipalities of the international border environment of SA, have harder or closed social borders between them than their individual or collective relationship with the BW counterparts. Furthermore, there is a diversity of other Batswana residing in Botlounge peaceably including transnational Barolong, Bangwaketse and Bahurutshe.

Therefore, the investigated places of abode informing this Lefebvrian border study are much more than simple “villages” in a predominantly “Setswana speaking location...situated...along the length of the Botswana-NWP boundary” (Ngcangcela, 2014:72-75). These places of abode are diverse residential settlements with different demographic sizes. For example, Lobatse-Peleng is an international urban borderland with a District population of roughly 86,000 inhabitants than while its SD counterpart of Borolong is predominantly rural with an estimated 11,000 inhabitants. Botlounge is semi-rural border settlement with less than 10,000 inhabitants while the rest of the Greater Mahikeng subnational borderland is distinctly rural with small portions of it comprising urban space that supports more than 300,000 inhabitants. The territorial politics of the SA-BW border region as conceived and perceived through the A1-A2 cross-border gates and cross-borderlands reveals a complexity that requires further research from a variety of spatial scales and socio-temporal perspectives. This to enable a concrete and focused Lefebvrian theorization and conceptualization of the monumental AU state space that is cognizant of the interstate implications of the OSBP practices and NMMDM policies on the politics of the representational spaces of both countries, vis-à-vis eurhythmic geopolitical relations, since as literature posits, is important to help us understand the accessibility or inaccessibility of the cross-border region inter alia, the nature of its security complex.

#### **7.4 The relevance and significance of Lefebvrian scholarship and empirical approaches in geographical limology**

The academic aim and research objectives of this study was to offer a Lefebvrian analyses of the international border and cross-borderlands of SA and BW as a means of contributing towards the advances of Lefebvrian scholarship in political geographic research on the one hand, and the re-territorialization of Batswana in geographic limology on the other hand. Despite Lefebvre’s (1991, 2004) cryptic concealment of the territorial dimensions of his spatiology scholarship of the production of space and the analytically advanced rhythmology, it was possible for this African conceived and Africa situated autonomous study to fill the gap in Anglophone and African geographic scholarship conceptually as well as empirically. In a scholarly subfield in which cross-border ethnographic fieldwork is rapidly declining inter alia, the under theorization and under conceptualization of interstate borderlands and statist border epistemologies that trigger or reproduce the territorial trap, Lefebvre’s The PoS and ERA rose to the occasion albeit through great difficulty.

Firstly, the existing lack of the territorial appropriation of Lefebvre's unitary scholarship and Lefebvrian thinking in political geography amongst political geographers is an incredibly big gap to ignore and to attempt to fill. Nonetheless, this researcher perceived, and critical political geographers' established Lefebvrian gap created an intellectual opportunity for an African case-study to contribute to both Lefebvrian scholarship in geography and geographic scholarship from a Lefebvrian perspective. This study's literature development and analytical findings were autonomously discovered at a time in which territorial scholars in the Global South and Global North demand non-geographic perspectives in the advancement of political geographic studies in limology, as well as the demand for a Lefebvrian political geography in or of Africa. As a result, Lefebvre's (1991) spatial architectonics framework that advocates for the radical yet circumspect reversal of the ideologically dominant tendency that divides and compartmentalizes scientific knowledge and territorial spaces, is identified as a critical requirement for the times by global and regional scholars of territory and international borders and borderlands.

Secondly, with ERA and The PoS, this study was able to explore Lefebvre's under examined perspectives on territory, spatial production and international borders from a range of non-geographic disciplinary perspectives which illustrate the mental versatility *inter alia* the inter and transdisciplinary character of Lefebvre's social-spatial sciences in ways never before uncovered by geographers of the city and of the international border. Thirdly, Lefebvre agrees with contemporary political geographic scholarship on the arbitrary nature of international borders and their artificiality however, Lefebvre goes on to develop a thesis which states that arbitrarily established international borders create the impression of geographic as well as ethno-cultural incongruence where there in fact continuity. This hypothetical statement is true for this empirically approached analytical study on the Botswana dominated international border and borderlands of SA and BW. The theoretical statement interestingly might not be completely true for the Finnish-Russian border studied by Paasi (1999a, 1999b, 2009a) or the German-Poland urban borderland perceived from a German perspective by Teufel (2014) for example.

Fourthly, Lefebvre's theoretical scholarship of the spatiology and rhythm analysis are fundamentally empirical in as much as they are abstract and cross-disciplinary. This body of literature revitalizes the dying conversation among political geographers on inter and transdisciplinary methods and methodological paradigms informing political geographic thought from since antiquity. The fusion and grounding of elements of The PoS and ERA with geographically established methods such as anthropology's ethnographic spatial immersion by participant observation, alongside history and the archival method, created opportunities for the authentic production and theoretical analyses of the A1-A2 study area and society in light of existing debates in geographic literature. Had it not been for the empirical demands of Lefebvre's a-disciplinary sciences towards the autonomous and ethnographically inspired study of the SA-BW fracture line and its residential places of abode *inter alia*, the cultural politics and political clout of its border societies, this study's empirically informed analytical findings and thematically organized Lefebvrian review of literature would not have been possible.

This is an interesting mystery that political geographers in the Global North and Global South are not engaging Lefebvre territorially nor are they thinking about their respective international-subnational borders and cross-border regions with Lefebvre's (1991, 2004)

Heideggerian spatial architectonics framework underpinned by rhythm to further navigate the territorial trap in knowledge production, as well as the colonial trap of Africa's postcolonial political geography of international borders and borderlands. The breakthrough of this study lies in its ability to have led me unknowingly to political geography which further helped to unify the fragmented inter and transdisciplinary bodies of literature concerning Batswana of SA and BW relative to other studies conducted within geography on SADC border regions and elsewhere. Lastly, the significance and relevance of Lefebvre cannot be overstated nor underplayed in territorial border studies in general, and political geography in particular. Since political geography is in the African context a relatively young yet vibrant and dynamic subfield of geographic interest, this Lefebvrian study contributes towards the growth and advancement of the territorial subdiscipline in unorthodox ways that complement the humanities scholars demands for Lefebvrian political geographers to help assist with the territorial theorizing and hence centralization of the continent in broader analytical discourses.

The future for African political geographic research with Lefebvre therefore looks promising however, it would require the coming together of various political geographers—along with non-geographic border scholars—in Africa and the Global North, to examine Lefebvre's scholarship empirically, theoretically and conceptually as a means of Lefebvrian redress in geographic scholarship. This critical engagement would also require a discourse on fieldwork dressage for postgraduate students and established academics alike regardless of their methodological paradigms in territorial studies so that neglected issues of ethics and power in territorial fieldwork are mitigated *a priori* rather than assumed.

### **7.5 Conclusion**

While it is difficult to offer a logically coherent synthesis of the study's findings relative to the expansive geographic and non-geographic literature, it was possible to extract key points that delimit the study's contributions to the scholarship of Lefebvre in political geography, and political geography's theoretical advancements in international borders theorizing and borderlands conceptualization. Through the A1-A2 junction points and places of abode of Batswana straddling the SA-BW fracture line, I discovered a temporally organized and highly complex territorial polyrhythmia whose political spatial practices are in various ways influenced by the eurhythmia-arrhythmia dialectic among Batlounge and Barolong of SA than of BW, and the potential geopolitical interstate arrhythmia espoused by SA's adoption of the extra-territorial international border management regime of the OSBP model which will encroach on BW's territory via its places of abode which SA identified without BW's diplomatic involvement. At the subnational level the abstract space of the NMMDM in Greater Mahikeng ignores the existing arrhythmia between Batlounge and Barolong of the provincial capital in ways that have rendered the practical functionality and authority of the two traditional leaders involved obsolete.

Contrary to their BW counterparts where traditional leaders have a practical role in juridical systems and micro-territorial planning on behalf of their rural and urban constituents, SA border populations of the A1 border gate are fundamentally marginalized from political discourse that directly affects their ontology and are further alienated from spatial relations and process that affect their politics. With Lefebvre I sought to bring together Northern and Southern Batswana in a single study in which the monumental abstract space of the fracture

line was subordinated in theoretical analyses for the theoretical conceptualization of under theorized and not very well known nor conceptualized places of abode straddling the chronometrically organized A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama and the A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek junction points dictating their permanently transformed cross-border movements, social relations and intercultural exchanges.



## Chapter 8

### Henri Lefebvre in Geographical Limology: A Conclusion

#### *8.1 Introduction*

The main aim and objectives of this study was to investigate the international border of SA and BW and its four Batswana inhabited cross-borderlands with Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) unitary spatiology of the production of space and rhythmanalysis for political geography/geographical limology. Through a non-exhaustive review of predominantly Anglophone as well as African political geographic literature on international borders and borderlands, I discovered that Lefebvre's inter and transdisciplinary scholarship that is so well-established and advanced in urban geography, is interestingly under examined and hence under advanced in political geography. Add to that, the main social unit of this study's Lefebvran territoriality is the SADC society of Batswana which as I outlined in Chapter 1 of this thesis, has not been advanced on theoretical and conceptual terms in geographic limology since their first global entry in 1991. Furthermore, I discovered that both contemporary Anglophone and African political geographic scholarship indicated a critical decline in empirical discourses on international border regions which this autonomous Lefebvran study sought to fill and revive debates around.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to provide a succinct summary of the study's original contribution to the geographic subfield of political geography by illuminating on how the study's aim, objectives and key questions were attained, or not, through Lefebvre's autonomously conceived spatial rhythmological strategy. I reinstate the study's ethical approach to fieldwork followed by recommendations and delimitation of areas of future research development.

#### **8.2 Recap: study aim, objectives, questions, and research assumptions**

In Chapter 1 of this study, I outlined the following research problem as the basis for undertaking this Lefebvran border and borderlands study in the geographic subfield of political geography. The main problem was and remains the lack of Lefebvran representation in political geographic thought and scholarship in the Global North and Global South. As a result, we do not know the territorial dimension of Lefebvre, nor have we epistemic understandings of Lefebvre's contributions to international borders and borderlands theorizing, conceptualization, and empirical approaches. Add to that, the geographic society of Batswana which underpins the interstate border and borderlands of SA and BW are also not very well known nor their borderlands well conceptualized in political geography. It became the general aim of this study to investigate the delimited study area of the A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama and A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek border gates and borderlands of SA and BW for a Lefebvran analyses. The objectives of the study were to (a) import and advance my autonomous intellectual appropriation of Lefebvre's under examined territorial dimension in political geography, (b) re-space/re-territorialize Batswana in contemporary geographical limology and, to (c) determine the political spatial practices and spatial rhythms of the SA-BW international border region.

The study's research questions were thus conceived considering the aim and objectives outlined. These questions concerned the manner in which Lefebvre conceives and empirically approaches the study of international borders and borderlands vis-à-vis orthodox political

geography and political geographers, Botswana's pre-historic organization in the contemporary study site prior to the establishment of the international border and the contemporary political functions, or rhythm-analytical spatial practices, of the investigated international border relative to the unknown and conceptually closed cross-borderlands of Botswana. From these I formulated three research assumptions based on the argument that the omission or ongoing neglect of Lefebvre's territorial dimension in political geography limits the geographic subfield to routine theorizations and asocial territorial analyses which are not grounded in empirics, and further constrain the subfield from replenishing itself and more broadly border studies in the critical humanities and social sciences. I therefore explicitly outlined the assumptions that Lefebvre's spatiology and spatial rhythm-analysis overlap and are at home in political geographic scholarship despite their near absolute absence in the territorial subfield, and lack of appropriation and engagement by political geographers in the Global North and Global South. Pre-historic Botswana had mental conceptions of space and practical utility of borders in their multiple dimensions, contrary to popular discourses. The sub-regional cross-border landscape of SA and BW is a highly mobile and spatially integrated interstate space composed of distinct spatial locations and time organized places which are further constituted by superfluous flows of energy.

### **8.3 Study contributions on general terms**

Concerning the study's general contributions, my study offers a distinct contribution towards the political geographical research in international borders and borderlands with Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) qualitative (social) science of space and the empirical method of spatial rhythmology where it has not yet been conducted in the territorial subfield. The autonomous deployment of Lefebvre's (2004) inter- and transdisciplinary theoretical method of rhythm and its strategy of borrowing data sets and additional analytical tools from other sciences such as ethnographic spatial immersion by participant observation, history's archival method and discourse analysis *inter alia* photography, made possible the study's original contributions to the study of the A1-A2 cross-border region of Botswana of SA and BW. Concerning Lefebvre, Chapter 2 of the study introduced the unknown critical state theories of the SMP and New State Form which advance Marx's incomplete contribution to political state theory which, as further critically noted by Elden (2010a, 2010b, 2010c), are missing in spatial theorizations of territory. Furthermore, Lefebvre's spatiological approaches to territory and border producing as well as space organizing principles derive from non-geographic disciplinary perspectives informed by the biological, animal and temporally situated anthropological sciences anchored on the pre-historic sub-region of the contemporary AU's EAC REC of the agropastoral Masai of Kenya.

This insight is particularly groundbreaking since it shatters the Eurocentric mental framework of the ideologically dominant tendency at work in Lefebvrian scholarship that limits Lefebvre's application to cities or urban geography on the one hand. On the other hand, this tendency prevents Anglophone and African political geographic thought from appropriating Lefebvre (1991, 2004) territorially in ways that would help de-Westernize/decolonize/Africanize the scholarship, and further resolve the well-established analytical impasse on the territorial debate including the reproduction or perpetuation of Agnew's (1994) territorial trap in geographic border scholarship (Brenner, 1999, 2001; Elden, 2004a; Brenner and Elden, 2009; Elden, 2010a; Antonsich, 2011; Kipfer, Saberi and Wieditz, 2012; Sassen, 2013; Elden and Morton, 2016). The ideologically dominant tendency which Shields

(1999) in Elden (2001) describes as rife in Anglophone scholarship further prevents geographic literature from effectively importing non-statist as well as non-geographical border perspectives and epistemologies in the geographic subfield in light of established trends in the Global North, which are further supplemented by critical humanities scholars theoretical demands for Lefebvorean political geography to reterritorialize Africa as a central world region in broader analytical discourses (Nugent and Engel, 2010). With these dynamics which are articulated in Chapter 2 of the study, I further advanced some of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) under examined and territorially under appropriated conceptual frameworks of geographic border regions, the spatial triad and the spatial rhythm which I aligned with existing frameworks in territory invested scholarship for further import empirically to help with the study's aim and objectives.

I was thus able to advance Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) rhythm analytical spatial architectonics framework in Chapters 2 through the argument of epistemic redress between the Global North and Global South regions in which the majority of territorial borders and borderlands thinking and conceptualization—including Lefebvorean thinking and scholarship—is epistemologically dominated by scholars in the former region. Indeed, where orthodox political geographic scholars sought and settled the big debate on the emergence of a single, unitary theory or theories, inter alia the search for international borders than borderlands, Lefebvre (1991) proposes theoretical unity between ideologically partitioned academic fields of border studies through the unitary theory of spatial architectonics (Brunet-Jailly, 2009; Johnson, et al., 2011; Paasi, 2009a, 2012a). The Heideggerian spatial architectonics perspective which Unwin (2000) perceives as Lefebvre's (1991) theoretically complex chapter of the spatiology, seeks to reverse rather than delink from the ideologically dominant tendency of the Eurocentric West which always seeks to compartmentalize and keep separate overlapping as well as interdisciplinary fields of study, along with the physical geographic partitioning of space through state-centric international borders.

With its autonomous Lefebvorean perspectives in political geography, this study strengthens the epistemic position of Anglophone scholars' territorial search for the 'international border' in geographical border studies amidst a sea of post-disciplinary and postmodernist relational perspectives in geography that undermine the territorial integrity of the international border (Brunet-Jailly, 2009; Johnson, et al., 2011). In addition, this Lefebvorean study is fixed at the territorial margins or spatial limits of its SA-BW facture line, its relatively fixed junction points and associated borderlands which are geographically situated at the edges of SA and BW's border space determined sovereignty thus reneging on a territorial or relational border thinking purported by Agnew (2008), Paasi (2011a, 2012a) and Rumford (2006, 2011) as result of the ubiquitous and hence polysemic nature of international borders. Furthermore, the lack of generalizable methodological frameworks or theoretical lexicon in the territorial social sciences on the one hand (Sevastianov, Laine and Kireev, 2015; Walther, et al., 2023), and the decline—inter alia the significance—of ethnographically produced empirics in geographical border studies on the other hand (Ramutsindela, 1999; Megeran, 2006; Koch, 2023), created a distinct opportunity for this study to revive debates on both ends such that the under problematized place of the 'borderlands' in international border studies are raised to the level of theoretical as well as empirical priority.

Indeed, where political geographers sought and further responded to the calls to theorize international borders universally, the call to theorize borderlands and to further liberate them

from the so-called “conceptual closet” is yet to be answered on the part of borderlands theorization (Rumley and Minghi, 1991:1). This Lefebvrian study on the African cross-borderlands of SA and BW contributes towards the intellectual appropriation as well as creative liberation of the four permanently established residential places of abode which are inhabited by a predominantly Setswana speaking society of SADC.

I advanced this perspective in Chapter 3 where I sought to answer questions pertaining to Batswana’s spatial organization and utility of borders in pre-historic as well as historical context because it is through an engagement with a studied society’s pre-history and history that border scholars can gain insight through empirics into their spatial practices. This pre-historic and historical approach is in tune with traditional methods of political geography described by Webb (1979), Prescott (1987), and Kolosov (2005, 2006, 2015). Lefebvre’s spatial architectonics was deployed relative to the US notion of the frontier and its frontier perspective to reveal pre-historic Batswana as a frontier society whose nomadic spatial rhythm and practices of migration and secondary settlement in various parts of Africa such as Egypt, Great Lakes Region and Central Africa over several centuries to millennia, led to their permanent geographic settlement in contemporary SADC REC where they established permanent residency (Ellenberger, 1912; Molema, 1920; Wainwright, 1943; Matthews, 1945; Mogodi-Plaatje, 1995). The arrangement and spatial distribution of Batswana in 13<sup>th</sup> century central south Africa was interestingly facilitated by riparian and orographic borders of the subregion which fundamentally influenced the emergence of aspatial bordering in which various subsets of Batswana differentiated themselves from each other by geographic variations in Setswana dialects north and south of natural borders (Schapera, 1952, 1974; Mgadla and Volz, 2006).

Furthermore, Batswana produced their physical geography in accordance with the natural architecture of the surrounding landscape such that a two-dimensional three-tiered land-use model became the *raison d’etre* and *sine qua non* for Tswana territorial organization, spatial production and social reproduction. With Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial triad, I was able to discern and conceptualize this anthropology established geographic pattern of Tswana mode of spatial production and social organization. Batswana’s two dimensional three-tiered model for land-use meant that residential settlements were the domain of absolute and representational space which doubled up as the site for spatial practices which facilitate social life, while the agropastoral holdings of *masimo* and *meraka* which were remotely connected to the settlements, occupied the realm of representations of space and the perceived space of spatial practice precisely because of their physical geographic distances from each other, and the general settlements which these agropastoral spaces supported and nourished (Molema, 1920; Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; Pistorius, 1997a, 1997b).

This spatial triad conceptualization negates the prevailing Afro-pessimistic as well as established Eurocentric views about which advance the notions that pre-colonial African societies were unconscious of space territorially until the advent of international borders, and that the Central Cattle Pattern is the main framework within which archaeologists and anthropologists can explain settlement formation and geographic organization of societies in precolonial or Iron Age Southern Africa where Batswana are concerned (Schapera and Comaroff, 1991; Huffman, 2002; Denbow and Thebe, 2006). Ramsay (1991) and Okihiro’s (1973) non-geographic studies concurred with this study’s research assumption on Batswana’s borders cognition in territorial terms. For Ramsay (1991) and Okihiro (1973) the

geopolitical interracial warfare of the 1840s to early-1850s signifies a historically as well as territorially relevant event which substantiated Batswana non-Western and hence innovative uses of spatial border walls and border posts settlements in defence of both territory and territorial society of the cross-border sub-*morafe* of Bakwena of Kgosi Sechele I who successfully claimed victory against a territory encroaching and perpetually bellicose Boer Republicans of the Transvaal. Within a similar historic period, Molema (1966) recorded Batswana's first international border dispute concerning the Euclidean allocation of the Keate Award which directly affected Barolong of Kgosi Montshiwa I in Greater Mahikeng and failed to resolve the establishment of Stellaland and Goshen borderlands in Rolong territory (Maylam, 1980). As Drummond and Minghi (1991) further illustrated, the Keate Award was arbitrary and hence socially problematic for the sects of the Bahurutshe of Kgosi Moiloa who struggled to access natural resources that they were previously able to. Furthermore, the international border's hardening regime towards the 1960s and 1970s meant pre-historic free flows of migration and social intercourse between Northern and Southern Batswana of SADC were gravely disrupted. Meanwhile, the pre-historic two-dimensional three-tiered model for territorial planning and geographic organization of society was permanently destroyed for the latter sub-group, and interestingly barely destroyed for the former group save for the Barolong of SD in Ngwaketse country of contemporary BW.

These findings have implications for contemporary African political geographic and non-geographic research concerning our disciplinary understandings as well epistemic approaches to African territorial politics en tout. This Lefebvrian architectonics perspective emerged in essence to reveal some of the nuanced idiosyncrasies in literature which prevent thought from effectively unifying various modes of research in the theoretical analyses of pre-historic and colonial border experiences of various African polities in ways that negate Afro-pessimism, challenges the territorial trap of statist thinking that subordinates borderlands experiences, rejects some aspects of Mignolo's (2009, 2011) decolonial border thinking which call for the radical delinking with the colonial *humanitas*, as well as Fouche's (2020) colonial trap of African borders that links back to Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2013) argument for scholars to make a mental shift from blaming European produced international border system for contemporary as well as historical issues facing various regions of the 21<sup>st</sup> century continent.

Through Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) autonomously appropriated spatial methodology of rhythm applied in Chapter 4, this study makes a novel contribution towards the declining discourse on empirics and ethnographically neglected fieldwork in political geography. Through its theoretically informed architectonics framework, I approached the study area of the contemporary A1-A2 cross-border region of SA and BW in 2016 and 2018 to collect and produce empirical data for Lefebvrian analyses. This method reinvigorates traditional approaches that stringently require any fieldworker in territorial border regions to undergo thorough *a priori* training—or Lefebvrian *dressage*—in anthropology, political geography and anthropology so as to provide unique insights that are geographically accurate descriptions of the studied area and society, and to further give concrete analyses of the international borders regimes (Webb, 1979; Prescott, 1987; Newman, 2003, Brunet-Jailly, 2005). With the Lefebvrian perspective adopted for this study, my very physical body became an important tool for the ethnographically framed phenomenological fieldwork of rhythmology whose paradigm is situated in the body, similar to the humanities advanced decolonial perspective invading African geographical limology. Through my

rhythmanalytical body as metronome I was able to conceive the political regime of the SA-BW international border in contrast to its late 19<sup>th</sup> century allocation and 20<sup>th</sup> century political appropriation by apartheid SA—whose spatial framework included the canton Bantustan of Bophuthatswana—more than independent BW.

As a Lefebvrian fracture line and monumental state space endowed with relatively fixed junction points, the political spatial practices as well as spatial rhythms of the SA-BW cross-border region, are those of international migration management as well as facilitation of the circulation of non-human products, goods and services across the 21<sup>st</sup> century international border environment. Both neighbouring states of SA and BW have two very different approaches to the management of the shared border and its administration of international migration between SA's North-West Province situated Batswana of Greater Mahikeng and Botlounge, and BW's SD and SED situated Batswana of Borolong and Lobatse-Peleng respectively. On the BW side of the border is a hard or closed border regime that is paper and time intensive with financial consequences per border crossing by private, public or commercial vehicle users. This regime is fundamentally shaped by the political history of post-independence BW with apartheid SA which created diplomatic hostility between the two nations which do not have any established cross-border governance structures between them despite the high degree of spatial integration and social interaction.

On the SA side of the border is the contrary. SA's international border regime is open or soft compared to pre-1994 such that it takes far less time with zero paper administration and no fees required from motorists of any kind to utilise the border gates on SA territory. This discovery would not have been possible if there was no immersion in the multiscale border environment which helped in the production and conception of the international border rhythmograph – a practical tool illustrating post-fieldwork spatial rhythms which through the extraction of my SA passport data, further reveal the complexities in undertaking such fieldwork on conceptual terms and with limited time and resources. Through spatial immersion I obtained critical official documents from the BW side which at the time were not readily available electronically or on the internet. Through repeat visits to the same participants and places in the study area, I was able to obtain BW's key documents which were necessary for the analyses of the country's A1-A2 borderlands and border management strategies which further helped with the discernment of the two countries SMPs which as Steinber's (2005) critical overview of SA's border environment reveal, had not been studied or analysed on comparative terms with BW's.

While the limitations to this study and its autonomous Lefebvrian approach were quiet a few and severe in some respects, I was able to overcome or mitigate against certain limits which I outlined in Chapter 4. The most important of the limitations that require a revisit in this chapter is that of a lack of *a priori* dressage in political geography, history, anthropology and the territorial dimension of Lefebvre I had to contend with throughout the lifecycle of this international border and borderlands study. Despite these pedagogical, Lefebvrian as well as disciplinary limitations, my parochial commitment to and autonomous study of Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) social spatial sciences came through on their guaranteed promise to give this study ontological privilege to theorize, conceptualize and empirically investigate the SA-BW international border and borderlands, for the advancement of our geographic understandings and territorial conceptions of the evolution of the Batswana underpinned cross-border region of SADC in broader analytical discourses.

Through Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of this study I made novice contributions towards the spatiological and spatial rhythm analyses of the study area in which I re-affirmed Drummond and Manson's (1991) study on the still Setswana-centric composition of the former Bophuthatswana-Botswana border landscape. I expanded this historical political geographic study with the inclusion of four A1-A2 border gated residential places of abodes of Lobatse-Peleng, Greater Mahikeng and Borolong along with the Lefebvrian statist analyses of the two countries international border policies which revealed an intricate layer of political complexity concerning the extra-territorial adoption of the OSBP model advocated by SA to streamline land based PoEs between its selected neighbouring states. BW is not included in SA's OSBP plans however SA's policy plans to encroach on BW's territorial sovereignty through the uses of its places of abode as experimental sites, revives the arrhythmic spectre of political hostility endured by BW in the 1970s to 1980s under apartheid SA noted by Kotze (1988), Maundeni (1998) and Osei-Hwedie (1998). On the other hand, BW's nationalist policy of *Immigration Act of 2010* reenforces the hard regime experienced at the border's junction points of the A1 and A2 in which there is little to no room for tolerating social differences and behaviours which contrast the ideology of the dominant space in BW society.

Interestingly, the inhabitants of the A1-A2 cross-border regions have non-isorhythmic influence on the transformation, spatial practices and spatial rhythms of the international fracture line of SA and BW. With Northern Batswana of the A2 Lobatse-Peleng, inhabitants worked together with the dominant space in society to appropriate the temporal functions of the A2 Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek junction point/border gate, to the tempo and needs of the representational space. In SA, these privileges are not perceived nor are they experienced or awarded to the inhabitants of the A1 junction points of Geater Mahikeng with tripartite Botlounge since the dominant space in that society works to silence both users and inhabitants of the international border. As a result, the comparative analyses of the international border and cross-border settlements which on the BW side of the border negate Lefebvre's (1991) theoretical analysis of the dialectical character of the representations of space with representational space, while on the SA side of the border the dialectical analysis is enforced. This finding among several findings made in the study, makes a compelling case indeed for the import, appropriation and critical engagement of Lefebvre's scholarship and scientific knowledge in political geography, and more broadly the critical humanities and social sciences invested in territorial border studies, to enhance intellectual explication and conceptualizations which would help shape the philosophical direction and empirical trends of future studies.

#### **8.4 Recommendations and areas for future research consideration**

This study has shown that there is a critical disciplinary need for Lefebvrian thinking, conceptualization and empirically focused research in the geographic subfield of international borders and borderlands in the Global North and Global South. The first recommendation I make is actually a plea for Lefebvrian incorporation in African geographical studies especially political geographic research in South African university curricula to help with the production of Lefebvrian geographers who are in critical demand by the humanities for the territorial theorization of Africa's political geography of borders and borderlands. To borrow from Walther, et al., (2023:2), Lefebvre's spatiology and rhythmology "should be taught and researched" by Lefebvrian scholars of geographic bent in SA's distinct "capital cities" such as Johannesburg, Gqeberha-Port Elizabeth and Cape Town via their "most recognized

universities". Failure to establish and advance Lefebvre in SA, SADC REC and the AU in general would lead to an intellectually representational deficiency of Lefebvrian thought in African political geography and territorial border studies *en tout*.

The second recommendation is for the reappropriation of the territorial toponyms for the A1 Ramatlabama-Ramatlabama border-gated places of abode in SA and BW which are called by the same names as the border gates that define them territorially. I therefore recommend to SA's Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMDM) and the Good Hope (sub) Southern District Council of BW to consider formal renaming of the A1 Ramatlabama tripartite borderland of Kgosi Shole to *Botlounge*, and the A1 Ramatlabama rural borderland of Kgosi Lotlamoreng II Montshiwa to *Borolong*, to avoid analytical as well as sub-cultural confusion of the cross-border region's dominant places of abode and their specific sub-*merafe* that inhabit as well as produce them. I therefore delimit the disciplinary import of Lefebvre's spatiology and spatial rhythmanalysis as a critical area for research development and further study in political geography such that sub-regional border dynamics and borderlands policies of SADC REC can be readily engaged and approached through empirics informed geographical analyses which would help the sub-region circumnavigate the potentially arrhythmic politics of extra-territoriality and capitalist—rather than society driven—borderless movements, inter alia threats to SA Barolong and Batlounge's eurhythmic social spatial relations.

It is therefore my hope that this general study serves as a springboard towards the advancement of disciplinary debates and theoretical unity among political geographic scholars concerning the Lefebvrian study and analyses of international borders and borderland regions of Africa, and the world.

### **8.5 Conclusion**

This Lefebvrian border and borderlands study of the SA and BW sub-region and its six million borders partitioned and organized polyrhythmic society of Batswana, was conceived ethnographically for contribution in political geography. Where the political geography and representational politics of Batswana of SA (Bophuthatswana) and BW based Batswana were last researched more than 30-years ago in geographical limology, this study sought to break the barrier by examining the political geography of contemporary Tswana society and territorial space on transnational terms by de-distancing between SA and BW geographical, anthropological and political historical research. Theoretically, I sought to de-distance between the political geographic scholarship of the Global North and Global South, to integrate these two unique traditions with non-geographic epistemic perspectives as per the existing spatial architectonics trend in geographical research.

This study is therefore not a complete Lefebvrian study of the SA-BW international border and its non-isorhythmic Batswana underpinned cross-borderlands. It must instead be perceived and understood as the completion of an introductory study concerning territorial Lefebvre in an African context autonomously appropriated by an African Lefebvrian of Tswana bent whose future works aim for the spatial de-distancing of Lefebvre's scholarship *en tout*, as well as the advancement of existing African and Middle Eastern political geographical research on Bantustans (cantons), Borderlandization, subnational regional separation, Batswana and state atrophy. To the Anglophone contexts of western Europe and US, this study seeks the near absolute advance of Lefebvrianism particularly in the US where



Lefebvre's scholarship has the most detractors who established interdisciplinary barriers that limit Lefebvre's scientific discourse and epistemic traditions to the subfield of urban geography than political geography.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A – Fieldwork Letter of Introduction

Department of Environmental and Geographical Science  
University of Cape Town  
RONDEBOSCH 7701  
South Africa  
e-mail: maano.ramutsindela@uct.ac.za  
phone: + 27 21 650 2783/2873



9 June 2018

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**SUBJECT: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION – ERNESTINA NKOGE (PhD Student)**

This letter serves to introduce Ms Ernestina Nkooe who is studying for her Doctoral Degree in Environmental and Geographical Science under my supervision. Ms Nkooe's research is on the borderlands between Botswana and South Africa, where she is interested in how the border between the two countries has evolved over time, in the impact it had on Batswana living on both sides of the border, and in the general movement of people between the two countries. As part of her research, Ms Nkooe will need to observe the movement of people through border posts in Botswana and in South Africa. In Botswana, her observation will be limited to the border posts of Ramatlabama and Lobatse.

The main goal of Ms Nkooe's study is academic, i.e. the study is done for the sole purpose of meeting the requirements for a Doctoral degree. Ms Nkooe's study has the potential to contribute to our understanding of the impact borders have on ordinary people as well as on the countries involved. It is hoped that the findings of the study will assist governments to improve border management in 21st century Africa.

I would appreciate it very much if you could give Ms Nkooe the assistance she needs to carry out her research successfully. I am willing and available to provide any further information you may require.

Sincerely,

Signed by candidate

Professor Maano Ramutsindela

Appendix B – A1 Border Fee (BURS)

Declarant code      Company code

Name and address: **burs**  
 HBT 738 FS      Botswana Unified Revenue Service

43	Ramatlabama Borderpost
Receipt N° : R 19038	on 11/07/2018 at 12:57:48
Total amount:	152.00 ncy

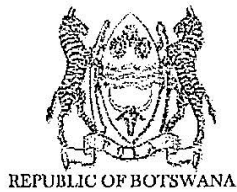
**OFFICIAL RECEIPT**  
**BOTSWANA UNIFIED REVENUE SERVICE**

Transaction code	Reference	Amount
RTP Road Permit	-3500	52.00
MVI MV Insurance	VT 11/10/2018	50.00
NRF Road Fund	VT 11/07/2019	50.00
Total amount		152.00

Means of payment	Reference	Bank code	Amount
10 In cash			152.00
Amount collected			152.00
FCY Code:			
Exchange rate:			

Appendix C – BNARS Terms and Conditions

TEL: (00267) 3911820  
FAX: (00267) 3908545



MINISTRY OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT,  
SPORT AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT  
BOTSWANA NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
& RECORDS SERVICES

**REFERENCE NO: BNARS 6/2/8 I (38)**

**14 August 2018**

Ms. Ernestina Seanokeng Nkooe  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch  
South Africa

Dear Madam

**REQUESTING PERMISSION TO MAKE COPIES OF SOME ARCHIVAL  
MATERIALS FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES**

Reference is made to your correspondence dated 8<sup>th</sup> August 2018 on which you requested for copies of archival materials relating to Ramatlabama and Lobatse settlements. You are granted permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Acknowledgement of BNARS as the source of information
2. A copy of your final work is deposited with BNARS
3. Use a digital camera (without flashlight) under the strict supervision of the archivist as the photocopying machine is not working
4. Taking snapshots of the whole file is **not** permitted ( a limit of 1/3 of the total number of pages)

You are requested to visit our search room identify and lodge a request on archival materials relating to your work.

Your cooperation in this matter would be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Signed by candidate

Lesedi Morapedi  
**For/ Director**

Appendix D – Lobatse Town Council Research Appointment Letter



**LOBATSE TOWN COUNCIL**

Private Bag 0028, Lobatse, Botswana

Telephone: 5305800

Fax: 5332458

Email: [lobatse-town-council@gov.bw](mailto:lobatse-town-council@gov.bw)

OUR REF:

Date: 27/08/2018  
TO: ERNESTINA SEANOKENG  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN  
SOUTH AFRICA

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CORRESPONDENCES**

We acknowledge receipt of your Correspondence  
referenced \_\_\_\_\_

Dated 27/08/2018 in respect of \_\_\_\_\_

REQUESTING RESEARCH PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW  
THE COUNCIL

For further follow up or clarity, please call the above number.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Signed by candidate

FOR/Town Clerk