

# DEMOCRACY



## POPULAR PRECEDENTS PRACTICE CULTURE

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THE TORTOISE AND THE SPEAR:  
POPULAR POLITICAL CULTURE AND VIOLENCE IN THE  
SEKHUKHUNELAND REVOLT OF 1958

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The Tortoise and the Spear; Popular political culture and violence in the Sekhukhuneland Revolt of 1958.

Early on the morning of 16th May 1958 in Sekhukhuneland 82-year-old Kgobolala Sekhukhune was roused from his sleep by a knock at the door of his hut. In the pitch dark he responded. As the door swung open he was stabbed in the chest with a spear and hacked in the arm with an axe. Within three days nine men had been killed, many more had been grievously wounded and plumes of smoke from burning buildings and vehicles drifted into the pale winter skies. As convoys of police churned up complementary clouds of dust, men from the villages in the plains and the valleys scrambled up the steep slopes of the Leolu Mts to seek refuge - once again - in the caves and crevasses of this great natural fortress.(1)

The initial explanations for these events offered by officials and reporters invoked history and terror in equal measure. A special correspondent for the Rand Daily Mail wrote, 'The Bapedi, tribesmen who were the once all powerful rulers of Sekukuniland, took up arms again last week for the first time in sixty years. They have reverted to guerrilla-type tactics in an attempt to regain their lost power and past glory....[Now] behind the brown clouds [of dust] in caves among the rocks the dreaded 'babolai' [murderers] wait.(2)

Increasingly, however, a sinister, secret organisation called the Khudhuthamaga (red and white Tortoise) was presented as the instigator and perpetrator of gruesome violence. The tone of these interpretations owed a good deal to the fears of black conspiracy and atavistic revolt which flourished within colonial society in the aftermath of the Mau Mau Revolt. But the police and prosecutors were able to assemble evidence which, although fragmentary and even fanciful, suggested that the Khudhuthamaga did exist and was centrally involved in the rising.(3)

This paper attempts a rather more substantial reconstruction of the history of the Khudhuthamaga. It shows how its emergence in the mid 1950s was shaped by an interaction of migrant and chiefly political forms and discourses, and represented an attempt to reconstruct the institution of chieftainship from below, in order to prevent it from being incorporated into the Bantu Authority system. A core component in this initiative was the attempt to give new substance to the idea that kgoshi ke kgoshi ka batho (a chief is a chief by the people). The Khudhuthamaga also wrestled with the issue of how to deal with those individuals who were perceived to favour Bantu Authorities and the paper traces how and why its members edged towards the conclusion that they should be killed. Both processes highlight key elements within popular political culture.

This paper also extends the critique of literature which sees rural revolts as essentially parochial affairs remote from national political movements. In previous articles I have shown that both the ANC and the SACP played an important if highly mediated role in rural political mobilisation in the Transvaal.(4) In this paper I argue that the experience of the Sekhukhuneland Revolt contributed in turn to the wider debate about the use of violence within the ANC and SACP which culminated in the launch of Umkhonto we Sizwe in 1961.

### Migrants, Chiefs and Commoners

The conquest of the Pedi kingdom in 1879 brought with it predictable consequences of land alienation and political fragmentation. A number of groups which had assisted the victorious armies were recognised as independent chiefdoms. The heartland of the polity was divided between the Lydenburg and Middleburg districts and transformed into farms. Three locations were defined in the remaining area of which the largest was the Geluks Location - a narrow band of land hugging the foothills of the Leolu Mts. The first Native Commissioner in the area Abel Erasmus pursued policies of divide and rule with characteristic vigour. In 1896 he split Geluks location in half, relocated the Paramount to Mohlaletse in the arid north, and installed a client, Kgolane, as chief in the relatively populous and fertile southern portion.(5)

Well into the twentieth century the basic assumption of the administration of the area was that the power of the chiefs and especially that of the Paramount should be kept in check. While the Paramountcy was thus formally restricted to authority over no more than a portion of one location, in practice its authority had considerably wider range. The hostility with which the Paramountcy was regarded by colonial authority also helped to ensure that it retained widespread popular legitimacy amongst communities living on farms and in locations far beyond the formal boundaries of its domain. From the 1920s, the imposition of 'tribal' land levies also allowed the Paramountcy to accumulate substantial amounts of land. As the Native Affairs Department (NAD) policy shifted towards a policy of retribalisation, chiefs in Sekhukhuneland as elsewhere, were given somewhat greater recognition and material reward. But the position of the Paramount remained restricted and unresolved. And this ambiguous context encouraged some headmen to harbour the ambition to elevate their own positions.(6)

At the apex of the local political system which was constructed in the first three decades of the twentieth century were two Native Commissioners - one based in Pokwani location and the other in Geluks location. In theory these men held sway over a vast area and population. Chiefs who proved recalcitrant ran the risk of a reduction in their stipends while those who challenged official authority directly ran a very real risk of deposition. Commoners who stepped out of line were also firmly dealt with - deportation being a common punishment. In practice, however, the Commissioners had very limited impact on the day to day existence of most of their subjects. Their primary responsibilities were to

collect taxes and to issue passes to work seekers and these activities engrossed both their energies and those of the handful of staff they had at their disposal. Aside from the annual tax tour (which was discontinued in the 1920s) when the Commissioner and his retinue made a grand progress round the district, the main contact many individuals had with these officials was when they left en route to town. The vast bulk of the practical administration of the area, including the allocation of land, the adjudication of cases, and the sanctioning of crucial phases in the political, social, economic and religious cycle of communities, was handled by scores of unrecognised sub-chiefs or headmen (dikgoshana) who administered the villages dotted across the area. The authority of this level of leadership was sanctioned and conferred not by the Native Commissioner but by the Paramount or in a minority of cases by one of the other powerful chiefs. Only the most intractable issues were referred from these headmen to the Paramountcy for resolution as most communities shunned the Native Commissioners court and offices as far as possible. (7)

This political system was predicated on a system of migrant labour which involved virtually all males from their teenage years, for expanding periods of their lives, as the decades and the generations slipped by. Yet despite the centrality of migrancy to the lives of these men, most still regarded it as a way of preserving a primarily rural way of life. Migrancy was a means to secure the resources to marry, to build a homestead, to accumulate cattle and ultimately to retire. Towns were regarded as Makgoweng - the place of the whites - or Leshokeng - a wilderness. Part of what defined them as such was the absence of core institutions like initiation and chieftainship and what they saw as the corrosion of appropriate relationships of gender and generation. They believed in sum that towns were deeply uncivilised places. The Paramountcy was for many a key symbol and guarantor of a cherished rurally focussed moral order, while the Native Commissioner represented an outpost of Makgoweng best kept in quarantine. (8)

The commitment to an alternative rural world was in part sustained by most mens' expectation that they would ultimately secure some rights to land and livestock. This did not of course imply an egalitarian rural society. Evidence from the 1930s and 1940s suggests that there were very marked disparities in the resources which households commanded and new settlers could battle to gain access to any land, especially in the increasingly congested locations. The residents of Sekhukhune land faced the looming threat to their social order of the creation of a permanently landless and stockless stratum. This spectre was for the moment held at bay by complex social networks and processes of redefinition of rights in land and cattle which prevented the creation of starkly defined rural classes. Equally important was the steady haemorrhage of men to the towns on a permanent basis which acted as a pressure valve and in some instances allowed for the redistribution of resources. But just how long this elaborate balancing act could be maintained was open to question. (9)

Socio-economic factors were of course only one of a number of forms of differentiation within the villages of Sekhukhuneland. The population of each chiefdom was - for example - divided into a number of distinct ranked strata ranging from bakgomana - royals - through batho feela - commoners - to mathupya - descendants of captives. But probably the most profound division in most villages in the 1930s and 1940s was between the baditshaba (those of the community) - and the Bakristi (a small Christian minority). Christians in most instances lived in a distinct area of the village. John Phala an ANC activist recalled of his childhood in the 1930s: 'We can see that Apartheid started there among the black people. There was a contradiction between us, the Majakane (Christians) and those they called the Baheitene (heathens)'. It is revealing that the term Majakane was derived from the verb jaka meaning 'to live in a foreign country.' Christianity was closely associated in the minds of most Pedi with colonial conquest and a broader assault on established values and social practices. Christians were seen as having turned their backs on the community (setshaba). Christian youth did not attend initiation and as a result they were not incorporated into regimental structures. Uninitiated men were also excluded from the central political forums in the villages. Christian youths until the 1950s, however, constituted the overwhelming majority of those who attended the predominantly mission schools in the area. When mocked for still being 'boys' by initiated youths converts responded with derision at their detractors 'backwardness' and lack of 'civilization.' Unsurprisingly these exchanges became heated and sometimes violent, although it was unusual for serious injury to be the result of these confrontations. (10)

Tensions between commoners and chiefs also flared from time to time in many communities. These conflicts were most marked in those cases - such as that of Abel Erasmus' client Kgolane - in which chieftainship was blatantly the creation of colonial manipulation. In these instances commoners fought a long drawn-out struggle to reduce the effective authority of the chief to the minimum possible, without invoking reprisals from white officialdom and, whenever they were able, to invoke the alternative authority of the Paramountcy. (11) But even in communities where the legitimacy of the chief was more securely grounded the nature of chiefly power was a point of ongoing contestation. The scarcity of resources meant that commoners were increasingly unable to employ the classic strategy of withdrawing from the areas of incompetent and/or capricious chiefs, and chiefs could now look to white officials to confirm and maintain them in office in the face of challenge. The overall result was to make Chiefs more authoritarian and remote from their subjects. Godfrey Pitje who grew up in Sekhukhuneland and who returned to conduct anthropological research in the 1940s, observed that whereas in the past commoners had been able to speak in pitso (public meetings)

Nowdays ... there is very little freedom of speech . Pedi chiefs are notorious for resenting remarks from commoners. After a commoner has aired his views it is not uncommon for the chief to ask "Whose son is he?" ... It is a reflection of the mentality common amongst nobles... that those lower than themselves are not capable of advising them..... Those who resent such treatment usually do so by reminding the chief that Kgoshi ke kgoshi ka batho(ie a chief is a chief by the grace of his people). This expression carries with it the threat that unless the chief rules by the will of the majority, his subjects may desert him. However, under European administration this threat cannot be carried out, at least not in the old sense.' (12)

One recurring source of conflict was the imposition of special levies by the chiefs. The most controversial of these charges was a land levy of L1 per tax payer which was initiated in 1923 and partly administered by the Native Commissioner . As we have seen above this considerably expanded the amount of land under the authority of the Paramount . But it was far from universally supported. The payment of the levy ran counter to the longstanding popular conviction that 'the land belongs to us , we cannot buy our own ground.' (13) There was a deep-seated reluctance to buy back land that most people believed had been stolen by the whites. The land that was acquired was also often remote from the locations, already densely settled and did little to alleviate land hunger in the heart of Sekhukhuneland. Some headmen and subordinate chiefs also chafed against a system which expanded the power of the Paramount but did little to enhance their own positions. Special collectors were appointed to gather the levy from groups of migrants on the reef and periodic raids were also conducted by the Native Commissioners' police in the reserves. Defaulters were sometimes manhandled and found themselves fined or even imprisoned. Conflict on this issue flared on a number of occasions from the 1930s onwards. The levy was finally discontinued in the early 1950s in part as a result of a campaign led by ex-servicemen which featured amongst other things a protest march to Mhlaletse - the seat of the Paramountcy. (14)

Communities in Sekhukhuneland in the 1930s and 1940s were neither egalitarian nor in equilibrium, but were rather in the grip of deepseated processes of change and were shot through with divisions and tensions, only some of which have been hinted at above. Nonetheless the evidence for this period suggests that the most profound cleavage lay not within chiefdoms but between this world to some extent defined by the exercise of communal tenure and chiefly authority, and the wider world of white power and capitalist relationships. Sekhukhuneland and especially the locations within it were seen by many who lived there as a place of refuge. It was a sanctuary from swaggering white officials and employers, from brutal policemen and the burden of passes, from wage labour and rents, from dangerous women, delinquent youth and the rampant criminality which infested urban society. The limited degree of freedom which this represented was closely tied to retaining access to land and livestock, to preserving the remaining autonomy of the chiefdoms, and to ensuring that the power of

white officialdom remained as confined as possible. Native Commissioners were humoured as long as they did not attempt to tamper with the inner workings of the chiefdoms and most were aware in the 1930s and 40s that minimal intervention brought maximum co-operation. Basil Sansom who conducted fieldwork in the area two decades later commented 'Any alteration that entails, or seems to entail, further penetration of white influence into what the Pedi define as their sphere of command will encounter principled rejection'. (15)

#### Betterment and Bantu Authorities

In the aftermath of the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act there was intensifying state intervention in the countryside. In particular in the northern Transvaal vast tracts of land - including farms bordering on the old locations in Sekhukhuneland - were acquired by the South African Native Trust (SANT). From the 1940s these farms were automatically designated 'Betterment' areas and strict controls were imposed on the inhabitants. In the name of 'conservation' cattle were culled, lands were demarcated and fenced, individual land and stock holdings were reduced and in some instances a landless class was defined. Communities found themselves hemmed in by a host of restrictions, ranging from a ban on cutting trees to prohibitions on keeping donkeys and goats. Households found that they had to pay fees for grazing stock and rents for residential sites. 'Widows' were informed that they were entitled to reduced amounts of arable land. New settlements were laid out in straight lines. Individuals who had - or sought to secure - land and livestock to sustain households in the present or to keep alive the ambition of rural retirement in the future were placed in jeopardy. But perhaps most ominous of all were the powers that 'Betterment' and its post-war successor 'Rehabilitation' gave to white officials and their agents to interfere in the daily life of communities. Native Commissioners, Agricultural Officers and (African) Agricultural Rangers invaded communities with rolls of fencing wire, sheaves of rules and regulations and lists of new charges. Chiefs and headmen who resided on land under control of the SANT found themselves functionaries in a tightly defined administrative system. This complex of measures became popularly known as 'the Trust'. It was widely detested as intrusive, oppressive and inimical to the maintenance of even a residual political and economic autonomy. (16) Johannes Mangope Phala, for example, gives a vivid sense of the violation of a private domain in explaining why he rejected 'the Trust'.

They were coming into our homes,... even our own homes would be controlled by them.... Can you accept that if you marry a woman that another man just comes, throws you out of your house, climbs into your bed and sleeps in your blankets? (17)

'The Trust' met with intense opposition in the Northern and Eastern Transvaal and conflicts flared throughout the 1940s. The Nationalist Party victory of 1948 and the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 ushered in a new phase of rural restructuring. But while the system of tribal authorities was seen as the foundation

of a decisively separate administrative order for Africans, it was also seen as a new solution to old problems. Officials in Pretoria and on the ground believed that Bantu Authorities would hasten the implementation of 'Rehabilitation'. Communities - especially in the old locations - also believed that a double agenda existed. While officials harped on benefits of 'self-rule', their audiences interpreted their blandishments as a poison chalice enticing them with the nectar of 'independence' but brimming with the venom of 'the Trust'. (18)

By 1952 the Secretary of Native Affairs Dr W. Eiselen - who had grown up on a mission station in Sekhukhuneland - was anxious that the process of establishing Bantu Authorities (BAs) should get under way. Confronted by widespread popular hostility to BAs, but concerned to avoid undermining the legitimacy of the system by the use of blatant coercion, officials looked for the opportunity for a breakthrough. The prestige and legitimacy of the Pedi Paramountcy which officials had long viewed with suspicion, now held out the possibility of dramatic 'progress'. They noted that

the influence of the Maroteng chiefly house stretches far beyond the present tribal area... [in] the nineteenth century they were the recognised rulers of the Bantu who presently live in the .... area between Bosbokrand in the East, Pietersburg in the West and Pretoria in the South. (19)

Eiselen and his officials believed that, if the Paramount could be persuaded to accept the BA system, communities in the broader region rapidly would follow suit.

The scope for manipulation of the Paramountcy was also increased by a prolonged partial interregnum. In 1943 Sekhukhune II died after a long reign. His designated heir Thulare Sekhukhune had however pre-deceased him in 1941 without producing an heir and the Maroteng bakgomana (royals) faced the problem of how to establish a legitimate heir. The immediate solution was to install Thulare's younger brother Morwamotshe as acting chief with the responsibility of raising an heir for his brother. Morwamotshe was a mild man of limited education. He was reluctant to take a clear lead on any issue and was content to delegate decisions to his councillors. The consequence was that the affairs of the chiefdom were increasingly dominated by his more assertive brothers. The most senior was the tribal secretary Motodi Sekhukhune but the most influential, and a man who later was viewed by many as the effective ruler at Mhlaletse, was Mabowe James Sekhukhune. (20)

Mabowe was remote from the main line of succession but was a personable youth with a quick intelligence who enjoyed a warm relationship with his father Sekhukhune II. At the latter's suggestion he left the local school and went to stay with a lawyer 'Aapie' Roux at Lydenburg who had done work on behalf of the Paramount. Mabowe attended to local mission school where he



completed std six. During his stay in the Roux household he also became well versed in the ways of the Afrikaner middle class. In 1936 he went to the Rand and, after a brief spell as a mine clerk, found employment in the concession store at the Van Ryn Deep Mine where he worked for four years and mastered a range of the skills needed in commerce. In the 1940s, he found employment in a number of other stores, dabbled in ANC politics, observed the 1946 mineworkers strike and finally in 1947 returned to Sekhukhuneland. His wish to marry an educated Christian woman was rejected by his family and he entered into an arranged marriage with a cousin whom he immediately despatched to school.(21)

Trading in Sekhukhuneland in the late 1940s was monopolised by a handful of white trading families. The strict enforcement of a 30 mile exclusion zone made it extremely difficult for new traders to gain licenses. But Mabowe was able to use his connections to the Paramountcy and to Aapie Roux, to secure locations and licenses for stores. In the early 1950s as the Nationalist administration lowered the obstacles to black traders, Mabowe steadily expanded the number of shops under his control. He also developed close relations with a number of wholesalers based in Pietersburg and forged links with the family of Dr Naude, MP for the town and Minister of the Interior who was impressed by this shrewd and convivial Pedi royal.(22)

Mabowe believed that it was pointless to resist the Nationalist Government and judged that both Bantu Authorities and Bantu Education would open up new avenues of opportunity and 'progress' within the reserves. He acted as a key link between the NAD officials based in Pietersburg and Morwamotshe and his councillors. Morwamotshe's closest advisors came to share Mabowe's view that the Paramountcy could derive considerable benefits from co-operating with the proposed new dispensation. Mabowe also had close connections with other emergent black traders who also saw potential advantages in the proposed new order. In the early 1950s after he was appointed by Morwamotshe as Chairman of the Sekhukhuneland School Board, he threw himself into the task of refashioning local schooling. One of the obstacles to the expansion of schooling had long been popular hostility to missionary dominance. Mabowe saw Bantu Education as an opportunity to build community based and supported schools. When the only secondary school in the area was closed by the Anglican Church Mabowe set about collecting a 'voluntary' contribution of ten shillings from each family in the location to build a brand new high school. He was also able to fashion a happy combination of his interests when he secured a trading licence for a prime spot adjacent to the new school.(23)

Mabowe was the most articulate and visible spokesman for a small minority within the reserve who supported Bantu Authorities. Aside from traders, this grouping included some senior royals and chiefs who were persuaded that the system would entrench and improve their positions. Some headmen also resented their positions in the old order and hoped for better out of the new. As Frans Marodi Nchabeleng complained in 1953, 'headmen have ren-

dered long and good service and have many followers but they are still called headmen and they are not recognised by the government' (24) There were also clerks, policemen and agricultural rangers, whose fortunes were closely tied to those of the local state. There was some division in the ranks of local teachers but most came from conservative Christian backgrounds and were remote from the main currents of popular concern. While uneasy about the implications of Nationalist policies, they nonetheless tended like Mabowe to view resistance as hopeless and to believe that on balance state intervention would bring 'progress'. The broad pattern was that those whose life strategies revolved around migrancy and accumulating land and stock, rejected Bantu Authorities while those who were well placed to perceive opportunities in commerce, education and the local state took a rather more sanguine view. As Gad Sekhukhune observed 'You know as a businessman or as a teacher you have got to visualise the coming land, they are a bit civilised unlike tribal people'. (25) But for many people the new order represented not civilization but its reverse - a quantum advance of the world of the whites, the values of majakane and the stormtroopers of 'the Trust'.

By no means all senior royals supported Bantu Authorities. Some believed that the new system would hamstring them politically and materially, while others feared for the popular legitimacy of the of the Paramountcy. Aware of high levels of popular hostility and the existence of divisions amongst the bakgomane Bantu Affairs Department (BAD) officials and Mabowe moved cautiously. A range of inducements were held out to persuade Morwamotshe to establish a Tribal Authority. In 1953 on the death of Chief M. Kgoloko, who had officially held sway over the southern portion of Geluks location, the BAD offered to recognise Morwamotshe as official Paramount on 'the understanding that within three months [he] will agree to the establishment of a Bantu Authority, if necessary with the powers of a regional authority'. (26) On the 20 August 1953, with considerable fanfare before an audience of chiefs, headmen and officials, Morwamotshe was installed as Paramount over the whole of Geluks location and the tribal farms. Three months passed but no request to establish a Bantu Authority was forthcoming. Thus began a cat-and-mouse game that was to drag on for the next two years. In private meetings Morwamotshe and his most senior councillors gave their assurances that they intended to comply, but in public meetings they deferred to angry and even bellicose popular sentiment and avoided any open commitment.

There were men of high rank who spoke out against Bantu Authorities in these meetings. For example Godfrey Sekhukhune - a staunch member of the ANC - argued that incorporation into these structures would defile the legacy of Sekhukhune I and sever the arteries of legitimacy and popular support for the Paramountcy. He likened Bantu Authorities to a snake's egg that would hatch a viper in the heart of the polity. Increasingly exasperated officials alternated between threats and promises. The Paramount was reminded of the possibility of deposition. He was also offered additional powers, a larger salary and finally on 10 December of

1956 at a public meeting in a frenzy of bribery he was promised 'a railway bus, a secondary school, a clinic, a post office and a telephone.' (27) When Morwamotshe agreed that he would like these facilities Mr Prinsloo - the Chief Information Officer of the BAD - leapt up and shook him by the hand. An official photograph was taken and Mr Prinsloo announced that he was overjoyed that Morwamotshe had accepted Bantu Authorities. Delighted BAD officials began to prepare the proclamation of a regional authority with councillors nominated by the Paramount and drawn from the Maroteng bakgomana, the more powerful headmen and a couple of teachers and shopkeepers. (28)

### Sebatakgomo and the Khudhuthamaga

News of these events was carried to the Rand by migrant workers. From the early 1950s workers from Sekhukhuneland gathered in compounds, hostels, factories and burial societies to debate and dissect events at home. They listened to the grim stories migrants from other areas had to tell about 'the Trust' and Bantu Authorities. As has been discussed at length in previous articles, Sebatakgomo - a rural resistance organisation set up in 1955 from within the ANC and the underground SACP - drew in these networks of concerned migrants and developed a mass following amongst mainly Pedi workers. It centred on the hostels and was composed of village based committees which met in each of the industrial centres and which sent representatives to a central committee which met in Johannesburg. The central committee was known as the Khudhuthamaga. (29)

The common denominator of the vast majority of the members of Sebatakgomo was that they were migrant workers from baditshaba communities in Sekhukhuneland. This provided a core of common values and shared experiences of processes of rural and urban change in the early 1950s. However there was also considerable diversity in the movement which can be conceptualised by means of a continuum. At one end of the continuum were individuals with at least primary schooling, who had long histories of involvement in unions, the SACP and ANC, and who were familiar with the versions of democracy, nationalism and socialism propagated in these organisations. A number of these men played a key role in the leadership. At the other end of the continuum were migrants who had neither western education nor involvement in unions or political parties whose primary commitment was to defending a residual rural autonomy. The latter, who probably comprised the majority of the membership, had models of organisation derived primarily from their experience of the political processes within chiefdoms, regiments and burial societies. Some of these men were aware that many of the leaders of Sebatakgomo had wider political connections, but trusted them because they were from BoPedi. When the leadership visited rural communities they stressed that they were from Sebatakgomo rather than emphasising their connections to the ANC. As the movement grew in strength its 'Pedi' character became even more marked. In 1957 partly as a consequence of this shift its name was changed to Fetakgomo which was derived from the political maxim Feta kgomo o sware motho - (leave the cattle and take the people) - which was

closely associated with the history of hegemony of the Maroteng Paramountcy. It also had rather more immediate resonances given the centrality of cattle culling to 'the Trust'. (30)

The use of the term Fetakgomo with its interplay of historical and contemporary allusions highlights part of the reasons for the organisations' success. Out of the interaction of its various components an ideology was forged focussing on key symbols with wide ranging resonances. Central to this ideology was a rejection of Bantu Authorities and 'the Trust'. This appealed to concerns both over the Nationalists denial of political rights to Africans within a common society, and to fears that the 'freedom of the chiefdoms' would finally be destroyed. Defence of chieftainship was a crucial component in the aims of Fetakgomo but it was couched in terms which appealed to broadly based constituencies. While the office of chieftainship - and especially that of the Paramount - was celebrated, it was also recognised that individual chiefs were incompetent and/or careless of their subjects' interests. The ideal that kgoshi ke kgoshi ka batho was stressed which resonated both with commoner concerns over the increasingly authoritarian and co-opted realities of chiefly rule and with the democratic discourse of the ANC. (31)

In 1956 and 1957 Fetakgomo set about bringing these ideals and the practice of chieftainship into closer alignment. As inconclusive meeting followed inconclusive meeting in Sekhukhuneland fears grew amongst migrants that elements within the Paramountcy were intent on doing a deal with the B.A.D. In November 1956 messages reached the Rand that Morwamotshe was about to capitulate. The leadership of Sebatakgomo despatched a letter from 'Sechaba sa Bapedi' (the Pedi community/nation) asking Morwamotshe to convene a pitso at Mohlalatse which would be attended by migrants and locals to discuss the issue. The letter was however intercepted and ended up in the hands of the Native Commissioner. When the migrants led by John Kgoana Nkadimeng arrived on the appointed day they found the police waiting for them with an order prohibiting the meeting. The large and angry crowd which had gathered was finally forced to disperse. But Morwamotshe was clearly shaken by these events. Before the migrants returned to Johannesburg he told Nkadimeng, 'You go back and tell my people that I have not signed for the land [accepted Bantu Authorities]' (32)

The Sunday after their return from Sekhukhuneland a meeting of Sebatakgomo was called. It was reported that police had prevented the pitso and it was argued that the organisation was of little value if it could be so easily thwarted by the authorities. Nkadimeng suggested that in future Sebatakgomo should operate as far as possible in secret. They should find secure means of conveying messages and issue cards only to trusted members. But it was also concluded that if the movement was to succeed steps had to be taken against a more insidious enemy, 'that all persons who proved to be renegades should be exposed and made known to members of the organisation. Renegades were considered to be

those working for the government or who are informers'. (33) The fears of the migrants were intensified when news reached them that Morwamotshe, within two weeks of giving them the assurance that he would not 'sign', had apparently publicly embraced both Mr Wessels and Bantu Authorities.

This turn of events persuaded the leadership of Sebatakgom that drastic measures were required. But they still sought to avoid a head-on confrontation with Morwamotshe which could both have sown division in their own ranks and tarnished a vital symbol. It was proposed that Mabowe Sekhukune and others who formed the Dihlogo Tsa Motse (literally the heads of the village) - the inner circle of Morwamotshe's administration - should be deposed and replaced by individuals who could be trusted by the migrants. To this end, and after much debate, it was decided to send Phetedi Thulare (a senior royal) and Morewane Motubatse to Mohlalese to take matters in hand. These individuals along with other migrants who were at home started to contact influential villagers - amongst them Morwamoche's brother Mosehla Sekhukhune - and to mobilise popular opposition to Mabowe, Motodi and the other councillors. After some weeks, a series of meetings were held at Mohlalese at which the existing advisers of the Paramount were called to account. They were accused of secret dealings with officials, of withholding vital information and of misleading Morwamotshe. In these and subsequent meetings the activities of Mabowe Sekhukhune came under particular scrutiny. He failed to attend but, in his absence, was charged - amongst other things - with embezzling the funds for the new school and of misusing the chiefs' car. But most importantly of all he was accused of conspiring to usurp the chieftainship. A photograph of Mabowe published in the December 1956 issue of the BAD magazine Bantu and captioned 'Chief Sekhukhune' was seen conclusive proof of the validity of these fears. Through all of these proceedings, however, care was taken to avoid direct criticism of Morwamotshe. (34)

The upshot of these meetings was the replacement of the Paramounts' key advisers. Ntladi Mampuru was appointed as Induna and Phetedi Thulare as secretary and a new inner council was constructed out of individuals who had a track record of opposition to BAS. Mabowe - in the face of persistent rumours that an attempt would be made on his life - left the area and his shops were subject to an almost total popular boycott. Motodi and many of the other displaced advisers, sought refuge in the neighbouring village of Ntshabeleng. These events constituted a major political coup. While on the face of it operating within the conventions and forms of chiefly power, these meetings had in fact overturned long-established practices which restricted influence over these positions to a small group selected by the Paramount and senior royals. Now a much broader constituency within the chieftdom had been actively involved and the group installed in key positions also maintained close contact with Sebatakgom's structures on the Rand. One of the principal projects pursued by the new urban and rural leadership was to collect funds to provide Morwamotshe with a new house and car. This was in part intended to remind Morwamotshe that material rewards for loyalty

were not the monopoly of the BAD. (35)

Once again the BAD officials found their hopes dashed of the smooth establishment of a Bantu Authority. Morwamotshe flanked by his new advisers denied that he had ever accepted Bantu Authorities. In mid March 1957 Dr Piet Koornhof was dispatched by Eiselen to investigate the situation. He was alarmed by what he found and argued that 'a setback.... will have repercussions throughout the Transvaal because Sekhukhuneland can be regarded as the heart of the Transvaal Bantu'. He recommended firm measures against the new advisers and continued support for Mabowe. (36) Early in April, Phetedi Thulare and Godfrey Sekhukhune were arrested and deported to Matubatuba and Mtunzini respectively. After these arrests the Dihlogo Tsa Motse worked in close conjunction with the urban leadership of Fetakgomo to stage protests and to raise money to retain lawyers to contest the deportations. The urban leadership made a number of visits to Sekhukhuneland in these months. A recurring refrain in their meetings was that it was 'time to win back the land but that they must now fight not with assegais but with money.' (37) They also reported on the rapid growth and activities of Fetakgomo in the urban areas and distributed membership cards.

The BAD response was two-pronged. On the one hand repression was intensified. Over the following year there were further deportations, Morwamotshe was deprived of his official authority to hear tribal cases, the school at Mohlaletse was closed, the ANC was banned and an effective local state of emergency was declared. On the other hand overtures were made to a number of headmen to accept Bantu Authorities. The principal inducement that was offered was that those who complied would be recognised as independent chiefs and would head autonomous tribal authorities. While most chiefs resisted these blandishments - not least of all for fear of the wrath of their followers - a minority responded positively. (38)

These developments heightened tensions within the chiefdoms. The urban leadership of Fetakgomo urged that the organisation should be expanded in the rural area but Morwamotshe and some members of the Dihlogo Tsa Motse resisted on grounds that existing political structures were adequate. A group of younger migrants - aged in their twenties and early thirties - who were present at Mohlaletse and who had participated in Fetakgomo activities in Johannesburg were not satisfied with this response. Led by Lebelike Mogase and Motubatse Mangope, they called a meeting of the Dihlogo Tsa Motse. They demanded to be allowed to participate in meetings of the council as one member recalled 'because they just saw us drink beer while they paid money and the banned men still had not returned. Therefore they wanted representation to put matters right.' (39) Morwamotshe and some of the councillors resisted repeated demands along these lines but eventually Kgetjepe Makotenyane and Nkopodi Rampelani said that that 'they were our children and would help us with the work and a majority agreed to their involvement' (40) Once they were admitted the young migrants urged that the name of the council should be changed to Khudhuthamaga and that it should follow the political lead of

its Johannesburg namesake - the executive committee of Fetakgo-mo.

The intervention of the young migrants saw yet another shift in the balance of power within the chiefdom. For now it was not only commoners but also young men who had a decisive say in the inner councils of the Paramountcy. Having secured unprecedented political leverage, these men helped build the Khudhuthamaga into a major political force in the region. Office bearers were elected and regular meetings were held under a Marula tree on the mountain slopes behind the royal kgoro. Branches were established in the major villages which sent two elected representatives to the central committee. Morwamotshe was not present except at special request but was represented at meetings by his brother Mosehla Sekhukhune. In practice the Khudhuthamaga became the effective focus of power and authority on the vital issues of the day. (41)

One of the most urgent issues it confronted was what to do in the case of subordinate chiefs who might agree to the establishment of tribal authorities. While some of these individuals were rulers of long standing and were relatively well-entrenched most were at loggerheads with the majority of their own villagers and the fact that headmen who accepted Bantu Authorities were expected to make an immediate start on 'betterment' further eroded their popular support. The strategy that was pursued in these instances was that their subjects brought complaints against them to Mhlaletse where - after a hearing - they were deposed and replaced with individuals acceptable to the Khudhuthamaga. A number of headmen who suffered this fate appealed to local officials for support. The consequence in a handful of communities was the existence of two competing headmen/or women: one with minority support but with official recognition, the other supported by the Khudhuthamaga and by the majority of their villages. (42)

### The Rangers

These events produced a profound polarisation within Sekhukhuneland between a small minority defined as supporters of Bantu Authorities and dubbed Marangera and the overwhelming majority known as the Makhudhuthamaga - the people of the khudhuthamaga. The term Marangera was taken from the African agricultural rangers who served under white agricultural officers on 'Trust' farms. Rangers symbolised co-option by white officialdom and the invasion and subversion of the inner domain of chiefdoms and homesteads. All those who publicly proclaimed themselves in favour of tribal authorities and/or betterment earned this appellation. (43)

But the category also had rather broader connotations. It harked back to the bitter and costly struggle between allies of Abel Erasmus and the supporters of Sekhukhune II in the 1890s. It was also coloured by the division between Christians and baditshaba.

By no means all of the Rangers were Christians but many were from majakane families and Christians had long been viewed as a potential fifth column within the society. Black teachers were also closely associated in popular thinking both with Christianity and more broadly with the intrusion of white power and values. The fact that a number of teachers were prominent supporters of BAS considerably strengthened these perceptions. There was also considerable suspicion of black traders. Epitomised in the person of Mabowe Sekhukhune such traders were suspected of a willingness to betray and subvert core values in order to be able to secure their own material advantage. This perception was probably heightened by the failure of most black traders to play the publicly redistributive roles that had helped legitimate previous patterns of accumulation within chiefdoms. There was also a widespread belief that the white officials' key informers were to be found amongst the ranks of the Rangers and there was a suspicion that some were using the powers of witchcraft to defend and advance their cause. Rangers - in short - came to symbolise not only Bantu Authorities and 'the Trust' but a whole constellation of forces which threatened the 'freedom of the chiefdoms'. (44)

In 1959 Motodi Nchabeleng - a teacher but nonetheless a staunch supporter of the Khudhuthamaga - wrote a vivid account of these divisions.

The Rangers were the spies of the system of Bantu Authorities. Their work was to go around arresting people and reporting those that spoke out against the system to the authorities.... Another word that caused fear was St Helena [deportation]. It came to the point that the ... the Rangers refused to eat with the resisters and ... the people resolved no longer to accept food from the hands of the Rangers. Paying each other visits was now fraught with danger ... Fear of killing grew in the country of Bopedi. In the night people walked in fear of one another. The Rangers were always heard saying of the resisters, 'this year they will go for ever.' Then it was often heard that so and so was picked up and sent to St Helena. Mockery and talking ill of one another grew night and day. As time went by it became evident that here in BoPedi would be no peace or reconciliation. (45)

This account highlights not only the depth of the divisions, but also conveys a sense of the role that witchcraft beliefs played in deepening polarisation. Belief in witchcraft was pervasive in both Christian and Baditshaba communities in the 1950s and the use of poisons was regarded as the hall mark of the particularly feared category of day witches. As Motodi Nchabeleng recalled 'they thought witches were poisoning people, mostly those who were strong speakers' (against BAS). (46) The power to inflict disaster on ones enemies was another element in the armoury of witches which also appeared to some to be mirrored in the ability of Rangers to secure the deportation of their opponents. Witchcraft and misfortune were in addition believed to flourish in divided communities. This is not - of course - to suggest that there was a simple elision of witches and Rangers but rather that forms of explanations which underpinned witchcraft beliefs shaded



into the interpretation of these divisions and coloured the characterisation of Rangers.(47)

Feelings ran so high on these matters that the threat of violence was present in many meetings where Rangers faced their detractors. The experience of 72-year-old 'Ginger' Kambula at a meeting at Mohlaletse in September 1957 provides a vivid picture of one such encounter. Kambula, who was from a far-flung chiefdom but related to Morwamotshe by marriage had not attended a meeting at the Paramountcy for some time and was not aware of how dangerous the political undercurrents there had become. After having taken notes of the meeting on a piece of paper he rose to argue that the Paramountcy would be destroyed if Bantu Authorities were rejected. The Chairman of the meeting Kgagudi Maredi leapt to his feet and shouted 'take that paper on which he has been writing and tear it to pieces because he wants to give it to Mabowe. He is a Ranger.'(48) Then a group of men stormed down on him and beat him until Morwamotshe and Mosehla Sekhukhune were able to stop them.

As the state intensified pressures in Sekhukhuneland and succeeded in widening cleavages in the body politic, debates took an ominous new turn. Late in 1957 some of the younger migrants started to relay accounts of events at Zeerust and elsewhere where 'collaborators' houses had been burnt and some had been killed. It was argued in a meeting of the Khudhuthamaga with Morwamotshe present that 'it no longer is possible to live alongside people who caused our people to be arrested. They should be killed.' Morwamotshe responded 'If you want to practice witchcraft do it without my agreement. Why do you ask my permission to kill people?' He went on to say that he wanted no violence and the Khudhuthamaga as a whole supported him.(49)

By March 1958 it had become obvious to the BAD that neither threat nor promise could prize Morwamotshe free of his new councillors. Officials decided on drastic measures. Morwamotshe was suspended from office and 82-year-old Kgobalala Sekhukhune who was a retired policeman remote from the main line of succession was appointed in his stead. On the 21st March Morwamotshe was deported to Cala in the Transkei accompanied by his wife and children. The BAD believed that they had provided a salutary display of their power. What they failed to understand initially was that by acting directly against Morwamotshe they had delivered the most profound affront imaginable to popular political values. The shock waves of the officials' ham-fisted action reverberated through the villages, compounds and hostels. In Johannesburg John Nkadimeng addressed a mass meeting. "I asked them, how can they be proud any more when their king has been taken away and they sit here with other people? What do they tell them, what do they say about their own life?"(50) These words also convey a sense of the importance of the Paramountcy for migrant's own sense of identity.

Morwamotshe's deportation came only two weeks after he had spoken out against the use of violence against Rangers. When the Khudhuthamaga assembled in early April in the aftermath of his

arrest, it was more receptive to militant voices. Mosehla Sekukhune was the acting head. Stephen Zelwane Nkadimeng made an impassioned speech. He proclaimed that the Rangers were the cause of Morwamotshe's arrest and that they should be killed. He said that at the last meeting people warned that the Chief might get involved if they fought with the Rangers. The chief had now been captured. Now was the time to kill the Rangers. A heated argument broke out in the meeting. Some shouted out that now was the time to kill them, while others argued that large amounts of money had been gathered to pay for lawyers which would be wasted if people took matters into their own hands. While a majority of the meeting remained reluctant, a vocal minority of younger men persisted in their demand for direct action. Finally, Mosehla Sekukhune agreed that the Rangers should be killed because it was they who were responsible for the arrest of the Paramount. Thereafter individuals called out the names of individuals considered to be Rangers and lists of intended victims were compiled. (51)

In the weeks that followed discussions continued amongst the group of younger men who described themselves as 'the soldiers of the Khudhuthamaga.' (52) A plan was drawn up to attack Rangers simultaneously throughout the region on a set day. This action was to be executed by the 'youth'. Fears were expressed, however, that violence would widen and deepen cleavages within the villages, leaving the relatives of those killed embittered and intent on revenge. Such an outcome would have defeated a central part of the purpose of the planned attacks on the Rangers which were seen as a means of overcoming internal disunity, restoring community cohesion, and thus of strengthening defences against both misfortune and external intervention. In an attempt to combat the potential for division, relatives of the intended victims were urged to lead the attacks. (53)

On the 13 May men from the Reef and the reserve massed at the Native Commissioners' office at Schoonoord to demand the return of the Paramount. Kgobolala - the acting chief - and Mosehla had a meeting with the Commissioner during which Kgobolala pleaded, unsuccessfully, to be allowed to stand down. The Commissioner then went out to speak to the crowd. He greeted them by saying 'Paramount Chief Kgobolala and the Bapedis' and then went on amidst mounting uproar to tell the assembly that Morwamotshe would never be allowed to return. Members of the crowd shouted out 'you are just here to collect our taxes not to appoint our chiefs. We will break down this building because it was built with our money, we will no longer pay taxes, and the police must no longer visit our villages'. (54) Thereafter the crowd moved off to a nearby clump of Marula trees. What happened then is shrouded in controversy. State witnesses later maintained that Mosehla and others made speeches giving explicit orders that 'Rangers should be killed' but notwithstanding the generalised outrage at what had transpired it is improbable that they would so publicly have thrown all caution to the winds. More persuasive are the accounts that suggest that speakers laid the blame for this turn of events on the Rangers and that there were calls from within the crowd that 'the Rangers are known in every village and that they must be named and be kicked out of the villages.

Others shouted out that they should be killed.' (55)

It was three days later (on 16 May) that Kgobolala was so rudely awakened as described in the introduction. Another prominent Ranger at Mohlaletse, Thomas Mothabong Mabogoane, was also roused by a knock on his door before sunrise. He recalled

I heard voices outside the door and when I opened it I saw Motubatse. I said 'whats wrong'? He then spoke in a soft voice so that I could not hear him. Then I realised what the whole village knows - they have come to kill me. I stepped outside and he stabbed me. (56)

Mabogoane, though seriously wounded, managed to flee and both he and Kgobolala escaped with their lives. The fact that they survived, though heavily outnumbered, suggests that their attackers still lacked the resolve to murder. The assault was not only half-hearted, it was half-cocked as well for the attacks at Mohlaletse took place in advance of the date set by the 'soldiers of the Khudhuthamaga' for the eradication of the Rangers. Later on the same morning police went to the village of Manganeng to arrest two of the more militant speakers at the Schoonoord meeting - Phaswane Nkadimeng who was heir to the office of local headman, and Stephan Zelwane Nkadimeng. The crowd that gathered blocked the police cars exit route. The policemen panicked, opened fire and killed a man and a pregnant woman and wounded several others before driving off at high speed with their captives. This episode snapped the final restraints and Rangers were attacked firstly in Manganeng and then throughout Sekhukhuneland. (57)

When news of the shooting reached Mohlaletse early the next day two regiments were mobilised to go to the assistance of the people at Manganeng but dispersed when they encountered a heavily armed police column. Palane Matjie recently returned from an abortive attempt to find and kill Mabowe Sekhukhune when he joined the men en route to Manganeng. After the regiments collision with the 'Boers' and now accompanied by Dihlare Masufi, he resumed the search for the second man on his list of targets - Dinakanyane Seroka - who was widely believed to be using witchcraft to assist the Rangers. Eventually they found him hiding in a donga.

We said to him 'where are you from and where are you going?' He did not answer. Dihlare said to me 'Now what do we do with him?' I said 'he is our enemy we cannot just leave him, you are wasting time'. I hit him with a knobkierie on his head then Dihlare stabbed him with a spear. It broke when it went into him....he managed to pull it out.... Then I stabbed him. I stabbed him. I finished him off.

After they had killed him, they took his pass book which they delivered to the moshate (chiefs place) saying 'you don't have to worry any longer we have killed him.' (58)

The next day, despite numerous warnings, the leading Ranger

Chief Kgolane Kgoloko went back to his village of Madibong along with his induna Makoropetje Maphiri. When they arrived a crowd of sixty people - mainly men with assegais and axes but also some women with stones - stormed down upon them. They fled in separate directions. The chief took refuge in a house but was pulled out and beaten and stabbed to death. A millstone was placed on his battered head. Mhaphiri was also cornered and killed. (59)

Despite the spontaneous elements in the violence, the idea that its socially corrosive effects could be contained, still seems to have played some part in shaping the pattern of events. At the village of Mphanama, Mangase Mashabela was identified as a Ranger, was seized by an angry mob and was taken to be executed. His life was spared, however, when four of his sons in turn refused to strike the first blow. (60) At Manganeng after the police shooting the enraged crowd surrounded the house of trader Motle Nkadimeng. It was led by a relative Maseboto Gantse. When he entered the house he encountered his intended victims daughter Moseane. She said 'is it you?' He replied 'yes it is I little niece'. She said 'is it really you that has come to kill my father?' He replied 'yes but if I kill you father you will not struggle or go wanting'. She begged to be allowed to stay with her father in his final moments but she was driven away before he was killed. (61)

By the 18 May nine men had been killed, many more had been injured and the property of Rangers had been put to the torch. Some of the victims were publicly proclaimed supporters of Bantu Authorities, but others - including traders and teachers - were attacked partly because they fell into the social categories which were associated with the Rangers. But attacks were also quite specific. As the above cases indicate, while anger was vented on particular individuals, their families by and large escaped without serious physical injury. Once this wave of killings was over a war of attrition followed. Police swarmed over Sekhukhuneland and many villagers took refuge in the mountains. There were further attacks - especially hut burnings - on Rangers, a widespread refusal to pay taxes and an intensified boycott of Ranger traders. Over three hundred men and women were arrested

and trials on charges ranging from public violence to murder continued over the next two years. But officials also realised both that they had blundered by deporting Morwamotshe and that little progress could be made until he was returned. After officials received private assurances that he would be more co-operative in future Morwamotshe was returned home in August 1958. His arrival was greeted with jubilation and was seen as a great victory by the majority of his subjects. (62)

#### Explaining the violence ?

The preceding narrative contains elements of an explanation for the incidence and form of the violence. It grew out of a context of intensifying state intervention and repression in which core values of the society were placed under threat. Many people believed that their whole way of life faced destruction. The

targets of the violence - the Rangers - were initially seen as agents of a malevolent enemy but as the conflict intensified they were increasingly believed to bear prime responsibility for the dangers that confronted the society. This depiction of their role was coloured by witchcraft beliefs, and the view gained ground that it was only by the removal of the 'enemy within' and the restoration of a cohesive community that disaster could be averted. The arrest and deportation of the Paramount constituted the most profound affront imaginable to the social order which the makhudhuthamaga sought to defend and proved to be a trigger for violence. But the shootings by the police at Manganeng helped to inject a more spontaneous and lethal element into the attacks.

But the question remains of why it was that Rangers were increasingly represented as having primary responsibility for arrests and deportations? It was after all very visibly white officials and police who were the key actors and few migrants or residents were under any misapprehensions about the relative power of the South African state. One part of an explanation is the widespread belief that, behind the scenes, Mabowe Sekhukhune and his allies were providing information to, and manipulating, officials in order to advance their own political ambitions. This interpretation was also consistent with deep seated models of causation which tended to place internal divisions and conflicts at the forefront of explanations for profound setbacks such as - for example - the conquest of the polity by the Ndwandwe in the 1820s and by the British in the 1870s. A further element in an explanation is the 'dual theory' of causation commonly contained within witchcraft beliefs which sets out to explain the particularity of misfortune. Among the Azande, to cite a classic example, the question was posed as to 'why particular warriors, and not others are killed by particular enemies in battle. Clearly those slain were killed by enemy spears; but an internal enemy, the witch, has caused this particular death'. (63) It seems plausible, in a context in which witchcraft accusations were rife, that the particularity of the misfortunes of arrest and deportation were partly explained by the witchcraft believed to be practised by

the Rangers.

Another element of an explanation is highlighted by the mobilisation of the regiments at Mhlaletse and by the centrality of the young 'soldiers of the Khudhuthamaga'. The Pedi kingdom had been defeated, disarmed and partially dismantled. But a military capacity and ethos had by no means been entirely extinguished. Accounts of the wars fought against the British and the Boers were told and retold and the role of internal divisions in providing fatal chinks in the defensive armour of the state was recalled. The reality of defeat and control was acknowledged but the legitimacy of the new rulers and especially their right to the land was far from fully recognised. Within the villages the socialisation of young men continued to hold up the ideal of the fearless warrior. Boys' principal form of recreation was stick fighting and young men learned to use rather more lethal assegais and battle axes. In towns some participated in the 'bruising

comradeship' of the amalaita. During initiation youths' physical courage was repeatedly put to the test, they were steeped in military history and ultimately formed into regiments. One of the tasks entrusted to these regiments remained the defence of the community. (64)

Despite this schooling of young men in the military arts, Sekhukhuneland for much of the first half of the twentieth century was relatively free of serious violence. That was part of what differentiated it from the despised urban wilderness. But the young migrant 'soldiers of the Khudhuthamaga' had also had to learn to survive in the often violent worlds of the compound, the hostel, the location and, increasingly in the 1950s, the prison. (65) They were, in varying degree, exposed to the more militant mass based politics of the period and became aware through discussions with migrants from other districts of violent resistance elsewhere to state attempts at rural restructuring. Armed with these experiences the 'young men' were prepared to challenge the more cautious approach of many of the older generation in the villages. This does not of course mean that these men relished violence or that murder came easily to them. Indeed the botched attempts on both Kgobolala and Mabogoane suggest that the young men involved were also partially paralysed by the sickening disjuncture that novices find between the theory and practice of war. But what is also true is that young men steeped in this culture and convinced that their communities faced mortal dangers did not have to wrestle with the Gandhian or Christian pacifism and/or a commitment to nonviolent action that inhibited some the leadership of the ANC when they pondered the choices open to them. (66)

Explanations which focus on the socialisation of young men, however do not explain the role that women played in the violence. At Madibong, for example, women played a leading role in the resistance to and ultimately the murder of Chief Kgolane Kgoloko. Two women, Madinoge Pholokwe and Mapeetla Raseomane were subsequently sentenced to death for their part in these events. Madinoge was the senior wife of Chief Morwamotshe Kgoloko and she was two months pregnant when he died in 1953. Kgolane Kgoloko was appointed as regent on his brother's death and was entrusted with responsibility for Madinoge and the infant heir. He and Madinoge rapidly came into conflict, however, and she rejected his authority and established an alternative relationship with John Makopole Kgolane. When Kgolane indicated his support for BAs and started erecting fences, Madinoge emerged as the leader of the mounting popular hostility to his rule. The matter was taken to Mhlaletse and Kgolane was deposed and Madinoge was appointed as regent in his place. Kgolane did not accept this verdict and to the fury of his subjects continued to rule with the support of the Native Commissioner. When Kgolane returned to Madibong on that fateful day in May of 1958 it was believed that during his absence he had conspired with white officials to have Madinoge and her key supporters 'thrown away to St Helena' (deported). The available evidence points to Madinoge as the effective leader of the opposition to Kgolane but both in the preliminary hearings and in the Supreme Court trial that followed,

the male officers of the court could not bring themselves to accept that a woman could have been the leader and it was her hapless lover, John Kgolane, who was portrayed rather as the villain of the piece. (67)

The story of Madinoge provides an example of the kind of role that the senior wives of chiefs could and did play in dynastic struggles, but as chief wife and potential regent she was hardly representative of women in general. However, in other villages, while women played a less prominent part in leadership, in assaults and in killings, they were at the forefront the destruction of fences and other manifestations of 'the Trust'. And there is also evidence of women challenging men to take action. In 1954 at the village of Mafefe, Naphtali Lebopo was working with two other rangers demarcating fields, when suddenly a woman appeared and shouted 'Men you better bring me those trousers, we will wear them because you are cowards.' (68) Then men appeared, somewhat sheepishly, holding assegais. The rangers' truck was close at hand and they scrambled into it and sped off.

There were very few female migrant workers from Sekhukhuneland on the Rand in the 1940s and 1950s and those that were in the towns were not represented in the urban structures of Sebatakgomo. Women were also excluded from the central political forums within the chiefdoms and did not participate in the meetings of the Khudhuthamaga. But this exclusion did not exempt them from participating in the wider polarization of communities or prevent them from contributing to the growing conviction that Rangers should be removed from the villages. This was not simply a case of wives being swayed by the interests of their husbands. In the context of a migrant labour based economy in which remittances were often sporadic and sometimes ceased altogether, many women were crucially dependant on access to land and cattle for their survival and for that of their families. While formal control over both was vested in the hands of their husbands and brothers *de facto* management of these resources by the 1940s and 1950s had in some instances devolved on women. 'The Trust' threatened to diminish or even to deny the access of many families to these vital props to their livelihood and also introduced a definition of rights to land and cattle in which only men's rights to control these resources was fully recognised. Widows and more broadly female heads of households were anomalies in the minds of agricultural officials and were considered - at best - to have diminished claims to land and livestock. They were therefore faced with being forced into still more dependent relations on male kin or even with outright dispossession. It is hardly suprising that women were numbered amongst the most militant opponents of 'the Trust'. (69)

#### Violence and the ANC

While the use of violence ran directly counter to the official policy of the ANC and SACP, there were undercurrents of discussion within both movements which may have contributed to these

events and which were certainly affected by the Sekhukhueland Revolt. In the aftermath of the 1952 defiance campaign there was considerable debate about the viability of passive resistance and while it was eventually accepted as continuing to be appropriate for the meanwhile, some members including migrant workers from Sekhukhueland like Flag Boshielo and John Kgoana Nkadimeng,

believed in the idea of fighting back. Now the question was if you fight back how would you do it. So people like Flag analysed this question especially after 1953 now with the Mau Mau revolt.... everybody was talking about it. And we had discussion groups where we were talking about this guerrilla war, you know. We really cherished the idea that one day we would be able to fight back. (70)

Flag Boshielo - a prominent member of both the underground SACP and the ANC and the original driving force behind Sebatakomo - was particularly taken up with this issue and devoured all the material he could find on Mau Mau. In the early 1950s he went to Sekhukhueland to train as a herbalist and to explore the possibilities of rural guerrilla warfare. On his return he argued still more strongly for serious consideration to be given to armed struggle. One important context in which he expressed his views was that of the grouping of migrant workers from Sekhukhueland who formed the inner circle of the leadership of Sebatakomo. Boshielo was banned in 1955 and restricted to Johannesburg but remained an influential figure. (71) The evidence presently available does not make it possible to establish conclusively what influence - if any - these views had on the thinking of the 'soldiers of the Khudhuthamaga.' But it is suggestive that Stephen Zelwane Nkadimeng who led the demand for violence against the Rangers within the Khudhuthamaga, was also a member of the ANC and the SACP and was probably well versed in these early debates about armed struggle.

Whether or not they were influenced by discussions within the ANC and the Party, these events certainly played a part in fuelling the debate about armed struggle within sections of the national movements. The willingness of communities to take up arms, the fact that the mountains and caves of Sekhukhueland had once again given rebels shelter and that the state had been forced to return the Paramount, all gave food for thought to men from Sekhukhueland like Boshielo, Nkadimeng, John Phala and Elias Motsoaledi who were ultimately to play significant roles in Umkhonto We Sizwe. The Revolt also provided Boshielo with additional ammunition in his campaign to put armed struggle on the political agenda. The question may have cropped up in the regular discussions he held with Mandela and Mick Harmel. The law firm of Tambo and Mandela played an important part along with Shulemoth Muller in challenging the deportations and organising the defence of the rebels. And the ANC and SACP leadership, embroiled in the interminable Treason Trial, had ample opportunity to reflect on the significance of these events. Not least of all they were confronted by requests from militants from Sekhukhueland and subsequently from Pondoland for guns in



order to be able to pursue their struggles more effectively. And while they were not yet able to meet that demand, they did put emissaries from Pondoland, whose own struggles were just beginning into contact with veterans of the 1958 Revolt. (72)

One must be careful, of course, not to overstate the role of either Boshielo or the Sekhukhuneland Revolt in the shift to armed struggle. Clearly both are no more than pieces in a very much larger puzzle. (73) But this evidence does provide some context for Mandela's acknowledgement of the role played by the rural revolts in prompting this shift and it also helps explain why Elias Motsoaledi when asked in 1993 to describe the formation of MK began his account with the battle against 'the Trust' in the northern Transvaal. For him, at least, the Sekhukhuneland Revolt was the opening skirmish in the war of liberation. (74) Certainly once MK was formed the urban and rural networks of Sebatakomo provided a rich source of recruits. Godfrey Sekhukhune back in Sekhukhuneland after his banishment to Natal became the key contact and recruiter for MK. John Phala recalls of the early days

Organising the volunteers to go to MK it was simple and easy because Sebatakomo was strong.... In the Sekhukhune area we would just call the people [in the village] in a mass meeting and say "The ANC wants soldiers, the ANC wants soldiers." Then everybody was rushing to call his or her son to come and join MK. Here in the [Jane Furse] hospital was the headquarters of recruiting for the ANC. Godfrey Sekhukhune was a male nurse in this hospital. So when we organise the volunteers to join MK we used the ambulance. So Motsoaledi was coming to collect people here at the hospital because they have been collected in an ambulance from all over our villages. (75)

Just what the somewhat staid collection of doctors at the hospital in 1962 would have said if they had discovered the purpose to which their ambulance service was being put beggars the imagination!

### Conclusion

Policemen and prosecutors were right to suggest that the Khudhuthamaga played a significant part in the Sekhukhuneland Revolt. But the picture of a sinister conspiracy bent on violence which they painted in the courts in an attempt to secure the conviction and execution of its members, obscures as much as it reveals. As we have seen the organisation emerged out of popular concern - especially among migrant workers - that chieftainship would become an instrument of Bantu Authorities and the hated 'Trust'. It was part of a remarkable attempt to make real the ideal that Kgoshi ke kgoshi ka batho which resonated both with the democratic values articulated within the ANC and with commoner conceptions of chieftainship. Sebatakomo and the Khudhuthamaga were able to mobilise a very broad following and to effect significant changes in the nature of chiefly rule partly because of a strategy and ideology which celebrated chieftainship - especially the paramountcy - at the same time as it set about trans-

forming it. But it is also important to recall that the attempt to democratise the institution never challenged a second fundamental proposition which was 'Kgoshi ke kgoshi ka madi ke bok-goshi' (A chief is a chief by the blood of a chief) which stressed its hereditary basis. And the exclusion of women and uninitiated men from key political forums and processes went unquestioned.

Equally while the Khudhuthamaga mustered widespread popular support and participation it was also a forum in which dissent was viewed with mounting hostility and in which the eradication of cleavages within the community became an overriding value. The perception of individuals stigmatised as Rangers evolved from one which portrayed them as agents of the system to one in which they bore primary responsibility for its actions. They were first shouted down, then driven from the villages and finally assaulted and even killed. These were extreme circumstances in which communities faced a fundamental assault from state structures which commanded very little legitimacy and provided almost no meaningful channels for the representation of popular sentiment. Nonetheless it must also be said that the popular political culture which evolved in this bleak environment, in which division, dissent and disaster were seen as intimately interconnected, in turn constituted stony ground for the nurture a culture of debate and tolerance of divergence. The political legacy of the Khudhuthamaga is, in short, ambiguous. It contains elements which could well feed into contemporary attempts to construct a democratic rural order. It also displays symptoms of the political intolerance and witch burnings which disfigured the fleeting dominance of the 'comrades' in Sekhukhuneland in the 1980s. But it should also be borne in mind that the young 'soldiers of the Khudhuthamaga' and the even younger 'comrades' of the later period saw themselves as being at war and war has rarely been democracy's friend. (75)

#### End notes

The research on which this paper is based would not have happened without the prompting of the late Godfrey Sekhukhune and the help and companionship of Isaac Sekhukhune, Stephen Motubatse, Cedric Rachidi, Philip Mbiba and the late Philip Mnisi. Hugh Macmillan and Helen Bradford have also been generous with their help. This paper has also benefitted from ongoing discussions with Stephan Schirmer and Deborah James made valuable comments on an earlier draft.

1/.Rand Daily Mail 30/7/1958; UW,CPL, A410/C2-9, Sekhukhuneland, 16 June 1958; SC4,CC,1959/13/188/1 evidence of Kgobolale Sekhukhune, 29/7/1958.

2/.RDM 24/5/1958 and 22/5/1958.

3/.RDM30/7/1958; OTS7696/443? CNC Pietersburg to SNA, 26/5/1958. Khudhuthamaga is also rather more mundanely translated as executive committee but this rendition held little appeal for those who sought to establish the existence of an atavistic conspiracy. Under police interrogation one of the key members explained

'Kudu Thamaga means a secret, it is just like a tortoise, a person cannot establish where its head or legs are. It is not easy to kill because its head is not prominent. The only way you can kill it is to throw it in the fire' NTS 7694/443/332/ 'Onrus in Sekhukhuneland en Stamsake, 1925-1960, Seraki Kgoloko, 6/10/58; S.Kgoloko, interview 1, 2/12/87.

4/.P.Delius, 'Sebatakomo; Migrant Organization, the ANC and the Sekhukhuneland Revolt' JSAS15,4, (1989); Sebatakomo and the Zoutpansberg Balemi Association: The ANC, the Communist Party and Rural Organization, 1939-1955. JAH, 34 (1993).

5/.P.Delius, The Land Belongs to Us (Johannesburg, 1983) and Abel Erasmus: Power and Profit in the Eastern Transvaal in W.Beinart, P.Delius and S.Trapido eds. Putting a Plough to the Ground (Johannesburg, 1986)

6/.D.R.Hunt, 'An Account of the Bapedi, Bantu Studies, 4 (1931) see also UW, CPL, AD/1438/2 Native Economic Commission (NEC) D.R.Hunt, Lydenburg 20/8/1930.

7/. Ibid. See also UW, CPL, AD, /1438/2 NEC evidence of JC Yates Middelburg 22/8/1930 and B.Sansom, 'Leadership and Authority in Pedi Chiefdom' Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Manchester (1970) pp.30-60.

8/. This for reasons of space is a rather static and truncated treatment of Pedi migrancy. For a much fuller discussion of changing patterns of migrancy and the changing attitudes of migrants from Sekhukhuneland see Delius, 'Sebatakomo; Migrant Organisation' pp.582-610. See also Mohube Phala interview 2 8/1/1988 and M.Nchabeleng, 'Boipusho' unpublished manuscript 1959.

9/. UW, CPL, AD, /1438/2, NEC, Evidence of D.R.Hunt, Lydenburg 20/8/1930 and evidence of J.C.Yates Middelburg 22/8/30. E. Motsoaledi, interview, 19/4/1990. J.Nchabeleng, interview 1, 15/12/1987; J.K. Nkadameng, interview 1, 6/6/88; P. Nkadameng, interview 1, 6/6/1988, N. Sekhukhune, interview 1, 9/8/87. D.P.Lebopo, interview 1, 11/7/88. S.Morwamotshe, interview 1, 29/9/87; M. Phala, interview 1, 6/10/87. M.Molepo 'Peasants and or Proletarians' ASI seminar paper 26/9/83. This precarious balance - rather like the liquidity of a bank - was maintained partly because not all of those who could claim rights to land did so at any one time. The fact that most households could secure rights to land does not of course mean that all could and there were families who were without either land or cattle or both. The evidence does not - at present - permit any reliable quantification of the ratios involved or the capacity to distinguish between households which held reasonable hopes of securing rights to these resources in the future and those that did not.

10). J.Phala, interview 1,; E. Motsoaledi, 1; J. K. Nkadameng, 1,

; G M Pitje, interview 1, 4/3/1987. Part of the depth of these divisions relates to the particular role played by missionaries in the nineteenth century. See Delius, The Land and P. Delius, The Conversion (Johannesburg 1984) One must of course also beware - even at this point in time - of overstating the starkness of the division. In some ways the concepts of Baditshaba/Baheiteni and Bakristi/Majakane represented contending ideal types - actual social relationships and practices presented a considerably more blurred picture and both categories of people shared many day to day experiences both of life in the villages and of the world of migrant labour. For example - as I have shown elsewhere - as significant though still small amount of children from baditshaba families were attending school in the 1930s and 1940s. Delius, 'Sebatakomo ; Migrant Organisation ', pp.595-597.

11/. See for example - NTS342/90/55 Chief Kgolokoe 1910 -1953.

12/. G. Pitje, 'Traditional Systems of Male Education Amongst the Pedi and Cognate Tribes,' African Studies, 9, 2, 3, 4, (1950) p.47.

13/. B.K. Hlakudi, interview 2, 18/11/87.

14/. Ibid; M.J. Sekhukhune, interview 2, 14/10/88; E. Motsoaledi, 1; UW, CPL, AD, 1348/2, NEC, evidence of D.R. Hunt 20/8/1930; NTS6813/19/318/ Pitso records 1929-1936; NTS1381/39/213 Bapedi Tribal Levy 1925-1933.

15/. Sansom, 'Leadership and Authority', p20. This rather congested paragraph is distilled from scores of interviews conducted with now retired migrant workers in several villages in Sekhukhune-land and on the rand between 1987 and 1990. See for example B.K. Hlakudi, interview 1, 28/8/87 and interview 2; JT Moukangwe, interview 1, 29 Sept 1988. M. Phala, 1 and 2 ; J.M. Phala, interview 1, 18/11/87.

16/. Delius, 'Sebatakomo, Migrant Organisation', pp603-5 . J. Bekker, 'We will plough where we like; resistance to the application of Betterment Schemes in the Pietersburg area, 1937- 1946' BAHons dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1989. P. Kgobe, 'Resistance to Betterment in the Pietersburg Area; The Case of Ga-Matlala, 1940-1980, BAHons dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand 1992. B. Hiron, Yours for the Union (Johannesburg, 1989) ch.10.

17/. J.M. Phala 1. See also, for example, B.K. Hlakudi, interviews 1 and 2. These concerns run through numerous interviews.

18/. NTS331/55/55; Chief Sekhukhune Bapedi 1920-57 ; NTS 342/90/55 Chief Kgolokoe 1910-1953; NTS1813/138/276/ Minutes of Chief Native Commissioners conference, 29/30 November 1955.

19/. Ibid quotation drawn from NTS331/55/55; Minute from office of the First Minister to Governor- General nd 1956.

20/. NTS3331/55/55 Chief Sekhukhune Bapedi 1920-57.; M. Nchabeleng,

Boipusho; G Sekhukhune, interview 1, 11/7/89; T Mabogoane, interview 1, 7/12/87; B.K.Hlakudi, 2; S.Motubatse, interview 2, 6/10/87.

21/.M.J.Sekhukhune, interview 1, 21/10/87; B.K.Hlakudi, 1 and 2; G.Sekhukhune, 1.

22/.ibid See also NTS 7694/443/332/ Onrus in Sekhukhuneland en Stamsake 1925-1960, pp. 56, 46, 37,72,75,76,77,119/20,124,243-9.

23/.M.J.Sekhukhune,1; G.Sekhukhune,1; B.K.Hlakudi, 1 and 2; M.Ntshabeleng,'Boipusho'.

24/.NTS342/90/55, Minutes of meeting at Malegale 20/8/1953.

25/.G.Sekhukhune,1.

26/.NTS/342/90/55, W.Eiselen to CNC, 9/6/1953.

27/.UW,CPL,A410/C2-9, Sekhukhuneland, 16 June 1958.

28/.Nchabeleng, Boipusho; N.P.Sekhukhune, interview 1, 9/8/87; NTS8977/198/326 Bapedi Tribal Authority 1957-58.

29/.Delius, 'Sebatakomo and Migrant Organisation' pp605-616.

30/.Ibid and Delius, Sebatakomo and the ZBA, pp306-313; NTS 7694/443/332, Elekia Mamagase Nchabeleng 23/1/1959; H.O.Monnig The Pedi, (Pretoria 1967) p.40.

31/.Ibid. See also M.Ramokgadi, interview 1 ? ;J.Mashego; interview 1, ? February 1988; J.K.Nkadimeng, interview 1, 6/6/1988; M.Phala, interview 2. M.Nchabeleng, 'Boipusho'.

32/.J. Nkadimeng, 1: NTS 7694/443/332, Elekia Mamagase Nchabeleng 32/1/1959; NTS8977/198/326 Bapedi Tribal Authority 1957-58.

33/.NTS 7694/443/332, Elekia Mamagase Nchabeleng; J.Ntshabeleng, interview 1. Both Nkadimeng and Boshielo were active in the underground structures of the SACP and this may well have has some influence on the quest for secrecy.

34/.Ibid . See also Seraki Kgoloko, 12/9/1958; M.Ntshabeleng, Boipusho; J.Nkadimeng, 1. N.Sekhukhune, interview 1, 9/8/1987 and interview 2, 29/1/1988. M.Phala,1; UW,CPL,A410/c2-9 Sekhukhuneland,16 June 1958.

35/.Ibid

36/.NTS8977/189/326 Bapedi Tribal Authority 1957-8, P Koornhof to SBA, 30/3/57.

37/.NTS7694/443/332 Seraki Kgoloko, 12/9/58. J Nkadimeng, 1,

J.Ntshabeleng, 1, N.Sekhukhune 1.

38/.M.Nchabeleng, 'Boipusho'; NTS8977/189/326 Bapedi Tribal Authority 1957-8. N.Sekhukhune, 1. J.Nchabeleng 1 and 2.

39/.NTS7694/443/332, Seraki Kgoloko, 12/9/58; J.Phala, unpublished manuscript.

40/. Ibid

41/.Ibid see also N.Sekhukhune, 1 and 2 ; J.Nchabeleng 1 and 2, M.Phala 1 and 2; M. Nchabeleng, Boipusho; S.Motla, interview 1, 7/12/87.

42/.NTS8977/189/326/ Bapedi Tribal Authority 1957-8; SS/CC/13/1/3/9/58 see eg. evidence of Madinoge Kgoloko, Phetedi Kgoloko Morewane Mashabani, Phaswane Mashabela and Johannes Mashabela.

43/.Sansom, 'Leadership', p.35,64. M. Nchabeleng, Boipusho; N. Sekhukhune, 1 and 2. The term 'voortrekker' appears in court records and in Sansoms' account as an alternative to Makhudhuthamaga but the term is now rarely used and while there are speculative accounts of its derivation and meaning I have not through interviews been able to clarify the issue. I have therefore used the widely used and understood term Makhudhuthamaga.

44/.Ibid See also G.Sekhukhune, 1 ; M.J. Sekhukhune 1 and 2; P. Matjie, interview 1, 10/10/87; J.Nchabeleng, 1 and 2; M. Nchabeleng 1; K. L. Manailane, interview 1, 11 April 1988, Interview 2, 30/11/1988; D. Radingoane, interview 1, 13/12/88. These perceptions as we will see below also influenced the choice of targets for attack when violence broke out in 1958.

45/.M.Nchabeleng , 'Boipusho'.

46/.M. Nchabeleng, interview 2, 5/4/88.

47/. Ibid G.Pitje, interview 1, 4/3/1987; Pitje, 'Male Education', pp.76,107; Monnig, The Pedi pp.76-7. M.Mampuru, interview 3, 17/11/88; P Matjie, 1. Elements of the context and characterisation of the Rangers have strong resonances with classic analyses of witchcraft beliefs and accusations. Gluckman has, for example, stressed the importance of underlying 'moral crises created for a group which sets high value on unity as its own development leads to a proliferations of conflicting interests within it,' M.Gluckman, Allocation of Responsibility (Manchester, 1972) pp.24-25; while Mayer concluded 'Witch hunting, then, goes together with a feeling that basic sentiments, values and interests are being endangered. A society in order to feel secure must feel that not only its material interests but also its way of life, its fundamental values are safe. Witch hunting may increase whenever either of these elements seem gravely threatened'. A witch is 'the traitor within the gates .... is on the wrong side of the moral line ... He has secretly taken the wrong side in the basic social opposition between "us" and "them" .'

P.Mayer, 'Witches' in M.Warwick ed Witchcraft and Sorcery (London, 1970)pp. 60-63.

48/.NTS8977/198/326, Ginger Kambula, ? September 1957.

49/.NTS 7694/443/332, Seraki Kgoloko, 6/10/1958; See also P.Matjie, 1 and L. Motubatse, 1 and 2.

50/.J.Nkadineng, 1; M.Nchabeleng, 'Boipusho'; M.Phala, 1 and 2.

51/.NTS7694/443/332, Seraki Kgoloko, 6/10/1958; G.Sekhukhune, 1; P.Matjie, 1; L.Motubatse 2.

52/. Ibid; J.Phala, unpublished manuscript, Robben Island, nd.

53/.M.Nchabeleng, 1; J.Nchabeleng 1 and 2 ;SS/CC/14/2 Mangase Mashabela, 30/9/58.

54/.NTS 7694/443/332, Elekia Mamagase Nchabeleng, 23/1/1959, Seraki Kgoloko, 6/10/1958; N.Sekhukhune 1 and 2.

55/. Ibid; SC/CC/1959/13/185/1 evidence Stephen Sekhukhune 29/7/58, Charlie Sekhukhune 31/7/1958; SS/CC/185/14/2, evidence Legane Mashigwane, Nkopodi Ramphelane, 8/10/1958, Malekutu Thulare, 9/10/1958; SS/185/15/3 Mabatani Marutani; P.Nkadineng, interview 1, 6/6/1958.

56/.T Mabogoane, interview 1, 7 December 1987.

57/.P.Nkadineng, 1; J.Phala, unpublished manuscript, Robben Island, nd.; SC/CC/1959/ 13/185/1 Evidence Major W.Kokot.

58/.P.Matjie, 1; see also SS/CC 111/1959/ Crown vrs Pelane Matjie; and M.T.Sekhukhune, interview 1, 12 August 1987; L.Motubatse, 1.

59/.SC/CC/1959/13/185/1 evidence of D.Kgoloko, P Segobodi, J.H.Van Rooyen; R. Moetalo, interview 1, 7/6/1988. M.Raseomane, interview 1, 14/12/88.

60/.SC/CC/ 185/14/2 evidence of Mangase Mashabela, 20/9/58.

61/.SC/SS/185/13/1/ evidence of Kabule Motle 11/9/1958.

62/. M.Nchabeleng, Boipusho; NTS 7694/443/332, Onluste in Sekhukhuneland en stamsake 1929-53 ; G .Sekhukhune, 1; N.Sekhukhune, 1. M.Sekhukhune, 1. UW, CPL, 410/C2-9, Sekhukhuneland, 16 June 1958.

63/. Gluckman , The Allocation p.7; See also D.Hunt, 'The Bapedi' pp.284-285 and P.Delius, 'The Pedi Polity under Sekwati and Sekhukhune' London University Phd 1980 pp.354-56; Berliner Missions Berichte, 1862, p331; J.Winter, 'The Tradition of Ra'lo-lo' SAJSIX (1912) pp97-8; Nchabeleng, 'Boipusho'; M Nchabeleng, 2.

64/.Delius, The LandPS, 181-246 G.Pitje, 'Male Education' pp105-199; Monnig, The Pedi pp117-120; M.Mampuru, 1; E.M.E Mothubatse, interviews, 1-3, 8-16/11/1976; J.K.Nkadineng, 1.

65/. E. Motsoaledi, interviews 1 and 2, J.Nkadimeng, 1 and 3, T.M.Sekhukhune, 1 and 2, N.P.Sekhukhune 1 and 2. See also W.Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography,' JSAS18;3;1992 esp.473-486; P.Bonner, 'The Russians on the Reef' in P. Bonner, P.Delius and D.Posel (eds) Apartheids Genesis (Johannesburg, 1993) For a much fuller discussion than is possible here of changing patterns of migrant association and politics see Delius, 'Sebatakogomo' pp. 597-603.

66/.T.Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa (Johannesburg, 1983) pp.106,232-234.

67/.M.Raseomane, interview 1, 14/12/88; R.Moetalo, interview 1, 2/6/ 1988; K.Lerutla, interview 1, 23/9/87; M.Lerutla, interview 1, 1/2/89. L.Mampuru, interview 1, 11/7/89; NTS342/90/55, Chief Kgolokoe, 1907-53; SC/CC/185/13/1 evidence Madinogo Kgoloko, Phetedi Kgoloko, Morewane Mashabani ; See also SS/CC/185/15/3 Evidence of Phetedi Kgoloko, John Makopole Kgolane, Madinoge Pholokwe.

68/.N.Lebopo, interview 1; 7/4/88.

69/.B.Hlakudi, 1 and 2; M. Raseomane, 1; L.Mampuru, 1; M.Lerutla, 1; R.Moetalo, 1; R.Kgetsepe, interview 1, 9/2/88; N.Lebopo, 1; D.P.Lebopo, interview 1, 11/7/88 and interview 2, 8/9/88; D.Magomarele, interview 1, 20/1/1988; NTS 10276/59/423/4. G.Ackron to CNC 18/5/49; The category of 'widow' which runs through both official and oral accounts probably refers to a range of households which for a variety of reasons (of which the death of a spouse was only one) were effectively female headed. Plans for trust farms adjoining the Sekhukhuneland reserves in the early 1950s included large rural villages comprising of individuals who had been deprived of rights to land or stock. As to the 'large numbers of widows who previously held lands in this group of farms... which is a feature of all Trust farms in Sekukuniland.. it is doubtful whether widows will make good farmers ..... they should get one morgen (instead of three or six morgen)... the fact that the minimum rental payable for land is L1 whether it is one or five morgen in extent is a factor which may induce widows to move into a rural village as soon as it is established' NTS10248/38/423/3. Aapiiesboom Trust Farms 16/1/1954. See also NTS10248/423/2 and A/-/C/. Mutsi Groep Trust Plase. This is a somewhat different picture to the one drawn of processes in the Ciskei and Border region in the same period. The contrast is partly accounted for by the difference between women without rights to land who were able to secure some access to land through 'the Trust' and women in the Sekhukhuneland case who had access to land and who confronted the danger of this being significantly reduced or even denied. That is not to say - of course - that there were not some women in the broader region for whom 'Trust land' was considerably better than no land. See A. Mager, 'The People Get Fenced': Gender Rehabilitation and African Nationalism in the Ciskei and Border Region, 1945-1955' JSAS18,1992 esp.pp.778-782. Another vital issue in this period was passes for women which were of course a crucial issue in the Zeerust Revolt and were a source of conflict just to the north of Sekhukhuneland. No attempt was made by officials to introduce the



issue in the already volatile context of Sekhukhuneland but news of these struggles travelled on migrant networks and was presumably interpreted as yet another threat both to the 'freedom of the chiefdoms' and to the position of women. See C.Hooper, Brief Authority (London, 1960) and D.M.C.Sepuru, 'Succession Disputes, Macongress and Rural Resistance at GA-Matlala, 1919-1980' BAHons dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand 1992, p.107-8.

70/.J.Nkadimeng and J.Phala, interview 1, 17/6/93.

71/.Ibid and J.Nkadimeng, interview 3, 3/4/91. Motsoaledi, 1,19/4/90, 23/4/90 and 3, 11 /5/1990 ; See also Delius, 'Sebatagomo and the ZBA'pp.306-313.

72/. J.Nkadimeng, 1 and 3, Motsoaledi 1 and 2 and especially 5, 7/4/93; J.Nkadimeng and J. Phala, 1.; L.Mdingi, interviewed by H.Bradford 20/9/90; N.Mandela; No Easy Walk to Freedom(London, 1973) p168:

73/.P.Bonner, B.Harmel and I are currently working on a Albert Einstein Institute(AEI) supported oral history project to try to put the elements of the puzzle together.

74/.AEI, E.Motsoaledi, interview, 7 April 1993

75/.AEI, J.Nkadimeng and J.Phala,interview, 17 June 1993

76/. P.Delius, 'Migrants Comrades and Rural Revolt, Sekhukhuneland, 1950-1987' Transformation 9, 1990.