

# DEMOCRACY



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AFRICAN NATIONALISM, ETHNIC NATIONALISM AND THE CHIEFTAINSHIP  
THE CASE OF MATSIKETSANE MASHILE

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AFRICANA

## African Nationalism, Ethnic Nationalism and the Chieftainship The Case of Matsiketsane Mashile

### Preface

The recent election results in Natal must have come as a nasty surprise to commentators that reduce ethnic mobilization to manipulation or political patronage. Clearly, the electorate rejected Mare's conclusion in Brothers Born of Warrior Blood that:

"The way in which a political version of the 'Zulu nation' has been created supports the argument that ethnicity should not be politically privileged."<sup>1</sup>

Mare argues that, in contrast to ethnic mobilisation, african nationalism unites people around their true and legitimate common interests. As far as Mare is concerned the rhetoric of ethnic nationalism only serves to obscure the real issues, and legitimate an oppressive status quo. No attempt is made by Mare to relate the rhetoric of ethnic mobilization to pre-colonial sources of political authority (particularly chiefly, gendered and generational authority) or to do research to find out what the rhetoric of ethnic nationalism actually means to Inkatha's supporters.

The Pulana are an ethnic group located in the Bushbuckridge district of the North Eastern Transvaal. Striking similarities exist in the rhetoric used to mobilise Zulu nationalist and Pulana nationalist movements. This rhetoric links ethnic nationalism to the politics of the chieftainship, particularly when expressing claims to land and political authority. Yet, while Zulu nationalism had, at best, a strained relationship with African nationalist movements, a substantial overlap existed in the interests of Pulana nationalists and their African nationalist counterparts.

This paper, a chapter from my thesis, examines the relationship between african nationalism, ethnic nationalism and chiefly politics as these variables played themselves out in the career of Matsiketsane Mashile, a Pulana leader. In doing so, it attempts to offer a more nuanced and complex approach towards understanding the relationship between democracy, the politics of the chieftainship, and ethnic mobilization.

### Introduction

Matsiketsane Mashile had scars on his back (from lashings he received as part of a sentence for incitement), a broken cheekbone (from a farmer who tried to prevent him from collecting the belongings of a deceased worker), and a voice that could make his audience "soar through the clouds"<sup>2</sup> (a gift from his ancestors). Matsiketsane was an African National Congress leader and unrecognised chief banished in 1963 for fifteen years because of his opposition to Tribal Authorities. He returned to Bushbuckridge in 1978 and immediately set about rebuilding his chieftainship. He demonstrated his spiritual prowess in his

position as a Bishop in the Bantu Apostolic Faith Mission Church and as a faith healer. He constituted a family council (**Bagomane**) and then built a core following by organising the largest burial society in Bushbuckridge. As an elected Member of Lebowa Parliament, Mashile fought corruption in the Lebowa Government, and in doing so, became a political representative of the population, a position supposedly reserved for recognised chiefs.

As an unrecognised "chief", based in a Pulana "island" allocated to Gazankulu, who forged links with the African National Congress in the fifties, Mashile personified the gap between the Pulana (oral) history of the district and the perceptions and policies of the bureaucracy. Building on his singular history, Matsiketsane was able to forge alliances with the two oppositional movements that emerged amongst the Pulana. The first movement, the Pulana nationalists, grounded their opposition to Apartheid on a moral economy of the chieftainship that drew on the imaginary of the chief as living representative of the dominant lineage. Building on this moral economy, that nationalists constructed a series of principles that constituted what they considered to be the appropriate relationship between ethnicity and politics. These principles clashed with those employed by the Apartheid state, especially those principles applied by the state in the allocation of land. Organisationally, this movement took the form of a migrant association, the **Leihlo La Naga: the Eye of the Nation**. The second oppositional movement, the secular Pulana, grounded their critique of Apartheid on their racial identity, that is their exclusion from central state power because of their racial characteristics. Although these residents acknowledged their ethnic identity, their political focus was distinctly national. They recognised the counter hegemonic potential of the Pulana identity, but did not organise politically around ethnicity. Hence, although they saw the practice of initiation school, the employment of indigenous idioms, and the use of the Pulana language as part of a process of resisting colonial intrusions, they steadfastly refused to link the wielding of political power to ethnicity. The secular Pulana drew on democratic principles which dictated that all subjects be treated as equals by the state and which separated the wielding of social authority from any spiritual dimension. These people formed the **Mapulaneng Crisis Committee (MCC)** and aligned themselves with national political organisations linked to the Congress tradition.

Although the two movements shared large areas of overlapping interest, the two approaches were not entirely compatible. The secular Pulana, who brought national political organisation to the district, were interested in building organisations (both adult and youth) with the capacity to challenge the bureaucracy. Mashile's role as a Member of Parliament was crucial in achieving this goal. However, Mashile's claim to traditional authority was a double edged sword for the Crisis Committee. On the one hand, Mashile represented historical continuity, and as a consequence, drew on a multitude of cultural resources that resonated with his constituency. On the other hand, Mashile's authority was never able to transcend the confines of chiefly

secession disputes and sectarian ethnic interests. This in turn drew organisations with a national agenda into localised conflicts.

This paper explores the relationship between chiefly politics and Pulana and African nationalism as it unfolded in the career of Matsiketsane Mashile.

### Matsiketsane and the Chieftainship

Matsiketsane Mashile was born in 1927 on Maripeskop (Moholoholo), the second son of his father's third wife. Two years after his birth, a few hundred families were removed by the forestry Department to five farms owned by the state some forty kilometres east of Maripeskop on the Lowveld. The removed households settled along the same clan lines that existed at Maripeskop. Amongst the removed households were refugees from Mozambique known by the Pulana as the **Bahlakano**, who had settled on Maripeskop under a Pulana chief. Although there seems to have been spatial segregation in that the **Bahlakano** formed a separate "clan", the refugees spoke Pulana, and attended initiation school and the Pulana **Kgoro**.<sup>1</sup> Three years after the removal, Matsiketsane's brother, Sekgopela Mashile was born.

Matsiketsane's claim to the chieftainship was based on his relationship to Maripe. According to Mashile, his grand-father, Legole Mashile, was one of Maripe's sons, who died before he could "take over his rightful place" on the chieftainship. Instead, Setlare took over as "acting chief" on Maripe's death. Setlare changed his surname from Mashile to Chiloane to "distance himself" from his brother. Mashile's father, Lekgwadi, entered into a secession dispute with Setlare when he was old enough to take over the chieftainship. The dispute divided the chiefdom into two areas, one controlled by Setlare, one by Lekgwadi. However, during the dispute, Lekgwadi was "murdered" by witchcraft used by his opponent. A year after the death of Lekgwadi, the forestry removals took place resulting in most of Lekgwadi's followers being removed to the Lowveld. On Setlare's death in 1946, Mabalane Chiloane became chief. Mabalane was succeeded by his eldest son, Sekganyane in 1956. On the death of Sekganyane in 1959, his brother Masinyane Chiloane ruled as regent for four years. After Masinyane's death, another of Sekganyane's brothers, German Chiloane, became regent. German ruled (officially at least) till the end of the eighties.<sup>4</sup>

Although rules of genealogical secession legitimise claims to the chieftainship, these rules, in and of themselves, do not determine secession. As can be noted from the above, genealogical claims are complex. Royal blood provides a claimant with the authority to speak, but it does not guarantee that claimant the right to rule. When the divinely sanctioned harmony between rulers and ruled is broken, that is, when the actions of the chief and the aspirations of his subjects differ, secession disputes ensured that the aspirations of the chief and that of his subjects are made congruent. Secession disputes were the rule, rather than the exception. Comaroff provides a succinct

summary of what this entails:

Genealogical argument may provide the terms in which rival claims are debated, but actual outcomes depend upon the processes of competition for support and on the ability of politicians to mobilise followers. In this sense, ascription and achievement are not conflicting principles but describe two levels of one reality"<sup>5</sup>

Although the Kgoro dictated procedures which governed the exercise of chiefly power, and the external context also placed limits on the wielding of that power, chiefly authority was also dependent on the personality of the chief. "His right to regulate the affairs of the morafe [chiefdom] was held, tautologically, to depend on his ability to demonstrate his effectiveness before his people".<sup>6</sup> Or as one informant put it: "the chief chooses himself".

Bushbuckridge in the seventies and eighties, provided a paradoxical context within which a chief could exercise power: On the one hand, recognition meant that the chief was a bureaucrat, forced to implement broadly unpopular policies. On the other hand, the powers of any member of the bureaucracy were obscure; a chief with a powerful personality was able to exploit this confusion to consolidate his authority, while those with less powerful personalities were marginalised by other sections of the bureaucracy. Matsiketsane inherited a political vacuum in the gap between popular visions of the chieftainship and the reality of Tribal Authorities. The administrative confusion surrounding the bureaucracy also personalised the political process: those people with the ability to assert administrative control effectively had control. The fulfilment of Matsiketsane's political aspirations hinged on his ability to demonstrate his personal powers by exploiting these vacuums.

When Matsiketsane was a child, his grand-mother told him, that by right, he was chief. His ancestors confirmed his royal calling by appearing to him in dreams.<sup>7</sup> In short, Matsiketsane knew himself to be the chief. The ball was in his court. He needed to prove that his ancestors had endowed him with the qualities worthy of the respect paid to a chief. In demonstrating these powers, Mashile hoped to build a sufficient support base to appropriate the chieftainship. The following sections show how Matsiketsane went about achieving this end.

### Urban Experiences

A year after Matsiketsane was born his father was allegedly murdered in the course of the chieftainship dispute with Setlare. As was the custom, Matsiketsane's mother was remarried to his father's younger brother. Mashile had just completed his Standard One at a local school when his "younger father" died. His "younger father" had used most of Mashile's father's cattle to buy more wives. Those few cattle that remained were "taken" by Mashile's half brother, who moved to Leamington some forty kilometres away. Mashile's family found themselves destitute. Having achieved his Standard one, Mashile had to "cry tears of frustration" at having to leave school,<sup>8</sup> and he left for the

Witwatersrand to seek employment.

Mashile worked as a domestic before being employed at Amato textiles in Benoni. He moved from the Benoni hostel to the Apex squatter camp in order to live with his wife. The camp was organised along a mixture of regional and ethnic lines; Pulana and other migrants from Bushbuckridge had a section of the camp and held a *kgotla* every weekend. Matsiketsane became Markus Madiongoane's, the leader of the camp, secretary. At Amato textiles he became a South African Council of Trade Unions (SACTU) shop steward. In the wake of the 1955 Amato strike, Mashile lost his job at the textile company. Two years later Mashile returned to Mapulaneng.<sup>9</sup>

The Ludlow Mashile returned to in 1957 was a very different place to the one he had left in 1948. The South African Native Trust (SANT) had purchased Ludlow and were in the process of moving residents from their scattered households into residential blocks, and demarcating the haphazard agricultural plots into one morgan squares. Mashile also found himself living on a "Pulana island"; Despite the predominance of Pulanas on Ludlow, as well as surrounding farms, the farms fell under the Shangaan "sphere of influence" and had been allocated to the Mnisi chieftainship.

Mashile also discovered that the surrounding farms were involved in a bitter struggle with Hall and Sons, an agricultural company based in Nelspruit. Hall and Sons had purchased eight farms in the immediate vicinity of Ludlow in 1944. The relationship between the company and their tenants had been fraught. As rent tenants, residents had fought the companies attempts to increase rent, monopolise the sale of cattle and the use of manure, and force their children to work at the company's farm in Nelspruit.<sup>10</sup> These struggles reached a climax in 1957 when the company tried to introduce compulsory labour tenancy on the farms. The tenants were given ninety days notice to leave the farm or accept labour tenant conditions. When the notice period had expired, the indunas on the farms were ordered to appear before the Native Commissioner. Whilst visiting the Commissioner, their homes were destroyed.<sup>11</sup>

With the expulsion of the indunas a leadership vacuum emerged and Matsiketsane enthusiastically joined the fray. He took over the induna's court and found an unlikely ally in a neighbouring farmer, Nic Roberts, who was the head of the district's Labour Tenancy Control Board. Roberts seasonally employed the tenants on Hall and Son's property and was loath to see his supply of labour dry up with the implementation of labour tenancy on the company farms. He tried to use his position on the Control Board to influence the Commissioner to ban labour tenancy in the Released Area.<sup>12</sup> His approach to the Commissioner was untenable as Hall and Sons were acting in accordance with Chapter Four, which formally abolished rent tenancy. Mashile reported the conflict to "The World" newspaper, who wrote an article on it.<sup>13</sup>

Roberts and Mashile tried to employ lawyers to sue Hall and Sons for damages and to withdraw the eviction notices. Before the

cases reached court, the NAD suspended the implementation of Chapter Four in the district.

After clarifying that there was no possibility of the Company's farms being excluded from the Released Area, Hall and Sons dropped their attempts to implement labour tenancy.<sup>14</sup> The relationship between the company and the tenants did not improve, however. Matsiketsane continued to challenge the company's monopoly on cattle sales and their right to appropriate kraal-manure. On one of his expeditions to Johannesburg to seek assistance, Mashile contacted the African National Congress (ANC). The ANC agreed to provide the tenants with legal assistance on the condition that they joined the organisation. Mashile convened a meeting, and about four hundred people joined the organisation. Through the intervention of the lawyers, the appropriation of kraal manure ceased.

Mashile used his court to run ANC meetings. "When the police came we used to put ANC minutes under the table and take out the books of the tribal court."<sup>15</sup> In 1960, a spy attended his court, and Mashile was arrested on charges of incitement for encouraging people to burn their passes. He was found guilty and sentenced to two years hard labour at Barberton Prison and five lashes. Recalling the lashes, Mashile commented: "They hit me that day until I could see stars. But I thought: 'You buggers! You think I will be afraid of you and let you take my land.'"<sup>16</sup>

On his release, Mashile discovered that the farm on which he was resident, as well as surrounding farms, were allocated to the Mnisi Tribal Authority. With the assistance of his younger brother, Sekgopela, Mashile began to organise resistance to the demarcation of Tribal Authority areas. He demanded that the area of his chieftainship be recognised or that he be given immediate recognition as the legitimate heir to the Setlare chieftainship. The meetings he organised were well attended and militant: "Blood would flow", Mashile allegedly asserted, if the courts did not rectify the situation. An exasperated Charles Bourquin, the Native Commissioner who prided himself on his ability to "justly" mediate between state and the "native" gave up the struggle of trying to "reason" with the brothers, and organised that the brothers were banished from the area to the Eastern Cape.<sup>17</sup>

#### Banishment

Matsiketsane spent fifteen years in the Transkei, while his brother was restricted to the Ciskei for eleven years. Matsiketsane was very active in exile: "My house was like a hospital", he remembers, "People were coming from all over for me to pray for them. I wasted a lot of time on church business. I used to go into the mountains and fast."<sup>18</sup> Helen Joseph organised bursaries for the two brothers. Matsiketsane passed his Standard eight and two matric subjects. Sekgopela also passed his Standard eight exams. Lastly, Mashile worked for the Transkei government on an experimental farm. Church, school and work were, however, no substitute for home: the years in exile were extremely painful for both brothers who were chronically

homesick.<sup>19</sup>

Although the two brother were physically absent from Bushbuckridge, they left a heritage behind in the district which was to grow more powerful year by year as residents of the area began to experience the inequities of Apartheid. Residents began to look to their past for symbols of resistance as inspiration to guide them in their immediate struggles. The memory of the Mashile brothers served this purpose. In many quarters, (incorrect) stories circulated about the Mashiles being prisoners on Robbin Island, with other national leaders. Yet the heritage the Mashiles left behind was ambiguous: Matsiketsane's association with the African National Congress animated people looking to national liberation organisations for their emancipation. On the other hand, his association with Pulana land claims made him a symbol of (sectarian) ethnic interests. On his return to Bushbuckridge, Matsiketsane was to build on both aspects of this heritage, without, however, resolving any of the ambiguity surrounding it.

### **The Brothers Return to Bushbuckridge**

In 1974, Sekgopela returned from the Ciskei. Perceived by the Commissioner as a threat to public order, he was immediately placed under house arrest. In 1978, while still formally under arrest, he successfully ran for the Lebowa Legislative Assembly. The same year Matsiketsane (illegally) returned from the Transkei. After fasting for sixteen days in the mountains, (and nearly dying in the process), Mashile went to go and ask the magistrate for permission to stay permanently at Bushbuckridge. He was banished to Bochum, but on appeal was allowed to return to Bushbuckridge and live under house arrest for three months, after which the restrictions were removed.<sup>20</sup>

Matsiketsane returned to find the nucleus of his chieftainship intact. Despite the area's allocation to the Mnisi chieftainship and to Gazankulu, Matsiketsane's nephew, Benson Mashile had maintained the core institutions of the chieftainship. Benson held Kgoro at his home every second weekend. He also ensured that initiation school was held in defiance of the banning of the institution by the Gazankulu Legislative Assembly. Benson was also chair of the Primary and Secondary school committees. The Mashile's following was ethnically heterogeneous and included many of the families removed from Maripeskop.<sup>21</sup>

Matsiketsane's most powerful ally was his brother, Sekgopela. The two brother's complimented one another. If Matsiketsane was the talker, Sekgopela was the listener. If Matsiketsane demanded respect because of his uncompromising pugnaciousness, Sekgopela commanded respect with his unflappable composure. Furthermore, both brothers were extraordinarily brave people. By fighting corruption as a Member of the Lebowa Parliament, Sekgopela built a substantial support base amongst grass-roots leaders (like Willis Ngobe).

When Matsiketsane returned from banishment, he was welcomed by



a group of migrants representing a migrant organisation. The organisation was made up of Pulana nationalists and was to be a further source of support for Mashile.

Matsiketsane and the Land Question: The Leihlo La Naga Migrant Organisation

In 1978 a meeting of Pulana migrant workers was held at the municipal compound in Crown Mines Johannesburg. Migrants were mobilised through sending invitations to burial societies, compounds and factories. The vast majority of the migrants who attended the meeting worked for either the railways, municipality, mines or manufacturing concerns. Most of the workers were illiterate, reflecting the relatively late arrival of schools in Mapulaneng. Urban representatives of the Tribal Authorities were also invited to the meeting. The meeting elected an interim committee for a new organisation, Leihlo la Naga, The Eye of the Nation.<sup>22</sup>

The major concerns of the The Eye of the Nation's founders were the "land question" and the position of Mapulaneng in Lebowa. On the one hand, "Pulana land" was being progressively "lost" to Gazankulu, on the other, the Pulana were being excluded from jobs and resources provided by the Lebowa Government. As a means of tackling the problem, the founders hoped to create a structure to unify the disparate Pulana chiefs under the umbrella of their common ethnicity. As a means to achieve this unity, the migrants wanted to have one Pulana representative in each township, instead of the existing system where each of the eight chiefs had an "induna". The aims of the organisation were reflected in its motto: "Mapulana first".<sup>23</sup>

The migrant's had, however, entered ethnic politics under duress. In contrast to the motto, the first aim and objective of the organisation was the:

"elimination of discrimination on the ground of race, tribe, religion, language and sex; and instead create conditions in which equality of opportunity can be exercised."<sup>24</sup>

In short, the migrant organisation aimed to abolish Apartheid.

This opposition to Apartheid was built on the migrant's ethnic identity. Prior to the implementation of Tribal Authorities, Pulana ethnicity had existed, but the relationship between that ethnicity and politics was diffuse. Pulana ethnicity was greater than any single chieftainship. There was no indigenous principle which linked membership of a chiefdom to a Pulana (or any other) ethnic identity. As a consequence, and given the Pulana chiefdom's historical position on the edges of the Pedi, Swazi and Shangaan polities, the Pulana chiefdoms were characterised by ethnically heterogeneous populations. On the other hand, according to indigenous principles, ownership and control of land was the exclusive and sacred right of the chief. A chieftainship "sacrificed blood for the land", that is it earned the right to own the land through conquest. However, these indigenous principles clashed with the ethnic criteria employed

by the Apartheid state in the allocation of land and the recognition of chiefs. The implementation of Apartheid saw the Pulana nationalists "losing" what they believed to be land belonging to the Pulana chiefdoms. The Pulana nationalists felt confident that they were best able to assert their ethnic interests, (particularly in relation to the "land question"), when the link between ethnicity and access to state power, one of the cornerstones of Apartheid, was severed.

Yet, the Pulana nationalists had to fight on a terrain where they were at their weakest; that is they had to organise themselves as an ethnic group to stake their claim to land and government resources. A bridge needed to be built between the indigenous and Apartheid principles. Some structure had to be found to represent a Pulana nation's claim to land on the basis of conquest. Unlike the Zulu king, there was no clear Pulana paramount: there were many Pulana chiefs, none of whom had a secure historical claim to the paramountcy, but all of whom found elements in history on which to base the claim. These competing claims to the paramountcy reflected a history of intra-Pulana chiefly competition and distrust. The Pulana chiefs did not have a history of working as a coherent block under a centralised authority. Finding a representative of the organisation in the countryside was not going to be an easy task.

The migrants faced further difficulties in their search for a representative of the Pulana nation. The recognised chiefs accepted Tribal Authorities out of a political necessity. However, having accepted a position in the bureaucracy, and the strictures that went along with that position, the recognised chiefs had distanced themselves from the indigenous principles on which the Pulana claim to land was based. Furthermore, these chiefs were paid by the state to implement policies that denied those rights that the chieftainship was looked upon by its subjects to protect.<sup>25</sup> The chief was no longer chief because of the "people" but because of recognition by the state. These chiefs could not symbolise what it meant to be a "moral Pulana". The migrants had a vision of the chieftainship as the Pulana chieftainships existed prior to Tribal Authorities, that is as political and ritual protector of the integrity of the *Xgoro*. The migrants wanted to reestablish a system where the chief did not receive a salary from government, but survived through the services he rendered to his subjects. Any problem was to be solved through "calling his people to Legkotla". In short, "it was only for a chief to make peace with his tribe".<sup>26</sup>

The situation was further complicated by the fact that the migrants had urgent complaints that they hoped to voice about the functioning of the Tribal Authorities. Although the explicit aims and objectives had the potential to unite chiefs and subjects, the implicit aim of the *Eye of the Nation* was to provide the migrants with a "voice in the countryside". Not only were decisions being made at Tribal Authority meetings during the week in the absence of the migrants, but bribery and embezzlement were commonplace. School building funds were being embezzled by both chiefs and principals. More and more taxes were being

imposed on an already over-extended populace. The majority of the councillors on the Tribal Authorities were businessmen who did "not feel pity for the poor".<sup>27</sup>

Not surprisingly, the newly formed migrant organisation was frustrated in its efforts to obtain recognition from a state reluctant to recognise any political representative apart from the chief. At an introductory meeting, the chiefs and the magistrate in Bushbuckridge refused to accept the credentials of the executive committee. The organisation found an ally in Chief Masoja Chiloane (Molotele), the last chief to be granted a Tribal Authority after being removed from white owned farms in 1972. Molotele's insular existence on Glen Lyden under labour tenancy conditions, left the chief illiterate, steeped in an oral tradition, and out of his depth in his new circumstances.<sup>28</sup> The chief was vulnerable and looking for allies. Hints that the migrant organisation recognised his claim to paramountcy fell on receptive ears, and Molotele allowed a mass meeting to be held in his courtyard. However, the tension between the chieftainship as defined in an oral tradition and the compromises made by chiefs in accepting Tribal Authorities surfaced. Speakers complained about the "decision" by Molotele to "sell" the chieftainships historical land on Glen Lyden by "accepting" removal and Tribal Authorities. The next (and last) meeting the migrants held at Molotele was surrounded by machine gun wielding police.

Undaunted, the migrants held a further meeting at Crown Mines to elect an "urban areas executive committee". Executive portfolio holders as well as a representative from each of the nine townships present were chosen. However, these elections were designed to maintain the appearance of trusting the recognised chiefs. A few weeks later, the "real" elections for the "Top Urban Executive Committee" were held in the absence of any representative of the recognised chiefs. The meeting was attended by Sekgopela Mashile, who had recently been elected to represent Mapulaneng in the Lebowa parliament. Approximately eighteen members were elected, all of whom were workers. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer all worked for the railways. There were two Apostolic Faith Mission priests on the executive. The majority of the members had their homes in the Setlare and Molotele chiefdoms.

Having been shunned by the recognised chiefs, the migrants had decided to throw in their lot with Matsiketsane. As an unrecognised "chief" banished for fifteen years for his opposition to Tribal Authorities, Mashile personified the image of the chief as protector of the "community". As Mashile's core support area was allocated to Gazankulu, his claim to the chieftainship represented the chasm between one of the Pulana oral histories of the region (and the moral economy of the chieftainship associated with that tradition) and the state's ahistorical, ethnically based, principles of land allocation. Furthermore, Matsiketsane claimed that the Setlare chieftainship was the paramount over the other Pulana chiefs on the basis of Maripe's victory over the Swazis in 1864. In a nutshell,

Matsiketsane Mashile represented the vision of a chieftainship that ignored the boundaries and principles imposed by the Apartheid state. The "top executive" committee formed the "reception committee" to welcome Matsiketsane on his return from the Transkei in 1978. Mashile was presented with "gifts" and a feast was arranged at Mashile's house.

Following the feast the goal of uniting all the Pulana chiefs under the structure of the **Eye of the Nation** became untenable. On his return, Mashile reopened the succession dispute for the Setlare chieftainship. By welcoming Mashile home, the migrant's had taken sides in the dispute and closed off the possibility of working with Setlare. Furthermore, the recognised chiefs were threatened by Matsiketsane's claim to the paramountcy. The executive members of the organisation recalled: "The chiefs of Mapulaneng decided that LLN had chosen Matsiketsane to be the paramount chief of Mapulaneng. After this event all the chiefs ignored us."<sup>29</sup>

A few months after Matsiketsane's return the Mapulaneng branch of the LLN was formed. The branch united grass-roots leaders who were disenchanted with the bureaucracy with supporters of Matsiketsane's chiefly aspirations. The President of the branch, a priest, was a close relative of Mashile's. The General Secretary was a school principal. The Treasurer was a recently retired migrant who was renting and managing a shop. All three officer bearers lived in the Setlare Tribal Authority.<sup>30</sup>

#### Matsiketsane Builds His Chieftainship

To prove his personal power, a chief must prove his ability to intervene in the sphere of the supernatural. Matsiketsane returned to Bushbuckridge as a Bishop in the Bantu Apostolic Faith Mission church. He soon formed a congregation and opened up sub-branches of the church. Matsiketsane proved the "power of his words" by acting as a faith-healer in the church. In time, his brother, Sekgopela, and nephew, Benson, became priests in the church and held services at their houses. Former Pulana headmen in Gazankulu who supported Mashile's claim to the Setlare chieftainship, also started congregations.<sup>31</sup>

The two brothers reconstituted structures of the chieftainship, in particular the **Bagomane** (the chief's family council), in the form of the Kwanang Mashile burial society. Although the society was originally only meant to service members of the Mashile family, the demand was such that the organisation expanded beyond those confines. By 1986 the society had seven branches with a total membership of over five hundred households. Matsiketsane was the president of the society. Sekgopela was his deputy. There was a large overlap of the priests in Mashile's church and branch heads of the society. The branches were based in both Mapulaneng and Gazankulu. At the end of each year, the society held a feast at Matsiketsane's house consisting of speeches, songs, dances and food.

Implicit in the notion of a burial society was the constitution

of a community based on the principle of *mahloko*, "sharing the pain". By taking the burden of the death off the family's shoulders, the society was making the "community a family" and the "family a community".<sup>32</sup> The feast followed the burial represented a symbolic display of trust and unity. Trust because residents were willing to eat the food offered at the feast and unity because no-one was socially above eating the offered food. Apart from providing himself with a public platform to communicate relevant political messages, by placing himself at the intersection of the living and the dead, Mashile was putting himself in a position to interpret the legacy of the ancestors.

### Matsiketsane and the Lebowa Parliament

The two Mashile brothers, with the support of Leihlo La Naga, won the 1983 elections to become members of the Lebowa parliament. The Mashiles' main opponent was a close friend of the Chief Minister of Lebowa, a businessman and the only Pulana resident in Mapulaneng with a university degree. Mashile's victory represented the triumph of indigenous symbols over symbols of status and power associated with western literate culture. To the Pulana nationalists, victory meant that even though the state refused to recognise Mashile's credentials, this did not mean that the "people" did not recognise his leadership.

As a Member of the Lebowa Parliament, Mashile was able to have his cake and eat it. He was able to represent the "community" to the Lebowa Government (a job otherwise monopolised by the Tribal Authorities) without (unlike the recognised chiefs) becoming implicated in the administration of unpopular policies. Mashile became an even greater threat to the recognised chiefs: Implicit in each approach made to Mashile for assistance and advice was an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of his claim to the chieftainship. Mashile became a broker: he either took residents directly to the bureaucracy or brought the bureaucracy to meet the residents without being associated with the failures of the state.

The Mashiles fought against regionalism and nepotism in the Lebowa government that had the effect of discriminating against Pulanas. An alleged Pedi stereotype of Pulanas was that they were "stupid" and "primitive" because relatively few Pulanas were educated compared to the Pedi who had a long history of mission schools. The following quote illustrates how this attitude was experienced:

At home we spoke Pulana, but at school, where most of the teachers were from Pietersburg, we had to speak Northern Sotho. People from Pietersburg were saying that we are speaking like kids... At one stage, Matsiketsane wanted to break from Lebowa, because of the way those people were behaving towards the Pulanas.<sup>33</sup>

The Mashiles fought for, and succeeded in, placing Pulanas in jobs in the bureaucracy that were previously "reserved" for "Pedis from Seshego". The instatement of the first Pulana school principal in 1984 was hailed as a victory for the Pulana against "Pedi" chauvinism. In the processes of securing jobs for

professionals in the bureaucracy, Mashile won the support of numerous principals and teachers who became members of the LLN.<sup>34</sup>

The Mashiles also struggled for infrastructural resources from Lebowa. These struggles included the provision of schools, water supply and electricity. Amongst the Pulana nationalists the construction of a teacher's training college was both an economic and ethnic political project; a teachers training college would not only secure jobs for Pulanas in the bureaucracy, but also contradict the stereotype of Pulanas as "primitive". Mashile organised for the Minister of Education to attend a meeting with "parents" at a school hall in Mapulaneng. The meeting was attended by over a thousand people. The Minister agreed to establish a temporary college of education at Lekete school the following year while a permanent structure was under construction.

The Mashiles' achievements in making bureaucrats accountable for their actions were impressive. In the seventies, the provision of any bureaucratic service, including the provision of water, electricity and land, lay at the discretion of the Tribal Authority. To alienate the Tribal Authority meant losing access to the entire bureaucracy. Mashile was able to bypass the Tribal Authorities in ensuring that residents' rights were respected. This gave residents the opportunity to challenge the Tribal Authorities without fearing devastating repercussions. Mashile had agricultural officers, policemen, clerks and a magistrate "transferred" for corruption. To his constituency, Mashile was able to use his position to present himself as a chief who represented the "people" to the authorities, but not vice versa.

These activities made Matsiketsane a symbol of resistance and a source of political authority that went beyond his position as MP. The two brothers did not limit their activities to disciplining the bureaucracy. They successfully challenged the implementation of certain Betterment policies, such as the banning of the use of river beds for farming purposes. They fought the Lebowa policy of arresting and fining migrants for not paying their taxes when they came home at the end of each year. Sekgopela Mashile specialised in assisting residents with work-based problems. The Mashiles were called in by families to mediate in marital problems and disputes between neighbours.<sup>35</sup> The executive of Leihlo La Naga summed up Mashile's ambiguous status: "Every time we didn't want to see a chief because we had an MP in the Lebowa Government."<sup>36</sup> To the Eye of the Nation at least, Mashile had become the Paramount chief of Mapulaneng.

#### Leihlo La Naga and the Ethnic Conflict

The Pulana Nationalists' opposition to Apartheid did not mean that they were above local ethnic antagonisms. Leihlo La Naga began to explore alternative political strategies to improve the position of Pulanas, specifically in relation to the state. Read through the prism of Maripe's relative subjugation to the Pedi Paramount, the Lebowa Government was perceived by the

organisation as a new form of "Pedi" dominance. Lebowa tax was represented as the Pedi taking money from the Pulana.<sup>35</sup> The organisation looked into the possibility of Mapulaneng becoming a separate homeland so as to fall directly under central government. Towards this end, Leihlo La Naga tried to forge an alliance with the "Khutswe" and the "Pai", based on their common understanding of the relationship between ethnicity and politics and their mutual marginalisation by the recognised "tribes", those being the "Pedis, Shanganese and Swazis".<sup>36</sup>

Conflicts with the Lebowa Government were overshadowed by the release of the Consolidation Commission in mid 1984 which redefined the borders between Mapulaneng and Mhala. The application of the same indigenous principles that conflicted with Apartheid principles also lay behind the Pulana antagonism against "Shangaans". As far as the Pulana Nationalists were concerned, the "Shangaans", fleeing the wars in Mozambique, had been given sanctuary and land by the Pulana chiefs. In accepting land, the "Shangaans" were regarded as having accepted their subjugation to the Pulana chiefs. When the "Shangaan" chiefs were given "Pulana" land and recognition from the state, the Pulana nationalists saw this as a betrayal of their historical agreement.<sup>37</sup>

The Commission proved to be the spark that resulted in the ethnic war of October 1984. Leihlo La Naga, with the Mashile brothers as Members of Parliament, organised the Pulana side of the conflict.<sup>38</sup> Although the immediate nature of the conflict created an unprecedented degree of unity between the urban branch of Leihlo La Naga, the Mapulaneng branch, the Mashile brothers, and the Molotele chieftainship (who were the most effected by the border changes) this unity began to break down shortly after the conflict.

Funds raised for legal services were allegedly embezzled by Molotele resulting in a rift between the chief and Matsiketsane. This rift soon took the form of chiefly conflict. Molotele, Matsiketsane asserted, was living on land belonging to the Setlare chieftainship and should move back to Glen Lyden to live on his "own" land.<sup>39</sup> The Molotele chief's insecurity regarding his recognition by the state served to make the conflict more intense.

A split emerged between the Mapulaneng branch and the urban leadership of Leihlo La Naga over the control of funds. Following the split, the Soweto branch began to approach opposition members of (the central) parliament, rural service organisations, and the Minister of Constitutional Development around the possibility of Mapulaneng withdrawing from Lebowa and falling under central government. They had little success in these endeavours.<sup>40</sup>

In 1985, two African National Congress guerillas were killed, and one guerilla was shot and captured in Mapulaneng. The general secretary of the Mapulaneng branch of Leihlo La Naga was arrested and charged with assisting a banned organisation. He was found guilty and was to become the principal of the Robben Island

prisoners' school during his imprisonment. Two other members of the Leihlo La Naga executive were interrogated and tortured by the police. These events highlight an overlap between the aims of Leihlo La Naga and that of the national liberation movement. It is towards Matsiketsane's alliance with organisations with a distinctly national agenda that the paper now turns.

### Matsiketsane and the Congress Alliance

In 1986 Matsiketsane forged an alliance with the residents of Shatale that was independent of his claims to the chieftainship. Shatale, which was to become the headquarters of the secular Pulana, was an extraordinary place when compared with the surrounding trust farms. A portion of London farm was demarcated, named Shatale and declared a township in 1962. This meant that taps were provided on every street and residents were forbidden from keeping stock. No agricultural land was provided. The Native Commissioner, Charles Bourquin, modelled the township on urban townships and pressured the Department of Housing to build corrugated iron houses. The houses were built, made available for rent and, much to Bourquin's chagrin, were boycotted by the local populace. The chief state ethnologist, Van Warmelo, was called in. Van Warmelo diagnosed the boycott as having been caused by chiefly competition for followers and prescribed the construction of a township in all Tribal Authority areas. Bourquin knew better, and eventually relented by allowing residents to build their own houses without having to pay a monthly rental. A high-school was built in the township to encourage "professionals" to settle in Shatale.<sup>41</sup>

"Surplus" residents from townships around Graskop, Pilgrims Rest and Sabie were removed to Shatale.<sup>42</sup> Households from the surrounding trust farms with an interest in providing their children with a Secondary education moved to the township. Over time, the township became the home of teachers, other professionals and businesspeople. Relatively few households in Shatale depend on migrant labour.<sup>43</sup> In 1984, half the High schools (which offered matric) in Mapulaneng were located in Shatale.

The township was governed by a town council. Although the powers of the council were negligible, residents had few complaints. Rentals remained relatively low, and conditions in the township were noticeably better than surrounding areas. Every household was provided with taps, electricity was installed in the mid eighties, and the main road was tarred in 1986.

In 1984, the Mashile brothers called a parliamentary report back meeting in Shatale. The meeting was attended by approximately two thousand people. Although problems around civic issues were raised, the most pressing and vocal problem was that of policing.<sup>44</sup> Residents were enraged by the poor police performance in solving thirteen murders that had occurred in the township during the previous year. Most of the murders had involved the mutilation of the victim's bodies. The genitals, tongue and eyes had been severed from the corpses. Suspects had



been arrested for the crimes, but had been released without being charged. The Mashiles raised the problem in the Lebowa parliament,<sup>45</sup> but the situation did not improve. The following year, five more people were killed, including two children.

Evidence around the murders pointed to a group of seven people lead by a businessman (who was also the township mayor), Mr Morema. The motivation for the crimes was to make "muti" so that the gang's businesses would thrive. Residents believed that they had not been arrested because of a close relationship between the leader of the gang and the police station commander at Bushbuckridge. In November 1985, the Mashile brothers organised a meeting between township residents and the Minister of Law and Order in Lebowa. At the meeting, the Minister agreed to have the Station Commander transferred along with his senior officers.

In December 1985, the group of seven people were arrested after various human body parts were allegedly found in Morema's refrigerator. However, the group was released without being charged. Tension in the township heightened as a new restaurant complex owned by Morema was shortly to be opened. Residents asked themselves who was going to be "sacrificed" to "baptise" the new store.

It is impossible to describe the atmosphere of terror that pervades a neighbourhood when there is a muti-murderer on the loose. Few images evoke as much horror, anger and fear as that of a brutally murdered and mutilated corpse. No-one can feel safe as the choice of target is arbitrary. The absence of street-lights make travel by foot at night, a regular necessity for most residents, a dread-filled experience. Anxiety in Shatale reached a fever-pitch.

Apart from the fear that the muti-murder provoked, the killings also generated a moral-panic.<sup>46</sup> The failure by the police to act effectively against the murderers caused residents to question the very fibre of the state itself. The gulf between residents and the bureaucracy increased. As "the sore aches the owner",<sup>47</sup> that is those effected by a problem experience the consequences of the problem, a group of residents decided to take action. A pamphlet was produced, ordering members of the alleged gang to leave or face being forced out of the township. A group of six students organised a series of secret meetings in the classrooms of five Secondary Schools in Shatale. On the evening of the 23 February the students from all the schools assembled on the local soccer ground and went on to burn the houses of two members of the gang. Three days later, a mob of students confronted the alleged leader of the gang, Morema, at his bottlestore. Morema drew a gun, an altercation ensued during which Morema was killed and his bottle-store burnt down. The students went on to burn the houses of the remaining members of the gang.<sup>48</sup>

That evening the Lebowa riot squad from Seshego arrived in the township. They arrested every student they could find, all the members of the local football club and two teachers. The police, assisted by members of Morema's family, systemically assaulted

all the arrested people. Those students who had not been arrested fled into the nearby mountains. School attendance dropped to a negligible level.

The Mashile brothers obtained permission from the Minister of Law and Order in Lebowa to hold a mass meeting in Shatale with the aim of persuading the students to go back to school. The arrested students were released on March 14. Two days later, the meeting was convened. At the meeting, the Mapulaneng Crisis Committee was elected to negotiate with the police and other relevant authorities.

#### **Mobilisation to Organisation: The Mapulaneng Crisis Committee**

The social composition of the Committee reflected Shatale's specific history. All the members, except for the women's organiser, had at one time or another been teachers. The ages of the members of the Committee ranged between twenty six and thirty six.<sup>49</sup> The Pulana nationalist claim to political hegemony over the district did not make sense to members of the Crisis Committee who had experienced life under "Shangaan" chiefs and whose world-view was essentially national. The following life history of the President of the Committee demonstrates these themes:

Lawrence Mogakane was born in Orinoco in 1959, the fifth of a family of eight children. His father was a migrant worker, employed as a waiter in a hotel in Germiston. The majority of the Mogakane's neighbours, and childhood friends were "Shangaans". Local boys formed gangs to protect one another from boys from the (predominantly Pulana) Shatale. Any neighbourly disputes were taken to Kheto Nxumalo, the Shangaan chief's court. Lawrence went to primary school in 1966. Six years later, he went to an ethnically mixed initiation school whose principal was Hlanganu. In 1973, after suffering constant harassment from Nxumalo's induna following the establishment of Gazankulu, the Mogakane's moved to Shatale "because of the proximity of schools". At high school, Mogakane formed a study group with three other students who were later to become members of the Crisis Committee. Although Mogakane had been brought up with the idea that Pulanas were the "owners of the land", any resonances that the notion had were removed when, in 1979, Mogakane read for a Bachelor of Commerce degree at the University of the North, and was exposed to student political organisation and national leaders of. During one of his vacations, Mogakane got a job at Sabie paper mills and proceeded to organise the factory under the Paper, Printing and Allied Workers Union. After three years of studying, Mogakane was forced to leave the university without qualifying for financial reasons. On his return to Bushbuckridge, he began employment with a Bank.<sup>50</sup>

The MCC saw itself as part of a national movement and made almost immediate contact with national organisations. These

included the South African Council of Churches, the Detainees Parent's Support Committee, the National Education Crisis Committee and the United Democratic Front. Members of the Committee attended workshops and conferences called by the above organisations. The Committee adopted the liberation strategy advocated by the UDF, which centred around the creation of mass based organisations. The Mashile brothers' role in facilitating meetings and contact with the bureaucracy was vital in achieving this goal, which created the basis of a working alliance between the Committee and the brothers.<sup>51</sup>

Soon after the Crisis Committee was formed, students in Shatale formed the Shatale Youth Congress (SYC). The Youth Congress consisted of a Central Executive Committee, a Cultural Committee, and Educational Committee and a Disciplinary Committee. Most of the leading members of the Congress had experienced political organisation whilst attending school in townships on the Rand. The President of the Congress was schooling in Shatale because he was wanted by the police in Daveyton because of his political activities. Like the MCC, the SYC made almost immediate contact with national organisations.<sup>52</sup>

The aims of the Shatale Youth Congress identified unambiguously with a national political agenda. The first aim was to "draw [up] a good guideline for a future community system in a democratic South Africa."<sup>53</sup> The other aims and objectives included building unity amongst residents, improving education, providing entertainment and maintaining law and order. The latter aim was to dominate the activities of the Youth Congress. The families of the alleged muti-murder gang had become vigilantes, working with the consent of the police. The vigilantes harassed Shatale residents and threatened to poison the water supply. The SYC formed itself into anti-crime squads who patrolled the location throughout the night. When a bakery was robbed, residents approached the SYC who caught the thieves. The SYC also formed a "people's court" modelled on the chief's court. The court was used to discipline members of the SYC, intervene in neighbourly conflicts and try cases of youths in neighbouring communities who abused the aims of the "struggle".<sup>54</sup>

The MCC and the SYC maintained a close working relationship. The leadership of both organisations consulted with one another before embarking on any action. The SYC provided the person power to publicise MCC campaigns. The two organisations set up Student Representative Councils in Shatale. When a woman was kidnapped by a gang based in Mhala, members of the MCC and the SYC, rescued the girl, destroyed the gang's business, and handed the gang over to the police.

The MCC aimed to "organise the region" and went about forming sub-branches, which in the process, resulted in a working relationship with the Mashile brothers. On the 13 April, the Mashiles held a parliamentary "report back" meeting at Green-Valley. After residents had registered their complaints, the MCC organised an election for the Setlare sub-branch of the Crisis Committee. Youths from Shatale also informed youths at the

meeting to form an organisation.

With the election of the Setlare Crisis Committee, the Crisis Committee as an organisation became associated with Matsiketsane's chiefly and ethnic agenda. The three active members of the SCC were the Chair, a telephone exchange operator (who had passed his matric exams); the Vice President: a shoemaker whose schooling ended at Standard One; and the Treasurer: a shopowner who had also left school after Standard One.<sup>55</sup> The Chair was secretary of the Mapulaneng branch of Leihlo La Naga and the Treasurer had the matching portfolio in the local branch of the migrant organisation. The Vice President was Matsiketsane's nephew, who was an executive member of Leihlo La Naga, the next in line for Matsiketsane's "throne" and who was resident in Gazankulu. In other words, the Setlare Crisis Committee did not recognise the borders between Lebowa and Gazankulu but defined Mapulaneng along the lines advocated by Leihlo La Naga. In the areas outside of Shatale, the Crisis Committee, youth organisation, and the rhetoric of national liberation that came along with it, became drawn into one side of a secession dispute and the ethnic conflict. Assertions by the recognised chief that the Setlare Crisis Committee was another attempt by Matsiketsane to replace him, were on the face of it, consistent with the unfolding of events. Furthermore, given the association between Pulana ethnicity and the emergence of national liberation organisations in the district, no organisations with a national political agenda found a foothold in Mhala until 1990.

The MCC was caught in another contradiction. On the one hand, it had constituted itself as a crisis committee, whose main function was to calm an extremely explosive situation. On the other hand, the MCC perceived itself as being part of a national liberation movement. They organised the May 1 stayaway and attempted to implement the resolutions taken at the National Education Crisis Committee's national conference. They popularised a culture of national liberation introducing t-shirts, stickers and newspapers with an african national slant to Mapulaneng.<sup>56</sup> The problem for the Crisis Committee lay, however, in the way the rhetoric of the liberation movement was understood by the youth. The African National Congress declared 1985 the year of the youth and hailed the youth as the vanguard of the struggle for national liberation. These calls fell on receptive ears in the countryside. The rural youth, historically and culturally excluded from having a political voice, were given the authority to lead the nation. Youth organisation spread like wildfire throughout the district. However, there was a huge gap in the way the MCC and the SYC understood the "struggle" and the role of youth organisation, and the way that the youth living under the Tribal Authorities perceived problems faced by their "communities". In the months of April and May 1986, approximately one hundred and fifty people were attacked as witches. Youth organisations linked by rhetoric to the Congress Alliance became enmeshed in local struggles and divisions. These associations between the "struggle", the authority to act and local conflicts can be read off the following song sung by the Brooklyn Youth

Organisation as they patrolled the location at night:

Our lives are in great danger.  
We are bewitched.  
We are poisoned.  
Abortions are the order of the day.  
Comrades, wake up, remake the world.  
Our parent's hour has passed away.  
This hour belongs to the youth.  
We the Comrades.  
Forward Comrades.  
We are a generation of war.

During this period the MCC and SYC were called upon to intervene in a number of incidents to prevent the anti-witchcraft attacks from taking place. They were almost always successful on these occasions. However, in the majority of cases the MCC and SYC were unaware of, and had no control over, the attacks. It was only the invasion of the area by a large contingent of South African Defence Force soldiers that brought the situation under control. At the same time, the executive members of the MCC, the Mashile brothers and the active members of the SCC were detained and visible political organisation in the district ground to a halt.

Matsiketsane spent six months in jail before being released on bail. Charged first with sedition and then with terrorism, Mashile and the Crisis Committee were acquitted at their trial in mid 1997. However, in order to understand the context Matsiketsane inherited on his release from prison, it is necessary to take a detour into the nature and significance of youth organisation. This will be achieved in the following chapter that explores the moral economy of youth organisations, particularly as it related to chiefly politics and gender and generational relationships. The final chapter takes up the story of Matsiketsane again, by analysing the Sofasonke Civic Union, an alliance that was formed in opposition to the Mashile brothers and youth organisation.

Nevertheless, it will not be out of place to conclude this paper by posing the question: Was Matsiketsane primarily a Pulana nationalist, or an african nationalist. The obvious answer is that Matsiketsane was both: He found Apartheid repugnant as both a Pulana and a black South African. But Pulana nationalism was not entirely compatible with African nationalism, and, in the last instance Matsiketsane was married to his claim to the chieftainship, and the imaginary on which that claim was built:

It was through them [the "Shangaans"] that I was arrested. They wanted to rule me, whereas they are the refugees from Portuguese East Africa... When Bourquin came in 1934, he appointed Shangaan headmen as chiefs ruling their own people. But I was not affected by that as they were not ruling us. Until 1962, when they confiscated all the land and handed it over to the Shangaans. Then they said I must be an Inunda under a Shangaan chief... I said, that will be the day. When they see Pulana all over support me, they

organised a deportation order... We suffered alot. My cattle, goats, house destroyed by Bourquin and the Shangaans. That is why, although the ANC pleads with me to forget all, I find it difficult not to speak.

### Conclusion

This paper has tried to tease out the relationship between Pulana ethnicity and politics as that relationship played itself out in the career of Matsiketsane Mashile. Although there were large areas of overlap between a secular Pulana identity and the Pulana nationalists, the political agendas of the two organisations representing these approaches were not entirely compatible. The close working relationship between Matsiketsane Mashile and the MCC, and the continuities between the LLN and the SCC ensured that organisations linked to, and the rhetoric associated with the national liberation struggle, were perceived as part and parcel of chiefly disputes and particular ethnic interests. Consequently, national political organisation did not make inroads into Gazankulu until 1990. Matsiketsane's historical association with the ANC, plus his relationship with the MCC, resulted in his reputation amongst the recognised chiefs as the ultimate leader of the youth. Youth politics was thus drawn into chiefly secession disputes. Nevertheless, youth organisations also fell at the intersection of gender and generational relations, and thus had its own specific history, and political agenda. This forms the subject of the following chapter.

## Notes

1. Mare, G., Brothers Born of Warrior Blood: Politics and Ethnicity in South Africa, Raven Press, Johannesburg, 1993, p104.
2. Conversation with W Ngobe.
3. Interview, Maitjie, T., Buffelshoek, 23/11/1991; Makhubedu, B., Buffelshoek, 22/11/1992.
4. Interview Mashile, M., Acornhoek, 07/07/1992. See also Niehaus, I.A., "Witch-Hunting and Political Legitimacy: Continuity and Change in Green Valley, Lebowa", Paper Presented to the Department of Social Anthropology, University of the Witwatersrand, 1991, p10.
5. J Comaroff, Chieftainship in a South African Homeland, Journal of Southern African Studies, 1,1 (1974) p40.
6. Comaroff J and Comaroff J, Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity and Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa, Chicago Press, 1991, p 149.
7. Interview Mashile, M., Acornhoek, 07/07/1992.
8. Interview M Mashile, Acornhoek, 5/7/93.
9. Koch, E., "The Scars of Struggle", Learn and Teach, No 6, 1988, p32-36. For details of the squatter struggles at Apex see: Bonner, P., "Siyawugobha, Siyawugebhola Umbhlaba Ka Maspala ["We Are Digging, We Are Seizing Great Chunks of the Municipality's Land"]", Popular Struggles in Benoni, 1944-1952", African Studies Seminar Paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1988. For more information about the Amarto textile strike see: Bonner, P., and Lambert, R., "Batons and Bare Heads: The Strike at Amato Textile, February 1958", African Studies Seminar Paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1983.
10. CAD NTS V6814 32/318, Minutes of Meeting of Chiefs and Head, Islington 24/7/44; NTS971/323/8/1 V7153, Letter South African Institute of Race Relations to NAD, 12/11/54; NC Bushbuckridge to CNC Pietersburg 13/1/55.
11. See CAD NTS 971/323/8/1 V7153, Internal Memo on Ejection of Mapulane Tribe of Leamington and Andover, undated and Statements made by Allen Mashile, Simon Mashego and Rice Matlhake to Senior NC Pretoria on 6/9/57.
12. CAD NTS 971/323/8/1 V7153, Letter N J Roberts to NAD 29/8/57, Letter Geldenheys and Roberts to NAD, 9/9/57.
13. The World, 16 May 1959.
14. CAD NTS 971/323/8/1 V7153, Letter H L Hall and Sons to NAD 2/1/58 and 19/2/58.

15. Mashile M, quoted in Koch, E., Learn and Teach, Number 6, 1988, pg34.
16. *ibid.*
17. CAD UHU Minute no 1076, 26/6/63. The Minute contained the banishment order.
18. Interview Mashile, M., Acornhoek, 05/07/1993.
19. Interview Mashile, M., Acornhoek, 05/07/1993; Mashile, S., Buffelshoek, 13/07/1993.
20. Interview Mashile, M., Acornhoek, 21/07/1993.
21. Attendance at both the court and the initiation school was ethnically mixed.
22. Interview Chiloane, C., and Mashego, S., Soweto, 14/12/1989.
23. See the Constitution of Leihlo La Naga.
24. *ibid.*
25. See Chapter Two.
26. Interview C Chiloane [secretary LLN], Soweto, 5/1/90.
27. Interviews: S Mashego, N Mashego and C Chiloane, [ LLN Executive] Soweto, 13/12/89, 14/12/89 and Cornelious Chiloane, [LLN Secretary] Soweto, 5/1/1990.
28. Delius argues that the "entrapment" of Ndebele labour tenants and workers on farms was crucial in shaping a particularly conservative Ndebele ethnicity. See Delius "The Indzundza Ndebele: I Indenture and the Making of Ethnic Identity", in Bonner, P., I Hofmeyr, D James and T Lodge (eds), Holding Their Ground. Class, Locality and Culture in 19th and 20th Century South Africa, History Workshop 4, Johannesburg, 1989. I argue that the metaphor of "entrapment" was employed by Ndebeles to mobilise against the imposition of "independence" on the KwaNdebele Bantustan. See Ritchken, E., The KwaNdebel Struggle Against Independence" in Moss, G., and Obery, I., (eds) South African Review 5, Raven Press, Johannesburg, 1989.
29. Interview, S Mashego, M Mashego and C Chiloane, Soweto, 14/12/89.
30. *ibid.*
31. Interview Mashile, S., Buffelshoek, 08/05/1993.
32. Interview Dibekoane, R., Johannesburg, 10/01/1989.



33. Interview Kalli Shakoane, 20/7/93, Green Valley. Also see Minute Book of Mapulaneng Branch of Leihlo La Naha, Meeting held February 1984 in Mapulaneng.

34. Interview Kalli Shakoane, 20/7/93, Green Valley.

33. Interview Chiloane, C., and Mashego, S., Soweto, 14/12/1989. Also Matsiketsane Mashile keeps a written record of meetings he attends, as well as a record of cases that are brought for his attention. A copy of these records has been given to the Church of the Province Library. The above paragraph is based on these records.

34. Interview Chiloane, C., and Mashego, S., Soweto, 14/12/1989.

35. Minutes of Meeting of LLN, Mapulaneng branch, Acornhoek, 28/1/84.

36. Minutes of Leihlo La Naha, Mapulaneng Branch, February 1984.

37. See Constitution of LLN, Minutes of meeting, Mapulaneng Branch, Feb 1984; and CAD K335, Written and Oral Evidence to Uys Commission of the Pulana delegation.

38. Interview Mogale, P., (Executive Member of Mapulaneng Branch of LLN), Greenvalley, 16/08/1992.

39. Interview Mashile, M., Acornhoek, 07/07/1992.

40. Written correspondence between LLN and the Transvaal Rural Action Committee, Peter Sole [MP] and Minister of Constitutional Development [Wilkens].

41. CAD BAO 24/1080 Letter BAC to CBAC Pietersburg, 7/4/65; Adjunk-Sekretaris Behuising: Report of Audit inspection London Bantu township, 22/5/69 and Report on audit inspection Under Secretary Bantu Settlement, 27/5/69; Memo Administratiewe Beheerbeampte: Plakkerbestryding 11/12/69.

42. Suburbs in Shatale are popularly named after the (white) town from where people were removed.

43. The gender ratio in Shatale remained consistently around 50% in the seventies and eighties. See Infraplan, Survey of Mapulaneng, 1991.

44. See Ritchken, "Mobilisation and Organisation...", Chapter two for more details of these issues.

45. See Hansard, Lebowa Parliamentary Reports, 1984, p360.

46. A "moral panic" refers to the moment when a particular problem becomes symbolic of societie's very fabric being torn apart. See Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T., Clarke, J., Roberts, B., Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order, MacMillan, London, 1982.

47. Quote taken from mobilising pamphlet distributed in Shatale. Exhibit 2 in State verses Mashego and eleven others.

48. Interview Mashego, S. (Vice President of Shatale Youth Congress), Shatale, 20/12/1987; and Ntlatlane, J. (executive member of SYC), Shatale, 15/12/1986.

49. Mohammed Bham's (defence attorney) personal records from the trial: Mashego, E., and eleven others versus the State, Nelspruit Regional Court, June 1987. These records will be donated to the Church of the Province Library, Wits University.

50. Based on the following interviews: Mogakane, L., Shatale: 27/12/1987; 29/12/1987, 27/11/1991; Pretoria: 22/07/1993; 05/08/1993; Johannesburg: 17/10/1993.

51. The wording of constitution, on the advice of lawyers, was guarded. The following is the Preamble to the constitution:

a) Organise the society so that they could take up their demand for a relevant role in the territory without violence.

b) Work in tandem with our MPs<sup>6</sup> in taking up matters of common concern to the highest authorities.

c) Organise the people so that they could play a more meaningful role in the society.

The Aims and Objectives of the Committee were:

a) To watch and voice out the demands of the people in a closest proximity.

b) To forge links with students and parents for a normal execution of education process as scheduled.

c) To organise and engage the society in sporting and social welfare.

52. Interviews Dibekoane, R., Johannesburg, 10/01/1989; Mashego, S., Shatale, 20/12/1987.

53. 14) The full Aims and Objectives of the SYC read as follows: Through the present crisis the congress shall contribute through solving the present community crisis by:

a) To build unity between student and parents, teachers, workers and other members of the community.

b) To collect the demands of residents regarding education.

c) To limit boozing among youths and provide them with entertainment.

d) To provide a concrete channel for community grievances to our Town Council.

e) To assist the needy concerning education ie providing school funds and books.

f) To encourage youths to take part in sporting activities.

g) To see that dancing, soccer and other entertainment clubs are lodged.

h) To draw a good guideline for a future community system in a democratic South Africa.

i) To reach and mobilise as many sectors of the community around the issue of education and peace amongst residents.

j) To see that the crime rate is limited by introducing anti-crime squads.

k) To see the promotion of law and order.

54. Interview Mashego, S., Shatale, 20/12/1987; Ntlatlane, J., Shatale, 15/12/1986.

55. Mohammed Bham's private records from the trial Mashego, E., and Eleven others versus the State, Nelspruit Regional Court, June 1987.

56. Interview Mogakane, L., Shatale, 27/12/1987.