

**THE BAKGATLA BA GA MOTSHA UNDER THE NATIVE POLICY OF THE
TRANSVAAL, 1852–1910**

by

SELLO PATRICK RANKHUMISE

submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the subject

HISTORY

at the

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY, MAFIKENG CAMPUS

PROMOTER: PROFESSOR B. K. MBENGA

APRIL 2017

Declaration

I declare that **THE BAKGATLA BA GA MOTSHA UNDER THE NATIVE POLICY OF THE TRANSVAAL, 1852–1910** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

S.P. Rankhumise

Contents

Declaration.....	ii
Glossary.....	vii
Abbreviations.....	x
Acknowledgements.....	xii
Abstract.....	xiv
Key words.....	xvi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Rationale and scope of the study	1
Methodological approach of the study	8
Hypothesis and objectives of the study.....	12
Literature review.....	16
Limitations of the study	26
Sources.....	28
CHAPTER 1	32
THE ORIGINS AND SETTLEMENT IN THE PRETORIA DISTRICT	32
Introduction	32
Geographical setting of Pretoria District and its surrounding sub-districts	32
Archaeological information about Hammanskraal.....	34
The <i>difaqane</i> turmoil and the emergence of the Bakgatla.....	35
The rise of the Motsha grouping	45
Conclusion.....	51
CHAPTER 2	54
THE ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE BA GA MOTSHA.....	54
Introduction	54
The worldview of the ba ga Motsha	54
The <i>kgoro</i> system.....	65
Marriage among the ba ga Motsha	69
Ba ga Motsha traditional system of education.....	70
<i>Kgabo</i> as a totem	72
Hunting, crop production and animal husbandry.....	76
Conclusion.....	82
CHAPTER 3	86

LAND DISPOSSESSION AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 1852–1871.....	86
Introduction	86
Boers' consolidation of power and land ownership in the Transvaal.....	86
Boer governance of African affairs in the Transvaal.....	93
The ba ga Motsha and the Labour Contract	98
The Native Act of 1866.....	107
The Hammanskraal Dam.....	112
The renewal of the 1856 Labour Contract, November 1870.....	114
The 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour.....	118
The ba ga Motsha and cheap labour in Pretoria.....	127
Conclusion.....	130
CHAPTER 4	133
THE BA GA MOTSHA AND THE BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, 1866–1891	133
Introduction	133
The origins and early activities of the BMS.....	133
The arrival of the BMS missionaries in the Transvaal.....	137
BMS missionary activities among the ba ga Motsha	139
Sachse's mediation in the Saul-Moepi conflict, 1870–1873	148
The impact of BMS missionary activities	151
Conclusion.....	164
CHAPTER 5	165
LAND PURCHASING AMONG THE BA GAMOTSHA, 1873–1904.....	165
Introduction	165
Conditions for land purchase by African communities.....	165
Purchase of farms at Neuhalle, 1873.....	168
The Native Affairs Department and land ownership by Africans	170
Border disputes over farms, 1885	173
Proposal to purchase Klipfontein, 1904.....	178
Conclusion.....	181
CHAPTER 6	184
PROTEST AGAINST THE BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, 1878–1906.....	184
Introduction	184
Independent African churches and the germination of anti-racism	185
Evangelist-ministers' breakaway from the BMS.....	186

The establishment of the Lutheran Bapedi Church	194
Registering the church	197
Conclusion	198
CHAPTER 7	201
THE BA GA MOTSHA MIGRANT LABOURERS IN PRETORIA, 1886–1910.....	201
Introduction	201
The demand for cheap African labour in Pretoria	201
Labour recruitment in Pretoria	203
<i>Kgosi</i> Moepi's visits to his subjects in Pretoria	208
The impact of migrant labour	213
Conclusion	215
CHAPTER 8	217
THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR SKIRMISHES IN HAMMANSKRAAL, 1899–1902	217
Introduction	217
South African War: A justification of this name.....	217
The ba ga Motsha: Serving two masters.....	220
The surrender of Pretoria and battles closer to Hammanskraal	222
The Hammanskraal skirmishes	223
The outcome of the war	228
Conclusion.....	233
CHAPTER 9	234
<i>TLHOMAGANO YA BOGOSI</i> AT SCHILDPADFONTEIN, 1902–1905	234
Introduction	234
The Transvaal government and the appointment of <i>dikgosi</i> , 1873–1902	235
<i>Batshwareledi ba bogosi</i> among the ba ga Motsha, 1902–1904	237
The Moroelakop incident, 5 March 1905	248
The withdrawal of Ratlhagana's firearm licence	253
Conclusion.....	256
CHAPTER 10	260
CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING <i>TLHOMAGANO</i> , 1904–1910	260
Introduction	260
<i>Tlhomagano</i> among the ba ga Motsha.....	260
Change of the ruling family's surname	273
Conclusion.....	276

CONCLUSIONS.....	281
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	291

Glossary

<i>Badimo</i>	ancestors in Tswana society
<i>Bagakolodi ba kgosi ba kgosi</i>	chief's advisors (singular, <i>mogakolodi wa kgosi</i>)
<i>Belanghebbbers</i>	a consortium of Boer farm owners in the Transvaal who provided land to African communities in exchange for labour
<i>Bogadi</i>	dowry or bride-wealth
<i>Bogosi</i>	the institution of chieftainship in Tswana society (plural, <i>magosi</i>)
<i>Bogwera</i>	initiation school for Batswana boys
<i>Bojale</i>	initiation school for Batswana girls
<i>Boswa</i>	inheritance among the Batswana society
<i>Difaqane</i>	period of tension and conflict in southern Africa between the 1820s and the 1830s
<i>Die Engelse oorlog</i>	the English War
<i>Die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog</i>	Second War of Liberation (i.e. the South African War of 1899–1902)
<i>Go tsena mo tlung</i>	a practice among Batswana whereby a man marries his late brother's wife

<i>Hoof Kaptein</i>	paramount chief/ <i>kgosi-kgolo</i> (<i>Setswana</i>)
<i>Kgabo</i>	a velvet monkey – totem of the Bakgatla
<i>Kgoro</i>	a ward in Tswana society (plural, <i>dikgoro</i>)
<i>Kgosana</i>	junior chief/headman (plural, <i>dikgosana</i>)
<i>Kgosi</i>	chief (plural, <i>dikgosi</i>)
<i>Kgosigadi</i>	chieftainness (plural, <i>dikgosigadi</i>)
<i>Kgosi ya nama o sa tshwere</i>	an acting chief among the Batswana
<i>Kgotla</i>	<i>public meeting, central meeting or court</i>
<i>Magapu</i>	watermelons (singular, <i>legapu</i>)
<i>Mafisa</i>	cattle for loan
<i>Maphutshe</i>	pumpkins (singular, <i>lephutshe</i>)
<i>Modimo</i>	God
<i>Mokgatla</i>	a member of the Bakgatla community (plural, <i>Bakgatla</i>)

<i>Morafe merafe</i>	the society, or ethnic community, in Setswana (plural -
<i>Moraka</i>	cattle post (plural, <i>meraka</i>)
<i>Seano</i>	totem
<i>Sereto</i>	praise song/poem
<i>Tlhomagano ya bogosi</i>	Chiefly succession among the Batswana
<i>Volksraad</i>	parliament of the Transvaal government

Abbreviations

AISA	Africa Institute of South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
BMS	Berlin Missionary Society
CNC	Cape Native Congress
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
ELCSA	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa
GNLB	Government National Labour Bureau
GOV	Government
HMS	Hermansburg Missionary Society
IDG	Institute for Global Dialogue
LBC	Lutheran Bapedi Church
LMS	London Missionary Society
MHC	Master of the High Court
NAD	Native Administrative Department
NASA	National Archives of South Africa
NC	Native Commissioner
NNC	Natal Native Congress

NVAORC	Native Vigilance Association of the Orange River Colony
WMS	Wesleyan Missionary Society
NWU	North-West University
TA	Transvaal Administration
TAD	Transvaal Archives Depot
TNAD	Transvaal Native Affairs Department
TNC	Transvaal National Congress
SANA	South African National Archives
SANNC	South African Native National Congress
SNA	Secretary for Native Affairs
SP	State Prosecutor
SS	State Secretary
UNISA	University of South Africa

Acknowledgements

This study was completed with contributions from a number of individuals and institutions. My first sincere thanks go to my promoter, Professor Bernard Mbenga, for his guidance, criticism and advice during my preparation of this thesis. My profound gratitude and thanks go to Dr Siphamandla Zondi, Head of the University of South Africa-based Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), who conducted a preliminary review of this study.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr Eddy Maloka, former Chief Executive Officer of the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA), for showing keen interest in my academic development and encouraging me to pursue a doctoral study. I am also grateful to individuals who motivated me to continue with my studies, who include Professor James Kariuki, Professor Korwa Adar and Dr Sehlare Makgetlaneng.

My special thanks go to Mr Makanye Maubane for serving as a key informant on various aspects of the Bakgatla; to *Kgosi* Phopolo Maubane of the ba ga

Motsha-Maubane for allowing me access to information on the history of the community, and to *Kgosi* Moepi of the ba ga Motsha-Moepi at Schildpadfontein for giving me permission to interact with members of his Council on the subject. I would like to thank Mr Bennet Maubane, Mrs Soodi Moepi and Mrs Anatania Moepi for providing assistance and useful information during my field visits to Schildpadfontein.

Thanks are due to Ms Sybil Matlhako, Mr Siphon Seakamela, Ms Matheko Badana, Ms Cecile Brits, Mr Reginald Kutu, Mr Abram Mahlomuza, Mr Thabo Sedibana, Mr Rhulani Mihlanga and Ms Amanda Kruger of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) for their tireless support; to Ms Lene Kraft for editing the earlier drafts, and to the Reverend Thulane Masilela, Evangelist Abby Mohlaka and Mr Joe Bila for providing information on the Lutheran Bapedi Church (LBC).

I would also like to thank DIRCO for providing the funding for this research.

Thanks are due to my family – my wife Rose, son Patrick Jnr, and daughter Lerato – for their support and encouragement. Finally, and most importantly, thanks to my parents, Nkele and Modise Rankhumise, who have always remained pillars of strength in my life.

Kgabo ga e namele setlhare, e je Borekhu!

S.P. Rankhumise

2016

Abstract

This study focuses on the Bakgatla ba ga Motsha, a part of a much larger composite group, namely the Bakgatla, who are found both in South Africa and Botswana. The ba ga Motsha as the *morafe* traces its origins from the Bahurutshe, are today found in the Groot Marico District of North West in South Africa. As a result of the *difaqane* one of the sons of *Kgosi* Mohurutshe, Mokgatla, temporarily fled Groot Marico with his supporters, leading to the establishment of the Bakgatla as an offshoot of the Bahurutshe. In the post-*difaqane* period, the Bakgatla underwent fission, which led to the creation of various Bakgatla sub-groups, including the ba ga Motsha, the ba ga Kgafela, the ba ga Mosetlha and the ba ga Mmakau. The ba ga Mmanaana subsequently emerged as a breakaway group from the ba ga Kgafela. During the early 1850s, the ba ga Motsha moved from Groot Marico to central Transvaal near the present-day Pretoria.

Harsh treatment of ba ga Motsha labourers and discontent over access to and ownership of land at the hands of the Boers in Pretoria (as explained below) later led to their relocation to Tshuaneng (1856) and Schildpadfontein (1873) in the Hammanskraal sub-district of the Transvaal, where the *morafe* encountered missionary activities of the Berlin Missionary Society (BMS). A section of the *morafe* remained in Tshuaneng under Saul Maubane as *kgosana*, while the larger part resettled with the *kgosi* at Schildpadfontein, in the present-day local municipality of Dr J. S. Moroka in the Mpumalanga Province.

After resettling in Schildpadfontein, the *morafe* faced challenges regarding *tlhomagano ya bogosi* (chiefly succession) which, in 1904, led to a shift of the *bogosi* (chieftainship) from the *kgosi's* principal marriage to the third. Controversies around the resolution of the dispute over *bogosi* led to the establishment of the 'Moepis' as the ruling family at Schildpadfontein. When

the Union of South Africa was established in 1910, the ba ga Motsha, just like other African *merafe* in South Africa, remained among the marginalised subjects of the whites.

Key words

Bakgatla ba ga Motsha, Berlin Missionary Society, Boers, *bogosi*, Hammanskraal, land ownership, Lutheran Bapedi Church, Maubane, Moepi, *morafe*, Pretoria, *tlhomagano ya bogosi*, Tshuaneng, *sefoka*, South African War.

INTRODUCTION

Rationale and scope of the study

This thesis discusses the history of the Bakgatla ba ga Motsha (hereinafter, the ba ga Motsha) in their regional context of the Pretoria District in the Transvaal, between 1852 and 1910. It demonstrates how the history of the ba ga Motsha adds to the accounts of socio-economic, cultural and political marginalisation of the African communities by the Boers in the Transvaal Republic. The subordinate position of the African communities, such as the ba ga Motsha, was just a microcosm of the racial inequality in other parts of South Africa.

The point of departure, 1852, was chosen because it marked the official creation of the Transvaal by the Boers, with Pretoria as its capital. The Boer presence in the area, Bergh & Morton, 2003:9) emanated from the military campaigns “to open up and settle in central, eastern and northern Transvaal”. Davenport (1991:76) further attests that the Transvaal was acquired through conquest undertaken in violent conflict and wars of dispossession that the Boers waged against the African societies. Coincidentally, the ba ga Motsha settled in this area during the early 1850s, having moved from the Groot Marico area. As a result, the creation of the republic was a result of the Boers’ struggle to achieve their republican independence from British imperialism and colonialism in South Africa, specifically the Cape Colony, and was characterised by subjugation of the African *merafe*. Consequently, the Boers’ quest for autonomy from British rule had an impact on the socio-economic and political situation of African communities in the Transvaal, which also affected the ba ga Motsha (Rose, 1902:284).

Boer farmers to various parts of the territory, including what subsequently became the Pretoria District. The Boer farmers interacted with the African *merafe* that they found already settled in the area, including the ba ga Motsha. The Boers maintained political and economic domination over the African societies, achieved through, among other things, the creation of alliances with friendly African *merafe*. The Boers used their superior military advantage to thwart possible resistance to their intrusion by African communities in the Transvaal. In the process, the Boers could secure the territorial borders of the Transvaal and impose their authority over the Africans in the territory. The Boers ensured their racial superiority over the Africans and, as a result, maintained the upper hand in terms of access to and control of resources, labour relations and political governance (Bergh & Morton, 2003:11).

The Boers lost the formal control of the area under discussion in 1900 following the outbreak of the South African War. From 1902 the Transvaal was under British colonial administration. In 1906 the territory was converted into a self-governing British colony which lasted until the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. The year 1910, thus, serves as the end period of the study. This period marked the official end of the militarised contests between the Boers and the British in the Transvaal as it ushered the beginning of the Union of South Africa. The Union of South Africa was created by the unification of the two Boer republics (Orange Free State and Transvaal) and the two British colonies (Cape Colony and Natal). From 1852 to 1910, the relations between the whites and the Africans in the Transvaal were structured in a manner that relegated the latter to an inferior status, and served to foster racial inequality throughout South Africa (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:186). The Constitution of the Transvaal Republic further endorsed racial intolerance in favour of the Boers, which remained central to the consolidation of racial inequality in the territory because through it 'the [Boer] nation [did] not allow equality of coloured and white inhabitants', as emphasised by Rose (1902:284).

The existence of a large number of indigenous people – the Africans – in the Transvaal and elsewhere in South Africa posed a serious threat to the Boers’ and later the British’s intentions to consolidate power. The Boers’ fear of possible attack by the African communities in the Transvaal was in line with the argument by Bergh & Morton (2003: 9) that “an important obstacle faced by the [Transvaal] administration was its lack of control over African polities on the western, northern and eastern borders”. This served as a motivating factor in ensuring that the African communities in the central districts do not pose any military threat to the whites in the area. Both the Boers republicans and the British colonial administrators in the Transvaal introduced various laws to govern African affairs, which was the case in various parts of the territory that became the Union of South Africa in 1910. The laws were mainly intended to deter possible threats to white domination in the territory, and formed part of what became known as the native policy. The word ‘native’ was used by the Boers to refer to any person of African descent, with the connotation of such persons being non-citizens or of a lesser value as humans. The whites in the Transvaal, as it was the case in various parts of South Africa, deterred the possibility of violent revolt by the African communities by legislating the prohibition of African from possessing ammunition and firearms (Mbenga, 1996: 37).

In their daily interaction with Africans, the Boers often replaced the word ‘native’ with ‘*kaffir*’ – an Afrikaans derogatory word to refer to an African. It should be noted that at that time, unlike now, all whites in various parts of South Africa used these terms routinely in order to emphasise the inferior status of Africans as compared to the whites. The important role that the Africans would play was to serve their white masters, young and old. Maloka (2014:7) sums up the whites’ undermining of the human status of Africans in the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa as follows:

The essence of white supremacy in South Africa was how the settler community should subjugate and govern the indigenous people for its self-interest and self-perpetuation as a minority.

Consequently, the administration of African affairs by whites was intended to achieve complete subordination of the indigenous people in all aspects of life. It gave the Transvaal administration access to cheap labour from the Africans in various parts of the Transvaal, especially in and around the Pretoria District. By 1871, the African communities that had settled in the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria included the ba ga Motsha, the ba ga Moseitlha and the Bahwaduba, and they were all subjected to harsh treatment by the whites. The harsh treatment experienced by the Africans in Hammanskraal, as was the case in other parts of the Transvaal, included forced and unpaid labour and occasional flogging for failure to provide labour and obey instructions from the white masters.

The ba ga Motsha lived on land owned by the whites, where they served as labourers. Unlike the ba ga Motsha, the Bahwaduba and the ba ga Moseitlha occupied farms on the condition that they worked for the white people. The Bahwaduba's major complaint against the whites was that they were denied sufficient land for burial of their deceased and were prohibited from farming on their land (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The ba ga Moseitlha also complained that the farm on which they lived was too small (Bergh & Morton, 2003:82). Additionally, the three communities complained that individual white officials, especially the Field-Cornets and Commandants, often extracted tax or tribute from them. This became their justification for the request to move away from Hammanskraal (Bergh & Morton, 2003:10).

Most notably, the *merafe* in Hammanskraal did not offer any resistance to the white domination. They instead conformed to the conditions presented by the whites. Later, they formally requested to move away from the area in search of land that they would completely own without the whites' interference. These *merafe* were unable to resist the whites because proximity of Hammanskraal to Pretoria provided an opportunity for easy mobilisation of Boer forces to quell possible resistance. Additionally, the everyday interaction between members of these communities and the whites was characterised by imposing the superiority of the whites. The African farm labourers were also expected to obey instructions from their white masters and government officials (Bergh & Morton, 2003:10–11).

Contrary to the situation that prevailed in Hammanskraal, other African societies in various parts of the Transvaal resisted white domination. In the eastern districts, for instance, the Bapedi under Sekhukhune and the Ndzudza under Mabhogo waged successful resistance against white domination (Davenport, 1991:146). The Bagananwa led by Mmalebogo and the Venda under Makhado also managed to wage successful resistance against the Boer encroachment into their territories (Bergh & Morton, 2003:10). Consequently, these communities managed to maintain their autonomy.

It should, however, be noted that between 1852 and 1872 no territories under white rule in South Africa had legislated policies on African affairs, except for the Native Taxes and Vagrancy Law of 1870. The Native Taxes and Vagrancy Law provided for legal protection of the whites by the state against the African communities. It further gave the Landdrost the authority to give consent for the Africans and coloureds to reside on government lands. The

Landdrosts also kept records of the number of livestock and other goods in possession of Africans and coloureds residing on state-owned lands. Africans and coloureds travelling across state-owned land were expected to possess passes which were issued by their white employer or *kgosi* – with the approval of the local missionary, Landdrosts or Field-Cornet. Individuals found guilty of failing to comply with the pass regulations were forced to provide unpaid labour to the whites in the area where the offence occurred for a maximum period of twelve months. A maximum fine of £7 was imposed on any government official, *kgosi* or white employer who failed to issue passes to the Africans and coloureds residing on government lands or in towns. Africans and coloureds were also forbidden from possessing firearms without the permission of relevant government authorities, the white employers or the *kgosi* (Jeppe & Kotze in Bergh & Morton, 2003:171).

Regarding taxation, the Native Taxes and Vagrancy Law provided for the levy of 2s 6d for grass huts owned by Africans above the age of 16 years, on condition that they were providing labour to the whites and were in possession of valid passes. Africans who provided labour to the whites but resided outside their place of employment were expected to pay five shillings, and those who were not working paid ten shillings. The *kgosi* or *kgosana* of each African community was responsible for ensuring that their subjects complied with the tax regulations. Failure to do so would subject the *kgosi* or *kgosana* to a fine ranging between ten shillings and £1. The Commandant-General was directly responsible for ensuring the effective application of all the aspects of the Native Taxes and Vagrancy Law (Bergh & Morton, 2003:175–6).

Consequently, measures to control the *merafe* included the creation of separate settlements, with white administrators being responsible for managing tax collection, labour recruitment, administration of justice and land allocation. In most cases, the white administrators, including Field-Cornets, Commandants and Commandant-Generals were using their authority over African communities for personal enrichment, especially through the use of forced African labour on their farms, and the pocketing of tax collected from the *merafe* (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104–106).

Amid the continued repression of Africans by the Boers, the Transvaal was annexed by the British in 1877. It was a turning point in the administration of African affairs as it led to the establishment of the Native Administrative Department (NAD), headed by Henrique Shepstone. According to the NAD, Africans were declared not sufficiently civilised and, as a result, the government had a duty and responsibility to govern them, while taking into consideration their laws and customs. The NAD promoted formal education and acquisition of industrial skills by Africans. The state continued to be the principal owner of land in the Transvaal (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:223).

All land purchased by Africans was transferred in trust to the state for such *merafe* and no African was allowed to register land under his own name, as such land registration powers were transferred to the office of the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA). The NAD's policies remained in place until the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, and were central in the development of the Native Land Act in 1913. The Land Act of 1913 handed 13% of land to the African communities, which comprised 70% of the South African population, while 87% of land was allocated to the whites who constituted 30% of the total population (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:223).

The ba ga Motsha and many other *merafe* in the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa remained non-citizens, whose lives were governed solely by decisions taken by the whites. The Africans were considered important only when they contributed towards sustaining the socio-economic and political superiority of the whites. The Africans, therefore, remained politically marginalised and economically exploited as part of the consolidation of European colonialism and imperialism in various parts of Africa. Throughout the period of the Transvaal Republic, the ba ga Motsha's aspirations of enjoying social, economic and political autonomy were thwarted as the government undertook deliberate actions and policies to subjugate the Africans in South Africa. These developments had adverse effects on the political and socio-economic sovereignty of *merafe* in South Africa, including the ba ga Motsha. Racial discrimination and segregation was thus officially used by both the British and the Boers in the administration of African affairs, and was one of the building blocks in the institutionalisation of apartheid policy from 1948 (Davenport, 1991:323).

Methodological approach of the study

This study follows a regional or micro-study approach to historical writing. This approach first emerged during the 1970s, is mainly concerned with the use of previously unnoticed and uncovered local events and developments in historical accounts. This is done with a view of illustrating the contribution of such local historiography to the national or macro-historiography. Micro-history has remained closely linked to disciplines such as anthropology and archaeology in its quest to document the past. Regional approaches to the writing of history accounted for micro-historiography, as noted in this quote:

Micro-history as a practice is essentially based on the reduction of the scale of observation, on microscopic analysis and intensive study of the documentary material. ... [I]t is often assumed, for example, that local communities can be properly studied as objects of small-scale systems, but

the larger scales should be used to reveal connections between communities within a region, between regions within a country and so on (Levi, 1991:95–96).

A number of scholars have emphasised the importance of micro-history in the writing of the history of South Africa. To these scholars, local history is relevant in order to provide a clear account of historical developments within the specific geographical space inhabited by different communities. Micro-history thus serves as an important component in linking local events to the broader regional or national history. It could be argued that this local approach to the writing of history gives the historian an opportunity to provide a precise account of how people within a specific geographical location interacted in shaping their everyday lives. Morrell (1983:i), for example, states:

[regional historiography] gives the writer a chance to reveal precisely how people faced the obstacles which barred their progress and thus probes beneath the surface of many general histories which have glossed over regional differences.

The documentation of the interaction between the ba ga Motsha and the whites and other *merafe* in the regional context of the Pretoria District serves as justification for the relevance of this micro-history. In the Transvaal, a number of regional studies covering a wide range of issues such as race relations, contests over access to and ownership of land and other socio-economic and political relations during the 1870s have been produced, and these include, among other things, an edited volume by Beinart, Delius and Trapido, published in 1986.

A micro-history approach to the study of the ba ga Motsha plays an important role towards closing gaps in the historiography of interaction between various communities, including the Boers in the Transvaal during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As this study looks into the

origins of the ba ga Motsha and settlement in the Pretoria District, it illustrates how historical processes such as fission among the Batswana contributed towards the dispersal of the various *merafe* falling under the Bakgatla in South Africa and Botswana (Van Zyl, 1952:15).

This study demonstrates the negative impact the creation of the Transvaal Republic had on the ba ga Motsha's access to and ownership of land, as it led to their relocation from the territory earmarked for white occupation in the Pretoria district. This was also evident among many *merafe* in South Africa that were relocated in order to allow space for the consolidation of economic and political power by the whites. This study also highlights the role and impact of the Berlin Missionary Society (BMS) upon the ba ga Motsha and how the *morafe* responded to the western way of life brought by Christianity. Through its missionary activities, the BMS allowed Christianity to play a role in the subjugation of African communities and the creation of conditions for Africans to accept their inferiority as a 'God-created' arrangement. Just as other missionary societies in South Africa, the BMS negotiated with the government about the ba ga Motsha's land purchase proposals and assistance in ensuring adherence to the rules and regulations governing the affairs of Africans as set out by the Native Affairs Department (NAD).

The study also highlights the non-violent manner in which the ba ga Motsha responded to harsh treatment by the Boers, especially following their subjection to coercive labour practices and the refusal of the white authorities to allow them to own land. Consequently, the ba ga Motsha's 'acceptance' of their subordinate status towards the whites accounted for their limited access and ownership of land and that lasted for decades. In recent years, especially after the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 the ba ga Motsha, as it was the case with

many other *merafe*, formally lodged claims to the land which had earlier, been taken away by the whites in various parts of Hammanskraal.

The micro-historical approach is thus used to give an account of the ba ga Motsha's socio-economic, cultural, religious and political world views, and reflecting on how these were affected by the Boers' consolidation of power in the Transvaal. Additionally, the micro-historical approach is applied to demonstrate the relationship between the ba ga Motsha and the broader Bakgatla in South Africa and Botswana.

It should be noted that this study's choice of micro-historical approach is in no way intended to belittle the national approach to the writing of history. In fact, micro-history assists in unpacking small-scale events with a view of developing a deeper understanding and appreciation of macro-history from a local perspective. Mbenga (1996:2) has also highlighted the importance of linking local studies with national ones to ensure complementarity between the micro- and macro-approaches to historical writing.

The ba ga Motsha's history does not feature in historical publications of the Pretoria region and has received little academic attention, despite a wealth of source material, especially archival, covering various aspects of the community. Such archival material covers their history, which includes their settlement patterns in various parts of the Pretoria District of the Transvaal, their interaction with the whites in the Pretoria District, land purchase, and the influence of Christianity. All these are critical but missing factors in the documentation of the wider history of the *merafe* in the central district of the Transvaal between the mid-19th century and early 20th century. The study of the ba ga Motsha could, therefore, be important in providing new

perspectives on the national discussions related to African settlements in Pretoria before the creation of the Transvaal Republic. The study could also serve as a key resource in addressing land the vexed question of redistribution in the post-apartheid period.

Hypothesis and objectives of the study

The ba ga Motsha form part of the *merafe* of the Bakgatla found in South Africa and Botswana. The community emerged as part of the Batswana groups that fled the *difaqane* attacks and resurfaced to form independent Bakgatla societies. As Mbenga (1996:36) explains, the *difaqane* had 'left these groups weak and in disarray'. The ba ga Motsha were among the first African groups to settle in parts of Pretoria before the establishment of the Transvaal Republic by the Boers in 1852.

Like many African communities in the Transvaal, the ba ga Motsha were forced to leave Pretoria and settled on the land leased from the *belanghebbers* (a consortium of Boer farm owners in the Transvaal who provided land to African communities in exchange for labour), in Tshuaneng, in the Hammanskraal where they were subjected to harsh working conditions by the white farmers. Throughout their history, the ba ga Motsha have not attempted to form a solid military structure.

Additionally, the community's survival depended on negotiations for peaceful coexistence with other communities. These factors accounted for the *mofare*'s failure to offer resistance to white domination. In most cases, the *morafe* used the missionaries in negotiating land purchase deals and pleading against forced labour by the Boer farmers in and around Pretoria.

Consequently, the weapons at the disposal of the *morafe* included home-made weapons such as spears and knobkerries that were used for hunting and small-scale defence. Even in cases where individual members of the *morafe* acquired firearms, they was mainly for self-defence and personal prestige rather than for creating a comprehensive military structure (Bergh & Morton, 2003:100).

Consequently, the ba ga Motsha's survival depended primarily on peaceful coexistence with neighbouring Bahwaduba and the ba ga Moseitlha. The Boers took advantage of the ba ga Motsha's lack of military strength to impose political and economic dominance over the community, with minimal recognition of the authority of *dikgosi and dikgosana* principal roles in decision-making processes and the overall governance among the *morafe*. To the Boers, and later the British, the presence of Africans near Pretoria, including the ba ga Motsha and their neighbours, the ba ga Moseitlha and the Bahwaduba, was strategic to their effort to build a modern state in South Africa because they did not offer military resistance to the white encroachment in the area.

The ba ga Motsha, like many African groups in the Transvaal, were exposed to harsh labour conditions at the hands of the Boers, which included their subjection to physical punishment for refusal to provide labour as per the Native Act of 1866. Physical punishment by the Boer authorities escalated during the late 1860s. In one incident that came in 1870 *Kgosi* Kgamanyane, who was a member of the ba ga Kgafela, was publicly flogged by Commandant Paul Kruger for refusing to provide labour for the construction of a dam in Saulspoort. This episode led to the migration of *Kgosi* Kgamanyane and part of his *morafe* to Botswana, after which the ba ga Kgafela groups in both Botswana and South Africa formed (Mbenga, 1996: 284). In the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria, *Kgosi* Maubane I was also flogged twice

by Field-Cornet Hendrik van der Walt. The ba ga Motsha ruling family, in contrast, kept the issue of the flogging of their *kgosi* secret. However, this led to growing discontent with Boer rule Boers, and drove them to relocate to, among other places, Schildpadfontein in 1873 (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The ba ga Motsha attempts to purchase land and register it under their name, as was the case with other Africans in the Transvaal, was indirectly discouraged by the South African government. Consequently, the white settlers in central Transvaal ensured that the African communities remained non-citizens (Bergh & Morton, 2003:11). In this regard, the Boers put up huge purchase prices in cases where the Africans proposed to purchase land (Rose, 1902:283). The ba ga Motsha paid “48 head of cattle and 20 rams and ewes” to Commandant Solomon Prinsloo so that they could be allowed to live on white farms in Hammanskraal but the *morafe* never owned the land (Bergh & Morton, 2003:106). In another case, Paul Kruger, then *veldkornet* (field-cornet) in the Pilanesberg District, in 1868 insisted that the ba ga Kgafela pay £900 for the purchase of the farm Saulspoort, while the actual worth was estimated to be £450 (Mbenga, 1996:207).

The ba ga Motsha’s desire to own land was also made impossible by the restriction on having land registered under Africans, as it was prohibited by law of the Transvaal government until 1873. The ba ga Motsha then used missionaries to purchase land in Neuhalle (1873), but that did not provide socio-economic and political emancipation, as the Transvaal government, through the NAD, continued to impose policies and regulations that favoured the whites. The ba ga Motsha’s attempts to purchase land, like those of other Africans in the Pretoria District, were an effort to move away from the harsh labour conditions imposed by the Boer farmers (Bergh & Morton, 2003:58).

Faced with harsh, repressive policies, the *kgosi* and the community developed a negative attitude towards the government, but fear of repression stopped them from staging overt political protest. Very few individuals, especially those who worked in urban areas, had the courage to join the nationalist movement in an effort to fight against racial discrimination in the Union of South Africa.

This study shows that between 1852 and 1910, the Transvaal government passed legislation, including the Masters and Servants Acts of 1856, that ensured the economic and political marginalisation of the *merafe*, by limiting their access to and control over land. That was one of the factors leading to the rise of formal African nationalist protest against white domination, which led to the establishment of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912, renamed the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923. The *ba ga Motsha* were affected by these developments, and many people especially the migrant labourers who worked in Pretoria and the Witwatersrand, joined the Transvaal Native National Congress (TNNC) in order to advance their grievances. Among the *ba ga Motsha*, however, the contribution of members of the *morafe* during the formative stages of the SANNC remained undefined despite active participation in the structures of the nationalist movements in both Pretoria and Witwatersrand. Peter Nkga Matseke, a member of the Schildpadfontein community who managed to occupy a prominent leadership position within the TNNC, was an active participant, together with the *ba ga Motsha* migrant labourers.

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) To investigate the historical origins of the ba ga Motsha as well as their relationship with other Bakgatla groups in South Africa and Botswana;
- (b) To examine the nature and effects of the ba ga Motsha's interaction with the Boers in the Transvaal;
- (c) To evaluate the *morafe's* responses to Christianity, especially by the Berlin Missionary Society (BMS);
- (d) To assess the role of missionaries in the *morafe's* access to, and control of, land;
- (e) To explore the nature and outcomes of land disputes between the *morafe* and the whites in the area;
- (f) To discuss the impact of the South African War on the ba ga Motsha–Boer relations in the Hammanskraal; and
- (g) To add to the existing literature on the history of race relations in the Transvaal, specifically, and South Africa in general.

Literature review

There are a number of scholarly works that provide general accounts of the history of the *merafe* in the rural Transvaal during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These include academic works by scholars such as Shula Marks, Anthony Atmore, William Beinart, Bozoli and Bundy. Marks and Atmore published a book that focused on the interaction between the white settlers and African societies in the Cape colony during the pre-industrial period. The publication included contributions on various aspects related to racial relations in the Cape

colony following the advent of the whites. The main argument presented is that the development of settler economy emanated from the exploitation of the African labour (Marks & Atmore, 1980).

Most notably, Professor Beinart wrote extensively on agrarian history in southern Africa. In one of his books he used the case of the Pondoland in the Eastern Cape to highlight the impact of European colonialism and imperialism on the socio-economic and political cosmology of the African societies in the area (Beinart, 1982). Beinart expanded his earlier thoughts on the conflictual relationship between the Europeans and the African societies in the Eastern Cape in an edited volume he co-edited with Professor Colin Bundy. Bundy also published extensively on peasantry and economic transformation in South Africa. Their work thus highlighted class analysis and also shed light on the organisation of rural societies in the Transkei between 1880 and 1930 (Beinart & Bundy, 1987). This study has benefitted immensely from the above-mentioned works, especially in terms of developing a general understanding of the broader issues in the Transvaal, such as white penetration and race relations during the period covered by this study.

Schapera's book, though dealing with Batswana societies in general, focused on the impact of western religion on Africans in the Transvaal (Schapera, 1967). Another scholar, Ruther (2004:207–234), has provided a general account of the influence of religion, especially by the BMS, on African groups in various parts of the Transvaal. The foregoing studies have highlighted the introduction of western religion into the African societies of the Transvaal and how it undermined the traditional religions practised by African societies in the area. However, none of the above works made any reference to the *ba ga Motsha*. Du Bruyn (1994:294–307), on the other hand, has produced an academic work that accounts for the impact of Christianity

on the Batswana in general. This study uses these earlier works to research the impact of Christianity on other Transvaal societies in shaping their socio-economic, political cultural and religious outlook. This was central in differentiating between the various kinds of impact on the experiences of the ba ga Motsha.

Lye's chapter in the book edited by Thompson provides an account of fission among the Batswana. Lye's work further demonstrates how fission resulted in the emergence of the various Tswana groups (Lye in Thompson, 1969). Its detailed account on the breakaway of the Bakgatla from the Bahurutshe and their sub-divisions into various Bakgatla groups made it among central sources in tracing the origins of the ba ga Motsha. It highlighted that the Bakgatla groups included the ba ga Motsha and the ba ga Mosetlha (both found in the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria), the ba ga Kgafela (found in the Kgatla Reserve of Botswana), the ba ga Mmanaana (found in the Ngwaketse and the Kwena reserves in Botswana), and the ba ga Mmakau (found in De Wildt in the Pretoria District of the Transvaal).

Another factor that contributed to the rise of smaller Batswana societies was the outbreak of the *difaqane*. Consequently, various *merafe* of the Batswana were assimilated by the invading groups such as the Ndebele and the Kololo, voluntarily sought refuge among stable groups such as the Basotho or fled their original land only resurface as small *merafe* in the post-*difaqane* period. The contribution of *difaqane* to the political changes in southern Africa is explained by scholars such as Omer-Cooper, Smith and Thompson (1969), Omer-Cooper's chapter in the book edited by Thompson rejected the colonial interpretation of *difaqane* (Thompson, 1969). Thompson's self-authored book also provided further perspectives justifying that *difaqane* was responsible for the advent of powerful kingdoms such as the Zulu and the Basotho who incorporated weaker communities as subjects (Thompson, 1990). The

traditional accounts on *difaqane* by the above-mentioned scholars were premised on the logic that emphasised the violent and destructive nature of the inter-African societies' conflicts that were motivated by Shaka's expansionist greed.

The introductory chapter in the edited volume by Thompson (1969:1–23) illustrates the connections between the African societies in southern Africa from the pre-colonial period until the post-*difaqane* era. Thompson (2001:80–87) argued that the Zulu were responsible for the advent of *difaqane*. In this case, he maintained that by the 1830s, the Bantu-speaking communities that had settled south of the Limpopo River existed as small groups whose economy was based on farming and animal husbandry. Consequently, the Zulu reorganised the age-regiments into military structures with the clear mandate to conquer smaller communities in an effort to build strong polities.

Professor John Omer-Cooper from the History Department at the University of Zambia was inspirational in leading academic discussions and producing publications on the history of southern Africa. Omer-Cooper further accounted for the military organisation of the Zulu as responsible for expeditions that extended from Zulu land into the rest of southern and central Africa. As a result of the *difaqane* attacks, new forms of identities were established, which created a chain of cultural and political inter-connectedness among the African societies in southern and central Africa (Omer-Cooper, 1966).

During the late 1980s Professor Julian Cobbing from the History Department at Rhodes University in Grahamstown added a new thesis to the interpretation of the *difaqane*. He argued that the imperial economic greed and expansionist ambitions by the British, the Boers and the

Portuguese in southern Africa accounted for the conflicts that affected the African societies in the whole of the sub-region. Cobbingg contended that “African societies did not generate the regional violence on their own ... [they were] caught within the European net (Cobbingg, 1988:489). Cobbingg emphasised that between 1811 and 1820 the British colonialists used the Griqua during raids for slaves in the interior. The Griqua slave raids forced weaker communities to flee abandon their original territories as it was the case with the Ngwane who left the land in the vicinity of the Caledon River and fled to the Transkei. A chain reacted emanated from the tension created by the Griqua raids as stronger communities attacked and absorbed the weaker ones (Cobbingg, 1988:489).

Drawing from Cobbingg’s thesis, a number of historians demonstrated the ripple effect of *difaqane* in the interior of South Africa. Professor Andy Manson from the North-West University in Mafikeng, for instance, used the case of the Bahurutshe to highlight how *difaqane* affected the Batswana societies in the interior of South Africa. He emphasised that competition over control of trade, slave raids, labour demands by the European colonialists and shortage of agricultural land accounted for conflicts in the interior of South Africa (Manson, 1992:8).

Professor Carolyn Hamilton from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Witwatersrand edited a volume that drew conclusions based on Cobbingg’s proposition regarding *difaqane*. The subject of *difaqane* remained hotly debated among the historians, leading to contrasting conclusions on the subject. To some historians *difaqane* could not be regarded as key concept in in the historiography of southern Africa- it is “dead and buried”. Others on the other hand viewed it as providing avenues for the re reconstruction of historical accounts on nation-building and the encroachment of the European settlers in southern Africa (Hamilton, 1995: 8-9).

In 2005 Jürg Emil Richner produced a masters' thesis, written under the tutelage of Professor Cobbing at Rhodes University, which added to the logic that the turmoil that external factors were responsible for the advent of *difaqane*. The chain reaction of that process caused destabilisation among African societies in southern Africa. That led to chain reaction of wars expansion leading to the rise of powerful kingdoms in various parts of southern Africa. He asserted that the historical developments associated with *difaqane* remained central in the production of historical accounts on the movements and settlement patterns of various African societies and how that was influenced by the encroachment of the whites in the area. He, however, concluded that historians should treat *difaqane* as a myth rather than elevating it as a legitimate historical concept (Richner, 2005). The author aligns to Cobbing's interpretation of *difaqane* and uses it to develop a general understanding of how the process contributed to the rise of the ba ga Motsha.

Moving away from general accounts of the history of societies of the Transvaal, a number of academic works exist that deal with societies closer to the ba ga Motsha in the Transvaal during the period covered by this study. These include works by Van Zyl, who was a doctoral student in the History Department at the University of Pretoria, Professor Lize Kriel of from the History Department at the University of Pretoria and Professor Bernad Mbenga of the History Department at the Mafikeng campus of the North West University.

Van Zyl's work, whose main focus is on the ba ga Mosetlha, though with scanty information, serves as an important source from which this study has benefitted. First, Van Zyl provides the historical origins of and relationships between various *merafe* of the Bakgatla in southern Africa, including the one covered by this study. Second, the work has information on the

geographical locations of various Bakgatla societies in South Africa in general, and in various parts of the Pretoria District of the Transvaal in particular (Van Zyl, 1952).

Kriel (2000), on the other hand, uses the case of the Hanawa in northern part of Soutpansberg District to demonstrate how the demand for African labour, taxation and control over land led to violent relations between the Boers and some African societies in the Transvaal. However, she has referred to the ba ga Motsha while addressing how whites, especially missionaries, were used in the land purchase deals by African communities. She further gives details about the ba ga Motsha's migration from the central district of the Transvaal to the outskirts of the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria, as part of her general account of the reaction of African societies to white penetration in the Transvaal. Kriel (2000) presented a useful comparison on the reactions of the ba ga Motsha to white penetration with those of other African communities in the central district of the Transvaal.

Mbenga produced a doctoral thesis that focused on the ba ga Kgafela in the Pilanesberg District of the western Transvaal, acknowledging the relationship between the ba ga Motsha and other Bakgatla in South Africa and Botswana. Mbenga's work provides the experiences of the ba ga Kgafela as part of the general circumstances of African societies under the Boer rule in the Transvaal. That includes the Africans' socio-economic subjugation and their ill-treatment, which included coerced labour and being subjected to corporal punishment by the Boers (Mbenga, 1996). Mbenga, however, provides very little information about the ba ga Motsha, as they fall outside his scope of study. The study, while making reference to the ba ga Motsha, emphasises that the *morafe* deserves academic attention by historians.

Professor Christian John Makgala of the University of Botswana in Gaborone produced a book focusing on the history of the ba ga Kgafela in South Africa and Botswana. His work mainly focused on the migration of the main section of the community to Botswana after Kgosi Kgamanyane was flogged by Commandant Paul Kruger. The study also provided enlightening information on the relationship between various Bakgatla societies and position of the *bogosi* of the ba ga Kgafela as paramount to all the Bakgatla societies in Botswana and South Africa (Makgala, 2009).

Mbenga, in his paper presented during the inaugural Edward Patrick Molotlegi Memorial Lecture held in Rustenburg, used the experiences of the ba ga Kgafela to illustrate how the Boers in the Transvaal often resorted to brutal methods in securing labour from the African societies. In most cases, the human dignity of the affected Africans was severely compromised (Mbenga, 1997). The above named studies by Van Zyl, Kriel and Mbenga further reveal useful and critical insights into understanding the dynamics of Boer–African relations in the nineteenth century Transvaal and focus on other societies other than the ba ga Motsha. They thus provide the basis from which to compare the experience of the ba ga Motsha with regard to their interaction with the Boers in the Pretoria District.

In another case study, Mbenga (1997) illustrates the details of occupation of the Transvaal by the Boers and how it resulted in the Africans' loss of their land and sovereignty. This study has benefitted from Mbenga's and similar ones on the region, including one conducted by Manson (1990) on the Bahurutshe of the Madikwe District, as they provide experiences of other communities that the author has used to draw a comparison between the experiences of the ba ga Motsha.

Another scholar, Bergh, unlike others who have focused on the regional history of the Transvaal during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, has through both his master's (1973) and doctoral (1990) theses paid attention to various aspects related to the history of the ba ga Motsha. Firstly, Bergh's studies focus on the Africans' interaction with the BMS in the Transvaal, in which he highlights tensions between the Africans and the missionaries during the late 1860s. The studies further illustrate how the missionaries were used by various African societies in land purchase deals during the early 1870s. These works remain central to providing this study with basic information on the ba ga Motsha's interaction with the BMS.

Bergh also focuses on the reaction of Africans to white penetration in the Transvaal in a general context (Bergh, 2000). In this work, just like Kriel, Bergh gives an account of the ba ga Motsha's land purchase experiences of the early 1870s, which he justified as part of the attempts by the community to evade its continuing exposure to ill-treatment by whites in the vicinity of today's Pretoria. Bergh's work provides a critical analysis of race relations and politics of land and labour in the Transvaal as they affected the Africans, including the ba ga Motsha, the Pedi, the Venda, the Hananwa, the Ndzundza and the Ndebele. Bergh's work has also been used by this author to draw comparisons between the experiences of the ba ga Motsha.

In another work co-edited by Bergh and Morton the 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour is used to highlight forced labour provided by the African societies to the Boer farmers in the Transvaal. This work contains first-hand accounts by the *dikgosi*, Field-Cornets, missionaries and the Commandant-General of the Transvaal on the state of labour relations in the Transvaal between 1850 and 1870. Through this work, Bergh and Morton demonstrate how the harsh treatment of African labourers by Boer farmers in the Transvaal led to increased

dissatisfaction by African societies and their reluctance to offer labour. The ba ga Motsha's neighbours, including the Bahwaduba at Witgatboom and the ba ga Moseitlha at Makapanstad, also experienced harsh treatment from the Boer farmers and, as a result, refused to avail their labour to them. This led to an official request by the Boer farmers to the Transvaal government to take up measures to ensure the supply of African labour to the white farms. Africans in the Transvaal, on the other hand, wanted the government to give them permission to purchase land so that they could be free from economic subjugation by white farmers. The ba ga Motsha *kgosi*, Andries Moepi Maubane II, and the BMS missionary, Otto Sachse, testified to the 1871 Commission on African Labour on behalf of the ba ga Motsha. This work is one of the major sources for this study as it supplements the existing archival sources on the history of the ba ga Motsha (Bergh & Morton, 2003).

Various studies have been produced on race relations in South Africa and the rest of the African continent. Most of such literature demonstrates how the African societies were subjugated by the European colonisers through the institutionalisation of their inferior and sub-human positions in society. This often led to the creation of government mechanisms for marginalisation of the Africans. Consequently, various colonial administrations introduced dedicated departments to deal with African affairs. Brooks (1927), for instance, provides perspectives on how the Boer state in the Transvaal was ill-organised in administering African affairs, and that this often led to personal enrichment by government officials – especially the Field-Cornets, Commandants and Commandants-Generals. The study presents a comprehensive account on the administration of African affairs in South Africa under the British colonialism, and how this was institutionalised into the establishment of the Department of Native Affairs (DNA) with white bureaucrats being responsible for the day-to-day administration of Africans in various colonies.

There is a wide body of literature on the causes, the course and outcomes of the 1899–1902 war between the Afrikaners and the British in South Africa. The war became known as the Anglo-Boer War, putting emphasis on the notion that it was a ‘white man’s war’. However, the direct and/or indirect involvement of various African societies in the war compelled the renaming of the war as the South African War, as documented by historians such as Warwick and Spies (1980:186–90), Siwundla (1984:223–234) and Morton (1985:169–191). Mbenga further confirms the rationale for renaming of the Anglo-Boer War as the South African War when he notes that ‘by the early 1980s, the old belief that the Second “Anglo-Boer” War was a “white man’s war” had become a misconception’ (Mbenga, 1996:103). While many accounts of the South African War have received attention by historians, very little has been documented on the involvement of the communities in the Hammanskraal area, including the ba ga Motsha. That remained the case despite the close proximity of the community’s settlement (Hammanskraal) to Pretoria where some of the major battles were fought. Most notably, Grobler’s (2013) has provided newspaper articles on the war as it unfolded. This included coverage of the skirmishes in Pretoria, focusing on how both sides attempted to secure the Pretoria–Pietersburg railway line to their military advantage. These railway stations were closer to the ba ga Motsha in both Hammanskraal and Pienaars River. This study, therefore, uses Grobler’s work to present argument on the active participation by the African communities in Hammanskraal during the South African War.

Limitations of the study

One limitation of this study is that some of the sources on the history of the ba ga Motsha, especially those that cover the issues around the BMS, were written in 19th century German and Dutch. The researcher’s lack of knowledge of these languages disadvantaged the study’s optimal benefit from such sources. To address this challenge, the researcher has applied his

knowledge of Afrikaans and used the works of Bergh and Morton (2003), which include archival sources on various aspects related to the interaction between the ba ga Motsha and white groups such as the Boer farmers, officials of the Transvaal government and the BMS missionaries.

Added to the researcher's limited knowledge of German and Dutch is the fact that the administrative office of the ba ga Motsha at Maubane village was gutted by fire during the anti-Bophuthatswana riots in the early 1990s. This led to the destruction and loss of important documents covering a wide range of issues on the history of the ba ga Motsha. To address this gap, the researcher has used existing archival sources and documented oral traditions on the history of the *morafe* and held interviews with key informants, including members of the royal families at both Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein.

The researcher has mainly depended on archival sources found at the South African National Archives (SANA) in Pretoria. As another intervention to close the above-mentioned gap, the researcher used the archival sources on the activities of the BMS and the Lutheran Bapedi Church (LBC) contained in the files of the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA) at SANA. These archival sources gave account on the ba ga Motsha's interface with Christianity. Furthermore, the researcher conducted interviews with many elderly members of the ba ga Motsha.

An additional challenge faced by the researcher was soliciting information from oral informants, who often presented contradicting factual data about the ba ga Motsha. In most cases, it appeared that the informants tried to impress the researcher about their 'unqualified' knowledge of the history of their community. To guard against such possible bias, the oral

information received was compared with the existing archival and secondary literature on the community in order to verify it. It should be noted that oral history could be a useful tool for data collection in the writing of a regional study. Through this method of historical enquiry, the researcher focuses on individuals' experiences and agency as they form the core of oral history from which observations would be made (Godsell, 2010). This could be the case, especially when researching on a contemporary issue, in which informants were either actors or had observed the unfolding of events. With regard to the current study, the oral informants did not have personal experience of the events covered, as they had occurred over a much earlier period, namely the first decade of the twentieth century.

Another challenge was the propensity of the members of the ruling families to present information to suit their individual positions in the history of the ba ga Motsha. The subjectivity of oral informants is common in the data collection processes of most historical studies. The challenge of informants with a vested interest in the outcome of the study has been confirmed by Vansina (cited in Mbenga, 1996), who highlights tendencies of the royal family 'to give official views that are coloured by the kind of function they are intended to carry out'. To avoid such bias, the researcher further consulted other sources, including non-royal informants, to verify the accuracy and reliability of the information provided by the royal oral informants.

Sources

Both primary and secondary sources were consulted in conducting this study. Primary sources are important in giving credibility to historical studies – including those written from a regional perspective – especially at doctoral level where historical research is expected to make 'an original contribution to historical knowledge' (Verhoef, 1998:73–74), as this study attempts to

achieve. The researcher consulted and used local evidence from a myriad of sources, but put more emphasis on archival and oral tradition. This study uses oral history to add to the data contained in archival sources (Moyo, 2010).

Oral tradition serves as a critical aspect in the writing of regional history, since it provides opportunity for the researcher to solicit facts from the local actors and/or those who received knowledge about the local history from the older generations. Morrell (1983) indicates that [regional] history cannot be written without sufficient local evidence and that the historian should be aware of the available evidence on the subject of his or her research. The availability of local evidence received from oral informants has thus provided sufficient primary evidence on the ba ga Motsha to qualify it as a regional study.

Oral sources were minimally consulted in conducting this study. The minimal use of oral information was mainly due to the fact that the period covered by this study is scarcely recalled by the current older generation of the community. The study used selected elderly members of the community as oral informants. These included members of the royal family, members of the tribal councils, officials dealing with the traditional affairs, *dikgosi* and evangelists of the Lutheran Bapedi Church (LBC), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa (ELCSA). They were interviewed on specific untold stories related to the history of the community.

Secondary literature on the subject was gathered from published sources accessed from various libraries. These included the libraries of the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) and the University of South Africa (UNISA), which possess rich volumes on the subject. Furthermore,

the Inter-Library Loan facility at libraries of the North-West University (NWU) and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) was used to obtain more secondary sources on the subject.

Archival records remain important sources in the production of regional studies as they provide relevant data in breaking away from national studies, which often put emphasis on the history of 'Great men, Great women or Great events' in the shaping of societal cosmologies. The writing of history from a national perspective witnessed a drastic change in the 1980s following historians' drift towards regional approaches to historical writing. The change towards regional historiography is necessary in order to demonstrate the relationship between local and national historical accounts. In this regard, there is a need for historians to undertake more regional studies in order to demonstrate how local events affected national developments.

The archival sources this study accessed include the records contained in the files of the Government (GOV), the Transvaal Administration (TA), the State Secretary (SS), the State Prosecutor (SP), the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA), the Government Native Labour Bureau (GNLB), the Master of the High Court (MHC) and the Native High-Commissioner Hammanskraal (KHK). All the above categories of archival materials were accessed from the South Africa National Archives (SANA), the Transvaal Archives Depot (TAD) and the University of South Africa Archive, all found in Pretoria. The files, though written in favour of the perspectives and interests of the white authorities at the time, were very rich in data and afforded the researcher an opportunity to interpret them as an attempt to present an accurate picture about the community as possible.

In addition, the above archival sources have provided useful information on the history of the ba ga Motsha and other African communities in the Transvaal. These include testimonies by *Kgosi* Maubane II and Reverend Otto Sachse of the BMS to the 1871 Commission on African Labour and to the Native Location Commission of 1885, already referred to.

While secondary sources were used to solicit published perspectives on the subject, the researcher used them with caution as, in most cases, such sources were written from the perspectives that advanced the interests of groups other than the ba ga Motsha. To address this challenge, the researcher did a cross-comparison of all types of sources to unearth the undocumented history of the ba ga Motsha and present his arguments. The cross-referencing of all documented and undocumented sources is thus used mainly to bring out a balance between document-driven and oral-based historical writings. This approach is relevant in the writing of the regional history of the *merafe*, such as the ba ga Motsha, whose historical records are scanty.

CHAPTER 1

THE ORIGINS AND SETTLEMENT IN THE PRETORIA DISTRICT

Introduction

This thesis focuses mainly on the history of the ba ga Motsha between the late 19th century and the early 20th century. This background chapter on the earlier developments is central to the understanding of the study in its entirety. The chapter contextualises the early beginnings of the ba ga Motsha and their settlement in the Pretoria District of the Transvaal during the mid-1800s. It focuses on five aspects. Firstly, it discusses the geographical setting of the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria where the ba ga Motsha had settled since 1856. Next, it provides archaeological details of the Pretoria District and surrounding areas. Third, it discusses the emergence of the Bakgatla as an offshoot of the Bahurutshe after the military invasions by the Ndebele of Mzilikazi and the Batlokwa under Manthatise during the period that led to the *difaqane*. Thereafter, it provides an account of the rise of the ba ga Motsha as part of the *merafe* of the Bakgatla found in South Africa and Botswana. Finally, it draws some conclusions.

Geographical setting of Pretoria District and its surrounding sub-districts

Geographically, the Pretoria District of the central Transvaal, which is now covered by areas of the Gauteng Province, the Moretele District of North West Province, southern parts of Limpopo Province and the eastern part of the Mpumalanga Province, is situated in the Highveld region of South Africa. Pretoria was named after the Boer leader Andries Pretorius for his role in the victory over the Zulu during the Battle of Blood River on 16 December 1838. The altitude

of the area is 1500 metres above sea level and it is situated between 25–26 lines of latitude and 28–30 lines of longitude. The area experiences hot summers and cold winters. Much of the rain, though often unpredictable, comes in summer between the months of October and March when high temperatures range from 32 to 35 degrees Celsius. The annual rainfall of the area ranges from 500 millimetres to 900 millimetres. Furthermore, the topography of the area is comprised of mountains and flat plains with the Magaliesberg Mountains as the largest. Much of the mountainous parts are in the Pretoria and Rustenburg regions. The Hammanskraal sub-district, on the other hand, is characterised by a flat terrain (Government of Bophuthatswana, 1977:29–31).

The area consists of a number of rock types, including granite, sedimentary and volcanic rocks. The combination of these rock types creates fertile soil which is ideal for the sustainability of vegetation needed for the grazing of domesticated livestock that the ba ga Motsha and other African communities in the Transvaal reared. Additionally, the area serves as habitat to a wide range of wild animals, and water supply is mainly sourced from the *Tshwane* (Apies) and *Moretele* (Pienaars) rivers (Government of Bophuthatswana, 1977:33–35). Vegetation of the area is a combination of both highveld grassland and sweet/mixed bushveld, which grows well in a relatively high rainfall environment. Species such as *acacia heteracantha* (umbrella thorn), *dichrostachys glomerata* (sickle-bush), *ziziphus mucronata* (buffalo thorn), *searsia lucida* (glossy crowberry), *petophorum africana* (African wattle), *combretum zeyheri* (large-fruited bush willow) and *faurea saligna* (Transvaal beech) are commonly found in the area (Government of Bophuthatswana, 1977:37).

The rainfall pattern of the area, coupled with its vegetation type, created a favourable condition for sustainable human life through the provision of meat and hide from wild animals. The popular wild animals hunted in the areas for meat included kudu, bushbuck, impala, warthog, wild pig, wildebeest, porcupine and rabbit. The Moretele and Tshwane rivers, on the other hand, provided additional meat from fishing. The trees in the area provided wood for fire and construction purposes (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Archaeological information about Hammanskraal

Archaeological research conducted in the Transvaal suggests that the Batswana groups occupied the central Transvaal from as early as the Early Iron Age (Mbenga, 1990:20). This is supported by Manson (1969:401) who argues that the ancestors of the present-day Batswana were iron- and copper-producing Negroid pastoralists who inhabited parts of the Transvaal from around 350 AD to 600 AD. Archaeological work by Loubser (cited in Maggs & Whitelaw, 1991:21), presents the Negroids – especially the Bafokeng and the Bakwena – as among the early inhabitants of southern Transvaal. The account by Loubser only identifies ancestors of the present-day Bakgatla community who occupied parts of the Zeerust and Pilanesberg districts during the Late Iron Age (cited in Maggs & Whitelaw, 1991:21). The study demonstrates that the ba ga Motsha emerged as a result of fission among the Bakgatla community who settled in what became the Zeerust District before the turmoil of the *difaqane*. Based on that conclusion, it could then be argued that the ba ga Motsha ancestors are the Negroid pastoralists referred to in the works by Manson and Loubser.

The *difaqane* turmoil and the emergence of the Bakgatla

The ba ga Motsha form part of the Sotho-Tswana linguistic group of the Bantu-speaking people of southern Africa. Other Bantu speaking groups found in the region include the Sotho, the Venda and the Nguni, with whom the Sotho-Tswana share common physical features. By 1500, the Sotho-Tswana societies had settled at the intersection of the Madikwe and Odi rivers and had divided into three clusters (Mbenga, 1996:22). Firstly, the Western Sotho-Tswana settled north of Waterberg and west of Limpopo River, are linked to the Bahurutshe and Bakwena. The Southern Sotho-Tswana cluster was the second and was associated with the Bafokeng. The third cluster was the south-western Sotho-Tswana (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:30–1). The three clusters became the basis for the establishment of various Tswana groups as they are currently known. These clusters trace their origins from Masilo and his son, Malope, the mythical ancestors of all the Batswana, who ruled from the middle of 1400 AD to late 1500 AD (Legassick, 1969:100).

It was during the 1500's that the territory controlled by the Sotho-Tswana extended from Groot Marico to various parts of South Africa. This later led to the rise of new sub-groups: the western group which comprised the Hurutshe and Kwena branches; the south-western group, consisting of Rolong and Tlhaping branches; and north-western groups (Giliomee, 2007:30–31). The argument on the emergence of the various branches of the Sotho-Tswana is further supported by Giliomee and Mbenga (2007:31) as follows:

The western Sotho-Tswana cluster, north of the Waterberg and west of Limpopo, is associated with the Hurutshe and Kwena branch, while the

South-western cluster, in the Magaliesberg and south of the Vaal, is linked to the Rolong and Tlhaping branch.

By the 17th century, the Hurutshe–Kwena branch settled at Rathateng, which is situated at the convergence of the Crocodile and Madikwe rivers, as discovered by Julius Pistorius in 1989 (Mbenga & Manson, 2010:2). Pistorius' discovery of the site provided ground-breaking information on the origins of the Hurutshe–Kwena branch and on their sub-branches, such as the Bakgatla from whom the ba ga Motsha originated. These communities interacted with each other and developed political entities with varying power relations to each other. The Bahurutshe, who settled in the area of the present-day Groot Marico, for instance, were viewed as the senior group of the Batswana (Legassick, 1969:109).

The Bahurutshe traded mainly in beads and ivory with other groups, including the Bangwato, who settled on the northern part of Limpopo River, and with the Bangwaketse, who lived along the Molopo River. In addition, the Bahurutshe were involved in iron mining. Trade and mining thus contributed to the Bahurutshe's economic power in the Marico area under *Kgosi* Thekiso who managed to amalgamate smaller groups. As its population grew and political rivalries emerged within its governance structures, the Hurutshe divided even further, leading to the rise of the Kgatla, Kwena and Rolong lineages (Legassick, 1969:109).

One known fact about the Batswana is that from around 1500 AD they disintegrated into smaller groups. This process of fission led to their dispersal which led to the settlement of smaller groups in various parts of the Transvaal, while others went to north-western Botswana. Fission is the disintegration of the principal community into smaller communities, leading to the creation of new political units. This fission process affected all the Batswana groups and

thus became symbolic in the analogy around their disintegration into smaller units (Mbenga, 1990:23).

It is in the context of continued disintegration into small groups that Batswana are often perceived as deriving their identity and name from the term 'tswana', meaning 'to come or go out from one another, to separate' (cited in Mbenga, 1990:23). The disintegration of the Batswana communities was caused by a myriad of factors, including political rivalries within the ruling family, competition over resources and natural disasters (Legassick, 1969:97).

The separation of the Batswana society, therefore, came to be described as emanating from the process of fission evident between 1600 AD and 1680 AD. The process of fission has been used by historians to account for the term '*batswana*' – directly translated to mean communities or people who break away from one another – as a descriptive name for this branch of the Bantu-speaking people. This perspective has been articulated by Schapera (cited in Mbenga, 1990:23) who indicates as follows:

[The composite name 'Batswana'] has been variously interpreted as meaning (a) 'the little offshoots' (from *-tswaa*, 'to go out, to come from'), (b) 'the separatists, or seceders' from *-tswaana*, 'to separate from one another'), and (c) 'those who are alike' from *-tswaana*, 'to be alike'.

Generally, fission occurred when the sons of the *kgosi* rallied the support of their initiation mates and moved away from the parent group to establish their own political entity. In such cases, the *kgosi*'s son would serve as the *kgosi* of the breakaway faction. Thompson (1990:24) has added to this view by arguing that 'the boys who were initiated together formed a distinct group under the leadership of the *kgosi*'s son'. There are other reasons advanced for the

occurrence of fission among the Batswana. Political rivalries and disputes over *tlhomagano ya bogosi* among members of the ruling families – especially in cases of the *kgosi* having sons from polygamous marital arrangement – often caused new groups to break away from parent groups. This argument is supported by the following:

Failing a direct heir, the [*kgosi*] is everywhere succeeded by the man next in order of seniority. Frequently, however, the succession is disputed by rival claimants. Even when the real heir is well known: and there will be strife and tribal disruption (Schapera, 1953:175).

Fission was also common among the southern Nguni societies such as the Xhosa, the Thembu, the Mpondo, the Mpodomise, the Bhaca and the Xesibe clusters. These societies settled as independent entities that often competed over control of resources such as land and livestock. Most notably, the sons from the *iinkosi's* (*iinkosi* is the Xhosa equivalent for *dikgosi*) junior marriages often moved away with their followers to establish their own societies. Again, sons from junior marriages were given land as gifts after successful completion of initiation and when quarrels emerged with the heir to the throne, which often led to succession. The breakaway groups among the Xhosa, as in the Batswana, maintained common language and heritage with their parent group (Davenport, 1991:55–56).

As in the southern Nguni clusters mentioned above, other reasons that contributed to fission among the *merafe* of the Bakgatla as part of the Batswana included population growth, competition for water resources, scarcity of land, political differences and disputes over *tlhomagano ya bogosi*. It could then be argued that *tlhomagano ya bogosi* among the various African groups could be equated with segmentation or fission. Cornwell (cited in Mbenga 1990:23) accounted for the causes of fission thus:

The process was due to a number of factors such as, for example, population growth and the scarcity of land and water resources, which tended to exacerbate political differences and succession disputes within the chiefdom.

A further contributor to fission was the turmoil of the *difaqane* – a period of tension and violent conflict in southern Africa during the 1820s and 1830s. Thompson (2001) and Visagie (in Pretorius: 2014) often used the concept to portray regional accounts of nation building. These narratives mainly put emphasis on the Zulu, especially the rise of Shaka and his expansionist military tactics, as responsible for territorial and political instability and nation building among the African communities. As indicated earlier in the study, Cobbing, on the other hand, argued that the *difaqane* wars came as a result of the imperial greed by the Cape colonial settlers, the Boers and the Portuguese who used coercive measures to get African labour and that led to massive resettlement of the African societies in the interior of South Africa.

Cobbing's thesis sparked academic interest by historians in the interpretation of the *difaqane*. This formed part of the academic engagement during the conference on southern African history held in 1991. Consequently, Professor Carolyn Hamilton from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Witwatersrand produced an edited volume covering the 'new' perspectives on *difaqane*. This book added to the academic discourse which challenged the argument that portrayed *difaqane* as a product of inhumane inter-ethnic greed that characterised nation-building among African societies in southern Africa (Hamilton: 1995). Based on this logic historians continued to produce academic accounts demonstrating that the *difaqane* was "triggered by a combination of the Zulu king Shaka's imperial ambitions and the depredations of on the east coast of Africa (Gevisser, 2007:8).

Consequently, the *difaqane* led to the creation of stronger communities, such as the Zulu, the Basotho, the Ndebele and Batlokwa, who often defeated and incorporated the smaller and weaker groups. Weaker groups, on the other hand, started to be conscious of their group identity and forged more cohesion in order to survive, as was the case with the Bahurutshe and their offshoots – the Bakgatla. Visagie (cited in Pretorius, 2014:121) described the *difaqane* as follows:

The *difaqane* can be regarded as one of the most significant revolutionary movements in southern Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. From the Great Lakes region of central Africa through the Kalahari to the Cape border regions, the extraordinary mobility of black communities caused their complete transformation.

Difaqane affected the nature of power relations and organisation of African societies in southern Africa. Such effects included high numbers of deaths, disruption of normal lives, forced migration, destruction of property and the interruption of social and economic activities among the affected communities (Pretorius, 2014:121). As mentioned, the *difaqane* led to the rise of African kingdoms, especially the Zulu, the Ndebele, the Swazi and the Sotho. The Zulu kingdom emerged as a result of increased militarisation during attacks against the smaller and weaker communities. The Zulu military units went to as far as modern-day Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania to wage attacks, and returned with livestock and survivors. The conquered groups were obliged to forsake their traditions, including language, and adopt the Zulu way of life. The absorbed groups were then turned into vassals and the livestock provided economic advantages, including serving as items for trade with the Europeans (Thompson, 2000:81–84).

The rise of the Ndebele kingdom also came as a result of the expansionist approach of the Zulu. As a result, Mzilikazi fled with his warriors from northern Zululand into the interior of South Africa. On their way, the Mzilikazi force conquered and absorbed smaller societies. The conquered groups then served as subordinates and added to their military strength. Mzilikazi established the Ndebele kingdom between the Vaal and Limpopo rivers. He later moved to Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe), where he attacked and subordinated the Shona, thus expanding the Ndebele dominance outside South Africa (Omer-Cooper, cited in Thompson, 1969:220). Today, the Ndebele constitute 15% of the population of Zimbabwe and are concentrated in the south-western part of the country, known as Matebeleland. Their tradition, including language and culture, remains similar to that of the Zulu in South Africa, thus demonstrating the legacy of *difaqane* (Interview with E. Manwa, Havana, 03 February 2016).

The Ndwandwe under Soshangane were driven away from northern Zulu as a result of the Shaka attacks. They moved northwards across Pongola River into the present-day Mozambique, where they created the Gaza Kingdom. From Mozambique, Soshangane expanded his influence and domination in parts of present-day Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania (Esterhuysen, 1998:30). Another Nguni group under Sobhuza fled northern Zululand and assimilated small groups, leading to the advent of the Swazi Kingdom in the modern-day Swaziland (Thompson, 2001:86). Moshoeshoe of the Basotho, on the other hand accommodated individuals and groups that were fleeing the scourge of *difaqane*. That led to the establishment of the Basotho nation in what is presently known as Lesotho (Gevisser, 2007: 21)

The Bakololo under Sebetwane also emerged as a powerful society that adopted an expansionist method similar to that of the Zulu. Their invasion and subjugation of smaller communities confirmed the historical narrative that put emphasis on the expansionist wars that originated from Natal as responsible for the chain reaction that led to rise of powerful kingdoms in various parts of southern Africa (Theal, 1901, 169-181). Based on this expansionist logic the Bakololo moved northwards from the Orange River, conquering and assimilating the societies they defeated along the way. By 1830, they reached upper Zambezi in modern Zambia, where they created havoc. This led to the disintegration of the Barotse Kingdom and the subjugation of the Lozi. Consequently, the Lozi adopted the Kololo culture and language (Esterhuysen, 1998:31).

Drawing from the arguments above, it became clear that the process of fission and the *difaqane* accounted for the dispersal of the Batswana and their disintegration. This also became applicable to the Bahurutshe, who broke into smaller chiefdoms, including the Bakgatla and their sub-groups. In the early 1820s, the Batlokwa under Manthatise attacked the Bahurutshe near Groot Marico, resulting in mass emigration from the area. A small group of the Bahurutshe returned to the area at a later stage. Sebetwane of the Bafokeng attacked the Bahurutshe in Groot Marico between 1825 and 1828, causing their dispersal in various parts of the Transvaal. Schapera (1953:15) accounted for the dispersal of the Batswana groups, following the attacks by Manthatise and Sebetwane as follows:

The process of fission ... among the Tswana was mainly [due] to onslaughts of invaders from the east, notably the MmaNtatisi (1822–3), Sebetwane's Kololo (1823–8) and Moselekatse's Tebele (1825–37). During this time, some of the Tswana tribes [including ba ga Motsha, who at that time formed part of the Hurutshe] were forced to flee their homes [and] were irretrievably broken up into scattered groups.

The *difaqane* attacks caused disruptions among the Batswana societies, which in the case of the Bahurutshe, led to the adoption of several aspects of the culture practised by the conquering groups, especially the Ndebele of Mzilikazi (Legassick, 1969:121). The Batlokwa, just like the Zulu, devastated the southern Highveld and caused massive dispersal of societies. This had a ripple effect with some of the fleeing societies causing havoc among the smaller and weaker groups they came across. These disruptions caused socio-economic and political instability among most of the Sotho-Tswana societies in the interior of South Africa (Davenport, 1991:12).

Following the *difaqane*, the large part of the Bahurutshe of Mokgatla were subjugated as vassals by Mzilikazi's Ndebele. The dominance by the Ndebele led to further disintegration of the Bahurutshe into smaller chiefdoms, including the Bakgatla who at that time were not existing as a separate entity. The turmoil caused by the Ndebele in the interior of the territory that was to become South Africa led to depopulation in various areas (Richner, 2005: v). For instance, the various groups of the Bakgatla, including the ba ga Motsha, ba ga Kgafela, ba ga Moseitlha, ba ga Mmanaana and ba ga Mmakau as part of the Bahurutshe served as an example of the Batswana chiefdoms that 'disappeared' as a result of the turmoil of *difaqane*, only to 'resurface' in the post-war era. Influential individuals, especially those with ties to the royal family, grabbed the opportunity created by *difaqane* and rallied support for the creation of the 'new' *magosi*, (chieftainships) (Davenport, 1991:10). Schapera (1953:15) further stated that those who were brave in defending their territories, including protecting their women and children 'were reserved for more terrible death ... infants were left to perish either of hunger or to be devoured by beasts of prey'.

After the turmoil of the *difaqane*, one of *Kgosi* Mohurutshe's sons, *Kgosi* Mokgatla, who was known as '*Mokgatla wa Legabo*' (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010), took his supporters and established his own chiefdom in the central Transvaal. It should be noted that Mokgatla as the founder of the Bakgatla in South Africa should not be confused with Mokgatla of Bahurutshe ba ga Mokgatla, who between 1840 and 1874 settled at Koffiekraal in Groot Marico (Breutz, 1953:31).

At Koffiekraal, the Bahurutshe also experienced fission, which gave rise to the Bakgatla branch under Mokgatla. The Bakgatla community experienced splits, which led to the rise of the ba ga Motsha – the focus of this study – and the ba ga Moseitlha in the Hammanskraal and Makapanstad areas of the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria, the ba ga Kgafela in Mochudi in Botswana and the Pilanesberg District of the western Transvaal, the ba ga Mmanaana in Moshupa location of the present-day Botswana, and the ba ga Mmakau in De Wildt in the Pretoria District of the Transvaal (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016). Legassick (1969:101) further noted that at the end of the eighteenth century the *bogosi* of this lineage-cluster was scattered in various parts of the Transvaal's Highveld, from near the area of the present-day Brits in the east to Kanye (Botswana) on the borders of the Kalahari, in the west.

Other communities – such as the Zizi, the descendants of the Dhlamini in present-day Swaziland – were also displaced, and experienced fission as a result of the *difaqane*. Originally, the Zizi were part of a huge population that had settled on the upper part of the Thukela valley in what is presently called Bergville District of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Following Shaka's attacks, they crossed the Mzimkhulu River and were assimilated into the Xhosa Kingdom of Hintsa (Gevisser, 2007:8–9).

The rise of the Motsha grouping

It was from Mokgatla that the community took its collective name, Bakgatla (*Mokgatla* – singular and *Bakgatla* – plural) (Van Zyl, 1952:21). Mbenga (1990:24) further emphasises that oral tradition confirms that Bakgatla as a collective name for all the Bakgatla in South Africa was adopted from their original ancestor, Mokgatla. Mokgatla moved with his supporters from Groot Marico to the Pilanesberg, following attacks by Bafokeng leaders Manthatise and Sebetwane, giving rise to the Bakgatla as a collective group. The lineage of Mokgatla continued, ensuring that the Bakgatla existed as an autonomous entity from the Bahurutshe. Regrettably, there are no records for the period when the children of Mokgatla ruled the community. What is recorded is that such descendants included Malekeleke, Masilo, Legabo, Pogopi and Mogale (Breutz, 1953:251). It should be noted, however, that though the Bakgatla under *Kgosi* Mokgatla existed as an autonomous entity, acknowledged the Bahurutshe as their parent group. Schapera (1953:15) notes that:

the [Ba]kgatla, an early offshoot from the Bahurutshe, broke up into modern [Ba]kgatla tribes [of] Moseitlha, Kgafela, Mmanaana, Mmakau [and] Motsha.

While there are claims about the ba ga Motsha's closeness to other Bakgatla groups, their identity has remained uncertain as they received little attention from historians. Mbenga (1990:24) posits that the ba ga Motsha are an offshoot of the ba ga Moseitlha, thus providing a lead into the enquiry about the history of this community. It should be emphasised that the uncertainty about the ba ga Motsha's earlier history, including their settlement in the Pretoria region, is due to the fact that they formed part of the *merafe* of the Batswana that 'disappeared' during the *difaqane* and 'resurfaced' in the post-*difaqane* period. The documentation on the activities of the community by historians was done in the context of their relationship with

other Bakgatla communities in South Africa and Botswana (Schapera, 1953:15). Legassick, on the other hand, notes that Schildpadfontein, where the ba ga Motsha settled in the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria, was among the earlier settlements of the Bakgatla in central Transvaal (Legassick, 1969:103).

The ba ga Motsha's relations with the ba ga Moseitlha, ba ga Mmakau and ba ga Kgafela have also been confirmed by a number of oral informants, who indicated the 'closeness' between the community and the ba ga Kgafela, ba ga Mmakau and ba ga Moseitlha was evident from the distant past (Interview with A. Letebele, Makapanstad, 30 May 2006; Interview with *Kgosi* H.M Makapana, Makapanstad, 30 May 2006; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). This closeness was further illustrated when addressing various issues related to the *bogosi* of the ba ga Motsha. Breutz (1953:233) claims that Mokgatla sent his two regiments, Malokwani and Majapoo, to assist the Boers in the war against Sekhukhune in 1879. On this, no one has yet been able to refute Breutz because there had been intermarriage and cooperation between the Bakgatla, especially the ba ga Motsha, and the Bapedi of Sekhukhune since that period. Such a claim on the lineages between the communities is further supported by Van Warmelo (1969:187), who notes that the Bapedi of Sekhukhuneland are from Motsha, progenitor of the ba ga Motsha, from whom they separated at Schildpadfontein in what is today Marapyane.

In line with the logic of Breutz (1953), it appears that Motsha formed part of the regiment that participated in the Boer-Sekhukhune war. After the war, he took his followers and settled near the present-day Hammanskraal, north-east of Pretoria, where he created the Motsha dynasty from the mid-1850s. Breutz's account of the settlement of the ba ga Motsha in the central district of the Transvaal does not show their linkage with the Bahurutshe of Groot Marico. On

the other hand, the origins of the four Bakgatla sub-groups have been explained in the context of Mokgatla as the *kgosi* of Bahurutshe, who had four children. Their names were Moseitlha, Kgafela, Kau, and Motsha, each born from a different wife. Moseitlha was from the *kgosi*'s principal marriage while Kgafela came from the second marriage. Kau and Motsha came from the third and fourth marriages respectively. Legassick, on the other hand, accounted for the Bakgatla as offshoots of the Bahurutshe as he argued that the evidence of the connection between the two groups was based on the fact that the Bakgatla 'look on the Hurutshe as "the principal Bakgatla" – *Bakgatla ba bagolo*' (Legassick, 1969:103).

While the exact date is not clear, it is believed that after the attack by Sebetwane, Manthatishe and Mzilikazi, *kgosi* Mokgatla settled at Mosega in Groot Marico. The date of Mokgatla's death is not known. What is known is that after his death his senior wife, whose name is not known, took over as a regent. The *kgosi*'s principal marriage did not produce a male successor but one daughter, Moseitlha. The Bakgatla were divided about the suitability of Moseitlha to take over the throne. Such dissatisfaction was mainly based on the logic that succession among the Bakgatla entailed the handing of the throne from the *kgosi* to his first-born son, which was strongly viewed as critical in maintaining 'the royal blood' within the ruling family. Any instance where a female took over the throne was viewed as creating a diversion from paternal succession. Moseitlha's rise to the *ba ga* Moseitlha throne thus led to conflicting claims to the *bogosi* by her three half-brothers from junior marriages. Each brother, therefore, solicited support from members of the community. Ultimately, Moseitlha was declared the *kgosigadi* (chieftainess), contrary to the patrilineal system of succession that was practised by the Bakgatla (Interview with A. Letebele, Makapanstad, 30 May 2006). The Bakgatla received Moseitlha's succession to the throne with mixed feelings, which led to Kgafela, Motsha and Kau from the junior marriages claiming their right to the throne. It should be noted that in some of the literature, Moseitlha is said to have been male. For instance, Van Warmelo (1944:4)

notes that Moseitlha was the eldest of the four brothers who broke away from the Bakgatla's ancient home in the Marico District.

Based on the above explanation, the gender of Moseitlha during the breakaway of the Bakgatla sub-groups from the Bahurutshe remained unclear. To this day, members of the community are not sure about Moseitlha's gender but very few people within the contemporary Bakgatla ba ga Moseitlha are convinced that their *kgosi*, Moseitlha, was a male (Interview with A. Letebele, Makapanstad, 30 May 2006). The claim is mainly used to justify the seniority of the ba ga Moseitlha over the broader Bakgatla communities in South Africa and Botswana (Interview with *Kgosi* H.M Makapana, Makapanstad, 30 May 2006). The contradictory conclusions by historians on the origins of the Bakgatla communities in South Africa existed because the history of these communities 'is imperfectly recorded and scant in volume' (Van Warmelo, 1944:60).

The official records on the Bakgatla groups in the central Transvaal were mainly developed by the Transvaal authorities to enforce the law and regulations that confirmed the subordination of the African societies. Very little, if any, of the official records contained information that shed light on the history of these societies, and that was also the case with the ba ga Motsha. The scantiness of recorded sources on the history of Bakgatla communities in the Pretoria District is highlighted by Van Warmelo (1944:60–61), who notes:

Among those Western Sotho [communities] whose Tswana identity is uncertain, but whose affinities all point to the West, may be mentioned Kxatla, represented by the Mmakau and Moseitlha in the centre (Pretoria), the Motsha in the East (Hammanskraal) and some smaller sections.

Based on the recollection of some of the members of the older generation from the community under study, the researcher considers that more scientific studies need to be conducted to determine the biological relationship between various *magosi* among the Bakgatla. This conclusion by the researcher is based on the fact that the recorded information by the Transvaal authorities on these chiefdoms is mainly written from a white perspective and is in a form of archival materials dated from the early 1870s, thus giving no clarity on the earlier periods. That has been confirmed by the ba ga Motsha's absence in the list of *dikgosi* among various African societies in the central Transvaal (GOV. 1086, PS50/8/07).

It should be noted, however, that the records of the Transvaal Native Affairs Department (TNAD) highlighted the three groups – ba ga Kgafela, ba ga Mmanaana and ba ga Moseitlha – as direct descendants of *Kgosi* Mokgatla (TNAD, 1905:27). The position held by the TNAD on the existence of the three groups contradicts the one presented by Breutz. Breutz explains that 'the oldest [*kgosi*] of the parent tribe of the Kgatla is said to have been Mokgatla (Kgabo)' (Breutz, 1953:251).

Breutz demonstrates how all the *dikgosi* of the Bakgatla (Moseitlha, Kgafela, Kau, Mmanaana and Motsha) trace their origins from Mokgatla. The information in Breutz's work thus remains central to tracing the relationship between the *dikgosi* of the Bakgatla in southern Africa. His analysis thus made a useful contribution in understanding the origin of the Bakgatla in general and the ba ga Motsha in particular. It shows the interconnection between the five Bakgatla groups as they are presently known.

There are no records on the details of Mokgatla's death, but what is recorded is that following his death, his son, Malekeleke took over the *bogosi*. Malekeleke was later succeeded by his son Masilo. Masilo was succeeded by his son Legabo, who was followed by his son Pogopi. Pogopi was followed by his son Botlolo. Mogale succeeded Botlolo and moved with his community to Momusweng, near present-day Makapan's Location in Hammanskraal in search of grazing land (Breutz, 1953:252).

Botlolo's younger brother, Tabane, and his supporters moved in the direction of present-day Pretoria and settled at De Wildt. There he was succeeded as *kgosi* by his son, Modise. Modise was succeeded by his son, Kau, who became the founder of ba ga Kau, as the community is currently known. Tabane's brother, Matlaisane, had ambitions of taking the throne, following the death of his brother. The community remained divided around the issue. Around 1850, the need for farming and pastoral land forced Matlaisane and his supporters further south of De Wildt to the present-day Pretoria (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Matlaisane died in Pretoria at an unknown date and was succeeded by his son, Motsha Maubane I, from whom the community derived its collective name – the ba ga Motsha. In addition, 'Maubane' became the surname of the ruling family. By 1850, the ba ga Motsha had established themselves near Derdepoort in Pretoria, from where they came in contact with the Boer farmers who employed them as labourers, often under harsh conditions (Bergh & Morton, 2003:52).

Conclusion

In summary, this study argues that the ba ga Motsha's settlement in the central district of the Transvaal took place in the aftermath of *difaqane* and the process of fission which was prevalent among the Batswana communities. In the midst of the *difaqane* turmoil, Mokgatla's children broke away from the parent group, the Bahurutshe. They included Motsha, who became the founder the ba ga Motsha. Other Bakgatla sub-groups that emerged included the ba ga Kgafela, ba ga Mmanaana, ba ga Mosetlha and ba ga Mmakau, and they trace their names from their founders. The entire Bakgatla group trace their collective name from Mokgatla as the founding father. Individual *dikgosi* among the Bakgatla then attach the name of their founding father to that of Mokgatla to show their separate identity from each other. It is for this reason that the ba ga Motsha drew their collective name from 'Motsha', who was one of the children of the *Kgosi* Mokgatla of the Bahurutshe. It was after the community had settled in the central district of Pretoria that Motsha's son, Maubane, took over the reign and the community became known as the ba ga Motsha-Maubane.

Figure 1.1 highlights the African kingdoms that emerged from the *difaqane* Wars, 1817–1828, while Figure 1.2 provides a schematic diagram of this lineage.

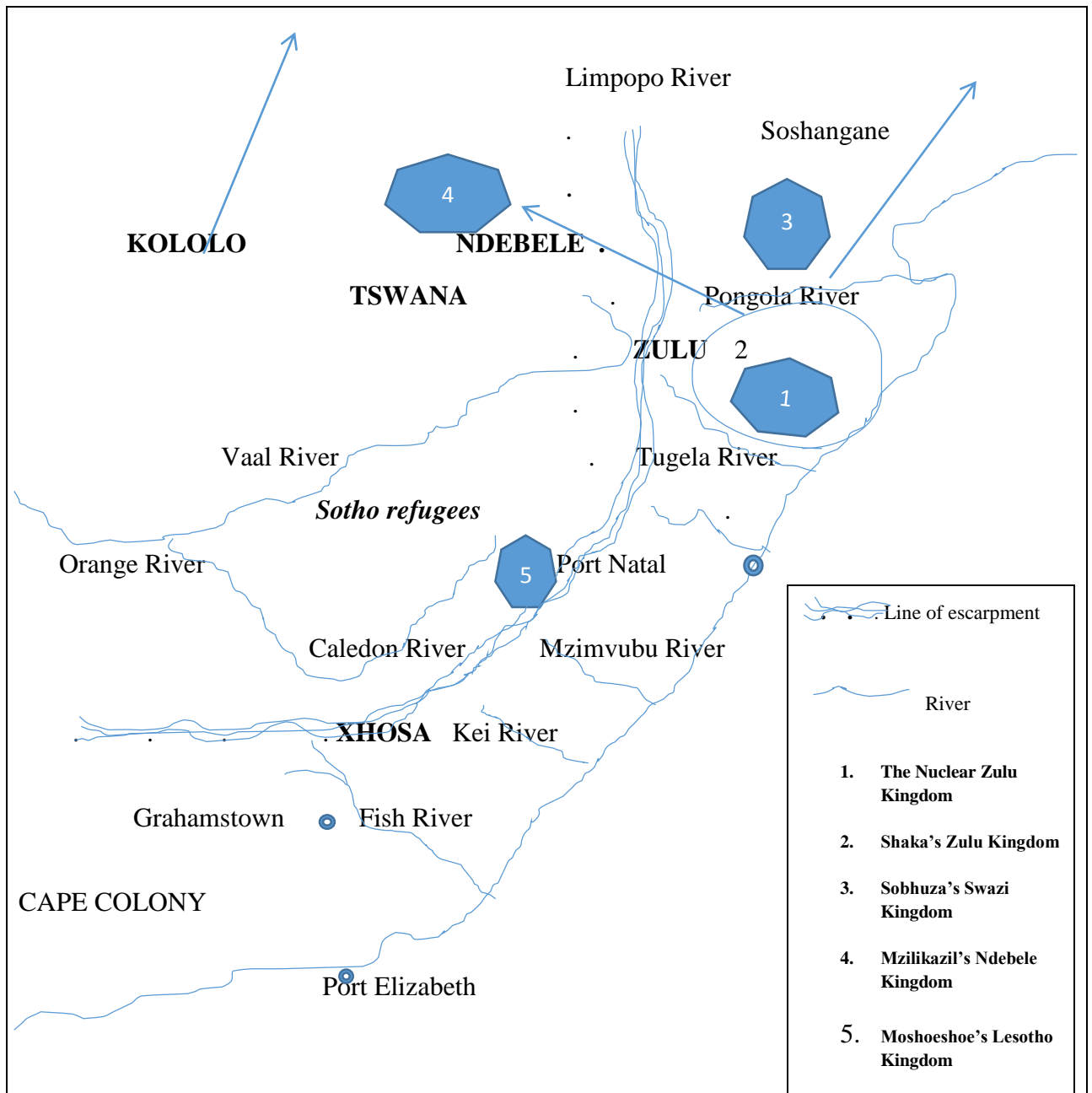


Figure 1.1: Difaqane Wars, 1817–1828

(Adapted from Thompson, 2001)

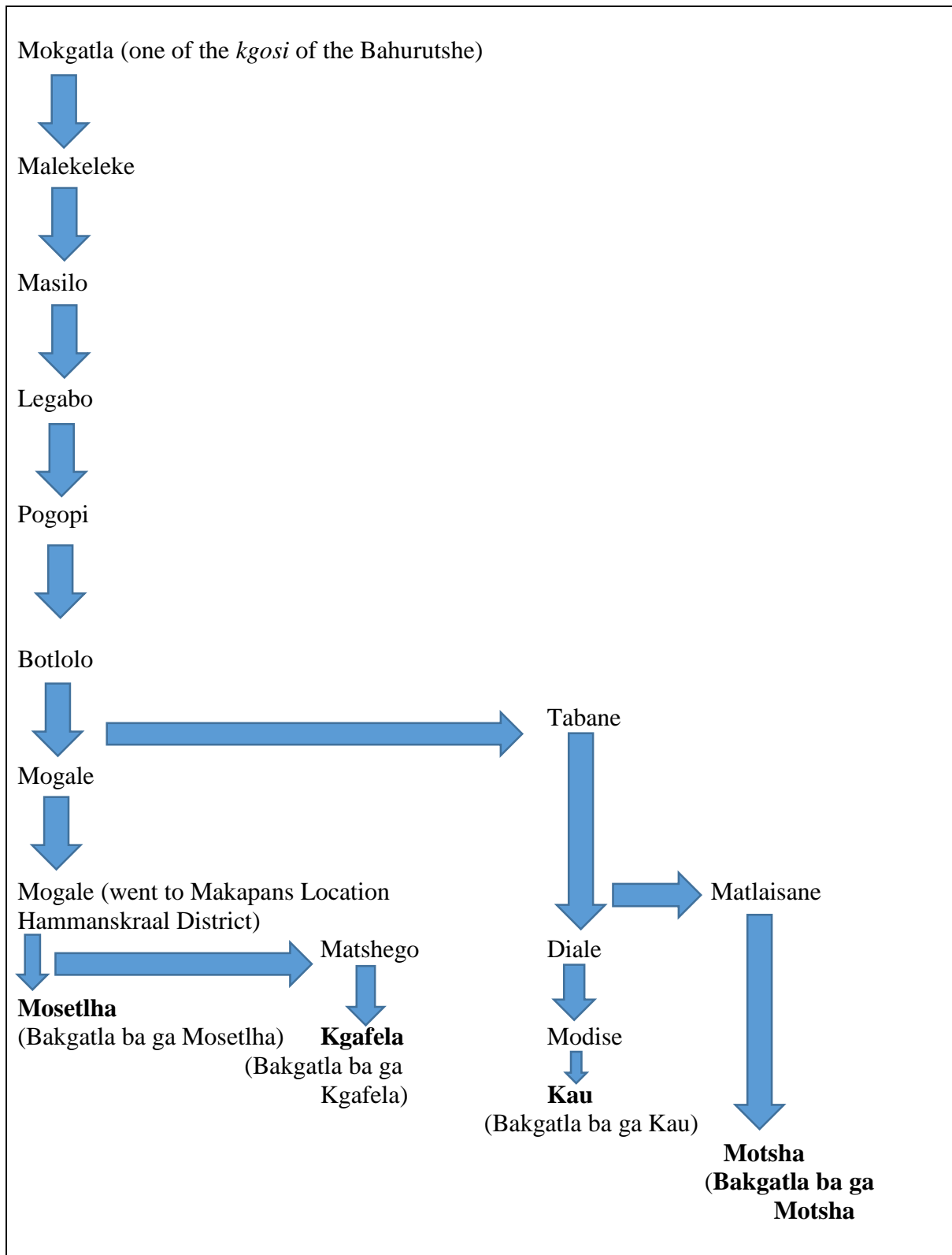


Figure 1.2: Genealogy of the *dikgosi* among the Bakgatla, including the ba ga Motsha, until 1850s

(Adapted from Breutz, 1953)

CHAPTER 2

THE ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE BA GA MOTSHA

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the organisation of the ba ga Motsha. The discussions presented on the perspectives of the ba ga Motsha shed light on aspects of both convergence and divergence in relation to other Batswana communities in South Africa. First, the chapter provides an account of the outlook of the ba ga Motsha. Second, it discusses the *morafe's* social organisation and its impact on the community's governance. Third, it deliberates on cultural practices among the ba ga Motsha, with emphasis on tolerance of cross-cousin marriages, and how the institution of marriage was used to determine inheritance. Thereafter, it gives an account of the ba ga Motsha's traditional education to show how individuals were socialised to be productive members of the society. Next, it explains the adoption by the ba ga Motsha of *kgabo* (velvet monkey) as its totem. This explanation is made as a general discussion on the practice of totemism among the Bakgatla communities in South Africa and Botswana. Second to last, the chapter discusses food production among the ba ga Motsha. Lastly, it draws some conclusions.

The worldview of the ba ga Motsha

Politically, the institution of the *bogosi* was highly respected among the ba ga Motsha, as was the case in other African communities in South Africa and the rest of the African continent. *Bogosi* was viewed as sacred. In this context, the *kgosi* was regarded as a link between the community's *badimo* (ancestors) and the supernatural being, *Modimo* (God). Consequently,

the *kgosi* personified the dignity of the community to the extent that the subjects were prepared to sacrifice their own wellbeing, where necessary to safeguard the *kgosi* against possible threats to his life or interests. Any form of disrespect towards *kgosi* and his family was viewed as a serious offence that could be punished by death or expulsion from the *morafe*. In this context, the commoners among the ba ga Motsha avoided making direct contact with the *kgosi*, except during the community general meeting (*kgotha-kgothe*) where he was scheduled to make important announcements or when he was hosting traditional ceremonies (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

In marriage, the ba ga Motsha practised polygamy, giving their *kgosi* and other men the legitimacy to marry more than one wife. For any *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha to be accepted as legitimate, he had to be a biological son of the previous *kgosi*, especially from his principal marriage. Consequently, the ba ga Motsha preferred that the *kgosi*'s principal wife should be from the marriage with a female from the ruling clan or from royal families of other ethnic communities, preferably Batswana. This practice was common among all the Batswana chieftainships in southern Africa. Among the Xhosa, however, royal marriage outside the Xhosa society was unusual (Interview with N. Masuku, Havana, 24 November 2016; Interview with N. Matshikwe, Havana, 24 November 2016). As a result, marriages were arranged between partners from different Xhosa societies (Mandela, 1995:45).

According to the ba ga Motsha, the legitimate successor to the *kgosi* was the eldest son from *kgosi*'s principal marriage. This meant that the *kgosi* had to marry someone with royal blood from either the *bogosi* of other communities or the *Motsha* or *Ditshwane* wards. Through this arrangement the community would ensure that its *bogosi* retained the 'strongest' royal blood possible. This minimised chances of the ba ga Motsha *kgosi* being appointed outside the

Motsha as a *kgoro*. While the ba ga Motsha allowed their *kgosi* to marry from the royal families of other Batswana communities, they did not discourage the possibility for *kgosi* to marry from the *Motsha* or *Ditshwane* wards, which signified that the community allowed cross-cousin marriages, a common practice among many Batswana communities. The Nguni, on the other hand, did not tolerate cross-cousin marriages among its *dikgosi* because “chieftainship ... [was] passed to the eldest son of the great wife ... who was generally a member of the royalty of another tribe” (Davenport, 1991:65).

During the time of his appointment and when appearing at official gatherings, the *kgosi* was dressed in leopard skin. This symbolised the power possessed by the *kgosi* to make key decisions affecting all aspects of his community’s life. The rain-making responsibility of the *kgosi* among the ba ga Motsha added to the prestige and the traditional prowess of *bogosi*. Schapera (cited in Mbenga, 1996:55) highlights the importance of the rain-making power of the *kgosi* among the ba ga Motsha as follows:

A chief’s reputation and popularity were often determined by the degree of success with which he could provide this [rain] most essential factor to the economic well-being and prosperity of his people.

Among the ba ga Motsha, the younger brothers of the *kgosi* were given land and cattle so that they could be economically independent. The land and cattle formed part of the patriarchally-based *boswa* (inheritance) among the ba ga Motsha. Notably, within the royal family the bigger share of *boswa* went to the eldest son, but for all other members of the community the *bajaboswa* (principal beneficiaries of *boswa*, singular, *mojaboswa*) were the youngest sons. All members of the community became content with this arrangement and the youngest sons were commonly addressed as *bajaboswa* – meaning the legitimate beneficiaries of inheritance and the estate. The eldest sons, on the other hand, received a portion of the livestock and land

similar to the arrangement for the youngest sons of the royal family, as part of empowering them towards economic independence (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). It was very rare among the *ba ga Motsha* that daughters were beneficiaries of *boswa*, as it depended on the goodwill of their fathers or brothers. The allocation of cattle among sons and the *bajaboswa*'s discretion to give their sisters part of *boswa* was done in the following manner:

Sons, irrespective of age, had the upper hand above daughters in the control of cattle. Sons could use their discretion on whether to allocate some of the cattle to their sisters. ... Sons could only take their share of the livestock after they had gotten married (translated from Setswana) (K32/254/13).

In the event of the death of the *kgosi* dying without children from any of his marriages or he became incapacitated or arrested, his younger brother or the son of his younger brother took over the *bogosi*. In that case, the *bogosi* shifted from the original ruler to another male member of his family. This practice was common among the Batswana in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia, who in cases where the royal family failed to produce a successor capable of leading the community declared themselves as not having a *kgosi*. In such cases, a protracted campaign emerged among the late *kgosi*'s relatives in an effort to appoint someone capable of leading the royal family. The ensuing protracted campaigns over *bogosi* often led to the proliferation of sub-groups linked to the late *kgosi*. Such proliferation of sub-groups was also common among other African communities. Among the Shona in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), for instance, there were 150 recognised *dikgosi* by 1902. By 1911 the number of Shona *dikgosi* had increased to 330 as a result of conflicting claims to *bogosi* (Du Toit, 1995:86).

It was common practice among the *ba ga Motsha*, as was the case with all African communities, that the *kgosi* was the highest decision-maker on all major activities affecting his people. He oversaw legal proceedings and handed down judgements on serious cases. Every case was

registered for the attention of the *kgosi* through the local *kgosana* (Mbenga, 1996: 31). The *kgosi* would then convene official hearings attended by the adult male members of the community, especially the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* (chief's advisors). *Bagakolodi ba kgosi* included uncles to the *kgosi*, senior members from *dikgoro* (wards) where the defendant and the accused were allowed to present their side of the story. This exercise included statements by witnesses on both sides. After thorough consideration and consultations with *bagakolodi ba kgosi*, the *kgosi* would arrive at verdicts on various cases brought before him. Once the *kgosi* had made a ruling on a case, no one was allowed to challenge it (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). Any attempt to do so was viewed as undermining authority of the *kgosi* and was a punishable act. This was further captured through a local phrase of "*lentswe la kgosi le agelwa mosako*" – meaning that all statements and decisions by the *kgosi* had to be respected by his subjects (Mbenga, 1996:31).

Verdicts passed by the *kgosi* included monetary fines or flogging for those found guilty of minor offences such as small-scale theft or conflicts. Serious offences such as murder, large-scale theft or defamation of the *kgosi*, *bagakolodi ba kgosi* or members of the royal family were punishable by a payment of livestock, preferably cattle, or serious public flogging (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). In some of the serious cases, the guilty person and members of their family were expelled from the community and their property, especially livestock, was confiscated. The ba ga Motsha judicial system thus served as a major generator of revenue for the royal family (Schapera, 1970:4).

Among the ba ga Motsha, as in all other Bakgatla groups and the rest of the Batswana communities in South Africa, dominance by the *kgosi* in running the community affairs remained evident. The *kgosi* and his family were the wealthiest members of the community as they were the custodians of land. He received material resources, including livestock, through tribute from his subjects. In this regard, Legassick (1969:98) posits as follows:

The office of chief [among the Sotho-Tswana] was the ritual, judicial, administrative, economic and political focus of the community, and membership of a chiefdom involved first and for most allegiance to the office of the chieftainship.

The desire to access and control wealth often made *bogosi* a highly contested institution among the ba ga Motsha, as was the case with other communities in various parts of Africa. The *kgosi* and male members of the royal family were the wealthiest members of the ba ga Motsha society, as was the case with other Bakgatla communities in the Transvaal and Mochudi. Commoners often provided compulsory labour at the farms owned by the royal family and they also contributed parts of their own harvest to the *kgosi* and his family (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). In addition, new arrivals into ba ga Motsha society paid a certain amount of money (or paid in kind) to the *kgosi* and *kgosana* in order to be allowed to settle among the community and be assimilated into the wider *Bakgatla* society. In this way, any individual or group that demonstrated willingness to settle among the community, to obey its traditional norms and standards and to be part of its cultural life was accepted (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016).

The ba ga Motsha, like many other Batswana groups, adopted a patriarchal model of succession in order to guard against possible delineation. This position on succession was influenced by the commonly-held belief by the community that “*dikgomo tsa eta ke e e namagadi di wela ka lengope*” (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). This expression was mainly used to emphasise that women did not possess the necessary qualities to occupy high decision-making positions in society. Based on this belief in the ‘natural capability’ of men to be leaders of society, men’s superior status was widely upheld by the ba ga Motsha.

The appointment of a successor was mainly made in cases of the death of the incumbent *kgosi* or his incapacity due to ill-health. In cases where the heir was still too young to take over, the throne of the *kgosi* was temporarily given to one of his brothers or an elderly male relative of the deceased *kgosi*, usually an uncle to the heir (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). In other cases, the wife of the dead *kgosi*, *kgosigadi*, was allowed to run the affairs of the community during the period between her husband’s death and the appointment of the heir or the *kgosi-ya-nama-o-sa-tshwere*, also called *motshwaredi wa bogosi* - regent or temporary chief (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016). The replacement of an incapacitated *kgosi* with another member of the ruling family was also common among the Swazi and Venda and that had to be undertaken with approval from the *kgosi*’s council (Davenport, 1991:66).

From the era of *Kgosi* Matlaisane to *Kgosi* Moepi Maubane I and to *Kgosi* Andries Moepi Maubane II, the succession among the ba ga Motsha continued to be handed down from father to the first-born son from the Great House (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). This pattern was interrupted in 1904 when the son of *Kgosi* Maubane I from the

Third House was appointed to take over the throne. This led to the beginning of the controversy about the succession debate among the ba ga Motsha, to be discussed later in this study (SNA, 197, NA369/04). It highlighted the ba ga Motsha contradiction of the succession practice by Batswana generally and led to the introduction of a new model of *tlhomagano ya bogosi* known as *sefoka*, to be discussed later in the study.

In some cases, especially as a result of natural disasters such as drought, the community's agricultural productivity became unprofitable as most plants and livestock struggled to survive. To avert further losses, the community led by the *kgosi* – who was believed to possess rain-making powers – would gather and conduct sacrifices, asking for divine intervention for more rain (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). The arrival of missionaries, however, led to the community's divided views on the *kgosi*'s sacred rain-making powers. Some, especially those converted to Christianity by the missionaries, opted to pray for rain. Mbenga highlights the decline in the popularity of the rain-making powers of *dikgosi* among the ba ga Kgafela as a result of the spread of Christianity (Mbenga, 1996:34).

The second level in the hierarchy of political governance after that of *kgosi* was the *kgosana*, which was common in the political organisation of the ba ga Motsha, as with other Batswana communities. This was applied when the elderly male members from the royal family, especially the younger brother of the *kgosi*, served as of his main advisors. Adult males related to the ruling family, including the *kgosi*'s personal friends, were often appointed to serve as the *dikgosana*.

The appointment of the *kgosana* among the ba ga Motsha, as was practised among the Batswana, occurred when the *kgosi* appointed male members from the royal family or a close relative to oversee the governance of part of his community that had settled some distance from the community's main settlement heir (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). The appointment of *kgosi's* relatives as *dikgosana* was common among other African communities in South Africa. The king of the Mpondo, Faku, for instance, allocated land across the Umzimvumbu River to his favourite son from the second house, Ndamase. This allowed the heir of his principal wife, Mqikela Sigcawu, to remain his successor. Ndamase was thus recognised by his father as *induna (kgosana)*, which led to the founding of the Ndamase as a sub-cluster of the Mpondo (Davenport, 1991:57).

In 1873, *Kgosi* Maubane II of the ba ga Motsha allowed his uncle, Saul, to serve as *kgosana* at Tshuaneng when he moved with the larger part of the community to Schildpadfontein. The move to Schildpadfontein was a result of the successful purchase of land from the Boers by *Kgosi* Maubane and his community, as discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Saul wanted to claim the ba ga Motsha throne from Maubane II. Saul thought that such a move would give him more recognition from the Boer authorities and provide him with an opportunity for his lineage's entry into the *bogosi*, but he did not succeed (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). From Tshuaneng, he continued to recognise the traditional and political seniority of *Kgosi* Maubane II (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Under the *dikgosana* system, trusted men who were not necessarily the relatives of the *kgosi* were appointed to oversee the governance of various sections of the territory under his authority. They collected taxes and tribute, served as messengers and gathered intelligence for the attention of *dikgosana*. *Dikgosana* would on their part rely on the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* and

present the information gathered as well as a part of the taxes and tributes collected to the *kgosi* (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016). This created a social hierarchy which had some economic benefit to *bogosi*. In addition, it denounced the myth about the autocratic nature of *bogosi* among the Batswana, as it provided an opportunity for democratic participation in key issues and developments affecting the community. In this regard, Schapera (cited in Mbenga, 1990:31) further argues:

In theory, all power was vested in the chief, the head of the community who governed it with his closest relatives. While this may sound autocratic, in practice, government was by consensus and considerably democratic.

In addition, Saul, during his tenure as *kgosana* at Tshuaneng, had more economic power than his subjects. He had a large piece of land for farming and the size of his livestock was larger than those of other members of the community. He also kept some of the tribute and fines, including livestock from various criminal cases he adjudicated. He, however, was obliged to present the larger percentage of livestock and wealth gained in his capacity as *mogakolodi-wa-kgosi* (advisor) to the young *Kgosi* Maubane II. As a result, his economic status was inferior to that of *Kgosi* Maubane II. He also paid personal tribute to *Kgosi* Maubane II, which symbolised his loyalty to him. This confirmed consensus at both Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein on the cultural and political authority of *Kgosi* Maubane II over all the *ba ga Motsha* ((Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). To this day, where there are a number of the *dikgosana* among the *ba ga Motsha*, the *bogosi* at Schildpadfontein remains the superior authority, and is often consulted on key matters affecting the *ba ga Motsha* as a collective. The *ba ga Motsha* sub-groups include the *Motsha-Maubane* at Maubane and the *Motsha-Maloka* at Masobe in Hammanskraal (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The superiority of the founder of *bogosi* to its *dikgosana* was also common in other African chiefdoms in South Africa. Among the Xhosa, the Mpondo and the Thembu in the Eastern Cape, for instance, the dominant chieftainship was respected by its sub-clusters, which was demonstrated through paying ritual respect to the senior *inkosi*. The recognition of the senior *inkosi* highlighted its political and heritage importance to all the sub-clusters (Marks, cited in Thompson, 1969:98–99).

The Zulu in Natal, on the other hand, existed as a strong kingdom that involved a large population, often with several *inkosana* (*dikgosana*) who owed allegiance to the senior *inkosi*. They drew inspiration from the Zulu's 'nation-building' that emanated from the rise of Shaka who controlled the area between Phongolo and Tugela Rivers and usurped various groups into his kingdom (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:38). Consequently, various sub-clusters were established by the British after defeating the Zulu during the Battle of Isandhhlawana in 1879, which led to the banishment of the Zulu King Cetshwayo to Cape Town and the creation of thirteen Zulu kinglets. This was short-lived, following the release of Cetshwayo and his rise to his position as the Zulu king. The example of the Zulu could be used to argue that the Zulu always maintained strong allegiance to the paramount king, which conveyed popular political and historical support (Marks cited in Thompson, 1969:130). The *ba ga Motsha*, as was the case with other Tswana communities, illustrated allegiance of the *dikgosana* to the *kgosi* (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010).

The *kgoro* system

Since the mid-1850s, the ba ga Motsha were divided into a number of *dikgoro* (or wards), which served to confirm the community's identity as part of the Sotho-Tswana (Legassick, 1969:99). Members of the royal family and their close associates remained influential in determining the political direction of the *bogosi* and were mainly drawn from the royal *kgoro* of the *kgosi* (Legassick, 1969:178). Schapera (1941:30) defines *kgoro* as:

Principal administrative and social units in the [community and comprised] ... a collection of households occupying their own well-defined portion of a village under the authority of a hereditary headman.

In its general context, the ba ga Motsha *kgoro* system was arranged and governed from a patriarchal perspective with the elder males, especially those related to the *kgosi* and the royal family, who occupied prominent and decision-making positions (Mbenga, 1996:30). In this context, the male members of the royal family enjoyed political and economic rights and privileges far above those held by ordinary male members of the community. Male members related to the royal family remained principal representatives of the *kgosi* within their individual locations and age-regiments. This practice was also common among other Bakgatla communities, including the ba ga Mosetlha who were based at Makapanstad in Hammanskraal (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016). In cases where relatives to the *kgosi* were found in a similar location or event, the one with stronger genealogical ties to the *kgosi* took precedence and automatically directed the proceedings (Legassick, in Thompson, 1969: 98).

The important role of members of the royal family in the administration of the society was also common in various other African societies. For instance, the Mpodu in the Eastern Cape recognised their *inkosi* as the senior member in the society and also possessing authority to make various decisions affecting the society. As a result of the dispersed settlement of the community the *inkosi* appointed members of the royal family as *inkosana* to provide strategic support in the governance of the society (Hammond –Tooke, in Thompson, 1969: 244).

The important role of the *kgosi*'s male relatives in the governance of African societies is further described as follows:

In administering the affairs of the [community], the chief was assisted firstly by a few selected relatives ... whom he consulted on all matters of policy. He also had a wider, more formal Council comprised of the hereditary headmen of all the wards, whom as a rule he summoned only in times of emergency, when he was anxious to ascertain beforehand the trend of public opinion (Schapera, 1941:29).

There were four *dikgoro* among the ba ga Motsha, who in the order of their seniority were Motsha, Ditshwane, Kau and Matseke. To this day, the ba ga Motsha still follow the same *dikgoro* arrangement. The royal *kgoro* of Motsha comprised the *kgosi* and his paternal relatives, some of whom – as mentioned earlier – served as the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* to the *kgosi* (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The Ditshwane was the second ward and was comprised of families related to the royal family, especially families that married female members from the royal family. The explanation given by oral informants is that the name Ditshwane is derived from *ditshwene* (plural for baboons) and was adopted by the community as part of its historical and cultural heritage in recognition of the community's relation with the Bahurutshe, whose totem was a baboon (*tshwene*).

Members of the Ditshwane occupied the second level of the ba ga Motsha's hierarchy, and remained very close to the royal family. Male members of the Ditshwane *kgoro* were represented in the key institutions of the community, including serving as *bagakolodi ba kgosi* (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The third *kgoro*, Kau, was comprised of individuals related to the royal family, though distantly, by virtue of marriage. It is further recalled by oral informants that the name, *Kgoro ya Kau* (Kau's ward), was in recognition of the historical relationship between the community and the ba ga Kau, who had settled at De Wildt. The ba ga Kau's relation with the ba ga Motsha was strengthened by trade and intermarriage between ordinary members of both communities and their royal families (Interview with *Kgosi* P. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The fourth *kgoro*, Matseke, was in recognition of the Matseke family, who was closely related to the Motsha, the ward from which most members of the royal family married. It could thus be concluded that the naming of the four wards was done for a number of reasons. Firstly, Motsha was named after Motsha as the original founder of the ba ga Motsha. Secondly, the use of Kau symbolised the relation between the ba ga Motsha and the ba ga Mmakau. Thirdly, Matseke is believed to be a younger brother of Motsha and served as *kgosi's* special *mogakolodi* during the period leading to the settlement in Pretoria. Ditshwane, on the other hand represented the importance of Apies River (Tshwane) as it provided water for key economic activities of the ba ga Motsha (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June

2010). The observation on the naming of *dikgoro* after key personalities among the Batswana, including the ba ga Motsha, is confirmed by Schapera (1967:18) as follows:

Most of the [wards] were named after some distinguished ancestor of their headman ... [and that] ... the constituent families were in most cases directly related either by birth or by marriage to its headman.

The *kgoro* system among the ba ga Motsha was used as a unit of local governance. Through this structure, the *kgosi* delegated *dikgosana* and *bagakolodi ba kgosi* the responsibility of handling minor cases presented by members of the community within their wards. In such cases, *dikgosana* could pass verdicts and impose fines on offenders (Interview with *Kgosi* P. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). A description of the *kgoro* system is thus provided in the following quote from Schapera (1967:18):

The [*kgoro*] was essentially a localised administrative unit. Its members all lived in the same hamlet or ward of the village, and had their own court, where lawsuits were held and other local business dealt with under the supervision of the headman, assisted by the more important heads of families.

The number of *dikgoro* (plural for *kgoro*) differed among various Bakgatla groups. The ba ga Kgafela in Mochudi, for instance, had five *dikgoro*. These *dikgoro* comprised of Morena, Mabodisa, Tshukudu, Manamakgothe and Kgosing (Pilane & Mitchison, 1973:123). The royal family belonged to the royal *kgoro* called *kgosing*, also known as the *kgatleng*. The Bakgatla in Moruleng had more than two wards. In fact, each ward name in Mochudi was also in Moruleng (Mbenga, 1996:30). The ba ga Moseitlha, on the other hand, had more than twenty *dikgoro*, among others, “Moseitlha, Motshware, Moratela, Tshwane, Batlhako and Kgoka” (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016).

Marriage among the ba ga Motsha

As pointed out earlier, the ba ga Motsha practised polygamy, which also allowed marriage between cousins. Like other Batswana societies, the ba ga Motsha *bogadi* process – including in cases of cross-cousin marriages - was controlled and decided by the senior adult males in both the bride's and the groom's families (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 34). Moreover, the practice of marriage among cousins is also practised by the Basotho where cousin marriage is formally arranged by the parents, often emanating to both parallel and cross-cousin marriages. In some cases, the parents would identify their sons' future wives from their extended family. Through this practice, the *bogadi* (bride price), mainly in livestock and preferably cattle, was paid to the bride's family, which was close to that of the groom since the marrying couple were cousins (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). To this day the ba ga Motsha view cross cousin marriage as important in cementing the relationship among extended families and that is proudly reflected in the popular phrase that says '*ngwana wa malome nnyale dikgomo di boele sakeng*' – directly translated to mean 'my cousin marry me so that the bride wealth can remain in the family' (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010).

Marrying a cousin was viewed as strengthening family relations and the practice is still common among the ba ga Motsha, though now on a smaller scale. The decline of polygamy among the ba ga Motsha has been caused by, among others, the influence of Christianity and Westernisation of the community emanating from their encounters with the Boers and other white groups who were the new authorities in Pretoria and Johannesburg (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). As a result, the economic status of the family was not negatively affected by the payment of *bogadi*. While marrying cousins was common

among the Batswana, it was not tolerated among the Nguni, who viewed it as taboo. Wilson (cited in Thompson, 1969:74) describes the contrasting views about cousin marriages among the Sotho and the Nguni in the following manner:

Nguni have exogamous clans and among most of them there is a rigid taboo on marriage into a mother's clan as well as into the father's, and sometimes a taboo on marriage to a grandmother's clan. Among the Sotho there is preferred cousin marriage, both parallel and cross-cousin marriage being permitted amongst most Sotho speakers.

The ba ga Motsha's neighbours, the ba ga Mose tlha, also practised cross-cousin marriages. The practice was adopted by the Bahwaduba, who had settled between the ba ga Motsha and ba ga Mose tlha *Legabo* (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). In addition, members of the three communities intermarried, which often resulted in friendly relations among them. According to a Mohwaduba oral informant, the Bahwaduba's adoption of the cross-cousin marriage was a result of the influence of and close interaction with the ba ga Motsha and the ba ga Mose tlha (Interview with M. Kutu, Hammanskraal, 5 July 2014).

Ba ga Motsha traditional system of education

The ba ga Motsha used *mephato* (age-sets) as units for socialising and inculcating societal values and morals among the younger generation. From an early age, children of the same age group were raised together, along gender lines, and given tasks that prepared them for greater responsibilities as they grew. *Mephato* thus served as key organisations for the socialisation of the younger community on the societal norms and standards. *Mephato* were mainly arranged with each gender receiving intensive lessons – mainly through observation – from the older generation. The highest institution for the socialisation of the members of *mephato* was through participation in the initiation process, known as *bogwera* for young men and *bojale* for

young women. Successful completion of the initiation process granted individuals acceptance as part of the adult population and they could be called upon to perform various communal work for the *morafe* and the *kgosi* (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 37).

The *mephato* among the ba ga Motsha were not highly militarised and, as indicated earlier, the military element of the training mainly focused on self-defence, hunting techniques and small-scale fighting. These were mainly based on the use of African traditional weapons, as opposed to western weaponry. Training and socialisation included aspects of responsible living for young men and women. Young men were taught the values of the society, their future roles as heads of family and their duty to serve their community and the *kgosi*. In contrast, other African communities, such as the Nguni, used *mephato* for socialisation of the young men, which included physical and military training. The age-regiments were always kept as a unit and taught important skills for the economic good of their families and the entire community (Callinicos, 2004:30). Omer-Cooper in (Thompson, 1969: 228) demonstrated that the Ndebele, the Nguni and the Swazi also drew inspiration from the militarised organisational structure of the Zulu and also established *mephato* which became central to their establishment of kingdoms.

The young ba ga Motsha women were taught about womanhood and its associated duties and responsibilities, including raising children, hygiene, family chores and the importance of being respectful towards their husbands. As a result, the teaching and learning process was conducted through 'shadowing' – a process whereby a learner learned skills through observation. Shadowing was undertaken along gender lines, with boys modelling the expertise of experienced older men and girls learning from older women in the community. In this way, the skills were transferred from one generation to the next and included various areas such as

farming, hunting, hygiene, cooking, food preservation, hunting, negotiation and conflict resolution. To this day, older members of the community often recall with pride how they had learned certain skills from their preceding generation. These included, for example, beer brewing and farming among the women, and cattle herding and hunting among the men (Interview with N. Madikologa, Hammanskraal, 23 July 2010; Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with L. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 10 August 2011).

Kgabo as a totem

Among the Bakgatla, the respect for a *kgabo* as the community's totem dates back from time immemorial. This was the case with all other Bakgatla communities in South Africa and Botswana. The *kgosi* was addressed as *kgabo e kgolo*, meaning 'the revered member of the community'. It should be emphasised that while the Bakgatla had the highest respect for *kgabo* as their totem, they also recognised the dominance of the lion (*tau*) and leopard (*nkwe*) among all the animals. Added to its fighting and hunting prowess, the *nkwe* remained special among most African groups because of its beautiful fur. The fur was therefore, worn by the *dikgosi* to symbolise prestige and power. For these reasons the *kgosi* among ba ga Motsha wore the fur of the *nkwe* and not that of the *kgabo* (Interview with *Kgosi* P. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with B. Maubane Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with Moses Kutu, Hammanskraal, 5 July 2014).

Naturally, the Bakgatla felt extremely honoured to be addressed as *kgabo*. Members of the community emphasised the importance by addressing each other as *kgabo*. The ba ga Motsha, like all other Bakgatla groups, adopted the *kgabo* as their totem or sacred symbol, known as *seano*. Members of the community used the *seano* to differentiate themselves from other communities. This often entailed situations where an individual would indicate to a stranger that they were *kgabo* or *mokgatla*— meaning that he or she was a proud member of the Bakgatla. It was also common for the Bakgatla to call each other *kgabo-mokgatla* to emphasise their pride in being a member of the Bakgatla (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016). It remains common practice among various Batswana communities to address themselves by totem names (Thompson, 1990:24).

Davenport (1991:63) adds that the importance of the totem among African communities, especially the Batswana, includes serving a “sacred animal ... [and] give[s] a person access to the fraternity of others across a number of chiefdoms who bore it”. The ba ga Motsha’s neighbours, the ba ga Mosetlha and the Bahwaduba, for instance, also took pride in their totems and referred to each other as *kgabo* and *kgomo* (wildebeest) respectively (Interview with M. Kutu, Hammanskraal, 5 July 2014).

The ba ga Motsha’s allegiance to their totem, as indicated by an oral informant, was reflected during greetings wherein the exclamation of the word ‘*kgabo!*’ was used as a way of greeting. The person who received the greetings often replied by saying ‘*kgabo!*’ or ‘*mokgatla*’, which was done with a sense of pride. This type of greeting bears significant meaning if the interacting people are of Bakgatla origin. It further stimulates enquiry about the branch of the Bakgatla for each of the party involved in the greetings. Most notably, greetings among the Bakgatla from various branches were received with a sense of belonging, which reflected the

historical and cultural ties among all the Bakgatla. The Bakgatla greeted non-Bakgatla in the same manner as a sign of respect and to illustrate friendship and affinity with one another (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with L. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 10 August 2010; Interview with Aaron Letebele, Hammanskraal, 30 May 2006).

It should be noted that there were certain Batswana groups that killed and ate their totems. This included the Batlhaping, found in Taung, who killed and ate their totem *tlhapi* (fish). In addition, the various sub-groups of the Batlhaping had their individual sub-totems. The Batlhaping ba ga Maldi, for instance, had the kudu as their sub-totem, while recognising *tlhapi* as their main totem (www.tlhalefang.com/setswana).

The cultural value of *kgabo* to the ba ga Motsha and all the Bakgatla communities in South Africa and Botswana is further expressed through the lyrics of the group's anthem. The lyrics of the anthem were as follows:

<i>Kgabo, Kgabo Mokgatla</i>	[An ape, an ape the Kgatla]
<i>Ga e je borekgu</i>	[Let it eat the plant sap]
<i>Ga e namele setlhare</i>	[Let it climb the tree]
<i>Ee je borekgu</i>	[Let it eat the plant sap]

These lyrics recognised and praised Mokgatla as the founder and forefather of all Bakgatla. They further celebrated his achievement as their founder by depicting him as rising to the top of a tree and enjoying its fruits. According to one of the interviewees consulted by the researcher, the lyrics symbolise the community's celebration of the agility of the ape in its

untamed wilderness (Interview with A. Letebele, Makapanstad, 30 May 2006). This could be equated to the successful withdrawal by Motsha from the Bahurutshe to form his own lineage. Legassick (1969:103) indicated the relationship between the Bahurutshe and Bakgatla by highlighting that ‘the Kgatla look on the Hurutshe as *Bakgatla ba Bagolo* (High Bakgatla)’.

In addition, the lyrics and the symbolism of the anthem remain central to the maintenance of a common identity and solidarity among all the Bakgatla communities in southern Africa. The solidarity among the Bakgatla is evident in the collective memory of the community to this day. This was confirmed by the oral informants from the ba ga Motsha and ba ga Moseitlha, who view the song as the “the pride and prestige of the Bakgatla” (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with L. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 10 August 2010; Interview with A. Letebele, Hammanskraal, 30 May 2006). Other oral informants emphasised that to this day the ba ga Motsha retain allegiance to their totem even when residing among the non-Bakgatla communities, thus calling each other ‘*kgabo*’ or ‘*mokgatla*’ (Interview with Kgosi H. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 2006; Interview with Kgosi P. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Unlike the Batswana, other African societies such as the Nguni preferred the use of the clan’s name or its praise name as a sign of respect when addressing each other. Consequently, individuals from the Nguni communities explained their cultural heritage and origin by identifying themselves with the founder of their society. A member of the Mpondo under Faku’s two sons, Ndamase and Seqawu, who had settled on the opposite side of Umzimvubu River in the Eastern Cape, for instance, would introduce themselves as the ‘Mpondo of Faku’. In this manner, an individual would be emphasising their relationship with the community’s founder (Davenport, 1991:57).

The identification with the name of the founding father of the society became central to the preservation of the history of the Nguni from one generation to the other. On the other hand, the ba ga Motsha, like other Bakgatla groups, used both the name of the founder and the totem as form of their cultural identity. In that case, calling a Mokgatla, *Kgabo-Mokgatla*, *Kgabo* or *Mokgatla* was viewed as the highest recognition of being a Mokgatla (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Hunting, crop production and animal husbandry

Historically, the communities in the central districts of the Transvaal, including the ba ga Motsha, enjoyed a physical environment that was conducive to the practice of subsistence agriculture, which was the cornerstone of economic activity (Mbenga, 1996:32). Additionally, the ba ga Motsha were involved in gathering and hunting. The gathering of wild fruit was mainly done by women and children. The most popular wild fruit gathered by the community was *morula*, which was consumed directly from the tree and also used to brew *bojalwa* (beer). Hunting, which was mainly the responsibility of elderly men, was undertaken in the forests along the Tshwane River. Respectable hunters were those who caught big game such as elephant, koedoe, wild hog and wildebeest. Most notably, the ba ga Motsha bestowed pride and prestige on the hunters who could kill dangerous animals such as lion, cheetah and leopard (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with L. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 10 August 2010).

The ba ga Motsha and all other African communities in the Transvaal were subsistence farmers who produced a variety of crops. Around the 1860s, the farming activities among ba ga Motsha were boosted through the introduction of irrigation and ploughing by the Berlin Missionary Society (BMS) missionaries led by Otto Sachse, who facilitated trade between the community and the white industrialists in from the urban centres in and around Pretoria and Johannesburg. Otto Sachse's presence in Hammanskraal is discussed in detail in Chapter Four. The contribution of the missionaries in the acquisition of farming implements by African communities was not unique to the ba ga Motsha. During the 1850s, crop production among the Batlhaping in the Kuruman District of the Transvaal received a boost following the introduction of ploughs and irrigation by the London Missionary Society (LMS) under Robert Moffat (Shillington, in Beinart *et al*, 1986:314).

The popular crops produced by the ba ga Motsha included maize (*mmopo*), pumpkins (*maphutshe*), beans (*dinawa*), watermelons (*magapu*) and sorghum grains (*mabele*). These crops form part of the self-supporting economy of all the Bakgatla communities (Mbenga, 1996:32). There were two kinds of *mmopo* – the white and the red types. The white type was more preferred as it was consumed during periods of good harvest. An oral informant confirmed that the red type, on the other hand, was consumed during times of drought (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). These crops were also produced by the ba ga Motsha's neighbours, the Bahwaduba. Additionally, these communities traded in seeds and exchanged services in the ploughing sector, as was confirmed by one of the oral informants (Interview with A. Letebele, Hammanskraal, 30 May 2006).

The slops of *mmopo* were cooked after the harvest to be consumed while fresh. Others were fried and served to members of the family or dried to either be used as seeds for the next ploughing season or to be ground to produce maize meal to cook porridge (*bogobe*). The cobs of the dried *mmopo* were used to make fire. The surplus was sold to the Boer-owned mills along the Pienaars River and Hammanskraal, where it was processed into maize meal and sold back to the African communities, the Boer farmers and the urban population in Pretoria and other neighbouring urban centres. The remainder of the parts of *mmopo* were used as fodder for cattle, sheep and goats. Others were left to decompose in the soil as fertiliser to maximise production during the next ploughing season (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with A. Letebele, Hammanskraal, 30 May 2006).

The *mabele* also formed part of the key components of the *ba ga Motsha* staple food. The *mabele* was prepared like *bogobe* for consumption by everybody in the family. In addition, it were used for brewing traditional beer (*bojalwa*). Consequently, *mabele* was viewed as central to both nutritional and entertainment value of the community. *Mabele* was part of the meal at most of the events hosted both individually and collectively by members of the community (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010).

The food crops produced in the area were further augmented by the indigenous vegetables (*morogo*) that grew during the rainy season. All the crops harvested in the area were either consumed while still fresh or dried and preserved so that they could be consumed during periods extending long after the harvest. The surplus harvest was preserved as seeds for the next ploughing season (Breutz, 1953:241).

The ba ga Motsha used the sun energy to dry meat and *morogo*. The dried food was kept as contingency for periods of food shortage, such as during drought or winter. Both meat and *morogo* were dried in cooked and uncooked forms. This formed part of the broader indigenous knowledge on food preservation by the African societies. The ba ga Motsha's experience and input to food preservation provides a rich area for academic research on indigenous knowledge systems (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The ba ga Motsha and their neighbours, the Bahwaduba and the ba ga Moseitlha kept domesticated animals, which included cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, chicken, donkeys and dogs. Due to lack of sufficient land, these societies kept their cattle kraals close to the residential area. During the time of drought, they often rented additional grazing land as *meraka* (cattle-posts) from the white farmers near Hammanskraal. Consequently, a group of cattle owners would collectively approach a white farm owner so they could keep their cattle until the drought or winter was over. In turn, they became collectively responsible for paying rent for the land. When summer returned and there were sufficient pastures, the cattle were returned from *meraka* and kept closer to the community (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). The keeping of livestock in the *meraka* was a common measure to avert loss of livestock by various African societies in other parts of the Transvaal (Interview with A. Letebele, Makapanstad, 30 May 2006). The Batlhaping, for instance, also took their livestock to the *meraka* during the periods when seasonal harvests failed and there was a serious decline in the condition of the livestock (Shillington in Beinart *et al.*, 1986: 314).

Cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and chicken played an important role as sources of food as they could all be slaughtered for meat. Cattle, sheep and goats also served as a source of milk, while chickens provided eggs as additional food products. The cattle and donkeys were used for transport and ploughing, while the dogs were used for securing settlements against thieves and for hunting. Most notably, cattle had more economic value than all other animals. Every part of the cattle had value: the skin was used for making drums, whips as well as for covering corpses. Wet dung was used for decoration and reinforcing the mud construction of houses, and dry dung served as a source of energy for making fire. In addition, cattle were also used to pay *bogadi*, fines and for other various purchases. A brief account on the importance of cattle among the ba ga Kgafela highlights the importance of cattle among the Batswana in the following manner (www.mphebathomuseum.org.za):

Cattle lie at the heart of all the important Tswana activities. They provide meat, milk, transport, power for ploughing, and precious dung that is mixed into manure and used as cement for hut floors and plaster for walls. Cattle hides are used for objects like reins and whips. Traditional doctors use the tail of a bull as a whisk in rituals. The scrotum of the bull is also used as a purse or a container for divining bones. Cattle are a measure of a family's wealth and status. The cattle have a special connection with the ancestors. For this reason, when a man dies he may be buried in his cattle kraal – especially if he is a chief.

The economic and social prestige of an individual among the ba ga Motsha, as was the case among many other African societies, was determined by the number of livestock, especially cattle, in his possession. Consequently, an individual with a large herd of cattle received respect from the rest of the community. This meant that he could keep a number of economically disadvantaged individuals as labourers. In return, he loaned his labourers cows for their services. This practice became known as the *mafisa* system (Mbenga, 1996:31). Over time, the number of cattle increased and the loaned cow was to be returned to its original owner with some additional cattle. The beneficiary of the *mafisa* system, on the other hand, had his own herd of cattle, and thus moved away from poverty. He, in turn, could apply the practice

to other economically disadvantaged members of the community. The *mafisa* system formed part of the community's social protection initiative and assisted in addressing poverty among members of the community, and during time of famine and drought it included corn, food and seed (Mbenga, 1996:31).

The ba ga Motsha, as a patriarchal society, took efforts to empower young men to be economically viable so that they could be in a position to support their families. In this regard, it was common practice among the ba ga Motsha that a father gave each of his sons a cow, goat or sheep from his livestock so that they could multiply over time. As the animals multiplied, they remained under the control of the father until the son got married and established his own family. In the event that the son could not get married, he could not claim full ownership of the livestock until the death of his father. That system was known as *go tshwaela* – directly translated to mean to earmark livestock for someone. The *go tshwaela* practice was common among the various Batswana societies. The system of *go tshwaela* among the Bakgatla is explained as follows:

[Translation] In a case where a man had sons and daughters, the cattle and other livestock were allocated to the sons from a young age. In an event that a man accumulated debts while his sons were still young, his sons were obliged to settle such debt with their cattle [accumulated from the *go-tshwaela* system] (K32/254/13).

Emanating from the *go-tshwaela* system, was a common practice among the ba ga Motsha that when the father died, the eldest son took control of his late father's estate, including the livestock. In that case the eldest son assumed the responsibility of using his late father's livestock to support his mother and all members of his family. His younger brothers, on the other hand, could not claim their part of the *go tshwaela* until they had got married (K32/254/13).

Conclusion

Overall, the institution of *bogosi* among the ba ga Motsha shared general characteristics to those of other Batswana communities. *Bogosi* was transferred from father-to-son, mainly to the *kgosi's* eldest son, who took over after the death of his father. The *kgosi* remained the highest decision-maker among the ba ga Motsha and was viewed as possessing divine powers, such as rain-making. On the governance front, the ba ga Motsha, as most African communities in South Africa and elsewhere on the African continent, followed the *kgoro* system to determine individuals' position in the community's social structure and decision-making processes. Consequently, individuals' social ranking was determined based on its relationship with the ruling family. The practice of cross-cousin marriage remained one of the characteristic features of the ba ga Motsha, as it was the case with other Batswana communities. Most notably, cross-cousin marriage was not tolerated among the Nguni. Like many African communities, the ba ga Motsha used oral tradition as a tool for transferring skills and knowledge from generation to generation. All the activities and learning among the ba ga Motsha, as was the case with other Bakgatla communities, took note of the centrality of *kgabo* as the totem. Furthermore, the community upheld patriarchal arrangements as central in determining political and economic authority.

Figure 2.1 presents a map of the ba ga Motsha and neighbouring settlements at Tshuaneng and thereafter Figure 2.2 offers a map of the movement and settlements of the ba ga Motsha in the Pretoria District in 1873

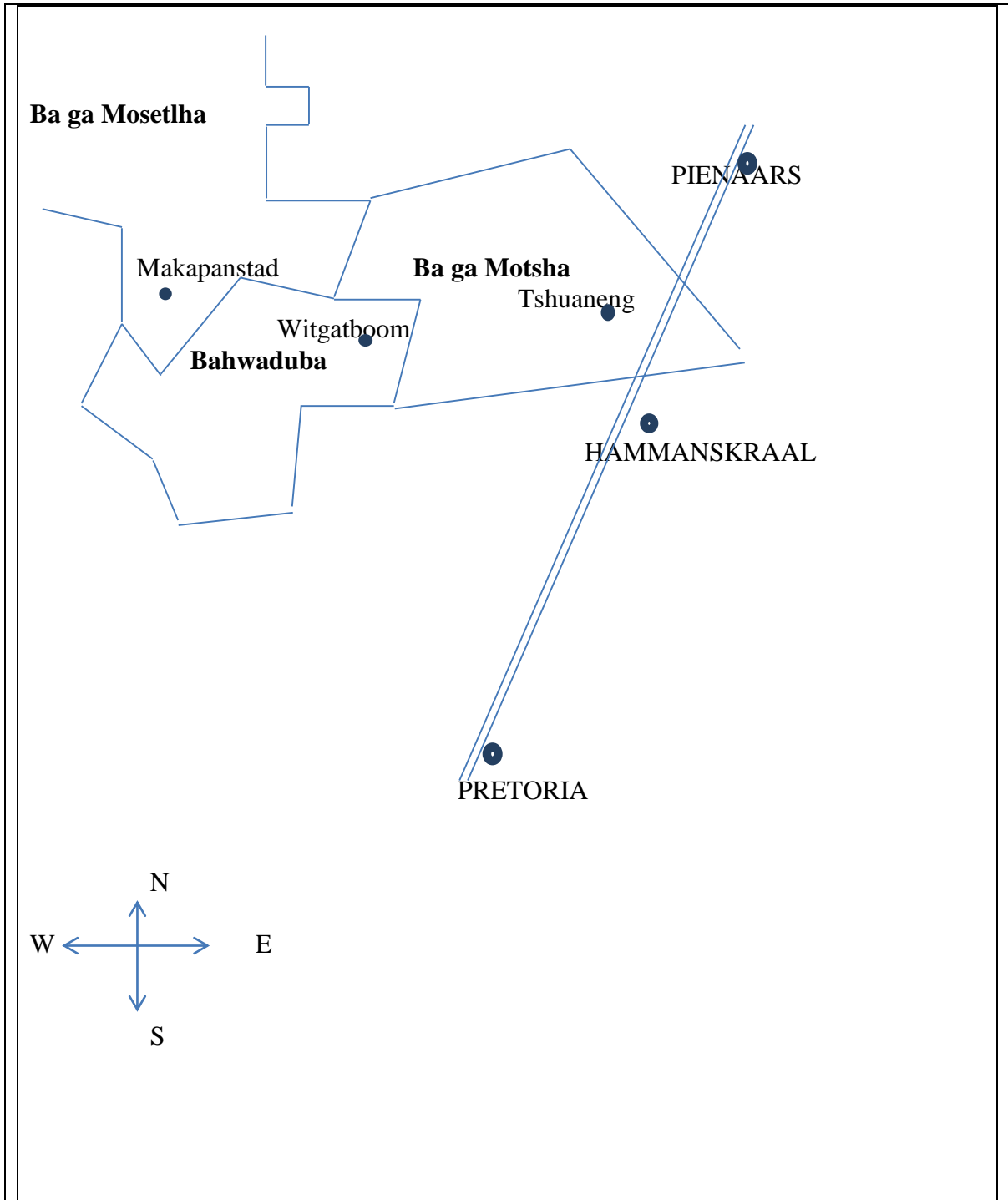


Figure 2.1: Map of ba ga Motsha and neighbouring settlements at Tshuaneng before 1873

(Adapted from Van Zyl, 1952)

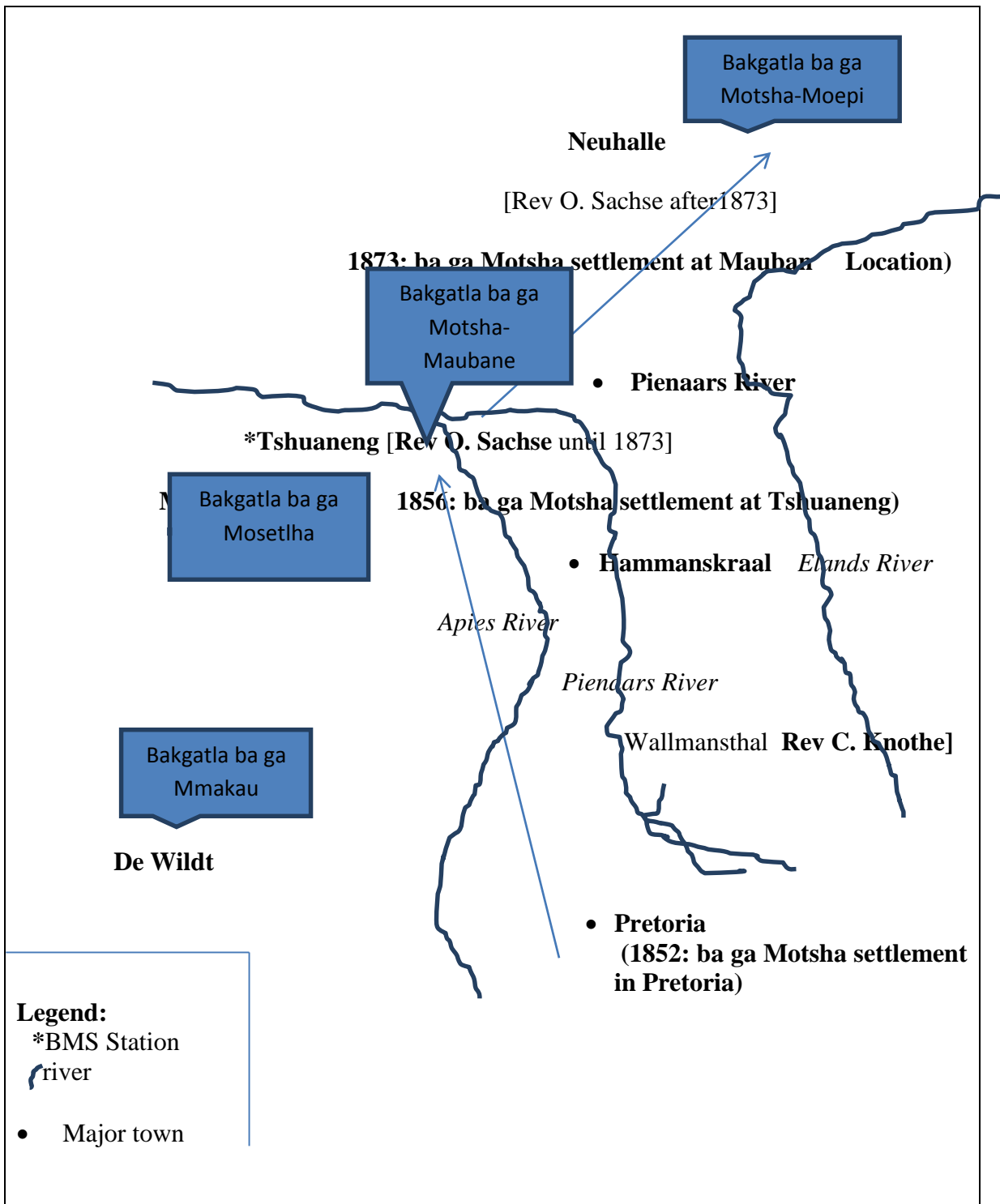


Figure 2.2: Map of the movement and settlements of the ba ga Motsha in the Pretoria District in 1873

(Adapted from Bergh & Morton, 2003)

CHAPTER 3

LAND DISPOSSESSION AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 1852–1871

Introduction

This chapter describes and discusses the relationship between the ba ga Motsha and the Boers regarding control of and access to land in the Pretoria District between 1852 and 1871. This is done to reflect on both the nature of the contest over land and how it served as one of the key features that defined the history of race relations in the Transvaal from 1852 until the establishment of the Transvaal Commission on African Labour in 1871. Furthermore, it illustrates the fact that it was between the 1850s and 1870s that the Boers gradually adopted and developed the governance approach that clearly subjugated the African communities in all aspects of life. This practice became part of the process that led to the regulation of access, control and ownership of land for the benefit of the Boers in the Transvaal and detriment of the African populations.

Boers' consolidation of power and land ownership in the Transvaal

After the Great Trek, the Boers settled in the Transvaal, which led to the establishment of white settlements in the interior of South Africa. The subject of the establishment of white settlements has received attention by historians, including Nathan (1937:154–159). The Boer colonisation of the interior of South Africa further encouraged the inflow of whites into the area. Initially, being deterred by the military dominance of the Mzilikazi over most of the Transvaal, the Boers could not establish a permanent settlement. Military confrontations followed between the

Boers and the Ndebele of Mzilikazi. After the defeat of Mzilikazi by a Boer commando led by Andries Potgieter in January 1837, the Boers gained control of the entire Transvaal. The victory over Mzilikazi in 1837 gave the Boer leaders the mandate to declare the Transvaal as their land by right of conquest and all the African people on it as their subjects. Jutta (1936:51), in his account of the intrusion of the whites into the Transvaal following the defeat of Mzilikazi, wrote:

[The Boers] had now spread over the whole of the territory captured from Mozilikatze, from the Orange River to the Limpopo, and from Bechuanaland to the Lebombo Mountains.

While the Boers were fighting hard for their self-determination in the Transvaal, the British endeavoured to take political and economic control of the whole of South Africa. This led to hostility between the two white communities. On 17 January 1852, the Boers and the British signed the Sand River Convention which marked an official ending, though temporarily, of the confrontation between the two white groups (Davenport, 1991: 170-171). Through the Sand River Convention, both parties agreed to abolish the subjection of Africans to slavery and recognise the sovereign independence of the Boer states north of the Vaal River, which from September 1853 merged to form the sovereign Transvaal Republic. The Convention ensured, as Manfred (1942:48-49) emphasised, the following:

The right [of Boers] to manage their own affairs, and to govern themselves according to their own laws without interference on the part of the British government. And that no encroachment shall be made [by the British] on the territory beyond the north of Vaal River.

It became clear from the Sand River Convention that the independence status acquired by the Boers gave their government the power to subordinate African communities. Consequently, the Boers consolidated political dominance over Africans in the interior of the territory that later became known as South Africa. The Boer government on the other hand, did not have the capacity to provide effective governance over Africans. At that point there was no official policy to administer the African affairs. Individual Boers used their own discretion to secure labour and subordinate the Africans and in most cases that led to forced and unpaid labour. To address administrative challenges on the governance of African societies, the Transvaal government adopted measures to ensure that the whites remained the only legitimate citizens, while Africans were merely subjects. The lack of capacity to administer African affairs resulted in inconsistent approaches by various Boer administrators in executing control over Africans and that was demonstrated by failure to maintain proper records on tax collection by the government officials. Brookes (1924:121) explains the inability of the Transvaal government to administer African affairs as follows:

The Republic was ill-organised, poor, and destitute of trained administrators. It could not undertake to rule, with any real control, large masses of Bantu.

Amid the Transvaal government's incapacity in the management of African affairs as mentioned above, the African societies, including the ba ga Motsha, were forbidden from owning the land. This was done mainly to ensure that they provided cheap and unpaid labour to the Boer farmers and, by so doing, contributed in strengthening the capacity of the Boer farms to supply urban centres such as Pretoria and Johannesburg with agricultural products. Bergh and Morton (2003:11) commented on the subordination of Africans in the Transvaal when they wrote:

As early as 1844, white settlers in the Transvaal had made it clear in the so-called Thirty-Three Articles that there would be no equality between black and white. This principle was re-emphasised in the 1858 Constitution of the

[Transvaal]. Furthermore, in June 1855, the *Volksraad* took a decision that all people of colour were to be excluded from citizenship.

As the need for a centrally-located capital increased, the *Volksraad* took a decision in 1853 to reserve the farm Elandsfontein in Pretoria for purposes of establishing a capital. On 16 November 1855, the *Volksraad* passed a resolution declaring Pretoria the seat of the Transvaal government. At that time, as discussed in Chapter One, the ba ga Motsha had already established their settlement in Pretoria.

By 1855 Boer cattle farmers established themselves on large tracts of land situated northeast of Pretoria. One of the earlier Boer settlers in the area was Hamman who used the African labour to build a large kraal to protect his cattle from the lions. His popularity in the protection of livestock from lions contributed to the naming of the area as Hammanskraal (Interview M. Maubane, Hammanskraal 30 June 2010).

The Transvaal government allocated large tracts of land to individual Voortrekkers as a way of securing their support. From the 1850s, large tracts of land were also controlled by title holders such as Field-Cornets and Commandants (Mbenga, 1996:204). Commandant-General Paul Kruger, for instance, owned more than one farm in the Rustenburg District, where he subjected the Africans into forced labour. This included African women who were forced to transport goods for long distances on foot (Bergh & Morton, 2003:145). Delius (in Beinart *et al.*, 1986:180) also indicated that, 'aside from the entitlement of each burgher to two farms, some individuals achieved considerable additional land holdings'. Additionally, Boers were allowed to own property in the cities such as Pretoria. Commandant Kruger, for instance, had a private house in Pretoria and another farm in the present-day Gezina, named after his wife.

Increased ownership of land by the Boers in the Transvaal thus provided them some economic benefits, including income from hunting and trade (Thompson, 2001:101).

In the Boer-owned farms in and around the Pretoria District, the African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, were also subjected to forced labour on farms. Field-Cornet Andries van der Walt and later his son Hendrik subjected the ba ga Motsha to forced unpaid labour. African labour was mainly responsible for all the farm activities that required physical efforts, including the clearing the trees to prepare the land for farming, and fetching water from rivers for both farming and household consumption. In most cases, the African labourers had to carry heavy water containers over long distances, often walking through steep and difficult terrains (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

In some cases, the African labourers were involved in securing their masters' livestock from theft or from been killed by wild animals. Consequently, the African labourers' lives remained at risk while protecting their masters' livestock and property. The exposure of the ba ga Motsha farm labourers to such working conditions, as was the case with other African communities in other parts of the Transvaal, illustrated that the Boer farmers did not see the lives of their African servants as of equal value to their own. The information about the exposure of the ba ga Motsha farm labourers to harsh working conditions at the hands of the Boer farmers was often transferred from generation to generation. It remains one of the glaring features in the community's collective memory on labour exploitation by the Boer farmers of the earlier generations (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal. 30 June 2010).

Moreover, the ba ga Motsha were also forced by the Field-Cornets to hand their livestock as payment for various offences or for trade. Field-Cornet Hendrik van der Walt, for instance, fined *Kgosi* Andries Maubane II a number of head of cattle for not obeying the labour demands by the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal. The cattle taken from the *kgosi* and his community were sold and the money was divided among the Boer farmers who complained about the ba ga Motsha's refusal to provide labour (Bergh & Morton, 2003:146).

Additionally, some white individuals and groups were allocated land for the services they offered to the commandos. This led to the establishment of consortiums of Boer land owners, the *belanghebbers*. The *belanghebbers* had an opportunity to amass more than two farms and became absentee farm owners. The *belanghebbers* rented the farms they were not using to the African communities (Morrell, 1983:36). In most cases, the African communities staying on such lands were expected to give half of their harvests and provide labour to the *belanghebbers* as payment (Thompson, 2001:132). The ba ga Motsha served among the African societies in the Pretoria District that rented farms from the *belanghebbers*, as demonstrated in detail later in this chapter.

Additionally, the Transvaal administration issued land grants to Africans as reward either for the labour they provided or for loyalty. Africans who received such land grants were, however, expected to always demonstrate obedience to their white masters. Under such conditions of land ownership, most African societies in the Transvaal, including the ba ga Motsha, were forbidden to own land (cited in Mbenga, 1996:205).

In 1855, the *Volksraad*, through Resolution 159 of 18 June 1855, excluded Africans from land ownership in the Transvaal. Boers' efforts to maintain control over land occupied by Africans were met with challenges. First, the demarcation of Boer farms did not take the location of African communities into consideration, which served as the basis for complaints by the *dikgosi* over access to and control of land. Second, African societies often conducted their economic activities, especially for hunting and grazing, in far areas outside of where they had settled and, as a result, still perceived such areas as falling under their control. Consequently, African societies found it very hard to accept restriction on access to hunting and grazing land as imposed by the Boers (Davenport, 1991:76).

Generally, between 1856 and 1870, white farmers in the Transvaal were allowed to own two farms on a freehold basis – one for crop farming and the other for keeping livestock. Much of the land acquired by white farmers in the Pretoria area, as was the case in other parts of the Transvaal, was previously occupied by African communities. These societies, including the *ba ga Motsha*, were dispossessed and forcefully removed from the land. From 1856, they were coerced into forced labour as tenants, expected to pay taxes and sometimes subjected to physical humiliation at the pleasure of their white masters. The tenants were subjected to paying the Boer landlords in cash and/or livestock for the right to the land, which resulted in dissatisfaction among the *ba ga Motsha*. The practice of subjecting African societies to harsh means of exploiting their labour and coercing them to pay taxes to the Boer landowners and the Transvaal authorities was also evident among other African groups in the Transvaal, as confirmed by Mbenga (1990:39) who wrote, '[senior government] officials such as Kruger resorted to harsher methods of extracting tax from the African inhabitants.' Trapido (cited in Mbenga, 1990:39) further highlighted that the harsh treatment of African societies in the

Transvaal was conducted through, among other things, the levying of ‘tax by exhortation, fines, proclamations and hectoring instructions to Landdrosts’.

Coerced labour and occasional subjection to physical punishment by the Boers in the Transvaal compelled the ba ga Motsha to move to Hammanskraal, 70 kilometres northeast of Pretoria, where they settled in an area called Tshuaneng in 1856. At that time, the ba ga Motsha were too weak to resist subjugation by the Boers in the aftermath of *difaqane*. In addition, in Pretoria and surrounding areas, African communities were forbidden to establish themselves in large settlements as it was viewed as posing a security threat to the Boers. This situation was created by the white authorities to regulate the economic and political sovereignty of the African communities and to utilise their labour to build a strong white-dominated economy and political order in the interior of South Africa. Bergh and Morton (2003:10) further state:

The need to obtain labour, in fact, was the most pressing aspect of the white settlers’ relationship with Africans. From the beginning they were dependant on African labour for their farming activities and tried, in various ways, to secure this labour.

Boer governance of African affairs in the Transvaal

The Transvaal Executive Council adopted a militaristic style of governance in administering the affairs of the African societies. As a result, all able-bodied Boer men between the ages of 16 and 60 in the Transvaal were recruited into the commandos which were convened when there was specific military need. All Boers were allowed to purchase firearms and ammunition and had to be ready to provide military service in case of African rebellion or war against their republic. Field-Cornets served as military commanders at sub-district level and served under the command of the Commandants who served as political authorities at district level. The Commandants, on the other hand, reported to the Commandant-General, who served as the

highest military official. The appointment as Commandant-General was valid for ten years, Commandant for five years and Field-Cornet for three years. Under such a military arrangement, it was a duty and responsibility of the appointed officers to ensure the maintenance of law and order in the interest of the whites and to ensure complete subordination of all African societies. All officers, excluding the Commandant-General, were sworn in by the President, during which they committed to be faithful and obey the orders issued to defend the interests of the Republic (Rose, 1902:295–297).

The military doctrine adopted in the organisation of the commandos included the inculcation into the Afrikaners as ‘a God-chosen nation’ to rule the Africans in South Africa. Based on such religious doctrine, each and every Boer had a duty and responsibility to defend that position. This entailed the establishment of the Boer military commandos that provided military services in defence of the interest of the Boer state. The commandos undertook expeditions against African societies viewed to be posing threats to the socio-economic dominance of the Boer state. The president of the Republic, who was also the Commandant-General, remained the supreme authority in the running of African affairs. He could issue direct orders to African communities and, where possible, take physical action to ensure they obeyed the rules as outlined by his Executive Council (Davenport, 1991:78).

Commandants were appointed as district administrators of African affairs. They worked in consultation with the Commandant-General but were also at liberty to serve as executors of justice in cases where they felt that the white interests were threatened. The next level in the administration of African affairs was that of Landdrosts. These were ‘chief administrators in the district’ and were adjacent to African communities. Their responsibilities included the everyday administration of African affairs, including collecting taxes, imposing fines and

reporting to both the Commandant and the Commandant-General about the general behaviour of the African communities (Rose, 1902:295).

The Landdrosts and Field-Cornets both functioned as civilian administrators and military agents of the state, whose duties included mobilising the local white inhabitants into commandos which were also used to coerce Africans into forced labour. Trapido (1980:351) further argues:

The major function of the Field-Cornet was organising of the commandos, the mounted militia in which every male burgher had by law and custom to serve.

The Landdrost C. Moll was responsible for adjudicating cases affecting the ba ga Motsha and appointing Field-Cornets in the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria. Solomon Theodorus Prinsloo, Commandant for the Pretoria District between 1856 and 1870, presided over the ba ga Motsha in the Hammanskraal sub-district (Trapido, 1980:351). Andries P. van der Walt served as Field-Cornet responsible for the administration of the ba ga Motsha during the 1850s. After his death at an undocumented date, he was succeeded by his son, Hendrik P. van der Walt. The dates of van der Walt's term of office are not clear, but he was followed by Theodorus Erasmus who occupied the position until 1868. Erasmus was succeeded by Johannes Hans G. Fourie. Notably, both the Field-Cornets and the Landdrosts had the power to make recommendations on the appointment of the *dikgosi* and allocation of land and African labour, and they sometimes served as the adjudicators of justice on behalf of the Commandant-General (Bergh & Morton, 2003:185).

The Commandant-General, the Commandants and Field-Cornets served as part of the military command that organised military commandos. Very often, both the military (Commandant-

General and Commandants) and the civilian administrators (Field-Cornets and Landdrosts) gave conflicting instructions to the Africans, which often led to confusion. For instance, almost all officials of the Transvaal government would collect taxes from the ba ga Motsha, and in some cases punished and fined members of the community for disobeying instructions (Rose, 1902:296).

The Commandant-General had the authority to allocate government land where African societies could reside. By 1852, the Transvaal was under Commandant-General M.W. Pretorius. Pretorius was replaced by Paul Kruger as Commandant-General. Kruger then exercised direct control, which included possible physical punishment in cases of disobedience in the administration of African communities in the Transvaal. Weaker African chiefdoms had to enter into master-servant relationship with the Boers where they were expected to make payment to the commandant and other district officials for the land they occupied (Davenport, 1991:68). The Field-Cornets also punished the African labourers for refusing to offer cheap and unpaid labour to Boer farmers. The Boers adopted harsh measures, including physical punishment against the African communities in the Transvaal because they “firmly believed that whites simply could not afford to take [the] risk because of overwhelming number of black people” (Grobler, 2014:174). The ba ga Motsha also complained that they worked (for the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal) without payment under Field-Cornet Andries van der Walt (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

Following the death of Andries van der Walt, his son Hendrik took over as the Field-Cornet responsible for the ba ga Motsha. Hendrik beat the ba ga Motsha men for refusing to provide cheap labour to the Boer farmers. Van der Walt on two occasions beat *Kgosi* Maubane I for

failing to avail adult members of his *morafe* to serve the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104). The physical punishment of *Kgosi* Maubane I by Andries van der Walt was viewed as having degraded the authority and dignity of the ba ga Motsha's *bogosi*. The *kgosi* and his *morafe*, however, could not do anything about it as they feared that any protest or refusal to offer labour would aggravate the situation, leading to further humiliation. Consequently, *Kgosi* Maubane I encouraged his *morafe* to provide labour to the Boer farmers and cooperated with the government officials in ensuring that his *morafe* paid tax as required by the government (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Hendrik's successor, Theodorus Erasmus, also beat the ba ga Motsha for failing to pay tax and for refusing to offer cheap and unpaid labour to the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal. However, Erasmus maintained that *Kgosi* Maubane I was obliged to collect tax from his subjects. As a result, Erasmus instructed *Kgosi* Maubane I to use all means possible at his disposal as the *kgosi* to ensure that the ba ga Motsha comply with tax requirements and supply labour to the Boer farmers. *Kgosi* Maubane I complied with the instructions from Erasmus, amid growing discontent by his subjects. An oral informant highlighted that *Kgosi* Maubane I's execution of Erasmus's orders on tax collection undermined the role of *kgosi* as guardian of the collective interests of his community (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal. 30 June 2010).

Erasmus was succeeded by Johannes Fourie, who continued to allow the Boer farmers to subject the ba ga Motsha to unpaid labour. That also led to the ba ga Motsha's resentment of the government and its officials, who they failed to protect them against labour exploitation by the Boer farmers. The ba ga Motsha remained dissatisfied with both Erasmus and Fourie, who, like Hendrik van der Walt and his father Andries, personally benefitted from tax collection and

continued to allow the abuse of their labour by the Boer farmers. Accordingly, all these Field-Cornets did nothing to improve their living conditions and did not allow the ba ga Motsha to own land in Hammanskraal (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The ba ga Motsha and the Labour Contract

The restrictions imposed by the Boers regarding land ownership antagonised many African societies and also derailed their economic sustainability. In an effort to address the challenge of land shortage for his community, *Kgosi* Maubane I in 1856 agreed with the *belanghebbers* on the occupational rights of three farms in the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria. The identified farms were Boschplaas, a portion of Wijnandskraal and part of Witgatboom. According to the agreement, the ba ga Motsha were expected to provide labour to the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal. In addition, *Kgosi* Maubane I was required to ensure that his subjects demonstrated obedience and the ability to provide unpaid labour to their white masters (Bergh & Morton, 2003:54).

In some cases, African labour was sourced from communities who were judged as not heeding instructions from the Boer authorities. In the case of the ba ga Motsha, this occurred when male members of the community were compelled to engage in various projects for the Boer farmers. During the late 1850s, for instance, Hendrik Klopper, who the community viewed as the first Boer farmer to settle in Hammanskraal, instructed *Kgosi* Maubane I to provide labour from his community to build a dam near the Tshwane River and make a water furrow to supply water to his farm. *Kgosi* Maubane I then instructed his subjects to provide labour to Klopper as he feared that failure to obey the instruction could have negative repercussions for him and his community, including possible subjection to physical punishment. Members of his

community thus listened to the *kgosi* and provided unpaid labour to Klopper (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The ba ga Motsha neighbours, the ba ga Mosetlha and the Bahwaduba, were also brought under the control of the *belanghebbers*. The Bahwaduba under *Kgosi* Mathibe lived on two farms owned by Engelbregt and Dreyer respectively. The Bahwaduba offered labour to a *belanghebbers*, Engelbregt, in exchange for the land they were occupying. Dreyer, on the other hand, made the community pay him 30 head of cattle as lease for the land (Bergh & Morton, 2003:107).

The Landdrosts and Field-Cornets collected tax from the ba ga Motsha and their neighbours. These communities sold their livestock to the white farmers, often at cheap rates, so that they could have the cash needed to pay tax. Rams and ewes were sold to the white farmers at 5/ each, while a young ox cost £7. The cheap labour provided by these communities to the Boer farms in Hammanskraal and around Pretoria added as a source of cash used to pay tax (Bergh & Morton, 2003:107).

With the growing Boer capitalism, the existence of large African communities, such as the ba ga Motsha, closer to Pretoria was to be regulated to maintain tighter control over them and to minimise their potential resistance to the Boer farmers and industrialists who needed their labour to make profits. The Boer farmers often requested intervention from government to regulate the numbers of African communities residing near their farms. In 1856, for instance, a Boer farmer D. E. Erasmus complained to Commandant-General Pretorius about the ba ga Motsha's encroachment on his farm at Derdepoort. The presence of the ba ga Motsha in

Derdepoort led to competition between them and Erasmus over land, especially grazing land. Additionally, Erasmus was not comfortable with the presence of the community closer to his farm as he feared that that might threaten the safety and security in his farm. It was a common practise among the white farmers in Pretoria and elsewhere in the Transvaal to feel uncomfortable to have large African communities closer to their settlements. The government supported Erasmus' claim and declared the ba ga Motsha settlement as illegal occupants of the area (SS, 128 R1486/70).

By 1856, the community was increasing in number, as its population could be estimated at around 1,000 people. This estimation is from the finding of the 1907 Native Location Commission report that the population of the ba ga Motsha was 1,616. Erasmus feared that the ba ga Motsha would stage a protest against the harsh working conditions on his farm. He only wanted to keep a small number of ba ga Motsha farm labourers. But the ba ga Motsha did not want to be separated. Pretorius then instructed the Field-Cornet for Pretoria, A. P. van der Walt, to find a solution to the situation (SS, 128 R1486/70).

At a meeting held at Derdepoort, east of Pretoria, on 13 June 1856, Erasmus pleaded with Commandant-General M.W. Pretorius to instruct Field-Cornet A.P. van Der Walt to evict the ba ga Motsha with immediate effect (SS, 128 R1486/70). He reiterated his concern about the presence of a large number of Africans on his farm being a threat to the safety of his family, who were vulnerable to possible humiliation by discontented members of the community who wanted to be given a right to own land and be remunerated for the labour they offered to the white farmers. Most notably, it was a common practice by Boer farmers to view a growing number of African families closer to their farms as posing a threat to their physical protection and, as a result, they often tried to find reasons to get support from the government to intervene

or support initiatives to keep large numbers of African families far away from their farms. Furthermore, Erasmus complained that members of the ba ga Motsha often refused to obey instructions to work on his farm. The request by Erasmus to the *Volksraad* to evict the community was witnessed and supported by neighbouring white farmers. They included D. Botha, C. Erasmus and G. Prinsloo, all of whom concurred with the reasons put forward by Erasmus (Bergh & Morton, 2003:53).

Van der Walt acceded to the instruction by the Commandant-General and ordered *Kgosi* Maubane I and his community to vacate his farm. In fear of facing severe punishment, *Kgosi* Maubane I and his community had to leave the land claimed by Erasmus. The eviction from the farm claimed by Erasmus left the ba ga Motsha landless, and the community had to move to the north-eastern part of Pretoria, after their *kgosi* had negotiated with Erasmus to find alternative land. In an effort to address the community's lack of access to land, Field-Cornet Van der Walt further instructed *Kgosi* Maubane I and his community to live in the white-owned farms scattered in and around Pretoria. *Kgosi* Maubane I and his people refused to accept the offer that individual families should stay on the scattered farms owned by whites, as it would divide the community. In his reply to the offer to settle on the farms of their white masters, *Kgosi* Maubane I indicated that they were prepared to move away from Pretoria in search of their own land (Bergh & Morton, 2003:53).

Kgosi Maubane I realised that white domination in the Transvaal was going to make would make it difficult for him and his community to find alternative land on their own. They thus had to cooperate with the Boer farmers and government representatives to find alternative land. Acting on the advice of his *bagakolodi ba kgosi*, *Kgosi* Maubane I thus requested Field-Cornet Van der Walt for assistance in securing land. *Kgosi* Maubane I promised Van der Walt that

members of his community would provide labour to the white farmers. This was intended to demonstrate ba ga Motsha willingness to serve the whites as labourers in return for assisting them to secure their own land (Bergh & Morton, 2003:53).

In his response to the request by *Kgosi* Maubane I, Van der Walt proposed that farms be identified outside Pretoria to where the community could relocate. Following consultation with the Commandant-General, the *belanghebbers* bought the farm Wijnandskraal and parts of two farms – Witgatboom and Bosplaats – in Hammanskraal, where the community was to settle in exchange for their labour. The community settled on both farms as labour tenants on the condition that they would be obedient to the rules of the government and provide labour to the white farmers in the area. *Kgosi* Maubane I agreed to the condition. This led to the signing of a labour contract between *Kgosi* Maubane I and Van der Walt, who acted on behalf of the *belanghebbers*. The contract was signed at Bosplaats on 2 November 1856 by *Kgosi* Maubane I and his Council and the *belanghebbers* delegation headed by Commandant W.P. Prinsloo and Field-Cornet J.G. Fourie (SS, 128, R1486/70).

The contract provided for the ba ga Motsha to stay on the farms owned by the *belanghebbers* and was binding for both parties from generation to generation. The ba ga Motsha then relocated to half of the farms Witgatboom and Bosplaats, which were situated between the Tshwane and the Moretele rivers, and their new area became known as Tshuaneng. Contrary to the expectations of the ba ga Motsha, the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal continued to subject them to forced labour. They were also subjected to physical punishment if they did not follow instructions or offer labour when required by the Boer farmers (Bergh & Morton, 2003:54).

Through the Labour Contract, *Kgosi* Maubane I agreed with the *belanghebbers* that he would ensure that his subjects remained obedient towards their white masters. In addition to undertaking responsibilities associated with farming, the *ba ga Motsha* labourers were used by the white authorities in infrastructural projects, which included the construction of bridges and roads, providing labour support in the building of government offices, and the maintenance of infrastructure. This further led to the continued dependence of the Boers' economy on the labour provided by the community. Apart from having to provide labour, there were other conditions attached to the allocation of Tshuaneng to the *ba ga Motsha*:

- (a) Profit made from crop production on the land remained the property of the community, provided they remained obedient to the white authorities;
- (b) *Kgosi* Maubane I assured the white authorities that he and his community would abide by the laws of the Republic and the provisions of the Labour Contract;
- (c) Members of the community were banned from possessing firearms unless they were given by the white authorities;
- (d) Every member of the community was expected to provide labour, to be obedient and to serve their white masters;
- (e) The *ba ga Motsha* serving on Boer farms and in urban areas in the Pretoria District agreed to undertake duties such as wagon-building, blacksmithing, bricklaying, ploughing, sewing and hat making;
- (f) The Boer masters were expected to remunerate members of the community in monetary terms or other unspecified value, according to their income;
- (g) The *kgosi* and *bagakolodi ba kgosi* were mandated to oversee the overall behaviour of all the people living on white-owned land;

- (h) The *kgosi* and *bagakolodi ba kgosi* were exempted from working for the white masters and in an event of the death of the *kgosi*, the community should elect or appoint the successor who would be bound to continue with the provisions of the labour contract;
- (i) Every white farmer could acquire six children from the community to serve as his servants;
- (j) The Field-Cornet's powers remained superior to those of the *kgosi* in all respects and the white masters should treat their servants in a 'humane' manner;
- (k) No African was allowed to opt out of the contract; and
- (l) Every African was allowed to lodge complaints about ill-treatment by his Boer master to the Field-Cornet, who would then be compelled to apply the law if a Boer farmer lost his farm workers through their ill-treatment so that he no longer obtained any labourers from the *ba ga Motsha* (Bergh & Morton, 2003:55–56).

The *ba ga Motsha* labourers complained to their *kgosi* about their harsh treatment from the Boer farmers, but the *kgosi* could not do anything about the ill-treatment of his subjects as he feared that he himself might be subjected to physical punishment by Van der Walt for complaining. *Kgosi* Maubane I instead encouraged his subjects to remain obedient to the Boer farmers (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

It could then be argued that the settlement of the *ba ga Motsha* at Tshuaneng and the signing of the Labour Contract with the Boer farmers did nothing to improve the living conditions of the *ba ga Motsha*. Instead, they remained subject to coercive labour by the white farmers. In some cases, they were subjected to corporal punishment for failing to provide labour to the whites. The *ba ga Motsha* continued to live under the oppressive terms and conditions of the

contract, much to their dissatisfaction and disillusionment. They, however, could do nothing to change their circumstances as they feared that any contravention of the contract would lead to serious punishment by the Boer farmers. Contrary to the labour situation faced by the ba ga Motsha, the neighbouring ba ga Mosetlha under Nchaupe Makapan and the Bahwaduba under Swartbooi Mathibe were allegedly 'satisfied' with the treatment they received from their Field-Cornet, as they were paid for their labour, though the payment was very low – just enough to enable them pay the taxes. The Bahwaduba, for instance, were assisted by their Field Cornet, Gert Engelbreght to get additional land but that was not sufficient to meet their economic needs, especially for grazing and farming (Bergh & Morton, 2003:107).

The ba ga Motsha, on the other hand, continued to face challenges associated with forced and unpaid labour. By the late 1860s, the community requested permission to purchase additional land from Carel Erasmus, a *belanghebbers*. At that time, *Kgosi* Maubane I had already died and the community was ruled on a temporary basis by Saul Maubane, younger brother to the late *Kgosi* Maubane. Saul stood in for the late *Kgosi* Maubane's son, Andries Moepi Maubane, the heir, who was still a teenager. The ba ga Motsha wanted to purchase the farm Boschplaas and have its full ownership, which would give them security of tenure and some form of political and economic independence from the Boer farmers and to terminate the Labour Contract. The proposed purchase of the farm Boschplaas was unsuccessful as Erasmus was unwilling to sell. He feared that it would allow the ba ga Motsha to develop economically through farming and that would contribute to the shortage of African labour for white farmers in the Hammanskraal sub-district. Instead, Erasmus tried to convince the ba ga Motsha to renew the Labour Contract with him and fellow Boer farmers in Hammanskraal to continue to subjugate the community. The ba ga Motsha refused as they were doubtful about the benefits of the proposed contract to them (Bergh & Morton, 2003:106).

Erasmus continued to engage with the ba ga Motsha regarding the renewal of the contract. He then persuaded Saul to agree to his proposal for the renewal of the contract on behalf of the whole community. Saul secretly agreed with Erasmus that he would use his position as the *kgosi-ya-nama-o-sa-tshwere* to his people to agree to the proposed renewal of the contract. Saul did that because he had personal ambitions of taking *bogosi* away from his late brother's son and heir, Andries Moepi Maubane. He knew that if he gained support from Erasmus, he would use it to persuade the government to recognise him as *kgosi* of the section of the community that settled at Tshuaneng. The arrangement between Saul and Erasmus reconfirmed the validity of the earlier Labour Contract of 1856 signed with Saul's late brother, *Kgosi* Maubane I. The young Andries Moepi Maubane and part of the ba ga Motsha who viewed him as the legitimate successor were opposed to Saul's renewal of the contract for the reasons already outlined. In their view, the contract was invalid and as such should be terminated. They tried in vain to nullify the contract between Saul and Erasmus, which created hostility between Saul and Andries Moepi Maubane (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Erasmus, on the other hand, continued to validate his agreement with Saul and allocated part of his farm for settlement by Saul and his supporters. Erasmus did not commit himself to validating Saul's claim to the ba ga Motsha throne, much to Saul's disappointment. Erasmus further promised Saul three head of cattle every eighteen months as long as Saul guaranteed that members of his community would regularly provide labour on Erasmus's farm. The condition of the agreement was that if any of the labourers provided ran away from the farm, Saul was expected to pay 2 Shillings per day for every missing labourer. Shortly after the renewal of the contract by Saul and Erasmus, four African labourers escaped from Erasmus'

farm, which led to Erasmus summoning Saul to account for the 'misdeed.' Saul was unable to pay the fine and also failed to replace the missing labourers, which caused tension between him and Erasmus (SS, 129, R1566/70).

The younger members of the ba ga Motsha also discouraged their parents from working for the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal because they were not happy with the ill-treatment of their parents by the farmers. Instead, they supported Andries Moepi Maubane's bid to have the contract terminated. Following the above developments, the ba ga Motsha from both factions under Saul and Andries Moepi Maubane remained without legal ownership of the land they had occupied in Tshuaneng. In 1870, the ba ga Motsha were forced to renew the Labour Contract despite their discontent over the matter (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

The Native Act of 1866

By the early 1860s, the ba ga Motsha's efforts to own land in the Transvaal were met with strong restrictions as discussed below. Furthermore, male members of the community were required to pay hut tax in cash as part of the Boer efforts to ensure their economic subordination. Consequently, the Field-Cornets became responsible for tax collection and labour recruitment for the Boer farmers. The community's supply of labour to the Boer farmers became central to the acquisition of cash by the ba ga Motsha labourers. During the 1860s, the demand for labour increased as a result of the growing number of the Boer farming community in the Transvaal. Additionally, the rapid industrialisation of Pretoria also created increased demand for agricultural produce in the city thus adding to increased demand for African labour on the surrounding farms. Field-Cornets then used raids to recruit labour from the African communities (Morton, 1994:178).

The imposition of taxation on African communities as a measure of encouraging wage labour among Africans was not unique to the Transvaal. The British used the same strategy in the Cape and Natal colonies. In Natal, for instance, Theophilus Shepstone, who was responsible for the administration of African affairs, had in 1846 created locations where Africans who ran away from their traditional communities were appointed *iinkosi* (*dikgosi*). These newly appointed *iinkosi* in return ensured that their subjects complied with tax requirements, especially hut tax, which was central to financing the administration of African affairs in the Natal colony. The system was less successful as not all African communities in Natal were willing to provide wage labour because the climatic conditions in the area boosted their economy as they had good grazing and farming land. That compelled the colonial settlers in Natal to import unskilled workers from India (Pretorius, 2014:171).

In 1866 the Transvaal government passed the Native Act as a structured policy for the administration of African affairs. The Act was passed for a number of reasons, including to establish a well-coordinated system of tax collection and to avert personal enrichment by Boer tax collectors. According to the Act, *dikgosi* were responsible for collecting hut taxes in cash from their male subjects. They were also expected to submit the collected money to the Field-Cornets. In some cases, *dikgosi* were responsible for mobilising their subjects as part of facilitating the tax collection tours by the Landdrosts. All the officials responsible for tax collection were expected to explain the Act to the African communities. However, they did not explain the Act to the African communities because they feared that that would give the African communities the legitimate right to complain to the government about tax irregularities and corruption by Boer tax officials. These taxes collected by Field Cornets included 30/- for those living at Tshuaneng, which was government land, and 15/- for five households residing

on a white-owned farm (Bergh & Morton, 2003:140). The legal requirement for the payment of tax forced young males from the ba ga Motsha to seek employment on the white-owned farms as this was one of the few sources of cash needed to pay tax (Kriel, 2000:69).

The exploitation of the ba ga Motsha labourers by the Boer farmers continued, which compelled *Kgosi* Maubane II to register complaints to the *Volksraad* (SS, 139, Supl. 104/1871, 1871). In the complaint that was prepared by Reverend Otto Sachse of the BMS on behalf of the community, the ba ga Motsha lamented that they were forced in 1856 to enter into agreement with the *belanghebbers*, according to which they were to settle on white-owned farms in exchange for labour (SS, 128, R1486/70, 1870). Bergh and Morton (2003:11) confirm the ba ga Motsha's Labour Contract with the *belanghebbers* by indicating as follows:

In the case of the ba ga Motsha, they were invited by groups of white farmers who had bought land to settle [African communities] in exchange of rendering [forced and sometimes unpaid] labour to the relevant farmers.

Field-Cornets such as Andries van der Walt, his son Hendrik and Theodorus Erasmus collected tax from the ba ga Motsha. They also subjected members of the community to harsh treatment, including physical punishment and forced labour, if they failed to pay tax. In addition, they subjected the *kgosi* and male subjects to physical punishment for not meeting the tax requirements as provided for by the Act even though the *kgosi* and his subjects knew nothing about the provisions of the Act. Hendrik van der Walt beat *Kgosi* Maubane I twice for failing to encourage his subjects to pay tax (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Various African communities complained about the behaviour of government officials, including Field-Cornets, Commandants and Commandants-Generals. The ba ga Motsha, for

example, indicated their dissatisfaction with the treatment they received from the Field-Cornets and Commandants who often beat and coerced them into forced labour. To avoid future humiliation, *Kgosi* Maubane I and his community conformed to tax payment but felt that the beating of the *kgosi* was an insult to the community (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

Most notably, the Native Act of 1866 became the initial legislation by the Boers to legitimise the subordination of African societies. The Act compelled Africans to supply cheap and coerced labour needed for various infrastructural projects, such as the construction of roads and railways and the building of various government offices. Such projects were necessary in the creation of a functional state, which the SAR was not at that stage of its evolution. African labour became central to Boer efforts to attain economic, social, cultural and political sovereignty in the Transvaal, which remained key in defining race relations in South Africa until the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910 (Davenport, 1991:321).

Van der Walt's threatening of *Kgosi* Maubane for failing to avail farm labour was viewed by the *ba ga* Motsha as undermining the authority of *bogosi*, the highly respected institution of the community. *Kgosi* Maubane and his community, however, did not wage any violent protest in response to Van der Walt's disrespectful behaviour towards *bogosi*. The *ba ga* Motsha's non-violent response could be accounted for, for three reasons. First, the *ba ga* Motsha did not possess military experience and capacity to wage a violent protest against the whites. Second, *Kgosi* Maubane I commanded much respect from the community and, as a result, his subjects adhered to his instruction to supply labour to the farms. Third, the community's resistance to the Boers had the potential to jeopardise any effort for land acquisition by the community. The *ba ga* Motsha thus had no choice but to be obedient to the Boer authorities so that they could be allowed to stay on the land demarcated for them (Bergh & Morton, 2003:11).

The *dikgosi* were liable for punishment in cases where members of their communities failed to pay tax. The Landdrosts, unlike the Field Cornets, Commandants and Commandants, explained to the African communities about the Native Act and its provisions related to their requirement to payment of tax, including the responsibility of the *kgosi* in that regard. African communities in the Transvaal were generally unhappy with being coerced to pay tax, but appreciated that the Landdrost made an effort to explain to them about the Native Act and its provisions. Consequently, *dikgosi* were compelled to encourage their subjects to conform to the Act because they feared that failure to do so could result in serious punishment by the Transvaal authorities (Bergh & Morton, 2003:178).

When Hendrik van der Walt was replaced by Theo Erasmus, the situation changed. Erasmus informed the ba ga Motsha about the Native Act, including their obligation and duty to pay tax to the officials appointed by the government. He informed the ba ga Motsha about the appointment by government of landdrosts C. Moll and S.J. Meintjies as tax collectors responsible for the Hammanskraal area and requested the *kgosi* to cooperate with them. The ba ga Motsha welcomed the appointment of Moll and Meintjies as tax collectors in their area, and through the encouragement by the *kgosi*, the community paid tax. There were cases where certain individuals failed to pay tax and both Moll and Meintjies, in consultation with *kgosi*, informed Erasmus. Consequently, Erasmus refrained from beating the *kgosi* for his subjects' failure to pay tax. However, he personally routinely flogged the ordinary ba ga Motsha for failing to pay tax (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The ba ga Motsha preferred to cooperate with the Landdrosts as they were less violent than the Field Cornets in their dealings with the Africans. Landdrosts Moll and Meintjies used the occasion of tax collection to listen to the complaints by the community, including their desire to purchase land and their dissatisfaction with the harsh labour conditions they were exposed to at the farms. The Landdrosts, however, did very little to address the complaints by the African communities but their 'friendly' approach earned them a small degree of respect from the African communities (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The acceptance of the Landdrosts among the ba ga Motsha, as was the case with other African communities in the central districts, posed a serious threat to the authority of the Field-Cornets and Commandants. Field-Cornet Theodorus Erasmus had a quarrel with both Moll and Meintjies, who he accused of having encouraged the ba ga Motsha to cease paying tax to him. That undermined his previous role as the official responsible for collecting tax from the ba ga Motsha. The growing unpopularity of Erasmus among the ba ga Motsha made him feel insecure and he ultimately resigned as Field-Cornet. Erasmus was succeeded by Johannes Fourie. Fourie did not want to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor and, as a result, tried to develop a better working relationship with *Kgosi* Maubane. He, however, like Erasmus, also beat up ordinary members of the community for failing to pay tax (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The Hammanskraal Dam

As it became clear that there would be a need for more water to sustain the white farms in the Hammanskraal area, Hendrik Klopper, one of the leading farmers there, came up with the idea of constructing a dam alongside the Tshwane River. The proposed dam was to play a key role in the irrigation of crops on Boer farms in and around Hammanskraal and, as a result, the

farmers would continue to provide fresh produce for the urban market in Pretoria. Klopper realised that it would be too expensive to involve external investors and planners in the construction of the dam. He therefore, opted for using cheap labour from the neighbouring African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, in realising the construction of the Hammanskraal Dam (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

In 1857, Klopper instructed *Kgosi* Maubane I to provide labourers to “dam up Aapjes (Apies) River and make a water furrow” to lead to his farm in Hammanskraal without payment for their labour (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104). Klopper threatened to punish *Kgosi* Maubane I if he failed to avail labour from his subjects for the planned project. *Kgosi* Maubane knew that if he failed to provide such labour, he could be subjected to physical punishment, which could include flogging in public. He wanted to avoid such embarrassment at all costs and, as a result, pleaded with his subjects to avail labour for the construction of the dam. The ba ga Motsha reluctantly did so, mainly out of respect for their *Kgosi* (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The ba ga Motsha became reluctant to offer their labour for the construction of the dam because they feared that they would be subjected to harsh physical treatment by Klopper. Amid such discontent by the community, the authorities’ use of force continued, especially in cases where the interests of the whites were at stake, including refusal by the community to offer unpaid labour. Even individual Boer farmers used coercive measures, including physical humiliation of Africans, to ensure that they remained obedient servants and that they contributed towards sustaining the whites’ political and economic domination in the Transvaal (Juta, 1936:111).

The renewal of the 1856 Labour Contract, November 1870

African communities in the central districts of the Transvaal were thus compelled to completely depend on the goodwill of the white authorities with regard to access to and ownership of land (Bergh & Morton, 2003:11). As indicated earlier, the African labourers continued to be subjected to physical punishment for refusing to provide forced unpaid labour for the Boer farms. On 4 December 1870, for instance, *Kgosi* Maubane II complained that most of his subjects had not been remunerated for hard work and long hours of service they had rendered to the Boer farmers. The ill-treatment of the ba ga Motsha labourers by the Transvaal authorities and Boer farmers was confirmed by William Skinner, a Landdrost in Pretoria between 1868 and 1871, who noted that “private [white] individuals sometimes gave orders [to members of the community] and even came to beat them up” (Bergh & Morton, 2003:84). Such inhumane treatment could be equated to slavery and it, in fact, led to “a period of harsh inter-group relations and white supremacy [in the Transvaal]” (Bergh & Morton, 2003:14).

The presence of the Boer farming community in the Pretoria District brought about a process of interactions with the ba ga Motsha – through trade and labour supply – especially after the community had moved away to Tshuaneng in 1856. The employment of the ba ga Motsha further contributed towards their obedience to the whites as their movements were kept under close surveillance. That also limited their socio-political interaction with each other and the opportunity to discuss and take decisions to challenge white domination, which meant that their subordination to the white farmers continued (Bergh & Morton, 2003:106).

Both the Boer farmers and the *Volksraad* saw their subjection of the African communities, especially in the central districts of the Transvaal, as critical to the consolidation of white rule. The *kgosi* and *dikgosana* among ba ga Motsha were used as labour recruiting agents in their communities in which they encouraged young and able-bodied men to voluntarily join the labour force on the farms in exchange for ‘privileges,’ including permission to own firearms and ‘protection’ by the white authorities (Bergh & Morton, 2003:106).

Based on the complaints about forced labour and the insufficient land for his community, *Kgosi* Maubane II, with the assistance of Sachse, in 1870 approached Field-Cornet Van der Walt to indicate his community’s desire to make a payment to terminate the Labour Contract with the *belanghebbers* (SS, 128, R1486/70). Field-Cornet Van der Walt instructed Maubane II to pay 88 head of cattle for the termination of the contract. *Kgosi* Maubane II made the payment as instructed but did not receive any proof of payment from Van der Walt. Having made the payment, *Kgosi* Maubane II and his community expected to opt out of the Contract. But that did not happen. Instead, the *belanghebbers* continued to demand labour from the ba ga Motsha under the same old terms and conditions of the Contract. *Kgosi* Maubane II then requested Van der Walt to explain the matter. Van der Walt indicated that the 88 head of cattle already paid were meant to grant permission for elderly ba ga Motsha workers “to have the right to work the ground with hoes” (Bergh & Morton, 2003:60). *Kgosi* Maubane II, however, did not complain to the Transvaal authorities as he feared that it might lead to further harsh treatment. The *status quo*, therefore, continued.

The ba ga Motsha’s argument about why the community had paid 88 head of cattle was further emphasised by other white farmers in the area. Contrary to the argument presented by Van der Walt, the ba ga Motsha maintained that the payment of 88 head of cattle was for the purchase

of Tshuaneng, as earlier agreed with Van der Walt. The Commandant-General, Paul Kruger, on the other hand, accepted the argument presented by Van der Walt instead. *Kgosi* Maubane II and his supporters were angered by the manner in which Van der Walt had handled the case but could not do anything about it, as the *ba ga Motsha* did not have any written documentation to support their claim that Tshuaneng had been sold to them and that they had actually paid for it in cattle. The *ba ga Motsha* felt that the Field-Cornet and white farmers in the area of Hammanskraal had treated them unfairly but feared further punishment by the Boers and, therefore, refrained from waging protest against the final verdict on Tshuaneng as presented by the Commandant-General. The white authorities' failure to provide written proof of the land purchase transaction by the *ba ga Motsha* was a common feature of the exploitative nature of the Boer-African relations in the Transvaal generally. It further confirms how the resources of African communities, including land, labour and livestock were illegitimately taken from them by the whites, often for their own personal welfare (SS, 139, 104/71).

Following their very unhappy conditions under the *Boer* farmers, the *ba ga Motsha* faction led by *Kgosi* Maubane II indicated to the *Volksraad* their desire to relocate from the central district of the Transvaal. It was quite clear that their chances of owning land in the area remained very slim. *Kgosi* Maubane II and members of his community wished to relocate elsewhere in the Pretoria District where they would not be exposed to exploitative living conditions by the Boers. The *ba ga Motsha* economic and political autonomy at Tshuaneng continued to remain a fluke under the Transvaal Government and *belanghebbers'* political yoke and they remained without land as they continued rent on white-owned farms (SS, 139, 104/71).

In November 1870, *Kgosi* Maubane II was coerced into renewing the 1856 Labour Contract and that further exposed his community to cruel living and working conditions at the hands of the Boer farmers. The bad treatment experienced by the ba ga Motsha at the hands of the white farmers forced *Kgosi* Maubane II to ask the Reverend Otto Sachse to lodge a formal complaint in writing to the *Volksraad*. Sachse, after consulting members of the ba ga Motsha, submitted a letter dated 4 December 1870 to Commandant-General Paul Kruger. In that letter, he indicated the desire by the ba ga Motsha to buy land where they could be free from the tough rule of the white farmers. Other African communities in the Transvaal also lodged their complaints against abuse by whites.

The ba ga Motsha neighbours, the Bahwaduba and the ba ga Moseitlha, on the other hand, continued to provide labour to the white farmers often under similar conditions as compared to the ba ga Motsha. The Bahwaduba of *Kgosi* Mathibe Bahwaduba, for instance, willingly paid 30 head of cattle to C. Dreyer for staying on his farm. The ba ga Moseitlha also agreed to provide labour for staying on a part of the farm owned by Jan Marais (Bergh & Morton, 2003:83). Elsewhere in the Rustenburg District, on the other hand, *Kgosi* Mokgatle Thete of the Bafokeng was fined twelve oxen and four bags of maize by Nicolas Theunissen for failing to provide sufficient labour to fertilise his farm. In addition, he was restricted from cultivating the gardens on a part of the farm Kookfontein, which belonged to Theunissen where he and his people lived (Bergh & Morton, 2003: 115). *Kgosi* Kgamanyane of the Bakgatla ba ga Kgafela was flogged by Commandant Paul Kruger in Saulspoort in April 1870 for refusing to provide forced labour to Kruger for the construction of a dam for his wheat irrigation project in the village (Mbenga, 1996:105).

The 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour

The mistreatment of African labourers by Boer farmers led to increased resentment by most of the *dikgosi*, which resulted in a reduced labour supply to most of the Boer farms, especially in the Pretoria and Rustenburg districts. The affected Boer farmers, on the other hand, complained to the *Volksraad* about the shortage of African labour and requested that measures be taken by the government to ensure an adequate supply of cheap African labour. Bergh and Morton (2003:17) indicate that there was growing “resentment of Boer farmers, who seemingly had no labour and appealed to the *Volksraad* for assistance”. The *Volksraad* then established the 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour to look into the factors that caused the shortage of African labour and identify possible remedies for the situation. In addition, the *Volksraad* intended to use the Commission to look into how African labour could be recruited to serve in key services of the government, especially in “the postal services and for the maintenance of roads” (Bergh & Morton, 2003:18).

The Commission was tasked with the gathering of all relevant information on African labour and the laws governing African affairs and made recommendations to the *Volksraad*. The Commission was composed of five members of the *Volksraad* who were elected by a majority vote. On 7 September 1871, the Secretary of the *Volksraad*, J. G. C. Leenhof announced the following members of the *Volksraad* as Commissioners: M. de Vries, J.A.L. Montgomery, H.M. van Zyl, J. Frank and M.W. Vorster (Bergh & Morton, 2003:30). The mandate of the Commission was, in summary, “to investigate all petitions relating to [African] servants and [African] laws, gather all information in this regard and submit a report to the [Executive] Council as soon as possible” (Bergh, 2000:53). The establishment of the Commission was justified in the following manner:

The State was in the process of consolidating itself, and one can regard the 1871 commission as an effort on the *Volksraad* part to rationalise and strengthen control of African labour and to generate income through taxes on African subjects (Bergh, 2000:49).

Kgosi Maubane II, Reverend Otto Sachse and David – an interpreter and a close associate of *Kgosi* Maubane II – testified before the Commission on behalf of the ba ga Motsha. Sachse made a testimony based on his personal experience as the BMS missionary who worked among the ba ga Motsha. Further testimonies for the Transvaal authority were presented by Paul Kruger as the Commandant-General, Salomon Theodorus Prinsloo in his capacity as the Commandant of Pretoria and Oltman Charles Weeber, a Public Prosecutor in Pretoria. All of these individuals presented their testimonies orally and/or in writing. The issue of the 1856 Labour Contract between the ba ga Motsha and the *belanghebbers* was brought to the attention of the Commission.

On 14 September 1871, the Reverend Sachse testified about the ba ga Motsha's labour experiences. His testimony was based on the community's dissatisfaction with the Contract that had been agreed between *Kgosi* Maubane I and the *belanghebbers*. Sachse informed the Commission that the complaint had never been addressed by the *Volksraad*. He indicated that the community was forced to renew the 1856 contract with the *belanghebbers* (SS, 139, 104/71). He further lamented that “[*Kgosi* Maubane II and his *morafe*] were afraid of the white people [and that] the contract [was] a heavy burden for them” (Bergh & Morton, 2003:61).

Sachse further informed the Commission that *Kgosi* Maubane II requested the *Volksraad* to provide reasons for the unfair treatment of his community, especially regarding the right to purchase land, and requested the termination of the 1856 Labour Contract. He indicated that

his community could no longer live under such conditions and preferred to leave the area. The *Volksraad*, on other hand, decided to ignore the letter from *Kgosi* Maubane II. Sachse then indicated that the ba ga Motsha were unhappy with the ill-treatment they received from the white farmers and the officials from the Transvaal government, especially Commandant Solomon P. Prinsloo, Commandant Paul Kruger and Field-Cornet A. W. van der Walt, who they accused of imposing arbitrary fines on the ba ga Motsha. *Kgosi* Maubane II also complained that they had insufficient land. In addition, Sachse informed the Commission that the ba ga Motsha preferred to be administered by a Landdrost instead of the Field-Cornet, Commandant or Commandant-General, and requested that the labour restrictions and heavy taxation imposed on them, as provided by the 1856 Labour Contract, be nullified. The Commission viewed the testimony on the Contract as valid regarding labour relations between the ba ga Motsha and the *belanghebbers* and requested a copy of the Contract for its review (Bergh & Morton, 2003:41).

Originally, *Kgosi* Maubane II was reluctant to release a copy of the Labour Contract to the Commission, as he feared that it might be used for purposes of legitimising the exploitation of the ba ga Motsha labourers by the white farmers. The Commission thus wrote to Sachse, requesting him to avail the Contract. Sachse conveyed the request from the Commission to Maubane II and informed him that the Commission would not use it against the ba ga Motsha. Following persuasion by Sachse, *Kgosi* Maubane II handed a copy of the Contract, which was then considered at the last meeting of the Commission on African Labour on 1 November 1871. A copy of the contract was presented to the *Volksraad* as evidence to be used in making a political conclusion on the matter once the Commission had completed its work. After considering the Contract, the Commission summoned *Kgosi* Maubane II to state his case on the issue. In his testimony, *Kgosi* Maubane II reiterated the complaints raised by his

community as reflected in Sachse's earlier presentation to the Commission. He complained about the interference of whites in his community's affairs. He indicated that Commandant Solomon P. Prinsloo and other whites in the Hammanskraal sub-district often confiscated their harvest and livestock. In addition, Prinsloo forced him to renew the 1856 Labour Contract. *Kgosi* Maubane II then requested that his community be allowed to purchase private land and be granted permission to purchase and own firearms (Bergh & Morton, 2003:41).

Furthermore, *Kgosi* Maubane II complained about the refusal by Field-Cornet Van der Walt to allow the community to own Tshuaneng and Bosplaats. Kruger ruled in favour of the Field-Cornet. This legitimised the whites' efforts to deny the *ba ga Motsha* the right to own the two farms. On 26 September 1871, Sachse made his second testimony to the Commission, in his capacity as the BMS missionary who worked among the *ba ga Motsha*. In his submission, he indicated that various authorities from the Transvaal administration were responsible for the governance of the community, but the *ba ga Motsha* preferred to report to the Landdrost, who they viewed as providing fair judgements in cases brought to his attention. He further indicated that the community complained about being denied the opportunity to purchase land by the *Volksraad*. In the 1856 Labour Contract, Sachse indicated that the *ba ga Motsha* wished that it should be nullified as it refused the community's access to and ownership of land. He further indicated his opposition to the issuing of firearm licences to members of the community as that often led to lawlessness and disobedience (Bergh & Morton, 2003:100–111).

David Maubane, an advisor to *Kgosi* Maubane II, also testified before the Commission and stated that the *ba ga Motsha* had settled at Tshuaneng long before the arrival of white farmers in the area. He said that when the whites came to the area they subjected members of the *morafe* to forced labour. He reiterated the ill-treatment of the *ba ga Motsha* by the whites as

indicated in the earlier testimonies presented by Sachse and *Kgosi* Maubane II. Maubane further informed the Commission that white farmers in the Hammanskraal sub-district often used force to confiscate crops and livestock, and that in one instance white farmers, Hans Fourie and Salomon Prinsloo, came to demand food from *Kgosi* Maubane II. When Maubane indicated that he had no food, they took his ox. People who were unable to provide food or livestock to the Boer farmers were beaten up. The testimony also included complaints about the ill-treatment of the ba ga Motsha labourers by the Commandant-General, who they accused of often beating people (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Prinsloo, who served as the Commandant in Pretoria from August 1870, testified before the Commission on 12 September 1871. He indicated that a number of white farmers in Hammanskraal complained about the 'disobedience' by about fifty members of the ba ga Motsha following their refusal to provide labour to the farmers as provided for in the 1856 Contract. The ba ga Motsha perceived this as being unfair and a white justification of their exploitation of African labourers. He further indicated that the majority of able-bodied members of the community preferred to be migrant labourers at the gold and diamond mines rather than on Boer farms (Bergh & Morton, 2003:74).

The ba ga Motsha also complained that they were subjected to instructions from many quarters, including the Field-Cornet, Commandant and Commandant-General, and it was, therefore, a challenge for them to honour these instructions, which at times were contradictory. In some cases, Commandant Prinsloo did not receive instruction from the *Volksraad* to impose sentences on ba ga Motsha, whom he had found guilty of various offences. Despite the absence of authorisation from the Transvaal government, he continued to unilaterally impose sentences on members of the community found guilty on various charges (Bergh & Morton, 2003:74).

Prinsloo indicated that, in his opinion, the administration of the ba ga Motsha and other African communities in the central district should be left under the authority of the Commandant because he could use his influence and authority to ensure their obedience. Prinsloo further proposed to the Commission that the ba ga Motsha be forbidden to own firearms, as those who owned them often physically threatened others who did not own firearms. He desired that the ba ga Motsha be allowed to trade in horses as they were useful resources for transport and farming. He registered his opposition to the ba ga Motsha private ownership of land and concurred that the community should instead be allowed to settle on locations owned by the government. He complained that the BMS missionaries were influencing the ba ga Motsha to disobey instructions from the Transvaal authorities. Prinsloo further complained that the BMS missionaries were at times representing members of the ba ga Motsha in requesting reduction of fines for various offences they were found guilty of, including violation of the Labour Contract. Subsequently, he complained that the actions of the missionaries were denying the state an opportunity to collect sufficient revenue needed to pay Field-Cornets and Commandants. Sachse, together with Field-Cornet J.G. Fourie, forced ba ga Motsha individuals charged with 'disobedience' to pay fines. Those who did not pay were subjected to ten to fifteen lashes (Bergh & Morton, 2003:77).

Another witness, the State Attorney for Pretoria, Oltman Charles Weeber, told the Commission that his office had received a number of complaints from white farmers about the 'disobedience' of the ba ga Motsha, including their objection to the 1856 Labour Contract. He indicated that the ba ga Motsha preferred to work for hard cash at the mines rather than provide labour to the white farmers. He felt that the ba ga Motsha should live on government lands so that they would be in a position to pay taxes and that all 'loitering' members of the *morafe*

should be forced to provide labour to the local white farmers at a fair payment. The *Kgosi*, on the other hand, should be responsible for paying taxes for all members of his community who did not wish to provide labour to the white-owned farms. In his view, the complaints over ill-treatment of the ba ga Motsha by the whites should be presented to the Public Prosecutor and members of the community should be forbidden from owning firearms, which he perceived as influencing disobedience to white authorities. He furthermore indicated that Maubane II and his community wanted to leave Hammanskraal because they intended to purchase private land (Bergh & Morton, 2003:47).

Commandant-General Paul Kruger testified on labour relations between the whites and the ba ga Motsha. The Commission decided that the testimony by the Commandant-General should be based on his personal interaction with the ba ga Motsha and other African communities in the Transvaal. The Commandant-General failed to honour the appointment, as he viewed that testifying before the Commission might expose his rough treatment of the ba ga Motsha labourers. He viewed appearing before the Commission as undermining his position as the Commandant-General of the Transvaal.

After strong persuasion from the Commission, Kruger agreed to testify on 17 and 18 October 1871. He requested that the proceedings of the Commission should not be placed in official records of the Executive Council, fearing that they would expose his inhumane treatment of the ba ga Motsha labour. His request was overruled by the *Volksraad* as he was one of the leading government officials seriously implicated as being responsible for the tense race and labour relations in the Transvaal. In his testimony, Kruger indicated that the Africans' existence in the Transvaal only made sense when they served the interests of the whites, including the provision of labour. Furthermore, he indicated that the white farmers, including

himself in his capacity as the Commandant-General 'have the power to impose punishment and that a native shall not remain away from his master for more than 24 hours without a pass' (Bergh & Morton, 2003:31).

Kruger reiterated that small African communities should not be allowed to settle in Native Locations, but should live as tenants on white-owned farms. In his view, the presence of large African communities under influential *hoofkaptains* [*dikgosi*] posed a security threat to the socio-economic and political authority of the whites in the Transvaal and, as such, should not be allowed. The Commission's courage to expose the Commandant-General's treatment of African labourers illustrated some level of commitment by the Transvaal government to undertake consultative processes in identifying the causes of racial tensions.

After listening to testimonies by various individuals, the Commission came to the conclusion that the complaints by the ba ga Motsha and other African chiefs in the central districts of the Transvaal were valid. The findings included that the white farmers in the Hammanskraal sub-district, with the approval from the Transvaal government, ill-treated the ba ga Motsha labourers and, in some cases, exposed them to inhumane treatment, which included flogging for allegedly failing to honour the terms of the 1856 Labour Contract.

The Commission made the following recommendations to the *Volksraad* for a decision:

(a) The African communities must live in government lands, as the Boers feared that if they were allowed to own land it might lead to economic independence, thus making it difficult for the government to maintain political and economic domination of the Transvaal;

(b) Tax for Africans living on government lands should be £1.10, which compelled the Africans to rely on wage labour at both the Boer farms and the urban centres as source of cash needed to pay tax;

(c) Individual Africans should be free to choose their masters, subject to a contract properly drawn up by a Field-Cornet, who must ensure that they receive fair payment for their services;

(d) African communities must be placed under the administration of a Landdrost or Resident Justice of the Peace. Such an arrangement would allow the settling of disputes and court cases in conformity with the general intention of ensuring the upholding of the laws governing Africans and maintaining white domination in the Transvaal;

(e) The *dikgosi* in the Transvaal may not be subjected to flogging in cases where they have been found guilty of wrongdoing by the Transvaal authorities. The flogging of *dikgosi* was viewed as undermining their authority and had the potential to lead to increased resentment against the authority of the Transvaal government and its officials responsible for the administration of African affairs;

(f) The penalties imposed by the Field-Cornet on members of the African communities may not be disposed of without the approval of the Landdrost. The Landdrost had to ensure that such penalties were in line with the Native Act and were not intended to enrich individual Field-Cornets;

(g) Africans were allowed to complain to the Landdrost about penalties imposed on them by Field-Cornets. This allowed the African communities to seek protection from the Landdrosts against unfair penalties imposed on them by the Field-Cornets;

(h) On issuing passes, the missionaries may not have more rights than any white private citizen. The whites, especially Boers, were viewed as the legitimate citizens of the Transvaal. They were responsible for protecting the social, economic and political interest of the government,

and their upper hand in land and resource ownership remained central in retaining their loyalty towards the consolidation of the Boer rule in the Transvaal (Bergh & Morton, 2003:151).

All of the above recommendations were effected but very little was done to change the subordination of the African communities by the whites in the Transvaal. The Commission acknowledged the prevalence of ill-treatment of African labourers by white farmers. However, it recognised the superiority of the white farmers over their African servants but provided space for legal recourse in cases of ill-treatment of African labourers by their white masters. As a result, African communities were allowed to purchase land and settle in the locations which were often registered under the whites or owned by the government. This was a continuation of the denial of African communities to own land.

The ba ga Motsha and cheap labour in Pretoria

The emergence of Pretoria as the capital of the Transvaal Republic led to increased demand for cheap African labour in various sectors such as construction and other services offered in the city. The employment opportunities in the city added to wage labour which the ba ga Motsha and other Africans communities rendered to the Boer farmers in the rural parts of Pretoria. As a result, the ba ga Motsha joined the labour force in Pretoria where they were employed by the white authorities in various infrastructural projects, including the construction of bridges and roads, providing labour in the building of government offices and the maintenance of infrastructure. Other categories of cheap labour provided by the Africans included maintaining the gardens around the properties owned by the government and individual white owners, collection of rubbish from public places white-occupied residential areas in Pretoria and any

other type of job that required manpower and deemed to be menial if performed by the Boers. This resulted in growing dependence of the white economy in the Pretoria on the cheap labour provided by African communities such as the ba ga Motsha. Skilled and semi-skilled labour was mainly provided by the whites, with vast differences in remuneration, to the advantage of the whites. Some of the elderly oral informants confirmed that their parents and grandparents worked in various factories in Pretoria, and that they contributed to the construction of Pretoria as a modern city (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with N. Madikologa, Hammanskraal, 23 July 2010).

The skilled and semi-skilled white labour in the Transvaal came mainly from Europe. This included experts in the fields of town planning, mining and engineering. There were also other professionals, including individuals in the legal field who settled and provided their services in Pretoria. For instance, in 1873 a Hungarian adventurer and civil engineer, Hugo Nellmapius, arrived in eastern Transvaal, where he introduced large-scale mining operations and a transport business that operated between eastern Transvaal and Delagoa Bay. In 1878, Nellmapius expanded his business to Pretoria and established a distilling liquor company valued at £100,000. His company made an annual contribution of £1,000 to the Treasury. He was later joined by other entrepreneurs, Sammy Marks and Isaac Lewis, with whom he established the first manufacturing industry in Pretoria called 'De Eerste Fabrieken' (The First Factory) valued at £100,000, and providing the Treasury with an additional £1,000 annual revenue. The factory was situated on his farm, Hetherley. Industrialisation in Pretoria also led to the extension of the railway network to connect Eerste Fabrieken with Germiston, which involved the employment of Africans during the construction of the railway line. Other industries

mushroomed alongside De Eerste Fabrieken, including those dealing with the manufacturing of clothing products, flour and sugar (Meredith, 2007:169–170).

The growth of Pretoria as the capital and the emergence of industries alongside De Eerste Fabrieken attracted both the skilled and unskilled labourers from other parts of South Africa and abroad. Consequently, the labour force in Pretoria included Europeans, Indians and Asians who, together with the African labourers from communities such as the ba ga Motsha, competed for economic opportunities offered by the emerging capitalism in Pretoria. Moreover, the ba ga Motsha formed part of the cheap labour to the then emerging industries in Pretoria. Additionally, the Boer farmers in Pretoria and its neighbouring sub-districts such as Hammanskraal remained key suppliers of agricultural products such as grain and sorghum needed at De Eerste Fabrieken. Consequently, the demand for African labour increased even more on the Boer farms around Pretoria. This was often carried out by the local labour force, obtained from communities such as the ba ga Motsha, the ba ga Moseitlha, the ba ga Kau and the Bahwaduba in Hammanskraal, who served as cheap and unskilled labour. The skilled and supervisory positions at De Eerste Fabrieken with high wages and good working and living conditions were reserved for whites, while the African labour force was subjected to extremely low wages and bad living conditions. As Thompson (2001:112) argued, the racially unequal allocation of wages and the emergent racial discrimination in the provision of services to the urban labourers in major cities such as Pretoria created a precedent for structuring industry on racial lines throughout the southern African region and beyond.

Conclusion

To conclude, African labourers in the Transvaal were exposed to harsh treatment by the Boer farmers, which led to their widespread resentment. Additionally, African labourers, including those from the ba ga Motsha, became reluctant to offer labour to the Boer farmers, which in turn negatively affected the Boers' farming profits. The Boer farmers, as a result, complained to the Transvaal government about the shortage of African labour and requested its intervention. The Transvaal authorities had, through the Transvaal Commission on African Labour of 1871, enquired about the causes of dissatisfaction by the African labourers. This led to testimonies by some of its key officials and representatives of the African communities. In the Hammanskraal sub-district, testimonies were heard from the ba ga Motsha, the ba ga Mosetlha and the Bahwaduba.

When the government established the Commission on African Labour in 1871, the ba ga Motsha remained convinced that they had a strong case that could convince the government to allow them to purchase land. Through testimonies by *Kgosi* Maubane II, David [Maubane] and Reverend Sachse, the ba ga Motsha accounts on the harsh living conditions under which they lived were presented to the Commission and included their request for the government to allow them to purchase land. Other testimonies to the Commission, especially by the government officials, emphasised the need for much tighter control of labour and movements of the ba ga Motsha by the government, including regularisation of tax payment and regulation of the ownership of guns by the ba ga Motsha. The findings of the Commission, on the other hand, confirmed that the ba ga Motsha were treated unfairly by the white farmers, including

Commandant-General Paul Kruger. Despite such findings, no recommendations were made by the Commission for disciplinary action against the whites who ill-treated the ba ga Motsha. The ba ga Motsha consequently, did nothing to follow up on the recommendations made by the Commission. All these confirmed the determination by the Transvaal government to undermine the political and economic independence of the ba ga Motsha. It also demonstrated the government's willingness to use its power and position to ensure white domination in the area even in cases of unfair treatment of African communities by the whites. Table 3.1, below, provides an overview of the Field-Cornets responsible for the governance of the ba ga Motsha.

Table 3.1: Field-Cornets responsible for the governance of the ba ga Motsha

WARD	FIELD-CORNET	CHIEF
Apies River	Andries P. van der Walt	<i>Kgosi Maubane I</i>
	Hendrik P. van der Walt	<i>Kgosi Maubane II</i>
	Theodorus Erasmus	
	Johannes (Hans) Fourie	

(Source: Bergh and Morton (2003))

CHAPTER 4

THE BA GA MOTSHA AND THE BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, 1866–1891

Introduction

This chapter discusses and analyses the arrival and interaction between the ba ga Motsha and the missionaries from the Berlin Missionary Societies (BMS) in the Transvaal between 1866 and 1891. The expansion of the BMS missionary activity among the ba ga Motsha coincided with the period of the Boer colonial consolidation in the Transvaal. The discussion on the interaction between the community and the BMS remains critical in the broader context of understanding the influence of Christianity in shaping the religious and economic outlook of the community and those of other African communities in the Transvaal. It also places specific emphasis on how BMS missionaries Alexander Merensky and Otto Sachse contributed to the spread of the Christian gospel and the western way of life among the ba ga Motsha. It further demonstrates how the success of the BMS activities among the ba ga Motsha was possible due to the support from *Kgosi* Maubane II.

The origins and early activities of the BMS

The introduction of the BMS missionary activities among the ba ga Motsha could be described in the broader context of the arrival of the German missionaries in South Africa with Reverend Johannes Janicke (1748–1827) as one of the pioneers. From 1819 until his death, Janicke was a pioneer preacher of the Bohemian Church based in Berlin. Janicke's preaching emphasised that Christians should dedicate their lives on earth in serving God through regular praying sessions where individuals confessed their sins, which became known as a 'religious

awakening'. Peasants and other lower classes in the German society were viewed as 'tools of God' and, as a result, had to serve the believers. This appealed to aristocrats and young students of theology and became popular belief in Europe (Bigler, 1972:130–31).

It was from Berlin where Janicke advocated the idea of creating German Christian missionary stations in various parts of the world from as early as 1800, which inspired the creation of the Berlin Missionary Society (BMS), as discussed later in this chapter. Janicke further advocated for meetings among the believers to share ideas on Christian values and to maintain group solidarity. This led to the establishment of a training school for missionaries in Berlin, followed by the growing popularity and interest in missionary training among some members of the German aristocracy. Consequently, in 1823 Janicke established a fundraising campaign in Germany for the creation of a missionary training college. The campaign was called an Appeal for Charitable Contributions in Aid of Evangelical Mission. The funding campaign received favourable responses from a number of notable German aristocrats and later led to the establishment of '*Die Gesellschaft zur Beforderung der evangelischen Missionen unter den Heiden*' (The Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Missions among the Heathen) in Germany (Du Plessis, 1965:14).

The recruitment for the Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Missions among the Heathen became popular and the enrolment for the programme increased. Berlin served as the headquarters of the society's missionary activities (Du Plessis, 1965:211). The growing support of the BMS in Berlin enabled the Society to stage missions in other parts of Germany. This earned the BMS accolades in the country and qualified it as the 'national' church in Germany, then known as Prussia. The BMS gained prominence in the eastern provinces of

Prussia, especially in locations such as Pommern, Schlesien and East Prussia (Poewe & Van der Heyden, 1999:9). Bergh (1973:1) further notes:

The BMS was born out of the missionary movement that emerged in Germany during the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century [translated].

As the activities of The Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Missions among the Heathen became popular in Germany, a need for the creation of a more structured organisation to administer the activities of its missionaries in Africa emerged. This led to the establishment of the BMS, which was officially launched in Berlin on 29 February 1824. The establishment of the BMS was realised by a group of aristocrats, high civil servants and professors, who met in Berlin to draw up laws governing the missionary society. Initially, the BMS was aimed at raising funds to support and educate German students in their overseas travels where they were expected to spread the Christian gospel (Du Plessis, 1965:211).

The BMS, like many other Europe-based missionary societies, expanded their activities to various parts of the world. In South Africa, the BMS missionaries started their missionary activities in 1833 by sending five graduates from its Berlin-based missionary training college to Cape Town to look at possibilities of creating permanent mission stations in South Africa. These pioneer missionaries included Gustav Adolph Kraut from Hamburg, August Ferdinand Lange from Rohrbeck, Rheinhold Theidor Gregorowsky of Marienburg, August Gebel from Gorlitz and Johann Schmidt from Hochkirch. This team of missionaries landed in Cape Town in 1834, where they began their missionary work in South Africa. As the Cape Town environment was welcoming to the Europeans, following Britain's political control of the area which they captured from the Dutch, the BMS missionaries soon joined expeditions trekking into the interior of South Africa in search of land and resources to establish missionary stations

among African communities. In September 1834, the BMS missionaries settled among the Griqua under Adam Kok at Philippolis in the Northern Cape, where they occupied a territory of twelve square miles along the banks of Riet River. The acquired territory became known as Bethany Mission Station, which served as the first BMS mission station in the interior of South Africa (Du Plessis, 1965:212).

At Bethany, the BMS missionaries experienced hostility from the Griqua, who often attacked their settlement and looted property and livestock. The attacks by the Griqua forced the BMS missionaries to temporarily close the mission station at Bethany in 1837. The BMS appointed C.F. Wuras from Germany to revive the Bethany mission station. Wuras arrived in Bethany some few years after the closure of the station. The Griqua domination of the area was also declining, thus providing the needed stability of the development of a missionary station. By 1847, the number of Africans at Bethany increased, following the arrival of groups of Batswana families who had fled their homes since the period of *difaqane* (Du Plessis, 1965:213).

With a growing number of converts, Bethany served as the centre for BMS missionary activity in South Africa. By 1850, the BMS had expanded to north-eastern Transvaal, the Eastern Cape, Natal and Swaziland. The expansion of the BMS activities received a boost when the Transvaal administration gave permission for the establishment of the Botshabelo Missionary Station at Middleburg in April 1860 (Du Plessis, 1965:218). The expansion of the BMS missionary activities led to contact with the African communities in various parts of the Transvaal, including the Pretoria district where the ba ga Motsha had settled.

Another factor that made it easy for the BMS to expand to the Transvaal was that the Transvaal government viewed the missionary societies from Germany as sympathetic towards the

consolidation of Boer dominance among the African communities in the Transvaal and, as a result, assisted in instilling the culture of obedience among the local African communities, including the ba ga Motsha. The Dutch and English missionary activities among African communities in the Transvaal, on the other hand, were not accepted by the Transvaal government because they were viewed as encouraging disobedience against the Boers. Some of the examples in this regard included S. Hofmeyr from the DRC, who worked among African communities in Zoutpansberg, and D. Livingstone, a Scottish missionary who worked among the Bakwena of *Kgosi* Sechele. Both missionaries were viewed to have instilled the culture of disobedience towards the Transvaal authorities and the Boers, therefore compromising the Boers' 'civilising mission' in the Transvaal (Mbenga, 1996:52).

The arrival of the BMS missionaries in the Transvaal

The arrival of the BMS missionaries in various parts of South Africa, including the Transvaal, should be understood in the broader context of the spread of Christianity from Europe to various parts of the world, including Africa and the Americas. The arrival of European missionaries in various parts of Africa was intended to spread Christianity and the western way of life among Africans, who the Europeans viewed as heathens. European colonisers perceived Africans to be uncivilised and their traditional belief systems were to be condemned. In this regard, Mbenga (1996:48) notes that 'the general view [of missionaries] was that African culture was fundamentally corrupt, sinful and needed to be redeemed'. The missionaries took conscious actions to encourage African communities to abandon cultural practices such as polygamy, rainmaking, witchcraft and ancestral worship, as these practices were contradictory to Christianity and the western way of life. Conversion of Africans to Christianity as carried out by various missionary societies throughout Africa was mainly aimed at transforming the

African culture much to the benefit of the European colonisers. In the Transvaal, missionary activities became important in consolidating 'settler colonialism of the Boers' (Mbenga, 1996:49).

The missionaries discouraged the communal way of life that formed part of the structure of most African communities. Consequently, extended families and collective ownership of resources were discouraged in favour of an individualistic approach to societal outlook, including an undertaking of economic activities. As a result of missionary activities, as Mbenga (1996:49) argues, 'African culture was intended to approximate that of contemporary Europe.'

The Bakgatla communities in the Transvaal – including the ba ga Motsha, like many other African communities in South Africa – came in contact with the white missionaries during the mid-eighteenth century. The missionary groups that first came to South Africa were from European countries such as France, Britain, Germany and America (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:99). The missionaries who worked among the Bakgatla communities in the Transvaal were the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) and the BMS. The DRC worked among the ba ga Kgafela, while the BMS worked among the ba ga Mmakau, ba ga Moseitlha and the ba ga Motsha. Mbenga (1996:49) highlighted that the DRC conducted its activities among the ba ga Kgafela in the Pilanesberg District, where they strongly opposed initiation (*bogwera*). The BMS, who worked among the ba ga Moseitlha and the ba ga Motsha in Hammanskraal, actively discouraged, among other things, the belief that the *dikgosi* among the Bakgatla possessed rain-making powers (Mbenga, 1996:55). The Hermannsburg Missionary Society (HMS), on the other hand, worked among the Bahwaduba (Bergh & Morton, 2003:107).

BMS missionary activities among the ba ga Motsha

The pioneer BMS missionaries who worked among the ba ga Motsha during the period covered by this study included Alexander Merensky, Otto Sachse and Otto Kahl. Of these, Merensky was the first to make contact with the ba ga Motsha through his occasional visits to Tshuaneng. Merensky was born on 8 June 1837 in Paten, Germany. He joined the mission seminary of the BMS in Berlin in 1855 and declared his intention to be part of the mission to spread the Christian gospel in Africa. After completing his mission training, he arrived in South Africa in 1858, where he served briefly as a missionary in Cape Town and Durban. Merensky was the pioneer missionary at the Botshabelo Mission Station, where he established a blacksmith shop, a wagon repair workshop and a mill.

Merensky was happy with his missionary work in South Africa as it offered a different experience from the one in Germany. Between 1866 and 1867, Merensky conducted field visits to the ba ga Motsha in Tshuaneng from the Botshabelo Mission Station. During the visits, he held meetings with *Kgosi* Maubane I with a view to recruiting the ba ga Motsha as labourers to the Botshabelo Mission Station. During meetings with *Kgosi* Maubane I, Merensky indicated that the BMS tradition allowed the local communities, such as the ba ga Motsha, to learn to use local conditions to interpret the Bible. The ba ga Motsha found that they could use the Bible to provide reasons for various situations in their lives. Moreover, the ba ga Motsha could then establish the link between their ancestral worshipping and Christianity. The ancestors (*badimo*) were thus viewed as a link between them and God. Continuance of ancestral sacrifices was viewed as an addition to the religious prayers and sermons to ask God's intervention as part of addressing the community's and individuals' everyday challenges. Even to this day, it is common to find some of the ba ga Motsha whose belief system is inspired by

the BMS to be practising the *badimo* and Christian ways of worshipping simultaneously (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Kgosi Maubane and his subjects saw that the BMS was more tolerant of their culture and was willing to recognise its key traditional institutions, including the *bogosi*. Consequently, *Kgosi* Maubane I granted Merensky permission to conduct religious teachings among the *ba ga Motsha*. Merensky then increased the frequency of his teaching visits to Tshuaneng and maintained close contact with the *kgosi*. As a result, *Kgosi* Maubane I allowed some of his subjects to offer labour to the Botshabelo Mission Station, which served as the centre of the BMS activities in the Transvaal. The *ba ga Motsha* who worked at Botshabelo also received religious teaching and converted to Christianity. When there was little work at Botshabelo, the *ba ga Motsha* converts had the opportunity to go to Tshuaneng, where they shared their experience and encouraged members of their families and neighbours to be part of the BMS teachings offered by Merensky. It became clear to the community that employment of some of its members at the BMS mission in Botshabelo provided an alternative to the tough labour conditions the *ba ga Motsha* were experiencing the Boer farmers (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

The acceptance missionary activity as a way of ameliorating their severe conditions under Boer rule was not unique to the *ba ga Motsha*. Among the Mpondo in the Eastern Cape, for instance, members of the community who worked on the missionary stations accepted Christianity and were exposed to the western way of life. As a result, they attended missionary schools and upon completion served in professions such as teaching, ministry or in the police. Among the Mpondo, as Callinicos (2004:100) accounts, the differences in work opportunities between the converts and non-converts were as follows:

As educated Christians, they [the assimilated] consciously distinguished themselves from the unconverted, whose place in the social structure was destined to be confined to the role of migrant worker and common labourer.

Kgosi Maubane's trust in Merensky grew, promoting a mutual friendly relationship between the two. In addition, the ba ga Motsha purchased western items such as ploughs and hoes from the Botshabelo mission station. Due to their good relations with Merensky, the ba ga Motsha remained willing to accept his religious teachings. Merensky emphasised the need for the community to rely on prayer through which God would provide a solution to their problems. He inculcated among the ba ga Motsha converts the importance of being obedient to the authority as highlighted in parts of Bible Scripture. Though not fully agreeable with the views of Merensky, the ba ga Motsha started to accept their conditions and viewed the BMS as a useful partner in their efforts to move away from ill-treatment by the Boer farmers. Merensky, on the other hand, saw the growing trust between him and the ba ga Motsha as an opportunity for increased missionary work among the community and for opening a permanent mission at Tshuaneng. However, he refrained from establishing a permanent station among the ba ga Motsha because it could have been viewed as an alternative employer to working on the farms. This could have led to the community's reluctance to provide labour to the Boer farmers, resulting in worsening relations between the BMS and the Transvaal authorities. This would have been a serious blow to the BMS's plans of spreading the gospel in the Transvaal, and Merensky wanted to avoid that at all cost. Subsequently, he agreed with *Kgosi* Maubane I to conduct occasional visits to give sermons to those ba ga Motsha willing to convert to Christianity. *Kgosi* Maubane I provided a hut at the royal kraal as a venue for holding sermons (Poewe & Van der Heyden, 1999:18).

Merensky became instrumental in the acceptance of BMS missionary activities among a small number of the ba ga Motsha, including Saul Maubane, who at the time was a regent for the heir to the throne. The ba ga Motsha were well-known among neighbouring communities for their *kgosi's* rain-making powers, which formed part of the community's traditional belief system. The ba ga Motsha *kgosi's* rain-making role was viewed by the Boers as enhancing the institution of *bogosi* in the community. During periods of drought, the ba ga Motsha convened under the leadership of the *kgosi* and his principal medicine man. All adult members of the community would then go to the dry water areas, pour water from their containers and exclaim *pula!* – meaning, 'let it rain'. The community believed that their ancestors would respond by making rain fall. This confirms that the community believed that their ancestors, as well as the *kgosi*, had a divine connection with *Modimo* (God). Thus they served as the conduit for the members of the community to communicate their problems and ask for divine intervention in addressing their various challenges. The *kgosi* among the ba ga Motsha was also viewed as possessing sacred rain-making powers (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

From a Christian perspective, the rain-making role of the *kgosi* among the ba ga Motsha was viewed as undermining the power and authority of God and, as a result, missionaries generally considered it a heathen practice that had to be abandoned. African traditional practices were regarded by missionaries as 'uncivilised' and had to be replaced by western way of life. However, most African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, refused to abandon the practice. During a period of severe drought in the 1980s for instance, members of the ba ga Motsha in Tshuaneng convened at the *kgotla* where the *kgosi* led the traditional proceedings to pray for rain (Interview with M. Maubane, 30 June 2010). Mbenga (1996:54) has also stated that the ba ga Kgafela resisted missionary efforts to make them abandon the rain-making

practice. This was demonstrated when the DRC missionary H. L. Gonin unsuccessfully tried to persuade *Kgosi* Kgamanyane to abandon his rain-making role. The BMS missionaries, on the other hand, tolerated the rainmaking role of the *kgosi* among the ba ga Motsha because they wanted to avoid the community's possible hostility towards its activities, and that earned them respect and resulted in the community's positive attitude towards Christianity (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Besides his tolerance towards the rainmaking role of the ba ga Motsha, Merensky's missionary activities among the ba ga Motsha were accepted for a number of reasons. First, Saul Maubane wanted to use the BMS in his efforts to request the Transvaal government to endorse him as *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha, following the death of his brother, *Kgosi* Maubane I. He knew that if the BMS's missionaries could agree to his appointment as *kgosi*, they would also assist in convincing the Transvaal government to endorse his appointment. Saul was intentionally trying to deny son of his late brother, Andries Moepi Maubane, the right to take over the ba ga Motsha throne. At that time Moepi was still young to take over as *kgosi*. Second, the ba ga Motsha used missionaries as middlemen while trading with the whites. This enabled the ba ga Motsha to purchase, among other things, agricultural equipment such as hoes, ploughs, seeds, building material, as well as guns. Realising the economic benefits brought by the missionary presence, Saul encouraged members of his community to attend the sermons hosted by Merensky at Tshuaneng (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal. 30 June 2010).

Consequently, a temporary missionary station was established at Tshuaneng during the late 1860s, but Merensky remained based in Botshabelo. He occasionally travelled to Tshuaneng to undertake his missionary activities among the ba ga Motsha. The number of converts was still small and wanted to additional recruits before he could consider establishing a permanent

mission station at Tshuaneng. Merensky further introduced Saul and his community to the western ways of life, which included trading in western commodities such as agricultural and household equipment. Through the influence of Saul, members of the community started to realise the benefits associated with their acceptance of BMS activities. Consequently, they were given the opportunity to learn technical skills from the BMS missionaries, such as building, sewing, and modern farming. The acquired skills became useful to the Boer farming community in Hammanskraal and Pretoria where some ba ga Motsha were employed. This also increased the economic output by the ba ga Motsha's subsistence farmers (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Merensky, taking advantage of the friendly relations he had built with the ba ga Motsha, increased his visits to Tshuaneng, where he continued with friendly interactions with Saul and members of the community. During his visits to the ba ga Motsha, Merensky spent time sitting with Saul and other ba ga Motsha converts at the ba ga Motsha royal residence and at the temporary mission station at Tshuaneng. He learnt about the local culture and language and gained knowledge on various topics such as farming, hygiene and construction (Poewe & Van der Heyden, 1999:18).

The number of the ba ga Motsha converts at Tshuaneng remained uncertain. What became clear to the researcher was that between 1856 and 1871, the ba ga Motsha population could be estimated at around 1,000 (Gov, 1086, PS50/8/07). From this population, a small number were converted and became part of the BMS establishment. These ba ga Motsha converts attended church services and encouraged others to do so (Bergh & Morton, 2003:110). It could be posited, however, that Merensky's missionary work provided a foundation for increased acceptance of BMS activities among the ba ga Motsha. This assertion is based on the

recollection, though scanty, of the missionary activities by some of the oral informants who had received information about the BMS missionary activities among the ba ga Motsha from the generation who had lived during Merensky's era as a missionary at Tshuaneng (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with Samuel Matlala, Hammanskraal, 15 June 2011).

Although the number of the ba ga Motsha converts remained small, the acceptance of Christianity by the small number gave the BMS hope that it was possible to sustain its work and, as a result, in 1868 Merensky assigned Otto Sachse to be stationed permanently at Tshuaneng. Sachse was a BMS theology student from Germany who, after completion of his theological studies, was stationed at Botshabelo before his appointment by Merensky as the first BMS missionary to work permanently among the ba ga Motsha (Bergh & Morton, 2003:109).

Moreover, Sachse committed to promote the undertakings and the religious principles of the BMS among the ba ga Motsha as per the directive from Merensky, who left South Africa in 1882 and he returned to Berlin on retirement. Merensky's missionary contribution played a critical role, laying the foundation in consolidating local support and promoting the religious doctrine of the BMS among the ba ga Motsha. The number of the ba ga Motsha converts, however, remained static and this became one of the principal concerns for Sachse, as he wanted to increase the number of converts. Sachse, as a white person, then availed himself to promote the community's obedience towards the Transvaal government and, as a result, served as 'a middleman' in promoting a cordial relationship between the two groups. He received complaints from the community about dissatisfaction with the labour conditions and land shortage which he conveyed to the Transvaal government (Bergh & Morton, 2003:109).

Subsequently, Sachse used his influence to encourage the ba ga Motsha to abide by the laws governing African affairs, including paying tax. He also kept a close eye on the possession and use of firearms by members of the community and issued passes to the small number of the ba ga Motsha migrants who worked in gold and diamond mines. He often complained to the Transvaal authorities, through the Field-Cornet, on the growing number of firearms brought by the ba ga Motsha migrants, which he feared had the potential to lead to lawlessness and disobedience towards the government. The increase in the illegal acquisition of firearms by African communities in the Transvaal during the 1860s and 1870s was also prevalent among the Bahwaduba who, according to the HMS, had purchased the firearms in Natal (Bergh & Morton, 2003:108).

Sachse, like his predecessor Merensky, was welcomed by the community and a growing number of the ba ga Motsha families became active participants in the BMS activities at Tshuaneng. They allowed their children to attend classes offered by Sachse. They realised the value of western education in the personal development of their children. To them, the BMS education offered the opportunity for their children to learn the western way of life, including how to read and write, which remained important in the community's interaction with the Boers. Some of the ba ga Motsha children who joined the BMS school in Tshuaneng under Sachse included Elias Nkwane, Johannes Rakganyane and Johannes Modingwane. These three boys graduated from the BMS School. By 1891, Nkwane, Rakganyane and Modingwane served as 'national helpers', also known as minister-evangelists among the ba ga Motsha (SNA, 260, NA731/05).

Like his predecessor, Sachse tried to win the support of the ba ga Motsha royal family as a strategy to increase the number of the BMS converts at Tshuaneng. He then developed cordial relations with the ba ga Motsha regent Saul Maubane, who in turn promised the BMS a small plot for its missionary activities. This allowed Sachse to conduct classes that focused on basic literacy and BMS theology to members of the ba ga Motsha, especially among the youth from the few converted families. Andries Moepi Maubane, the son of the late *Kgosi* Maubane I, was among the younger generation of the ba ga Motsha who showed keen interest in Sachse's teachings. A close relationship developed between the two. Sachse considered that the young Moepi Maubane could be useful in recruiting more people to the BMS activities. He could see that as the son of the late *kgosi* and a legitimate successor to the throne, Moepi Maubane was among the influential members of the ba ga Motsha royal family (Bergh & Morton, 2003:110).

The relationship between Sachse and Saul did not last long because Saul became suspicious that Sachse was influencing Moepi Maubane to claim the royal throne. Saul wanted to make a permanent claim to the throne and did not want Moepi Maubane to reclaim the throne after he had reached maturity. This resulted in the emergence of a hostile relationship between Saul and Maubane Moepi and, in some instances, they even quarrelled in public. These quarrels negatively affected the image of the royal family. The ba ga Motsha converts asked Sachse to intervene in the conflict between Moepi Maubane and Saul. Saul, however, worried about the friendship between Moepi Maubane and Sachse and, as a result, withdrew his support for the BMS activities at Tshuaneng. The benefits afforded to the BMS were consequently withdrawn and the decision to allocate additional land for missionary activities was reversed (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

Sachse's mediation in the Saul-Moepi conflict, 1870–1873

In spite of their hostilities, Saul was unable to expel Sachse from Tshuaneng. He feared it could invite intervention by the Transvaal authorities which could derail his ambition of claiming the ba ga Motsha throne. Sachse, on the other hand, viewed his closeness with Moepi Maubane as an opportunity for long-term consolidation of the BMS activities among the ba ga Motsha. He then committed to assist Moepi Maubane to be appointed as a legitimate successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane I, as discussed in Chapter 8. On 5 March 1870, Sachse informed the Transvaal authorities about the succession battle between Saul and Moepi Maubane and advised the authorities by noting as follows:

According to the [ba ga Motsha] customary law Saul was a regent and it was wrong for him to claim the throne permanently as it belonged to Andries Maubane [II] (Bergh, 1973:113).

After losing popularity with Saul, Sachse became closer to Moepi Maubane. He also became influential in the consolidation of BMS activities among the section of the community that supported Moepi Maubane's claim to the *bogosi* of the ba ga Motsha. Moepi Maubane worked closely with Sachse to seek assistance from the Transvaal authorities to appoint him as the legitimate successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane I. The move was successful and in 1870 Moepi Maubane took over the *bogosi* from his uncle Saul and became *Kgosi* Maubane II. His appointment led to a rift with Saul who refused to recognise him as his replacement. Consequently, Saul insisted that he was the sole political authority of the ba ga Motsha at Tshuaneng. He also opposed the missionary activities by Sachse and used his trusted members of the community to disrupt church services, and often threatened to victimise those who were sympathetic to the BMS. In addition to Saul's fear of the possible influence of the BMS on the community's succession, he informed his supporters that Sachse's missionary activities were

undermining traditional practices of the ba ga Motsha, including *tlhomagano ya bogosi* (Bergh & Morton, 2003: 105).

Saul's stance against the activities of the BMS made him adopt measures that were intended to make Sachse feel unwelcome at Tshuaneng. In 1871, for instance, he instructed his followers to refuse to provide labour to the BMS, as was requested by Sachse. He ensured that the BMS did not receive any support from his followers. Bergh and Morton (2003:104) attested to the existence of the differences between the two men as they note:

Sachse had problems with the completion of his house in Tshuaneng. ... His first problem was Saul ... [who] earlier promised to allocate land for the building of the mission but later changed his mind [translated].

Similarly, the rift between Saul and Sachse widened. Saul attempted to expel Sachse from Tshuaneng but was stopped by members of the council who feared that the move would create serious problems with the Transvaal authorities. In addition, Saul perceived *Kgosi* Maubane II as a traitor who was willing to abandon the community's traditions for Christian values inculcated by missionary Sachse. Saul demonstrated his hatred towards Sachse when he went on to physically destroy some of Sachse's possessions, including his wagon. Saul's harsh treatment of Sachse is attested by Bergh (1973:113):

[Saul] personally took efforts to remove Sachse from Tshuaneng. He broke Sachse's wagon, forcing him to occasionally hire one from the neighbouring Boer farmers, often at a huge price [translated].

Members of the royal council remained worried by the manner in which Saul treated Sachse. They, however, did nothing to punish Saul as they feared that he could use his power as regent

to dismiss them from the council or even expel them from Tshuaneng. The Boer farmers in the vicinity of Hammanskraal became concerned about Saul's treatment of Sachse and saw it as having the potential to lead to disobedience among the ba ga Motsha farm labourers. With increased pressure from the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal, the traditional council was called to mediate in the protracted differences between the Saul and Sachse. The *kgotla* resolved that Saul should repay Sachse for the damaged wagon and that he should be allowed to continue with missionary work among the ba ga Motsha (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Kgosi Maubane II, on the other hand, developed close relations with Sachse and sympathised with him when he had differences with Saul. *Kgosi* Maubane II's sympathy for Sachse served as a key factor in reinforcing the cordial relations between him and the BMS. This was further confirmed when Sachse provided assistance to *Kgosi* Maubane II by establishing necessary contact with the NAD and finalising the required documentation during the purchase of farms in Schildpadfontein in 1873, as discussed in Chapter 5.

At Schildpadfontein, Sachse built a mission station known as Neuhalle Mission Station, which included a church and a school. From Neuhalle Mission Station, Sachse continued to preach the gospel and train the ba ga Motsha in the skills of various trades, including building and farming. To this day, the old BMS mission house and the foundation of the original church built by Sachse remain part of the compound of the Neuhalle Parish of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa (ELCSA) (Interview with M. Kolobe, Marapyane, 18 July 2015).

Though Sachse continued to live among the ba ga Motsha at Tshuaneng, the missionary activities of the BMS became severely affected by his rivalry with Saul, who continued to discourage his supporters from being part of the BMS activities. He viewed Sachse as instigating *Kgosi* Maubane II's disrespect towards him. Sachse, on the other hand, complained about Saul to the Transvaal government. The Transvaal authorities denounced Saul's behaviour and showed sympathy towards Sachse. On 30 April 1870, the Transvaal authorities approved Maubane II as the legitimate *kgosi* of the community, leading to the demotion of Saul to an ordinary member of the traditional council (Bergh, 1973:113).

Saul's rivalry with *Kgosi* Maubane II continued. Amid the tension between the two men, *Kgosi* Maubane II regarded Sachse as his middleman in his official interactions with the Transvaal authorities. He maintained that Sachse should be allowed to conduct missionary activities among the ba ga Motsha. The tension between Saul and *Kgosi* Maubane II was resolved in 1873 when *Kgosi* Maubane II's proposal to purchase land near Schildpadfontein was approved, leaving Saul as a headman of the section of the community that remained at Tshuaneng (Bergh, 1973:113).

The impact of BMS missionary activities

Maubane II's cordial relations with Sachse led to the gradual acceptance of the BMS at Schildpadfontein. *Kgosi* Maubane II became actively involved in the church activities by regularly attending the church services offered by Sachse. In some instances, Sachse gave *Kgosi* Maubane II an opportunity to make announcements and preach during church services. This made *Kgosi* Maubane feel that he was duly recognised by Sachse and he encouraged members of his community to be part of the BMS (SS, 121, R390/70).

Sachse used the local environment, imageries and musical forms in his preaching and teaching of the teacher-evangelists. He further encouraged Modingwane, Rakganye and Nkwane to use local examples in their religious teachings. Mbenga and Giliomee (2008:100) attested the success rate of the localisation of Christian teachings by the African evangelists, using the case of Xhosa teacher-evangelists in emphasising:

Most successful evangelists were African Christians themselves. After minimum contact with white missionaries [local] evangelists preached the Christian gospel in a purely [local] setting [and] language.

The good relations between Sachse and *Kgosi* Maubane II created enabling conditions for further acceptance of the BMS following among the *ba ga Motsha*, especially by the older members of the community who were close to the royal family. They, in turn, encouraged members of their families to be part of Sachse's Christian teachings (SNA, 8, NA227/01).

The commitment to the principles of Christianity among the *ba ga Motsha* community, however, remained dubious as many continued to follow traditional practices labelled as heathen practices by the missionaries. This assertion was supported by Sachse in his testimony to the 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour, as he indicated that among the *ba ga Motsha* a small number really believed in the Christian way of life. He further indicated that the older members of the community, though they attended church services, remained too superstitious. The young people, on the other hand, were frightened of the elders and owing to their influence stayed away from the church services although they would have liked to attend (Bergh & Morton, 2003:110).

The situation where traditional belief systems among the African communities clashed with the missionary activities was not unique to the *ba ga Motsha*; it also existed in other Batswana

communities in South Africa and Botswana. Schapera (1953:58) confirmed this claim by presenting the case of Batswana communities in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, as he highlights:

New members of the Church are recruited mainly from the children of Christian parents, and their acceptance of Christianity seems to be largely a matter of course instead of genuine conversion.

Kgosi Maubane II admired Christianity and Sachse offered him private religious teachings, which further consolidated their close friendship. Saul, on the other hand, encouraged his supporters to uphold the traditional belief system, which made it difficult for Sachse to reach the *ba ga* Motsha at Tshuaneng who were willing to accept his religious teachings. Schildpadfontein remained the centre of BMS activities among the *ba ga* Motsha. To further win the support of *Kgosi* Maubane II towards his missionary activities, Sachse assisted the community in their interaction with the Transvaal authorities. This interaction included the issuing of passes to the *ba ga* Motsha and the collection of taxes on behalf of the Transvaal authorities. In 1873, Sachse employed *ba ga* Motsha labourers to build a church and missionary school at Schildpadfontein. Sachse was praised by the *ba ga* Motsha for treating them well, which included paying them for the labour they offered at the mission station. This reinforced the cordial relations between the BMS and the *ba ga* Motsha. A number of the *ba ga* Motsha became pleased with Sachse's attitude and willingly became converts, leading to a steady growth of missionary activity at Tshuaneng (Bergh & Morton, 2003:107).

At Schildpadfontein, Sachse attracted learners from the majority of the community members who wanted their children to acquire technical skills in various fields such as farming and

sewing. His knowledge of Setswana enabled him to interact with members of the community. His eagerness to learn the language earned him accolades and contributed towards increased support and popularity of the BMS among ba ga Motsha. It should be emphasised that Sachse's interest in learning Tswana and his eagerness to learn about the ba ga Motsha's culture was part of the strategy of the BMS of indigenising their missionary activities. This view is supported by Poewe and Van der Heyden (1999:18) who attest:

Berlin missionaries spent much time sitting around fires listening to stories. ... It was also part of the Berlin method that their missionaries learn the art of African preaching from gifted African evangelists. ... Pioneer missionaries therefore, worked intimately with African Christians.

It could further be argued that Sachse's good working relations with the ba ga Motsha were derived from the BMS strategy of not discarding the African way of life completely but accepting some of its 'soft' aspects that could be tolerated and, in that way, allowing their converts to retain and practise their culture (Jooste, 1996:24–37). This included allowing the chieftaincy and its established system of governance to be responsible for the political decision-making of the local communities. *Kgosi* Maubane II supported Sachse's missionary work, attended church services and became instrumental in encouraging members of the community to participate in the activities of the BMS (Bergh & Morton, 2003:110).

In 1879, after he had spent a decade as a missionary among the ba ga Motsha, Sachse returned to Germany for his retirement. By 1879, the BMS at Tshuaneng comprised about 400 local converts and the mission school had three classrooms (Bergh, 1973:134). When Sachse was absent, the national helpers – Modingwane, Nkwane and Rakanye – served as BMS minister-evangelists. They continued with the religious teachings at the Schildpadfontein Mission Station. Their religious teachings, as they learned from the Merensky and Sachse, were based

on Martin Luther's catechism, which put emphasis on the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, baptism, Holy Communion and confession in the acceptance of Christianity. After Sachse's departure, missionary activities continued, thus illustrating that the converted members of the community, with the support of *Kgosi* Maubane II, did not view the BMS as an obstacle for their survival and existence (SNA, 480, NA3089/10).

The majority of the members of the converted ba ga Motsha, however, continued to observe traditional practices which were viewed by missionaries as anti-Christian. The wealthy members of the community, especially from the ruling family, continued to practise polygamy. The missionaries collected a marriage levy of between £5 and £10 each time a member of the community married an additional wife. This was in addition to the 10/- that was paid when one married for the first time (Bergh & Morton, 2003:66).

The Transvaal administration saw the BMS missionary activities as useful in the consolidation of white domination in the Transvaal (Bergh, 1973:12). Consolidation was through the Transvaal Law No. 4 of 1885, which justified the adoption of coercive measures, including physical punishment, against Africans found to be practising lifestyles in conflict with the western belief system. The *dikgosi* were thus expected to ensure adherence to western religion by their subjects. Linington (1949:2) explained the provision of the Transvaal Law No. 4 of 1885 as:

The laws, habits and customs hitherto observed among [Africans] should continue in force as long as they have not appeared to be inconsistent with the general principles of civilisation in the civilised world.

Consequently, the BMS missionaries, based on their role as custodians of western civilisation, were allowed to promote religious conversion and a ‘civilised’ way of life among the ba ga Motsha. In addition, the missionaries, as was the case elsewhere in the Transvaal, issued passes that regulated the movement of ba ga Motsha. Passes were also issued for the ba ga Motsha, mainly males, who went to work in the mines in the Witwatersrand and for others who joined the urban labour force in Pretoria. Sachse, for instance, encouraged the ba ga Motsha to provide labour to the Boer farmers and advised them ‘to work well’ (Bergh & Morton, 2003:104).

The BMS missionaries inculcated a culture of good behaviour and obedience to whites by Africans. This was received with varied responses by African societies and it sometimes led to continued dissatisfaction against white domination. Africans’ continued dissatisfaction against white domination became one of the reasons for participation by members of the community in the broader nationalist struggle. The contribution of the ba ga Motsha in the nationalist struggle in South Africa is discussed later in this study.

Kgosi Maubane II became content with Sachse’s missionary work and encouraged members of his family, including his wife *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka – who was the wife of the late *Kgosi* Maubane I – to support the BMS activities at Schildpadfontein. With *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka supporting the BMS activities through regular attendance of church services, the majority of the royal family encouraged its subjects to raise their children within the Christian philosophy and doctrine of the BMS, as they realised the value of education offered at missionary schools. To illustrate the commitment by the ba ga Motsha ruling family to the BMS, in 1902 a royal family decision was taken – spearheaded by *Kgosigadi* Masekaseka – that Robert Sebis Moepi Maubane, one of the sons of *Kgosi* Maubane II, should be sent to a missionary school in Cape Town. Sending Moepi to the missionary school was intended to expose him to BMS traditions

and the western way of life. It was hoped that it would play a key role in the ba ga Motsha's increased support of the BMS, as Moepi was expected to be appointed as *kgosi* and he would then use the education he had received to promote acceptance of Christianity among his followers (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

Moepi's attendance at the missionary school was viewed as critical in equipping him with the necessary leadership skills to take over the ba ga Motsha throne, following the death of his father, Maubane II, in 1902. Sending Moepi to the missionary school was important in the consolidation of Christianity among the ba ga Motsha and is in line with Mbenga (1990:62) who explains the importance of the conversion of African chiefs as follows:

The conversion of commoners was good enough. But the conversion of the chief was much better, for with it came hope, if not assurance, of many more converts because of his personal example and influence.

The BMS became interested in only its missionary work and did not interfere in the whites' political contests in South Africa, which earned it recognition from the Transvaal authorities. The missionaries inculcated the culture of serving the whites' interests among the African communities. The BMS' contribution to promoting the ba ga Motsha's obedience towards the Boers was illustrated in a ba ga Motsha member's testimony to the 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour. The ba ga Motsha member, David, indicated that the missionaries had advised them to work well with the Boers and encouraged them to refrain from undermining the laws governing African affairs (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

The ba ga Motsha converts, especially the male converts, were given the opportunity to serve in various local committees of the BMS. The ba ga Motsha minister-evangelists, Modingwane

and Rakgale, also became close associates of Maubane II, who also consulted them for advice when necessary. The BMS introduced Maubane II to Christian customs and traditions. Converts started to view baptism as an important part of life. Children were baptised at an early age. Sometimes, even adults were baptised and later confirmed in order to be accepted as full members of the BMS. To this day, as confirmed by oral informants, baptism and confirmation ceremonies remain highly recognised in the community and the successful completion of these ceremonies is marked by festivities where family, friends and members of the church are invited (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Interestingly, most members of the community became involved in the activities of missionaries, not as a result of their total commitment to Christianity but because of their interest in missionaries. This was confirmed by Sachse in his submission to the 1871 Commission on African Labour, which confirmed the community's mixed feelings towards Christianity, as he mentions:

I think that religion has a beneficial effect on a small number that really believe. The old natives are too suspicious. The young people are too frightened of the elders and owing to their influence (Bergh & Morton, 2003:110).

Du Bruyn (1994:302) further argues that the African communities' acceptance of the missionaries did not necessarily mean that they were interested in western religion, as he argues:

Many chiefs tolerated the presence of missionaries not because they were interested in Christianity, but because missionaries were useful as possible protectors who possessed firearms, men who would bestow prestige on chiefdoms, scribes and diplomatic agents, and trading intermediaries.

The BMS missionaries baptised members of the African communities before they could be fully admitted as members of its Christian community. It was believed that through baptism God would forgive the sins of those who converted and that they would be protected from death and evil. Additionally, it was believed that baptism would ensure that the converts got everlasting salvation. Members of the community were taught the BMS theology, which encouraged converts to lead a good life on earth as preparation for life after death. Consequently, converts were expected to adhere to the content and meaning of the Ten Commandments. The missionaries taught the converts the Apostles' Creed, which emphasised the power of Holy Trinity in their everyday lives. Consequently, through the Lord's Prayer, members of the BMS confessed about their positions as children of God, who in turn has control over all aspects of their lives and who could punish them for evil and reward their good deeds on earth. The missionaries facilitated the Holy Communion, through which converts asked for forgiveness for their sinful life on earth and asked for salvation. The BMS missionaries in the Transvaal, as was the case with other missionary societies, blessed marriages of African converts after solemnisation by the government authority responsible for the registration of marriages (SNA, 8 NA227/01).

Selected members of the African societies, especially men who demonstrated commitment to Christianity, were encouraged to attend extra sessions where they were taught the BMS Christian tradition. The training included conducting church services during the absence of the missionaries, providing spiritual support to the converted community and recruitment of new members of their communities to join the mission station's activities. Upon successful completion of the religious programme, the graduates were ordained as evangelist-ministers, a term equivalent to teacher-evangelists by the DRC or the black ex-*Oorlam* by the Boers (Mbenga, 1996:61).

Subsequent to the completion of religious training, the BMS evangelist-ministers were allowed to conduct church services and this gave them authority to execute the responsibilities as delegated by the white missionaries. The BMS evangelists-ministers were also called 'national helpers' because they provided additional support for the BMS expansion in the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa. This support included visiting and praying for members of the congregation, officiating during burials and leading church services. The opportunity for African members of the BMS to be ordained as evangelist-ministers provided opportunity for the furtherance of the indigenisation of the BMS which led to conflict with the BMS (SNA, 8, NA227/01).

The ba ga Motsha's support for BMS activities was possible because the missionaries, especially Otto Sachse, provided opportunities for wage employment (Bergh & Morton, 2003:106). The BMS missionaries also played key roles in the community's land acquisition in the Hammanskraal sub-district, which has been discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three. It was common practice among African communities elsewhere in the Transvaal to use missionaries in their efforts to acquire land. During the 1860s, the ba ga Motsha's 'cousins', the ba ga Kgafela, used the DRC missionaries to purchase farm Saulspoort from Paul Kruger (GOV/756/PS, 50). The Barolong ba ga Seleka, on the other hand, used the missionaries from the Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) to buy land in the Thaba Nchu area (Mbenga, 1996:60).

The BMS used the mission station at Neuhalle to introduce literacy among the ba ga Motsha. Identified national helpers such as Rakganye and Mogadingwane received their formal

education from the Neuhalle Mission Station under Sachse, qualifying them to undertake responsibilities as evangelist-ministers. Rakganye and Mogadingwane continued to teach and preach the Christian gospel to the ba ga Motsha. The ba ga Motsha evangelist-ministers, as in various other parts of the Transvaal, especially the Pedi in Sekhukhuneland where there was a strong following of the BMS, were allowed to conduct all activities undertaken by their white counterparts. This, however, excluded officiating during marriage ceremonies and giving Holy Communion to their congregations, and that became a reason for discontent by the ba ga Motsha teacher-evangelists against the white authorities of the BMS. The evangelist-ministers then joined the protest against racial discrimination in the BMS led by Johannes Sebushane and the ex-BMS missionary Reverend Johannes Winter in Sekhukhuneland (SNA, 8, NA227/01). The protest against the BMS by its African teacher-evangelists is discussed in Chapter Six.

As a result of the encouragement by the BMS missionaries, most of the ba ga Motsha converts observed the rules and regulations governing African affairs, as stipulated by the Transvaal government and as encouraged by the missionaries. They further adopted a culture of lodging written complaints to the Field-Cornets and Landdrosts in cases where they felt ill-treated by the whites. The BMS activities among the ba ga Motsha and other African communities in the Transvaal prepared the African communities to accept their 'inferior' status to the whites. In this context, the whites were presented by the missionaries as chosen by God to lead the African communities out of 'darkness' and sin. Any challenge to the white domination and any undermining of the Boers remained punishable by law. Consequently, the missionaries were allowed to administer physical punishment in cases of disobedience by Africans. Sachse, however, refrained from imposing physical punishment on ba ga Motsha who were charged with disobedience (Bergh & Morton, 2003:109).

A small number of the ba ga Motsha accepted Christianity, while they did not abandon the community's traditional beliefs. For example, members and converts of the community continued to consult traditional doctors in cases of misfortune in their lives. This was supplemented by prayers officiated by missionaries and teacher-evangelists. Again, the community continued to conduct rain-making ceremonies (Bergh & Morton, 2003:109).

The ba ga Motsha converts subscribed to the doctrine of life after death and aspired to be accepted in the kingdom of God. The death of members of the community was viewed as a passage either to eternal joy of the kingdom of God or to eternal suffering under Satan. When someone passed away, the missionary, or some cases a local evangelist-minister, was called by the members of the deceased family to conduct funeral services, which were intended to prepare the dead for passage into eternal life. It should be noted, however, that the ba ga Motsha did not completely abandon their traditional belief in ancestral worship. They continued to use both Christianity and the traditional belief system in interpreting the role and importance of their ancestors in their daily lives. Thus, mysterious deaths were still often not perceived as the work of *Modimo* but *boloi* (witchcraft) was blamed for such deaths, and in most cases it called for consultation with *dingaka* (traditional doctors) who were consulted *go thea phuphu* (to strengthen the grave) so that whoever might have caused death should suffer the consequences. Even to this day, some of the ba ga Motsha still interpret death in the context of both Christianity and the traditional belief system (K32/254/13).

The BMS missionaries discouraged the ba ga Motsha from cultural practices that were seen as 'heathen' before the eyes of the white men. The BMS, for example, viewed the rain-making

practice by the ba ga Motsha as unchristian. The Boers also viewed the ba ga Motsha's subscription to traditional practices as uncivilised and addressed their adherents as *Oorlams* (Mbenga, 1996:56). The ba ga Motsha, though not completely devoted to Christianity, believed that '[western] religion [had] a beneficial effect on a small number' as the majority remained superstitious and still adhered to practices such as *bogwera*, *bojale*, polygamy, witchcraft and rain-making (Schnell, 1954:111).

According to the missionaries, superstitious practices by African societies were to be replaced by the introduction of formal western education whose religious curriculum was intended to erode the community's traditional way of life. Schapera expands on the missionaries' disregard for traditional practices of the African groups, including the payment of *bogadi*, as he argues:

The missionaries [thought] that it was wrong to buy a wife – that is how they originally interpreted the [*bogadi*] custom. If this custom had to go, then the interest and the regulative rights of the sib in connection with marriages had to go with it (Schapera, 1967:70).

It could be argued that the missionary activities generally encouraged ba ga Motsha converts to adopt the western way of life, while the community continued with its traditional practices. In most cases, BMS missionaries were well received by the younger generation who wanted to break away from the traditional belief system. The majority of the young members of the ba ga Motsha were in not favour of converting to the Christian way of life as presented by the BMS missionaries. Consequently, the majority of the ba ga Motsha youth accepted Christianity mainly because of pressure from their parents who also accepted Christianity as a result of pressure from the *kgosi* (Bergh & Morton, 2003:111). This view is supported by Schapera (1967:67), who asserts:

The really difficult task confronting Christians was, and is, not to induce the Bantu to discard their belief in magic in favour of scientific knowledge, but to persuade them to abandon their belief in ancestor-gods for the belief in Christ.

Conclusion

In summary, the arrival of the BMS in Hammanskraal and their interaction with the ba ga Motsha has been discussed in the broader context of the expansion of Christianity in South Africa between 1866 and 1891. This highlights the contribution by European missionaries in shaping the religious outlook of African societies in the area, including the ba ga Motsha. Most notably, the missionaries perceived the African traditional belief system as primitive and inferior. The African groups, therefore, had to be converted to Christianity, which according to the missionaries represented 'civilised way of life'. Among the ba ga Motsha, the presence of the BMS added to the key role played by the *kgosi* in religious matters. The *kgosi*, in addition to his rain-making powers and serving as a link with the *badimo*, became instrumental in encouraging his subjects to convert to Christianity. That formed the basis for the coexistence of Christianity and traditional religious practices among the ba ga Motsha. Furthermore, the acceptance of Christianity by the ba ga Motsha royal family created favourable conditions for the BMS missionaries such as Alexander Merensky and Otto Sachse to the spread of the Christian gospel and the western way of life among the ba ga Motsha.

CHAPTER 5

LAND PURCHASING AMONG THE BA GAMOTSHA, 1873–1904

Introduction

This chapter focuses on efforts by the ba ga Motsha to purchase farms near Neuhalle in 1873. This is done to illustrate how land purchases by Africans in the central district of the Transvaal, as in the rest of the territory, remained a highly contested issue that the Boers used as a tool to maintain the economic subordination of African communities. Between 1870 and 1900, Africans could only purchase land in the form of grants and/or through purchase from the white farmers. The purchased land was always registered under the whites. Another opportunity for Africans to own land was through land purchase deals, which were often spearheaded by sympathetic whites, such as missionaries. First, the chapter highlights the conditions for land purchase by African communities in the Transvaal. Second, it gives an account of the ba ga Motsha efforts to purchase land from 1873–1904. It highlights the crucial role played by BMS missionary Otto Sachse in the land purchase deals in the Hammanskraal sub-district, especially in the aftermath of the findings of the 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour.

Conditions for land purchase by African communities

Whites used access to land in the Transvaal as a tool for maintaining control. With the white economy depending heavily on agriculture, the control of the most productive land became central to efforts to build a strong white-dominated economy. The Boers' determination to take away land in the Transvaal from the Africans became clear, following the defeat of Mzilikazi by the Voortrekkers led by Andries Potgieter in 1837. Following this military

conquest, the Transvaal was declared a Boer territory and all African communities in the area were considered subjects who had to remain obedient to the whites. Consequently, African communities in the Transvaal lost access and ownership of productive lands and were subjected to forced labour by the Boers. In addition, Boers in the Transvaal were given large tracts of land as individual possessions, and in some cases individual Boers were allowed to own two farms – one for keeping livestock and the other for crop cultivation. Representatives of the governments, such as Field-Cornets, Landdrosts, Commandants and Commandant-Generals, often took advantage of the situation and acquired a substantial amount of land as personal possessions. Members of the African societies who were dispossessed of their land were then expected to offer labour to the white farms, which served as the basis for the development of individual wealth for the Boer farmers (Mbenga, 1996:204).

The monopolisation of land acquisition by the abovementioned government officials disadvantaged other Boers, who owned small tracts of lands and in some cases no land at all. After the mineral discovery in the Witwatersrand (gold) and Kimberly (diamond), the landless Boers joined the urban labour force, where they enjoyed upper social treatment, including higher wages – which was done deliberately to ensure the economic superiority of whites over Africans. African communities, after being forced to move away from their productive land by the invading Boers, also became landless and this impacted negatively on their economic activities. Furthermore, some of the Boers leased land for settlement by the African communities in exchange for labour, and this resulted in economic disparities between the Africans and the whites. However, the Boers allowed very few African groups to own land in the Transvaal (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:150).

African communities were expected to pay tax, which was a measure to pull them to seek employment from the whites. To ensure proper regulation in the collection of tax, Africans were allowed to settle in reserves – which remained under the watchful eye of the State. From the reserves, Africans were to pay Hut Tax of 2/6. The same tax was payable by Africans who stayed as labourers on Boer farms. Those living outside their masters' farms were expected to pay 10/ per hut. Though the government did not have a proper system for the collection of tax from the African communities, its officials ensured that it was collected – though in many cases the amount collected did not end in the government coffers (Brookes, 1927:121).

The obligation put on Africans to pay various types of taxes thus added to their economic problems and were compounded by their limited access to land. In response, most African communities in the Transvaal decided not to provide labour to the Boers' farms and this resulted in severe labour shortages and a serious decline in the economic output from the countryside. The Transvaal government was then compelled to look into the root of the shortage of the African labour and this led to the establishment of the 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour, as discussed in Chapter Three.

Following the recommendation of the Commission, African communities in the Transvaal were allowed to purchase land. The *dikgosi* and their subjects then raised funds through the collection of money and sale of crops and livestock to buy land. In most cases the African communities used whites and missionaries as their representatives during the land purchase. Once acquired, the new territory became a true possession of the community and matched the socio-economic and political needs of the community, for which a section of the acquired land was allocated for residential, farming and grazing purposes. All of these became central to

ensuring African societies' 'ownership' of land but did not assist in reducing their dependency on the economy that was dominated by the whites (Brookes, 1924:121).

The ba ga Motsha welcomed the opportunity to purchase land and register it under the whites because they viewed it as an opportunity for them to move away from the tough labour conditions at the hands of the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal. The ba ga Motsha neighbours, the Bahwaduba and the ba ga Moseitha, also indicated their desire to purchase land in order to maximise their economic activities. This illustrates that African communities in Hammanskraal opted for peaceful means, in this case agreeing to land purchase as opposed to violent protests against the Boer farmers. Consequently, the ba ga Motsha started initiatives to purchase farms at Neuhalle in the Waterberg District, as discussed in the next section.

Purchase of farms at Neuhalle, 1873

Following the conclusion of the 1871 Commission, as discussed before, the ba ga Motsha formally approached the *Volksraad* to indicate their interest to purchase land. The Africans were allowed to purchase land which was, in turn, registered under the whites and, in many instances, missionaries. In 1871, *Kgosi* Maubane II, with the assistance of Reverend Otto Sachse, started the process of purchasing land for his subjects. The use of Sachse in the purchase of farms was in line with the government's decision in 1871 that Africans were not allowed to have land registered under their names. Bergh and Morton (2003:55) further posit that:

With regard to land ownership, some African communities succeeded in getting around the restrictions. They initiated, often with the assistance of missionaries or agents, land purchases with local [white] landowners to buy land for them and to have it transferred to the white's names. An

understanding was then reached with the missionary in whom the missionary promised to keep land in trust for the community.

On 10 May 1873, *Kgosi* Maubane II asked Sachse to write to Commandant-General Kruger, indicating his community's desire to purchase land in the outskirts of the Pretoria District (SS, 156, R673/73). The Commandant-General did not provide a direct response to the request but instructed that the farms proposed to be purchased by the *ba ga* Motsha were not to be registered under their name. *Kgosi* Maubane II asked Sachse to indicate to Commandant-General Kruger that the purchased land would be registered under Sachse's name. Sachse wrote to Commandant-General Kruger informing him about the decision by *Kgosi* Maubane II on the registration of the land to be purchased. The request received a favourable response from the Commandant-General. Subsequently, the *ba ga* Motsha managed to purchase five farms, namely Schildpadfontein, Middelkop, Paaizyn Pan, Nieuwenhuis and Tuinplaas, on behalf of the community. Schildpadfontein was registered under Sachse's name, while the other four farms were registered as government's trust land (GOV, 1086, PS50/8/07).

In 1873, the community relocated to their newly acquired land. These farms covered an area of 20.880 morgen in total and after the purchase they collectively became known as Neuhalle (SS, 139,104/71). In addition to having the Schildpadfontein registered on his name, Sachse, on behalf of the BMS, received a third of Schildpadfontein as payment for his assistance in the purchase of farms on behalf of the *ba ga* Motsha. The BMS receipt of Schildpadfontein served as security for a £70 loan they provided to the *ba ga* Motsha for the purchase of the land (GOV, 1086, PS50/8/07).

The ba ga Motsha were not the only community to request permission to purchase land in Hammanskraal. The ba ga Motsha's neighbours, the Bahwaduba, had also used J.H.C Muller of the Hermansburg Missionary Society (HMS) to seek permission to purchase land where they could be free to conduct their economic and cultural activities without interference (Bergh & Morton, 2003:107). Like the ba ga Motsha, the Bahwaduba had to register their acquired land under the HMS and this provided a temporary solution to land ownership by the African communities in the central district, as they could not produce any written proof or title deed reflecting their legitimate ownership of the acquired land. The arrangement remained in place until the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877, as discussed in the preceding section.

The Native Affairs Department and land ownership by Africans

The political tension between the Boers and the British over the control of the Transvaal became evident since the establishment of the Transvaal Republic, and intensified following the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand area. When the British annexed the Transvaal in 1877, the Transvaal government became worried about possible threats to white domination posed by African communities. The British approach to the administration of African affairs did nothing to address the economic aspirations of the African communities, especially regarding land ownership, and the ba ga Motsha were affected by the British annexation. It is in this context that an explanation of the British approach and policies on African affairs in the Transvaal is provided to contextualise how they impacted on the land ownership by African communities, including the ba ga Motsha.

The British tried to ensure that an official policy governing African affairs was adopted because they considered that the governance of Africans could not be handled in the same way as the governance of Europeans. This led to the establishment of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) in the same year under Henrique C. Shepstone. To ensure smooth control over the Africans, the NAD created a bureaucratic structure that facilitated the flow of information and directives from the Office of the Colonial Secretary in London to the local Assistant Native Commissioner, who managed and oversaw the day-to-day activities of the African communities. The NAD in the Transvaal, as was the case elsewhere in the British colonial empire, was headed by the Commissioner for Native Affairs (CNA), who had offices in Johannesburg. All the matters related to Africans from the various districts of the Transvaal were brought to the attention of the Office of the CNA before being sent to the Minister of the Crown for action or for notice by the British parliament and public. The CNA served as the political representative of the British Crown and was the highest authority on all matters relating to British interests in the Transvaal. The powers and duties of the CNA were determined by the Minister of the Crown. Rogers (1949:4) outlines such powers and duties as follows:

[The power of the CNA included serving as] the representative of the Department and exercise the powers and carry out the duties by legislation, regulation or special instruction; exercise supervision over Native Commissioners, Tribal Chiefs, Headmen and other officials of the Department; watch over the interests of the Natives by making himself acquainted with their social and economic conditions, enquiring into their complaints, assisting them to secure employment and furthering any movements for their moral and material welfare; and keep the Secretary informed of all matters of importance that arise in his area and relate to the Native people.

Other duties assigned to the CNA included (Rogers, 1949:9):

- overseeing the general and individual welfare of African people;

- exercising civil and criminal authority and regulation applying to the Africans;
- availing himself to Africans and attending to their grievances;
- convening regular meetings with chiefs, headmen and other people to inform them about new laws governing African affairs;
- encouraging Africans to avail themselves of existing educational opportunities;
- providing an efficient and tactful administration of laws and regulations relating to land;
and
- collecting taxes from African communities.

The second highest position within the NAD was that of the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA), which was based in Pretoria. The SNA served as the principal administrative officer and was responsible for the day-to-day management of African affairs in the Transvaal. The SNA assisted the CNA in updating the British Cabinet and the Foreign Office about developments in the Transvaal. In addition, the work of the SNA in Pretoria entailed updating the CNA on various developments around the administration of African communities and matters that needed his direct attention. Where possible, the SNA advised on how the NAD should act on and/or respond to various matters affecting Africans (Official Gazette of the High Commissioner for South Africa, 1910). According to the Official Gazette of the High Commissioner, the SNA could, among other things, do the following:

Appoint all chiefs to preside over tribes and may divide existing tribes into two or more parts or may amalgamate tribes or parts of tribes into one [community] as may be necessary or as the good government of the natives in his opinion require.

The position of the SNA was followed by that of the Native Commissioner (NC). This position was meant for individuals who were given the authority by the CNA to execute the interests of the NAD at district level. The NCs were responsible for administering African affairs in consultation with the Office of the SNA. By 1886, there were fifteen NCs in the Transvaal, who were responsible for the following districts: Waterberg, Soutpansberg, Marico, Rustenburg, Pretoria, Middleburg, Lydenburg, Lichtenburg, Potchefstroom, Heidelberg, Ermelo, Bloemhof, Wakkerstroom and Utrecht (Pretorius, 2014: 173).

The work of the NCs was supported mainly by the Sub-Native Commissioner (SNC), who operated at sub-district level. The SNC was the eyes and ears of the NAD at local level and had direct interaction with African communities on various matters. These included conveying messages from the NAD, receiving complaints, processing applications for land purchase, processing documents for the appointment of chiefs and headmen, determining the behaviour of African communities in relation to the NAD and preparing documents for the issuing and withdrawal of gun licences issued to African chiefs and headmen. On 14 July 1881, the Ordinance No. 11 of 1881 was passed, 'creating the Administrator Supreme Chief and all the Landdrosts Administrators of Native Law; and recognising Native Law in all Courts of the Transvaal' (Edgar & Brookes, 1927:125).

Border disputes over farms, 1885

The Boer farmers in the Transvaal used the government position on keeping a distance between their farms and the African settlements to look at possibilities of expanding their farms by acquiring additional land from the African locations. The ba ga Motsha were affected by these developments. In 1885, there was a border dispute over parts of the farms Schildpadfontein

under *Kgosi* Maubane II and Bezuidenhoutfontein belonging to one P. Nieuwenhuis. *Kgosi* Maubane II was convinced that the government had the authority to deal with his community's challenges related to land acquisition. He then asked for the government's intervention in addressing the conflict over the ownership of parts of the farms Schildpadfontein and Bezuidenhoutfontein (GOV. 1086, P550/8/07).

The conflict over ownership of parts of the two farms led to serious border disputes between the two parties. Nieuwenhuis complained to the government that the ba ga Motsha were conducting occasional hunting expeditions on his farm. He also lamented that other transgressions by the community on his farm included collecting firewood and allowing livestock to graze on it. He threatened that he would punish those found guilty of transgression. The ba ga Motsha, on the other hand, maintained that the land belonged to them and that they were free to use it as they wanted. The tension between the two parties continued until the government committed to intervene. The government thus brought the matter before the Native Location Commission for investigation (GOV. 1086, P550/8/07).

The Commissioners of the Native Location Commission, led by C. J. Joubert, delayed the commencement with their investigation as the Reverend Kahl, who was expected to represent *Kgosi* Maubane II, was absent for unexplained reasons. It was then resolved that the matter be looked into by travelling distances on horseback on the farm Schildpadfontein with a view to discovering who between *Kgosi* Maubane II and Nieuwenhuis could point out the correct beacons to justify their individual claims to the contested farms. The Commission's preliminary findings indicated that the beacons pointed out by Nieuwenhuis were correct, but this was disputed by *Kgosi* Maubane II. The Commission then examined the reports on the ba ga Motsha's acquisition of the farms Schildpadfontein, Middelkop, Paaizyn Pan and Klippan.

It also visited the contested parts of Bezuidenhoutsfontein and Schildpadfontein with a view to making recommendations and advising on how the dispute should be resolved. On 7 March 1885, the Commission concluded that part of Schildpadfontein (No. 79) was the property of the BMS; that the farm Paaizyn Pan (No. 183) was registered under the government; that Middelkop (No. 332) and Klippan (No. 331) were registered in the name of the Commissioner for Native Affairs (CNA) in trust for the government; and that the portion of Schildpadfontein was registered in the name of P. J. Joubert, the Superintendent for Africans in Hammanskraal, on behalf of the government. The Commission then recommended that the farms Paaizyn Pan, Klippan, Middelkop and a portion of Schildpadfontein be placed under the Minister for Native Affairs as a location for *Kgosi* Maubane II and his people (GOV. 1086, P550/8/07).

The Commission further decided that Nieuwenhuis had a legitimate claim to Bezuidenhoutsfontein because it found that the beacons pointed out by Nieuwenhuis were correct, contrary to the claim by *Kgosi* Maubane II. The conclusion of the Commission was approved by Surveyor-General, Mr G. von Wielliegh. However, *Kgosi* Maubane II and his people were not happy with the conclusions made by the Commission and asked the Reverend Otto Kahl, a BMS missionary who acted on behalf of Sachse, to resubmit the details of their dissatisfaction (GOV. 1086, P550/8/07).

Kgosi Maubane II again felt that the decision taken was unfair towards him and his community because the farms Bezuidenhoutsfontein and Schildpadfontein had been rightfully bought by Reverend Sachse on behalf of his people. The protest against the decision to hand over a part of the farm Schildpadfontein to Nieuwenhuis led to a third meeting held by the Commission to examine the matter. At its meeting held on 12 March 1885 at the village of Swartbooi Mathibe

in the Hammanskraal sub-district, the Commission reconfirmed that the boundary beacon pointed out by Nieuwenhuis was the correct one. The Commission then decided to investigate the rest of the beacons of the farms occupied by the ba ga Motsha, which included Schildpadfontein (No. 79), Middelkop (No. 332), Paaizyn Pan (No. 183) and Klippan (No. 183), and its recommendation favoured Nieuwenhuis. In addition, a part of Schildpadfontein (No. 79) was declared property of the BMS and the other part was registered under P. J. Joubert, Superintendent of Native in trust for the ba ga Motsha. The farm Paaizyn Pan (No. 183) was registered under the government. The farms Middelkop (No. 332) and Klippan (No. 183) were declared government trust land under the administration of the CNA (GOV. 1086, P550/8/07).

Kgosi Maubane II maintained that the decision of the Commission was unfair because the boundaries of farms the Bezuidenhoutfontein and Schildpadfontein were altered in favour of the Boer farmers. He claimed that he did not receive the farm Grootfontein (Waterberg) that he had bought from Jan Smith who lived at Grootvlei near Nylstroom. The recommendations of the Commission were presented to the Executive Committee on 18 March 1885, and ultimately approved on 20 March 1885 (GOV. 1086, P550/8/07).

Following deliberations over the recommendations, the Executive Committee of the *Volksraad* concluded that *Kgosi* Maubane II agreed with the recommendation, which thus legitimised their decision. *Kgosi* Maubane II, however, was not in favour of the government decision to take to farms from his community. He reluctantly agreed, as he feared that his disagreement with the government's decision on the matter might lead to a possible penalty, including physical punishment. The Executive Committee also acknowledged that *Kgosi* Maubane II showed interest in acquiring more land adjacent to his settlement at the farm Neuhalle. The *Volksraad*, on the other hand, declared that members of the community could only settle in the

adjacent white-owned land in line with the conditions provided in the Squatter Law of 1887 as amended in 1895 (GOV, 1086, PS50/8/07).

The Squatter Law prohibited that land be registered under Africans and gave the right to each white farmer to keep five African families as labour tenants (Brookes, 1924). This was intended to curb the possible spread of infectious and contagious diseases from the Africans to the whites and to safeguard the whites against possible attacks by Africans, to facilitate easy access and control of African labour by the white farmers and to oversee the illegal congregation of Africans residing outside the farms in the Transvaal (Native Affairs Department, 1907:199–200).

The actual access to and utilisation of the purchased land by Africans was a controversial issue. It was sometimes marred by border disputes between Africans and Boer farmers. The ba ga Motsha were coerced into entering an agreement about their subordination and to ensure that they provided labour to white farmers, as was the case with the ba ga Moseitlha under Nchaupe Makapan. The government became wary of land complaints by African communities in the Transvaal and sought means to regulate and even curb such occurrences (SS, 139,104/71).

In 1884, the government declared that no additional land was to be transferred to the Africans. This decision was mainly intended to deter African groups, such as the ba ga Motsha, from purchasing additional farms because the Boer farmers feared that it would lead to a decline in the farm labour force. In addition, the Boer farmers perceived access to and ownership of land as being central to their economic and political domination over African communities.

Furthermore, Africans were prohibited to live on government ground not intended for settlement by Africans (SNA, 197, 354/04).

Consequently, from 1884, all efforts by the ba ga Motsha to purchase additional farms remained futile. In 1889, the government made it clear that the territories occupied by the African communities were not to be extended to the detriment of white interests and, where possible, whites could use force to retain dominance over African communities. The outbreak of the South African War in 1899 was one of the factors behind the stalling of efforts by African communities to acquire additional land (Burger, 2009:33).

Proposal to purchase Klipfontein, 1904

For nine years, since the conclusion of the Location Commission's deliberations on the ba ga Motsha's land dispute with Nieuwenhuis, the community still struggled to acquire additional land. Consequently, in 1904, *Kgosi* Robert Moepi Maubane of the ba ga Motsha attempted to purchase additional land for his community, notably Klipfontein (No. 196) (also known as Varkfontein) which was owned by L. Ohlsen. All necessary arrangements were made to ensure that the community members made their contributions for the purchase in the form of livestock towards the proposed purchase of the farm Klipfontein. In addition, the *kgosi* informed the NAD authorities about his community's intention to purchase additional land. On 26 May 1904, *Kgosi* Moepi held discussions with the Acting Native Commissioner, F. G. Rudolph, during which he indicated his community's intention to purchase the farm Klipfontein for additional grazing land for their livestock. In response, Rudolph rejected the request because Africans were not allowed to purchase land and it was the prerogative of the

NAD authorities to decide on the expansion or reduction of the borders of the existing African locations (SNA, 221, NA369/04).

Nevertheless, *Kgosi* Moepi persisted. He wrote to Rudolph on 28 May 1904, asking to purchase Farm Klipfontein. The request was in line with the announcement made earlier by the CNA at a meeting held in Hammanskraal on 17 September 1903, where the CNA confirmed that African chiefs were to be allowed to purchase land for their communities. Contrary to the announcement by the CNA, the request by *Kgosi* Moepi was rejected by the government because it feared that acquisition of additional land would enable the community to increase its economic activities, especially farming. This would reduce the ba ga Motsha's dependence on the income from labour offered to the Boer farms as the principal source of cash needed to pay tax. Rudolph conveyed the CNA decision to Moepi in a letter, dated 29 June 1904, where he wrote:

[He was] directed by the Commissioner for Native Affairs to inform [*Kgosi* Robert Moepi] that he has no power to sanction the purchase of land by natives, and that he is not prepared, therefore, to take transfer of titles of the abovementioned farm in the name of Robert Moepi (SNA, 221, NA369/04).

The decision by the government to decline the ba ga Motsha request to purchase the farm Klipfontein was taken in the context of the debates by the whites on how to manage African in affairs in the post-South African War period. Most notably, in the aftermath of the war, both the British and the Boers concurred that Africans should continue to be marginalised in all aspects of life. Consequently, in 1903 a South African Native Affairs Commission was established under the CNA at that time, Sir Godfrey Lagden. The Lagden Commission as the foregoing commission was known, included representatives with experience in dealing with African affairs from the Transvaal, Natal, Orange River Colony and the Cape Colony. The British-controlled Basutoland and Rhodesia were also represented at the Commission's

sessions that took place between 1903 and 1905. Interestingly, the Boers were under-represented at the Commission. The Africans, who were the main subject of discussions during the sittings of the Commission, were not represented at all and, as a result, recommendations made by the Commission remained without their input (Edgar & Brookes, 1927:132).

The recommendations by the Commission, which were later adopted as official policy on African affairs, included disenfranchisement of Africans and their continued socio-economic subordination, including continued limits on land ownership. The Lagden Commission, as Davenport (1991:207) highlights:

... reflected the High Commissioner's own concern for social planning, and introduced new rigidities into South African thinking about race relations which had an immense influence on later political debate. It formalised the idea of segregation in a new way. In the first place, it envisaged the territorial separation of black and white as permanent [and] mandatory principle of land ownership.

Kgosi Moepi felt disgraced by the NAD's decision not to allow him and his community to purchase the farm Klipfontein. He lost confidence in the NAD and developed a negative attitude towards the white authorities. This attitude was reflected through, among other things, his reluctance to attend meetings convened by the NAD authorities and his refusal to collect taxes from his subjects. Again, the rejection of the proposed purchase of the farm Klipfontein demonstrated the inconsistency of the NAD regarding land purchase by African communities in the Transvaal, as it was contrary to the decision not to allow Africans to purchase land made during the meeting between the representatives of the CNA and the *ba ga Motsha* held in Hammanskraal on 17 September 1902. In recent years, some of the older generation in the community recalled with sadness how the current land occupied by the community at both Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein could be viewed as a reflection of the restriction to own and access land in the past (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The CNA, through the Native Affairs Commission of 1905, ensured that African societies in South Africa were prohibited from owning land. This widened the economic disparities between the Africans and the whites and evolved into economic, social and political pressure on the government. The ba ga Motsha then became resentful towards the government (Interview with L. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 10 August 2011).

Constraints over the ba ga Motsha's lack of access to and control over land continued to be a glaring feature in their interaction with the Transvaal authorities. Any efforts by the community to be economically self-reliant were undermined and they therefore continued to provide labour to the white farms. Other members of the ba ga Motsha continued to be part of the migrant labour force to the mines at Witwatersrand and industries in and around Pretoria. The African groups, including the ba ga Motsha, continued to request permission to acquire land, but their requests were rejected by the government. At that stage, there was no organised movement to represent the demands of all Africans in South Africa (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November, 2010). The absence of unified action in addressing the African request to have access to land was further highlighted by Beinart and Delius (1986:45) as they noted:

The agrarian class struggle in the first two decades of the [twentieth] century seemed to offer little evidence of united political movements among the [African] tenants ... [and] ... the struggle on the farms was conducted in relative isolation, a constant contestation of the demand of the landlords.

Conclusion

To conclude, it could be argued that the period between 1873 and 1904 was characterised by efforts by the ba ga Motsha to purchase land to enable them to be economically independent from the Boers. In 1871, the government gave permission for African communities to purchase

land, but not under their own names. Instead, land was registered under the names of the whites, mostly missionaries. In 1873, the ba ga Motsha used BMS missionary Otto Sachse to purchase land at Neuhalle and registered it under his name. The community's efforts to expand their territory were often met with opposition by the local Boer farmers who were supported by the *Volksraad*, which demonstrated the whites' intentions to continue with the subordination of the community. The ba ga Motsha lost part of Schildpadfontein and Bezuidenhoutsfontein, following the *Volksraad* decision in 1885 against the community's ownership of parts of the two farms.

The ba ga Motsha's attempt to purchase the farm Klipfontein in 1904 was not approved by the CNA either. The remainder of the land was registered as government-owned land. This further confirmed the dedication by the Transvaal government to ensure economic marginalisation of the ba ga Motsha by denying them the right to own land, which was the case with all African communities in the Transvaal. After the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, a series of legislations was passed to further limit the African communities' land ownership and the ba ga Motsha were also affected by these developments.

Figure 5.1, below, presents a map of the farms purchased by *Kgosi* Maubane II at Neuhalle.

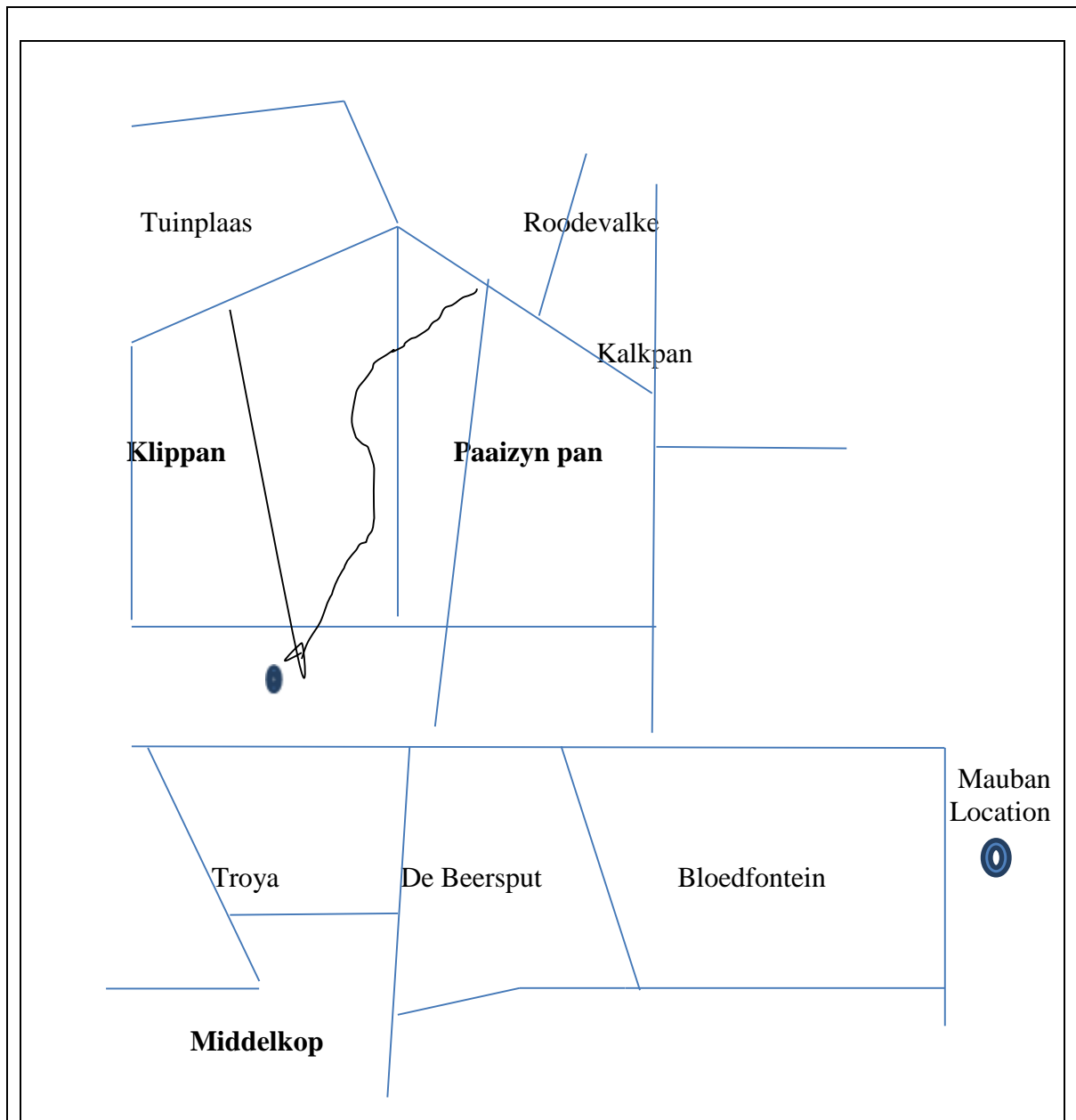


Figure 5.1: Map of farms purchased by Kgosi Maubane II at Neuhalle

(Source: GOV, 106, PS50/8/07 (1907))

CHAPTER 6

PROTEST AGAINST THE BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, 1878–1906

Introduction

This chapter discusses the racial tensions between the African evangelist-ministers – also known as the ‘national helpers’ – and the white missionaries of the BMS in Sekhukhuneland and how these tensions involved the BMS minister-evangelists among the ba ga Motsha. To provide a background, the chapter contextualises the advent of independent churches in South Africa and how that was linked the germination of anti-racism and liberation struggles. The chapter also illustrates how the protest by the African evangelist-ministers and their congregations, including those from the ba ga Motsha in Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein, led to the establishment of the Lutheran Bapedi Church (LBC) in 1892. It further demonstrates the extent to which the African evangelist-ministers were consequently marginalised by the BMS, especially regarding holding senior positions in the church and officiating at key ceremonies in the church. This led to racial tensions within the church. But finally, in 1906 the Transvaal administration officially acknowledged that African evangelist-ministers could facilitate marriages and purchase wine for the Holy Communion, which inspired *Kgosi* Moepi and the local evangelists-ministers in the consolidation of the LBC among the ba ga Motsha.

Independent African churches and the germination of anti-racism

The Boers used Christianity to justify their domination over African societies in the Transvaal. They viewed themselves as the *Herrenvolk* (God-chosen nation) that was destined to introduce civilisation in South Africa. The Boers used Calvinism as their principal theological thinking, and it became key in advancing their perceived racial superiority over African communities. By 1860, the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church, DRC), the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK, Nederdutch Reformed Church) and the Gereformeerde Kerk (Reformed Church) emerged as Afrikaans-speaking churches inspired by Calvinism. The theological teachings of these churches confirmed the Boers' desire to subordinate the African societies. Hofmeyr and Millard (in Pretorius, 2014:661) highlighted the racial separatism of the Boer churches since the 1650s as follows:

Calvinism played an important role in theological thinking of the Afrikaans churches. Eventually this developed into a neo-Calvinism or Afrikaner Calvinism which implied a combination of Calvinism with Afrikaner nationalism. This was to lead to a scriptural foundation for apartheid or separate development.

In the context of the Afrikaner nationalist thinking, the African societies in all Boer-controlled territories, including the Transvaal Republic, were meant to serve the whites. It was in that context that the Boers in the Transvaal Republic allowed various missionary societies, including the BMS, to undertake the 'civilising' mission in the Transvaal. As explained in Chapter Four, Boers regarded the missionaries as important, in ensuring that the Africans accept and understand racial superiority of the whites. The racial inequalities within various missions often led to the advent of African churches. Within the BMS, racial inequalities presented a stage for the germination of the anti-racism struggle by the African evangelist-ministers, as discussed in detail in the next section.

Evangelist-ministers' breakaway from the BMS

As noted earlier in the study, the BMS consolidated its presence with the ba ga Motsha when a small number from a community of 500 individuals became converts to Christianity in the late 1860s (Bergh & Morton, 2003:110). At that time, the Reverend Otto Sachse was the BMS' resident missionary among the ba ga Motsha. To promote missionary activity, the BMS recruited particular local African male members in their missions to be assistants to white missionaries. These assistants became known as national helpers or evangelist-ministers. Among the local community the evangelist-ministers were called *baefangedi* or *baruti* (*literally, teachers of the gospel*) because they played a key role in teaching the Christian gospel to African members of the congregation. The selected *baefangedi* performed various responsibilities, which included serving as assistants to the missionaries during church services and reading the Bible to the congregation and potential converts. They assisted the missionaries during burials and baptisms of the African members of the church. While the date remained unclear, it has been noted that among the ba ga Motsha at Neuhalle, Johannes Modingwane and Johannes Rakanye were trained by Sachse to be evangelist-ministers (SNA, 8, NA227/01).

By 1860, the BMS had established a stronghold among the Bapedi under *Kgosi* Sekhukhune in the northern Transvaal where it registered a stronger following among the local community, compared to the missions in the central Transvaal. Consequently, the Bapedi men, who demonstrated commitment to the BMS teachings, as was the case among the ba ga Motsha, were trained as the *baefangedi*. Martin Sebushane emerged as a leading *moefangedi* (singular for evangelist) among the Bapedi who had received missionary training from the BMS mission at Kgalatlou in Sekhukhuneland. In 1885 Sebushane and Timotheus Sello were ordained as

pastors by the Director of the BMS in the Transvaal, Dr H.T. Wangemann. Their ordaining elevated the two men as the first two African pastors of the BMS in the Transvaal. Sello worked with Knothe at the Missionary station in Botshabelo while Sebushane shared the BMS theology among the Pedi in Sekhukhuneland and other areas in the Transvaal, including in parts of the Pretoria District (Scriba & Lislerud, 1997: 188).

The Bapedi of *Kgosi* Sekhukhune and the ba ga Motsha maintained friendly relations prior to the establishment of the BMS in the Transvaal. The central feature of closeness between the two communities was cemented in intermarriages between commoners and members of the royal families from both sides. As a result, close ties between the ba ga Motsha and the Bapedi of *Kgosi* Sekhukhune encouraged interaction between the two communities. This led to strong relations between the two communities, which was realised through, among other factors, intermarriages involving both the royal families and their subjects. The *baefangedi* from both communities also maintained cordial relations, building on the close ties between the two communities. Consequently, the *baefangedi* from both areas frequently visited each other through inter-denominational activities, including attending funeral services of their members, which facilitated sharing of experiences as well as their personal encounters with the white BMS missionaries. It is still a common practice among various congregations linked to the BMS to conduct inter-congregational services and to attend various functions hosted in different parts of South Africa. Such interactions are also used to share perspectives on the issues affecting the church and society in general (Interview with J. Bila, Pretoria, 23 July 2015).

Generally, *baefangedi* among the ba ga Motsha and the Bapedi BMS, as in various African communities, were treated with suspicion by the two societies. This was because they were viewed as violating traditional beliefs by promoting the Christian way of life among the local communities. More importantly, the local *dikgosi* felt threatened by the emergence of the *baefangedi*, who followed the Christian approach in conducting certain ceremonies, such as praying for rain. A serious conflict of interest between the sacred *dikgosi* and the *baefangedi* emerged and led to a general negative attitude towards the Christian missionary activities by the African societies (Pretorious & Jafta, 1997, 213).

The ba ga Motsha, on the other hand, offered a different experience as both Christian and traditional belief systems were allowed to coexist (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). It was a common practise for the ba ga Motsha to continue to worship *badimo*, conduct rain-making ceremonies, engage in polygamy, employ the *dingaka* and use traditional medicine to protect them against *boloi* while at the same time observing the practises of the church and participating at its various services, including baptism and confirmation. In addition, key ceremonies such as marriages and funerals were also conducted with side-by-side recognition of both the Christian and traditional values. Moreover, it was a common among the ba ga Motsha to employ *ngaka* to use traditional medicine to protect marriages, while, at the same time, families attended church services and prayed to *Modimo* (God) to offer protection and blessings in various aspects of their daily lives (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010). The coexistence between the community's traditional belief system and Christianity was mainly for convenience as each side treated the other with suspicion (Poewe & Heyden, 1999:8).

By the late 1880s, the ba ga Motsha's growing support of and conversion to Christian teachings offered by the BMS resulted in more responsibilities for the local *baefangedi*. The *baefangedi* became inspired by the religious teachings, and especially the emphasis on equality of all human beings before *Modimo*. They learned through Bible studies how Jesus Christ was crucified so that all human beings could be saved from their sins. To them, Christianity remained relevant in their quest for the creation of just and equitable societies. Christianity served as a vehicle to address various challenges that the Africans were facing, characterised by their experience of having inferior status compared to the whites. Maloka (2014:9) accounts the following of Christianity by Africans in their quest for equal treatment as follows:

This appropriation took the form not only of the gospel, but the Africans themselves within the church structures started making demands on their white superiors for a voice in decision making and representation in the leadership hierarchy.

The white BMS missionaries among the ba ga Motsha, as was the case in other BMS mission stations in South Africa, encouraged racial segregation within the society. Consequently, they discouraged inter-marriages between missionaries or members of their families with the *baefangedi* and other African converts and non-converts. The white missionaries also occupied the best buildings in the missionary stations, while the *baefangedi* were accommodated in low standard housing, compared to their white peers. Additionally, the *baefangedi*'s role in the missionary stations was relegated to providing labour, including construction, maintenance and farming. Moreover, they fulfilled support roles during the religious activities that were led by their white counterparts. In addition, the BMS forbade the *baefangedi* from officiating during the marriage ceremonies of their members and they were disallowed from offering Holy Communion to their congregants, as these were reserved for the white missionaries (SNA 8, NA 227/01). The undermining of African Christian communities by the European missionaries was common in various parts of Africa. Pretorious & Jafta (1997: 213) also documented such

racial inequality within missions focusing on the Anglican and the Wesley missions in various parts of southern Africa.

The *baefangedi* remained committed to promoting fair and non-racial treatment of all within the BMS. Consequently, the *baefangedi* from the Bapedi and the ba ga Motsha communities requested to be allowed, like their white counterparts, to officiate at marriages and to offer Holy Communion at their congregations. The unequal treatment of the *baefangedi* by the BMS missionaries brought about closer cooperation between the African converts at both Sekhukhuneland and Schildpadfontein. In turn, the *baefangedi*, through the BMS station in Sekhukhuneland, wrote to the BMS authorities in Berlin to raise their concerns. The BMS authorities in Berlin saw the action by the *baefangedi* as challenging the authority of their white missionaries (SNA 8, NA 227/01).

The BMS, similar to other European missions in various parts of South Africa, feared that if they allowed equal treatment of whites and Africans at the missionary stations it could ultimately create an opportunity for the *baefangedi* to be dominant in its stations abroad (Scriba & Lislrud, 1997: 188). If the *baefangedi* took over the Christian mission, it could lead to the ‘contamination’ of Christian values with pagan practices such as *boloi*. Led by Sebushane, the *baefangedi* from Sekhukhuneland and Schildpadfontein joined the call for addressing racial inequality within the BMS. The *baefangedi* from Sekhukhuneland who supported Sebushane came from areas such as Schoornoord, Maleoskop, Matlala Location, Pokwani and Moletji. They were J. M Pududu, H. M. Mabogoane, T. H. Selepe, T. B. Mogadime, J. Mokgabudi, E. Letoaba, H. Matau, F. Mahume and H. Mogadime. As indicated earlier, the *baefangedi* from the ba ga Motsha at Schildpadfontein were represented by Modingwane and Rakganye

(SNA 8, NA 227/01). This group received support from Johannes Winter, a German BMS missionary who was based in Kgalatlou in Sekhukhuneland. Winter's support of the protest by the Sebushane-led evangelists is also emphasised by Pretorious & Jafta (1997: 213) who wrote, "Winter clashed with his fellow missionaries' paternalistic and discriminatory attitude towards the Pedi Christians".

Winter was born in 1847 in South Africa. He was the son of August Willem Winter and Anna Schüttge. His father was among the first BMS missionaries sent to South Africa. In 1852, Winter's family returned to Germany, where he pursued his studies and graduated in theology from the University of Berlin. In 1873, he was sent to South Africa as a BMS missionary and was stationed at Botshabelo. In 1878, he was appointed as the head of the seminary for the *baefangedi* in Botshabelo. After the defeat of Sekhukhune by the British in 1879, the BMS instructed Winter to establish a mission in Sekhukhuneland (Poewe & Heyden, 1999:29).

From 1882, Winter had personal problems with the BMS. He held a view that the *baefangedi* were an integral part of the BMS' expansion in the Transvaal. He then became vocal in the increased involvement of the *baefangedi* in key meetings and decisions related to the activities of the BMS among the local communities. He also believed in equal association of the converts, irrespective of race, and he personally had extramarital affairs with some of the local women. Winter's involvement with the *baefangedi* earned him unpopularity with the BMS authorities in Berlin, who labelled him a 'white kaffir' and accused him of alleged romantic relations with African women, which further left him in conflict with the BMS authorities in Berlin. Consequently, the BMS Disciplinary Committee in Berlin expelled him from the BMS

mission, but he remained at Sekhukhuneland where he continued to support the *baefangedi* in their efforts to establish an independent church (SNA, 8, NA227/1).

Following his expulsion from the BMS Winter became more active in supporting the *baefangedi*'s efforts to fight against their marginalisation in decision making processes affecting the local congregations (Interview with A. Mohlaka, Pretoria, 10 November 2011). Poewe and Heyden (1999:30) confirm Winter's support for BMS *baefangedi*, including those who worked among the ba ga Motsha, as they note:

From 1882 onward, the [BMS] Committee in Berlin had to handle frequent problems involving Winter [and the protesting African evangelists]. The solution was usually moving him or imploring him to return to Germany, to no avail.

Sebushane and the *baefangedi* saw Winter as a valuable partner in their struggle against racial inequalities within the BMS. Consequently, Sebushane accommodated Winter in his home in Sekhukhuneland and this added to the mutual relation between the two men (Scriba & Lislrud, 1997: 188). Winter then became inspired to develop a communication strategy between the Sebushane-led *baefangedi* and the BMS authorities in Germany and the Transvaal authorities (SNA, 50, NA1743/02).

The NAD was aware of the rift between Winter and the BMS as well as his quest for promotion of the *baefangedi* to senior positions, which were originally reserved for the white BMS missionaries (SNA, 50, NA1743/02). To the NAD, Winter played an important role in providing strategic information about the Bapedi, as he had close relations with the royal family. After his expulsion from the BMS, Winter remained convinced that Sebushane and his group had a right to form their own church (Poewe & van der Heyden, 1999:21). The

baefangedi then appointed him as their patron, though this move was not recognised by the BMS. In his position as patron, Winter was anxious to give *baefangedi* the authority to officiate at all events of the BMS in the Transvaal. This further widened the rift between him and his fellow white missionaries. His stand made him popular among the *baefangedi*, who viewed him as an important partner in their efforts to challenge their denial to the same privileges as the white evangelists of the BMS (GOV, 1012, PS 50/33/06).

Winter accompanied Sebushane during his visits to Schildpadfontein to solicit support of the *baefangedi* in that area. There they mobilised the local BMS congregation to support them in pressurising the BMS authorities in Germany to recognise the *baefangedi* as equals to their white counterparts (Interview with A. Mohlaka, Pretoria, 10 November 2011; Interview with J. Bila, Pretoria, 23 July 2015). *Kgosi* Maubane II welcomed Sebushane and Winter, and shared their perspectives with regard to the relationship between the *baefangedi* and the white BMS missionaries. He further allowed members of the local BMS congregation who were also his close associates, Johannes Modingwane and Johannes Rakganye to work closer with both Sebushane and Winter in addressing challenges faced by the *baefangedi* (GOV, 1012, PS 50/33/06).

The BMS missionaries became suspicious of the *baefangedi* who showed their support for Winter, including Modingwane and Rakganye, and threatened to demote them from their positions. The tension between the BMS and the *baefangedi* was further compounded by the society's restrictions and negative attitude towards the Africans and the undermining of the African views in church matters. Infuriated by the actions of the BMS, the *baefangedi*, with Winter as the author, sent a written request to the BMS in Berlin for equality in undertaking the mission's responsibilities by both the whites and the Africans in various missions in the

Transvaal. Their request was declined because the BMS authorities in Berlin maintained that *baefangedi* should only provide support services to the white missionaries. They remained aggrieved by the rejection of their request and maintained that they wanted to establish their own church. The Bapedi chiefs in Sekhukhuneland, in support of the *baefangedi*, expelled the BMS missionaries from their territories (SNA, 8, NA227/01).

Dissent towards the BMS was also prevalent among the ba ga Motsha and this weakened its popularity in both Sekhukhuneland and Schildpadfontein. The ba ga Motsha, however, did not expel the BMS missionaries but the majority of the local congregants supported the call for the establishment of an independent church. Consequently, the BMS station at Neuhalle continued with its activities, though with reduced number of local congregants. Even to this day, the old mission house and the foundation of the old church remain a surviving testimony of the BMS in Schildpadfontein. The premises currently serve as the home of the Neuhalle Parish of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa (SNA, 8, NA227/01).

The establishment of the Lutheran Bapedi Church

The *baefangedi* from the ba ga Motsha and the Bapedi, supported by their congregations, continued with their demand to establish an independent church. On 1 April 1890, the *baefangedi*, with the assistance of Winter, wrote a letter to the Transvaal government indicating their intention to establish their own independent church. They indicated that their envisaged church would maintain a good relationship with the BMS. The BMS would then be allowed to appoint one of its missionaries to oversee the activities of the new church. The matter was discussed by the government, which maintained that the request by the *baefangedi* should not undermine efforts to guarantee subordination by the Africans in the Transvaal. On 20 August

1890, the *baefangedi*, including Sebushane, Modingwane and Rakganye, wrote to the headquarters of the BMS requesting to establish an independent church with links to the BMS. The BMS authorities referred the matter to the CNA for action. The CNA did nothing to address the matter and this compelled Sebushane and his group to continue with their plans to establish their own independent church (SNA 260, NA731/05).

The group was comprised of a total of forty-seven *baefangedi*, led by Sebushane, and included Modingwane, Rakganye, Mabuse and Nkwane from the ba ga Motsha. The group wrote to the government and declared their unreserved dissatisfaction with the racist policies of the BMS and reiterated their commitment to establish an autonomous church (Poewe & Heyden, 1999:35).

The BMS, though their activities remained weakened at both Sekhukhuneland and Schildpadfontein, expelled the Sebushane-led evangelist-ministers from their structures. A century later, Motshekga (2011) noted the expulsion of Sebushane and the *baefangedi*, including the two from the ba ga Motsha, from the *baefangedi* as he commented:

The founders [of LBC], Reverend Martinus Sebushane, [Modingwane and Rakganye] were persecuted not for [their] faith; rather for the colour of their skin.

On 24 August 1890, Sebushane and his supporters established their own church, the Lutheran Bapedi Church (LBC), at Schoornoord, Kgalatlou in Sekhukhuneland. The choice of including 'Bapedi' in the name of the new church was mainly influenced by the leading role played by Sebushane, who came from the Bapedi community in Sekhukhuneland. In addition, the Bapedi

were in the majority among the *baefangedi* who had participated in the activities that led to the rise of the LBC (SNA, 480, NA3089/10).

When the LBC was formed it was thought that other *baefangedi* in other congregations of the BMS outside the Transvaal would form the local church drawing inspiration from the advent of the LBC (Interview with A. Mohlaka, Pretoria, 10 November 2011). That did not happen. The name, LBC, was accepted by all the *baefangedi*, including the non-Bapedi such as the *ba* *ga* Motsha who belonged to the Tswana. Even to this day, the LBC exists in various non-Bapedi communities and its ministers are drawn from various ethnic groups, often accepting the use of various African languages during the formal church proceedings (Interview with A. Mohlaka, Pretoria, 10 November 2011; Interview with J. Bila, Pretoria, 23 July 2015). Currently, the LBC has parishes in three provinces, namely Limpopo, Gauteng and North West and has ambition to expand to cover all the provinces in South Africa (Interview Reverend T. Masilela, Pretoria, 21 July 2015).

The *baefangedi* appointed Winter as the Superintendent-General of the LBC and he was responsible for dealing with all matters related to engagements with white authorities, including communication with the BMS headquarters in Germany. The BMS thus removed Winter permanently from its membership. Winter was viewed as a sell-out who decreased the chances for the creation of a much stronger presence of the BMS in South Africa. The BMS enforced strict rules on the ordaining of the *baefangedi* as full *baruti* and refused to recognise the LBC (SNA, 480, NA3089/10).

In October 1891, the group, assisted by Winter, approached the SNA in the Waterberg District and requested government recognition of their new church. The SNA conveyed the request to CNA J. A. Erasmus for his approval. The approval was granted on 24 October 1891, when Erasmus confirmed that the CNA agreed ‘to grant permission [for Sebushane and other evangelist-ministers including those from the ba ga Motsha] to leave the BMS and form their own church as they requested earlier’ [Translated from Setswana] (Mogamedi, 1958:19). The elderly members of the LBC recall with pride that approval by the government was a major victory for Sebushane and his *baefangedi* (Interview with A. Mohlaka, Pretoria, 10 November 2011; Interview with J. Bila, Pretoria, 23 July 2015).

Registering the church

The LBC was ultimately officially launched on 5 May 1892 at Kgalatlou with Sebushane as its first Bishop, but 24 August 1890 remained the official date of its establishment. To this day, the LBC holds its annual synod on 24 August or on a date close to the day as part of commemorating its establishment (Interview with J. Bila, Pretoria, 23 July 2015). The *baefangedi* from the ba ga Motsha were recognised as co-founders of the LBC, though it is not clear which positions they held in the new church’s administration. From 24 August 1890, Sekhukhuneland became the epicentre of the LBC, where it expanded to various parts of the Transvaal (SNA, 480, NA3089/10). Winter and Sebushane went on to ordain African evangelist-ministers as full ministers, including Modingwane and Rakganye from the ba ga Motsha in Schildpadfontein (GOV, 1012, PS 50/33/06).

The CNA wrote to Sebushane endorsing the independence of the LBC from the BMS. The meeting with the CNA was a major boost to the LBC. It gave the new church legitimacy to conduct its activities (SNA, 8, NA227/01). More members of the African communities in the Transvaal joined. The news was received with jubilation among the ba ga Motsha. Most of them left the BMS to join Modingwane, Rakgale, Mabuse and Nkwane, the founders of the LBC at both Tshuaneng and Neuhalle (SNA 260, NA731/05).

Sebushane, on the other hand, remained the Bishop of the LBC for all the congregations in the Transvaal until his death in 1892. Modingwane and Rakganye continued their ministries among the ba ga Motsha at Neuhalle until their death, of which the date is unknown. Their contribution to changing the racially based BMS bureaucracy is recognised in the official documents of the LBC. Their legacy among the ba ga Motsha exists in the form of LBC congregations that are still present in Schildpadfontein and surrounding villages of the ba ga Motsha (SNA, 8, NA227/01).

Conclusion

To summarise, this chapter has observed that the converted ba ga Motsha could serve as assistants to the missionaries. This provided opportunity for Africans to be promoted to positions of evangelist-ministers, thus being responsible for the furtherance of Christian activities among their communities, which was also common with the BMS at both Sekhukhuneland and Schildpadfontein. The *baefangedi* contributed towards abstruse understanding of the missionaries' Christian activities among African communities and that afforded them the chance to conduct services on their own. The *baefangedi* from the ba ga Motsha were also part of the African evangelist-ministers who drew lessons from the BMS.

Later they realised that the BMS was treating them unfairly as they were denied the right to officiate marriages of the African members. This led to the establishment of the LBC as an independent African church, which originally was composed of the Bapedi and the ba ga Motsha. The courage by the *baefangedi* to challenge the BMS served among the examples of active actions by the Africans in the struggle against racism in the Transvaal.

Table 9.1 lists the names of the ministers and local preachers of the LBC in 1905.

Table 9.1: Ministers and local preachers of the LBC in 1905

Ordained Ministers		
Name of minister	Name of local chief	Location
Martin Sebushane	Kholane	Schoornoord (Sekhukhuneland)
Johannes Modingwane	<i>Kgosi</i> Robert Moepi	Schildpadfontein (Hammanskraal)
Johannes Rakganye	<i>Kgosi</i> Robert Moepi	Schildpadfontein (Hammanskraal)
Josias Mokgadime	<i>Kgosi</i> Maserumule	Pokwani (Sekhukhuneland)
Jacobus Mokgabudi	<i>Kgosi</i> Kholane	Moletji (Sekhukhuneland)
Local Preachers		
Samuel Mabuse	<i>Kgosana</i> Moemise	Johannesburg
Elias Nkwane	<i>Kgosi</i> Robert Moepi	Schildpadfontein

(Source: SNA 260)

CHAPTER 7

THE BA GA MOTSHA MIGRANT LABOURERS IN PRETORIA, 1886–1910

Introduction

This chapter discusses the impact of the expansion of Pretoria as the capital of the Transvaal following the mineral revolution in the Transvaal in 1886. This discussion illustrates how these economic developments impacted on the urban labour patterns and the overall socio-economic outlook of the ba ga Motsha. Due to their close proximity to both Pretoria and Johannesburg, the ba ga Motsha participated in the emergent cheap migrant labour in the Transvaal. The mineral discoveries further contributed to the decline in the supply of forced and unpaid African labour to the white farmers as the cheap urban wage labour became attractive to African labourers. The Pretoria District was also affected. First, the chapter gives a general account of the demand for cheap African labour in Pretoria and adjacent urban areas. Second, it discusses the process and nature of labour recruitment in Pretoria and its implication on the ba ga Motsha. Third, it demonstrates the decline of cheap and unpaid African labour on the white-owned farms around Pretoria. Fourth, it highlights the impact of migrant labour in Pretoria on the ba ga Motsha's socio-economic worldview. Finally, the chapter draws some conclusions.

The demand for cheap African labour in Pretoria

The discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand area in 1886 added to economic development in the Transvaal. Consequently, the Transvaal government saw a need to expand Pretoria, as the capital, to meet the administrative and governance demands of the then gradually modernising

state. This created enabling conditions for rapid urbanisation and added momentum to the development of Pretoria. As a result, Pretoria emerged as the political centre of the Transvaal Republic. Subsequently, a number of auxiliary commercial enterprises emerged, including construction, wholesale business, trading stores, hotels, liquor outlets, manufacturing plants and labour recruitment agencies. These enterprises brought about employment opportunities which attracted mining companies and migrant labourers to Pretoria from all over the world (Beinart & Delius, 1986:27).

Although there is no specific evidence on the direct involvement of the ba ga Motsha as part of the urban labour force in Pretoria, the increased demand for cheap African labour in the city and in close proximity to the community made a compelling case for young men from the ba ga Motsha to join the urban migrant labour force in Pretoria. Various reasons accounted for the ba ga Motsha labourers to join the urban labour force. First, as was the case with the Boer farmers in the rural areas, the emergence of the various industries in Pretoria created a need for cheap African labour, as mentioned earlier. Second, in the countryside, young men were reluctant to join forced labour on the Boer farms because it was often characterised by harsh working conditions, including long hours of work and occasional physical punishment of the African workers by the white farmers in cases of failing to meet the desired labour outputs. Third, employment in the urban centres provided the young African men with some economic leverage over those employed on the Boers farms because when they returned to the countryside they brought with them western items such as clothing, alcohol and firearms, to name a few. These items were mainly bought through the economic interactions with urban labourers from various parts of South Africa, southern Africa and parts of Europe who were in the urban centres of the Transvaal in search of work (Pretorius, 2014:191).

Based on the reasons mentioned above, employment at the urban centres of Pretoria and the Witwatersrand became a preferred option among the young men from various African communities in the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa. At that time, the population of whites in the Transvaal was increasing, which led to a growing demand for cheap African labour in various industries that were mainly owned by whites. The white labourers in the urban centres were mainly employed as both skilled and unskilled labourers, often earning far more than the unskilled African labour (Pretorius, 2014:180).

Similarly, young ba ga Motsha men joined the cheap migrant labour force in Pretoria and the Witwatersrand. While noting that there were ba ga Motsha migrant labourers in Witwatersrand, this chapter mainly focus on those found in Pretoria. The cheap African labour, which the ba ga Motsha also provided, was used in the manufacturing of bricks and in sand and stone mining at various quarries around Pretoria. These two industries provided much needed building material for various construction projects in the city (Bergh & Morton, 2003:18).

Labour recruitment in Pretoria

Since the proclamation of Pretoria as the capital of the Transvaal in 1855, the Boers in the area were afforded superior socio-economic status compared to the unskilled African labour. Additionally, the Boers were further given full citizenship in the Transvaal. The establishment of Pretoria as the capital city of the Transvaal attracted many patriotic Boers who supported complete autonomy from the British. The new city was to be built to serve as the pride of Afrikaner independence and this required the construction of key infrastructure to meet the requirements of the capital. These included roads, government buildings, residential areas,

recreational facilities, roads and railway lines. Additionally, the administration of the city required services in the fields of postal services, healthcare, administration of justice, policing, sanitation, hospitality, land distribution and management, agriculture and food security, to name a few. (Pretorius, 2014:172).

The physical labour associated with the provision of goods and services to the white urban population in Pretoria was then reserved for the African labour recruited from the communities closer to the capital. By the time of the establishment of Pretoria as the seat of the government in 1855, the ba ga Motsha had settled in Hammanskraal, 70 kilometres northeast of the city. In 1873, as mentioned earlier in the study, part of the community moved to Schildpadfontein, some 100 kilometres from the capital. The proximity of both sections of the ba ga Motsha to Pretoria thus presented convincing argument for their employment as part of the African labourers in Pretoria (Bergh & Morton, 2003:18).

The demand for African labour in Pretoria led to the mushrooming of white-owned labour recruitment agencies. The agencies often collaborated with the *dikgosi* from the neighbouring communities such as the ba ga Motsha to secure the services of young men who would in turn be sold to provide hard labour to various companies operating in the city. From the first proclamation of Pretoria as the capital of the Transvaal, the African urban labourers in the city, which included the ba ga Motsha, were mainly employed in various sectors such as construction, security and police, postal services and magistrate courts. The construction sector was boosted in 1893 by the establishment of Portland cement factory in Daspoort, east of Pretoria. As a result, the then emerging white suburbs such as Arcadia, Sunnyside and Pretoria saw the mushrooming of several services sectors, including hotels and postal services (www.sahistory.org.za/pretoria-timeline).

Additionally, the government established the Department of Works and Industries as the custodian for the construction of various buildings in and around the city. It approved plans and conducted inspections to ensure that all buildings were in line with the official planning of the city. As the city expanded, various buildings were constructed, including residences, cottages, shops, warehouses, churches and other key buildings required to service the urban centre. The residential buildings included servants' quarters for African workers who were accommodated to render labour to their masters from the early hours of the morning until evening. The ba ga Motsha labourers also formed part of the African urban labourers employed in the private residences by the whites in the city (Bergh & Morton, 2003:18).

The ba ga Motsha urban labourers in Pretoria declined in 1899, following the outbreak of the South African War. Many had to return to Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein until the end of the war in 1902. The post-war period thus marked the intensification of efforts to modernise Pretoria to accommodate the needs of its growing white population. This created a need for more African labour in the city. The decline of African urban labourers during the South African War was not unique to the ba ga Motsha, as all urban centres in various parts of South Africa saw the same decline. This included key cities such as Ladysmith in Natal and Kimberly and Mafikeng situated in the then Cape Colony. Nowadays, Kimberley and Mafikeng are found in the Free State and North West provinces respectively (Pretorius, 2014:243).

After the war, the ba ga Motsha re-joined the urban labour force needed in the city in preparation for its establishment as the seat of the Union of South Africa from 1910. The Town Engineering Department of the Pretoria Municipality in its 1913 Report highlighted that the total value of the buildings completed stood at £11, 90. The completed buildings were located at what is today known as central Pretoria, Hatfield and Arcadia. At that time, the city's popular streets – Schoeman Street, Church Street, Andries Street, Arcadia Street and Pretorius Street – started to take their modern shape. The Municipality of Pretoria used prisoners for the construction, including Africans who were found in the city without work permits. These included jobseekers from various African societies around Pretoria and from Hammanskraal (TA4/4032, 26).

In the security sector, the urban African labourers were employed to guard key installations such as government offices, business enterprises and personal properties of the wealthy whites. Most notably, the banking sector started to grow in Pretoria and a highlight was the formation of the ZAR National Bank in 1894. This encouraged the growth of commercial activities in the city and the bank therefore remained vulnerable to robberies. The security sector thus became important to curb continued robberies (Mbenga & Giliomee, 2007:206).

It was common that the watchmen worked twelve-hour shifts with very little wages. They were often allowed to use batons to defend themselves against possible attacks by the thieves and to prevent possible theft. The watch patrol servicemen remained central to informing the authorities about criminal activities of the Africans in the city and they served as the eyes and ears of the authority on possible revolt against the government. This made them feared by the locals. Trusted patrol servicemen and some of the *dikgosana* were also recruited as police officers. They too were responsible for keeping law and order in the sections of the city that

were populated by the Africans and for providing strategic information in defence of the Boer interests in Pretoria and surrounding areas. This was mainly done to avert possible strikes by the growing African labour in Pretoria. The ba ga Motsha, based on their proximity to Pretoria, served as part of the patrol servicemen and African policemen in the city. The employing companies were not content to allow the African patrol servicemen to possess firearms. It was feared that by allowing the patrol servicemen to possess firearms, controlling them in the event of possible rebellion against the Boer authorities could become difficult. At the same time, the Boers were fearful that the British would recruit the armed African patrol servicemen in their political campaign to hamper the effective administration of Pretoria. The African patrol servicemen were then put under the tight command of the Boers, who often put strict measures in place to ensure total subordination by their subordinates (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Conversely, the African servicemen in the patrol industry remained content with their positions and offered no resistance to their conditions of service. The little money they earned made it possible to pay hut tax, and what was left was used to buy western items in the capital. The ba ga Motsha also offered heap labour to various sectors that emerged in the city. The use of migrant labour as source of cash needed for paying tax and acquiring western items was common in most parts of South Africa. In the Eastern Pondoland, for instance, the British annexed the Mpondo territory and introduced hut tax to coerce members of the community into wage labour in the Cape Colony (Callinicos, 2004:27)

Like other urban workers among the ba ga Motsha, the servicemen were respected by those who remained in the community and the farm labourers because they were viewed as being exposed to the urban life offered in Pretoria. When visiting their homes, they often put on their uniform and were envied by their peers who remained at the villages. Members of the ba ga Motsha who were recruited as part of the African police force were mainly responsible for handling criminal cases such as stock and property theft within their area and other crimes committed against the white population in the area. Within the community, the policemen held regular meetings with the *kgosi*, updating him on the safety and security responsibilities that the Transvaal authorities expected from him and the members of his community. The *kgosi*, on the other hand, established his own local 'police' who reported all criminal cases to him so that he could decide whether to conduct trials under the customary law or to refer them to the Magistrate Court in Hammanskraal (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal 30 June 2010).

Kgosi Moepi's visits to his subjects in Pretoria

By 1882, the official records of the Transvaal government revealed that there were 1,579 ba ga Motsha who were eligible to pay tax. Subsequently, the need for cash to pay tax remained among the compelling reasons for the ba ga Motsha to join the urban wage labour in Pretoria (GOV. 1086, PS50/8/07). The *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* of the ba ga Motsha, notably *Kgosi Moepi Maubane*, undertook occasional visits to their subjects working in Pretoria. Through the visits, *Kgosi Moepi* managed to establish closer relations with his subjects in the urban area. He further boosted his prestige as *kgosi* because the labourers who were members of his community would be interested in meeting with him to get updates on various aspects of the community life. In the urban centres, the *kgosi* was hosted by a group of migrants from his community who also arranged gifts for him, including alcohol. While this study did not

manage to reveal evidence on the specific encounters where the *dikgosi* of the ba ga Motsha were hosted in Pretoria, it was revealed that in the Witwatersrand area, Moepi was hosted by his distant cousin, Marcus Maubane, who worked for J.L. Juta at Pritchard Street in Johannesburg. Marcus was responsible for informing the white employers about the visits by *Kgosi* Moepi and asked that his fellow ba ga Motsha be allowed to meet with him. During the meetings, *Kgosi* Moepi encouraged his subjects to contribute towards various projects in the community by purchasing seeds and farming equipment that would be used collectively by *morafe*. In addition, individual ba ga Motsha used the visits to make their pledges towards the *kgosi*. This was mainly done to earn a closer relationship with the *kgosi*, thus facilitating greater respect and recognition by the traditional leadership of *morafe*. Their intentions also included the possible appointment as *bagakolodi ba kgosi* upon their return from the Witwatersrand. Elderly informants recalled how their parents would indicate that the position of *bagakolodi ba kgosi* was often given to wealthy members of the community, who were always willing to make monetary contributions in the running of the community matters, including to the royal family (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Drawing from the experience in the Witwatersrand, it could be argued with a high level of certainty that the same situation prevailed when the *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha visited his subjects in Pretoria. This was also confirmed by some of the oral informants who were consulted on the subject. According to the informants, generally, the ba ga Motsha migrant labourers in Pretoria supported their *kgosi* and viewed their stay in the urban centres as temporary, as they remained determined to return and make a contribution to the socio-economic development of their community (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17

November 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010, Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Between 22 December 1904 and 07 March 1905 Kgosi Moepi visited his subjects working in other urban centres in the Transvaal, including Pretoria, Johannesburg and Middleburg. During these visits he was always accompanied by a group of royal protectors and advisors. His movements drew the attention of the NAD who suspected that he was mobilising support from his subject to secure guns that could be used in potential violence against the whites (SNA 516, NAC4/05). On the contrary, *Kgosi* Moepi's visits were mainly intended to serve as field trip through which he wanted to understand the living conditions of his subjects and to draw possible lessons that could be adopted to improve the economic conditions of his people. Several oral informants highlighted that it was common practise among the *dikgosi* of the ba ga Motsha to visit their subjects in the urban centres mainly to use them as middlemen in the purchase of certain western items for personal and sometimes for the collective benefit of their communities (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

At the various urban centres, the ba ga Motsha appointed someone from their group to be their representative in addressing their concerns with the white employers and coordinating visits by the *kgosi* and his delegation. This contributed to keeping group solidarity among the ba ga Motsha migrants, and was also a common arrangement with various migrants from different parts of South Africa and other parts of southern Africa. Petrus Nkga Matseke, a member of the ba ga Motsha working as an interpreter in Marabastad, was the main convener of the other ba ga Motsha migrant labourers during the visits by *Kgosi* Moepi. Matseke wanted the *kgosi* to join other African chiefs in lodging complaints about unfair treatment faced by African

communities at the hands of the whites. He was also opposed to the concept of native reserves, as he viewed it as confirming the subordinate position of the African people in general and the ba ga Motsha in particular. *Kgosi* Moepi viewed Matseke's views as radical and feared that he might have a bad influence on other ba ga Motsha migrants in Pretoria. This led to a rift between the two men. Matseke thus limited his interaction with *Kgosi* Moepi by not visiting Schildpadfontein (GNLB, 371, 62/27).

In Pretoria, the ba ga Motsha migrants formed informal associations. These structures existed in various urban centres, including the Witwatersrand. The association maintained the community's traditional leadership structures where members of the ruling family and those who came from senior wards often became natural leaders. During the 1920s, for instance, Marcus Maubane, a relative of *Kgosi* Robert Moepi, was the leader of the ba ga Motsha Association in Johannesburg, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The white employers often recognised the association and used the association's leadership structure to report on key developments affecting their communities, including deaths of key members of the community. In addition to being appointed as representatives for organising the *kgosi's* visits, the leadership also had the responsibility to inform and discuss with all members of the issues affecting their families and to provide support to each other. In addition, this helped to share news about developments in their community (GNLB, 371, 62/27).

The *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* among the ba ga Motsha, often accompanied by their trusted followers, also used visits to their subjects in the Witwatersrand and Pretoria to purchase various western items sold in the urban markets, such as clothing and tobacco. Possession of western items gave a sense of status to the buyers, who in turn introduced these items to the community at large. The demand for western items therefore increased and, as a result, young

ba ga Motsha males became more interested in obtaining passes from the Transvaal authorities to seek employment in Pretoria (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The ba ga Motsha migrant workers purchased firearms from the illegal markets in Pretoria and surrounding areas. David [Maubane] in his testimony to the 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour attested that the ba ga Motsha had many firearms which were acquired by the migrant workers in Pretoria and Witwatersrand. He also highlighted some of the firearms were not officially recorded by the Transvaal authorities Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

During the ba ga Motsha migrant labourers' seasonal visits to their villages, the acquired firearms were left there. Such firearms were kept in secret to avoid possible arrests, punishment and confiscation by the authorities. The *kgosi* and *dikgosana* were often informed about the acquired firearms, and they too kept the information from the Boer farmers and the representatives of the Transvaal government. Consequently, the number of firearms the ba ga Motsha owned increased, which was often viewed as posing security threats to the Boer farmers. The Boer farmers and the BMS missionaries in Hammanskraal reported cases of shootings and stock theft involving the use of firearms to the Transvaal authorities. The Transvaal authorities feared that the proliferation of firearms could lead to disobedience among the ba ga Motsha, especially considering that the community was exposed to harsh working conditions at the hand of the Boer farmers. The Boer farmers and missionaries were encouraged to further report the possession of illegal firearms to the government, so that those found guilty could be brought to justice (Bergh & Morton, 2003:79).

The government's strict control of firearm ownership by the African societies, including punishment in cases of possession of illegal firearms, did very little to discourage the ba ga Motsha from illegal firearm purchasing. Those who owned firearms, however, did not use them to wage any physical attack on the Boer farmers, but used firearm ownership as personal prestige and for hunting purposes (Bergh & Morton, 2003:105).

The impact of migrant labour

Employment opportunities for the ba ga Motsha in Pretoria contributed towards the decline in the supply of African labour to the farms in Hammanskraal. As a result, the farm labourers comprised mainly of the elderly members of the community. The emergence of the wage labourers, as a result of employment opportunities offered by the urban economy, led to the rise of a new elitist class among the ba ga Motsha. This was prevalent in all African communities that participated in wage labour offered by employment opportunities in the urban centres (Bergh & Morton, 2003:106).

The new class used wages to buy items symbolic to wealth, such as cattle and firearms, thus joining the ranks of the wealthiest in the community. The accumulation of firearms by the African migrant labourers was received with great concern by the government as it posed a serious security threat. Policies on gun ownership and issuing of firearm licences were therefore maintained. In this regard, the firearm licences were only issued to the Africans who demonstrated good behaviour towards the Boer authority, especially the *dikgosi* and *dikgosana*. Conversely, the migrant workers continued to purchase firearms from the illegal market available at the urban centres, including Pretoria. The ba ga Motsha migrant workers also purchased firearms from both the legal and the illegal market in Pretoria. Even those who

remained in the countryside had the desire to purchase firearms legally and were willing to pay tax on ownership of firearms. In 1871, for instance, *Kgosi* Maubane II, as captured by Bergh and Morton (2003:106), wrote to the government and indicated:

We have many guns. The people who work [in Witwatersrand] bring these with them. We will be satisfied if we could buy [more] guns. We will be satisfied even if we have to pay more tax to do this.

Additionally, Boer farmers gave firearms to their trusted *ba ga Motsha* labourers who formed part of their hunting expeditions. In some cases, the *ba ga Motsha* labourers were given firearms by their masters to protect the livestock against attacks by wild animals, especially the marauding lions in and around Hammanskraal. The *ba ga Motsha* who were given firearms by their masters were expected to return them after completion of the assignment for which they were issued. However, some of the *ba ga Motsha* labourers failed to report back to their masters and left with the firearms. That led to proliferation of illegal firearms within the community. The continued acquisition of guns by members of the *ba ga Motsha* introduced gun violence to the community. In some instances, firearms were used as a symbol of power to settle interpersonal disputes, as their owners earned respect and were feared by those without firearms. This brought about disobedience towards the Boer farmers and in some cases the possession of firearms led to criminal activities, especially stock theft from the Boer farms. The BMS, for example, became worried about the selling of firearms and ammunition to the *ba ga Motsha* (Bergh & Morton, 2003:109).

The *ba ga Motsha* migrant labourers in Pretoria, like all African migrant workers, were accommodated in male-only compounds where members of their families, especially women, were forbidden from paying visits. Married male members of the *ba ga Motsha* were then subjected to spending months away from their families. In some cases, the families in the countryside were left under protection of available male relatives, creating temporary

dislocation of families and proxy marriages (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Amid these challenges faced by the African migrant labourers, most men from the ba ga Motsha viewed the employment opportunities in the mining area as an opportunity to accumulate cash. In addition, they needed money to pay tax to the government. The *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* were directly held responsible for ensuring that their subjects paid taxes and failure to do so could lead to a £10 fine (Native Affairs Department, 1907:209).

Conclusion

In closing, this chapter has noted that the ba ga Motsha, like all African communities in the Pretoria District, were affected by the creation and expansion of Pretoria as the capital of the Transvaal. Consequently, members of the community, especially the young able-bodied men were compelled to join the cheap African urban labour force as wage earners. In most cases, the African migrants were subjected to long working hours and were sometimes exposed to working conditions that demanded a lot of physical effort and to serious labour-related hazards, especially in the construction industry. Though economically, politically and socially marginalised based on racial grounds, the ba ga Motsha migrant labourers gained more authority and respect within their communities due to their exposure to and possession of western items found in the urban centres, including firearms. In addition, the *kgosi* and *dikgosana* among the ba ga Motsha took advantage of the presence of their subject as urban labourers to pay visits to Pretoria and Witwatersrand. That allowed them to acquire western

items and exposed them to conditions on the control of their movements and engagements by the government. It is clear that certain elements contributed to the political economic and social marginalisation of the urban African migrants in Pretoria, which was a glaring concern in almost all the urban centres in South Africa, including in the Natal Republic, Cape Colony and the Orange Free State.

CHAPTER 8

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR SKIRMISHES IN HAMMANSKRAAL, 1899–1902

Introduction

This chapter explores and analyses the South African War skirmishes near Pretoria and Hammanskraal between 1899 and 1902. This is primarily done to demonstrate the contribution of the African communities in Hammanskraal, including the ba ga Motsha and to justify the war as the South African War, 1899–1902. It starts by giving an account of the renaming of the war from Anglo-Boer War to the South African War to illustrate the direct and indirect involvement of all communities in South Africa in the war, including the ba ga Motsha. In addition, it explores cases on the involvement of the Africans in various clashes on the outskirts of Pretoria, including in Hammanskraal. This is followed by an account of various battles that took place directly in Hammanskraal. Furthermore, the chapter provides an account of the outcome of the war and its impact on the ba ga Motsha. Lastly, the chapter draws conclusions.

South African War: A justification of this name

Between the 1600s and 1900s European imperialism and colonialism had marked South Africa as a contested terrain by various groups who wanted to exploit both the natural and human resources for their own economic and political benefits. Britain remained determined to colonise various parts of South Africa as part of its ambition to create a federation of South

African states. The Boers, on the other hand, wanted to maintain their political and economic sovereignty. Consequently, in 1875 the British colonial secretary for colonies, Lord Carnarvon, officially announced the intention of complete annexation of the whole of South Africa by Britain. Two years later, the Transvaal was annexed and this led to fierce rivalry with the Boers. Nasson (1999:9) points out, “Boer republicans found the British virtually as committed to grinding them into submission”. Continued disagreements between the two groups led to the Anglo-Boer War of 1880–1882. As Davenport (1991:198) argued, “the [South African] War was fought to determine which white authority held real power in South Africa”. At the end of that War, the Boers managed to retain political autonomy in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. The Boer-controlled Transvaal, therefore, “re-emerged in a better state”. That led to a strong belief among the Boers that “only committed republicanism could act as a counter to British imperialism” (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 196).

The British, on the other hand, had the upper hand in determining the foreign policy in both republics. After the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, the British renewed their interest in complete colonisation of the whole of South Africa. Giliomee (cited in Pretorius, 2014:235) has highlighted the economic greed of the British following the discovery of gold in the Transvaal as follows:

Britain could not abide by the fact that the [Transvaal Republic] had full control over the richest goldfields in the world at the time when gold was the lifeblood of international economy.

Consequently, Britain encouraged the influx of its migrants, *uitlanders* (foreigners), to the Witwatersrand. Later, the British authorities supported the call for the *uitlanders* to enjoy the same political rights as the Boers. The Boers viewed this move as an indirect way of advancing the British political and economic dominance in the Transvaal, and was rejected. On 9 October

1899, the Transvaal government declared war against Britain after all attempts to avoid war between the Boers and the British had failed. This marked the beginning of war, which was originally referred to by historians as the Second Anglo-Boer War or the Boer War. Both names suggested that the war was a ‘white man’s war’ only, principally involving the Boers and the British (Pretorius, 2014:242).

Moreover, the South African War remains a well-published aspect of South African history. During the 1980s, for instance, historians started to challenge the fallacy that the Boers and the British were the only key actors in the war. Historians do concur that the war was a result of the competing greed between the British and the Boers over the control of South Africa and its vast natural resources, including minerals. Consequently, through the works of scholars such as Warwick and Spies (1980) and Warwick (1983) it has been discovered that various African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, participated in the war on both the British and Boer sides. The arguments on the renaming of the war as the South African War have been advanced through studies by historians such as Krikler, Mohlamme and Morton (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:223).

Pretorius further added to the discourse on the naming of the war by referring to it as ‘Everyone’s War’. In this manner, Pretorius highlights that the participation by the African communities was justified because they made up the majority of the population in South Africa. According to Pretorius, the whites in the Transvaal consisted of 289 000 people, as opposed to 755 000 Africans. Consequently, recruitment of Africans in both combat and non-combat roles became essential as both sides wanted to maintain the numerical advantage needed to sustain their fighting capacity (Pretorius, 2014:254).

While noting that the war involved ‘everyone’, as alluded to by Pretorius, this study supports the arguments that presented the war as the South African War. It was a war premised on the economic and political greed of the Boers and British over control of economic resources found in South Africa and the desire to impose political subjugation of the African communities such as the ba ga Motsha. This conclusion is maintained while recognising that expatriates who participated in the war, especially on the side of the British, included volunteers from Canada, Australia and New Zealand whose participation was premised on expectations for economic opportunities in the event of the victory by the British (Pretorius, 2014:244).

While the study did not find any evidence of the ba ga Motsha role as combatants, archival sources provided information on various skirmishes that took place closer to the ba ga Motsha settlements at both Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein. Historians discovered that the Boers and the British used Africans in both combatant and non-combatant roles in most encounters elsewhere in South Africa and this provided the basis for the argument that the ba ga Motsha also fulfilled roles which influenced the outcome of the guerrilla phase of the war in the Pretoria and Hammanskraal areas. This, as discussed below, is key proof of the ba ga Motsha’s contribution to the war thus adding to existing accounts on the involvement of African communities as justification for the renaming of the war as the South African War.

The ba ga Motsha: Serving two masters

When the South African War broke out, the ba ga Motsha remained divided as to which side they were to support, Boer or British. Others thought that supporting the Boers would, in an event of Boer victory, put the community in an advantageous position in its endeavour to purchase additional land and that the authority of the *kgosi* and *dikgosana* as the custodians of

the land on behalf of the *morafe* would receive more recognition by the Boers. They were under the impression that such land would be registered under their names, not under the names of white farmers and/or missionaries, as was the case with the land purchased by the community at Schildpadfontein. The ba ga Motsha's thinking that their support for the Boers during the war would put them in advantageous position regarding land ownership was based on the fact that the Boers would like to maintain the community as its 'ally' in soliciting information about the British encroachment to Pretoria through Hammanskraal (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Some sympathised with the British, thinking that a British victory would ensure their freedom from the physical punishment, taxation and coerced labour imposed on them by the Boers. This became motivation for their willingness to serve on the side of the British. The support offered by the African communities to the British forces was not unique to the ba ga Motsha. In the Mafikeng area, for instance, the Barolong boo Ratshidi sided with the British because of their protracted conflict with the Boers over land ownership (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:218).

At the time of the war the Maubane royal family was preoccupied with resolving *tlhomagano ya bogosi*, following the death of *Kgosi* Maubane II, as discussed earlier in the study. Consequently, there was no official position from the ruling family pertaining to the ba ga Motsha participation in the war. This allowed individual members of the community to make their own decisions on whether or not to participate in the war and on which side to serve. This also applied to the section of the community that remained at Tshuaneng. The members of the ba ga Motsha who participated in the war mainly provided occasional strategic information about the activities and movements of both forces in Hammanskraal. The information provided

by the ba ga Motsha scouts was mainly used to secure various parts of the Pretoria-Pietersburg railway line, which remained critical for the supply of resources to the troops on both sides. Archival information further attested to the significance of the railway during the war from early 1900, when the Boer forces solicited strategic information from sympathetic white farmers and African communities about the British presence along the railway Pretoria to Pietersburg (IOP, 5, IOMG464/00).

The surrender of Pretoria and battles closer to Hammanskraal

The British forces under the command of Field Marshall Roberts remained a thorn in the flesh of the Boers as they presented superior military capability over the Boer commandos in various parts of the Transvaal. Roberts's counter-intelligence activities near Hammanskraal, which involved the services of the African scouts, probably the ba ga Motsha, warned of the Boer military encroachment in the direction of Hammanskraal. The intelligence information provided by the ba ga Motsha scouts assisted the British in identifying the moves of the Boer forces and preparing for counter-attack. The acquired intelligence information achieved some level of success in the British military activities in Hammanskraal. This was demonstrated when A.F.C. Godfrey, an *uitlander* from Pretoria at Moretele River, was captured because of the suspicion that he had been providing strategic information to the Boer forces (IOP, 5, IOMG464, 00).

Additionally, on 24 May 1900, the ba ga Motsha scouts from Schildpadfontein also reported to the British intelligence about the Boers' invasion at Waterval near Moretele River. The specific Boer force was under Commandant-General Botha and was destined for Nylstroom, where they intended to strengthen the Boers' position in controlling the railway line and to

protect the Boer provisions from northern Transvaal. The military activities mentioned above served to prove the initial South African War military activities in the Hammanskraal area (IOP, 9, IOMG1175/01).

On 1 September 1900, the Boer commando attacked the British patrol in Warmbaths. An undisclosed number of combatants from the British side were wounded and others were captured in the attack. Others under the British military intelligence governor retreated in the direction of Pienaars, where they regrouped and took control of the railway station. In the process, they confiscated livestock belonging to the civilians living near Pienaars. Though the researcher did not find direct evidence of the seizure of ba ga Motsha livestock by the British forces at Pienaars, it could be assumed with certainty that the ba ga Motsha at both Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein were victims of livestock confiscation as both areas were situated some 10 kilometres and 40 kilometres from Pienaars, respectively (IOP, 4, IOMG35/00).

The Hammanskraal skirmishes

From August to September 1900, the Boers waged a series of attacks against the British forces in Hammanskraal. The British suffered serious losses and it was reported that nine members of its forces had been killed during a guerrilla attack by the Boer forces. After successful defeat of the British forces in Hammanskraal, the Boer forces moved northwards towards Pienaars and on their way looted food and livestock from African communities, including the section of ba ga Motsha that had settled at Tshuaneng (IOP, 9, IOMG1175/01).

In a report based on evidence gathered by the ba ga Motsha scouts in Pienaars, the British Military Intelligence Governor in Pretoria on 13 November 1900 was informed about the Boer advancement from Waterval, which intended to stop the occupation of Pienaars by the British forces from Hammanskraal. From the information that ba ga Motsha scouts handed to the commander of British forces at Waterval, Paget, 'four Boers attacked a pro-British white woman at her home in Walmansthal near Hammanskraal, took two women [as prisoners] and dispossessed a wagon' (IOP, 5, IOMG464/00).

According to information by an unnamed ba ga Motsha scout, the Boers arrived in Hammanskraal at approximately eleven o'clock at night, where they attacked civilians in the area. They attacked a house while 'a lot of them remained on the hill' near Walmansthal. The troop was on its way to Pienaars River, where it intended to wage an offensive in an effort to consolidate the control of the Pretoria-Hammanskraal railway. Upon arriving in the area of Hammanskraal, the Boer troops incited terror and fear on all the people they came across, including those belonging to the African communities such as the ba ga Motsha at Tshuaneng and Schildpadfontein. An African scout from Leeuwfontein, near Waterval, informed the British forces about the Boers' military offensive as he stated:

He has been driven away by the Boers and ... all the Kaffirs ... are being driven away by the Boers telling them that they now belong to the Boers ... many weapons and many women were taken as prisoners by the Boers (IOP, 5, IOMG464./00).

The expulsion of Africans from Leeuwfontein by the Boer forces was further confirmed by other African scouts, who provided information to the British Command that the Boers had come as far as Leeuwfontein, thereafter moving south of Pienaars, where they confiscated livestock from the African communities. Others remained on the hill waiting to safeguard the

acquired loot which was essential in sustaining their war efforts. From Leeuwfontein, the Boer troop moved in a north-easterly direction towards Pienaars. The ba ga Motsha scouts reported that ‘many spoors of wagons of the Boers came through Schildpadfontein’ (IOP, 5, IOMG464/00). Additionally, the ba ga Motsha scouts saw about thirty Boer soldiers from Warmbaths with four wagons. They then shared this information with the British military intelligence, which alerted its forces to take up an offensive position (IOP, 5, IOMG464/00).

It should be noted, however, that some African communities also participated in the war on the side of the Boers. In the same vein, the British did not have total control of the ba ga Motsha participation on their side, which often led some individuals from the community to take part on the side of the Boers (Interview with L. Moagi, Pretoria, 12 March 2012). The members of the ba ga Motsha who participated in the war on the side of the Boers included Simon Petrus (Peter) Matseke from Schildpadfontein. As highlighted on the South African History website (www.sahistory.org.za), very little has been documented about Matseke’s actual involvement in the war, except that he served as a wagon driver for the Boer forces during the war. Based on the evidence that historians presented on the secret involvement of Africans in combatant role on both sides it could be asserted that even Matseke and a group of ba ga Motsha who were part of the Boer commando in Hammanskraal were armed. Davenport (1991:199) provided an account on the role played by Africans on the side of the Boers by indicating, “Boer authorities [limited] blacks who accompanied the commandos to the role of wagon drivers or servants”. As servants, the Africans on the side of the Boers, as it was also the case on the British side preformed a number of support roles including scouting, digging trenches, collecting firewood and delivering food supplies to the commandos (Davenport, 1991:199). It was based on this logic that Matseke led a small group of the ba ga Motsha who provided

supplies to the Boer forces in Hammanskraal (Interview with P. Matseke, Hammanskraal, 6 September 2010).

Matseke's role as a wagon driver brought him closer to the Boer commanders during the war. Consequently, he mastered Dutch and this afforded him the opportunity to work as a court interpreter in Pretoria after the war (Interview with P. Matseke, Hammanskraal, 6 September 2010). Based on his closer communication with the Boer commanders, it could be concluded with a high level of certainty that his inputs were accepted by the Boers when they planned various military operations around Hammanskraal and Pretoria and, as a result, he played a strategic role in the war (www.sahistory.org.za).

The involvement of Africans in strategic roles was not only limited to the case of Matseke. Among the Barolong-boo-Ratshidi in Mafikeng, Solomon Plaatje reinforced his professional career as an interpreter for the Cape government in Mafikeng. Unlike Matseke, Plaatje could not present his input to the British on the war. His experiences on the negative impact of the war on the Barolong and other African communities inspired him to join the nationalist struggle in South Africa and became the first secretary of the South African Native National Congress (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:213).

The British remained determined to capture the Hammanskraal railway station. In response, the Boer forces remained vigilant of the British military activities in the area. African scouts were recruited to provide information about the movement of trains travelling between Hammanskraal and Pienaars carrying supplies for the British forces. On 29 August 1901, Jack Hindon, who was a popular train wrecker among the Boer commando in Hammanskraal, used

the information from the African scouts to derail a train travelling between Hammanskraal and Waterval which was carrying military supplies for the British forces. The train had armed British officers on board who resisted being captured by the Hammanskraal Boer commando. Exchange of fire ensued and thirteen British soldiers and three civilians on board were killed. Consequently, the crew on board were forced to surrender. Hindon and his men, on the other hand, emerged victorious and took all the war supplies, including food and dynamite. This gave the Hammanskraal commando added capacity to destroy many more trains believed to be carrying supplies for the British forces (Grobler, 2013:121).

The Boer forces used the demolition of railways and trains because it provided them with military advantage. First, it compelled the British to increase the number of soldiers to guard the railway and this reduced their numerical advantage on the battle front. Second, the Boer forces captured valuable war supplies such as food and ammunition needed to sustain their military activities. Third, the demolition of trains and railways inflicted severe damage to the British military capacity while using minimal personnel (Davenport, 1991:195). The Boers' strategy of demolishing trains and railway lines was not only used in Hammanskraal; it was also widely used in the eastern Transvaal. In September 1901, the British commander, Lord Kitchener complained to Commandant-General Botha that the derailing of railways and trains by the Boer forces reflected the use of uncivilised methods of warfare as it did not discriminate between military and civilian targets. The Boer forces, however, continued to sabotage activities on railways and trains to gain military advantage against their enemies (Grobler, 2013:123). The Boers military efforts remained inadequate to offer resistance to the offensive by the British forces. The British forces then took over Pretoria on 5 June and three months later annexed the Transvaal (Pretorius, 2014:245).

The outcome of the war

The Peace Treaty of Vereeniging, signed in 1902, received sufficient attention by historians. The treaty signified the end of the South African War. The Boers were humiliated in the war and most of their farmers lost their economic autonomy, as their farms and belongings had been destroyed in combat. After suffering massive losses and being faced with the harsh socio-economic miseries associated with war, the Boers reluctantly surrendered to the British. While the Boers had lost the war, the British remained cautious on how they were going to maintain their political control in South Africa. At Vereeniging, both white groups – the Boers headed by General Jan Smuts and General Hertzog and the British headed by Kitchener and Sir Alfred Milner – assured the other that military confrontation would be avoided in the future. The determination to avoid future military tension was premised on both sides' determination to avert possible attacks by the Africans. This view is in line with the contention by Morrel (1983:6) that “the end of the war in 1902 was significant not so much for the defeat of the Boers but for the alliance of Boer and Briton against the Africans”. Both the Boers and the British then committed to working together to create a modern country that would ensure socio-economic and political superiority for all the whites. The Treaty of Vereeniging, as Davenport (1991:201) noted:

... was a treaty of friendship which would settle future economic relationships and political rights, and provide for the arbitration of disputes, equal language rights, and mutual amnesty.

To the British bureaucrats, fighting in a war in a faraway country such as South Africa proved to be a costly exercise and measures were necessary to deter possible military confrontation with the Boers in the future. What remained glaring was the fact that the outcome of the war served as the foundation for the construction of a unified white-dominated capitalist state.

Consequently, the Transvaal was annexed by the British to form part of a unified South Africa under Sir Alfred Milner as high commissioner. The Boers' legal system that had Landdrosts as principal executors of justice was replaced by the magistrate system, which became mainly interested in ensuring the British domination of the political landscape in the whole of South Africa (Mbenga, 1996:254).

African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, despite their various involvements in the war, did not gain anything from the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging. Both the British and the Boers agreed to exclude African communities from participating in government and, as a result, they were kept out of formal politics. The key preoccupation of Milner's administration was to win confidence of the British and Boer subjects who were viewed as central to the creation of a white-dominated state in South Africa (Pretorius, 2014:259).

Milner's administration actively tried to revive the socio-economic wellbeing of whites in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. In this case, the majority of Afrikaners and British who had been displaced during the war were allowed to return and re-establish their lives in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. In the Transvaal, as in various parts of South Africa, African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, were subjected to inferior status compared to their white counterparts, which led to the continuation of master-servant relations that were based on the racial superiority of the whites – identical to the period before the outbreak of the South African War (Mbenga, 1996:254). Milner's administration wanted to maintain strict control on the activities of African communities to ensure that they did not pose threats to the white interests in South Africa. Consequently, the everyday running of matters related to African communities was brought under the NAD (Mbenga, 1996:254).

The ba ga Motsha, like other African communities in the Transvaal, were exposed to strict measures that governed their political and economic activities. Their movements in the urban centres such as Pretoria and Witwatersrand were restricted. In all cases, the members of the community who wished to look for work in the cities were required to apply for travel permits from the government. The government, on the other hand, conducted security checks to ensure that the applicants would demonstrate obedient behaviour once allowed to go to the urban centres. Such strict issuing of passes was also applicable to the African chiefs who often visited their subjects in the Witwatersrand mines. *Kgosi* Robert Moepi of the ba ga Motsha was among the African chiefs who regularly visited his subjects in Pretoria and Johannesburg. The Transvaal authorities became sceptical that *Kgosi* Moepi's frequent visits to his subjects in urban centres could motivate him to adopt a more radical approach towards the whites. According to the white authorities, this had to be deterred as it could lead to disobedience against the whites in the Hammanskraal sub-district.

To regulate his movements, the authorities temporarily suspended his travel permit in June of 1904. *Kgosi* Moepi viewed the suspension of his travel permit as constraining his movements and denying him the opportunity to learn about the experiences of his subjects who were working in Johannesburg and Pretoria. The strict policies on the movements of African labourers and their chiefs did not go unchallenged. It led to the call by Africans for representation in government so that they could contribute to the development of policies governing various aspects of their lives. By 1902, the African traditional leaders and other educated members of their communities had started to plan the establishing of formal nationalist structures to oppose white domination in South Africa. This led to the establishment of a number of Native Congresses throughout South Africa, including in the Cape, Natal, Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Pampallis (1991:61–63) attests:

In the years following 1902, the main focus of African political activity became the question of the franchise in the Transvaal, Orange River Colony and Natal ... all these organisations struggled for the rights of the oppressed African people.

The organised African political organisations during the early 1900s included the Natal Native Congress (NNC), the Cape-Colony-based South African Native Congress (SANC), which was later called the Cape Native Congress (CNC), and the Native Vigilance Association of the Orange River Colony (NVAORC). The NNC at that time was headed by Martin Luthuli, Saul Msane, Josiah Gumede and John Dube. The CNC, on the other hand, was headed by Reverend Walter Rubusana, while the NVAORC was guided by T.M. Maphikela (Pillay, 1993:3).

The establishment of the Transvaal Native Congress (TNC) in 1906 became instrumental in the formalisation of the African protest against white domination in the area. The TNC later merged with the Transvaal Native Political Union. Both agreed to retain TNC as the official name of their structure. Like other African political organisations from various parts of the country at that time, the TNC's political activities were conducted in a non-violent form whereby it sought to negotiate with the Transvaal authorities to allow African communities participation in decision-making processes in the same manner as their white counterparts (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2008:236).

Judging from *Kgosi* Moepi's behaviour towards the Transvaal authorities, in the aftermath of the failed purchase of farm Varkfontein and the Moroelakop incident discussed before, it could be concluded that *Kgosi* Moepi [Maubane] had directly or indirectly influenced the activities of the TNC. In an interview with the author, an oral informant closely related to the ba ga Motsha royal family supported the efforts of the Africans in the Pretoria District to have more

power in governing their own affairs, however, without undermining the white authorities (Interview with L. Moagi, Pretoria, 13 June 2012).

Although there is no evidence of *Kgosi* Moepi's attendance at various meetings, the fact that he had received formal education from a missionary school and was part of the African traditional leadership which at that time was calling for the franchise of African communities – especially the *dikgosi* and members of the community who received western education – qualified him to be among the pathfinders of anti-white struggle in the Transvaal. At that time, it was common for traditional leaders, educated individuals and businessmen to raise issues with the white authorities as a way of fighting for justice and equality. That became among the key characteristics of the SANNC – renamed the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923 – as it emerged as 'a direct consequence of the denial of political rights to the majority of the [non-white] population' (Esterhuysen, 2008:312).

Peter Matseke, an aggrieved member of the *ba ga Motsha* who had participated in the South African War on the side of the Afrikaners, became active in the nationalist movement in Pretoria. He served as the president of the TNC during its formative years. Matseke also served as a representative of the *ba ga Motsha* migrants in Marabastad, Pretoria (Interview with L. Moagi, Pretoria, 13 June 2012). At that point, migrants from various parts of the country would form a loose structure based on their tribal origins to address various aspects related to their livelihood in the urban centres. They debated and reflected on their individual and collective experiences with the white authorities, the impact of various legislations on their socio-economic status and their relations with the traditional chiefs and their families in the African locations. This often led to the creation of 'ethnic-based associations' that became mainly interested in advancing and protecting their individual group's interests (Bonner, 2002:5).

As Matseke's popularity grew in Marabastad – a shanty town situated on the northern part of Pretoria that served as a residential area for African migrant workers in the city – more of the ba ga Motsha migrant workers became aware of the racial injustices imposed by the whites in the aftermath of the South African War. Consequently, the majority of the ba ga Motsha voluntarily supported the call for the establishment of a unified nationalist movement to advance the interests of all Africans in South Africa (IOP, 6, IOMG242/01).

Conclusion

To conclude, the chapter demonstrated that members of the ba ga Motsha participated actively during the South African War skirmishes near Pretoria and Hammanskraal between 1899 and 1902. Their participation, as was the case with many other African communities, further added to the justification of the renaming of the war from the Anglo-Boer War to the South African War, especially in the context of the argument on the involvement of all communities in South Africa in the war. Additionally, during the Hammanskraal skirmishes, it was discovered that the British forces used combatants from Rhodesia, which also added to the extra-territorial nature of the war and could be used to argue that the war was 'everybody's war'. This further illustrated the level of both local and international interest in the control of the economic resources found in South Africa. Most notably, the ba ga Motsha did not benefit from the outcome of war, despite their participation in various skirmishes in Pretoria and Hammanskraal. Contrary to the ba ga Motsha's expectations, the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging confirmed their social, political and economic subordination, as was the case with all the other African communities that participated in the war.

CHAPTER 9

TLHOMAGANO YA BOGOSI AT SCHILDPADFONTEIN, 1902–1905

Introduction

This chapter discusses the political developments among the ba ga Motsha at Schildpadfontein, while focusing on the *tlhomagano ya bogosi* (succession – hereafter *tlhomagano*) and the appointment of *dikgosi* (chiefs) between 1902 and 1905. First, it discusses the stability in the *bogosi* (chieftainship) of the ba ga Motsha between 1873 and 1902. That emanated from *Kgosi* Maubane II's adherence to the conditions on the provision of labour by the ba ga Motsha and their race to the Boers. Second, it provides an account of the *bogosi ba nama o sa tshwere* (regency) among the ba ga Motsha, following the death of *Kgosi* Maubane II in 1902. The role played by the NAD in the appointment and/or dismissal of the *batshwareledi ba bogosi* (regents- hereafter, *batshwareledi*) and how this led to the appointment of Andries Moepi Maubane as *kgosi* in 1904, is also discussed. Thereafter, a discussion follows on the Moroelakop incident to demonstrate the Boers' suspicion of possible attacks by the ba ga Motsha and its contribution to the Transvaal authorities' mistrust of *Kgosi* Moepi. Lastly, it gives an account of the issuing of firearm licences to members of the ba ga Motsha ruling family, and how the firearm licences were used to maintain obedience and loyalty of the community members to the government.

The Transvaal government and the appointment of *dikgosi*, 1873–1902

The Transvaal government regarded *dikgosi* as central to ensuring the subordination of African communities. Since the arrival of the Boers at the Cape and later their movement into the interior of South Africa, as was the case elsewhere on the African continent, the African communities respected their traditional governance system. This has been discussed in detail in Chapter Two. To recap, the traditional governance among the African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, revolved around *bogosi*, which remained central to critical decisions affecting the whole community. This included making decisions regarding the maintenance of relations with the neighbours and the utilisation of both natural and human resources at its disposal. This meant that the *kgosi* had the authority to declare war or make peace with the neighbouring communities. In addition, the *kgosi* had the power to make decisions on whether to rebel against or cooperate with external forces (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 35). The Transvaal government therefore closely monitored the activities of *dikgosi* and tried by all means to ensure that they remained obedient under white domination. The government got more involved in determining the political destiny of African communities, including the appointment of *dikgosi*, as it was used to deter possible rebellion against the white authority (Pretorius, 2014:166).

It was for the foregoing reasons that the successive white governments in the Transvaal managed to maintain political and economic dominance over the African communities in South Africa, including the ba ga Motsha. In addition, the post-South Africa War dispensation emphasised the need for the government to take deliberate action through the NAD to sustain the subordination of Africans in the Transvaal and elsewhere in South Africa. Consequently,

the government passed Ordinances 3 and 44 in 1902, which gave it sole authority to appoint *dikgosi*. The two pieces of legislation gave *dikgosi* the right to exercise primary authority in civil matters affecting their groups (Edgar & Brookes, 1927:131).

The 1902 laws gave the Transvaal government the power to appoint members of the royal families who were committed to assist in ensuring adherence by the African societies to the rules and regulations that ensured the socio-economic and political superiority of the Boers over the Africans. The government thus made such appointments without considering whether or not the appointments were in line with *tlhomagano ya bogosi* (succession- henceforth *tlhomagano*), as determined by the African tradition. As a result, the appointment of *dikgosi* by the Transvaal government had an impact on the *tlhomagano* among various African communities as the NAD ensured the removal of *dikgosi* who were unwilling to cooperate with the government. This led to the promotion of *dikgosi* and members of the ruling families who were prepared to assist in the consolidation of white supremacy. The Boers' upper hand in deciding on *tlhomagano* among African societies continued even during the post-South African War, and was further maintained by the Union government. Among the ba ga Kgafela, for instance, the Transvaal government appointed Moselekatse, who was succeeded by his son, Mokaie, to take over *bogosi* after the departure of *Kgosi* Kgamanyane from Pilanesberg. This remained the case despite the fact that neither Moselekatse nor his son was nominated by *Kgosi* Kgamanyane. Such interference often disrupted the patterns of *tlhomagano* among many African societies (Mbenga, 1996:198).

Batshwareledi ba bogosi among the ba ga Motsha, 1902–1904

Following the death of *Kgosi* Maubane II in 1902, the *ba ga Motsha* were divided over who should be appointed as *motshwareledi*. This was despite the provision made by the community's traditional practice which gave the late *kgosi*'s younger brother automatic authority to serve as *motshwareledi* for the late *kgosi*'s eldest son to take over the crown. After the death of *Kgosi* Maubane II in 1902 *Kgosigadi* Masekaseka did not allow her husband's brother, Saul, to serve as *motshwareledi*. Masekaseka and her supporters within the Maubane royal family feared that he would permanently bring *bogosi* under his lineage. Another factor that added to the challenge regarding the appointment of *motshwareledi* from the late *Kgosi* Maubane II's sons was that there was no son from the principal marriage and Masekaseka, in her capacity as *kgosigadi* did not support the appointment of Ratlhagana, the eldest son from the late *kgosi*'s second marriage, as successor (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). *Kgosigadi* Masekaseka, despite her old age, then took over as *motshwareledi*. The *ba ga Motsha* accepted Masekaseka's position as *kgosigadi* for various reasons. First, her ascension to the throne was in line with the community's requirement as she was expected to play a key role in decision-making and in preparing for the heir to take over when the time was right. Second, they viewed that her strong character was relevant in keeping unity within the royal family and to avoid succession disputes (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The SNC, on the other hand, was opposed to the appointment of Masekaseka as *motshwareledi* because the Transvaal authorities viewed her as too old for the acting position and accused her of incompetence and failing to turn up for meetings (convened by the SNC) that addressed affairs of the community and failing to collect taxes from her subjects. The SNC called for her

removal from the position. That created conflict between the royal family and the government (SNA, 131, NA1217/03). The Transvaal government did not want the debates around *motshwareledi* to lead to widespread protest against its authority by the ba ga Motsha. As a result, they modified their position on the matter by agreeing to the appointment of Ratlhagana, the first-born son from the late *kgosi*'s second house as joint *motshwareledi*, as discussed later in the current chapter (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Based on the position of the government mentioned earlier, *Kgosigadi* Masekaseka stood a chance of being deposed from her position as *motshwareledi*. However, she continued to show disrespect towards the NC. Her disrespect prevailed because she believed that the NC undermined her authority as *motshwareledi* and, most importantly, as *mmakgosi* (chief's mother). Angered by the Transvaal administration's hostile attitude towards her, Masekaseka decided not to cooperate with the Office of the SNA, as she maintained that the government was interfering in the running of her people's affairs. Consequently, Masekaseka refused to collect taxes from members of the ba ga Motsha and did nothing to regulate the movement of Africans in her location, as required by NAD regulations, and the Transvaal government viewed this as a sign of disrespect (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

Masekaseka's alleged disobedience got the attention of the SNC, and in 1895 she was fined £1 for failing to abide by the instructions on tax collection issued by the NAD (KG, 111, CR1362/95). Her disobedience of the NAD became recurrent as she consistently failed to attend meetings called by the SNC. Consequently, as punishment, in April 1902 the SNC called for the appointment of Ratlhagana, *Kgosi* Maubane II's son from his third marriage, as *motshwareledi* on behalf of Moepi instead (SNA, 131, NA1217/03). The SNC concluded that Ratlhagana would be able to cooperate and assist the officials of the NAD in ensuring that the

ba ga Motsha conform to all government instructions concerning African communities, including ‘assisting the officials attached to the Office of the Native Commissioner whenever called upon to do so’ (Official Gazette of the High Commissioner for South Africa, Vol. XXXII, 1910).

The appointment of Ratlhagana as *motshwareledi* was in line with the Tswana tradition on *tlhomagano* as he was a legitimate son of the late *kgosi*. This assertion is supported by Mbaya (1999: 62) as he wrote that according to “Tswana tradition all the sons of the chiefs borne of various wives of the chief were legitimate. On the other hand Mbaya (1999:62) warned that “chief’s son by a concubine did not have a right to succeed even if there are no legitimate descendants”. This traditional custom on *tlhomagano* was also applicable to the appointment of *motshwareledi* but Masekaseka maintained her opposition to the SNC’s appointment of Ratlhagana (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Despite her uncooperative attitude towards the NC, Masekaseka feared that the SNC would motivate for the permanent appointment of Ratlhagana as *kgosi*, and she wanted to prevent this. She maintained that Moepi was the legitimate heir to the throne. On 25 May 1903, Masekaseka complained to the SNA about the negative treatment she was receiving from the white authorities and about the decision to appoint Ratlhagana as her replacement. She requested the SNA to confirm the ruling of the SNC and that the Transvaal government recognise Moepi as *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha at Schildpadfontein. The SNC recommended the removal of *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka to the CNA (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

In her motivation against the appointment of Ratlhagana as *motshwareledi*, Masekaseka indicated that in April 1902 the SNC had visited Schildpadfontein in person and collected taxes from the people (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). During his visit, SNC informed Masekaseka that she would no longer to take part in governing the ba ga Motsha. Masekaseka was infuriated by the news and tried to mobilise her supporters to protest against the decision by the SNC. Masekaseka and her supporters were unsuccessful in their effort to ensure that she retained her position as a *motshwareledi*, as the SNC threatened to take serious action against the people who might challenge his ruling on the matter. The SNC then appointed Ratlhagana to act until the return of Moepi, who was still at school in Cape Town (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

Masekaseka was dissatisfied with Ratlhagana's appointment as *motshwareledi* and respectfully asked for a favourable response from the NAD authorities (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). She further pleaded with the NAD not to blame her for ignoring the SNC and communicating directly with the SNA, as she wished to have the decision of the highest authority. The SNA enquired whether the SNC knew anything about the information from *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka. In a response dated 6 June 1903, the SNC wrote:

I am quite aware that Masekaseka is the Queen Regent representing Robert Moepi her grandson. From August of last year, since my appointment to this station, I have experienced considerable difficulty in dealing with natives falling under Queen Masekaseka. After due consideration and many annoying examples of her incompetency to act as regent during the absence of Robert, I arrived at a conclusion that the temporary appointment of a competent replacement was most necessary (SNA, 131, NA 1217/03).

To justify the Transvaal government's involvement in the ba ga Motsha's succession, the SNC noted that Ratlhagana had participated in the flogging of an unnamed woman under Masekaseka's orders. The SNC then fined Masekaseka and Ratlhagana £3 each for the alleged flogging offence which, according to the SNC should not have been committed. Again, the SNC accused Masekaseka of showing disregard for the pass laws and failure to respond positively to messages sent to her from the NAD authorities inviting her to meetings to address issues affecting the ba ga Motsha. Based on these arguments, the SNC felt strongly that Masekaseka should be removed from her position as *motshwareledi* (SNA, 131, NA 1217/03).

The SNC, on the other hand, realised that the complete removal of Masekaseka was against the traditional governance system of the ba ga Motsha. During an interview with the author, an older member of the ba ga Motsha royal family proudly explained the legitimacy of the appointment of Masekaseka as *motshwareledi* among the ba ga Motsha, as it was permitted by the community's customary law, emphasising as follows:

The traditional ba ga Motsha law of succession allowed for the queen to act in cases where the heir was young to rule and/or when the community was still deciding on whom among the late chief's sons was to be regarded as a rightful heir to the throne (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal 30 June 2010).

To avoid being accused of violating the traditional governance law of the ba ga Motsha, the SNC indicated that the appointment of Ratlhagana did not necessarily mean that Masekaseka would not be involved in the running of the community's affairs. He further clarified this point to the SNA as follows:

In temporarily appointing Alfred [Ratlhagana] Maubane to be responsible to us for all matters concerning the Schildpadfontein natives, I made it understood that Masekaseka was not deposed, but that one man only was to be answerable to this office (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

The SNC instructed Ratlhagana to work closely with Masekaseka and informed him that his appointment was temporary. The SNC's instruction was merely to make Masekaseka think that she was still in charge in the governance of the community, while the power in fact rested with Ratlhagana. Ratlhagana agreed to his appointment as *motshwareledi* and continued to demonstrate a behaviour that satisfied the SNC. He honoured appointments with the SNC and often presented himself to the NAD authorities, even at short notice. Masekaseka, though she agreed to serve as a joint *motshwareledi* with Ratlhagana, felt that the decision of the SNC undermined her authority within the community and continued to treat Ratlhagana with the suspicion that he was harbouring ambitions to take away the throne from Moepi (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

The decision by the SNC to appoint Ratlhagana as *motshwareledi* infuriated Masekaseka. On 25 May 1903, she complained to the SNA about the action of the SNC which, as she saw it, undermined her position as the *mmakgosi* and *motshwareledi*. Her justification for the unsuitability of Ratlhagana's appointment was that Moepi informed her that Ratlhagana hated him and that he even threatened to kill him (Moepi). According to Moepi, Ratlhagana had on one occasion attempted to poison him. Masekaseka further indicated that Moepi was not on good terms with Ratlhagana and was unhappy to see him as *motshwareledi* during his (Moepi's) absence. The SNA was aware of the tension between Ratlhagana and Masekaseka. In his communication with the CNA, he noted (SNA, 124, NA903/03):

I believe that she [Masekaseka] was very much opposed to his [Alfred Ratlhagana Maubane] recognition in any capacity by the Government as he was alleged to be Robert's [Moepi] rival, a claimant to the chieftainship.

The rivalry between Ratlhagana and Masekaseka was based on Ratlhagana's claim to the throne, as he was the eldest son of the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. The principal marriage of the late *Kgosi* Maubane II had failed to produce a male heir, and there were a number of sons from *kgosi's* twelve wives. Ratlhagana was from the second house, while Moepi came from the third and, as a result, they were half-brothers. Oral informants from the royal family recalled information offered by their parents that Masekaseka's opposition to the appointment of Ratlhagana was motivated by fear that he might take the throne for ever (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The SNA, on the other hand, responded that the appointment of Ratlhagana was not meant to depose *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka, but the community intended to have a male *motshwareledi* who could competently rule the community and keep good relations with the Office of the SNA. This was based on the SNA's opinion that Masekaseka was too old and unable to attend to some of the assignments handed to her. She was also accused of failing on a number of occasions to communicate with the NAD authorities and of frequently sending Ratlhagana to represent her at various meetings, instead of being there in person *herself* (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

In July 1903, the SNA visited Schildpadfontein to determine the facts for himself. His visit was premised on the notion that the resolution of the matter was important for the NAD's smooth administration of the community. He further emphasised that it was in the interest of the government to appoint a reliable person to act on behalf of Moepi, as it was impossible to work closely with Masekaseka. The SNA went on to claim that Masekaseka failed to ensure that members of her community paid tax as required by the government. The SNA, therefore,

viewed her as demonstrating inability to take good decisions in the execution of her responsibilities as *motshwareledi*. Thus, the SNA shared the same views as the SNC regarding their common desire to replace Masekaseka as *motshwareledi* (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

The SNC solicited views from members of the community, including the *bagakolodi ba kgosi*, on who to appoint as *motshwareledi*. The SNA nominated Ratlhagana as the suitable candidate to act on behalf of the young Moepi. The SNA decided that Ratlhagana should be appointed as *motshwareledi*, which overruled the efforts by Masekaseka to oppose his appointment. The majority of the members of the community were disappointed by the decision of the SNA to appoint Ratlhagana but, in fear of punishment from the government, decided not to disclose their resentment. Consequently, the appointment of Ratlhagana illustrated an example of how the SNA had an upper hand in the violation of traditional succession practices by Africans in the Transvaal (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

For fear of being punished by the Transvaal authorities, Masekaseka pretended to welcome the SNA's appointment of Ratlhagana as *motshwareledi*. Contrary to her earlier opposition to Ratlhagana's appointment, Masekaseka promised to work closely with him, ensuring that the community conformed to the laws and regulations of the NAD. She further informed the SNA that she did not hate Ratlhagana and that she had previously assigned him some of the key responsibilities in the *bogosi*, including meeting with officials from the NAD. In this manner, Masekaseka denied being opposed to Ratlhagana's suitability to serve as *motshwareledi*. However, she indicated her concern that should Ratlhagana be appointed, he might refuse to hand over the throne to Moepi when he returned from school in Cape Town, which could cause serious problems regarding the succession among the *ba ga Motsha* (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

It could be argued that Masekaseka's change of heart was motivated by her fear that she could get into trouble with the NAD if she contested its decision. This conclusion is premised on the fact that the CNA had the authority, which the ba ga Motsha recognised, to appoint *dikgosi* and *batshwareledi*. The *dikgosi* appointed by the CNA were respected and recognised as such, and if anyone did anything to disturb the status quo, such a person was viewed as undermining the authority of the NAD and could be subjected to a trial, a fine or physical punishment. Based on the involvement of the NAD, the matter of the appointment of Ratlhagana as *motshwareledi* among the ba ga Motsha was concluded by consensus among all the parties concerned. On 27 August 1903, Ratlhagana received an appointment letter signed by the SNA that marked the official commencement of his rule. His reign lasted for only one year, as will be discussed later in this chapter. The appointment of Ratlhagana was motivated by the NAD's declaration of his satisfactory behaviour (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

Towards the end of 1903, Moepi finished school and returned to Schildpadfontein from Cape Town. Supported by his grandmother, Masekaseka, Moepi approached the *kgotla* and asked that the throne be bestowed upon him. The Office of the SNC was also informed about Moepi's return from school and his request to take over the *bogosi* of the ba ga Motsha. The SNC had to analyse the matter seriously because Ratlhagana was cooperating well with the government and had created an enabling environment for the collection of tax and the provision of labour by the community. If possible, the SNC was willing to facilitate his permanent appointment as *kgosi* but did not want to antagonise the community. The SNC then gave the request by Moepi serious consideration (SNA, 197, NA369/04).

After observing his behaviour, the SNC was convinced that Moepi, though only 19 years old, appeared to possess the required maturity, intelligence and knowledge to be appointed to the position of *kgosi*. Based on his observations, the SNC did not have doubts that Moepi would contribute towards the improvement of the already existing good relations between the community and the NAD. Therefore, in February 1904 Moepi was recommended for the position. The SNC, in his letter motivating the appointment of Moepi, informed the Acting CNA that “the young chief desires to be formally approved and appointed by the CNA as lawful chief” (SNA, 131 NA1217/03).

The ascending of a female member from the royal family to the throne among the Bakgatla was not unique to the ba ga Motsha. During the first part of the 1900s, for instance, the ba ga Mosetlha *Kgosi* Nchaupe died and his first born son, Mokopane, who was *kgosana* of the section of the community that settled at Bela Bela in Waterberg District took over as *kgosi*. *Kgosi* Mokopane also died but his elder son, Thipe, was still too young to take over the throne. As a result, the late *kgosi*'s younger brother, Mathibe, took over as *motshwareledi*. Years later Thipe took over the throne from his uncle (Mathibe) and married his cousin, Ntebeng. Unfortunately the couple did not bore a successor as they did not have children. When *Kgosi* Thipe died and his wife, Ntebeng took over as *motshwareledi* on behalf of his late husband's younger brother, Nchaupe II. The handing over of the throne from Ntebeng to Nchaupe demonstrated a peaceful handover of the throne within the royal family, with emphasis on the preferred *kgosi* being the eldest son of the royal couple closest to the deceased *kgosi*. (Interview with L. Makapan, Hammanskraal, 21 November 2016). It could then be concluded that, unlike the ba ga Motsha, *tlhomagano* among the ba ga Mosetlha, up to the appointment of Nchaupe II, remained less controversial.

Among the ba ga Motsha the appointment of Moepi as *kgosi* meant that Ratlhagana's term as *motshwareledi* had to come to an end. Ratlhagana welcomed the news about the appointment of Moepi as *kgosi*. His response was unexpected, especially to Masekaseka who had earlier indicated that Ratlhagana was a rival of Moepi and had a vested interest in claiming *bogosi* of the ba ga Motsha. Ratlhagana's supporters felt that he could have refused to relinquish power because he had a legitimate claim to the *bogosi*. This argument was based on the fact that he came from a more senior house than that of Moepi. Possible refusal for Ratlhagana to relinquish power to Moepi could have led to conflict and division within the community. One older informant recalled with pride how his parents informed him that the conflict regarding the *tlhomagano* was averted because Ratlhagana had already agreed to hand over power to Moepi. This was evidence of a successful case of the peaceful handing over of the throne from a regent to the heir (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Ratlhagana's cooperation was recognised and welcomed by the SNC, who informed the CNA that the NAD should take note of "the able and most satisfactory manner in which Alfred Mauban[e] ha[d] conducted the affairs [of the ba ga Motsha] during his appointment [as *motshwareledi*], and consider that he should be specially commended" (SNA, 197, NA369/04). On 28 April 1904, Moepi was formally appointed as the *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha. The news of the CNA's approval of Moepi's appointment was met with delight by Masekaseka, who had always distrusted Ratlhagana. Ratlhagana then stepped down peacefully, paving the way for Moepi's ascension to power. This marked the beginning of the young Moepi's reign with whom, based on his literacy, the NAD had hoped to work harmoniously in implementing its rules and regulations governing the affairs of the ba ga Motsha (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The developments which led to the deposing of *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka as *motshwareledi* and the appointment of Ratlhagana in her place by the NAD in 1902 illustrate the tension between the African traditional practice regarding *bogosi* and the determination by the Transvaal authorities to use the institution of traditional leadership to consolidate power over Africans. This is one of the causes for a break in the succession chain in many African societies that has also led to controversies in the case of the ba ga Motsha to this day.

The appointment of *batshwareledi* among the ba ga Motsha continued to be marred by controversies and created serious challenges with regard to the succession politics within the community. It often demonstrated how influential personalities in the community, especially within the ruling family, could use their position in ensuring that their preferred person was appointed as *motshwareledi*. The white authorities also used their influence to support a candidate who was often viewed as demonstrating obedience to the government. This was mainly done with the hope that it would create an enabling environment for the African communities to accept their subordinate position and ensure their willingness to serve the white interests (Interview with *Kgosi* P. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The Moroelakop incident, 5 March 1905

The government was convinced that *Kgosi* Moepi, based on his exposure to western education, would be supportive of its efforts to ensure his community's adherence to rules and regulations governing African affairs. Contrary to the expectations of the SNC and the CNA, Moepi disobeyed orders from the NAD. Examples of the NAD considered to be disobedience included his travels to Johannesburg on 22 December 1904 and 6 January 1905 to see his subjects working in the mines, and his visit to Pretoria on 2 February 1905. In all his travels,

it was alleged that Moepi did not apply for permission from the NAD. In addition, “on each journey [he was] accompanied by several followers” (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The NAD, thus wrongly concluded that *Kgosi* Moepi was mobilising support from his subjects in Johannesburg to wage protest against the authority of the NAD in Hammanskraal. The NAD accused him of using his firearm to hunt game during winter, when hunting was forbidden. The NAD authorities suspected the ‘bad influence’ of Masekaseka as contributing to *Kgosi* Moepi’s actions. This view was based on the conflictual experience the NAD had had with the community during her term as *motshwareledi*. Based on *Kgosi* Moepi’s “unsatisfactory behaviour”, the NAD withdrew the privileges that *Kgosi* Moepi enjoyed as *kgosi*. This included the withdrawal of his travel pass, which meant that his movement to other parts of the Transvaal was restricted (SNA, 197, NA369/04).

The NAD also imposed a fine on *Kgosi* Moepi for hunting game without permission. The Resident Magistrate for Waterberg indicated that ‘[*Kgosi*] Robert Moepi was convicted and fined heavily for slaughtering game out of season’ (SNA, 516, NAC4/05). The SNC also noted that *Kgosi* Moepi had violated his pass restriction when he held a meeting with his subjects at Moroelakop in the Waterberg on 5 March 1905. During the meeting, he had allegedly told his audience that he planned to attack whites. This allegation was based on the contents of a letter which had been found by a white man near the venue of a meeting held. The man presented it to the SNA on 13 March 1905 and indicated to the SNA that during the alleged meeting, *Kgosi* Moepi had spoken negatively about the whites. The SNA interpreted the letter as confirmation of *Kgosi* Moepi’s intention to undertake a revolt against the whites. The letter read in part that “they [the ba ga Motsha] must all work together and act quickly while the white people are unsuspecting” (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The NAD was also informed that a black goat had been slaughtered during the Moroelakop meeting. The NAD interpreted this as symbolising a planned attack. Consequently, the NAD assigned F.W. Armstrong, Resident Magistrate of the Middleburg sub-district, to research the symbolic meaning of slaughtering black animals by African communities. Armstrong, following his investigation into the matter, discovered the rumour to be false, as he discovered that the slaughtering of the black goat formed part of the ba ga Motsha tradition of making sacrifices to their ancestors and requesting their intervention in addressing some of the challenges faced by the community. In conclusion, Armstrong reported that the practice was indeed part of the sacrifices the ba ga Motsha conducted at the graves of their ancestors who were buried at Moroelakop (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The Resident Magistrate further suggested that it was a common practice among African communities, including the ba ga Motsha, to slaughter cattle, goats or sheep during winter, and he did not know whether or not such animals were black in colour. He noted that during the sacrifice, the blood of the slaughtered animal was spilt on the grave of some noted or revered ancestor so that it sank into the ground of the grave. The greatest secrecy was maintained pertaining to the ceremony as only the *kgosi* and his councillors were allowed to attend it. The flesh of the sacrifice animal was roasted on the grave and eaten by the *kgosi* and his councillors, while the skin was then preserved. The maidens and boys of the community were then sent to water the grave, but they were not told why. They were simply shown the earth they had to pour the water on (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

Armstrong also reported to the SNA that among the ba ga Motsha it was necessary to kill the wild animals and the skins of these animals were mixed with those of the domestic ones and burnt to ashes at the kraal of the *kgosi*. The ashes were then given to a number of the male

elders, including the *ngaka* (traditional doctor) and the *kgosi* or the *kgosana* to eat by putting a small quantity on each one's tongue. They dug a hole in which the insides of the black animals were placed, often close to the grave of the ancestor. Armstrong noted that these meetings were not intended to wage attack against the Boers. It was likely that the same performance may have caused concern to the Boers in the Waterberg District following the meeting held by *Kgosi* Moepi and his *morafe* at Moroelakop on 5 March 1905 (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The ba ga Motsha practice of making sacrifices, as was common in other African societies in the Transvaal and elsewhere in South Africa, was done for a variety of reasons, including thanking the ancestors for blessings in life and requesting their protection against misfortune. This practice is still common among the ba ga Motsha today. The NAD reluctantly considered the recommendations by Armstrong and dismissed the claims about *Kgosi* Moepi's alleged intention to attack white people, following the slaughtering of the black goat at Moroelakop (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

However, regarding the letter picked up by the white informer at Moroelakop, the NAD remained convinced that *Kgosi* Moepi was planning a revolt against the whites. The SNA assigned a special detective to Schildpadfontein to secretly investigate the alleged intention by *Kgosi* Moepi to attack whites and to keep a close watch on his actions towards whites. The assigned detective monitored *Kgosi* Moepi's movements to establish whether or not he was rallying his supporters in preparation to attack white people near the Waterberg and Hammanskraal (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The detective observed that *Kgosi* Moepi's behaviour was suspicious and that it could be concluded that he was planning to attack the whites. It was common practice for the *kgosi* to be in the company of his personal protectors when travelling from one area to another, he would be in the company of his personal protectors. The oral informants confirmed the *ba ga Motsha* practice of keeping personal protectors. To this day, *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* among the *ba ga Motsha* keep trusted individuals as bodyguards or informants. These were mainly physically strong men, who had distinguished themselves as brave and who were loyal to their master to the extent that they were willing to provide him with maximum protection and gather strategic information related to the *bogosi* (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The *kgosi's* personal protectors often carried with them some traditional weapons such as spears and knobkerries, while the he had a firearm. The suspicious behaviour of *Kgosi* Moepi was based on the detective's report that on a number of occasions *Kgosi* Moepi, accompanied by some of his trusted men, travelled to a number of destinations outside the Hammanskraal area. The travels were undertaken despite a government ban imposed on his movements (SNA, 516, NAC4/05). Based on the detective's report on *Kgosi* Moepi's travels, he was found guilty of transgressing his pass ban. His gun licence was withdrawn and he was sent to prison for six months. He was also charged with the brutal flogging of a member of his community. It was not clear why the flogging had been conducted, but the *ba ga Motsha* customary law allowed the *dikgosi* to flog individuals who had been found guilty of minor offences. The information about the flogging of a member of community by *Kgosi* Moepi was circulated to the SNCs for Warmbaths and Potgietersrus so that they could use the case against *Kgosi* Moepi to warn other African communities in those areas about the harsh sentence that awaited them in cases of misconduct. After serving his jail term, *Kgosi* Moepi continued as *kgosi*, but his relationship with the NAD declined (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

Kgosi Moepi's alleged secret meetings with his subjects at Moroelakop, including his visits to other parts of the Transvaal, could be viewed as an attempt to solicit first-hand information about the experience that members of his community had with whites. To the NAD, it was interpreted as a plot to attack whites. This illustrates the level of mistrust the NAD had towards *Kgosi* Moepi and shows the commitment of the whites to look for every reason to accuse Africans of harbouring anti-white sentiments. In cases where it was discovered that Africans were seen demonstrating some level of disobedience against white rule, they were subjected to harsh treatment, including fines, flogging or imprisonment. This was done mainly to teach the offending Africans a lesson and to discourage others from rebelling against white authority (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The withdrawal of Ratlhagana's firearm licence

The NAD, through its bureaucratic structures, was responsible for the issuing and cancellation of firearm licences to *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* of various African communities. The issuing of firearm licences was in line with section 29 of Ordinance No. 13 of 1902, which required the NAD 'to guard against unregulated acquisition of arms by licensed chiefs' (SNA, 124, NA903/03). The SNA further emphasised that under the Arms and Ammunition Ordinance, authority was given to the CNA to issue licences to chiefs and headmen who were not posing a threat to the whites. The firearms issued to African chiefs were thus stamped and a serial number was allocated to each before being handed to the licence holder. Ratlhagana and *Kgosi* Moepi were among the *ba ga* Motsha leaders who were issued with firearm licences. Ratlhagana owned a Martini Henri Rifle and *Kgosi* Moepi had a shotgun. Following recommendation by the SNS gun licences were also issued to Lot Maubane and Andries Maubane, who were *dikgosana* at Schildpadfontein (SNA, 124, NA903/03). In his motivation for granting a firearm licence to Ratlhagana, the SNA emphasised (SNA, 124, NA903/03):

The old woman is very aged and incompetent and the management of the tribe is almost in the hands of Alfred Maubane, who is a young and intelligent man. No claim by Alfred Maubane to the chieftainship has been presented before me and Alfred talks of Robert Moepi as the chief. Alfred is the eldest son of the chief wife of the late chief. I suggest that Alfred Maubane be granted a licence [for displaying] good behaviour. Under the instruction of Masekaseka, a firearm licence application for Robert was also submitted to the CNA leading to the purchase of a shotgun which was registered under his name.

The SNA was satisfied with the issuing of firearm licences to the *ba ga Motsha* because government viewed the community as small and manageable, which assisted in building trust between the community and the NAD. For both Ratlhagana and *Kgosi* Moepi, it was a privilege to receive gun licences from the SNA. This confirmed the trust and confidence that the SNA had in both men and its expectation that both would use their positions within the community to ensure cooperation in the implementation of the laws governing African communities in the Transvaal. Again, to both Ratlhagana and *Kgosi* Moepi, the right to own guns provided them prestige and respect in the community (SNA, 124, NA903/03).

After handing the throne to Moepi in 1904, Ratlhagana, together with his brother Mashile and their families, relocated to the southern part of Paaizyn Pan in what is currently known as Phake-Ratlhagana. The relocation to Paaizyn Pan occurred following *Kgosi* Moepi's allocation of the territory as appreciation for the role he played as *motshwareledi* when he was at school. Again, Moepi was happy that Ratlhagana did not refuse to hand the throne to him as that could have created conflict within the royal family. Ratlhagana and his brother were later joined by a few families from Schildpadfontein who remained convinced that Ratlhagana, instead of Moepi, was supposed to be *kgosi* of the community. A large number of families arrived at Paaizyn Pan, where Ratlhagana established an offshoot of *the ba ga Motsha* called the *ba ga Motsha-Ratlhagana*. The new *kgosana* was recognised by *Kgosi* Moepi as a sub-group of the

ba ga Motsha and Ratlhagana was expected to adhere to the instructions issued by *Kgosi* Moepi in Schildpadfontein (SNA, 124, NA903/03).

Ratlhagana opted to move away from Schildpadfontein peacefully and not contest the community's *bogosi* against his half-brother, *Kgosi* Moepi. At Phake-Ratlhagana, he appointed his son, Andries Maubane – who was named after the late Maubane II – as his close advisor. Interestingly, Andries was issued a gun licence by the NAD, which recognised Ratlhagana's community as a sub-group of the ba ga Motsha under *Kgosi* Moepi (SNA, 124, NA903/03).

Following the conflict between *Kgosi* Moepi and the NAD, as discussed above, the CNA felt that it was not safe to allow the *kgosi* and *dikgosana* from the ba ga Motsha to own firearms. The SNC then recommended to the CNA that Ratlhagana's firearm licence be withdrawn as he had lost his position as the *motshwareledi* among the ba ga Motsha. The CNA consulted the neighbouring SNC in Warmbaths to give his views on the proposed withdrawal of Ratlhagana's firearm licence. The SNC in Warmbaths was against Ratlhagana retaining the weapon, and his gun permit was withdrawn. He feared that Ratlhagana might use the weapon to mobilise support against *Kgosi* Moepi. Again, the SNC did not rule out the possibility for Ratlhagana to attack whites near Warmbaths, which could cause insecurity among the white population in the area (SNA, 124, NA903/03).

On 23 December 1905, an official from the Resident Magistrate's Office confiscated the firearm from Ratlhagana. Ratlhagana complained to the CNA that no reasons were given about why his gun had been taken away from him. He argued that he was entitled to possess the firearm, as he had always performed well for the NAD and was never involved in any misconduct. Despite Ratlhagana's plea, however, the CNA decided to suspend his licence. The NAD handled the withdrawal of Ratlhagana's firearm licence as a precautionary measure against possible protest by the ba ga Motsha against whites. This was based on the NAD's conclusion that Ratlhagana could sympathise with Moepi, who had been convicted for insubordination. In addition, Africans viewed their possession of firearms as a symbol of power and, as such, Ratlhagana could use this power to rally the support of the ba ga Motsha and establish a strong chieftom that could pose a threat to white domination at Paaizyn Pan. The NAD wanted to deter such an eventuality (SNA, 124, NA903/03).

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter noted that the NAD were influential in the termination of the *tlhomagano* among the ba ga Motsha after the death of *Kgosi* Maubane II in 1902. This was mainly done to ensure that the community complied with all instructions, rules and policies governing African communities in the Transvaal. Consequently, *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka was viewed as uncooperative towards the NAD. Her place was taken by Ratlhagana, who was viewed as more 'intelligent' and understanding about the operations and expectations of the NAD. The NAD's disregard of *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka ability to lead the ba ga Motsha served to illustrate that the Boers viewed women, including their own, as subjects and not as main actors in the political life of the society.

The uncooperative behaviour by *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka thus represented 'rebellion' against the Boer's patriarchal authority. The support for Ratlhagana as *motshwareledi* demonstrated the NAD's preference to deal with the male leaders of the African societies, against whom they used physical punishment and/or fines in cases of uncooperative behaviour and actions against the Boer domination. In such cases, the *dikgosi* and their male subjects were relegated to inferior position in relation to the Boers. When the heir to the ba ga Motsha's throne, Moepi, returned from school in Cape Town, the NAD changed its attitude towards Ratlhagana. This led to the termination of Ratlhagana's regency and the bestowing of the crown to Moepi, as the NAD viewed Ratlhagana as uncooperative and withdrew his gun licence. The withdrawal of Ratlhagana's gun was controversial. During his term as *motshwareledi*, Ratlhagana had served the NAD well, which was confirmed by the SNC for Hammanskraal who ironically recommended the withdrawal of the licence. In addition, Ratlhagana's son, Andries, was issued a firearm licence by virtue of his position as *kgosana* under his father. This illustrated inconsistency within the NAD in dealing with cases of gun licences issued to the *dikgosi* and *dikgosana*. On the other hand, Ratlhagana's appointment of his son as *kgosana* illustrated that the *dikgosana* among the ba ga Motsha viewed themselves as superior authorities who could be equated to the position of *kgosi*, however, they maintained their respect and recognition of the parent *kgosi*.

The issuing of firearm licences to the *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* among the ba ga Motsha served as a way of soliciting their loyalty to the white administration. This practice was common among other African communities in the Transvaal. The issuing of such licences was mainly based on loyalty and good conduct, and in cases of insubordination to the white authorities, these licences were withdrawn. Members of the ba ga Motsha were happy to be granted access to own firearms, as it brought about prestige and honour. The withdrawal of firearm licences

by the NAD was often viewed as appropriate in limiting the political authority and the social status of the Africans who had guns. It also served to confirm whites' fears about possible attacks by armed African communities, who often demonstrated dissatisfaction during their interactions with the whites. In this context, the white government regulated the number of firearm owners among the African communities. Proper monitoring of the use of firearms and the purchasing of ammunition by Africans was also maintained. It was common practice for the NAD to withdraw firearm licences and instruct the surrender of firearms by Africans in cases where they were no longer serving as chiefs and/or headmen of their communities, as was the case with Ratlhagana. Table 7.1 below lists the *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* among the ba ga Motsha who possessed firearm licences.

Table 7.1: List of *dikgosi* and *dikgosana* among the ba ga Motsha who possessed firearm licences

Name of applicant	Recognised status	Place of residence	District	Description of weapon
Alfred Maubane	<i>Motshwareledi</i>	Schildpadfontein	Pretoria	Martini Henri Rifle
Robert Maubane	<i>Kgosi</i>	Schildpadfontein	Pretoria	Shotgun
Andries Maubane	<i>Kgosana</i>	Schildpadfontein	Pretoria	Hunting rifle
Lot Maubane	<i>Kgosana</i>	Schildpadfontein	Pretoria	Shotgun

(Source: SNA, 124, NA903/03)

CHAPTER 10

CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING *TLHOMAGANO*, 1904–1910

Introduction

This chapter discusses the *tlhomagano ya bogosi* (succession) of *dikgosi* among the ba ga Motsha. This is done to highlight the principles followed by the ba ga Motsha when making unique decisions regarding the *tlhomagano*, and how these developments led to the founding of Moepi as the surname of the ruling family in Schildpadfontein from 1904. First, the chapter gives a general account of how the principles of *tlhomagano* were followed among the Bakgatla communities in the Transvaal. Second, it defines and discusses the practice of *sefoka* – a practice of succession unique to the ba ga Motsha, which gave power to the late *kgosi*'s daughter from the principal marriage to resolve *tlhomagano* through her nomination of future *kgosi* from her half-brothers. Third, it discusses how the practice of *sefoka* was used in the appointment of Moepi as the successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. Thereafter, it provides an account of the developments leading to the adoption of Moepi as the surname of the ruling family in 1904. Finally, it discusses the impact of the change of surname on the social coherence within the ruling family.

Tlhomagano among the ba ga Motsha

The ba ga Motsha, just like all the Bakgatla and other Batswana groups, adhered to the practice whereby the political leadership and governance were organised along patriarchal lines, with the *kgosi* as the highest authority. This practice was also common among other African societies in southern Africa, including the Nguni, Sotho and Venda, where *bogosi* was passed from father to son. Under this arrangement, all *dikgosi* were expected to trace their biological

origins from the founding father of their group. In the context of the Bakgatla, all *dikgosi* were regarded as legitimate by virtue of their lineage to *Kgosi* Mokgatla (Kgabo), the founder of the community (Breutz, 1953:251).

The principle of *tlhomagano*, based on the transfer of power from father to son, was officially recognised in the Transvaal through the Transvaal administration of Estates Proclamation, No. 28 of 1902 (Rogers, 1949:201). This provided for the recognition of the authority of a man's eldest son from the early stages of his life. As a result, the fathers and other older male members of the group would educate their eldest sons about various aspects of the community's governance system (Schapera, 1953:42). The eldest sons, on the other hand, shared the lessons learned with those junior to them. It should be noted that in cases of incapacity or ill-health of the eldest son, such authority was transferred to the immediate junior sons and this practice is still applicable to the *ba ga Motsha* today, as confirmed by some of the interviewees (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with L. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 310 August 2011).

In some cases, conflicting claims to the throne by the sons of the *kgosi* led to controversies around *tlhomagano*. Schapera (1953:175) gives an explanation on the occurrence of conflicting claims to *bogosi* among the Batswana:

Occasionally the leading [*dikgosana*] of the [community], if they consider [the legitimate heir] unsuitable for [*bogosi*], will intrigue against him and bring about the [*tlhomagano*] by a more satisfactory though junior relative.

The commoners were made aware of who, among the *kgosi*'s sons, was going to take over the throne in the event of the *kgosi*'s death, as well as who would succeed in the event of incapacity,

illness and/or death of the identified heir to the throne (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). The society's knowledge on the successor assisted in providing clear information on the future genealogical positions of all the *kgosi's* sons in the political governance of the society. Consequently, sons of the *kgosi* enjoyed respect from their peers, who viewed them as their future *dikgosi*, and this was observed by all the Batswana groups in South Africa (Schapera, 1953:38).

Members of the royal family often had varying views on succession, especially in cases where the legitimate heir showed signs of incapacity (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). In such cases, lobbying for the successor was presented on behalf of the sons from the *kgosi's* secondary marriages, which in some cases did not follow the logic of the principles of succession, as described above. Factors such as personal ambitions, jealousy towards the heir, intelligence and bravery of sons from the junior marriages and their distinguished behaviour towards the legitimate heir were often cited as motivation for the shift in the line of succession (Schapera, 1953:175).

In some instances, when the *kgosi* died the *mmakgosi* (mother to the *kgosi*) also called *kgosigadi* (chieftainess), if she was still alive, was afforded the position of *motshwareledi* on behalf of a young or incapacitated heir (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). The *mmakgosi* would have all the authority enjoyed by the late *kgosi*, including presiding over serious cases, allocating land, collecting taxes and serving as the main figure in representing her community in all engagements with external parties. *Motshwareledi* could appoint a representative to handle other matters related to the governance of the group (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

Parents of commoners often encouraged their daughters to be kind to the *kgosi's* sons. Respect and kindness to the *kgosi's* sons were perceived as creating an enabling environment for daughters of the commoners to marry members of the royal family. According to an elderly ba ga Motsha respondent, these marriages were important as they were used to elevate the social status of the family of the bride, who then became part of the ruling family and enjoyed all the privileges associated with that (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). The appointment of leaders of age-regiments, hunting expeditions and *bogwera* (initiation school for boys) was used as avenues to groom future leaders in the society and 'always included members of the *kgosi's* family' (Schapera, 1953:38).

It was in the above context that male members from the ba ga Motsha ruling family asserted power and authority over their age groups at early stages of their lives and, as a result, their hereditary leadership positions became accepted by the commoners. In addition, it was common that sons from junior families, who conveyed more respect, were often supported by some members of the ruling family to claim the right to the throne and this often led to the shift in the line of succession. It was in the context of this logic that the *kgosi's* eldest sons and other sons from the royal family started to dominate the decision-making in their age groups and this became the norm until they ultimately took over the reins from their fathers (Schapera, 1953:50).

The heir to the throne, on the other hand, received special treatment from all members of the community – young and old. His interaction with the rest of the community became closely monitored by special representatives of the royal family tasked to ensure that he did not end up in situations that could compromise his position as the future *kgosi*. An oral informant confirmed the respectable position held by the heirs within the ba ga Motsha to this day. He

noted that in most cases the heir received favours and protection from the commoners and was always addressed as '*Kgosi*' (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Members of the royal family, especially those closely related to the *kgosi*'s principal marriage, became protective of the heir. This was common among all Bakgatla groups. They did everything to protect an heir from danger that might lead to his death or incapacity, as this could lead to a succession crisis and might shift power from the *kgosi*'s principal marriage – especially if the heir was the only son from the principal marriage. It was common that the most powerful *ngaka* (traditional doctor) in the community was employed to doctor the heir against possible bewitching that could lead to his death or incapacity. Once appointed to doctor the heir and other members of the ruling family, especially the *kgosi*, the *ngaka* was not allowed to serve commoners. He thus became the *ngaka* of the ruling family, which often elevated him to a respectable position in society (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

In some cases, the *ngaka* became part of the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* who would accompany the *kgosi* during his various visits, including private and public meetings with members of his community or visiting delegations from other communities. The *kgosi* would often consult the *ngaka* to profess and identify people who were intending to harm the *kgosi* or those who were planning to overthrow him (Interview with J. Motsepe, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010).

Sometimes, members of the ruling family would go to distant areas seeking the services of the most feared *ngaka* to treat the whole family against possible bewitching from the rival families. This was done to ensure that members of the community developed respect towards the future

kgosi. Schapera (1953:62) further emphasises the importance of the *ngaka* in the Tswana society as he notes:

The chief still has his own doctors for various private and public purposes. Those distinguished in this way are commonly recognised as leaders of their profession.

In cases of the *kgosi's* polygamous marriage, it was common that members of the junior marriages and their supporters would make attempts on the heir's life so that they could lay claim to the throne. This did not occur among the *ba ga Motsha* during the period under discussion but was one of the reasons why the heir to the throne was given serious protection. Sometimes, *dithhare* (traditional medicine) were used to protect the heir from *boloi* (witchcraft) (Schapera, 1953:61).

Junior sons from the *kgosi's* marriage took the leadership of their age regiments in a similar way as the senior son. This prepared them for future leadership, as they automatically became the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* and sometimes the *dikgosana* of sections of the community. Keeping a close relationship with the peers from the commoners' families was often viewed as a privilege because it provided an opportunity for advantageous positions in the governance of the community during the future reign of their peers. These close relationships with the *kgosi* afforded the commoners the opportunity to be part of the community council and/or to serve as part of the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* to the *kgosi* and/or the *dikgosana*. Schapera (1953:37) notes the flexibility in appointing commoners as the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* among the Batswana as he wrote:

Commoners of lowly position, who are conspicuously loyal to the chief and able in ways, may receive promotion by being headmen of new wards. In addition, men with outstanding personal qualifications of special kind (e.g. bravery in war, skill in debate, knowledge of the law, or proficiency in

magic) usually gain prestige and therefore influence in public affairs; wealthy men similarly, may obtain personal followers by lending out cattle.

The *kgosi's* junior brothers often enjoyed more privileges than the commoners, including controlling bigger portions of land and playing a strategic role in the governance of the community. Those who were cooperative and friendly towards the *kgosi* automatically became the *bagakolodi ba kgosi*. The heir's half-brothers were also afforded opportunities to be *dikgosana* on the basis of seniority, as in the case of the heir, to determine their level of authority within the society. Sometimes, the heir would appoint some of his brothers as part of his advisory council. This was always done with caution to avert the possible overthrow of the *kgosi* by his brothers. In most cases, the *kgosi's* inclusion of his half-brothers was a sign of recognising their importance as members of the royal family and was intended to further ensure unity and cohesion among the *kgosi's* sons. This was also done to appease members of the royal family who had shown respect and loyalty to the *kgosi*. Schapera further highlights that 'among the nobles, the more closely a man is related to the *kgosi*, the higher his rank' (Schapera, 1953:37).

Another option used to address succession challenges in cases where *kgosi* died without producing sons from the principal marriage was through the application of the principle of *go-tsenamo-tlung* ('entering the house'). Through this practice, a senior male member of the ruling family, mainly one of the late *kgosi's* brothers or a surviving uncle to the late *kgosi*, was approached to take over the patriarchal responsibilities of the *kgosi* (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). The main intention was to ensure that the relationship produced a son who would be the rightful heir to the throne. As the society was polygamous, the wife or wives of the *kgosi's* brother remained content with the decision. The justification for such practice was that it maintained the royal blood of the heir and ensured that there were no succession disputes (Schapera, 1953:43). The uncle, on the other hand, ruled the

community as a regent until such time that the heir was ready to take over the throne. Another option to address the challenges associated with *tlhomagano* after the death of *kgosi* was the temporary appointment of the late *kgosi*'s younger brother or the eldest son from *kgosi*'s second marriage as *motshwareledi*, especially when the legitimate heir to the throne was too young to take the responsibilities of the *kgosi* (Mbaya, 1999: 61).

In some cases, the late *kgosi*'s younger brother or a senior son from the second marriage took over the throne, especially when the heir was incapacitated or was still too young to take over his responsibilities as *kgosi*. The appointment of the late *kgosi*'s younger brother to take over the throne was a temporary arrangement and, as such, *motshwareledi* was expected to return the throne to the heir once he had become ready to claim his position as the *kgosi* (Mbaya, 1999: 61). However, the late *kgosi*'s brother or the heir's half-brother was often reluctant to hand back the throne to the rightful heir. *Tlhomagano* often led to rifts within the Tswana societies and also led to assassinations as both the heir and the *motshwareledi* would want to consolidate their position as *dikgosi* (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

Among the ba ga Motsha, the *tlhomagano* controversies were evident in 1902, following the death of *Kgosi* Maubane II. From her inception as *motshwareledi*, *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka favoured the appointment of Robert Sebis Moepi Maubane from the third marriage to be the successor of the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. Issues relating to the position of Masekaseka, as *motshwareledi*, have been discussed in detail in previous chapter. At the time of his death, as recalled by the informants from the ba ga Motsha royal family, the late *Kgosi* Maubane II had twelve wives. The first three were Potsanyane from Ga-Matlala in Sekhukhuneland, Moloji from the Motsha ward in Schildpadfontein and Mankone from the Matseke ward in Schildpadfontein. Potsanyane had a daughter, Mmapela. Moloji had two sons, Alfred

Ratlhagana and Mashile. Mankone, on the other hand, had a son named Robert Moepi. As there was no son from the late *kgosi*'s principal marriage, it was expected that the elder son from the second marriage would take over the throne (Interview with *Kgosi* P. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Masekaseka, on the other hand, preferred that the throne be handed to Moepi because she did not like Ratlhagana. Masekaseka told the community that before his death, *Kgosi* Maubane II had instructed that Ratlhagana marry a daughter of Sekhukhune, as a prerequisite for succeeding him. *Kgosi* Maubane II's wish was communicated to and supported by all the members of the royal family. After the *kgosi*'s death, Masekaseka personally informed Ratlhagana about the late *kgosi*'s instruction for him to marry a daughter of Sekhukhune (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

Ratlhagana, on the other hand, disagreed with his father's wish and indicated that he wanted to marry a woman of his choice. This disappointed many people within the royal family, including Masekaseka, and it was decided that Ratlhagana could not be the *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha as he disobeyed his late father's wish. This was in line with the ba ga Motsha's belief that the wishes and instruction of the deceased must be fulfilled, as failure to do so would be perceived as bringing a bad omen, which was captured in the expression '*lentswe la moswi le agelwa mosako*' ('a dead person's instruction must never be transgressed'). Disappointed by Ratlhagana's decision, Masekaseka approached Moloji and insisted that she, on behalf of her son Moepi, announces to the community that Moepi would realise the late *kgosi*'s wish so that he could be declared a legitimate heir to the ba ga Motsha throne. Moloji agreed with Masekaseka's position. Masekaseka requested Potsanyane to support the appointment of

Moepi as the *kgosi* and in return she and Mmapela were promised a large piece of land and cattle (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

Rathlagana's supporters, on the other hand, perceived him as having a legitimate claim to the throne, despite his refusal to realise his late father's wish. To this group, the next option was that his younger brother, Mashile, be given the opportunity to take over the throne, in line with the late *kgosi*'s instruction. This did not happen because Masekaseka used her influence as the *mmakgosi* to counteract all efforts intended to appoint Mashile as the *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha.

Sefoka: solution to the royal dispute over tlhomagano

Amid the competing claims to the ba ga Motsha throne, the royal family decided to conduct the *sefoka* practice, according to which Mmapela – the eldest daughter from the late *kgosi*'s principal marriage – identified among her half-brothers who would take over the throne. The occasion to undertake the *sefoka* practice was hosted by Masekaseka and was attended by members of the royal family and witnessed by the whole community. During the event, the eldest daughter from the late *kgosi*'s principal marriage presented a traditional artefact, decided upon by the elders of the *morafe*, to one of her half-brothers as a symbol of nominating him as a successor to the late *kgosi*. Once the recipient had consented, he was declared the official heir to the throne. The *sefoka* was a practice unique to the ba ga Motsha, who since then have never performed it again (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The ba ga Motsha oral informants had knowledge about *sefoka*, as they were told by their parents, and they posited that among the ba ga Motsha the practice has been applied only once, when deciding on the successor of Maubane II after his death in 1902. It is not clear whether the practice of *sefoka* was legitimate in addressing the succession row, following the death of Maubane II. The presence of sons in a number of the *kgosi*'s marriages provided space for the application of *sefoka* as a solution to the succession controversy. The royal family elders, headed by Masekaseka, started a process of appointing a successor and informed the NAD authorities about their intentions. The NAD, on the other hand, agreed to respect the decision of the *morafe* on the matter (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

The majority of the royal family, supported by a faction within the community, believed that Ratlhagana as the eldest son from the *kgosi*'s second marriage was an automatic choice to inherit the *bogosi* of the ba ga Motsha. Other members of the royal family, headed by Masekaseka, were opposed to the choice of Ratlhagana because they perceived his refusal to marry from the Sekhukhune family as undermining the wish of the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. The choice of the Masekaseka's faction was Moepi, the eldest son from the late *kgosi*'s third house, as his mother had promised that she would ensure that he married from the Sekhukhune royal family, as instructed by the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. At that time (1902), Masekaseka, as *motshwareledi*, appealed to the SNC for Hammanskraal to support the choice of Moepi as the legitimate heir to the ba ga Motsha throne. The elders of the community, led by Masekaseka and her councillors, then decided that the *sefoka* practice should be applied, as the parties could not reach agreement on the successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane II (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

In 1902, during a meeting of the royal family, Mmapela was expected to hand *sefoka* to her preferred half-brother. It was expected that Mmapela would choose Ratlhagana as *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha. However, to the amazement of the attendants, she chose Moepi, the eldest son of the *kgosi*'s third wife, Mankone, as the prospective *kgosi* of the *morafe* (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). At that time, Moepi was too young to take over the throne (SNA, 131, NA1217/03). An elderly member of the Maubane family recalled how his elders narrated to him about the event when he wrote (Maubane, M., n.d):

Robert Sibis Maubane is the one who changed [his] surname [from 'Maubane' to 'Moepi']. The reason for this was that he knew very well that the bogosi did not belong to him. Actually, Mmapela the elder daughter of Potsanyane was supposed to take the throne. As she was a female, young and not willing to take the throne a family [*kgotla*] was held where Mmapela was told to hand *sefoka sa bogosi* [throne] to one of her brothers whose mother was second to Potsanyane's house. The date for the meeting was arranged and all relevant royal members were present to witness the handing over of *sefoka sa bogosi* as agreed previously. Mmapela stood up with *sefoka* in her hand. She walked straight towards Robert [Moepi] and handed it to him, meaning that she was personally handing [*bogosi*] to him. Suddenly, all the elderly women who were [present at the *kgotla*] stood up and ululations were heard. [The ululations meant] that a total agreement has been reached concerning who should lead [the ba ga Motsha as *kgosi*].

Some people in that meeting, especially those who supported Ratlhagana as the rightful successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane II, were amazed and disappointed to see things being done in a wrong way. According to the ba ga Motsha protocol, Ratlhagana was supposed to be given *sefoka* as his mother was the second wife of the late *Kgosi* Maubane II, while Robert's mother was the third wife (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). Later in 1902, Moepi had to go to school in Cape Town. Ratlhagana and his faction viewed the whole process of *sefoka* as unfair, as they strongly felt that he had a legitimate claim to the throne, as provided by the rules of succession discussed earlier in the chapter.

Ratlhagana and his supporters in the royal family, especially from the *kgosi*'s other junior marriages, did not contest the decision of Moepi's appointment (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). They feared that if they did, they might be subjected to severe punishment by the NAD, who endorsed the appointment of Moepi. Furthermore, Ratlhagana feared that Masekaseka could use her influence as queen to suppress any opposition to the appointment of Moepi to the *ba ga Motsha* throne. She then informed the NAD that Ratlhagana was planning to kill Moepi so that he could increase his chances of being appointed as a successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. She did this to discredit Ratlhagana in the eyes of the NAD authorities (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

In May 1903, Masekaseka wrote to the NAD accusing Ratlhagana of planning to take over *bogosi* from Moepi. She also complained to the NAD that Ratlhagana had attempted to poison her and that he was not on good terms with Moepi. The negative attitude of Masekaseka towards Ratlhagana illustrated her unwillingness to forgive him for refusing to marry from the Sekhukhune royal family, as wished by the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. Masekaseka wanted the wish of the late *kgosi* to be realised, as it was a commonly held belief among the *ba ga Motsha* that failure to do so might lead to the whole royal family being cursed by their ancestors. In addition, she reported to the NAD that Moepi did not trust his half-brother Ratlhagana, whom he suspected of harbouring intentions to overthrow him. When Moepi returned from Cape Town and ascended to the *ba ga Motsha* throne in 1904, he did everything in his power to isolate Ratlhagana from the running of the *morafe*. This included the exclusion of Ratlhagana as part of the *bagakolodi ba kgosi* to *Kgosi* Moepi (SNA, 131, NA1217/03).

It should be noted that there is no written evidence among other Bakgatla societies or the rest of the Batswana as a whole of where such practice was applied. Even among the ba ga Motsha, the practice was only applied during the 1902 succession encounter. In addition, knowledge about the practice resides mainly among the elderly members from the ruling family (Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010). It could then be concluded that the *sefoka* practice, if adopted to address similar succession challenges, as was the case with the ba ga Motsha, could offer an interesting option in resolving complex succession issues among various societies in the present day.

Change of the ruling family's surname

The harmonious relations between Moepi and the NAD authorities did not last long, as Moepi was accused of planning a revolt against the NAD specifically and the whites near Waterberg generally. Following the revolt at Waterberg, Moepi feared that the authorities at the NAD could plot to replace him with one of his half-brothers from his father's other eleven wives. It was a common practice that the NAD would replace an uncooperative *kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha with another member of the royal family who was viewed as pliant and more willing to execute the instructions from the Pretoria administration. This also occurred during the appointment of Ratlhagana as a regent in 1902 and the later appointment of Moepi in 1904. Based on the fear that the NAD authorities might depose him, Moepi started to create a good working relationship with some of his half-brothers, except Ratlhagana, in an attempt to solicit royal support for his *bogosi* (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

After his appointment as *kgosi* in 1904, Moepi changed his surname from Maubane to Moepi. This was motivated by his desire to ensure that his own lineage retained the *bogosi* of the ba ga Motsha. Furthermore, he feared that the descendants of his half-sister, Mmapela, might in the future claim their right to the *bogosi*, which could thwart his objective and change the patriarchal succession arrangements of the community. A member of the ba ga Motsha royal family further recalled the event from his parents and wrote:

As Robert was the only person with the new surname at that time, other members of the royal family also decided to join him. Many remained with ‘Maubane [as the surname] (Maubane, M., n.d)

Moreover, Moepi wanted to deter any possibility of the descendants of *Kgosi* Maubane II’s younger brother, Saul, to claim the ba ga Motsha throne. He urged members of the royal family to follow his example. In fear of being victimised by Moepi and his supporters, the ordinary ba ga Motsha did not protest against the decision to use Moepi as the official surname of the ruling family in Schildpadfontein. At that time, the members of the ba ga Motsha at Tshuaneng refused to change their surname to Moepi but continued to respect the seniority of the *bogosi* based in Schildpadfontein (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The impact of the changing of the *kgosi*’s surname

As a reward for their loyalty, Moepi allowed his half-brothers to be part of the *bagakolodi ba kgosi*. To show their allegiance to him, members of the royal family were requested to change their surname from ‘Maubane’ to ‘Moepi,’ a request which was received with mixed feelings by members of the royal family. He further attempted to reregister the land occupied by the community under the name of Moepi but with no success, as it remained registered as Mauban Location. Some of the sons of the late *Kgosi* [Andries Moepi] Maubane II retained ‘Maubane’

as their surname while others followed Moepi and adopted Moepi as their surname (SNA, 516, NAC4/05).

The majority of the members of the royal family, especially those tracing their roots from Ratlhagana, continued to use Maubane as their surname. These were the ones who viewed themselves as the rightful heirs to the ba ga Motsha throne in Schildpadfontein on the basis that they were descendants of senior marriages from which Moepi was born. This view was widely known among members of the community but no actions were taken to reclaim the throne. The descendants of *Kgosi* Maubane II's younger brother, Saul, who are currently found in Maubane village near Hammanskraal, are aware of the controversy surrounding the use of Moepi as the official surname of the ruling family. However, they do not want to get involved in the succession politics of the ba ga Motsha since their lineage has been recognised by the Moepi family as the ba ga Motsha-Maubane branch of the ba ga Motsha (Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010; Interview with B. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010).

The conflict over *tlhomagano* among the ba ga Motsha, as demonstrated above, was mainly caused by rivalries within the royal family and this was common among many African groups. In all African societies, *bogosi* remained the highest position in society and it brought prestige, wealth and political power to *kgosi* and his close relatives. The benefits associated with *bogosi* then became key reasons behind succession battles. In some cases, as was the case with the ba ga Kgafela in the Pilanesberg District, the claim to the chieftaincy included people who were not part of the community's lineage. In that instance, Moselekatse and his son, Mokae, took over the *bogosi* after the departure of Kgamanyane and were recognised by the Transvaal government. The Transvaal government continued to recognise the *bogosi* of Moselekatse and his son despite the fact Kgamanyane was opposed to their appointment thus their legitimacy

remained questionable. Their *bogosi* lacked legitimacy and served as the basis for conflicting claims to the community's line of succession (Mbenga, 1996:199).

Conclusion

To conclude, this study has noted that the ba ga Motsha in 1902 adopted a new cultural strategy called *sefoka* in deciding the successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. The practice involved asking the eldest daughter from the *kgosi*'s principal marriage to decide upon which of her half-brothers who would succeed the late *kgosi*. This led to the appointment of Moepi from the *kgosi*'s Third House. This particular *tlhomagano* became a watershed in the history of succession among the ba ga Motsha. It led to the introduction of *sefoka* as a new but arbitrary model for deciding on a successor. This model was only practised by the ba ga Motsha and there are no recorded cases of its practice by any other Batswana community in the Transvaal. The adoption of this model seemed to have been influenced by *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka's desire to have Moepi, instead of Ratlhagana, appointed as the successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane II.

The approval of the appointment of Moepi as the heir to the throne illustrated the NAD's ignorance about the principles of *tlhomagano* among African societies. It illustrated the NAD's interests of only endorsing the appointment of an individual who was willing to ensure his community's adherence to government legislation governing African groups. This often led to the NAD's appointment of illegitimate chiefs, which contributed towards the rifts among members of the ruling family. The controversy surrounding the appointment of Moepi as the successor to late *Kgosi* Maubane II led to a decision to change the surname of the ruling family from 'Maubane' to 'Moepi'. This was received with mixed feelings by members of the ruling family – with some adopting the new surname and others maintaining Maubane. The Transvaal

authorities endorsed the change. To this date, the Moepi family remains at the helm of the ba ga Motsha in Schildpadfontein. Figure 8.1 below is a representation of the genealogy of the ba ga Motsha chiefs and thereafter Table 8.1 lists the wives of *Kgosi* Andries Maubane in order of seniority with names of the children from the first three marriages.

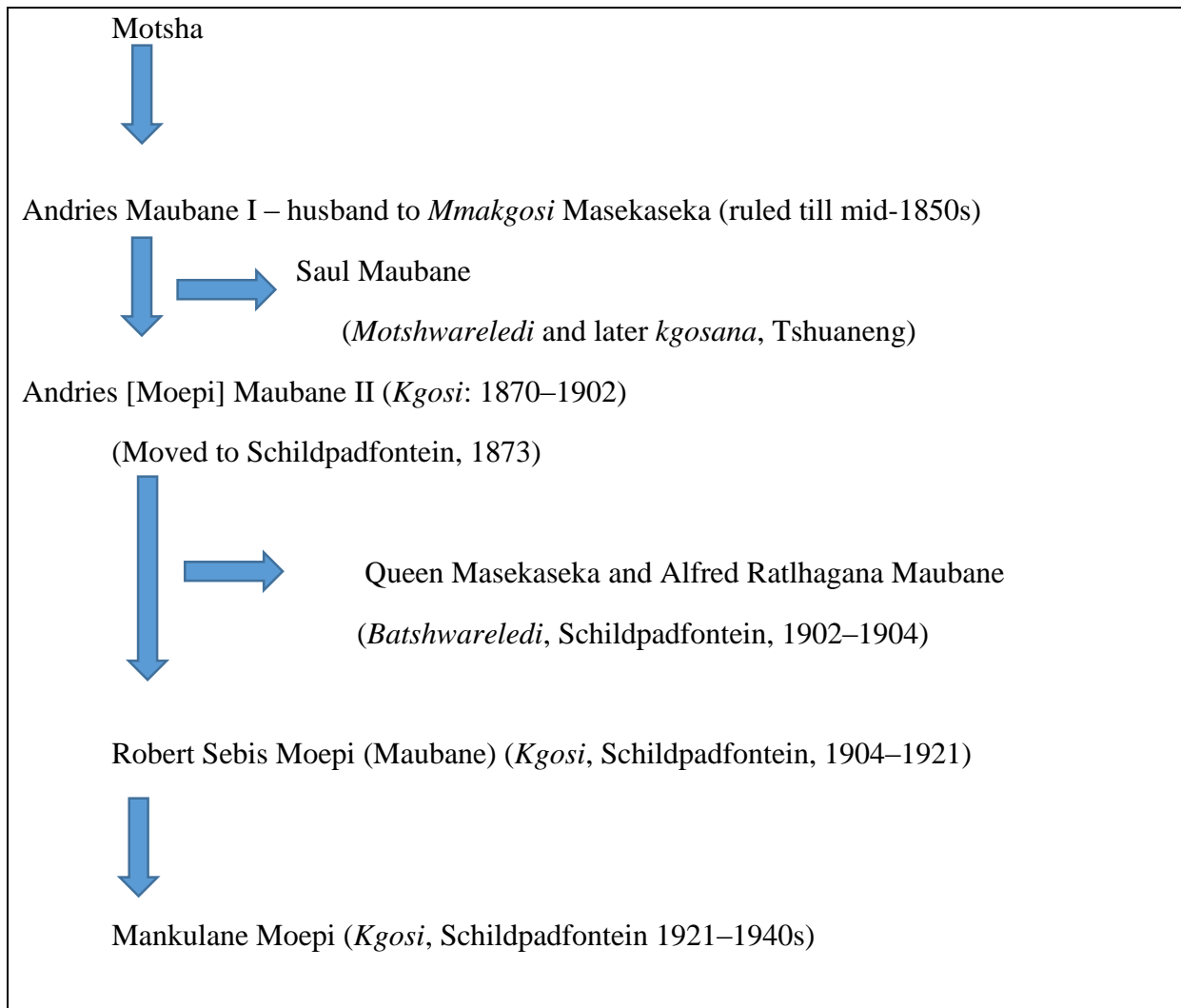


Figure 8.1: Genealogy of the ba ga Motsha chiefs

(Sources: SNA, 197, NA369/04; SNA, 221, NA1189/04; SNA, 124, NA903/03)

Table 8.1: List of wives of Kgosi Andries Maubane in order of seniority with names of the children from the first three marriages

Name	Origin	Children
1. Potsanyane	From Ga-Matlala in Sekhukhuneland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mmapela (f)
2. Moloji	From Ga-Motsha ward, Schildpadfontein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alfred Ratlhagana Maubane (m) • Mashile Maubane (m)
3. Mankone	From Ga-Matseke ward, Schildpadfontein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Robert Sebis Moepi Maubane (m)</i>
4. Serokolo	From Ga-Mogashoa, Sekhukhune	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown
5. Malebo	Unknown ward, Schildpadfontein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown
6. Malebo	From Ga-Motsha ward, Schildpadfontein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown
7. Mmakomane	From Ga-Kau ward, Schildpadfontein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown
8. Monokwane	From Ga-Motsha ward, Schildpadfontein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown

9. Mmantshedi	From Ga-Kau ward, Schildpadfontein	• Unknown
10. Matlhodi	From Lehurutshe, Groot Marico	• Unknown
11. Mmammule	Unknown	• Unknown
12. Mmamataleng	Unknown	• Unknown

(Source: Interview with B. Maubane, 30 June 2010; Interview with M. Maubane, Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010)

CONCLUSIONS

This study adds to regional studies on the history of African communities, starting with the establishment of the Transvaal Republic in 1856 until the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910. It has illustrated how a micro-historical account could be used to explain macro-historical developments that shaped the political cosmology of South Africa. The study has presented the case of the ba ga Motsha as a key component of the Bakgatla societies found in South Africa as well as Botswana, and demonstrated their contribution to the shaping of the history of the Transvaal specifically and the history of South Africa in general. The study further demonstrated that the ba ga Motsha are a sub-group of the Bakgatla, a composite group of the Batswana found in southern Africa. The community's link with other Bakgatla groups presents a strong argument for their inclusion on any study on the Bakgatla.

The ba ga Motsha settlement in Pretoria occurred as a result of the process of fission among the Bakgatla communities, following the *difaqane* turmoil of the 1820s and 1830s. Other Bakgatla communities that were also affected by the *difaqane* included the ba ga Mosetlha who settled in Makapanstad, the ba ga Kgafela in Rustenburg and Mochudi, and the ba ga Kau in De Wildt. Fission among the ba ga Motsha occurred during the early 1870s when *Kgosi* Maubane II relocated to Neuhalle with his supporters. He left a section of the community with his uncle, Saul, who wanted to be *kgosi*. The ba ga Motsha at Neuhalle, however, remained the principal group. It was only in the 1950s that the section of the community that had been under the *bogosana* (sub-chieftainship) of Saul received official recognition as a full *bogosi* by the government. That was done with consent from the *bogosi* in Schildpadfontein and led to the advent of the ba ga Motsha-Maubane. Today, there are other ba ga Motsha sub-groups, which include the ba ga Motsha-Seabe and the ba ga Motsha-Maloka, also found in Hammanskraal. The split of the ba ga Motsha is as a result of two factors. First, the relocation

by *Kgosi* Maubane II and part of his community to Schildpadfontein divided the community in two, leading to the advent of the ba ga Motsha-Maubane. Second, the *bogosi* in Schildpadfontein willingly allowed the emergence of two more branches, the ba ga Motsha-Seabe and the ba ga Motsha-Maloka.

The study also found that the ba ga Motsha and other African societies in the Pretoria District experienced harsh treatment by the Boers. These included their restricted access to land and subjection to forced labour. As a result, the community's settlement in Pretoria was short-lived as the Transvaal authorities authorised their relocation to Tshuaneng, where they lived on land owned by the Boers. The resettlement of the community to Tshuaneng was made possible by the fact that the Transvaal authorities did not allow African communities to own land or to have land registered under their names. The Boers thus seized the opportunity and accommodated the community on their farms in exchange for their labour.

Based on the above, the study concludes that the ba ga Motsha were one of the original African societies that settled in Pretoria before the arrival of the Boers. Their settlement as one of the earlier inhabitants of the territory that was later named Pretoria by the Boers presents the community or some of its key leaders, such as *Kgosi* Maubane I, *Kgosi* Maubane II, *Kgosi* Maubane Moepi, as some of the names that could be used as actors in the renaming of key features of the city and its surrounds, including streets and buildings. Additionally, the evidence about the community's settlement in various parts of the city provides a justification for a land claim of the areas that were once under the ba ga Motsha possession. Such land claim could add an interesting dimension to the rewriting of the history of Pretoria.

As the study has shown, the highly skewed relationship between the Bakgatla and the Boers was characterised by tension and conflict. Members of the community complained about ill-treatment by white farmers, which included being regularly subjected to physical punishment and unpaid labour. The community also indicated that the arrangement to be under the Boers was against their desire, as they thought that they had right of ownership to Tshuaneng. The community felt that their *kgosi*, Andries Maubane, had received a raw deal from the Boers and this led to their resentment of the white farmers and the Transvaal administration.

The ba ga Motsha, like other African communities in the Transvaal, presented their complaints about ill-treatment by the white farmers at the 1871 Commission on African Labour. In this context, the community used the Reverend Sachse of the BMS to prepare written submissions to the Commission. The submissions were received by the Commission but nothing was done to ensure that the white farmers stopped exposing members of the community to harsh and inhumane labour conditions. African communities' right to own or purchase land under their own names name was rejected. Subsequently, *Kgosi* Maubane II indicated that his community was prepared to move away from Hammanskraal to avert the ill-treatment that the members of his community were facing at the hands of the white farmers and the Transvaal administration. He then requested permission to purchase land far away from Pretoria. The study, therefore, argues that the BMS missionaries such as the Reverend Sachse did not necessarily assist the African communities in their land purchase deal, based on their contribution towards economic emancipation of the African communities. It was rather done to secure themselves large tracts of land once the land purchase deals had been completed. Successful conclusion of the land purchase deals made it possible for the missionaries to win the hearts and minds of the African communities. This assisted in the expansion of missionary activities among the African communities.

Sachse's agreement to assist *Kgosi* Maubane II in finalising the purchase of land in Neuhalle was also motivated by the fact that Maubane I's younger brother, Saul, had developed a negative attitude towards the BMS. He made efforts to attack Sachse as a sign of registering his discontent with the BMS activities. Furthermore, Saul concluded a deal with the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal which gave him authority as the head of the section of the community that remained at Tshuaneng.

On the rift between Maubane II and Saul, the study maintains that the Boer farmers in Hammanskraal feared that if the whole community was going to relocate to Neuhalle, it would have a negative impact on the labour supply to their farms. They then took advantage of the tension within the *ba ga Motsha* royal family and encouraged Saul and his supporters not to relocate. Saul saw that as an opportunity to legitimise his claim to the *ba ga Motsha* throne in Tshuaneng. Those who remained at Tshuaneng thus continued to be a source of cheap labour to the Boer farmers.

After the death of *Kgosi* Maubane II, *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka and later Ratlhagana served as the *batshwareledi* on behalf of Moepi, who in 1902 went to school in Cape Town. The appointment of *batshwareledi* and *dikgosi* at that time was mainly based on their obedience and good behaviour towards the NAD. Good behaviour by the *batshwareledi* and *dikgosi* was often rewarded with the granting of gun licences, as was the case with Ratlhagana and Moepi. It was a common occurrence that suspicious behaviour resulted in the withdrawal of 'privileges,' which was the case for both Ratlhagana and Moepi, whose firearm licences were withdrawn when they were seen by the Boer authorities to be displaying suspicious behaviour.

The study presented a discussion on the NAD's withdrawal of *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka from her status as *motshwareledi* because she was accused of being uncooperative towards the Boer administration. She was then replaced by Ratlhagana, first-born son from the late *Kgosi* Maubane II's second marriage. The study upholds that the withdrawal of *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka as *motshwareledi* reflected the patriarchal nature of the Boer administration. Her uncooperativeness in terms of executing the directives from the all-male white government was viewed as an insult to the Boers' efforts to manage the ba ga Motsha. The Boers preferred to work with male members from the royal family, especially those who were willing to execute their orders. These members from the royal family were often subjected to fines and/or physical punishment for failing to execute orders. The appointment of Ratlhagana as *motshwareledi* thus demonstrated how the Boers marginalised the *bogosi*, often relegating the role of the *dikgosi* to that of proxy-representatives of the government, contrary to their original role as the custodians of key community decisions that favoured their subjects.

The appointment of Moepi as the successor to the late *Kgosi* Maubane II was confirmed through the practice of *sefoka*. This happened much to the dissatisfaction of a number of members of the royal family who strongly maintained that the rightful successor to the late *kgosi* was supposed to come from the second marriage and not the third, as had happened. This explanation is based on the fact that there was no son from the *kgosi*'s first marriage, thus providing a justification for the son from the *kgosi*'s second marriage to be considered the successor. This was in line with the Tswana tradition and custom. Eventually, Moepi – from the second marriage and through the *sefoka* process – became the successor to the late *kgosi*. *Tlhomagano* among the ba ga Motsha continued to be handled in a controversial manner and has continued led to lead to unofficial claims and counterclaims to *bogosi* to this day.

After seeing through the *sefoka* process, the royal family was divided regarding the suitability of Moepi as the rightful successor of the late *Kgosi* Maubane II. One faction believed that in the absence of a male successor from the *kgosi's* first marriage, the royal family could have opted for the elder son from the second marriage as the automatic successor. Conversely, others remained convinced that the appointment of Moepi was legitimate as it had been applied with the consent of the *kgosi's* daughter from the principal marriage. This created confusion. Amid all these, the *sefoka* process served as an interesting intervention in addressing the *tlhomagano* among the ba ga Motsha. Though controversial, the process could be used as a point of reference in similar situations in the future.

Most notably, the discussions around *sefoka* were led by *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka and the actual handling of *bogosi* was conducted by Mmapela, the first-born daughter from the late *Kgosi* Maubane II's principal marriage. *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka dominated the discussions and was influential in determining how the *sefoka* process was to be undertaken. Her role in the issue demonstrated her ability to be innovative in resolving *tlhomagano* in the absence of a male heir from the late *kgosi's* principal marriage that took place, despite the fact that the Boers viewed her as not possessing intellectual capacity. The outcome of the *sefoka* was generally accepted by the community and was also endorsed by the Transvaal government, and that served as a key diplomatic victory for *Mmakgosi* Masekaseka. It further demonstrated the important role played by the ba ga Motsha women in the decision-making process, thus demystifying the view that the ba ga Motsha, as a patriarchal society, viewed men as the sole decision-makers.

Upon ascending to the throne, *Kgosi* Moepi thus decided to deal with the issue of the controversy of his *bogosi* by changing his last name from 'Maubane' to 'Moepi', a surname which he had inherited from his late father. Some members of the royal family loyal to him

followed his example, and this led to the founding of 'Moepi' as the surname of the ruling family of the ba ga Motsha in Neuhalle. Members of the royal family who refused to change their surnames were treated with suspicion and were denied privileges associated with being members of the royal family. The change of surname was treated as a sensitive matter, as it created tension within the broader ruling family. To this day, the issue of the change of surname from Maubane to Moepi remains central to the arguments around the succession of Bakgatla chiefs in Mauban Location. It thus made the *bogosi* and *tlhomagano* among the ba ga Motsha to remain a sensitive and controversial subject.

The most popular BMS missionary to work among the ba ga Motsha was Otto Sachse. His major contribution to the community included mediating during the conflict between *Kgosi* Maubane II and his brother, Saul; facilitating a mutual relationship between the community and the NAD; serving as a principal scribe for official correspondence between the community and the whites; leading and concluding land purchase deals on behalf of the community; and establishing the Neuhalle mission station which remained the centre for BMS activities among the ba ga Motsha. The BMS expected the ba ga Motsha to abandon their traditional beliefs such as *bogwera*, ancestral worship, payment of *bogadi* and the practice of polygamy.

The ba ga Motsha, on the other hand, wanted to maintain their traditional religion while also subscribing to some aspects of Christianity as offered by the missionaries. The ba ga Motsha, like most African communities in the Transvaal at that time, did not become wholly converted to Christianity. Christianity was relevant only when it served their interests, such as in assisting them to gain access to the firearm market, retaining harmonious relations with the Transvaal authorities, gaining access to land and using missionaries to purchase land on their behalf.

The missionaries served as the representatives of the white authorities among the local communities. They administered justice on behalf of the administration, collected taxes and served as middlemen in all the communications between the African communities and the Transvaal authorities. The popularity of the BMS among the African communities, including the Bakgatla, was made possible by the fact that the missionaries made an effort to learn local languages and culture. They worked closer with the African evangelists from whom they learned how to conduct sermons in local languages. The good working relations between the missionaries and the *baefangedi* were viewed by the Elders of the BMS in Berlin as contaminating the mission's theological practices. This caused quarrels between the evangelists and the BMS authorities.

The differences between the two groups culminated in 1890 when a group of African evangelists, headed by Martin Sebushane and supported by Reverend Winter, left the BMS to form the LBC, which continued to conduct its religious activities along the BMS lines. On 5 May 1892 the Transvaal government officially recognised the LBC as an independent African church, with Martin Sebushane as its inaugural Bishop. On 24 August 1892 the LBC was officially launched and from that date, the LBC existed side-by-side with the BMS, also called the Berlin Church, until the BMS split during the 1980s giving rise to ELCSA. The process that led to the advent of the LBC was characterised by formal engagements between the *baefangedi* and the leadership of the BMS. These included formal correspondence between the two parties. When the *baefangedi* were not receiving favourable response from the BMS, they asked the Transvaal government for permission to establish an independent church thus, as indicated above, the LBC was inaugurated in 1892. The *baefangedi's* engagements with

both the BMS and the Transvaal government set the tone for the struggle against racism in the Transvaal.

The study has observed that the ba ga Motsha, like all African communities in South Africa, were affected by the outcome of the South African War (1899–1902) and the creation of the Union of South Africa (1910). Both the British and the Afrikaners used the outcome of the South African War to consolidate their political social, cultural and economic superiority over African communities. In addition, individuals such as Peter Matseke played a key role in the South African War skirmishes in Hammanskraal. Despite this, the name of Matseke is hardly mentioned in academic works covering the war, relegating him to the status of an ‘unsung hero’. The study argues that based on his role, Matseke deserves to be equated to other prominent Africans, such as Solomon Tshekiso Plaatje of the Barolong in Mafikeng, whose involvement during the Siege of Mafikeng has been presented in various studies as one of the ‘great men’ in the history of the South African War and the advent of the nationalist struggle in South Africa.

Lastly, a great deal of archival material exists that covers a number of African communities in the central districts of the Transvaal during the era of the South African Republic. In addition to the material on the ba ga Motsha, there are many records covering other African communities that have received little attention from historians, including the Bahwaduba of *Kgosi* Mathibe and the Ndebele under *Kgosi* Kekana, all situated in the Hammanskraal sub-district of Pretoria. The experiences of these communities could add an interesting dimension to the understanding of the history of the Transvaal from a regional historical perspective and, as such, provide fertile ground for historical research. Most notably, the conduct of historical research about

these communities could contribute to the relevance of micro-historical approach in furthering the understanding of the national history of South Africa.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Contents

- i. Government reports and records
- ii. Archival sources
- iii. Oral informants
- iv. Books and chapters in books
- v. Journal Articles
- vi. Thesis and dissertations
- vii. Unpublished papers
- viii. Internet sources

i. Government reports and records

Letter, Native Commissioner's Office, Pretoria, Papers N.C.P. 462/1904, No. 80/1904, 29th June 1904.

Official Gazette of the High Commissioner for South Africa, published by the authority of His Excellency the High Commissioner, Vol. XXXII, Pretoria, Tuesday, 11 October, 1910.

ii. Archival Sources

GOV – Government Documents

GOV, 1086, PS50/8/07, Location Commission, History of Native Tribes, Chief Maubane (1870).

GOV, 1098, P550/08/07, Location Commission Maubane – History of Native tribes, (1870).

TA – Transvaal Administration files

TA, SS 139, Supl. 104/1871, Testimony of Maubane Moepi, 25 Sept 1871, (1871).

SS – State Secretary

SS, 139, Supl. 104/1871, “Testimony of Maubane Moepi”, 25 September 1871, (1871).

SS, 121, R390/70, “Otto Sachse, Ga-Motsa, versoek bekrachtigen bekrachtein Als kaptein op Andries Maubane – ontvang”, (1870).

SS, 123, R599/70. “O. Sachse, Apies rivier klaagt namens Andries Maubane over handelswysze van J.C. Fourie, veldcornet – ontvang”, (1870).

SS, 128, R1486/70, “Andries Maubane, Apies-Rivier, versoek contract, verbreken met burgers – ontvang”, (1870).

SS, 129, R566/70, “Commandant-General, PTA, Toezending Rapport in zake Andries Maubane – ontvang”, (1870).

SS, 136, R1116/71, “Commandant-Generaal, Pretoria, toezending brief S.T. Prinsloo, Commandant, en Riekert, veldcornet, over trekken Andries Maubane naar Malok Zynkop, versoekonder hem the stoppen – ontvang”, (1871).

SS, 139, SUPL 83/71, “Staats Sekretaries, Insending van ‘n brief van Kaptein Andries Maubane DD4/12/1870 insake ‘n kontrak tussen die ZAR en sy vader Moepi met byskrif van die sendeling O. Sachse”, (1871).

SS, 0, R10056/98, S. Maubane Schilpadfontein, “klaagt over de handeling van die heer J. Pretorius by het invorderen van belangsting” (1898).

SS, 1692, R7176/88, V. Sachse, re zynonschuldige beschuldiging inzake Kaptein A. Maubane (1888).

SS, 156, R673, Otto Sachse, “Ga Motsha, over eene woonplaats voor Andries Maubane”, (1873).

SS, 282, R1704/78, “His Excellency Commissioner, Zoutpansberg and Waterberg – Replies” (1878).

SS, 312, R1902/80, “Forwards Administrative Bill and rules” (1880).

SP – Staats Prokureur

SP, 8, SPR163/78, “Minute from Colonial office. Stating suspicion that a native called David has been prisoned by native Chief Maubane”, (1878).

SNA - Secretary for Native Affairs Files

SNA, 8 NA227/01, “Native Ministers of Lutheran Bapedi Church”, (1901).

SNA, 197, NA369/04, “Sub.native Commissioner – Hammanskraal – Recommends the appointment of Robert Moepi alias Sibis as Chief of the Mauban Tribe, Schilpadfontein”, (1904).

SNA, 50, NA1743/02, “Native Commissioner Lydenburg, Letter from Ministers and Teachers”, (1902).

SNA, 124, NA903/03, “letter from Native Commissioner central division, enquiry for gun permit, Alfred Maubane for cancellation”, (1903).

SNA, 516, NAC4/05, “The native unrest, meeting held Marulakop (Marolakop) Waterberg District, Robert Moepi”, (1905).

SNA, 221, NA1189/04, “F.G. Rudolph Box 314, Pretoria, Proposed purchase by Chief Robert Moepi of Schilpadfontein of the farm Klipfontein number 196, also known as Varkfontein which is registered in the name of L. Ohlsen”, (1904).

SNA, 131, NA1217/03, “Chieftainess Masekaseka, Schilpadfontein, Pretoria District, Complains that the sub-native commissioner has appointed Alfred Maubane to act as chief of the Bakhatle tribe until the return of Robert who is at present at school in Cape Town”, (1903).

SNA, 487, NA4016/10, “Native Commissioner Pretoria, Sub-Native Commissioner Hammanskraal”, (1910).

SNA, 260, NA731/05, “Reverend JA Winter – Representatives of the Lutheran Bapedi Church”, (1905).

SNA 480, NA3089/10, “JA Winter post office Schoonoord, Lydenburg, list of ministers”, (1910).

GNLB: Government Native Labour Bureau files

GNLB, 371, 62/27, "Tribal levy: - Bakgatla ba Mocha, Schilpadfontein", (1927).

GNLB, 382, 12/3, "Death of Chief Robert Moepi, Schilpadfontein, Hammanskraal", (1928).

GNLB, 282, 470/17, "Lutheran Bapedi Church", (1911).

IOP files

IOP, 4, IOMG35/00, "Commandant Hammanskraal, Information received from native scouts (1900).

IOP, 5, IOMG464/00, "Commandant Hammanskraal, No Boers west of Elands River" (1900).

IOP, 6, IOMG242/01, "Considerable risk to native as Boer patrol" (1901)

MHG: Master of High Court cases

MHG, 0, 247/68, "Moepi, Renate Maskaseska Maubane", (1914).

KJB: Konsul-General van die ZAR files

KG, 111, CR1362/95, "Veldcornet AP Botha wyk Aapjesrivier, over patronen die Masekaseka", (1895).

KHK: Native High- Commissioner Hammanskraal

KHK, 2/2/153, N11/1/3 (17) "Bantoeadministrasie en ontwikkeling Naturellesake .Stam owerheid, Bakgatla-ba-Mocha, Kaptein R. L. Moepi, Skilpadfontein", (1904).

iii. Oral Informants

Bila, J. (Mr) : Atteridgeville, Pretoria, a member of the National Executive Committee of the LBC, 23 July 2015.

Kolobe, M. (Ms.): Marapyane, Pienaars River, a resident at the ELCSA Mission house, the original site of the BMS mission station in Marapyane, 18 July 2015.

Kutu, M. (Mr): Mathibestad, Hammanskraal, a member of the Bahwaduba of Kgosi Mathibe in Hammanskraal, 5 July 2014.

Letebele, A. (Mr): Makapanstad village, Hammanskraal, a member of the ba ga Moseitlha in Makapanstad, 30 May 2006.

Madikologa, N. (Mr): Dertig village, Hammanskraal: 23 July – a member of the Tribal Committee of the ba ga Motsha-Maubane, Hammanskraal, 23 July 2010.

Makapan, H.M. (*Kgosi*): Makapanstad village, Hammanskraal: 30 May – *Kgosi* (late) of the ba ga Moseitlha in Makapanstad, Hammanskraal 30 May 2006.

Makapan, L. (Mr): Hammanskraal, Makapanstad village, Hammanskraal (telephonic interview – Member of the *Kgoro-ya--Kgosing* and Secretary to the ba ga Moseitlha Tradional Council, 21 November, 2016.

Manwa E Ms.): Havana, – a Zimbabwean diplomat who originates from Matebeleland in Zimbabwe, 03 February 2016.

Masilela, T. (Mr): Atteridgeville, Pretoria, 18 July – Dean of the Pretoria Circuit of the LBC, 18 July 2015.

Masuku, N. (Ms): Havana, Princess of the Mpondo clan from Western Pondoland in the Eastern Cape Province., 24 November 2016.

Matshikwe, N. (Ms): Havana, member of the Xhosa tribe Piere in the Eastern Cape Province, 24 November 2016.

Matlala, S. (Mr): Dertig village, Hammanskraal, an evangelist (late) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa based in Hammanskraal, 15 June 2011.

Matseke, P. (Mrs): Dertig village, Hammanskraal, an elderly member of the ba ga Motsha and daughter-in-law of Petrus Nkga Matseke - founder member of the Transvaal Native Congress, 6 September 2010.

Maubane, B. (Mr): Maubane village, Hammanskraal, member of the *Bagakolodi ba kgosi i* of the ba ga Motsha in Maubane, 30 June 2010.

Maubane, M. (Mr): Maubane village, Hammanskraal, an elderly member of *Kgoro ya Motsha* of the ba ga Motsha, 30 June 2010.

Maubane, P. (*Kgosi.*): Maubane village, Hammanskraal, *Kgosi* of the ba ga Motsha-Maubane at Maubane village in Hammanskraal, 30 June 2010.

Moagi, L. (Mr) Atteridgeville, Pretoria, grandson of Petrus Nkga Matseke, 20 March 2012.

Mohlaka, A. (Mr): Atteridgeville, Pretoria, an evangelist and member of the National Executive Committee of the LBC, 10 November 2011.

Motsepe, J. (Mr): Opperman village, Hammanskraal, an elderly member of ba ga Motsha, Hammanskraal, 17 November 2010.

Motsepe, L. (Mr) Dertig village, Hammanskraal, a member of the ba ga Motsha in Hammanskraal who served in a portfolio dealing with traditional affairs at the Moretele Local Municipality in Hammanskraal, 10 August 2011.

iv. Books and chapters in books

Beinart, W. 1982. *The Political Economy of Pondoland 1860-1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Beinart, W. 1988. "Agrarian Historiography and Agrarian Reconstruction". (In Lonsdale, J. ed. *South Africa in Question*. London: Cambridge University Press. p. 134-153).

Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. 1987. *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Beinart, W. & Delius, P. 1986. "Introduction: approaches to South African Agrarian", (In Beinart, W., Delius, P. & Trapido, S. (eds.). *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South, 1850-1930*. Ravan Press: Johannesburg. p. 2-4).

Bergh, J.S. & Morton, F. (eds.). 2003. *To Make Them Serve ...: The 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour*. Pretoria: Protea Book House.

Bozzoli, B. (ed.). 1983. *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Bradford, H.A. 1988. *A Taste of Freedom*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Breutz, P.-L. 1953. *The Tribes of the Rustenburg and Pilanesberg Districts. Ethnological Publication No. 28*. Pretoria: Native Affairs Department.

Brookes, E.H. 1924. *The History of Native Policy in South Africa from 1830 to the Present Day*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Burger, D. (ed.). 2009. *South Africa Yearbook, 2008/09*. Pretoria: Government Communications.

Cameron, T. & Spies, S.B. (eds.). 1986. *A New Illustrated History of South Africa*. Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers.

Callinicos, L. 2004. *Oliver Tambo: Beyond the Engeli Mountains*. Claremont: David Philip Publishers.

Davenport, T.R.H. 1991. *South Africa: a Modern History*. London: Macmillan.

Delius, P. 1986. "Abel Erasmus: power and profit in the Eastern Transvaal". (In Beinart, W., Delius, P. & Trapido, S. (eds.). *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South, 1850-1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Denoon, D.J.N. 1973. *A Grand Illusion: the Failure of Imperial Policy in the Transvaal Colony during the Period of Reconstruction, 1900-1905*. London: Longman.

Doxey, G.V. 1991. "The origins of racial discrimination in the South African labour market". In Zbigniew, A. (ed.). *Studies in the Economic History of Southern Africa*. London: Frank Cass.

Du Plessis, J. 1965. *A History of Christian Missions in South Africa*. Cape Town: Struik.

Esterhuysen, P. 1998. *Africa A - Z: Continental and Country Profiles*. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Garrett Fisher, W.E. 1986. *The Transvaal and the Boers: A Brief History*. London: Chapman Hall.

Gevisser, M. 2007. *The Drean Differed: Thabo Mbeki*. Jeppesstown: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

Giliomee, H. & Mbenga, B. 2008. *New History of South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers.

Government of Bophuthatswana, 1977. *The Republic of Bophuthatswana*. Johannesburg: Chris van Rensburg Publications.

Greenwall, R. 1992. *Artists and Illustrators of the Anglo-Boer War*. Vlaeberg: Fernwood Press.

Grobler, J. 2014. "State formation and strife". In Pretorius, F. (ed.). *A History of South Africa: from the Distant Past to the Present Day*. Pretoria: Protea Book House.

Hasselhorn, F. 1987. *Mission, Land ownership and Settlers' Ideology*. Johannesburg: South African Council of Churches.

Hamilton, C. 1995. *The Mfecane Aftermath: Reconstructive Debates in Southern African History*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand Press.

Jafta, L. & Pretorius, H. 1997. "A branch springs Out: African initiated churches". In Elphick, R. & Davenport, T.R.H. (eds.). *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History*. Oxford: Currey.

Juta, M. 1936. *The Pace of the Ox: The Life of Paul Kruger*. Constable: London.

Keegan, T.J. 1986a. *Rural Transformation in Industrializing South Africa: The Southern Highveld to 1914*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Keegan, T.J. 1986b. "White settlement and black subjugation on the South African highveld: the Tlokoa Heartland in the North Eastern Orange Free State, ca. 1850-1914". In Beinart, W., Delius, P. & Trapido, S. (eds.). *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South, 1850-1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Keegan, T.J. 1988. *Facing the Storm: Portraits of Black lives in Rural South Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip.

Keegan, T.J. 1991. "The making of rural economy: from 1850 to present". In Konczacki, Z.A., Parpart, J.L. & Shaw, T.M. (eds.). *Studies in the Economic History of Southern Africa*. London: Frank Cass.

Koyana, D.S. 1998. "Administrative functions of traditional leaders". In D'Engelbronner-Kolff, F.M., Hinz, M.O. & Sindano, J.L. (eds.). *Traditional Authority and Democracy in Southern Africa*. Windhoek: New Namibia Books.

Le May, G.H.L. 1965. *British Supremacy in South Africa*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Legassick, M. 1969. "The Sotho-Tswana peoples before 1800". In Thompson, L. (ed.). *African Societies in Southern Africa*. New York: Praeger.

Legassick, M. 1977. "Gold, agriculture, and secondary industry in South Africa, 1840-1964". In Palmer, R. & Parsons, N. (eds.). *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa*. London: Heinemann.

Legassick, M. 1980. "The frontier tradition in South African historiography". (In Marks, S. & Atmore, A. (eds.). *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*. London: Longman.

Levi, G. 1991. "On microhistory". In Burke, P. (ed.). *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Linington, P.A. 1933. *Native Administration in the Union of South Africa*. Government Printers: Pretoria.

Low, A.B. & Rabelo, A.G. 1998. *Vegetation of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland*. Pretoria: Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

Makgala, C.J. 2009. *History of the Bakgatla-ba ga Kgafela in Botswana and South Africa*. Pretoria: Crink.

Maloka, E. 2014. *Friends of the Natives: The Inconvenient Past of South African Liberalism*. Durban: 3MS Publishing.

Mandela, N. 1995. *Long Walk to Freedom*. London: Abucus.

Manfred, N. 1937. *The Voortrekkers of South Africa: From the Earliest Times To The Foundation of Republics*. London: Central News Agency.

Manfred, N. 1942. *Paul Kruger: His Life and Times*. Durban: Knox Publishing Company.

Manson, R. 1969. *Prehistory of the Transvaal: A Record of Human Activity*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Marks, S. & Atmore, A. eds. 1980. *The Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*. London: Longman.

Mbenga, B.K. & Manson, A. 2010. *People of the Dew: A History of the Bafokeng of Rustenburg District, South Africa, from early times to 2000*. Cape Town: Jacana Media.

Mgadla, P.T. 1998. "The Kgosi in a traditional Tswana setting". In Edge, W.A. & Lekorwe, M.H. eds. *Botswana: Politics and Society*. Pretoria: L Van Schaik Publishers.

Mogamedi, J.M. 1958. *Ditaba tsa kereke ea Bopedi Church tikologong ea Sekhukhune-land*. Middleburg: Lutheran Bapedi Church.

Morton, R.F. 1994. "Captive labor in the western Transvaal after the Sand River Convention". In Eldredge, A. & Morton, R.F. (eds.). *Slavery in South Africa: Captive Labor on the Dutch Frontier*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Muller, C.F.J. 1969. *Five Hundred Years: A History of South Africa*. Pretoria: Academica.

Nasson, B. 1999. *The South African War, 1899-1902*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Nathan, M. 1937. *The Voortrekkers of South Africa*. London: Central News Agency.

Native Affairs Department. 1907. *The Laws and Regulations Specifically Relating to the Native Population of the Transvaal*. Pretoria: Government Printing and Stationary Office.

Omer-Cooper, J. 1969. "Aspects of political change in the nineteenth-century Mfecane". In Thompson, L. (ed.). *African Societies in Southern Africa*. New York: Heinemann.

Omer-Cooper, J. 1966. *The Zulu Aftermath: A Nineteenth Century Revolution in Bantu Africa*. London: Longman.

Phapallis, J. 1991. *Foundations of the New South Africa*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller.

Pillay, G.J. 1993. *Voices of Liberation, Volume. 1: Albert Luthuli*. Pretoria: HSRC Printers.

Pretorius, F. 2014. *A History of South Africa: From the Distant Past to the Present Day*. Pretoria: Protea Book House.

Pyrah, G.B. 1954. *Imperial Policy and South Africa, 1902-1910*. London: Clarendon Press.

Rogers, H. 1934. *Native Administration in the Union of South Africa*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Rose, E.B. 1902. *The Truth About the Transvaal: A Record of Facts Based Upon Twelve Years Residence in the Country*. London: Morning Leader Publication Department.

Saunders, C. 1983. "Historians and apartheid". (In Lonsdale, J. ed. *South Africa in Question*. Cambridge: African Studies Center. p. 13-32).

Saunders, C. & Southey, A. 1998. *Dictionary of South African History*. Claremont: David Phillip Publishers.

Schapera, I. 1941. *Married Life in an African Tribe*. London: Faber & Faber.

Schapera, I. 1953. *The Tswana: Ethnographic Survey of Africa, Southern Africa*. London: International African Institute.

Schapera, I. 1970. *Tribal Innovators: Tswana: Chief and Social Change, 1795-1940*. New York: The Athlone Press.

Schapera, I. 1967. *Western Civilisation and Natives of South Africa*. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul.

Schapera, I. & Comaroff, J.L. (eds.). 1953. *The Tswana*. London: Kegan Paul.

Schnell, E.L.G., 1954. *For Men Must Work: An Account of German Immigration to the Cape*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller.

Scriba, G. & Lislud, G. 1997. "Lutheran Missions and Churches in South Africa". In Elphick, R. & Davenport, T.R.H. (eds.). *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Selby, J. 1973. *A Short History of South Africa*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Sparks, A. 1990. *The Mind of South Africa: The Story of the Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. London: Heinemann.

Thompson, L. 1969. *African Societies in Southern Africa: Historical Studies*. New York: Praeger Publishing.

Thompson, L. 1990. *A History of South Africa*. Yale University Press: Chicago.

Transvaal Government. 1903. *The Laws of the Transvaal Up to 189*. London: Waterlow & Sons.

Transvaal Native Affairs Department. 1905. *Short History of Native Tribes of the Transvaal*. Pretoria: Transvaal Native Affairs Department.

Trapido, S. 1980. "Reflections on land, office and wealth in South African Republic, 1850-1900". In Marks, S. & Atmore, A. (eds.) *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*. Hongkong: Longman.

Trapido, S. 1986. "Putting a plough to the ground: a history of tenant production on the Vereeniging Estates, 1896-1920". In Beinart, W., Delius, P. & Trapido, S. (eds.) *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South, 1850-1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Van Jaarsveld, F.A. 1964. *The Afrikaner's Interpretation of South African History*. Cape Town: Simondium Publishing.

Van Warmelo, N.J. 1935. *A Preliminary Survey of the Native Tribes of South Africa*. Pretoria: Native Affairs Department.

Van Warmelo, N.J. 1944. *Union of South Africa: Department of Native Affairs Ethnological Publications*. Pretoria: Minerva Printing Works.

Warwick, P. 1983. *Black People and the South African War*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Warwick, P. & Spies, S.B. 1980. *The South African War: The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*. London: Longman.

Worden, N. 1994. *The Making of Modern South Africa*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.

v. Journal Articles

Beinart, W. 1984. "Soil erosion, conservationism and ideas about development: a southern African exploration, 1900-1960", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11 (1).

Bergh, J.S. 2000. "African reaction to white penetration: the central districts of the Transvaal in the 1870s", *Historia*, 45 (1).

Burton, D. 1987. "The taxation of Africans in the Transvaal, 1902-1907", *Kleio*, 19.

Caruthers, J. 1989. "Creating a National Park, 1910 to 1926", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15 (2).

Cobbing, J. 1988. "The Mfecane as alibi: thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo", *Journal of African History*, 29 (3).

Comaroff, J. & Comaroff, J.L. 1986. "Christianity and colonialism in South Africa", *American Ethnologist*, 13 (1).

Delius, P. 2010. "J.A. Winter: visionary or mercenary? A missionary life in colonial context", *South African Historical Journal*, 62 (2).

Du Bruyn, J. 1994. "Of muffled southern Tswana and overwhelming missionaries: the Comaroffs and the colonial encounter", *South African Historical Journal*, 31.

Hall, M. 1987. "Archaeology and modes of production in pre-colonial southern Africa", *Journal of Southern African studies*, 14 (1).

- Kriel, E. 200. "African reaction to white penetration: the Hanawa of Blouberg, ca.1886-1894", *Historia*, 45 (1).
- Koyana, D.S. 2002. "Chieftainship and Headmanship are not hereditary", *Speculum Juris*, 16 (2).
- Lewis, J. 1984. "The rise and fall of the South African peasantry: a critique and reassessment", *Journal of Southern African studies*, 11(1).
- Maggs, T. & Whitelaw, G. 1991. "A review of recent archeological research on food-producing communities in southern Africa", *Journal of African History*, 32 (4).
- Mbuya, T. 1999. "Legitimacy and succession in Tswana states: the case of Bakwena", *Pula: Journal of African Studies*, 13 (1&2).
- Mbenga, B.K. 1997. "Forced labour in the Pilanesberg: the flogging of Chief Kgamanyane by Commandant Paul Kruger, Saulspoor, April 1870", *Journal of South African studies*, 23 (1).
- Mulunga, F. 2003. "Schism and secession: the founding of the Bapedi Lutheran Church, 1890-1898", *Historia*, 48 (2).
- Pilane, A.M. & Mitchison N. 1973. "Dikgoro-wards of the *baKgatla-bakga-Kgafela*". *Botswana Notes and Records*, 5.
- Poewe, K. & Van der Heyden, U. 1999. "The Berlin Missionary Society and its theology: the Bapedi Mission Church and the independent Bapedi Lutheran Church", *South African Historical Journal*, 40.
- Richard, P. 1999. "Basarwa subordination among the Bakgatla: a case study in north-western Kgatlang", *Pula: Botswana Journal of African studies*, 13 (1&2).
- Ruther, K. 2004. "Sekukuni, listen! Banna! and to the children of Frederick the Great and our Kaizer Wilhem: documents in the social and religious history of the Transvaal, 1860-1890", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 34 (3).

Saunders, C. 1990. "What of regional history? Towards a History of the Western Cape", *South African Historical Journal*, 22.

Siwundla, H.T. 1984. "White ideologies and non-European participation in the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902", *Journal of Black Studies*, 15.

Verhoef, G. 1998. "The master's degree: perspective on research on post-graduate level", *New Contree*, 43.

vi. Theses and Dissertations

Bergh, J.S. 1978. "*Die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap in Pretoria en omgewing, 1866-188*". Pretoria: University of South Africa. (Thesis – D Litt et Phil).

Bergh, J.S. 1973. "*Die sendeling Alexander Merensky in geskiedenis van Suid Afrikanse Republiek, 1859-1882*". Pretoria: University of South Africa. (Dissertation – MA).

Caruthers, J. 1998. "Game protection in the Transvaal, 1846 to 1926". Cape Town: University of Cape. (Thesis – PhD).

Jooste, G.J. 1996. "*Ras, volk en politiek in die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap*". Pretoria: University of Pretoria. (Thesis – PhD).

Manson, A. 1990. "The Hurutse in the Marico District of the Transvaal, 1848-1914". Cape Town: University of Cape Town (Thesis - PhD).

Makhura, T.J. 1993. "The Bagananwa polity in the north-western Transvaal and the South African Republic, c. 1836-1896". Mmabatho: University of Bophuthatswana. (Dissertation - MA).

Mbenga, B.K. 1996. "The Bakgatla-ba ga Kgafela in the Pilanesberg District of the Western Transvaal from 1899 to 1931". Pretoria: University of South Africa. (Thesis – PhD).

Molokoe, B.K.M. 2000. "Bophuthatswana and its impact on the North West Province, 1974-1998". Mafikeng: North-West University. (Thesis – PhD).

Morrell, R.G. 1983. "Rural transformation in the Transvaal: the Middleburg District, 1919-1930". Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand. (Dissertation – MA).

Ntshabele, D. 2001. "A History of the Bafokeng in the Rustenburg District of the North West Province, 1948-1999". Mafikeng: North-West University. (Dissertation – MA).

Richner, J.E. 2005. "The historical development of the Concept "mfecane" and the writing of Early southern African History, from the 1820s to 1920s". Grahamstown: Rhodes University. (Dissertation – MA).

Van Schalkwyk, J.A. 1995. "*Ideologie en die konstruksie van 'n landelike samelewing: 'n antropologie studie van die Hananwa van Blouberg*". Pretoria: University of South Africa. (Thesis - D Litt et Phil).

Van Jaarsveld, F.A. 1985. *Die Ndzundza-Ndebele en die blankes in Transvaal: 1845-1883*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University. (Dissertation - MA.)

Van Zyl, H.J. 1952. "*Die Bakgatla van Mosetlha: 'n volkekundige studie van 'n bantoestam se ekonomie se lewe en posisie*". Pretoria: University of Pretoria. (Thesis - D Litt et Phil).

vii. Unpublished papers

Godsell, S. 2010. "Re-hearing the homelands: Hammanskraal stories", paper presented at the 7th Annual National Oral History Conference, hosted by the Department of Arts and Culture, White River, Mpumalanga, 12 - 15 October.

Mbenga, B.K. 1997. "The acquisition of land by Africans in the Western Transvaal: the case of Bafokeng of Rustenburg District, 1902-1931", paper presented during the First Edward Patrick Lebone Molotlegi Memorial Lecture , Phokeng, 1 October.

Moyo, C. 2010. "Marriage of convenience: archives and oral history in Zimbabwe", paper presented at the 7th Annual National Oral History Conference, hosted by the Department of Arts and Culture, White River, Mpumalanga, 12 - 15 October.

viii. Internet sources

Anon. s.a., "The Berlin Missionary Society in South Africa", <http://www.safrika.org/berlin>
Date of access: 5 April 2011.

Gauteng. Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment. "State of the Environment Report. Pretoria: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment", <http://www.ceroi.org.za/reports/pretoria> Date of access: 08 September 2005.

Merensky, A.B. s.a. "Berlin Missionary Society, South Africa", http://www.dacb.org/stoies/southafrica/merensky_alexander.html Date of access: 28 April 2011.

Motshekga, M. "Address by Dr M Motshekga, Premier of Gauteng" a prayer meeting of the Lutheran Bapedi Church". 28 February 1999.
http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/1999/9312_10291.htm Date of access: 28 April 2011.

Sahistory.org.za. s.a. "Missionary settlement in southern Africa, 1800-1925".
www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/bios/matseke Date of access: 5 April 2011.