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IDEOLOGY AND THE CULTURAL APPROPRIATION OF THE PAST IN MOCHUDI VILLAGE, BOTSWANA.

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg,
in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts.

Johannesburg 1981

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

P C Henderson

(Name of Candidate)

_____ day of January, 1981

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a descriptive study of ideology and the different cultural appropriations of the past or of traditional values in Mochudi village, Botswana. The status and meaning of traditional values in relation to the emerging class structures in third world countries and in relation to social change in general has long been neglected or one-sidedly interpreted. Mochudi, the large capital village of the Bakgatla people with a population of approximately 20 000, was chosen for an area of study in this field because it constituted a community characterised on the one hand by the ossification of traditional modes of production, and on the other by an entrenched migrant labour situation. It was particularly within this socio-economic context that traditional values were to be assessed.

The methods employed in the assessment of these values included participant observation, interviews, collection of case histories, collection of songs and poetry, a questionnaire and the consultation of relevant literature.

Major conclusions which were reached in the dissertation were firstly, the fact that traditional values continue to be of importance to most sectors of the population. These values, however, cannot be rigidly associated with any particular emerging class or class fraction. Rather traditional values are appropriated differently by all groups. For example the government utilizes traditional conceptions to legitimize its position. Other villagers on the other hand, use these ideas to criticize government policy. The appropriation of traditional ideas is further complicated by the internalization of a colonial negative self-concept on the part of other villagers. In this instance tradition and the past are negated and

the ways of Sekgoa*or the typifications of the ways of the white man are emulated and exalted.

Apart from these conflicts which cut right across the society there also exists an inter-generational conflict which manifests itself in ideological discourse in the following way Young people are at pains to negate the past in the hope of entering a modernized way of life. Older people on the other hand, having fully experienced the limitations involved in the migrant labour situation, insist that the village provides ultimate security and they therefore uphold traditional values. This negation of the past on the part of the young is accompanied by their exodus to the cities in Botswana and South Africa.

Given the fact that this study is confined to one particular village in Botswana, it is not possible to generalize its findings on a larger scale to Botswana as a whole. However it has attempted to isolate specific problems and areas for study. Also insofar as the village is situated within a general social context and is subject to general social and economic forces, the study is not without relevance to Botswana as a whole.

*Sekoca literally means "the ways of the English". The term implies the so-called "way of life" and cultural horizon of the "white man".

PREFACE

The bulk of the fieldwork was carried out during a period of 9 months in 1979. I had gained access to the village of Mochudi through a friend at the University of the Witwatersrand, Segale Kgamanyane. His wife, Elizabeth, and their five children, Nkomeng, Lehotse, Dikeme, Sebatseng and Magalefe, lived permanently in Mochudi. During my entire stay in Mochudi I lived with this family. In January 1980 I returned to Botswana for 2 weeks so that I could visit the cattle posts along the Notwane River, which were situated far away from the actual village itself.

I am more than indebted to Segale and his wife and wonderful children. Segale, apart from being a fine friend, encouraged me continually and often extricated me from difficult situations. When I first arrived in the village, I was subjected to an onslaught of typifications which often interfered with my work. I also had to discover the conflicts within the immediate community in order to realize whom to avoid and whom to consult. Elizabeth and the children gave me constant emotional support through their acceptance of me. The children particularly were responsible for teaching me Setswana and I derived great joy and pleasure from participating in their games. There are also numerous other young people who helped me in my work and who befriended me. I wish to thank them all, particularly Sisi.

I remember Nkoko Sebatseng Pilane with particular fondness. In many ways she adopted me as her own grandchild. She is an extremely witty and hard working woman who sagely pointed out my mistakes. It goes without saying that I wish to thank all the uncles and aunts in Segale's

family who adopted me as their daughter-in-law.

Amos Kgamanyane Pilane, the tribal historian, and a remarkable old man in his 90's, spent many friendly hours with me. I am indebted to him and I also greatly enjoyed his courteous and philosophic conversations.

I was always welcome in the lapa of the dynamic teacher and head of household, Trifiena Molefi. I wish to thank her and her daughter and grandchildren for their lively conversations and their singing.

Lepodisi Sekoboane of Rasesa spent many rewarding hours with me in which we played music together.

André and Elsbeth Proctor shared stimulating hours with me and were real friends.

Thanks also to Hugh Pearce, the district officer of lands, for his enthusiastic support and continued interest in my research.

A bursary from the University of the Witwatersrand enabled me to carry out my research for two years. The Human Science Research Council also gave me a bursary during this time.

Lastly, I would like to thank Professor Schutte for his continued support and guidance in the supervision of my work. His visit to Mochudi was especially appreciated.

GLOSSARY OF SETSWANA TERMS

Bakgatla bagaKgafêla	the Bakgatla people, descendants of Kgafêla.
Batswana	the Batswana people
botho	humanity
Botswana	the place of the Tswana
diphafana	drinking vessels made from gourds
dipula le dithebe	Botswana currency
go batla	to want
go bereka	to work for a wage
go dira	to do something of value
go sebetsa	to work for a wage
kagiso	peace
kgosi	chief
kgotla	meeting and discussion place
leinane	tale or animal fable
madomkraga	name for the Botswana Democratic Party, meaning jack
mainane	stories
malume	maternal uncle
makgoa	white people
masimong	lands or fields
mathatha	problems
mitolente	name referring to the district "Meadowlands" in Soweto which describes a type of brick house in Mochudi
mmutla	a hare
mocoga	sacrificial ceremony for the dead
Mosarwa	a member of the San peoples
motlanka	servant
Motswana	a Tswana person
ngwana	child
ngwetsi	daughter-in-law
poo	bull
rramocolo	grandfather

Sekgoa	literally "the English", but also extended generally to mean "the ways of the white man"
Setswana	the "ways of the Tswana"

LIST OF MAIN INFORMANTS

Elder R	Mochudi
Elder P	"
Elder K	"
Elder M	"
Grandmother M	"
Grandmother T	"
Grandmother S	"
Grandmother B	"
Kgatleng brigade official	"
4 Primary school teachers	"
Schoolteacher M	"
Headmistress of Primary school	"
Botswana People's Party spokesman	"
Schoolgirl P	"
Young girl S	"
Young man S	"
Young man P	"
Young woman M_1, M_2 and M_3	"
Two young herdboys	"
Young guitar player	Basesa, the neighbouring village
Preschool children	Mochudi
Schoolchildren	"
A number of older people with whom I had intermittent contact	"

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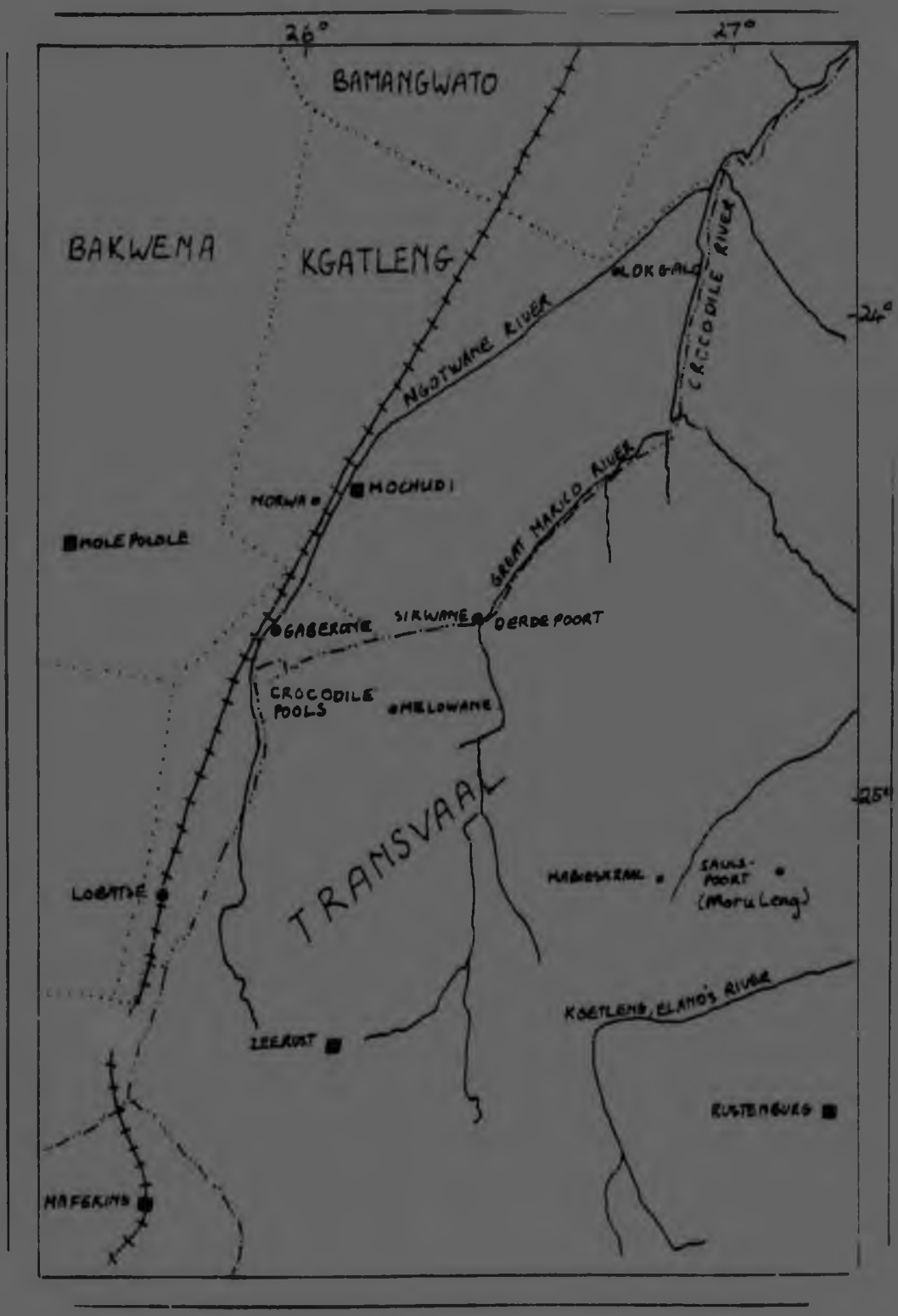
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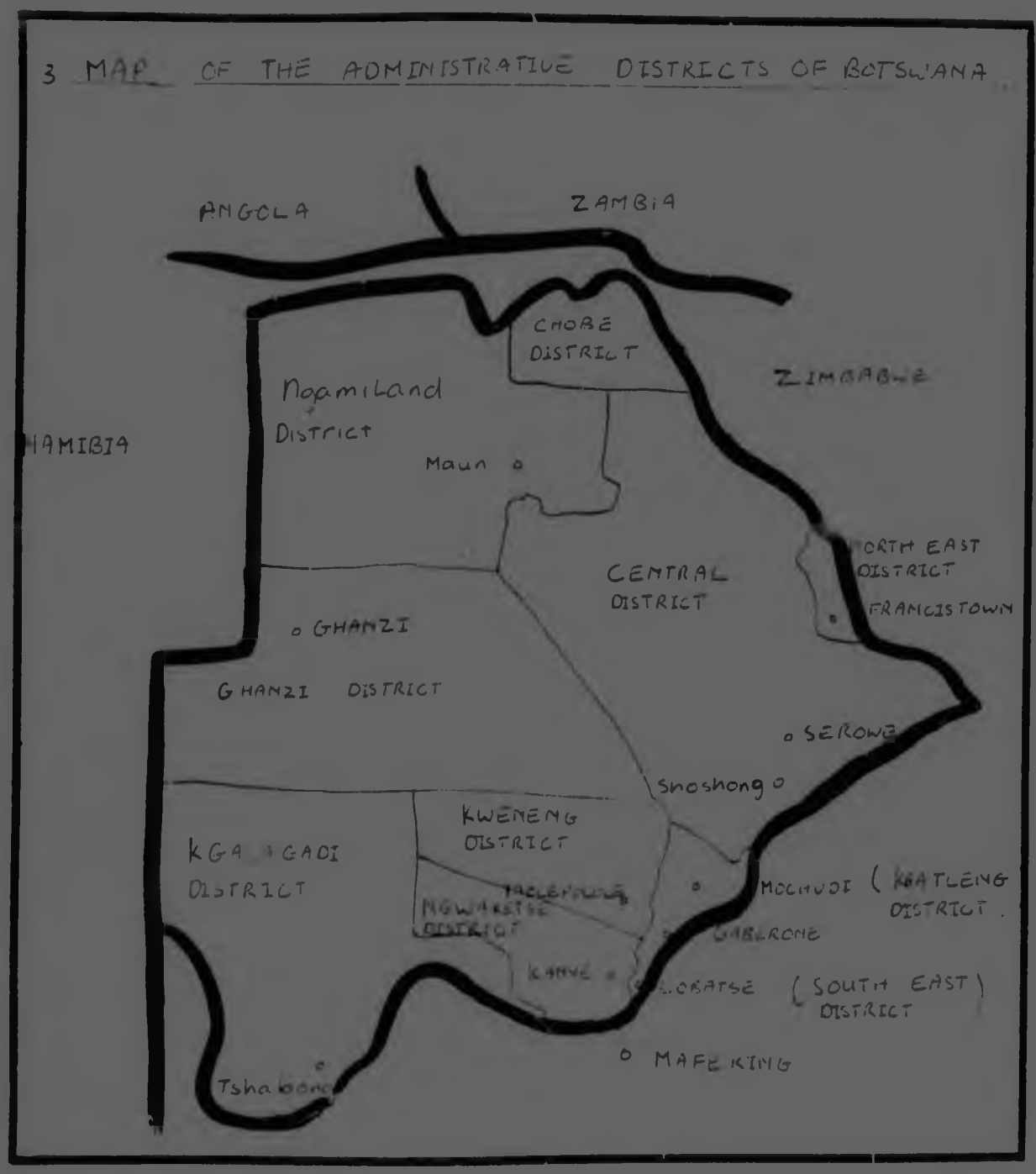
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Botswana is a country characterized by many disparities. It is precisely some of these disparities which are suggested in the dissertation. Succinctly these revolve around both current economic forces and within ideological discourse itself.

In the particular context of the dissertation, ideological discourse refers to the specific way in which different members of Mochudi village relate to their past and the way in which their appropriations of tradition are incorporated within current perceptions and experience of social conflict. On the political, cultural, social and familial levels, these appropriations challenge and confront one another. Not only do these appropriations reflect the conflicts embedded within the social fabric of the community but they also attempt to elucidate these from different perspectives. The different appropriations of the past in this sense provide the "tools" for meaningful interpretations of current reality.

Although the appropriations which are explored, concern a particular community, I have placed these within the context of broader disparities, for example, the economic forces which are characteristic of Botswana as a whole. Hopefully this will suggest that the conflicts in perceptions and ideas in Mochudi village may also reflect those experienced in other similar communities.

I begin the dissertation with an introductory chapter discussing in detail the economic forces which are currently present in Botswana. These point to the disparity between the urban and rural environments and

the way in which the urban environment develops at the expense of the latter. The polarity between rural and urban environments is also connected with the phenomenon of internal and external migratory labour within the country and abroad. All these factors are interwoven with the emergence of class stratification in Botswana.

Briefly this stratification is characterised on the one hand by a stratum of cattle owning elite. This elite invariably has connections with government and with traditional tribal authorities. On the other hand we are able to locate an increasingly marginalized and impoverished group of rural dwellers which owns no cattle at all and which, in some cases, has no access to land. In between these two extremes we locate a slightly more well-off peasantariate. (Notice that this term denotes both rural farmer and migrant labourer). This middle group of people nevertheless also experiences the increasing pressures associated with capitalist development which tends to benefit large farmers at the expense of smaller ones.

In exploring these forces, I wish to suggest a context in which discourse concerning different appropriations of tradition takes place. Discourse in this sense can in no way be reduced to a crude reflection of economic factors or indeed be associated with any particular class. This is because elements of this discourse have a history which transcends the relatively recent emergence of specifically new economic forces.

In the second chapter I deal precisely with different attitudes to, or appropriations of the past. In other words this chapter shows the way in which different people relate their own history and the way in which this reflects their interpretation of current social forces. Here we locate a disparity between those who seek to distance themselves from the past and those who insist

on a virile appropriation of it. These disparities may be situated within the historical context of the conflict between the ideological discourse of the colonized and the colonizer and the cultural alternatives which this conflict has precipitated. I have termed this conflict the conflict between the ways of "Sekgoa" or the ways of the English and the ways of Setswana.

Having established the different forms of appropriation of the past, I go on, in chapter three, to situate these appropriations within the context of the disparity between national and local politics. This chapter reveals the way in which the government is perceived by villagers to be out of touch with their community. We also show how traditional ideas, in some cases, provide a source of critique of modern government. However, this critique of national government is not unequivocal since people's perceptions of the man of power and wealth are often conflicted.

Chapter four explores the conflict between the world views of young and old. This reflects the disparity between urban and rural environments. The young people seek to negate village life and to idealize life in the towns. The elders point out the precarious position of the migrant in town and uphold traditional concepts of self-sufficiency and production. In so far as economic forces directly underlie the phenomenon of migratory labour they also provide the nexus in which the conflict between old and young takes place. Ironically the majority of young people are unable to escape from village life and their attempt to set themselves apart from the community through distinctive cultural expression only exacerbates internal conflicts within the village. This chapter also points to the way in which primary school education contributes to young people's negation of village life. More specifically, school life and what is taught there is completely unrelated to the needs of village life. Neither does it acknowledge the

particular knowledge which is engendered within such a community. The disparity between village life and the school is reflected in the contradictory attitudes of young children to their environment, these being the simultaneous affirmation and negation of village life.

In chapter five I examine people's perceptions of the anthropologist. These clearly reveal stereotypes concerning the white man. These stereotypes raise specific problems for the integration of such a stranger within a community. However, given these factors, there are specific ways in which such a stranger, so easily identified with the colonial other, may be incorporated. This process of incorporation also reveals a great deal about people's appropriation of the past and their relation to the colonial other or the ways of Sekgoa.

The last chapter situates the findings of the thesis within the context of current theoretical debate.

Here we show how traditional ideas are appropriated by all classes throughout the society and how these ideas cannot be identified with any one particular class. The same ideas are generally used by everyone but in different ways. Thus it is shortsighted to condemn traditional conceptions as being innately reactionary just as it is shortsighted to suggest that so-called "modern ideas" are necessarily innovative.

In conclusion then, we may say that the historical conflict between colonizer and colonized is still being played out on an ideological level between those who seek status by dissociating themselves from the past and who identify with the so-called ways of the "civilized" other, and those who insist on a connection between the past and the present. In this case the traditional past provides a reservoir of cultural c nceptions which are appropriated in order to criticize current realities.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOTSWANA ECONOMY

1. INTRODUCTION

I begin the chapter stressing the very real importance of understanding material conditions in Botswana. Such an analysis of economic relations in the country will primarily suggest the way in which different classes are emerging there. Such an overview of objective social and economic relations will provide a background against which to analyse perceptions of the world. Although ideological appropriations of the world and the meaning-structures which they create must be granted autonomy, their juxtaposition with material contradictions within society lends our analysis an extra dimension, one which transcends the analysis of meaning-structures according to their internal logic alone.

Returning to our central concern then, in very general terms, Botswana is a country like so many so-called "third world" countries where feudal or peasant relations of production have been incorporated and "frozen" within capitalist relations. The situation is characterized by a number of problems, the most obvious being the country's crippling state of dependence on countries such as South Africa. The present government is hard pressed to create employment within the country and although, since independence, thousands of jobs have been created, most of them have been bureaucratic and administrative in nature. With South Africa closing its borders to foreign labour, the situation is made all the worse in the short term. Little emphasis has been placed by government or sectors which would benefit people by generating employment, for example, in agriculture. This has resulted not only in a

decline of this sector but has the consequence that most young people scorn working in the lands and with cattle, saying that the work is "uncivilized" and too hard. People, predominantly the young, are flocking to the urban centres, with the illusion that they will find work there. With the breakdown of the extended family, agriculture becomes more and more difficult because fewer people are available for labour in the fields. Although cattle and agriculture still occupy the greatest number of people it can no longer be said that people are living in a traditional way. Everyone, apart from the rich cattle owners, depend on wage labour of some of the members of the family. The isolation of the individual worker, because of the sale of his labour and the way in which he has been incorporated in new economic relations has meant that rural development and self-help schemes based on conception of communal labour have failed, for example the Brigades (1). They have failed contrary to the stated aims of one Mochudi brigade official "to counteract the trends in progressive underdevelopment".

In superficially recounting the economic situation in Botswana, I do not mean to suggest that a crude correlation between economic and ideological factors can be made, but the attitudes for example, of young people, must be seen in the light of the overriding importance of wage labour and the individualism which it structurally entails.

Government has attempted to institute commercial cattle ranching within the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (T.G.L.P.) in order to generate capital, and although its stated aim is to encourage the small farmer, the only people who seem to have benefitted from these moves are the big cattle owners. Many people perceived the new land policies as a threat to their present communal land rights. In fact, the Bakgatla, the people of Mochudi, have rejected the proposals out of hand as they see these policies as leading to the direct impoverishment of some of the people (2). The government has tried to institute a policy of

establishing commercial as well as communal areas of production. These are seen to be contradictory. The basis for the formation of different classes is thus established although obviously the conditions for this began in the past. We must see the emergence of class within the context of the articulation of different relations of production in the case of Botswana, the articulation of capitalist and pre-capitalist relations. Class emerges specifically where these relations become antagonistic. Relations of production are connected with specific control over the means of production and the consequences which this has for the extraction of surplus labour. To clarify, Hindess and Hirst write,

> '(Modes of production) differ not in the existence of surplus labour but in the mode in which it is appropriated. It may be appropriated collectively as in primitive communist and advanced communist (socialist) modes of production, or it may be appropriated by a class of non-labourers as in capitalism or feudalism. In the second case the mode of appropriation of surplus labour constitutes antagonistic relations of production and a social division of labour between a class of non-labourers (capitalists, feudal lords, etc.). The mode of appropriation of surplus-labour governs the mode in which the social product is distributed among the agents of production.'(3)

In what is to follow, we will basically discuss the Botswana government's economic policy since independence as well as the nature of its rural development projects. We will show how these are situated within the context of international migratory labour and how the specific situation in Botswana has given rise to internal migration. A discussion of these phenomena will point to the emergence of different classes in Botswana and the stratification of the peasantry into different groups. We will also discuss the Bakgatla response to development projects and lastly we will show how changes in economic and social relations in Botswana have resulted in changes in residence patterns.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOTSWANA ECONOMY SINCE INDEPENDENCE

a) General Overview

The government has primarily concentrated on the development of the beef and mining sectors since independence, both of these being export orientated. Revenue prior to independence was also dependent on export, a tendency which has only increased and become entrenched during the independence years. Secondly, the government has concentrated on urban development as opposed to rural development. Both trends need to be examined carefully since their implications for the predominantly rural population of Botswana are far reaching.

Although there has been an overwhelming increase in the rate of economic growth in Botswana since independence, this increase has been largely irrelevant to the majority of the population. It has achieved little in the way of generating employment for them.

> To expand, growth in the production of beef increased in the mid-sixties due to the fortuitous ending of a severe drought. The expansion of the size of the national herd during recent years is thus not ensured since a recurrence of severe drought could reverse this process. This increase in the size of the national herd has also been accompanied by unequal distribution of cattle. Only relatively large cattle owners survived the terrible drought years. This has resulted in the following situation: 45% of potential cattle owners or household heads own no cattle at all while 5% of rural households own 50% of the cattle(4).

Growth in beef production has not been accompanied by a thorough development of the agricultural sector. The propaganda of rural skills, technological know-how, the formulation of a vigorous agricultural policy have been ignored.

Likewise in the mining sector little potential exists for large scale employment since it is characterized by

capital-intensive production. It has been said that it is unlikely to provide jobs for more than 6 to 8% of the active labour force(5). The income from mining has up till now been exclusively used for urban development and for increasing the wages of the salary earning elite.

Despite the quick capital gains made from an externally orientated economy it is essential to recognize the fragility of such an orientation. This orientation is compounded by the power which South Africa exerts on Botswana. Despite political disagreements between the two countries, South Africa, largely because of the customs agreement, remains the cheapest available source of all Botswana's capital and consumer goods(6). South Africa is also Botswana's principal foreign investor. The external orientation of the Botswana economy is also subject to fluctuations in overseas markets. To conclude then, the external orientation of the Botswana economy is particularly vulnerable since it can be affected not only by internal factors such as drought, but also by political changes in South Africa and fluctuation in external markets.

b) Urban Development

A large proportion of government development expenditure has gone towards urban development firstly in the construction of the capital Gaberone at the time of independence and secondly in the construction of the Selebi Phikwe town and mine.

The government maintained that concentration on the development of the mining sector was the only way in which revenues could be increased. Revenue increases were perceived to be necessary for the establishment of budgetary independence which would free the government from dependence on aid-grants. Budgetary independence was in fact achieved through revenue gained from the re-negotiated Customs and Union Agreement with South

Africa. Once budgetary independence was achieved in 1973, the government made a verbal commitment to increase the expenditure on rural development. The then Vice President, Dr. Quett Masire, in his budgetary speech of that year stated that the government 'would concentrate not only on economic growth and its impressive physical manifestations, but also on the quality of the lives of all Batswana and the equitable distribution of benefits.'(7) Be that as it may, the expenditures on health, community development and agriculture increased less than the average for all sectors together. Expenditures on the urban sector, however, increased greatly.

In the same year, the President instituted independently, the "Accelerated Rural Development Plan" which revolved around the improvement of rural infrastructure, primary schools, roads, water supplies and clinics. Because of this project, rural expenditure increased fourfold between 1973/74 and 1974/75, a rate which has been subsequently maintained(8).

All in all over this period only 7% of the budget was spent on agricultural production. This rate was lower than that of the colonial era.

It is important also to suggest briefly the role which foreign aid plays in relation of government orientations in expenditure. Most aid has been given to assist specified projects and not to help generate changes in social and economic policy. This has resulted in what Colclough and McCarthy have called a 'project approach to planning'(9). Also important is the fact that the terms attached to aid often insist on the rapid completion of the particular project in hand. This in turn results in resorting to capital-intensive and import dependent solutions.

3. a) Internal and External Migratory Labour

An understanding of migrant labour is important, since this points not only to Botswana's underdeveloped state and the dependency structures which this creates in relation to other states in terms of cash income and food supply, but it also points to developed and underdeveloped areas within the country itself. These factors have dire consequences for the future of the agricultural areas under current government policy, namely as we have seen, the stress of urban as opposed to rural development. Secondly the dichotomy between developed and underdeveloped areas can be linked to the emergence of a class structure within the country which also points in certain areas to monopolistic trends in agriculture and to stagnation in others. As we shall see, monopolistic trends are implied in the proposed cattle ranching scheme and stagnation seems the inevitable lot of the proposed population catchment areas. These issues will be discussed in more detail when we explore more fully the government's rural development policies such as they exist.

b) External Migrant Labour

Migrant labour has been a predominant feature of Botswana's history since its inception as a British Protectorate in 1885. As early as 1844 Batswana were working for Boer farmers in the Groot Marico and Saulspoort areas. Massey states that by 1880 there were over 2 500 Batswana on the Kimberley diamond mines(10). From this time onwards men began to work in a variety of jobs in South Africa. During World War I some men joined the African Labour Corps. Men worked in the gold mines on the Rand, in industry, for municipalities, as domestic servants, on farms in the Rustenburg district and on the diamond mines in South West Africa. Prior to independence, South Africa offered employment opportunities which were unavailable in Botswana

at the time. Botswana steadily became a labour reserve for South Africa, not only due to natural calamities in that country such as drought and disease, but also due to political and social factors, for example the embargoes on Tswana cattle imposed by the South African Government and the active encouragement of recruitment by the tribal and administrative authorities in the protectorate who sought money for the hut tax, tribal levies and fines. The chiefs were remunerated by the colonial authorities for the number of men they managed to recruit for the South African mines. Schapera estimated that by 1943, 18 000 adult males were employed in South Africa as compared to 5 000 employed inside the territory itself(11). In 1941 he estimated that 28% of adult males and 5% of women were outside the country. The 1971 census showed that these figures had not changed substantially; 25.5% of men of working age and 5.5% of women were absent in South Africa(12).

Between 1964 and 1971, 50% of international migrants worked on South African mines, the majority of women worked in domestic service. By 1978 the South African mines had changed their policy regarding recruits from foreign countries. This labour was no longer regarded as being "safe" in the light of the period of unrest and intense dissatisfaction on the mines which spanned the 70's(13). In 1978 the South African mines were already recruiting over 50% of the workers from inside the country. In order to attract domestic labour, wages were raised quite considerably. Cooper writes,

> 'With the average cash wage rising from R21 per month in 1972 to R91 per month in 1976 on the mines, there was an all time peak in 1976.'(14)

The South African policy on recruitment dictates that the number of recruits from Botswana will decrease, preference being given to experienced miners. Massey writes,

> 'In the long term it seems highly unlikely that there will be any substantial increase in the demand for mine labour. Most current projections foresee a levelling out of total demand for mine labour in South Africa in the 1980's and a gradual reduction in numbers from then on until the year 2000.'(15,16)

c) Internal Migratory Labour

Botswana has one of the highest urbanization rates in the world, this being about 14% per annum. In the initial section of this chapter we have hinted at the consequences of this trend, namely internal migration. Since independence there has been a massive growth in formal sector employment. However, despite the fact that about 3 000 jobs are created each year the active domestic labour force increases between 5 000 and 6 000 per year(17). Because of the large number of people not involved in formal wage labour and also because the geographical distribution of new jobs favours the urban areas, government has committed the error of suggesting the existence of a dual economy in Botswana. This has led to the misconception that poor rural households survive on subsistence agriculture alone and that rich urban households have forgone their ties with the rural areas. Most unskilled workers are also of necessity peasant farmers and the wages they receive make it very difficult for them to either invest in agricultural production or to become fully proletarianized. Contrary to the conception of a dual economy, a high proportion of rural households are supported by a wage earner, either in the towns or in South Africa. The nature of the rural linkages between skilled workers, for example at Selebi Phikwe, and their homes in the rural areas shows that the middle and poor peasants would benefit from the latter's wage increases. Apart from formal employment, more people are involved in informal employment, domestic servants, people paid in cash or kind on non-freehold agricultural holdings. These wages are unspeakably low. Hired men involved in agriculture receive lower wages than anyone else. With regard to informal work within

the towns themselves, Colclough and McCarthy note how the population of the towns has been growing at a faster rate than the growth of jobs in the formal sector. The proportion of the population involved in formal jobs has fallen from 37% in 1964 to 30% in 1975. Informal employment is considerably higher(18). It goes without saying that the employment in the rural areas is considerably less and more poorly rewarded than in the towns.

To conclude concerning the effects of external and internal migratory labour, just as an oscillating pattern of migration was established between Botswana and South Africa during the colonial era, so since independence due to the excessive emphasis on urban development and the low wages offered due to wage policy, migrations between towns and rural areas now exist. The combination of international and internal migration is devastating for rural communities. Cooper writes this with respect to the Kgatleng, the area in which I did my research.

> 'If migrant labour still accounts for 38% of the males between 15 and 64 being absent from the Kgatleng and a further 40% or so are moving to Botswana towns, then who is left in rural Botswana?'(19)

This leads Massey to conclude,

> 'The process of development and underdevelopment which defined the relationship between South Africa and the black peripheries being duplicated in the uneven development of urban and rural Botswana.'(20)

d) Migrant Labour's Effects on Productivity in the Rural Areas

Internal and external migration has extremely negative effects on the productivity of the rural areas. This is exacerbated by the government's tacit encouragement of migration and its lack of initiative in terms of real agricultural reform. As early as 1941 Schapera wrote,

> 'The vast majority of families in each tribe reaped either too little or barely sufficient for their needs.'(21)

In 1940 Botswana imported about 46 000 worth of maize meal. In 1971, a comparatively good crop year, a government study found that 84% of the households in eastern Botswana did not produce enough grain to be self-sufficient. The gravity of this is clear when we remind ourselves that eastern Botswana is Botswana's highest rainfall area so that one can imagine that other areas in Botswana were even less equipped to produce enough for basic food needs at this time. In the same year, Botswana imported maize meal from South Africa to the value of R3,5 million(22).

e) Social Effects of Migrant Labour

As early as 1943 Schapera noted the destructive effect which migrant labour had on "tribal" life. He suggested to the colonial administration that the 'only alternative (to continued migration) was to embark on a policy of agricultural and industrial development.'(23) Today 15% of Botswana households are headed by unmarried woman with children. Over half of the children born in Botswana are born out of wedlock. Women are becoming more and more isolated both socially and economically as a result of the migrant labour system. The breakdown in the family has far ranging consequences in that traditionally families constituted labour units. Today the young are increasingly attracted to the towns. Traditional seasonal migration between village, cattle post and lands is giving way to more permanent migration away from the tribal capitals due to lack of labour. (This will be discussed in more detail). The increasing monetization of the rural economy has substantially reduced the role of the household as a self-sufficient economic unit. The support structures for economic dependents in Botswana families are disappearing, hence the isolation of single women and old people. The nuclear family and indeed the truncated family becomes more predominant. It is within this context that single women and their children become marginalized.

> 'The increasing number of families headed by women where there are no present or absent male members of working age is evidence of the fact that the growing number of mine workers has led to an increase in the seriously poor or destitute people.'(24)

The 1974 survey on rural incomes revealed that 45% of rural households owned no cattle and were living below the poverty datum line(25). Thus the problems of absolute poverty have increased due to external and internal migratory labour.

Also due to the stratification within rural areas, household incomes are very unevenly distributed. The poorest 40% of households received only 12% of the total rural income. The richest 20% receive 58% of this total. These incomes are influenced primarily by patterns of cattle ownership(26).

f) Government Policy Regarding Migrant Labour

Government, if anything, encourages migrant labour. Its development policies for rural Botswana are not geared to reincorporating migrants within the country or raising the productivity or incomes of the rural majority. It is content to receive a considerable amount of revenue for miners outside the country. Massey writes,

> 'Since independence in 1966, there has been no indication that the Botswana government intends within the foreseeable future to end, or even wind down migrant labour in South Africa. The official view is that it is "unfortunate" but "inevitable" that Batswana still work in South Africa, given that "employment opportunities within Botswana will only build up slowly". In practice the only discernible policy toward the system has been that it should be milked for as much government revenue as possible, which is very much the policy pursued by the British during the colonial period.'(27)

Government, in fact, prizes the revenue from mines to such an extent that it attempted to increase the recruitment fee due to the government by recruiting agencies from R1 to R40 in 1976. It also attempted to make the recruiting agencies fully responsible for the

full payment of the individual's tax instead of only a minimal proportion of the tax. Miners understandably rejected this attempt. So did the TEBA recruiting agency. The most important consequence of the government's basic continuation of colonial attitudes to migrant labour is that it continues to disguise the urgent necessity for rural transformation in Botswana.

a) Class Structure and Migrant Labour

An interaction between an international capitalist economic system and traditional socio-economic systems during the colonial period gave rise to the emergence of a peasantry in many African countries. This type of peasantry, however, has been subject to rapid structural change. Before we suggest the stratification which occurs within peasant classes in such neo-colonial situations and their relation to other emerging classes, let us define more precisely what is meant by peasantry. Bundy, for example, has suggested a definition of peasantry which

> 'distinguishes peasants from pre-colonial agriculturists by the integration of the former into a complex social structure with novel economic and political obligations. It distinguishes peasants from capitalist farmers or agrarian entrepreneurs in terms of the latter's ability to accumulate, to hire non-family labour and to break with the ideological confines of peasant society. It distinguishes peasant from rural proletarian in that the former retains access to the means of subsistence and sufficient control over the disposal of his surplus to feed and clothe his family through agricultural exertions, while the latter must sell his labour power to subsist.'(28)

Rapid structural change within rural populations, due to the integration of a peripheral economy within the metropolitan capitalist economy, has given rise to two extremes. On the one hand the capitalist farmer and on the other the rural proletarian. This denotes a process whereby some peasant agriculturalists become capitalist farmers and some become proletarianized(29). As Bundy has noted, 'an infinite series of gradations (lie) between

these two extremes(30).' It is precisely within the means of this type of stratification which also characterizes such a country as Botswana that we are able to point to the emergence of class. It is also within the context of the emergence of a rural proletariat or more correctly peasantariate, that we may situate the phenomenon of migrant labour.

Both Leys and Galeski have provided broad suggestions for the division of a peasant class. Leys' exploration of the stratification of the peasantry in Kenya explored in broader and concrete terms the emergence of class structure in neo-colonial Kenya and his work must be regarded as a seminal text in this field(31). Briefly, Leys pinpoints the existence of a bourgeois class in Kenya, which occupies an intermediary position in the export trade between producers and foreign bourgeoisie. He then suggests the stratification of the peasantry into large farmers, middle peasants and landless peasants. He also reveals the emergence of a marginalized group of rural dwellers who can no longer be easily identified with the peasant class as such. If we recall the rapid structural changes which such a peasantry undergoes we may suggest that the term large peasant is not strictly correct since this category of peasant, if not already denoting the existence of the capitalist farmers, indicates his emergence. Likewise, the landless "peasantry" denotes the emergence of a rural proletariat.

Despite these criticisms we may nevertheless note that the class stratification which Leys notes in Kenya is similar to that of Botswana. It now remains important to suggest the type of stratification which has taken place in Botswana.

Tentative Exploration of Class Stratification in Botswana

3a(i) Bourgeoisie

The bourgeoisie in Botswana is closely associated with government and traditional tribal authorities. It has large access to land, cattle and other resources. It constitutes the group of capitalist farmers and at the same time these farmers or absentee landlords occupy high positions in town(32). To expand, large land owners constitute the salaried monopoly. The privileged position which they hold in the urban areas enables them to accumulate sufficient capital to invest in large tracts of land. This elite group hires workers on a seasonal or full time basis to replace family labour. Family labour has to be replaced because nearly all wealthy family members have jobs in the urban areas. They have access to higher education. Education is inevitably linked with the promise of higher salaries in the formal sector. The fact that education primarily benefits the wealthy highlights the social stratification in the rural areas and the existence of different classes in these areas.

(ii) Peasants and Middle Farmers

Because they do not own as many cattle as the large farmers, middle farmers are much more reliant on traditional obligations and economic relations than the large farmers, who have, because of their wealth, been able to establish independent capitalist farms. This group of farmers co-operate with one another, sharing the means of production (cattle and tractors). They engage in exchange labour and sometimes seasonally hired wage labour. They maintain relative independence due to their mutual co-operation. In good years they sell a proportion of their surplus grain to the market. They also on occasion sell cattle. In some instances they become employers of poorer peasants. However, these farmers' position is subject to a great deal of variation which often necessitates members of the family engaging in migrant labour.

(iii) Landless Rural Dwellers

The landless "peasantariate" or rural proletariate constitutes the greatest percentage of rural wage earners as opposed to wealthy land owners who often occupy professional and bureaucratic positions in town, and middle farmers who engage in migrant labour. Landless peasants also constitute a labour source for middle and large farmers. In Botswana, the inequality between a few large land owners and a few landless has always existed, the landless being the Basarwa, traditionally hunter gatherers who became traditional servants of the Batswana. Inequality in ownership of the means of production has been exacerbated by drought and capitalist relations of production. Both the latter factors have resulted in the concentration of large cattle herds in the hands of the few and the loss of cattle ownership among 45% of household heads. Access to land is also in danger of becoming skewed due to the institution of commercial cattle ranching which allows capitalist farmers exclusive access to leasehold land which de facto represents individual tenure. It may be generally said in Botswana that those people who are hired by large and middle farmers to aid them in their agricultural pursuits constitute one of the most impoverished groups in Botswana.

(iv) The Marginalized

Leys mentions that in societies of great inequality there are groups of people who become marginalized to the extent that 'they are largely excluded from effective membership of the society.'(33) In Botswana an increasing number of unmarried women are entering this category. Not only are their wages approximately half of the male wages for the same job where they gain access to jobs, but also they are becoming more and more dependent on male assistance in agricultural work in terms of ploughing and planting. Often when these females do gain some kind of assistance in these matters from male relatives, they are

often the last to receive help and consecuently their yields suffer. It is, however, their lack of ownership of the means of production (cattle, animals, equipment) on the one hand, together with their marginal position in wage employment which accounts for their desperate position(34).

The stratification of class in Mochudi village itself is characterized primarily by the existence of middle ranking farmers and marginalized rural wage earners. The relative absence of any large farmers has resulted in a specific rejection of government agricultural policy which we will explore in detail in what is to follow. Particularly we will pinpoint a conflict between middle farmers and marginalized herders or cattle post residents.

4. GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR RURAL AREAS IN BOTSWANA

a) The A.R.D.P. -- Accelerated Rural Development Plan

This project which began in 1973 and ended in 1976 was a short term and easily realizable one. It involved mainly the creation of a basic rural infrastructure which included primary schools, clinics and water supplies. Most significantly, however, it tended to satisfy basic needs rather than to stimulate rural production or to redistribute essential assets. Before its implementation the government was beginning to acknowledge, at least in debate, the necessity for rural development. In the end the programme was more adequately described as a "building project" rather than a development project(35). The A.R.D.P. was strategically launched before the 1974 elections. Undoubtedly the B.D.P. (Botswana Democratic Party) made political capital out of the project which had such immediate and tangible results. Although, as we shall see, most villagers are sceptical about most

governments in general, some still recall the improvements in infrastructure of those years, saying that at least the present government had given people schools, water supplies and clinics. Colclough and McCarthy aptly conclude,

> 'The A.R.D.P. was justified so far as it went but it should have been followed by a programme for the improvement of arable agriculture. This will be much more difficult to achieve, but is essential if the rural people are to realize their productive potential.'(36)

b) <u>The T.G.L.P. -- The Tribal Grazing Land Policy</u>

This policy, initially forwarded in 1975, is the only major rural "development" programme being implemented by the government. As can be gleaned from its title it deals largely with cattle production. Before discussing its nature, however, it is important to explore briefly the state of grasslands, water accessibility and cattle ownership in Botswana. Firstly we have intimated that cattle ownership is highly uneven in Botswana. Those with no cattle (45% of the population) suffer from absolute poverty, whereas cattle ownership and wealth are highly correlated. Cattle ownership is also linked to arable production. Those without cattle are severely handicapped in this sphere as well because of lack of easy access to ploughing oxen.

Apart from those who own no cattle at all there is a second group in which owners have up to 50 head of cattle. These comprise approximately 40% of the rural household heads. These people either plough land using their own, hired or loaned cattle. (These are called mafisa cattle). Thus they face fewer problems in arable production than those without any cattle at all. These farmers, however, graze their cattle communally and have communal water holes and are thus affected by the heavily over-grazed areas around the boreholes. Those owners with more than 50 head of cattle, approximately 15% of

household heads, include some enormously wealthy individuals. Many of these farmers have exclusive rights to boreholes which they have sunk in remote areas.

With the extraordinary increase in the size of the national herd in recent years, the quality of the grazing lands has deteriorated. Both these factors are very difficult to control because of the population's resistance to destocking and to fencing. When cattle ownership is so skewed an increase in the national cattle herd benefits the marginal owner to the extent that he is willing to put up with the general deterioration of the range. Just as destocking is seen to benefit only the large owner, so is fencing. Fencing is seen to deny access of small cattle owners to traditional grazing rights.

Because of the general deterioration of the grazing land, many big cattle owners, especially in the Ngwato district, have moved to remote areas, sinking boreholes and thus acquiring grazing rights over a quarter of Bamangwato territory. This deterioration led the government to formulate the T.G.L.P. policy. Basically this policy was supposed to cater for the interests of both the small and large cattle owners. Big cattle owners would move out of communal areas into remote areas, thus opening up new grazing lands with the accessibility to borehole water. At the same time these farmers would relieve the congested communal areas. Large cattle owners were to establish commercial ranches in the remote areas. This measure was seen to be a means of protecting the rights of the small cattle farmer and increasing the capital returns for cattle farming in t commercial ranching areas. The T.G.L.P. proposed a specific zoning of land into commercial ranches, communal grazing lands and mixed farming areas, wild life areas and population catchment areas. Implicit within the last category is the realization of the inevitability of people being pushed off the land given

the internal contradictions of the T.G.L.P. Firstly, it is difficult to see how the establishment of large commercial ranches is compatible with successful communal ranch areas. Secondly, the cattle population pressure on the land is increasing and the excess of cattle in the communal areas will become worse contrary to government's desire to lessen the pressure in these areas. Pressure to establish commercial ranches will be considerable and because of the government's interest in securing quick returns within the cattle industry, priority will be given to these. Stocking limits are included in leases in commercial ranching areas. Excess cattle will concentrate even more in the communal areas. Despite concern for the severely destitute expressed in many government papers, the creation of commercial ranches out of tribal grazing land implies that people with no cattle forfeit their rights to this land. The policy is heavily loaded in favour of the large cattle owners who ultimately have economic power in Botswana. The contradictions within the policy fundamentally revolve around the democratic pretensions of the government (protection of the individual's traditional land rights) and the inability to sustain these, given the capitalist path it has taken in development programmes. On close examination, provision for the rural poor appears to be nothing but the potential creation of landless rural ghettoes, more euphemistically termed "population catchment areas". Let us examine in more detail the zoning of land as proposed in the T.G.L.P. so as to clarify why such a conclusion should be made.

4b(i) Zoning of Land Proposed in the T.G.L.P.

Commercial and Communal areas: Government definitions

'When an area has been designated Commercial, what the land board is basically saying is, this area has a comparatively low population density, is relatively good land for ranching, and already a number of cattle owners in this area would like to go commercial. When it has zoned a particular area Communal it is saying, this particular area has just far too many people living in it for one man or a few men to have exclusive

rights on the scale needed for ranching.'(37)

But, as has been shown, in practice the vague and apparently innocuous phrase "comparatively low population density", disguises the fact that people are living in these areas and are necessarily pushed off the land when commercial ranches are established. Hence the following circumlocutions where "communal" areas are regarded as being necessary within commercial areas.

> 'Ghanzi district ... gives us a clear example of what happens when no communal (i.e. unfenced, unleased) land is left within Commercial ranching areas. The Ghanzi block with its 200+ fenced farms was established some 20 years ago. At that time no planning of the area seems to have been undertaken beyond trying to squeeze in as many fenced farms as possible along the Ghanzi ridge ... The fact, for example, that some 5 000 Basarwa were using the area already and had done so for hundreds of years was ignored completely. Today we are paying for this lack of planning.'(38)

The proposed incorporation of communal areas within commercial areas is supposed to cater for these marginalized people. People pushed off the land are said to "need a piece of communal land on which to build schools, health posts and other services ... a place for people to make a small field of maize ... for them to graze their few livestock".(39)

Reviewing the commercial and communal areas, it seems that those people occupying communal areas are at a decided disadvantage compared to those in commercial areas in terms of overcrowding, overgrazing and shortage of land. The inevitable result of this is that some people cease to become farmers. It seems that the population catchment areas are designed for just such people.

> Population Catchment Areas: Government definition
>
> 'Population catchment areas will exist around existing population centres (the villages). Development within these areas will try to be the type that encourages

> community action, participation and approval. The areas to be included around these centres need to be defined in more specific terms ... It is felt that in defining these areas as areas of action it will be in keeping with the need to begin providing supplemented and alternative income and investment opportunities.'(40)

(Hereafter follows a list of small settlements in the Kgatleng which are suggested for this particular type of zoning. Most of these settlements are exceedingly poor, many people without cattle).

Given the excessive inequality of wealth in Botswana it is difficult to see how these population catchment areas can on their own generate alternative incomes for people. The provision of infrastructure alone in these areas is ultimately of no productive importance. There is a real danger of these so-called urban environments stagnating completely. Commercial ranching itself will generate very little employment. To conclude, the following government statement seems predominantly idealistic and tends to disguise the various class interests inherent in the T.G.L.P.

> 'If commercialization of ranches is to occur in Botswana, everyone must benefit, not just those who will be getting the ranches. One way of ensuring that everyone benefits from the development set in motion by the T.G.L.P. is to set aside areas of land where people can continue to pursue their traditional life ways (or develop alternative means of making a living). Careful attention is being paid within government to employment opportunities, the development of communal areas and the extension of social services."(41)

5. THE BAKGATLA'S ATTITUDE TO THE T.G.L.P.

The Kgatleng itself is a highly populated district. Most cattle owners belong to syndicates, meaning that they have communal rights to group water holes and grazing lands. Those who do not belong to syndicates are expected to pay a fee for the use of these water points. Water in rivers is accessible to all. However, in the winter months this

supply is often unreliable and so the poorest cattle owners are forced to pay a fee to group syndicates who control boreholes. In Koomoditshaba, for example, 20 thebe per head is paid each month by non-syndicate members(42).

Most cattle owners in the Kgatleng are opposed to the establishment of commercial ranching areas in this region because of shortage of land. Some are open to the concept of group ranching or the holding of group leases. It is interesting to explore the communication of the T.G.L.P. to farmers in the rural areas. Despite the government's intense efforts to communicate the contents of the T.G.L.P. to rural dwellers via radio programmes and other means, many people are without knowledge of its specific contents. Although most people in the Kgatleng are basically opposed to it because of shortage of land, the altruistic though somewhat misguided motives of the T.G.L.P. to assist the marginalized and landless, have met with conservative opposition from the farmers who control areas in which the marginalized live. These farmers are reluctant to part with the token patches of land required by the government for herdsmen. The conflict between these middle farmers and the herdsmen has its roots in the past as well. Many of these people were traditional serfs of the ruling tribes, many of them are of Basarwa or bushmen origin. But this is not only an ethnic problem since many non-Basarwa are being pushed off the land and manage to survive through herding cattle for owners. Let us firstly explore the Bakgatla's general rejection of the T.G.L.P. and then explore in more detail conflicts between cattle owners and their employees.

a) <u>The Bakgatla's General Rejection of the T.G.L.P.</u>

I would firstly like to examine a report on a typical kgotla meeting held on June 18th 1979, which was chaired by the deputy chief, P. Pilane, and addressed by B.K.

Temane, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Local Government and Lands. The meeting was held due to general resistance to the T.G.L.P. plan on the part of the community, a resistance which has continued. Perhaps the political machinations of the plan will best reveal themselves in quoting extensively from this report. Firstly, let us state that the government was anxious to see democratic decisions being made within the communities with regard to the land use plans or the zoning of different areas. The difficulty of this is amply illustrated in the following report and this difficulty already points to the emergence of antagonistic classes. In the end the reasons for the overwhelming rejection of the T.G.L.P. are given in the questions put to the secretary.

The Report

> 'The permanent secretary informed the kgotla that he had come to clarify points which people may not have clearly understood on the T.G.L.P. He had earlier been invited to a land board meeting to clarify the implications of the Kgatleng plan. He could not understand why it had taken so long to start implementing the land use plan. The Kgatleng land use plan was approved and some of the members of the district land use committee even came to affirm the approval of the plan by the tribe. He later learned that there were difficulties in implementing the land use plan but these claims were dispelled by the then chairman of the Land Board, Chief Linchwe II. He was then surprised to learn at the land board meeting that the tribe had not been consulted on the plan, if at all consulted, had not approved the plan. Some issues he had learned with concern were that some ethnic groups and people residing in small villages were not allowed to have residential and ploughlands in areas zoned in the land use plan as population catchment areas, syndicate groups which have shown an interest in ranches were either prevented or hindered from acquiring ranches. On ranches which have been mapped out in the land use plan, he informed the people that these ranches were not compulsory but it would be wrong to prevent those interested people from acquiring ranches.'
>
> (Note, the underlined passage is my emphasis)

Mr. Mokgwati, the man compiling the minutes of the meeting, then went on to say how the secretary had shown

how ranches had been zoned to the N.W. area of the Kgatleng and that people could enter into leasehold agreements with the Land Board. Those who had been reduced from 15 thebe to 4 thebe per hectare being applicable for 50 years.

Some of the questions asked at the meeting were as follows.

a. 'At the time of the T.G.L.P. consultation period the President of Botswana informed the people that as the Kgatleng was a small district, there would be no ranches. What has changed the situation now?'
b. 'Will it be democratic to allow interested groups of syndicates to acquire ranches when the majority of people are against the establishment of ranches in this district?'
c. 'With the increase of human population in the district where will these people have land for their livestock if ranches are to be established?'
d. 'Having recognized the scarcity of land in the Kgatleng, how can people interested in ranches acquire them in other districts?'

People's resistance to the establishment of ranches in the Kgatleng was ultimately so great that the government accepted their rejection. In a meeting I attended addressed by the late Seretse Khama prior to the 1979-80 elections, he unequivocally stated that ranches would not be established within the Kgatleng but that interested parties could apply in the larger districts for land. Prominent in the struggle against the establishment of ranches, even group ranches, is the middle farmer pitting himself against both the large farmer wanting to establish ranches and also against the totally impoverished or poor peasants in remote areas, those often working for a pittance for middle and large farmers; those w'o ostensibly, according to the T.G.L.P. will be afforded the minimum of social services,

access to schools, clinics and a token access to the land. It is the responses of these people to the T.G.L.P. which we shall now examine. We also explore the position of these people within the emerging class structure of Botswana to show how they are being progressively paralyzed by new relations of production and how their numbers are growing because of the process involved in these relations. Pinpointing the conflict which exists between these people and cattle owners in the rural areas, we are able to place the rejection of the T.G.L.P. by cattle owners in the Kgatleng in a broader context in which this rejection not only reveals their understanding of the threat which commercial ranches constitutes for the middle farmer but which also points to the fact that proposed government reforms regarding cattle post residents, are seen to threaten the owners' labour supply. In this particular instance, feudal relations have fused with capitalist relations in a particularly destructive manner for the landless class of rural dwellers. To reiterate the different strata within the remote areas, these are: (1) cattle owners (2) relatives of cattle owners having "mafisa" or loaned cattle (3) cattle post residents, most of whom are employed by one of the cattle owners and (4) a few self-employed living on cattle posts or in small village communities.

As has been stated in the above, our immediate aim is to examine the situation of the cattle post residents and their response to the T.G.L.P. which is different from that of the large and middle farmers. We shall also examine the response of those people living in small villages to the proposed population catchment areas.

5b(i) Cattle Post Residents (a description of life style)

Cattle post working families are subject to paternalistic relations by the cattle owners. Many of the families are of Basarwa descent, yet by no means all. Thus it is not accurate to concentrate primarily on the racial discrimin-

ation directed towards these people who were traditionally hunter-gatherers. As Jeanette Copperman writes,

> 'The Basarwa in the N.W. Kgatleng have been the focus of some concern. There exists a reluctance to grant them rights pertaining to every Motswana such as the right to land and there even exists some obstruction from allowing them to attend school. It is my impression that the Basarwa are not the only group who suffer from many of these problems. Cattle post residents and those living in less densely populated areas as a whole suffer many disabilities.'(43)

Working families live in relations of utter dependence on cattle post owners. Some residents continue to be paid in kind. Jeanette Copperman found that where they were paid a wage, herders in the Kgatleng received an average wage (cash) of P6.62 per month and that a large amount of income received was paid in kind(44). The estimated value of payments in kind and money was approximately P70.65 for a family of 7 per month which was 30% below the minimum subsistence level calculated in the rural income distribution survey(45). The largest part of workers' income is received in kind; gathered foods, free water, milk, firewood, bags of corn, old clothes and occasionally meat. In all cases drinking milk is seen to be a right. Women work primarily as domestic servants and are paid only in kind. Sometimes they work as seasonal workers and also brew beer for additional income. In two cases in Copperman's investigation of the Kgatleng, children had been taken to Mochudi as servants. The following statement by a mother of one of these children, evokes the particular sorrow of her daughter.

> 'Our daughter was taken to Mochudi to look after children and was given food and clothes, but when she had a child of her own, they sent the baby back to the cattle posts and would not let her keep it with her. She keeps asking me why she cannot come back to live at the cattle post with us.'(46)

5b(ii) Attitudes of Herdsmen to the T.G.L.P.

Fears expressed at the thought of losing jobs due to T.G.L.P. Policy

Some herdsmen expressed the anxiety of being evicted from their jobs if they were granted pieces of land on which to plough. Some felt that once they had been given a piece of land they would forfeit their traditional rights of gathering food and drinking the milk of the cattle owner. Thus, for example, with regard to people living at Netledi, Makgobokgobo, Dikhudu, Masuathaga, a joint land board and district council report stated the following,

> 'Almost all herdboys said though they had heard that the country is to be divided into farms they had no idea how this is to be done. They however expressed fear that they might be made redundant once cattle are kept in ranches, which means loss of employment (because not so many men are required to watch cattle in areas of free range), and benefits which they have enjoyed from their employers. Most of them do notapprove of the policy as they feel it will be a threat to their livelihood.'(47)

General Dissatisfaction with herding

Only in a few cases do harmonious relations exist between herders and cattle owners. Predominantly, herdsmen complain of low and irregular payment, lack of independence and unfair treatment. Cattle owners often rationalize their position by saying that herdsmen are unreliable and often steal goods. Many families, if they are able, attempt to seek alternatives to cattle herding since the job is the most poorly rewarded in Botswana. One self-employed man from Kgomodiatshaba expressed his frustration with cattle herding in the following way,

> 'I am finished with herding cattle. The pay is too little and after you have spent your time looking after the owner's cattle he wants to know why you lose his cows. We are just like cattle in the kraal.'(48)

Another man made the following statement,

> 'I worked for M for 3 years herding his cattle and looking after his livestock but I never received payment for my work. So, with the help of the councillor, I took my case to chief Linchwe who told M that he had to pay me. But M had already reported me for losing his pigs, his cows and his chickens. He claimed I had allowed his horses to fall into pits without ever informing him. M

therefore told the chief that he would not pay me until I had returned that which he claimed I had lost. Then his wife told chief Linchwe that I had reported these losses to her but that M had not come to the cattle post to do anything about the problem. Chief Linchwe awarded me P60. The cattle owner had given me P30 and I am still waiting for the other P30.' (This informant has since died of T.B) (49)

Demands for Land and Critique of Government

Despite the reservations of some herdsmen as described [illegible] the above concerning the T.G.L.P., many others [illegible]pressed the desire to have a piece of land of their [illegible] They welcomed the government's offer of land but [illegible] nevertheless sceptical as to whether these will materialize. Thus,

'The democratic party keeps telling us that we have a right to land. When the elections come, they pick us up in their tractors so that we will come to vote for them. But when will we see our land?'(50)
(cattle post herder -- Kgatleng)

'We need to have fields and homes of our own. It is no good if you are given land as a servant. You do the work of debushing it, you plough it for two months, then the master's son or daughter comes from Mochudi and the field will be taken away from you and given to them.'(51)
(herder -- Kgatleng)

'Need for ploughlands by the minority group which originated from Swapong. There is feeling among this minority that the government is not for the poor because they are denied the right to own land. It was stated since 1961 there has been no allocation of ploughlands, as it is said Ramatlabaki is a game and grazing area. The landless feel that the land-owners have influenced the land board to refuse them land ownership as they are not Bakgatla and they are poor. They also stated that they are being forced to work at the "masimo" (lands) of the land owners in order to get food. They feel they are being exploited.'(52)

c. Perceptions of Proposed Population Catchment Areas

The poorest people in remote villages are often worse off than cattle post residents(53). Brewing beer is one of the most important income-earning activities for female headed households in these villages. Many cattle post

women also brew beer. 'Parties" are thrown selling the powerful drink, Khadi, at 5 thebe a cup. Meat is also occasionally sold(54). Many people marooned within these small villages as well as the descendants of cattle post residents are dependent on migrant labour to the South African mines. Every cattle post family in the N.W. Kgatleng according to Copperman had one son at the mines. Responses to mine work indicated a dislike for the work but also its necessity for survival.

> 'We were treated well, the porridge even came out of a machine but it is dangerous. I do not want to go back.'
> and
> 'The money is good. That is why I go. I do not like it there.'(55)

THE CATTLE POST



Sleeping shelter for men and young boys at the cattle post



An elder hanging milk buckets to dry. This man mans a cattle post with the help of one young boy. Recall the shortage of labour in this field.



The cattle post kitchen



Author in cattle post kitchen



A visiting uncle helping to milk the cows



A young couple visiting their aged uncle at the cattle post

The offered alternative for redundant herdsmen to move into villages which are to be "transformed" into Population Catchment Areas with services provided is viewed negatively by most. Some people responded to the suggestion that they move to Artesia where they could have access to free water, ploughlands and village amenities in the following manner.

> 'If we go to Artesia we will stay drinking and our crops will be ruined.' --

a statement which reflects a realistic appraisal of activities in impoverished villages. People's marginalized position in these villages is misconstrued by land owners in the following way.

> 'Artesia people do not like to work, the parents and the children brew beer and sell it and then brew more beer.'

This overlooks the fact that ardent beer brewers have little choice in the matter since there exist no other employment opportunities in the villages.

5d. Potential Lines of Conflict in the Kgatleng

Hopefully the above has pointed to the potential conflicts within the rural population. Larger villages have distinct advantages over small villages, cattle owners over non-cattle owners, cattle owners over herdsmen. The more impoverished groups are becoming more and more isolated and marginalized. The following recorded conflict clearly shows that despite the T.G.L.P.'s humanitarian motives, it contains contradictions which elicit resistance from the emergent underprivileged classes which we have suggested in the above. The interests of the cattle owners and of herders cannot be so equitably incorporated within the total plan. Dominant trends despite resistance, seem to forecast that advantages of the T.G.L.P. will mainly fall to cattle owners rather than to non-owners and that the non-owners' landless and isolated position will only be exacerbated. Interest in the increased independence of cattle herdsmen and their families on the part of the government is in

direct conflict with cattle owners' interests.

> 'The relationship between farmers and herdboys is said to be strained owing to the frequent visits of the remote area dweller officer. It is alleged that the remote area dweller officer promised herdboys better employment, food, clothing, ploughlands and draught power. Literacy classes were started for herdboys. Some cattle owners alleged that since the promise herdboys have become uncontrollable and inefficient. Literacy classes keep them for some hours while they are supposed to be herding cattle. Cattle owners stated that this programme disrupted the routine of herding cattle. Herdboys, on the other hand, allege that cattle owners were made angry by the relationship between the R.A.D.O. (Remote Area Dwellers officer) and herdboys. Conflict has since erupted between cattle owners and herdboys. It was observed that as a result some of the herdboys had already lost their employment. Out of the five households affected, two had been changed into monthly paid employment and these were not allowed any other benefits like milk, sour milk and draught power. It was found out that the three that have lost employment have been replaced by Bakgatla herdboys.'(56)

The seriousness of withholding traditional privileges is realized when we recall the low wages in Botswana in general and especially in the rural areas.

6. STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN TRADITIONAL SUBSISTENCE FARMING: CRISIS IN AGRICULTURE

Structural changes in subsistence farming have heralded the emergence of the nuclear family as an economic unit among more wealthy peasants and the truncated family as an economic unit among poorer peasants. In the latter case the father is often away on migrant labour contracts and the women and children are involved in agricultural pursuits with wage labour penetrating even the agricultural sectors. With the destruction of the extended family as economic unit and the emergence of the nuclear family as economic unit, traditional divisions of labour have been disrupted precipitating the increasing marginality of women, since women are not so easily incorporated within the labour market.

It goes without saying that these trends manifest themselves with the simultaneous breakdown in economic co-operation between kinsmen. Instrumental in this breakdown of traditional co-operative relations is, as we have seen, the entrenchment of migrant labour in Botswana and the partial absorption of men within the labour market. These disruptions have severe consequences for the availability of labour in agricultural areas and this severe shortage has resulted in distinct changes in settlement patterns where individual farmers, especially the middle ranking farmer, as we have described him, have established fields near the cattle posts. This does not mean that traditional co-operative mechanisms are no longer operative. They are particularly important for the poorer members of society. However, where they do operate, their meaning is often different from their traditional one. These relations are often used ideologically to conceal exploitation. Where they do operate they are always in danger of being disrupted or distorted by individual economic interest. The above trends have resulted in the emergence of a particular stratification of the peasantry which we have suggested in the above where (1) some working in the agricultural sector are hired by cattle owners and are the most disadvantaged members of society and (2) where sons and daughters of cattle owners are no longer absorbed within the agricultural sector but because of the specific nature of their education and general economic forces, gravitate towards the towns and the modern sector and (3) where the middle farmers are hard pressed to rationalize their production because of shortage of labour and (4) where big farmers enjoy the most privileged position in the country.

To return to our main theme, let us examine the natural and technical, social and economic factors which have resulted in structural changes within traditional subsistence farming. Traditionally grazing lands and agricultural lands were located separately, the agricultural

lands being situated near the village. Due to the spatial separation of resources, a particular division of labour emerged within the household together with co-operative relations between households to articulate the two agricultural spheres, animal husbandry and crop production. The division of labour was as follows: cattle posts were shared by lineage segments, for example, father and sons or even brothers and sons. Their offspring provided a labour pool of young men based on kinship. This meant that the head of the household was seldom involved. Women were primarily involved in crop production, hoeing, weeding, scaring birds and harvesting. Men did heavy work such as clearing fields of trees and ploughing with cattle. Men were more mobile and moved between village, fields and cattle posts. Relatives and neighbours situated at the cattle posts assisted each other with ploughing. This ploughing was done on a rotational basis with neighbours and relatives sharing resources. All had equal access to cattle for ploughing and to milk. Thus, although cattle ownership has always been skewed there existed more equal access to cattle in the past.(57)

Natural and Technical Factors Contributing to Change

With increase in population growth, relatives were not so closely situated either within the village or in the spatial allocation of their fields. Movement away from the original agricultural areas resulted in a dispersion of agnatic kin. The introduction of the iron plough in 1920 had far-reaching consequences for the division of labour and amount of work undertaken. Men had to give assistance with ploughing, weeding and harvesting because of the increase in field size made possible by the plough. As a consequence, women stopped hoeing. Even when the wooden plough was in operation before the introduction of the iron plough, women would traditionally hoe half the field for planting. Increase in field size and in population resulted in the expansion of fields around the village with the consequence that cattle posts had to

move further afield. Cattle could no longer be watered near the village as in the past. In 1934 the colonial administration sank a number of boreholes. This period also witnessed the formation of the "syndicates" or groups of relatively wealthy people who pooled their resources in order to sink boreholes.

Social and Economic Factors

Migrant labour and wage income precipitated the following conflicts. Brothers would look after an absentee's cattle and would also plough his wife's field. According to traditional relations men were not paid for these tasks. No wage labour existed in Botswana itself and herdsmen and servants were paid in kind. Since money became a necessity for all, unpaid labour was resented as exploitation. With men being absent and the size of the field increasing, men were hard pressed to have everyone's field ploughed in time. As we have seen, men were quickly absorbed within the labour market and that by 1940,40% of able-bodied men were absent and working in South Africa. The need for cash in some instances was so great that grain was often sold indiscriminately. It is to be noted that the powers of the chief had been severely curtailed by the colonial administration. Despite this, people still gravitated towards the villages in the winter months where structural relations between ward members, headmen and chief continued to operate.

Today the traditional separation between pastoral and agricultural areas has broken down to some extent because of labour shortage, expansion of cultivated land and the breakdown in kinship co-operation. As we have indicated, the separate location of cattle posts depended on the division of labour and co-operation between men. For a long time the Bakgatla resisted educating their sons since they were needed at the cattle posts and they realized that this type of education would divert them from their

agricultural interests. Today the majority of young men are migrants and herdboys are difficult to find. Most young men also go to school because of the more immediate rewards located in modern sector employments. There is also little incentive for relatives to herd an uncle's cattle with the possible reward of one or two cattle after a number of years, given the comparative rewards of the migrant labour wage at the mines in South Africa.

Given the shortage of labour experienced by the middle ranking farmer it is not surprising that agricultural and cattle production are being concentrated in the same area. However, this concentration has led to the deterioration of the range.* Because cattle are situated around the fields, fences have to be constructed around them to protect the crops. These fences are invariably made out of thorn bush and thus have to be replenished every year. Attempting to introduce agricultural improvements is also time consuming. Many of these farmers therefore live permanently at their lands. Cattle, however, remain the main source of income for the rural areas. As we have seen 45% of the population own no cattle at all and those who own up to 50 head of cattle, 40% are in danger of losing their limited wealth as well, due to overgrazing and the possibilities of drought. Successful agricultural production itself is very difficult and has played only a supplementary role for most farmers. Yields usually fall well below subsistence requirements. Factors affecting the yield are cattle ownership and therefore access to cattle for ploughing, drought, exhaustion of the soil, shortage of labour due to migrant labour and poor agricultural methods because of delayed ploughing, broadcasting of seed and unwillingness to invest too much money in agriculture because of its supplementary role. With the difficulties encountered in the agricultural field, income derived from migrant labour is often more important. This has led Hoyt Alverson to write,

*Range means grassland

> 'For the vast majority of households the "welfare" value of the annual harvest in terms of kilojoules of energy, aesthetic gratification of unalienated labour, maintenance of the social group (e.g. household) vastly exceeds the harvest's exchange value.'(58)

Thus agriculture is not self-sustaining and therefore requires subsidization with wage labour and the sale of cattle.

Given the gross inequality in ownership of the means of production in Botswana today, it is not surprising that agriculture contributes very little to poor households, a great deal to medium income size households and a lesser amount to wealthy households(59). The irony involved in the greater importance of wage labour and hence migrant labour because of the paucity of jobs in the rural areas is that the poverty and fragility of agricultural production can on one level be attributed to the entrenchment of migrant labour. The seriousness of the increasing underdevelopment of the rural areas is adequately expressed in the following statement,

> 'Most serious is probably the fact that a dependence has been created on an external source of income at the cost of an independently acquired income within the village environment. The aspirations and energies of the young are not directed upon the village economy itself since it is not possible to see the immediate benefits thereof. Rather than learn how to farm properly most people prefer to acquire the skills and knowledge taught at school in the (usually vain) hope for a job in the urban areas or a higher wage at the mines.'(60)

As has been intimated in the other sections of this chapter the creation of developed and undeveloped areas in the country are, if anything, being encouraged by the government. The overall changes in settlement patterns due to the imbalanced concentration on urban development is as follows:

1. A sector of the population is staying for longer periods of time on the lands. In order to make

agriculture viable they concentrate their labour in an agricultural area and because of shortage of labour seldom go into the village.

2. On the other hand, some people are abandoning agriculture altogether and are going to live in towns and big villages.
3. People living in smaller villages move in a circulatory or one-way fashion to the towns looking for wage labour.
4. Generally there are more people living in towns and villages than ever before.

One of the most serious consequences of these trends has been the effect on some of the attitudes of many village people, especially the young, to village life and its relation to the cities. These consequences are of particular relevance to this thesis and will be discussed in the chapters which follow. Briefly, these reflect the isolation of the individual wage earner, and a distrust for all forms of co-operative endeavour. The insistence on immediate tangible rewards for any task undertaken, an individualism which passively relies on an external and dominant social order for income, a negation of agricultural tasks as being intrinsically boring and of low prestige.

7. General Conclusion

Botswana's development policy since independence has tended to ignore the urgent need for rural transformation. Those sectors of the economy which have developed, the mining and cattle sectors, are largely export-orientated and have not benefitted the majority of people, firstly because they have generated very little employment or productive relations within the country and secondly because cattle ownership is so highly skewed. To date the capital generated from mining has been largely used in expanding this sector and in urban development. As we have seen, the cattle industry itself is extremely

fragile because of possible fluctuations in overseas markets and the most severe consequences of drought. Little has been done to restructure agricultural production in the rural areas. Rather migrant labour in all its forms has been tacitly accepted. Nothing has been done to reabsorb migrants into the productive relations within the country itself. The population of Botswana has been estimated to reach 124 000 between 1978 and 1988. At present there are only 55 000 engaged in wage employment in Botswana. And the 50 000 or so employed in South Africa will slowly be pushed out of the labour market. Less than 10% of rural households grow sufficient crops to subsist(61). Given the stagnation of the rural areas, one cannot help but ask what is going to happen to the majority of people in Botswana? Already we have intimated the emergence of a class structure in which many people are destined for complete poverty and destitution. Assistance given to agricultural production is, to date, given to a small class of capitalist farmers(62). Contrary to government ideology and its concern with marginalized groups, class differences can only be exacerbated given current trends. A. Massey writes,

> 'A naive view of Botswana could lead one to assume that the government will encourage the creation of family-based, cash cropping, mixed farms as a solution. A more sophisticated view would recognize that the big farmers who are in political control will attempt to consolidate and expand their agricultural holdings, drawing on returning migrants as a cheap labour force. As this will only make a small dent in the employment problem, unemployment will inevitably grow and with it, political discontent.'(63)

Even if an extensive and sound agricultural development scheme was initiated a great deal would have to be done to combat the attitudes of the young which have in many ways rejected agricultural possibilities. The importance of the chapter to the rest of the thesis lies in the fact that it provides a background to the ideological struggles which I shall later explore. More

specifically, it suggests the emergence of class. It suggests polarization between rich cattle owners, middle ranking farmers and marginalized herders and women. Government policy has only tended to exacerbate these contradictions. Its liberal affectations are directly contradicted by material conditions. In a later chapter we shall see how these affectations are in fact criticized by certain villagers as being inappropriate to rural conditions.

CHAPTER 2

1. The Brigades were formed to provide practical training for primary school leavers. For an account of the Brigades see VAN RENSBURG,P. The Serowe Brigades, Alternative Education in Botswana. London: MacMillan, 1978.

2. For an account of this rejection, see pp.27-29.

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4. Rural Income Distribution Survey 1974/5. Gaberone: Government Printers, 1975.

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9. Ibid, p.105.

10. MASSEY,D. (1980), p.9.

11. Cited in COOPER,D. "National Migration Study; working paper no. 2." Gaberone: Government Printers, 1979, p.2. From SCHAPERA,I. (1947) p.70.

12. MASSEY,D. (1980), p.9.

13. MASSEY,D. (1980), p.5.

14. COOPER,D. (1979), p.6.

15. MASSEY,D. (1980), p.13.

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18. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.179.

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24. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.175.

25. Government of Botswana, Rural Income Distribution Survey. Gaberone: Government Printers, 1974, pp111, 223.

26. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.192.

27. MASSEY,D. (1980), pp10-11.

28. BUNDY,C. The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry. London: Heinemann, 1979, cited in BUNDY p.10, pp11-12.

29. SAUL,T.S., WOODS,R. "African Peasantries" in SHANIN,T.(ed), Peasants and Peasant Societies. Harmondsworth: 1971, p.104.

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1. LEYS,C. Underdevelopment in Kenya, the Political Economy of Neo-colonialism. London: Heinemann, 1975, pp.170-206; and GALESKI, cited in BUNDY (1979), p.101.

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37 & 38. WILY,L. "Detailed Planning within Commercial Areas". Ministry of Local Government and Lands, Kgatleng; Mochudi, 1978, p.1.

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42. COPPERMAN,J. "Interim Report on the N.W. of Kgatleng". Gaberone: Government Printers, 1977, p.3.

43. COPPERMAN,J. (1977), p.2.

44. Pula or Batswana currency is nearly equivalent in value to the South African Rand.

45. COPPERMAN,J. (1977), p.1.

46. Ibid, p.2.

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48. COPPERMAN,J. (1977), p.7.

49. Ibid, p.1.

50. Ibid, pp.3-4.

51. Ibid, pp.3-4.

52. Ministry of Agriculture. "Report on the Kgatleng First Development Area", p.25.

53. COPPERMAN,J. (1977), p.2.

54 & 55. Ibid, p.7.

56. Ministry of Agriculture. "Report on the Kgatleng First Development Area". pp.17-18.

57. For a more detailed account of these factors and structural change, see K. Knoijman's thesis, Social and Economic Change in a Tswana Village. University of the Witwatersrand, M.A. Thesis, 1978.

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CHAPTER 3

THE HISTORY OF THE BAKGATLA AS TOLD BY THE PEOPLE OF MOCHUDI

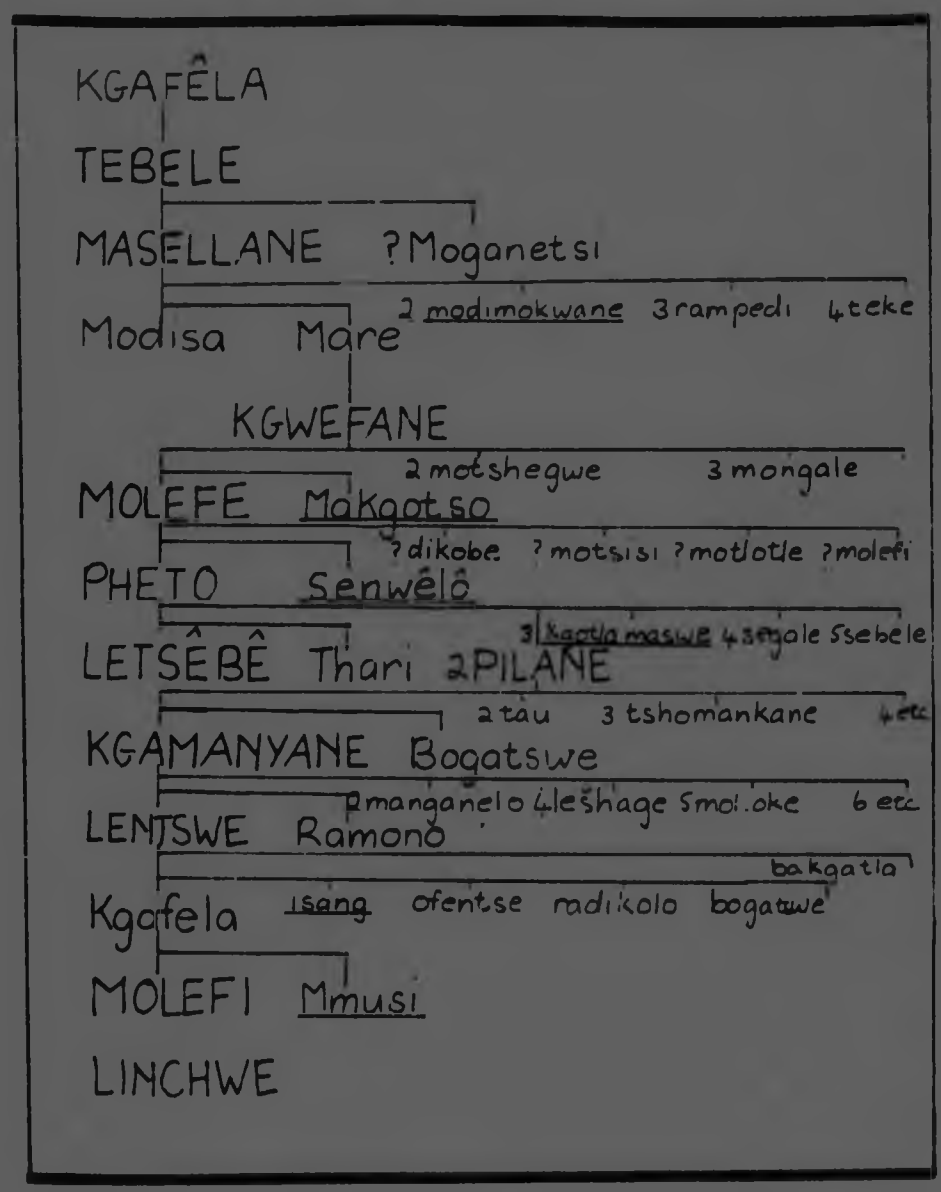
Section One. An overview of the history of the Bakgatla.

In this section, I give a summarized overview of Kgatla history based mainly on Schapera's work, A Short History of the Bakgatla-baga-Kgafêla of Bechuanaland Protectorate, School of African Studies, Cape Town Communications, 1942 ...
I have chosen those aspects of his account which illuminate the accounts of informants which are to follow. Although his work is based on oral testimonies it is important to remind ourselves of the particular historical circumstances in which he was writing. As colonial historian he undoubtedly stresses the "civilizing" influence of European culture and technology. Also his relative silence concerning Molefi's reign and demotion suggests certain political conflicts which had to be repressed at the time.

The Bakgatla baga-Kgafêla, the people of Mochudi, the Kgatleng and Rustenburg districts are one of the five different offshoots of the Bakgatla group of peoples. Today these groups occupy the central and western districts of the Transvaal and south eastern Botswana. At one time all groups were united under the rule of a single chief, Mokgatle, hence the term Bakgatla. The Bakgatla trace their origins even further back in claiming that they are an offshoot of the Bahurutse from whom they seceded under a leader named Malekeleke. In what is to follow, I shall give a brief overview of important chiefs' reigns up to the present chief's father's reign. Reference may be made to the accompanying genealogical

table of the Kgatla chiefs. Retu ning to Malekeleke, one of the earliest ancestors of the Bakgatla, we find that his grandson, Matshego, did not have a male heir in his great house. His great wife had given birth to a girl named Mosetlha. In the second house he had a son named Kgafêla. When Matshego died there was conflict concerning who should succeed to the chieftainship. Consequently the people split into two groups. The one followed Mosetlha since they claimed that she was the legitimate heir because she was the offspring of the great house, and the other followed Kgafêla, their rationale being that they refused to be ruled by a woman. This is how the Bakgatla baga Kgafêla derived their name. The genealogy of chiefs suggests that this took place towards the end of the seventeenth century or the beginning of the eighteenth century. The early history of the Bakgatla shares two basic attributes with all the other tribes in the Transvaal and to the North. All these people were forced to pay tribute to dominant groups. All groups were fissile and tended to split up into smaller autonomous ones which were led by contestants for the chieftaincy. People were absorbed into more dominant tribes because they were defeated or they sought protection there. As will be seen, although at certain times different groups fought against each other, they often became allies in different circumstances.

Genealogical Table of the Kgatla Chiefs(1)



This list is confined to the ruling dynasty of the Bakgatla-baKgafêla ... the names of full chiefs are given in CAPITALS, and those of acting chiefs or regents are underlined.
The sons of the great house are listed in order of rank, this being indicated by the number preceding each name. Some of the sons of the larger houses are omitted. For the minor houses, only the first son is named. If his rank is unknown his name is preceded by a question mark.

Returning to the original Kgafela, he and his people settled at Tsekane, east of the Crocodile River. Kgafela's grandson Masellane, settled at Molokwane at the junction of the Crocodile and Pienaar's Rivers. He and his people were forced to pay tribute to the Bathako. This claim to tribute was defiantly disregarded. During the chieftainship of Masellane's successor, Kgwefane, and Kgwefane's son, other tribes were absorbed within the Bakgatla-baga Kgafela group. This process was continued during Molefe's reign. After Molefe's death (±1790) his younger brother, Makgotso, became regent for Pheto, Molefe's son. Pheto quarrelled with Makgotso who consequently left his people and eventually went to stay with the Bakwena. The Bakwena chief, Legwale, was related to him in the maternal line. He persuaded Legwale to accompany him to Bakgatla territory with an army, saying that he had been driven away from home by his elder brother's son. At this time the Bakgatla were living at Sefikile (Spitskop), a hill to the north of Saulspoort. The Bakgatla defeated the Bakwena. Both Legwale and Makgotso remained captives of the Bakgatla for about a year. Subsequently they were both sent back to Molepolole, the Bakwena capital, with large herds of cattle.

Despite the fact that the Bakwena had fought against the Bakgatla, a subsequent chief of the Bakgatla, Letsebe, came to the Bakwena's aid when the latter had been severely defeated by the Bangwaketse(3). At this stage the Bakwena were poverty stricken. All their cattle had been captured and they were constantly subjected to various acts of intimidation on the part of the Bangwaketse. The Bakgatla were successful in capturing cattle for the Bakwena and as a reward Motswasele, the Bakwena chief, granted them access to a certain stretch of land if they ever required it. This land was claimed by the Bakgatla many years later. It is the land which they currently occupy. Senwelo, Letsebe's successor, was the regent Matlotlo. He came from a remote house and was not

considered to be a danger to the true heir's succession. However, he proved to be tyrannical and he killed all the brothers and nephews who stood between him and the chieftainship. The tribe began to scatter because of his cruelty. By chance, the heir, Pilane, escaped Motlotlo's attempt to murder him. With all the people scattered, Pilane became the servant of a Bakwena hunter. Together they dug game-pits along the Marico River. Pilane only revealed his true identity when some of his own people recognized him.

Motlotlo, on the other hand, was killed by his own people after the fragmentation of the tribe. During this time the Bakgatla lived as nomads on game and wild vegetable foods; they had lost all their cattle. When Pilane was restored to power the Bakgatla once again became united. This period also witnessed the emergence of trade links between the Bakgatla and other groups of people(4).

It is important to note that this trade marked the emergence of new economic relations among these peoples. At first, trade facilitated greater political and social control of tribes by royalists and by senior tribes since these were in control of the trading of skins, tusks and ostrich shells. However, these links, which initially proved to be lucrative, were disrupted when Mosel katse's armies entered the western Transvaal in 1825. The Bakgatla were still recently united and were too weak to offer any substantial resistance and consequently paid tribute to the Matabele in skins, corn and ivory. Pilane attempted a minor uprising against the Matabele with the help of the Griquas. He was forced to flee into exile because of this. His uncle, Molefe, established a much more equitable relationship with the Matabele. He was able to arrange Pilane's return. As is known, the Matabele domination over that part of the country did not last very long since it coincided with the arrival of the first missionaries in that region. Robert Moffat visited Moselekatse in 1829. By 1836 large parties of Voortrekkers began making

their way to the fertile plains north of the Vaal.

Moselekatse was forced to abandon the area and so he turned northwards to settle eventually in Zimbabwe. In 1839 the Boers founded a small settlement at the town which is today known as Rustenburg. This was in fact very close to where the Bakgatla were living at the time. By 1852 there were 20 000 Boers in the vicinity and by this time their independence beyond the Vaal River had been formally recognized by the British. Given this, the Boers claimed all Africans who lived north of the Vaal River to be their subjects. They forced these people to work for them. The Bakgatla, together with many other peoples, were forced to send both men and women to work on Boer farms(5).

The Boer farmers progressively encroached upon the land marking out large farms for themselves. The Bakgatla and others were forced into a position where they had to purchase land they were living on. In 1904 the Bakgatla informed the land commissioner of the Transvaal that Paul Kruger, who was then field cornet of the Rustenburg district, had forced them to buy land they were living on. They had on two different occasions given cattle for this very purpose and were only informed afterwards that this payment would be regarded as rent. The land was subsequently divided amongst white farmers since the President had decided against allowing blacks to purchase land. The Bakgatla were sorely pressed under these oppressive measures, specifically with the continual demands for labour. In 1869 their chief, Kgamanyane, was severely flogged by Paul Kruger because he had for some time refused to provide labour. The Bakwena, who lived in what was then called Bechuanaland, hearing of Kgamanyane's difficulties, had on several occasions offered the Bakgatla the land which they had been provisionally given so many years previously when they had assisted the Bakwena in defeating the Bangwaketse. Kgamanyane decided to take up

the offer in August of the same year. He left with a great many of his own people and it is said that his brother, Kgari, who was reputed to be a great rainmaker, ensured that heavy rains would obscure the path of their departure from the Boers. It is interesting to note that among those who remained behind, there were a handful of Christian converts. The Rev. H. Gonin of the Dutch Reformed Church came to settle among the Bakgatla in 1864(6). He too, together with Kgamanyane, had to purchase land on which to establish his mission.

Relations between the Boers and the Bakgatla were conflicted. The Bakgatla openly protested the demands made on them by refusing to send labour at times, by retrieving cattle when possible and by generally trying to resist their imposed servitude.

After they had left the Transvaal, they camped for a year at Tshwene-tshwene. They then founded their village Mochudi, on the banks of the Notwane River about 80 kilometres from Molepolole, the Bakwena capital. In the years that were to follow the Bakga la and the Bakwena came into severe conflict over the land issue. Sechele, the Bakwena chief, having heard that the Bakgatla were Boer subjects, was afraid that their presence in the area would imply that the land they were living on was Boer property. He therefore demanded that Kgamanyane's people pay him tribute in acknowledgement of the fact that the land belonged to the Bakwena. Tribute was never paid and the Bakgatla and the Bakwena began a war which chiefly involved cattle raids but which through time proved equally devastating for both parties since neither ploughed for fear of attack and pasture was severely damaged due to concentration of herds near the villages. It was frequently suggested that the Bakgatla be incorporated in the Transvaal, a suggestion which they generally opposed. At all times they sought to establish their independence both from Boer domination and from any

feudal obligations regarding the Bakwena. The ambivalence of the Bakgatla's position in terms of this was often used strategically to their advantage, for example, in 1878 when Lentswe, Kgamanyane's successor, received a declaration of war from Sechele, the Bakgatla missionary, Mr. Brink, immediately reported the matter to the Transvaal administration. (In 1877 the S.A. Republic was annexed by Great Britain). Following this, the Transvaal administration warned Sechele of the 'serious responsibilities' he would incur by attacking a people 'residing in the Transvaal'.(7) Sechele came to insist on the importance of settling the boundary question(8).

In 1881 the Transvaal was handed back to the Boers. At this time Chief Montshiwa of the Baralong at Mafeking, was disturbed by the number of filibusters entering his country and he appealed to all the chiefs to the north-west of the Transvaal to unite against a common enemy. Consequently hostilities between the Bakgatla and Bakwena at last came to an end. In the subsequent years, despite the fact that Sechele regarded the land which the Bakgatla occupied as his own and despite the fact that the British administration for quite some time regarded Lentswe as a subordinate chief, the Bakgatla continued to insist on their independence because they claimed they had established their right to the land through force.

During the initial years of the protectorate the Bakgatla were ambivalent in their dealings with both Boers and British alike. They attempted to maintain relative independence from both parties for as long as possible. But the rivalries between the colonial powers made it increasingly difficult to sustain.

Lentswe resisted British rule during the first decade of the protectorate. He, together with all the other tribes,

refused to accept the imposition of the hut tax in 1889(9). The following year the British retaliated by constructing a telegraph line through Lentswe's territory without his consent. His people resisted its construction by disrupting the work. This gained Lentswe a dubious reputation and when the Transvaal Republic approached the British administration for cession of the Bakoatla territory to them, the British at first seriously considered it. After some consideration, however, the High Commissioner at the Cape, Sir Henry Loch, refused the request since he considered the land between the Marico and Notwane Rivers to be a strategic route to the north (Matabele Land and Mashonaland). The rivers also constituted the most important water source in the Protectorate.

It is interesting to note that at this time the Bakoatla were well armed and a united group of people, ever on the alert for the possibility of Boer expansionism or Kwena attacks(10). In 1895 the British South African Company and the incorporation of large areas of the protectorate into its territory became a more alarming threat. During the 1880's Lentswe had sent a number of regiments to work on the Kimberley diamond mines to collect money to buy modern firearms and ammunition for the young men. Because the British were afraid of a Koatla uprising in the mid 1890's, they refused to recognize Lentswe's authority as a chief sharing equal status with other chiefs in the Protectorate. Lentswe became a convert to Christianity in 1892(11). His position as spiritual leader of the tribe and the linkage of this spirituality with all important activities in village life implied the necessary conversion of his people. He allowed the Dutch Reformed Church exclusive missionary rights. In 1895 Lentswe joined with Khama, Sechele and Bathoen in an attempt to avert a transfer to Rhodes' company rule. The latter three chiefs went to England to

ask for British protection. Although this was granted to their peoples, the company was able to negotiate with others, including the Bakgatla. However, when Jameson invaded the Transvaal in 1895, the British government immediately resumed the administration of all areas transferred to the company. Significantly, in exchange for protection, Lentswe and others agreed to pay hut tax and also to grant strips of land to the British for the construction of the railway line to "Southern Rhodesia". Apparently Lentswe was vehemently opposed to the railway line at first but once he had realized its inevitability and hispowerlessness to resist it, he himself and others joined in on its construction. The railway was built during the years 1896-7. These were also the years of the devastating rinderpest epidemic. In 1899, on the eve of the Boer War, the hut tax was officially imposed.

Both Boers and British attempted to keep Blacks out of the war. This, however, was far from what actually happened. Where Blacks did enter the war, an attempt was made to ensure their allegiance. In the Bechuanaland Protectorate, the British were without a significant number of troops and consequently they ordered all Tswana chiefs to protect their territories in the event of invasion(12). Barely two weeks after the fighting had begun, Lentswe was ordered to protect his reserve from imminent invasion. He was sent ammunition for the purpose but he returned it unopened, saying that he refused to fight a white man's war. However, some weeks later when the Boers had advanced through Mochudi in pursuit of the British and had, in the process, looted stores in Mochudi and at the railway station, Lentswe decided to enter the war on the side of the British. His earlier withdrawal was attributed to the presence of the Dutch Reformed missionaries, whose sympathies were assumed to lie with the Boers. They failed to see this refusal within the general context of resistance. When Lentswe

did enter the war it was largely with the persuasion of his brother Segale, who saw this as an opportunity for seeking revenge on the Boers for what had happened to Kgamanyane's people in the Transvaal. Segale suggested that the Kgatla together with the British attack the Boer encampment at Derdepoort. The Bakgatla were instructed to remain on the Protectorate side of the Marico River to provide covering fire while the British force attacked the camp. However, the British commander apparently ordered the Kgatla to climb and secure the ground across the river leading up to the encampment. The British, however, failed to join them and they retreated, leaving the Kgatla to extricate themselves from the situation as best they could. Fourteen Kgatla and twenty Boers died in the battle, and Kgatla "atrocities" were widely publicized since two Boer women died and seventeen women and children had been captured and handed over to the British. If we remember, before Kgamanyane had left the Transvaal, the Bakgatla had aided the Boers in fighting other tribes. While doing so, they had often captured women and children, handing them over to the Burghers who demanded their services(13).

The latent conflict between Boer and Mokgatla flared again. It was not long before rumours of harsh treatment of Bakgatla kinsmen in the Transvaal reached the Bakgatla at Mochudi. In the hostilities which followed, three of Lentswe's villages along the Marico River were destroyed by Boer commandos. He retaliated by raiding cattle from deserted Boer farms. His raiding parties penetrated deep into the Transvaal, sometimes as far as Pretoria. In February 1900, Lentswe and a party of men attacked a Boer supply line capturing six wagons of provisions. The British no longer insisted in the case of the Bakgatla that they remain inside the territory. The Bakgatla were permitted to defend their kinsmen in the Transvaal and recapture any of their raided cattle.

In 1901 an unsuccessful attack was made by the Boers

on Lentswe's boundary. Following this, the Boers made no further attempt to attack the Kgatla. The Kgatla cattle raids had been so successful that their herds were largely replenished following their depletion during the 1896 rinderpest epidemic. Neither were they required to return the cattle, although the Boers requested this. The war had consolidated their relationship with the British. They attempted to extend their territory to include their people living in the Transvaal. However, Milner refused to consider a boundary change since the Protectorate was perceived as being an African territory and it was out of the question that the Transvaal relinquish its settler colony status. Official recognition was granted to Lentswe as chief of his people in the Transvaal. Consequently, in 1903, he sent his brother to Saulspoort to act on his behalf as deputy.

Lentswe's conversion to Christianity in 1892 had significant consequences for many aspects of tribal life. For thirty years the Dutch Reformed missionary had lived among the Bakgatla to no avail. With Lentswe's conversion, however, Christianity became the official religion of the Bakgatla, primarily because of the importance of the chief as religious head of his people. Although two of Lentswe's brothers were Christians before his conversion, the majority of people were opposed to it. It was only after a huge meeting in which the issue was heatedly debated that he succeeded in getting his own way. As chief, Lentswe was the official rain-maker and played a central role in the economic welfare and affairs of the tribe by spiritually sanctioning and initiating all seasonal activities. He also intitiated and participated in the initiation of young men into age-regiments. With Lentswe's conversion all these ritual practices fell away. Lentswe also prohibited the payment of bride-wealth (bogadi) and polygamous marriage(14).

We know that as early as 1876 people were already

travelling to the Kimberley diamond mines to earn money for guns. By 1880 there were already 2 500 Batswana working on these mines (15). Lenstswe built a church at Mochudi in 1904 out of the money which the Makuka regiment earned on the industrial rand. This church is still standing today.

The missionaries were also responsible for the establishment of the first schools among the Bakgatla. The Bakgatla were always keenly interested in education. This did not prevent them from being critical of the type of education given to them in the early missionary schools. This type of education tended to emphasize religious instruction to the exclusion of more useful education. In kgotla meetings during Lentswe's rule, people discussed the necessity for better teachers and industrial training. One missionary of the period stated in relation to the Bakgatla's interest in education,

> 'Books and clothes have already become the fashion among the young kafirs, although unfortunately they become very conceited.' (16)

Perhaps this indicated the missionary's own resistance to the Bakgatla's demands for better education.

During the 1914 war volunteers from the Majanko, Mantwane and Makuka regiments joined the African Labour Corps. Some of these men went to South West Africa and others to Flanders

Soon after the first world war Lentswe's health became progressively worse. He had been deeply saddened by the death of his eldest son, Kgafela and by the death of 550 Bakgatla during the flu epidemic of 1918.

Isang, Kgafela's brother, took over the regency of the Bakgatla during Lentswe's illness. This was in the year 1920. He held the position for nine years after which Molefi, Kgafela's eldest son assumed the position as chief. Schapera writes that under Isang's rule, 'the

tribe made rapid progress towards civilization.'(17) Whatever ideological implications this statement may have, it seems clear that Isang attempted in an extremely energetic fashion to come to terms with this new "civilization" even if he, like many of his contemporaries, was unable to perceive that he could not fully participate in or benefit from it by attempting to acquire its skills, this being because, central to this "civilization's" modus operandi, were relations of power from which groups of people were necessarily excluded. He instituted energetic transformations in the fields of education, agriculture and animal husbandry. He also initiated a cultural revival by reappraising old customs and re-instituting some of them. Perhaps it would be most informative to cite his own words. The following extract comes from an address which Isang gave a teacher's training course held in Mochudi in 1931. In reading it, it is possible to see perhaps even between the lines, as it were, the extent to which this new "civilization" had created a situation in which traditional custom was negated. Important in this regard is that, during Lentswe's reign, the church took an intransigent stance regarding traditional practices, whereas during Isang's regency, the church co-operated with him in creating a "national religion" which allowed the incorporation of traditional ceremonies and customs. Isang writes,

> 'On October 5th 1920, the old chief became very ill and I became regent chief at the request of the people and the chief, who died in 1924. From the beginning of my chieftainship I aimed at securing for my people what I clearly saw they most needed. Those requirements and my measures for securing the same I attempted, summarizes as follows:
> 1. Christianity for their morals. I supported the church both financially and morally and did not allow other sects (i.e. other denominations or separatist African churches which often questioned the power of the chieftainship itself).
> 2. Education for their minds. I built schools and sent the best pupils away for further training; continually spoke about education at tribal meetings and established school committees even before the government took control. The new

national school at Mochudi was built by the tribe under my direction in 1921-23. (The funds for this school were also raised by a regiment).

3. Material advancement. I introduced better bulls and seeds, also double steel ploughs; encouraged building of better houses and helped people to find water with government aid. Found markets for their grain produce and cattle and controlled sale of kaffir corn to prevent famine; made laws to prevent my people from wasting money on unnecessary European clothes such as hats, silk stockings, etc; bought eight farms for the tribe in the Transvaal and prevented the denudation of timber; had three banking accounts for my people and did not allow them to contract debts; engaged a paid legal adviser in Mafeking to defend my people in law cases; laws to prevent young people from drinking kaffir beer.

4. Protection against unscrupulous Europeans. I gave no concessions or monopolies to European speculators; forbade the entry of Indian traders or poor whites in my territory, also the introduction of European liquor. Allowed no incompetent blacksmiths to work for my people.

5. National pride. I organized a National Patriotic Day; encouraged home industries such as pot making, plates and spoons; encouraged my people to speak pure sekgatla; tried to retain good old native customs in co-operation with the church by removing objectionable features (bogadi, bridewealth; go botha monhato, initiation; and formation of age regiments, are not now objected to by the mission); forbade my people to beg even at railway lines or stations.'(18)

Examining the above, we are able to see that the Bakgatla were at this time fully incorporated within the cash economy. They had encountered some of the most immediate effects of the initial stages of colonialism, in the form of:

1. A new religion which negated traditional life in its totality.
2. The possibility of famine due to new economic relations where grain was sold for cash.
3. An influx of traders and other adventurers who secured monopolies and concessions, the consequences of which were realized only in time.
4. Cultural amputation which affected language itself since words from European languages were incorporated

in large numbers into the Sekgatla dialect.

From the above we conclude that certain steps were taken in an attempt to reverse or rather, to keep these effects at bay. Needless to say, none of these measures is in operation today. People are unable to control prices of goods. Indian traders have good contacts with the people in South Africa and are sometimes able to charge lower prices than local shop owners. Brewing of beer is prevalent, especially among impoverished women, since it constitutes one of the few ways in which money circulates within the informal sector. The prevalent drinking of beer reinforces the ethic amongst migrants that time spent in the village should be dedicated to leisure and little interest is taken in other village activities. Even in good years grain is often sold to pay for the next year's ploughing, with the consequence that people often go hungry. The above extract reveals that Isang early perceived the importance of South Africa as a market and he thought that he would be able to compete with it or enter it effectively by selling cash crops and cattle there. Another address delivered by Isang to the Bantu Studies Circle of the University of the Witwatersrand in 1933 is fascinating in its connotations(19). It reveals a declared appreciation of the so-called merits of this new "civilization", a faith in the notion of progress and with it a certain r gation of the past. There is also the realization that in the past the Bakgatla were able to live in relative independence. Isang also recognizes certain unproductive ways in which this new civilization has been appropriated by members of the community. What Isang erroneously believes is that through adopting the right methods, the Kgatla would be able to compete with South African market and that education would be the key to the general prosperity of all. Also implicit in this address is the realization that this "new phenomenon" has come irrevocably to stay, that it is all powerful in its transformatory effects,

that it is dominant and is bound indisputably with the very life of the village.

Isang chose to generate understanding of new social relations through education. The building of the first primary school by the Bakgatla constituted a symbolic rejection of the missionary education which the Bakgatla were being subjected to up till this time. The school represented the desire to control their own education, to rid it of religious influence and to diversify it.

Industrial growth in South Africa is seen by Isang to directly affect the very life of the tribe. An example is made by Isang of the 80% cattle embargo placed on Tswana cattle at this time. He thought that the way to counteract this trend and others was to adopt the white man's methods in agriculture and animal husbandry and emphasis is placed on acquiring labour-saving devices in these fields to assist productivity and to release young people for schooling. The extraneous accumulation of prestigious but essentially unproductive commodities is condemned. Thus:

> 'I found the double furrow plough of advantage and a time saver as well as the improved steel single furrow plough, instead of the wooden beam that held the field and almost became an institution. Perhaps my education had some influence on the search for time savers to relieve the young generation as much as possible from field and other work in order to give them some more time for school. Anyway I considered it of great importance to increase the acreage under cultivation, and made as much propaganda as possible to popularize the double furrow plough. Civilization held out a great attraction to a good many people in the shape of double beds -- especially to those young men working in or returning from Johannesburg after work. More often than not, they were followed by this symbol of civilization, although very often these beds are used as ornaments only. It might have been going a little too far, but I decided to try to change the double bed for a double furrow plough. I accordingly held a meeting at Krugersdorp attended by my people there working on the Rand, and pointed out the necessity of agricultural implements, as well as

> the anomaly of having a square bed in a round hut, and as a result I think I am quite safe in saying that the Bakgatla possess more double furrow ploughs than many a tribe with double or even treble its population.'(20)

Many of these brass beds may still be seen today, only in different circumstances. Their fronts and backs are more "functionally" used as gates at the entrances of courtyards (malapa). Their prestigious value as commodities has decreased over time, although ironically they are more readily visible to the public eye today than they ever were inside the private interior of the hut. Throughout the address the spectre of migrant labour is never adequately dealt with, although it is obvious that these sought-after commodities of whatever kind are chiefly acquired through the wage labour of men in the union.

If Isang's regency represented a concerted and enthusiastic effort to come to terms with new social and economic forces, Molefi's reign witnessed the frustration of these efforts. Perhaps this was because the intransigent and domineering aspects of new forces began to make themselves felt. It was no longer easy to conceive of the possibility of tribal autonomy through innovation of methods. Molefi not only began to experience the structural necessity of Botswana's position as a satellite of South Africa, but he also experienced the increasing monitoring of chiefly power by administrative legislation. This is not to say that Molefi consciously realized the nature of Botswana's position within the total Southern African context, but certainly many of his actions indicate a disillusionment with the ways of the white man and the interference of missionaries and traders.

Molefi was singled out by the administration as being an irresponsible chief although today, as we shall see, many villagers recall him in favourable terms. Perhaps

the idiosyncrasies of his reign should be seen within the context of the changing nature of chieftainship itself, although many of the obsessive quarrels in which he involved himself were personal. It was during Molefi's reign that the chiefs first began to experience the restrictive effects of government administration on the powers of the chief. It is important to note that with the introduction of the cash economy the nature of the chieftainship changed initially due, not to administrative legislation, but rather due to these economic forces. The chiefs were responsible for the collection of hut tax for government revenue for which they received 10% commission(21). This money and the money extracted from other tribal levies was often used by the chiefs to pay personal debts or for personal gain. The concentration of private property in their hands due to changes in the economy often gave them autocratic powers. Consequently, in the 1930's, the British introduced important legislation which seriously regulated the authority of the chiefs for the first time. Colclough and McCarthy write,

> 'It was well known that the chiefs were often very rich, and that they had profited greatly (and lawfully) from their tax collection activities on behalf of the administration. But in addition, the chiefs were also able on occasion to exploit their position of influence to pursue their personal gain rather than that of the tribe as a whole. In some tribes, for example, it was not unknown for the proceeds of fines imposed in the kgotla, of levies, rents and mining subsidies to be absorbed into the personal income of the chief. Equally there are examples of the ancient practice of calling out regimental tribal labour for public works being misused by the chiefs. Although there were broader international reasons which prompted a reassessment of Britain's role in the colonies at the time, these were the main domestic issues which led to the introduction of administrative reforms in the protectorate.'(21)

Interesting in this context is Kooijman's observation on the relationship between the emergence of private

property and a change in values relating to status. She writes,

> 'After the introduction of the cash economy privilege tended to become a source of personal gain. Cattle and crops came to be considered as assets which could be converted into cash, and cash was required to buy all the material goods which according to western values are imperative for a person of high status. The acquisition of many varied possessions rather than munificence has become the mark of high status.'(22)

She goes on to recall the fact that chief Molefi had five motor cars and that in his praise poem, reference is made to his greediness and the fact that he did not share prime beasts with his people. Chiefs at this time no longer felt obligated to share food with their people. The reciprocity between people and chief was breaking down; people no longer entered into tributary relations with the chief and chiefs no longer shared food with the destitute.

New legislation regarding the chiefs instituted during the mid-1930's, enabled the administration to suspend chiefs who, according to them, were not carrying out their duties "adequately". Chiefs could no longer impose levies on the tribe without the people's agreement and without the written approval of the Resident commissioner. "Councillors" were nominated to assist the chief. Chiefs were obliged to carry out lawful orders given by the commissioner. Also the judicial powers of the chiefs were curbed in that appeals against verdicts of tribal courts could be made to courts set up by the government.

After Molefi came to the chieftainship, it was not long before he and Isang began to quarrel seriously. For many years they were involved in disputes concerning the inheritance. Molefi claimed that Isang had appropriated some assets which were rightfully his. This argument resulted in Isang being banished for six months to his

cattle post and having to pay a fine for being disrespectful towards the chief.

Isang had also objected to Molefi's neglect of tribal affairs. He was very often drunk and he frequently absented himself from the village. Consequently a number of "guardians" were appointed to the Chief who accompanied him and assisted him in his duties. Molefi also began a protracted feud with the local missionary. Molefi also came into conflict with the Administration in persisting in exacting a tribal levy which the Administration had instructed him to suspend. It is obvious that many of Molefi's anarchic actions were in response to his frustrated powers. In 1935 a Tribal Trust Deed was drawn up which controlled the administration of tribal funds, curbing the chief's access to these. These funds, which included traders' stand rents, hut tax, commission levies and fines, were totally controlled and handled by the chief prior to this legislation. Schapera writes,

> (The Tribal Trust Deed) 'provided for the control of all tribal funds by a board of 7 trustees, comprising the District Commissioner as chairman, the chief, four members elected by the tribe and a treasurer appointed by the tribe, and it stipulated that these funds were to be used in specified ways to meet the cost of developmental works and tribal administration, including the payment of an annual salary to the chief.'(23)

Towards the end of 1935 Molefi instituted what was described by the Administration as a "mild reign of terror", the [illegible] targets being the church and the education authorities. He had the school supervisor beaten up and church services and concerts held in the church disrupted.

Molefi was eventually suspended from the chieftainship in 1935. Despite this he managed to exert considerable influence within the community, making his young brother's task as chief extremely difficult. Consequently he was

banished from the community in 1937.

Merely describing these events tells us nothing of their real meaning, what kind of opposition they actually constituted and what their ideological significance was. Unfortunately, Schapera is particularly evasive with regard to this issue and people today are loath to talk extensively about the present chief's father, other than explaining his actions in vague terms. It seems certain that, despite Molefi's apparent neglect of his people, many of them supported him. They formed themselves into a group called the "Ipilegeng" which attempted to reinstate him as chief. Opposition to the Ipelegeng only increased its popularity. These people later became members of the African Church of Zion. It seems to me that much of Molefi's behaviour implied a frustration with new developments and perhaps much of the support which he enjoyed was due to the fact that people also experienced the fundamental transformations in their lives due to the effects of religion, legislation, education and the cash economy. In some ways, Molefi's violent interventions in the community must be seen in the context of opposition to these changes, though an opposition not without contradictions since the colonial authorities which sought to curtail the powers of the chief through legislation had, in former years, inadvertently set up the conditions for the ossification of autocratic powers in the chieftainship. It is thus unclear whether Molefi's rebellion constituted frustration about the curtailment of extended autocratic powers or whether it reflected a frustration with the changes which colonialism brought to his people as a whole.

Section Two. The past as it is appropriated by people today.

a) Introduction: different kinds of oral tradition

In this section we try to show how appropriations of the past are always guided by interest specifically(24), interest which arises from class and(25) interest which arises from the desire to approximate the ways of the cultural other or the ways of "Sekgoa". Thus,

> 'The (verbal testimony of the informant) includes not only the referent -- the tradition or traditions that are being related -- but also the personal additions made to it by the informant.'(24)

It is these peronal additions which primarily reveal current interest. In this exploration of history as related by the people themselves, most of the material is drawn from oral tradition. Jan Vansina makes the useful distinction between "fixed forms" and "free forms" of the oral testimony. Fixed forms, precisely because they are learnt by heart and transmitted as they stand and their accuracy assured by methods and sanctions applied to their transmission, reflect ideals current at the time the text was initially formulated(25). Free forms, however, indicate an "internal structure" which belongs to tradition with the words being generated by the informant. Free oral forms thus indicate ideals within the present. In incorporating the notion of the ideal, Vansina points to the exemplary function which history performs in many societies, so that the past becomes distorted into providing examples of ideal types. More specifically Vansina writes,

> 'The testimony is always a communication of some kind, and an informant only communicates something which he thinks will be of interest to his listeners because he knows where their centre of interest lies, since they are those of a society as a whole. The spirit of the times and the cultural values of the society will determine what things are regarded as important.'(26)

Within this context it is the free form pertaining to oral tradition which enabled mediation between past and

current preoccupations and which proved most rewarding in disclosing how the past is meaningfully integrated within the present either by negating it or using it as a critique of aspects of current reality. The appropriation of the past within the testimony then, simultaneously reveals the nature of the present and the past.

> 'Every distortion is in itself a piece of documentary evidence, either about the past, or about present day society.'(27)

The oral testimony, then, not only discloses the persistence of traditional values, but also the particular interest of the informant as such. Vansina describes the testimony or the active intellectual appropriation of history for posterity as constituting a "mirage of reality".

> 'A testimony is no more than a mirage of the reality it describes. The initial informant in an oral tradition gives either consciously or unconsciously, a distorted account of what has really happened, because he sees only some aspects of it, and places his own interpretation on what he has seen. His testimony is stamped by his own personality, coloured by his private interests, and set within the framework of reference provided by the cultural values of the society he belongs to. This initial testimony then undergoes alterations and distortions at the hands of all the other informants in the chain of transmission, down to and including the very last one, all of them being influenced by the same factors as the first. Their private interests and the interest of the society they belong to, "cultural values of that society and their own individual personalities".'(28)

and he sagely guards against scientistic interpretations of tradition in stressing the following,

> '(It is) important ... that the historian should not regard himself as a detective who is out to find the right answer from a large number of false clues, but simply as someone who is trying to disentangle which aspect of reality relates to various elements of which a testimony is composed and the distortions a testimony contains can be just as revealing about past situations and events as an undistorted account.'(29)

In the appropriations of the past which are to follow, we are not so interested in the truth validity of these

appropriations but rather we are interested in the way in which these appropriations reflect present social relations and their ideological justifications.

b) Four different appropriations of the past in Nachudi village

In this section I wish firstly to describe in brief the characteristics of the four appropriation types as I have identified them; these being 1) the alienated appropriation, 2) the traditional appropriation, 3) the expatriate, or "objective" appropriation, and 4) the government appropriation. Having given a brief account of the qualitative nature of these appropriations I shall expand on the first three by substantiating them through reference to informants' accounts. I have chosen to omit a further exploration of the government appropriation of the past since these notions will be implicitly suggested in the following chapter as well as in the chapter concerning the conflict between young and old which contains a section on education.

It is important to note that these explorations are essentially qualitative and cannot be easily linked to any one class. It must be said in passing, however, that the attempts to purge oneself of traditional attributes as evidenced in the alienated appropriation is often associated with the economic elite. Teachers, for example, may be predominantly associated with this view, but at the same time many young people of all classes who have attended school also espouse these ideas.

Four different appropriations of the past

i) The emergence of an alienated conception of the past. This appropriation is prevalent among people who seek to emulate the economic elite as well as amongst the economic elite itself, which attempts to purge itself of traditional values. The purpose of this appropriation

is to discard the past or to find within it acceptable evidence of modern "civilization". This implies an antiquarian interest in history. I use the term antiquarian in an attempt to evoke the distance which such an interest creates between the past and its present appropriation. The antiquarian interest, as we shall see, implies a distinct lack of knowledge of the particularity of the past aiming to fetishize particular historical objects into a-historical, essentialist objectifications of a hypostatized "civilization". This appropriation of the past masquerades as genuine knowledge of it and simultaneously represents the desire to purge the present of certain tenacious aspects of traditional values. Treating history in an antiquarian way as something hidden from view to be re-appropriated, ironically indicates conscious suppression of knowledge of the past. One then re-approaches history with a so-called scientific interest and the desire to uncover so-called "neutral" historical objects. The neutrality of this approach is given the lie when we disclose the simultaneous identification of people who perpetuate this appropriation, with an absolutization of values propagated by the cultural other in the colonial situation, i.e. with discriminatory values arising out of a predatory colonial situation. This leads to the condemnation of the past as being without tangible civilization. All traditional artifacts, whether tangible or ideological in nature become tainted. Industrial civilization awesomely indicates the inexcusable absence of its innovations in the past.

ii) <u>Appropriations which confirm traditional concepts of the past</u>.

This particular appropriation in opposition to the above, strives to maintain links between the past and the present and attempts to perpetuate traditional values using these as a critique of aspects of current reality. Thus a virile normative connection is made

between the past and the present in this appropriation. Evoking history in this manner is to make it of immediate relevance to the present. Thus history does not recede but rather lives on in current appropriations. Appropriation of the past in this instance is a celebration of cultural values. The nature of this appropriation as well as the previous one, is made clearer when we situate them within the framework of neo-colonial social and economic relations. Here the presence of the "cultural other" has to be confronted, either through approximation or negation. Vansina contrasts these two kinds of appropriation in the following way: In the first instance,

> 'When informants show little interest in the traditions they know the testimony of the final informant will be affected by certain aspects of acculturation, which can be detected when note is taken of the informant's attitude towards the tradition he knows. In some instances informants will ascribe no importance to them. In the Congo it is usual to find nowadays that those who have had traditions handed down to them are strongly influenced by European civilization, and are ashamed to recite the traditions they know because they find them childish.
>
> When a fieldworker asks (such a person) to testify, he will try to carry out the task as speedily as possible and will omit certain details he regards as "childish", and abbreviate his account as much as he can.'(30)

In the second instance,

> 'An attitude quite the reverse is also to be found. An informant may be deeply interested in the traditions of his people. He may, on his own initiative, collect a number of traditions, combine them, and draw from them his own view of the past history of his tribe. His testimony will then be coloured throughout by the view he has arrived at.'(31)

Contrasting these first two appropriations we see that the past as related by the older people of Mochudi with predictable circularity has direct relevance for present social life. It is situated within the framework of the moral life in which traditional authorities are legitimized. Particular idiosyncrasies of chiefs, although

known are not so important as the fact that they operated within the precincts of what was socially acceptable. This is not to say that detailed knowledge does not exist concerning the past and important individuals. However, this specialized knowledge is the privilege of the few. Everywhere where this knowledge does exist, frequent intimations of a philosophical and normative nature are made within a specific account. Illustrative of the way in which history is perceived by the elderly, especially elderly women, is the fact that when I asked women to tell me about the past (bogologolo), they invariably responded, 'Ah, you want to know of our toms, the way we lived before, the way we would like live today.' Political events, social change, power ...les within the chieftainship were not isolated ... matrix of everyday life with its specific ...opri..ty. In fact, such factors were often omitted with the emphasis being placed on an essentially static rende..ing of the "good life", humanity or "botho", a life centred around the village, the cattle posts and the lands. Significantly others did not share this view of history. These were mostly educated people, teachers and others who espoused an ostensibly more "western" view of it. The past, or at least what is deemed to be the historical past, becomes anachronistic. It is no longer of any real moral or social importance, the emphasis being, 'this is the way we lived before. We no longer live in this manner'. There is the concealed desire in certain situations to purge themselves of the past.

iii) Government appropriations of the past particularly in the schools.

The government version of history as portrayed in history books conceals the secret desire to vacate the past in order to enter the "modern world". The motor force of this vacation is "development". Schematic rendering of history is evidenced in history books which parallels

the first appropriation's suppression of knowledge o
the past. But government versions are ambivalent about the past because they seek, on the one hand, to maintain a vaguely defined national pride in the past, but they simultaneously emphasize civilizing influences, for example, conversion to Christianity.

iv) The objective appropriation: the rendering of history in the Mochudi museum.

This version of history indicates the attempt to give an "objective" rendering of the past. Given the perceived disappearance of knowledge of the past, this appropriation indicates the desire to bring back the 'true history" of the village to the community. There is, for example, the desire to uncover what actually happened during certain chiefs' reigns. Even though the attempt to resurrect forgotten aspects of history may be valuable, the unconscious and supposedly neutral method used to convey history is read as a meaningful text by traditional observers.



Wooden bowls and basket work housed in the Mochudi museum. Note the British flag. People prefer to see cultural objects in use in the home rather than housed in a museum which some claim is a type of graveyard.



A collection of clay pots housed inside the museum. The centre pot is used for brewing beer and is still to be found in the village. Note the gourds on the left-hand side of the photograph. These are called dipafana and are used as containers for drinking "bojalwa" or traditional beer.

c) People's particular responses

i) The alienated appropriation

It is people who uphold this appropriation who, when you ask them to relate their history, will lead one to an historical "site", for example, a burial ground of chiefs or a place situated at a little distance from the village where they will show one the footprints of the first human being in the region, or the Dutch Reformed Church built during Isang's regency. Apart from these historical objects they say they have no history. Historical objects in this sense come to constitute a historical vocabulary precisely because they are appropriated ideologically as symbols of so-called civilization. Preoccupation with such objects becomes an indication of the degree to which white concepts of civilization and of history have been internalized by groups of people within the village. History is then only present within the durable historical artifact. Oral history itself loses its importance and ironically the historical artifact becomes fetishized. The specific irony entailed in this appropriation is that the object is stripped of its historical content and is in this state, elevated. These objects are elevated because of an attributed a-historical essence as it were. This being, that they are materially visible, they are prestigious, they are commodities. As suggested, no attempt is made to situate them within a historical context.

Of interest is the specific way in which these "sites" were presented to me. The "footprints" are a geological site in which large foot-like depressions are located on the surface of a specific outpouring of rock. The myth surrounding these footprints is that in ancient times, when the rocks were soft, the first man emerged from them and walked over them, having been forced out

of the ground by the gods from under the earth. His footprints are preserved in the rock together with the tracks of an ox cart. The "alienated" interpretation of these footprints as a site indicated the conception that such a site would impress me as a white because it was 1) a geological formation and 2) because of its link with a myth of origin. The myth of origin acquires status not because of its content but because it is an example of myths in general and is therefore regarded as a curious anachronism from the past. Invariably when I approached these people with questions about their past they asked me, without my soliciting it, whether I had seen the footprints. It was in the very nature of this question that I came to perceive that they related to their past as a collector relates to a field of objects which he has extracted from their social context. Given this specific appropriation, historical incidents lose their power to affect those living in the present. It is in this way that the past becomes anachronistic. Interest in it is directed out of curiosity, a curiosity which creates a distance between the student of history and the past.

The burial ground of the chiefs is not only interesting in the light of this fetishization, but it also constitutes a visual relic of this process in the past. It marks the transition from the burial of the chiefs in the main cattle kraal adjoining the chief's "kgotla" or meeting place, to the burial of chiefs in a formally constituted graveyard. This move was affected under pressure from the British administration. Returning to an examination of the ideological implication of the burial ground of the chiefs and royalty, the ground is interesting structurally since early graves are unmarked whereas later ones have elaborate headstones. Older people are able to identify unmarked graves whereas younger people are unable to do so. The elaborate headstones date from the early history of the village

reflecting not only the close ties which the Bakgatla had with the Boers from the mid-nineteenth century even before they arrived in Botswana, but also their early interest in education, mastery of the written word, the early conversion to Christianity(32). These historical "acquisitions", for want of a better word, are of cultural and ideological significance and their full contextual meaning can only be seen within the context of colonial confrontation. Elaborate gravestones in this context become displays of skill acquired in the so-called mastery of a new and predatory culture. Precisely because this other culture is predatory, a negative self-concept is internalized by the villager. What is important is that these gravestones are not erected for the benefit of the white outsider but for the internalized other within the community as such. So even today, it is the size of the monuments together with their inscriptions which are impressed upon one as a white outsider by those who favour the alienated appropriation of the past. It is these people who become watch-dogs of instances of so-called"civilization" within the village community and who religiously reinforce notions of elitism and paternalistic authority in the schools, administrative offices and community at large. The conviction that people in authority know more than others is perpetrated, which is often the case in the sense that a certain kind of knowledge conceals a coercive interest and is used to dominate and control others. The monopolization of technical knowledge and other by expatriate volunteers in Botswana is a case in point. The naturalist conception of knowledge necessarily being monopolized authoritarianly by a few is a direct reflection of the ideological and cultural relation between the colonist and colonized. Commodities, good fortune, salvation and prestige become the exclusive property of those in power.

Although Botswana was never a colony in the true sense

of the word, its position as labour reserve and protectorate has not been without similar ideological consequences. In the light of new concepts of status which necessarily imply conflict between those who, by virtue of their position within power relations are seen to possess status, and those who do not, the verbal inscription on the grave of a chief is prestigious because it excludes the illiterate, and it is this exclusion which becomes co-terminous with legitimacy. The way in which judges at a beauty contest which I was invited to attend are made to drink tea in china cups and eat biscuits laid out on a table in front of all the school children, indicates their distance from and hence authority over the children. The following oppositions become necessary in the context of an ideologically hypostatized status quo; knowledge, ignorance, "civilization", "barbarism", authority, subjection. As we have seen in the introductory chapter these contradictions are part of the very fabric of the social formation and are reflected in the effects of government policy in both economic policy and education.

Perhaps all that I have been trying to convey in terms of the emergence of an appropriation which negates the past or treats it anachronistically and which appropriates western cultural phenomena in an authoritarian fashion is succinctly expressed in the following anecdote. A teacher who walked home with me after I had been called upon to help judge the beauty contest which I mentioned above, told me the story of a woman whom she described as "thoughtful". This woman had suggested to her that most new things in the community originated with whites, even though at a later stage the people forgot the fact that the idea had been imported and they took it to be their own, i.e. of Setswana origin. This did not indicate a critical conviction that people were unaware of concealed colonial and other influences in their lives, but it implied that people were not

sufficiently aware of the true innovative source in their lives. In the teacher's own words then,

> 'Before Mochudi was so developed with a railway line to the north joined to the Cape and stretching northwards, there were very few transport links. In those days even the whites travelled in carts, or rather they were the first to introduce carts. In those days a road passed somewhere through the village close to where we are standing now. The woman whom I told you about told me that this area, Mosanteng, must have got its name in the following way. The first part of Mosanteng sounds like "more sand", if you think about it. Now my friend could only think from this that an Englishman passing through here on a wagon must have said that there was more sand here than in other places. After that, the people in the village called the area Mosanteng, adding the "eng" thinking that they had invented the word.'(33)

This story indirectly reflects the desire to purge institutions, behaviour and language of so-called uncivilized traits, to uncover the "English" attribute in every artifact. It reflects the conclusion that all new innovations, all progressive contributions are introduced externally, which in turn implies the passive acceptance of the new, a lack of control over whatever is new on the part of one's society. It therefore becomes, a-priorily, the passive receptacle of the chaotic and arbitrary "gifts" from a technologically ostentatious and dominant power. The tale conceals without the teller's knowledge, a deep-seated irony which clearly suggests the essentially oppressive and arbitrary nature of the relationship between the "innovators" and their recipients. It is ironically the casual trader passing through the village who is reputed to have named the area, the trader who uses the village as a stepping-stone along a much larger way, a way which is ultimately unconcerned with the welfare of the village itself.

ii) History as portrayed in the Museum: the objective appropriation

The Mochudi Museum is situated on top of the Phutadikobo

hill. It is, in fact, the school which chief Isang built together with all the Bakgatla during his regency. It was converted into a museum in the late sixties by an expatriate who still runs it to this day. This man has attempted to convert the museum into a cultural centre or a venue for village activities and discussions. Apart from district council meetings and the occasional concert or study group, this has largely been unsuccessful. Perhaps this points to the general fragmentation of the community at large and the lack of interest in coming together in large numbers to discuss village affairs and programmes for action. But in an abstract manner, it also reflects the difficulty of imposing such a venue on the community. People who frequently visit the museum are school children, volunteers and tourists. District council meetings and important events are held here but few ordinary villagers visit the museum. School children visit the museum on tours which have been arranged for them by teachers and the museum staff.

Implicit meanings generated by the museum

The museum as such houses artifacts, some of which are no longer used in the village. It therefore marks the retreat of the past and is a continual reminder that craft objects housed in the museum and still in use today are also destined for a similar fate if not appreciated. The museum indicates an attempt to salvage the past and to make people aware of their history and the changes which have accompanied it.

Objects housed within the Museum

1. Cultural artifacts: cooking utensils, chairs, "meroba" drums which are still used within the village itself for the important "bogwera" or initiation ceremonies.
2. Photographs: for example, Schapera's photographs of the last rain-maker in Mochudi; of past "mephato" (regiments); of houses in the 30's depicting intricate

designs painted on the walls with clay and dung; the installation of chiefs; pictures of the current chief, Linchwe II, in his ambassadorial capacity to the United States.

3. Tapestries: one tapestry depicting the achievements technical and otherwise, realized during Isang's regency; another depicting the arrival of the Bakgatla at Mochudi village, having fled the Transvaal. These tapestries are interesting precisely because they constitute a contemporary appropriation of the past.
4. Newspaper cuttings of contemporary events.

Although the museum ostensibly attempts to communicate with the villagers, to become an element in discourse with them, the very manner in which this discourse is attempted deprives the museum of the village conversant within discourse. Thus this attempt at communication is ironically seen by some villagers, not as an attempt to keep the past alive, but as a means of burying it forever. This small collection of artifacts is seen to be an inadequate and pale rendition of past kept alive by some within the medium of oral tradition, a tradition peopled by heroes and their words and deeds which, when reiterated in the present, stresses a vital link between the narrator and the past. The museum in contrast, suggests the disappearance of the past, its retreat into forgetfulness and severs the link between living people and the dead. The museum then caters for school children who have lost a meaningful relation to the past and who, in consequence, must question silent objects for clues to their past history.

The following statements by two grandmothers suggest and extend the metaphor of the graveyard to the museum:

> 'Going to the museum is like visiting a graveyard. All the rooms are filled with pots. Is it not

better to see those pots in our lands, see how we use them to make beer? Putting everything into the museum is like shutting the door on the past.'
(Grandmother -- Nochudi)

'I do not like the way photographs of the chiefs are so freely shown. To show a photograph of a chief is like showing a spook. Often the man might be physically small and unimposing and be made to look even more ridiculous in a formal suit of the time. A photograph is just a moment in time. It does not show one the real power of the chief. A chief has more power than can be shown in a photograph. It is better to remember the qualities of the chief and his reign than to look at a photograph and see nothing. Photographs offend me.'
(Grandmother -- Nochudi)

iii) Traditional appropriation of the past

It will be seen that many of the accounts which follow are linked specifically with incidents in the previous historical overview. However, the particular nature of these accounts enables us to perceive the process whereby bridges are built between the past and the present and it is by virtue of these mediations that important ideological content is evoked. There are basically three mediums through which the history of this nature is made accessible.

1. through oral tradition in terms of Vansina's conception of the fixed testimony.
2. through history as contained within the Bogwera ceremonies which remains inaccessible because of secrecy.
3. through the general accounts of the past given by experts and others within the tribe. These accounts parallel what Van Sina has termed "free formed texts".

With regard to 2., I take the secrecy of the ceremonies to be exceedingly important especially the exclusion of strangers as well as whites who, in the past, were allowed to take part. It is almost as if those in control of the ceremonies are aware that the force of tradition evaporates in being exposed to outside scrutiny

or the betrayal of the researcher or curious outsider.

Generally category 3. proved to be the most rewarding for me. General historical accounts contained the richest information since they incorporated the particularities or individually lived experience as well as fixed oral history in the form of oral poetry and proverbs.

It is primarily men who are the "historians" in the formal sense of the word, but many astute older women recall incidents in the past and it is often these women who pass on a general conception of the past to younger people, or a general interest. There are, however, indications that history as oral history together with its evocation and anecdotal character is fast disappearing. Young people entering school imbibe a watered down version of their own history, a version which avoids qualitative differences between different stages of history, which reinforces prejudice through a veneer of scientism, which disguises and ignores conflict, and which turns the eyes of pupils away from the wealth of historical knowledge in their own communities. It is true that certain praise poems are learnt but often their deep meaning escapes the pupils. This is in contrast to older people who place great importance and who derive great satisfaction from praising themselves as individuals. The praise poems of the Chiefs, of government ministers of Botswana, are an extension of this self-praise. To praise oneself and one's achievements is to give oneself a name. Certain young people are also involved in this process of giving themselves names. Just as the Leboko or praise poem is exalted in style, so oral history is exalted, it is celebratory and is thus very different from a detached account of the past. Just as the author of leboko about himself is drawing attention to his particular triumphs in his leboko, so the tribal"historian" draws attention to the

particular triumphs of his people in relating their history(34). A descriptive narrative of the past is invariably interspersed with personal anecdotes which are particularly memorable and which are comparable to maboko or praise poems themselves. This particular kind of self-praise or praise of one's people assumes the ability of the individual to confront his environment directly and effectively. The mode of telling does not contain intimations of man's loss of control of his social and natural environment although these intimations appear as it were on the edges of this discourse.

I shall examine these accounts in chronological sequence beginning with an examination of a particular person's rendering of the early history of the Bakgatla. I chose to deal with this particular account because, as well as being informative, it also shared basic characteristics with other accounts. In order to convey the philosophical, reflective and normative nature of verbally related history, it would be most fruitful to allow certain passages to speak for themselves, only afterwards drawing out their implications. The particular man in question is a highly respected "historian" of the Bakgatla, a man already in his mid-nineties. As well as being able to give an account of Bakgatla past well before his time, he is able to relate his experiences of the Boer War, the first schooling in Mochudi, the importance of the church. Predominant in his account is the stress on courtesy and peaceful living. In all our conversations, the theme of courtesy and its implications were stressed. Whatever Christian implications this concept may contain, it also has roots in traditional concepts of "botho" or humanity. Ideologically it implies the right of all people to live peacefully, including the enemy. Ideally, the enemy's opposition is countered through the courteous gesture. He is disarmed by treating him as one of one's own people. Although the

value of humanity or courtesy is continually stressed, the accounts which follow reveal the emergence in history of new kinds of social relations which deny the continuance of this mode of interaction. Important in all the accounts concerning interaction and confrontation between whites and blacks, is the continual affirmation of the Bakgatla as a people. Resistance and scorn for imposed definitions and assumptions about them on the part of the Boers and British is constantly stressed. Despite the defeat of the Bakgatla in reality, the anecdotes examined continually suggest the value of all the Bakgatla and they direct a sarcasm and irony towards the historical oppressor. Concerning the concept of humanity of "botho", in this context Alverson has recorded Kgatla informants as having said,

> 'Now people are often treated like servants or like animals, but they do not become servants in their own mind. They retain their pride as human beings. The real inner self (botho ba motho) can never leave a person.'

and

> 'In Setswana we say, "you can never build a kraal for a person. This means that there is no purpose in building a kraal for a person, since a person cannot be confined. Humanity (botho) cannot be taken from you nor controlled as a kraal controls the cattle ... Reasoning ability is not removed by suffering".'(35)

The Account

The Origins of the People

> 'The Basotho and Tswana people, although they now speak different dialects, originate from one man, Malekelele. One cannot think beyond this man, the mind goes blank. He is the root and origin of the Sotho and Tswana-speaking peoples.'

Early History

> 'The Bakgatla people came from Makapane (Pretoria). The chief here, Matsheco, had four wives, each of whom had children. However, the senior wife's prospective heir was a woman. Mary decided that this would only cause future disputes because as a woman and the most royal of women, whom could she marry? Surely she could not marry her own brother.

ter issue from any other marriage would cease to be royal. The Bakgatla were peace-loving people and at no time did they fight one another.

Those who were in disagreement decided to go their different ways. The Bakgatla who were eventually to settle in Mochudi chose the second wife's son as their chief, Kgafela. Kgafela then journeyed forth to find a suitable place for both men and animals to live. At each place they stopped they would test its qualities through staying there long enough to experience the changing seasons. At first they stayed at a place called Tsekane. They wandered from this place to others and eventually settled at Sefikile, the hill which is called Spitzkop by the Boers. All this country was at the time the people's country. People had not yet come to take it through deceit and sneakiness.

While they were stationed at Spitzkop, Kgafela sent his uncle, Mokgotso, and son to visit the Bakwena chief at Molepolole. On arrival the uncle remarked on the ugliness of the cattle there, the fact that they had very thick horns. You know in those days the Bakwena cattle ate something in the ground which made their horns swell. He also told the Bakwena chief of the beauty of his own people's cattle at Spitzkop. Their horns were altogether different, very slender. Also the Bakgatla at Sefikile were chaff because they were not of any real substance like the actual grain and could be easily swept away and conquered. Without any courtesy, without warning the Bakwena chief attacked the Bakgatla at Spitzkop. The Bakwena chief was defeated and two years later he was escorted back to Molepolole with a large herd of cattle. Such is the kindness of the Bakgatla. The Bakgatla are courteous people and do not kill chiefs. Lengwale's people were overjoyed to see him. The chieftaincy is sacred, under no circumstances must a chief be killed.*

* "Don't lay your hands on the kgatla
Those kgatla are a tree full of thorns,
They once caught us at Sefikile
They took Kgate to his home,
They caught Lengwale, but let him go,
For they do not kill chiefs, the kgatla,
They are merciful, the kgatla of kgafela." (36)

At length the Bakwena people were totally defeated by the Bangwaketse and over the years crippled since all their cattle, all their livestock, were seized. They were left with nothing except the land. Every year the Bangwaketse would drive their herds into the ripe mabele fields of the Bakwena and they were helpless. It is said that even the dogs deserted their masters because the smell of meat came only from the NgWaketse territory.

Eventually the Bakwena chief went in desperation to visit the Bakgatla chief at Spitzkop. He appealed to him, saying, "my people are lost", and he asked if the Bakgatla would help his people to regain their former status.

Thus it came to pass that those who once tried to conquer the Bakgatla now came to ask their help. The Bakgatla chief, Letsebe, sent two regiments which were joined by a few wild people who enjoyed the prospect of fighting. The Bakgatla camped near a salt pan at Segeng, a place highly populated by game. All the creatures enjoyed licking the soil here because of the salt. Lions stayed here permanently because there was no need to travel in search of prey. The Bangwaketse had hidden the Kwena cattle in the midst of a thick forest. The Bakgatla cut their way through this forest and they defeated the Bangwaketse, seizing a great many of their cattle. The Bakwena entreated them to take the cattle in tribute. However the Bakgatla refused, saying it was not customary to retain beasts having killed other human beings. All that could be claimed was the land. In this way we helped in replenishing the impoverished Bangwaketse herds. Thus the Bakgatla were eventually invited to come and stay in the Mochudi area by the Bakwena when they heard of their persecution under the Burghers. This they accepted. The Bakwena demanded tribute from the Bakgatla and when the Bakgatla refused, Sechele tried to move them from the Mochudi area to a smaller one. They had forgotten the courtesy of the Bakgatla. I talk about courtesy of the Bakgatla in the past. Is this not a good thing that you and I are speaking so peacefully in mutual understanding? We have come together to talk.'
(Elder K -- Mochudi)

Analysis

We may examine the above passage on two levels, linguistically or structurally, gleaning something from the way the very form contributes to the notion of harmonious living and courtesy and also in terms of its content,

how this content is congruent with the form and how it simultaneously outstrips it, implying the disruption of courtesy. The passage begins with a statement of origin, it introduces the original founder of all the Tswana-speaking people, 'beyond which it is impossible to think because the mind goes blank". The passage ends with an affirmation of the possibility of courtesy in the present. This particular notion of origin is important since it contributes to the conception of repeated time or qualitative time where the intrinsic value of tribal life is affirmed and where current rulers are able to trace their origins and in doing so, repeat the original way of life. Alverson writes with respect to this notion of origin and its disruption under current circumstances:

> 'In the traditional cosmology meaning lay in placing events in the context of the created order. The history of events was a changing but undeniably meaningful manifestation of cultural postulates. Time for the individual was orientated not to a temporal past, present and future, but to an atemporal and omnipresent origin with beginning but no end. Today for most Tswana the questioning of belief in cultural origins has created the spectre of a future that is not only infinitely more open but also unintelligible.' (37)

My informant also related to me a praise poem of the tribe in which the connection and continuity between rulers within a sea of time is clearly stressed.

> Oh gourd full of fatness!
> Morula tree of the great trunk,
> the Pakgatla!
> We, sons of the straight gorge at Moruleng,
> Which if it dries forces all people to disperse.
> Ah, the village is falling to pieces,
> All run until they are separated over the wide earth.
> We sons of the stamper which beats out of tune,
> The uninvited one, the spoiler of the rhythm of th.
> well-rounded grain.
> We sons of Molefe, Masilo, son of Malekeleke,
> We can eat the dwelling in which we sleep,
> ... sons of the day which eats its own sun.
> (Elder K -- Mochudi)(38)

In this poem the ancestral line and the continuity which it implies is brought out in the way in which 'We sons of Molefe, Masilo, son of Malekeleke' is expressed and

written in Setswana. The names of the ancestors are hyphenated in the following way: 'Dithata tsa Molefe-a-Masila-a-Malekeleke'. It was explained to me that in remembering any current chief it was necessary to include his ancestors and ultimately the original chief Malekeleke who, it was said, 'is beyond human understanding, the father of us all'. In this way Tswana is legitimized in terms of a natural origin which precedes man and is greater than him.

Throughout the informant's account, loyalty to the tribe, harmonious living of men and animals and magnanimity to enemies are stressed. There is one intimation of disruption given in the lines, 'All this country was at the time the people's country. People had not yet come to take it away through deceit and sneakiness'. People's country, in this instance, refers to the territory occupied by the Tswana people in general. It suggests that at this time the Tswana had relative control over their environment. The advent of the colonial other, however, witnessed the demise of this control. Also the stress placed on communication between both of us, the informant and myself, at the end of the passage suggests periods in which this communication has been an impossibility. In the appreciation of its comparative rarity is the knowledge of its disruption. Note that the informant was not asked by me to discuss notions of origin. He himself suggested that he begin with the early history and origin of his people.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BAKGATLA AND THE BOERS IN THE TRANSVAAL

In this section I have chosen to examine accounts of the relationship between Paul Kruger and Kgamanyane. As we have seen in the general overview of Bakgatla history, Paul Kruger was Field Cornet during Kgamanyane's reign. Perhaps one of the most interesting accounts of the Kgamanyane-Kruger relationship was given to me in the

form of a conversation between the two. It clearly illustrates the ambivalence between the Bakoatla and the Burghers. Recall that the Bakoatla were auxiliaries for the Boers against other tribes. Their privileged position did not, however, protect them from indentured labour or appropriation of their land. Fascinating in this conversation is the collision of two different world views or the collision of interests as portrayed by the Bakoatla, all behind the veneer of an assumed comradeship. It is significant that Paul Kruger and Kgamanyane were said to be great friends. The friendship, however, could only be the disguise of enemies given the fact that Kruger eventually beat Kgamanyane for disobeying him and tore up papers concerning the purchase of land by the Bakoatla.

The Conversation

Paul Kruger: 'Why are so many people ploughing now? The time for ploughing is finished.'

Kgamanyane: 'They are ploughing for me so that I may have food to feed the destitute.'

Paul Kruger: 'Do you pay these people to work for you?'

Kgamanyane: 'No, I do not pay them to work for me. They work freely.'

Paul Kruger: 'You must send some of your people to work for me.'

(Elder M -- Mochudi)

In concluding this conversation the old man said,

> 'People were sent by Kgamanyane to work on farms of the Burghers' land, land which had originally been theirs. Many were ill-treated, were beaten as "kaffirs" and they would take their beast as payment and would leave their servitude.'

Prevalent in this "conversation" is the way in which labour freely given is haunted by the ominous shadow of oppressive labour, or indentured labour. The conversation marks symbolically the intrusion of wage labour so that work done without pay becomes irrevocably associated with coercive extraction. One is no longer rewarded with the actual product of one's labour, rather the

product of labour is appropriated by the owner and labour becomes abstractly associated with the wage. In this context labour which is freely given takes on a new oppressive meaning. It is clear that in working for the Boer farmers the work no longer benefits, for example, the destitute. Rather the products of labour are consumed wholly by the farmer.

My informant (Elder K) related yet another instance of personal resistance on the part of Kgamanyane. This time it was on much more immediate level since it was one of the occasions which involved physical confrontation with Burghers. He was summoned by a son-in-law of Paul Kruger to a farm homestead. He was refused the company of his regiment as well as an interpreter in the event of having to sign any treaties. Throughout the following account the old man illustrated his words with vigorous physical demonstrations as to what actually happened to Kgamanyane. He ended by reciting with great joy the praise poem which commemorates this occasion.

> 'Our chief was taken to the house unaccompanied, alone, the doors and windows were shut. Suddenly someone cried, "Vat hom". Two men tried to catch hold of his legs, two his arms. He bent his knees and kicked out at those trying to hold his legs. He freed himself and took shelter under the tables which surrounded the room and were set with delicious food. He used his head as a lever, like this, and turned the tables upside down, sent everything crashing to the floor. It was the Burgher women who told their husbands to let him go.
>
> Ngwana mohudi tshaba tlhaga,
> ke tshaba tlhaga ke lemang*
> a he ke le difako di nkwelagale tlhagapatsa marallana
> Motho ke tshaba wa selepe wa molamu ga ke mo tshabe
> A ka re "tou"! Ngwana mohudi ke hunvela legapeng
> Tshesetsi was letseke-a-pilane.'

* Mohudi is the personification of kudu or tortoise

Child of the tortoise, fear the lightning,
But whose lightning shall I fear?
Lightning bolt and hail fall on me like bushes
  joined to the hill
I fear a man with an axe
I do not fear one with a fighting stick.
The stick that says "tou"!
While I, child of the tortoise, shrink behind my
  shield.
This has come to the ears of Pilane.'

This poem celebrates Kgamanyane's tortoise-like attributes, his ability to hide under the tables of the Burghers, unafraid of their blows, which reach only the table top. He hides within the calm interior of his shell, humorously watching the pandemonium around him, able to attribute his own meaning and interpretation of the event because of his calm ponderous identity as tortoise which he keeps secretly hidden from his assailants. Notice too that the narrator of the poem gives his name at the end of it, thus celebrating his own relation to the past and a deceased chief.

Lastly, to complete this section on the relationship between the Boers and the Kgatla in the Transvaal, I would like to examine a contemporary tapestry which illustrates the arrival of the Boers in the Transvaal, their subsequent relationship with the Bakgatla and the Bakgatla's eventual departure from the Transvaal and the establishment of Mochudi village in Botswana itself. This tapestry now hangs in the Mochudi Museum. Although this tapestry was appropriated by the museum, it is of considerable interest since it indicates a new way of appropriating tradition and recording it visually. It is an appropriation by a young Mokgatla who is at pains to reaffirm traditional appropriations of the past through a new medium. The medium indicates the desire to inform other appropriations of the past, for example the "objective" appropriation as evidenced in the museum, with a new impetus. It marks the historical process



Tapestry now hanging in the Mochudi Museum, depicting the Bakgatla exodus from the Transvaal.

weaver:
Seke Semele

This is our life: tapestries from Botswana, p.2

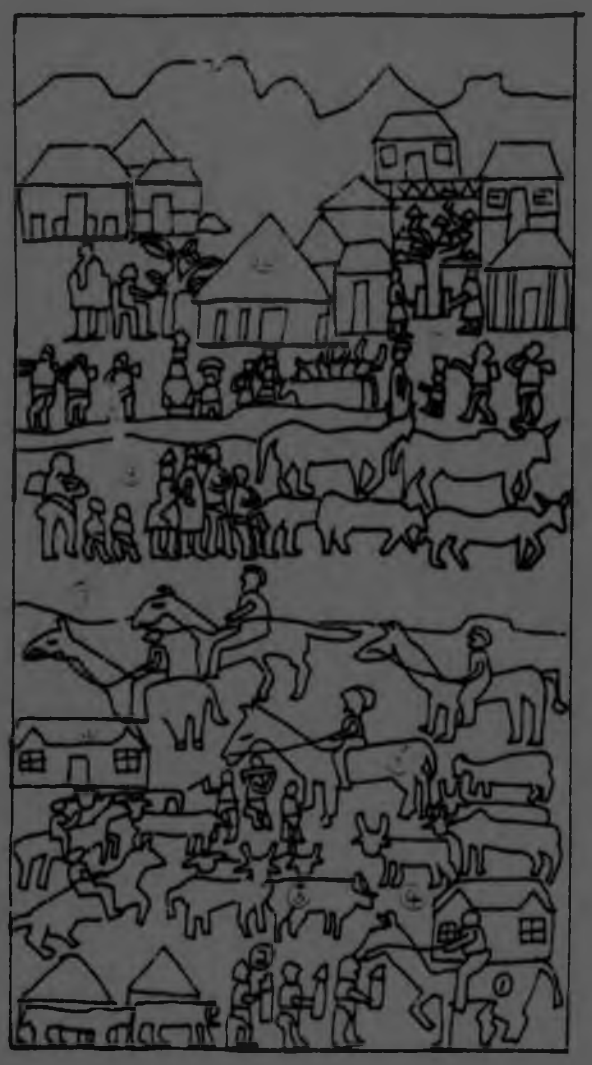


Diagram depicting previous tapestry

whereby traditional values and practices were initially suppressed and discarded during early colonial days and where these ideas and practices are being re-appropriated today as an expression of opposition to cultural domination and accusations of barbarism. This mirrors the process whereby bogwera or initiation ceremonies have been revived among the Bakgatla. The tapestry in question was woven in the village of Oodi in the Kgatleng district at the renowned Oodi Weavers Co-operative. The tapestries woven there are of general ideological interest since they record history as well as contemporary events of special interest. All tapestries are conceived and woven by locally domiciled people. Many of these magnificent works have been photographed and they have been compiled in a book together with commentaries by the weavers explaining their meaning(39). The tapestries contained in the book were exhibited in a number of villages in an attempt to promote dialogue and reflection amongst villagers about the past and about present social and political issues. These commentaries are particularly interesting since they are compiled by comparatively young people.

Explanation of Tapestry as written in the Mochudi Museum
(Elder -- Mochudi, in conjunction with weaver S. Semele)
With the arrival of the Boers at Moruleng (1) the Bakgatla were soon compelled to pay them tribute (2) provide labour (3) and to experience the looting of their herds (4) their lands were seized and Boer farms established on it (5) (6).
After chief Kgamanyane had been flogged in front of his tribe (reputedly by Kruger) he ordered it to move North. Kgamanyane's brother, Kgari, a noted rain maker, produced a series of downpours which completely wiped out the tribe's tracks (8). The pursuing Boers were halted (7), the Bakgatla continued their trek unhindered, crossed the Notwane (9) and arrived at Mochudi, where they established their new home (10).

The commentary from the book "This is Our Life" is as follows:

> 'It seems to us, when talking to visitors, that many people believe that Africa is nothing but jungle and wild beasts. Or if you prefer it another way, they seem to be more interested in the wild beasts of this country than in its people ... But as I said, there are also people. We are people, and we have a history like any other people. In our past we see the reason why we are poor and undeveloped today, so let me tell you just a little bit of our history. Once we lived in that place known as the Transvaal. We had trouble with the Zulus and other tribes, but really serious trouble did not start until the whites came to our country. At that time we did not know about their horses and their guns and they managed to put fear into us. They then started to take our land away and to steal our cattle, and finally we had no choice but to fight or to leave. The Zulus fought and were finally beaten. But we left, and we walked until we found water and a place where there were no whites. This is how we came to this area. Today we live in the Kgatleng, but some who remained still live in the Transvaal. Of course, when we came here we, in turn, pushed away the Bakwena who had arrived here earlier.' (40)

Important in the above is a positive affirmation of the Bakgatla history. It expresses, as it were, the rediscovery of history as an ideological force which is able to create identity and which is able to oppose negative definitions imposed on people by those in power over them. Significant in this respect is that the importance of people and their culture is stressed. Where once the patronizing colonial only saw animals he is now forced to see people who have a virile life of their own.

The Boer War 1900-1902

Concerning the Boer War, informant K used the occasion to examine other "white-man's" wars in which the people were involved; in all cases showing what he thought to be the arrogance of his white allies. He recalls an incident during the Boer War which records the interaction between the Boer and Bakgatla in an attempt to contrast the arrogance and disrespect of the Boer with the disarming generosity of the Bakgatla. These incidents allow for the comparison of Boer "characteristics", characteristics

symbolic of the oppressive foreigner, and ideal kgatla characteristics. Revealing humourless weaknesses or obvious arrogance in the colonial other enables subjugated peoples to reaffirm their identity. Ironically objectification of the colonized other is not successful in emasculating indigenous peoples of the ability of reciprocal assessment.

At the time of the Boer War, informant K was a young herd boy, and he describes in vivid terms the exodus of the young herd boys from the village and their trek with the young livestock to the cattle-posts on the Notwane river. The following exemplary tale about the interaction of one Boer and the Bakgatla was considered to be the deciding factor which persuaded Chief Lentswe to enter the war on the side of the British.

> 'It was to be a "no-natives" war. You know that is what they called it. Both the British and the Boers were suspicious of the Bakgatla people of Mochudi. The Bakgatla had never really sided with the British. They also rejected the Burghers by moving away from them. A representative of the Boers, Hans Ryker, rode into the present "kgotla" (meeting place) to inform Lentswe that his people were going to move upwards to this part of the country. Kgosi (chief) Lentswe told him that he could have his war as long as he left Mochudi alone and did not ride with his soldiers through the village because old people and young children would be hurt since they were always walking and playing in the paths. Hans got off his horse and picked up a handful of ground. He then said that the Kgosi and his people were smaller in terms of their importance than the smallest pebble which he held in his hand. He threw the pebbles into the air. Hans Ryker told Lentswe that if he liked he could build a road from Marico in the air. If this was not possible the Boers would take their own road with no consideration to anyone. During the war all Ryker's cattle were seized by the Bakgatla and also the British. He had become altogether a poor man. He came to Chief Lentswe and asked if he might have a team of oxen for ploughing and one or two milk cows for his family. And, because we of the Bakgatla truly believe that peace should be made, Chief Lentswe gave him plough oxen from his own

beasts and also enough milk cows to feed his family.

At this time I was herd boy. Together with many others we walked the domestic animals out of Mochudi. I was left in charge of small animals, the little calves and goats. We left early, walking for two days without rest, eventually establishing cattle posts along the Limpopo-Notwane confluence up to the Marico confluence. The journey itself had been taxing in the extreme, the smaller animals lost all their strength and we, the Bakgatla, killed them all to end their suffering. All life is sacred, one cannot mock the weak or persecute it by running after it. So the weak were killed and left behind for the wild animals to eat. The young men's legs swelled up too and everyone was in pain. After resting at the cattle post for part of the night suddenly, towards dawn, all the people rose as one man. In the distance we could hear the guns firing. The Bakgatla regiment did enter the war, they helped the British defeat the Boers at Derdepoort, Sikwane. Not only did the Bakgatla assist at Derdepoort but Chief Molefe of the Bakgatla was sent back during Hitler's war to recruit soldiers. It was under his persuasion that other tribes entered the war.

The Bakgatla also assisted the British during the 1914 war under the Kaiser who said in his foolishness, "There is only one God and therefore there shall be one King". In this way the Kgatla gave real support to the British.'
(Elder K -- Mochudi)

The Colonial Era

Elderly people remember the Colonial era as a period in which the Bakgatla fought other people's wars, in which various taxes were imposed and because of these they recall the beginning of the exodus of people to the mines and industrial areas in South Africa. It was a time when they experienced their lack of control over judicial proceedings. It is also a time in which education is seen to be emphasized as a way of gaining control within a changing social, economic and political environment, a world in which education was initially linked with missionaries and in which conflicts between people and missionaries arose because of this; a time in which, because of missionary influence, old customs were negated and discarded. People recall the new agricultural and

technical innovations introduced during Isang's regency. The present chief's father, Molefi, is also recalled together with his particular kind of resistance against new authorities. In order to convey conceptions of this period we shall examine each issue as I have listed it.

The World Wars

We have already seen reference to the Bakgatla participation in the world wars in the exposition of the way in which the Bakgatla came to fight on the side of the British. But this does not reveal much concerning the effect of war on people's lives. Many returned disillusioned since they were hardly paid for their services. Many people showed me medals with which they had been presented after the war. Most people described these as being useless acknowledgements for their suffering. There was no compensation for the wounded, the people who returned home with such severe injuries that they could do nothing in the village and were totally dependent on others for their subsistence. Others described the effects of shell shock and how certain people had become deranged because of their experience, often imagining that they were in the midst of the war. Others returned from the war with high expectations, fired with nationalistic ideas. Chief Molefi was included amongst these people and, as we shall see, wore his army uniform until his death, declaring 'The war is not yet over'. A man from Oodi describes this war in the following way:

> 'Eleven men from Oodi joined the army. They left by train and were surprised when they came to Durban and had to enter a boat. They believed they were going to fight the Boers. Egypt, they have told us, was a bad country full of fleas and bedbugs, dirty, poor and filthy. It has been like that ever since the time Moses had trouble with Pharaoh. There our men did nothing but dig trenches for the white soldiers to fight in. But when our own chief (Molefi) became angry, they brought them past Sinai to Syria where they taught us how to use guns. At the end there was a competition between the white team and a black team with these guns and our men won. From Syria they once again had to enter a boat, and so they came

> to Milan in Italy. Italy was a good country. It was while they were there that they were told that the war was over. Only seven of them returned to the village. Those who returned got five pounds each and a ribbon for their services. It would have been better if they had been allowed to keep their guns.'(41)

One of the most prevalent anecdotes relating to the Colonial era which I heard many times related in Mochudi, dealt with the British administration's interference with traditional judicial procedure. This incident symbolically witnesses the departure of the British from the boundaries of traditionally accepted social morality and because of this, also witnesses the emasculation of the people themselves, since accepted procedures of justice are wrested out of their hands. The British are seen to disrupt the proceeding of legitimate justice concerning the misbehaviour of one of their own subjects. In this instance they choose to defy traditional structures and to render themselves immune from these. It is within this context that people say 'during the Colonial era we had no power'. Although the incident occurred in the Bangwato territory, it is widely known and reflects a national stand against the foreign administration.

> 'During the 1930's a white boy lived in Serowe, Khama's place. This boy used to fool around with many of the village girls. This was against our customs (molao) and the fathers of the girls complained to the chief. It was agreed that the boy would have to pay maintenance for the children he had fathered and that he would be beaten in the kgotla as was the punishment for all boys who behaved in this way. When the British Governor in Mafeking heard that a white boy had been beaten in the kgotla, he sent 500 soldiers to Serowe to show the people that white men could not be treated in this way. So Khama was forced to leave his village. There was nothing anyone could do and that is why we say we had no power in those days.'
> (Young man -- Mochudi)

The History of Education in Mochudi

The following exposition concerning education among the Bakgatla is to be found in the Botswana Notes and Records,



The story of the errant white boy is generally known. Here the story is depicted in a tapestry(1). Note the boy lying face-down in the kgotla. Also note the British soldiers arriving on the bottom end of the tapestry.

Weavers:
Ellen Mothlatlodi
Odirile Nteatsi
Salome Tseko

This is our Life: tapestries from Botswana, p.6.

Volume 5. This passage was written by a respected elder of the Bakgatla, informant K, and it clearly elucidates the missionary influence on old customs as well as on education. It is interesting to note that in this passage it is not education which is rejected but rather the particular kind of education which people received at the hands of the missionaries. The passage therefore examines the people's rejection of this influence which they perceived as being an invidious form of oppression and which excluded them from the real advantages of Western education.

> 'The very first school in the European sense, which was started in Mochudi, was in 1900. It was founded by Deborah Retief, after whom the DRM Hospital in Mochudi is called. It was no doubt meant well. But all that was taught was reading out of the Bible in Setswana -- the Moffat translation. The idea was that "kaffirs" must learn to read God's word, but if they learnt to write, it might lead them to think they were as good as their teachers. Meanwhile, of course, the initiation schools, the preparation for the Mephato (regiments) were frowned upon and if possible, stopped, so that young people no longer learned the history of their own people, nor did they get the sex education and general education in manners which now is found missing and cannot easily be brought back. The missions were so totally against anything native that they prohibited circumcision, although this is included in both the Old and New Testaments.*

*Just how devastating this process proved to be is given in the following:

> 'Fifty years ago Isang Primary had just been built. But before that the education of the Bakgatla was entirely in the hands of the missionaries who taught the rudiments of the three R's, but mostly religion. Because of their opposition to any culture which was not in accordance with the principles of the religion they taught, the Batswana culture waned considerably and much of it has gone out of memory.'
>
> (Elder P -- Mochudi)

'So it appeared urgent to put some other education in the gap which was left.

'Here Jacobus Bernhorst Stofberg, an educationalist from the Cape, was instrumental in starting a small English language school, with a teacher from the Cape, Mr. Noble. This was done through the mission but the "home committee" did not like it, it may well have been partly a political move, as it came in 1903, immediately after the end of the Boer War.

'This was the Linchwe school and the first boy pupils, nine of them, were from the royal family. Soon they were joined by girls, and the original small, square room by the gate of the mission was to become the nucleus of a real school, built on the present site of Linchwe Primary School.*

'Although the money was supplied by the mission the children did the work (not altogether children -- I was nearly 20 when my father recalled me from the cattle posts to go to school, however we were then allowed to skip grades and twice I moved up two classes so the time of schooling was not so long). We made bricks and once, in Chief Linchwe's big ox wagon, went to the hills near Gaberone, where boys and girls cut a huge load of thatching grass ... but Linchwe Primary was still a mission school, and there was a keen desire to have a school of our own. This was because of a quarrel between the missionaries and the tribe in connection with education. It came about because the Chief Designate, Molefi, then only 7 or 8 years old, was sent to Linchwe School. But the missionary insisted that he and another youngster, Hamilton Molefe, son of the headmaster, should be sent home. The Reverend Murray openly said that he was here as a missionary to teach kgatla people the Word of God, not the wisdom of the world. These two were too young to understand such high matters. The tribe appealed to the Home Committee in Cape Town, the Secretary came and discussed matters with the tribe, in the church. In the final answer, the words of the Rev. Murray were repeated, they did not want worldly subjects like arithmetic to be taught.

'So it came about that in 1920, when Isang was recent, the first move was made to build a school by and for the Bakgatla. The stones were cleared -- all this heavy work was done entirely by hand -- from the site of the proposed school by the Mantwane morhato. The school was to be called Mochudi National School .... It was built on the splendid site on the hill so as to be a torch of learning and progress ... Our school was started as the direct result of a law unanimously

*This being at the Phuthadikobo Hills, Mochudi.

agreed in kgotla, that a school being a house in which children should be taught was to built. This being so, Isang called upon all the Machechele, his own mophato, to contribute £5 each (again a substandard sum in those days). They must do it through their own work of their own hands. Almost all went to work in Johannesburg in the gold mines, including the well-educated and well-off people and those in business. No-one was allowed to buy himself out by selling cattle. As soon as the worker received as much as £5, which might mean one or two months' work, he must take the money straight to the chief himself, not doing it through a relative. There was no government aid.

'Then the school building began to go up. The mophato who had been left at home had been making bricks and slacking lime. There were one or two masons as well. The bricks were passed up the hill by long lines of men and women, each carrying three bricks, you could find half a mile of them in several directions from the brick fields. Women carried water to the builders. In 1923 it was finished and formally opened by the Duke of Atholl. (At this ceremony I was posted in one of the small classrooms with a rifle, as guard).

'At this time Isang raised a new women's regiment and gave it a good name; maatlametlo a tswa go lejana. This is a proverb which says "working hard you may feel pain but you will be proud". The meaning was you have been tired out toiling hard to build such a school on top of a hill, but you have done something very good.

'The same year Isang passed a law that everyone should bring one son to school, but another could be sent to the cattle post since education and wealth are two things which balance. It was open to daughters ... There was a severe drought the next year, (Isang) made a famous speech, saying to the tribe, "How can we escape? Cattle are dead. Children are starving. The river is dry." The tribe answered him, "Pele ga phatla go itaya mong". That is to say, tell us what to do and we will do it. "Where you go we go. He then appealed to the British government for a drilling machine, to make boreholes but unfortunately without success. Then he went to the Transvaal, and was able to get the machine at Pretoria to work at Mochudi. He struck ample supplies of water at Lekwatse, Moologe, Monametsana, Metledi and Mabodisa. But in order to do this he raised special tax, or £6/10/- per man. This would not have been easy unless the whole tribe had reached a degree of educated thinking, either through school or discussion.

> '... Isang in fact encouraged everything both traditional and developed, as well as such things as cattle development and reclaiming land. He encouraged syndicates of cattle owners to develop their own boreholes. But above all, Isang was proud of his educational activities. Perhaps at this time the bright boys and girls got rather more encouragement and were less held back by slower pupils. Those in Standard 6 could speak English well (unlike today). It was not for nothing that, during World War II the Bakgatla in North Africa organized classes among themselves, led by Chief Molefi, then Regimental Sergeant Major, even before the Commanding Officers had thought of it. We hope that our special interest in education will always be maintained.'(43)

As we have seen in the general historical introduction to this section, Mochudi National School was ambitiously conceived as a centre for National Education of all tribes and that it had as its aim the education of young and old alike, not only in literacy but particularly English fluency so that everyone could make use of foreign resources to gain knowledge in technical skills and knowledge of the new social relations. Great emphasis was placed on the use value of whatever was taught at the school. It was hoped that much of what was taught would be directly beneficial to the community. As we have seen, for all its ambitious aims the school was eventually forced to close due to lack of funds. They could not afford to pay the good teachers whom they needed to fulfil their ambitions.

For all their ambitious and collective efforts the Bakgatla were unable to fight the more impervious and unyielding reality of the power-relations which surrounded them. To say that the school was forced to close due to lack of funds is merely to scratch the surface of explanation, to lose sight of the total social and political milieu within which the Bakgatla were then already thoroughly immersed, a millieu which necessarily precipitated their emergence as a satellite to South Africa which in turn precipitated the necessary flow of migrant labour

to South Africa, a state of affairs which could only perpetuate an inferior form of education. Briefly examining the passage we see how traditional forms of education were suppressed by missionary education and how the latter was seen to be grossly inadequate because of its prejudicial nature. In response to the changes in society which colonization brought about, a new virile education was needed to understand these changes and indeed to master them. Notice how the initial onslaught of colonialism destroyed traditional forms of education through the missionaries' opposition to mephato (initiation regiments). This destruction resulted in a reappropriation of traditional values in order to define the Bakgatla in opposition to the colonial other. This reappropriation constitutes the Bakgatla as an equal opponent within the colonial nexus with specific characteristics and demands. The appeal to traditional forms of co-operation in building the modern school sets the Bakgatla apart from the representatives of colonial power and implies that their interests will best be served through their own efforts rather than from the interference of the colonialists.

Isang's regency: Molefi's reign: The introduction of technological and agricultural innovations; and the general response to exacerbating colonial relations

A tapestry depicting Isang's regency and his innovations during this time, now hangs in the Mochudi Museum. The writing which you see at the top of the tapestry is an extract from the speech which Isang gave to the Bantu Studies Circle at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1923. We have already examined this speech in the previous section of the chapter. It reads in English:

> 'If any reform was to be introduced to adapt ourselves as a tribe to the new world conditions, the people must have some insight of the world around them, understand the forces that encircle them closer and closer and enable them to react to these forces.'

Kgosi Isang is shown in the tree -- the symbol of tribal



The tapestry depicting Chief Isaac's reign, now housed in the Vochudi Museum.

growth and well-being. The introduction of improved breeds of cattle and the double furrow steel plough are shown in the bottom section of the tapestry. Together these symbolize the establishment of the syndicate farming system, which is still only found in the Kgatleng. Above the plough the drilling of the first boreholes is depicted. Above the borehole we see a crowd of people gathered in a tribal "kitso" or meeting. It was agreed in meetings such as this one to raise a levy to finance drilling and the erection of the Mochudi National School which is depicted in the top left hand corner of the tapestry. Mochudi, to the right of the central tree, is depicted as being neat and clear during Isang's regency. The Dutch Reformed Church represents the reforms which Isang encouraged it to undertake.

If Isang's regency constituted an attempt to enter the new economy on an equal footing with those in power, Molefi's reign witnessed the demise of this attempt. Indeed, even during Isang's regency this attempt was based largely, as it were, on the will of Isang and not so much on a clear assessment of social and economic forces at the time. Isang himself was eventually opposed by the majority of the villagers due to his "excessive" demands on the people. His attempts to regularly extract levies for community projects were in the end rejected since many of the people perceived that however gallant their efforts were in implementing initial projects, many of these were ultimately emasculated. A case in point is the Mochudi National School.

Many people recall Isang with mixed feelings. One woman, informant N, described him as a hard worker but someone who was also cruel. During his regency, she said that no young boys had been idle in the village during the agricultural season. All were sent to the cattle posts and young girls helped to cultivate the chief's

lands. She praised him by saying that he was the first chief to give bursaries and also that he insisted on keeping the village clean. People in those days had maintained beautifully decorated lapas. She noted that this was in contrast to the dilapidated houses of today. Isang attempted simultaneously to sustain a pride in village life and traditional agricultural pursuits as well as a prosperous integration of these within the capitalist economy. But other forces were operating at the time, specifically those dealing with migrant labour, which proved ultimately the most powerful. In the early days of migrant labour, conditions under which people were recruited and the terms of their employment were notorious. As is known the British government intervened to stabilize recruitment and the nature of labour contracts. Despite the fact that this legislation protected workers from certain kinds of direct exploitation and trickery, the implementation of labour contracts restricted the freedom of the migrant labourer. All these moves served only to stabilize and ensure a flow of migrant workers to the south. The majority of the tribe ultimately became disillusioned with Isang's attempt to "modernize" them. These attempts at "modernization" took the form of attempting to extract levies from his people, levies which they could not afford, given the entrenchment of migrant labour and its low financial rewards. Ideologically his people's response to him was interesting since they began to criticize him for paying too much respect to European notions of civilization and the methods of this "civilization".

Even today many people, particularly old people, scornfully mock his attempts at "educating his immigrant people". They upholds the values of doing for oneself with one's own hands without dependence on a wage.

The consolidation of insurmountable economic forces made Isang's attempt at co-opting certain aspects of t is new civilization for the general benefit of his people, appear as collusion.

Molefi, Isang's successor, particularly rebelled against the church. Unlike Isang, for example, he encouraged the brewing of beer. His response to his discovery of relative powerlessness was essentially anarchic. He consumed western commodities with a voracious disrespect and he violated restrictions in an arbitrary and individual way. However, all these incidents reflect a rejection of, and a scorn for colonial rule. It was specifically during his reign that the powers of the chief and the social and economic independence of the tribe were severely curtailed. With respect to commodities, Molefe was particularly fond of cars, having a string of them to his name. He is generally remembered for a bus, the "Desert Eagle", which he used to drive around the village at great speed, filling it with fellow carousers or young children. One of these young children, now an adult, described to me a ride in which Molefi came to an abrupt halt outside a white man's shop, where he then proceeded to help himself to a substantial amount of sweets for the children, without paying for them, saying that this was his village and that no shopkeeper had a right to interfere with him. On another occasion he encouraged his companions to kick the back wheels of the bus because it was broken and he was unable to fix it, saying, 'It is only a machine, it is not a person and cannot feel pain, so kick it. I can always buy another one.' (Informant 5, young man -- Mochudi)

The following indicates the popularity of Chief Molefi. It also describes some of his rebellious actions and the mysterious circumstances of his death:

'Chief Molefi was a good somebody because he fixed

with the people. He was extremely active. Even when people were playing games he would join in if he were passing. He could jump very high, so high that his uncle Isang said that he "jumped like a cat". There was some cat ancestry in his veins. When he came back from the war he refused to take off his uniform because he said "The war is not over yet". The people were still ruled by others. When he went through the border to South Africa and when he came home he would not put up with any petty-official enquiries. He used to shout at the people at the border posts for the gates to be opened and they were. His people had not put up these so-called boundaries and he saw no reason to be crippled by them. Once his car broke down at the border post and he solved his problem by taking the nearest white man's car and giving the order that on his return the other car should be fixed. He was involved with the people. He used to call my mother "mother-corn" because she was good at growing crops and she was always the first person to finish her harvest although she was alone. Sometimes Kgosi would see me walking to the fields and he would give me a lift in his car. He would say "Be careful, young one, we do not want you killed in the forest". People are not satisfied about the way he died because he died so suddenly and he was not very old. Some suspected that he was poisoned. He had gone to a funeral with his wife in Gaberone. The person who had died was among his wife's relatives. He ate some food at his in-laws' place. Shortly after this he asked for some water to wash his body because he said it was burning. After he had washed he asked for a carose and he said he would go and lie outside for the fresh air. He told his wife to prepare for their journey home but she appeared to be too involved with her relatives and did not want to go home immediately. He stood up and told everyone that he was going to get petrol and that he would return. It is said that he drove at an almost inhuman pace towards Mochudi, this speed increased as he drove through Morwa.* People wondered who was that person driving so fast. As he came to Pilane station someone opened the gate for him. Just as he reached the government camp at Ramane his car crashed into the pavement. The district commissioner's office was nearby and the magistrate heard the crash. He told some people to go and see what was going on as he thought the car had not started again. The two messengers found the chief already dead sitting up very straight in his soldier's uniform which he had worn ever since the war. He had obviously died

*A little village south of Mochudi

before he had ever crashed the car. The magistrate then went to the hospital to collect the doctor. It is said that even today people crash in the same place. He was a better chief than Isang. Isang was too religious and he introduced education to "civilize" the people.'
(Young man S -- Mochudi)

It was generally believed that Molefi was deposed because he opposed the colonial government's ways.

'Many whites said Molefi was bad because he opposed their ways. Is it not true that when someone is no longer co-operative with them, they will say he is totally bad?'
(Elder P -- Mochudi)

Independence

Independence in terms of its own contribution to society is not viewed positively by the majority of adult villagers. They on the whole do not express pride in National government as such. Since government policy has to date not radically altered the lives of the majority of Botswana apart from the introduction of infrastructural improvements, people carry on village life, such as it is, in spite of government. Interesting views on independence are given when people cast a retrospective gaze over their total history. When linked to the past, independence is not seen as a massive outgrowth of the colonial period without the latter's evils. Rather it is seen to possess a dynamic of its own in which innovative changes have been introduced. This retrospective assessment of history is depicted in yet another tapestry from the book, This is Our Life. In the tapestry the pre-colonial, colonial and independent phases of history are clearly delineated.

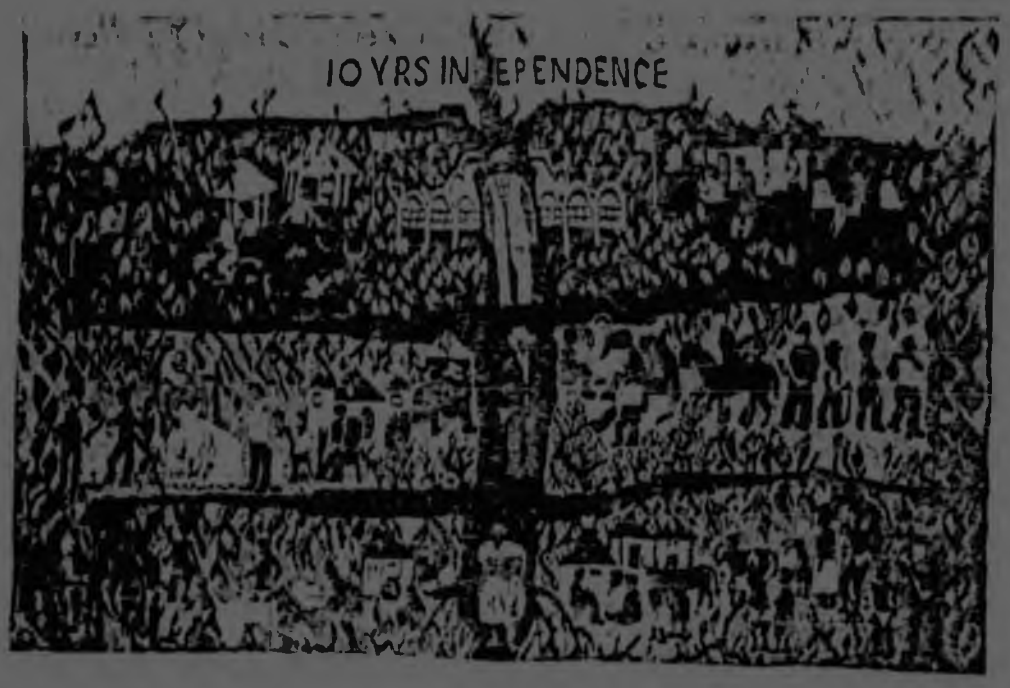
'Independence has meant a lot to our country. Since then there have been many changes for the better. The only trouble is that people do not seem to be interested in helping the president build this our nation. At the bottom of the weave you can see how we left the Transvaal and settled in what was known as the desert. You can see that during that time we had trouble at our borders with the Matabeles,

> the Boers and the English. We also had a lot of trouble with the wild beasts all over our country. The woman you see against the tree is our great-grandmother, the mother of our nation. In the middle section you can see the colonial times, the time when Khama the Great, seen against the tree, made a deal with the English Queen Victoria whom you can see to the left on a chair. This is a time when the missionaries and the traders and the soldiers came into our country and when the people started to leave in order to find work so that they could pay their taxes. At the top you can see our first ten years of independence. Our President, Sir Seretse Khama, is in the centre, our Parliament and so on. Unfortunately people still have to leave in order to find work but I do not really know whether they really have to leave. Maybe they have just not understood that they are needed at home to build this, our nation.'(44)
> (My emphasis)

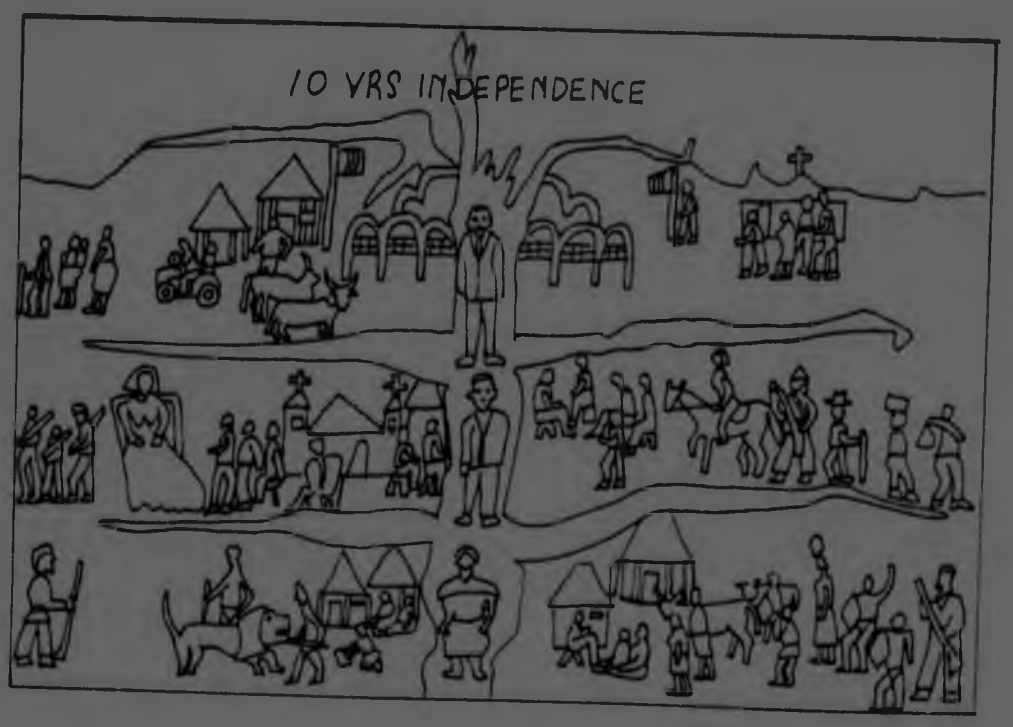
The last part of this statement is of interest because it establishes a point of continuity between the colonial era and present times. Migratory labour is as dominant as ever and it is correctly perceived that this phenomenon is in some way connected with the absence of active participation and ideological identification on the part of most villagers in and with the nation state. This is not to say that the Batswana in general do not have a preoccupation with a specific concept of nation. However, this preoccupation does not emphasize the importance of the newly emerged government ministers and their relation to the nation state. It therefore does not limit itself to the independent phase of their history. Rather it emphasizes the continuity of the Batswana people themselves through time, their origins being traceable to an original founder. This idea is silently expressed in the above tapestry even although the commentator limits the concept "nation" to the independent phase. It is precisely this continuity which binds the three historical phases together, although it is possible to differentiate the phases from one another, the past cannot be separated from the present. The past is not without its own decisive influence on the present. In this context it is well



This tapestry hanging in the Mochudi Museum depicts 10 years Independence celebrations. Note the flags prominent in the tapestry which represent a number of African countries as well as many overseas countries, predominantly donor countries. Seretse and Lady Khama are depicted to the right within the square made of flags.



Tapestry depicting pre-colonial, colonial and independent times



nigh impossible for people to extricate themselves from the shackles of migratory labour even if this is necessary for the emergence of a truly independent state. As one person has simply expressed it, 'You see, our life is divided between the village, the lands, the cattle posts and the mines.' (Grandmother -- Mchudi). This is the primary material and ideological content of villagers' lives. Just as migratory labour has survived into the present phase so has the tribe and the chieftaincy.* We shall explore the indisputable importance of these in the following chapter. It is precisely the government's lack of effective involvement in rural communities which has resulted in the majority of people ignoring it. This is not without serious consequences since government policy will inevitably encircle the villagers, bringing fundamental changes to the lives of all these people. The people still live within a paradigm which locates its roots in the past with specific concepts of land tenure, etc., with in short, a specific mode of production which has been ossified within the context of migratory labour. This specific separation between government and villagers enables villagers to criticue government but it also prevents them from understanding the nature of modern government.

In concluding this section I would like to examine one last tapestry. The commentary accompanying it shows how often it is possible to make sense of history only retrospectively. The independent phase thus portrays a black man observing current realities, not being able to make a decisive interpretation of it.

> 'Yes, this weave shows how we then lost our freedom. We had not been long in this country before the missionaries came and preached to us about their

*where government does appear in the villages it has largely taken over the function of the district commissioner et al.



Tapestry depicting different forms of Colonialism

God and Jesus his son. Some of us adopted the new ideas and somehow our nation became divided into those who believed in the White man's new God and those who still believed in our old God. In the next section of the weave you can see the trader. He came soon after and brought many useless things to us which we traded against our cattle and goats. And it seems that the trader got richer and we got poorer. So that we should not be eaten up by the Transvaal we became a Protectorate under the British Queen. This was our Colonial era and when we had to start paying taxes. This was imposed on us so that, in order to manage, we had to go and work for the White man. We had to carry him. The last section shows what is happening now, after independence. We are not quite sure whether all these people really want to help us or they want something in return from us. We are grateful for all the help given to us, but there is such a lot of whites in our country today.'(45)

In conclusion then, people generally perceive the colonial era as a time which has thankfully passed. As we shall see in the following chapter, this does not necessarily mean they are without criticisms of the present government or in fact that they perceive the national government to be of vital importance in their lives.

General Conclusion

Most significant in the chapter has been the suggestion of the four different appropriations of the past. These appropriations suggest that similar traditional content is used in fundamentally different ways by different groups of people. Reiterating briefly these appropriations we located 1) the alienated appropriation" which indicated a rejection of the traditional past and the studied appropriation of the ways of Sekooa or the ways of the White man; 2) the government appropriation which indicated a mediation between tradition and the ways of Sekooa and which tended to stress the continuity between past and present underlaying the contradictions between these; 3) the expatriate appropriation which indicated a so-called objective rendition of the past but which was

in fact regarded by some villages as constituting an imposition. We will see how in the next chapter the expatriate or "expert" is seen to enter into an exclusive dialogue with government in formulating policy and that villagers perceive themselves to be excluded from this dialogue.

CHAPTER 3

1. SCHAPERA,I., A Short History of the Bakgatla -- BaKgatla of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Communications from the School of African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1942, p.28.

2. SCHAPERA,I., (1942), p.3.

3. See the genealogy of the chiefs.

4. SCHAPERA writes,
'Under Kilane the Bakgatla once more became a united tribe. Their villages were scattered among the mountains which the Boers subsequently named Kilanesberg, after him, and the people again acquired cattle and cultivated the soil. They were visited periodically by the Griquas and other half-breeds from the South and Vaal River, who hunted in the country and traded with them in ivory.'
SCHAPERA, I., (1942), p.[illegible].

5. SCHAPERA writes,
'Until very recently men were still living among the Bakgatla who claimed to have been inspanned to draw Boer wagons through tracts infested with tsetse fly and therefore inaccessible to cattle.'
SCHAPERA, I., (1942), p.1[illegible].

Schapera goes on to write,
'The Boers also employed the Bakgatla as auxiliaries in their wars with other tribes. In Kgamanyane's maboko (praises) lengthy reference is made to the help he gave the Boers when they fought against the Baca Mokopane (1854) and the Basotho of Moshesh (1865).'
SCHAPERA,I., (1942), p.10.

6. Ibid, p.32.

7. Ibid, p.12.

8. Ibid, p.12.

9. TRUSCHEL,L.D., "Nation-building and the Kgatla, the Role of the 'n-la-Boer War". Botswana Notes and Records, vol.4. Botswana Society, Gaborone, p.185.

10. Ibid, p.186.

11. SCHAPERA,I., (1942), p.18.

12. Ibid, p.19.

13. For an excellent account of the battle, cf pp. I.D. TRUSCHEL's article "Nation-building and the Kgatla" pp. 186-190.

18. For more details concerning the conversion, cf. SCHAPERA,I., (1942), p.18.

17. MACKAY,D., (1930), p.9.

16. SCHAPERA,I., (1942), p.21.

17. Ibid, p.23.

18. Ibid, pp.50-51.

19. Ibid, pp.51-52.

20. Ibid, pp.53-54.

21. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S., (1980), p.24.

22. KOPYTOFF,K.T.M., (1978), p.37.

23. SCHAPERA,I., (1942), p.26.

24. VANSINA,J. Oral Tradition, a study in historical methodology. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973, p.29.

25. Ibid, p.196.

26. Ibid, p.97.

27. Ibid, p.112.

28. Ibid, p.76.

29. Ibid, p.77.

30. Ibid, p.110.

31. Ibid, p.112.

32. In 1892, Lentswe became a Christian.

33. Mosarateng does in fact derive its name from the large deposits of sand in the area.

34. For an account of self-praise see ALVESSON,M. Wird in the Heart of Darkness, value and self-identity among the Tawana of Southern Africa. Man (new series) London: Royal Anthropological Institute, 1990, pp.390-396.

Note that although praise or praise poems often exalt the deeds of an important person, there are several people who praise the ancestral spirits.

35. ALVESSON,M., (1990), pp.210 and 216.

36. SEMBENE, O. Tribal Scenes of the Tswana Chiefs, p.88. Oxford Library of African Literature, Translated and edited by T. SEMBENE, 1965, Caledon Press, Oxford.

37. ALVERSON, H., (1978), p.172.

38. Recorded in Tswana (July 1970), translation located in Botswana Notes and Records, vol.5, p.124, having been set down by the same informant on a previous occasion (year unspecified).

39. Lentswe la Oodi Weavers, This is Our Life; tapestries from Botswana. National Museum of Denmark, Danish association for international co-operation, Copenhagen, 1977.

40. Lentswe la Oodi Weavers, (1977), pp.1-2.

41. Ibid, p.7.

42. Francis Phiri, "Mochudi Fifty Years Back". Botswana Notes and Records, vol.5, p.11[illegible].

43. MOSS KGWEYANE TLHAGE, "Notes on Early Educational Efforts among the Bakgatla". Botswana Notes and Records, vol.5, pp.120-122. Pub. The Botswana Society, Gaberone. No date given.

44. NAOMI SEMBLE (weaver at the Oodi weaving centre), Lentswe la Oodi Weavers, (1977), p.[illegible].

45. Lentswe la Oodi Weavers, (1977), p.[illegible]. MOSS KGWEYANE TLHAGE and [illegible] PAULA MALLE

CHAPTER 4

NATIONAL VERSUS LOCAL POLITICS

'Oa bua Seretse Khama
Oa bua le madomkeraga*
Oa bua Lady Khama
Ene Amini oa segapapa
O tshabetse ko Khenya
Ke gore erile fa a tsh[illegible]a ko khenya a bona gore
ga a ka palama hilokop[illegible] a tla mmona, ga ese a
palame tonki a eta a e[illegible] a kotana ya selela a
ralala mo longaneng a ts[illegible] ko Rhodesia ga ke itse
gore a ka-etle lekoto on[illegible]mathlo.'

Seretse Khama is talki
He talks with "madomkera
She talks Lady Khama

That Amin he doesn't want to listen to anybody.
He ran away to Kenya. That is to say, when he ran
away to Kenya he saw that if he got into a helicop-
ter they would see him.
He did not climb onto the donkey. He walked behind
him hitting him with a stick to stop him from
straying so that they went the correct way causing
the little bushes to lie down in the forest. He
entered Rhodesia. I do not know if he walked nicely
with his feet but he has eyes (he could see the way).

(Young guitar player and song writer from Basesa,
a village on the outskirts of Lobudi)

*"Madomkeraga", meaning Jack, is the name for the Botswana Democratic Party. A humorous song implying that the then President and his wife talk only with their own party. The second part of the song is a commentary of a humorous personal myth depicting Amin in the role of the unconventional but clever trickster.

1. INTRODUCTION

The material I shall use in this chapter was substantially gleaned from people who partake in the traditional land tenure system and who are involved in some kind of migratory labour whether locally or abroad. This, therefore, excludes commercial land owners and business men and women or people involved in government work. It is primarily these people who are immediately threatened by government policy and developing economic trends.

In all their accounts, these people use words to point out their awareness of the encroachment of the government policies on their lives. What becomes overwhelmingly clear is that government is perceived as an external agent which is out of touch with people's problems as they see them. Government is also dominating in that people are no longer in control of their environment. (Although critics might observe that people lost control of their environment long ago because of migrant labour, what people see as being primarily threatened today is their traditional land tenure system; also they lament the decline in the power of the chiefs). These accounts will also reveal how important the past is in evoking the nature of present realities. The colonial experience provides a rich nexus of material which becomes condensed or absorbed into single concepts. For example, the word "English" or Sekgoa becomes a deceptively simple signpost which in reality is thick with meaning. It indicates power which is externally imposed, the destructive potential of science, the immorality of coercion, a foreign cultural framework and the ominous power of the industrialized world in contrast to the vulnerability of a country like Botswana. People are therefore aware of the influence of other countries, the pressure which they exert on their own. The Government is then equated in meaning with these other countries and is also linked with the colonialist. The colonialist is a foreigner

in the true sense of the word as he imposes himself and his interest and is not open to communication. This notion of the colonialist reaches back in turn to inform conceptions of foreign countries. All these meanings are not present in every usage of the word and therefore by inference in any other "thick concept",* but they emerge in different contexts. For the sake of coherence I shall exclude perceptions of other countries in this chapter although the rich complexity of cultural metaphor should never be forgotten.

One of the central issues which must be taken into account when examining national and local politics in Botswana, is "tribalism". I shall clarify what I mean by "tribalism", as the word as it is used today has acquired all the invective of the slogan. Firstly, in using tribalism, I refer loosely to past social formations in which ideology and relations of production are inextricably intertwined. Production of life and the way in which social relations are organized are linked within a moral framework, perhaps one could call it a cosmology. Each person in society has an appointed place. Morality is a social phenomenon and has not become privatized as it does under Capitalism where the moral indicates an internal state within the individual, or is at best confined to personal relationships which still inherently imply the centricity of the notion of the individual. Here conscious morality is devoid of global societal implications(1). Here too, relations of production are ideologically perceived as being neutral or scientific, a notion which in itself is suffused with the idea of neutrality. Thus, in this case, relations of production are perceived as being outside the domain of the moral. Tribal society is moral in the sense that every aspect of social life is situated within a normative framework.(2) When I use moral, I do not use it in

*See Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, Basic Books, (1973).

the idealistic sense of a normative framework devoid of defect, but what is important is that tribal ideology contains conscious values. The Tswana concept "molao" or "law" is closely interrelated with notions of morality, or "botho" (humanity). These laws or values imply how people are to be treated, how they are to be cared for and, more importantly, how each group and its organization within social, political and economic relations is seen to fulfil an important and acknowledged function. A case in point is the way in which, for example, wards, the basic organizational structures of the village, are viewed among the Bakgatla.(3) In their praise poem, the four main wards of the Bakgatla are described as the legs of an animal with the chief's ward, the Kgosing, denoting the head.(4) Among the villagers in Botswana, morality in this sense is still very much alive. What people perceive as lack of morality in the present government becomes a point of critique of that government.

The Marxist notion of tribalism and its ideological implications is also important in the present context. For example, it is argued that the notion of tribalism within the current political and economic context, i.e. within Capitalism, is used ideologically to separate people and to create feelings of superiority among them, thus preventing a united front against those in power.(5) Thus, for example, the notion of becoming aware of one's cultural heritage becomes reactionary in this particular instance.

Tribalism and racism in this sense are widely apparent in Botswana and must be seen within the context of colonialism and migratory labour. Inter-tribal rivalries which existed in the past mainly due to the limitations within tribal social formations because they required raiding of cattle and women to maintain themselves, have now acquired a new and more pernicious

meaning in that they are interwoven with notions of "civilization", notions which, as we have seen, have not only been learnt at the foot of the missionary but also in all contacts with those in power during the colonial era and also with those in neighbouring countries. Here the ideological discourse of those in power must be taken into account and the ambivalent effect which this has on the population. It is sufficient for Botswana to be economically under-developed because of its dependence on a country such as South Africa, for the Batswana to suffer at times the self-negating effects of racist ideology. The racism which Batswana exhibit towards the Basarwa or Bushmen must also be seen in the context of the past where these people were serfs or slaves. It is obvious that "tribalism" in the ideological elitist sense is an important force today because of its roots in the past and because traditional social relations have been maintained within new social formations in specific ways. The tribe today and its ideological implications are far from monolithic in nature. So-called tribal ideology has absorbed meaning from its total historical context. It is not without contradictions. It simultaneously strikes a blow against the government with its moral critique and it also potentially exacerbates the ideological struggle between classes and ethnic groups because it has internalized elitist notions. These, in turn, turn back as it were to the past to salvage hierarchical notions within the tribal social formations as a legitimation for elitism in the present.

Perhaps the mediation of morés and experience from the historical past with present developments is interestingly compared with Levi-Strauss' conception of "bricolage" or the way in which he describes the specific nature of mythical construction. This approach, transforming the analogy of the creation of myth to the historical arena, suggests that the past constitutes a reservoir of cultural objects which can be brought into

new focus and revitalized within a current horizon. This suggests that historical experience constitutes the limits within which interpretation of the world may be made.

Levi-Strauss writes of the bricoleur:

> 'His universe of interest is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with "whatever is at hand". That is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no witness to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions.'(6)

2. DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN BOTSWANA

a) Historical Roots

During the early sixties the colonial administration decided to advance the constitutional position of the protectorate. It was decided to re-examine what was then called the Joint-Advisory Council, a body which facilitated a minimal representation for chiefs and their supporters within the colonial administration. The Joint-Advisory Council was superseded in 1961 by a legislative council to which members of all races belonged. The nature of this council was largely inadequate and particularly the disparity in voting strength of the various racial groups represented on the council was criticized by educated Batswana.(7) The context in which the administration attempted political reform coincided with the rising tide of modern Botswana nationalism, a nationalism which was not unaffected by the stream of refugees from South Africa who crossed the frontier into the protectorate from the early sixties.(8) Within this context Stevens writes:

> 'Unfettered by traditional ties of loyalty and respect for the imperial protector, new leaders with radical ideologies were seeking the people's affections. Rejecting political structures that would incorporate racial or tribal decisions, the new nationalism took its cue from the political ideologies being generated in South Africa, which, after the Sharpville shootings, had become increasingly militant.'(9)

There was a distinct possibility that, given time, these parties could win the support of the rural people of Botswana and given this, the British Government 'fairly rushed the protectorate along the road to ultimate independence'.(10)

The first party to emerge in Botswana was the Botswana Federal Party. By 1961 it had already dissolved. December 6th, 1960, heralded the birth of the Bechuanaland People's Party. Its leadership and philosophy had their roots within the arena of South African politics; the Vice-President, Matante, having had close ties with the P.A.C. in South Africa and the party secretary, Mpho, having been a former treason trialist and having had close links with the South African Congress of Democrats and the A.N.C. Motsete, the president of the party, was the most moderate among the leadership, being a quiet intellectual and educator. He was at one time the first secretary of the Tribal Council and his disillusionment with the policies of the administrative government and its ineptitude in developing the country, led him into independent politics.(11)

The party's politics tended to be 'radical, anti-colonial and nationalistic.'(12) Included in its policy was the exclusion of chiefs from the government. Thus, although it 'acknowledged the "good and opportune services rendered by the ancient institution of chieftainship", it flatly opposed nomination of chiefs to representative bodies.'(13) The party was soon plagued by internal rivalry with the result that in July 1962 the

party secretary, Mpho, was expelled for allegedly attempting to seize leadership, with communist backing, from the moderate leader, Motsete, and also for attempting to stem Matante's P.A.C. influence in the party. Mpho then formed his own independent party which is today known as the Botswana Independence Party. In the same year Matante broke away from Motsete to form his own party. Matante was now to all intents and purposes the surviving leader of the B.P.P.

Despite the initial turmoil within the B.P.P., it achieved a measure of international recognition as Bechuanaland's liberation party in its early years. Matante addressed the United Nations Committee on Colonialism on two occasions; in 1962 and towards the end of the following year. The B.P.P. was recognized by the Organization of African Unity right until October 1965, even when the party was defeated at the polls.(14)

Within this political climate, the administration decided to push forward the constitutional review from the originally proposed year, 1968, to 1963. The B.P.P. reacted by calling for an immediate abolition of the existing constitution and Motsete led a group of 800 people to the High Court in Lobatsi. Especially in the urban centres where the B.P.P. had most of its support, huge crowds gathered to protest the arrest of 7 people jailed in Francistown and to hear meetings addressed by Matante. Because of this, meetings of more than 12 people were banned. The B.P.P. was undoubtedly growing in strength having established 17 territorial branches and 5 in Johannesburg.

Seretse Khama was alarmed at the radical tone of the party, considering it to be dangerously antagonistic to South Africa. Thus he announced the formation of a new party, the Botswana Democratic Party, in early 1962. In

this he was given encouragement from the colonial authorities which were anxious to establish more moderate leadership. Seretse was, as far as they were concerned, an appropriate candidate since prior to this he had been a member of both the Ngwato Tribal Council and the Joint Advisory Council. He was also one of the most educated men in the country. In addition to this, as a traditional heir to the largest group of people in Botswana, the Bamangwato, he commanded wide popular support in the countryside. Recall that the B.P.P. supporters were mainly situated in the towns. Seretse's marriage to a White woman, which was originally frowned upon by the British Administration, now came to be perceived as proof of his non-racist and democratic ideas. These ideas, it was felt, would give his party legitimacy in the eyes of the world. Seretse's party, essentially a conservative one, opposed Matante's party in two fundamental ways. He was opposed to evicting white people from the country or repossessing their lands and he was also opposed to the B.P.P.'s radical attitudes towards the institution of chieftainship. Thus Stevens writes:

> 'Recognizing a threat in the B.P.P., Seretse proceeded inside and outside the legislative council to organize a counter force. The result was a somewhat conservative party making a conscious appeal across tribal lines to traditionalist sentiment. Of special importance was his alliance with Chief Bathoen II of the Bangwaketsi who, while not reactionary, was strongly inclined to maintain chiefly authority. To the extent that tribal lines were crossed, the B.D.P. became cautiously nationalistic and thereby reduced the danger of a total political-tribal confrontation. Also by defending the rights of the white settlers, whatever their citizenship, to participate in constitutional discussions, Seretse placed his party in solid opposition to the demands made by the B.P.P. for their exclusion.'(15)

The B.D.P. therefore drew support from a wide political base as soon as it was founded. Most Ngwato supported their traditional leader while the party appealed to moderates throughout the country. The chiefs were particularly attracted to the party since it promised a

constitutional role for the chieftaincy after independence. Colclough and McCarthy write of this that the chiefs interpreted 'this to mean that, at the tribal level, government would remain much as before'.(16) As we shall see, this was not to be the case since, although Seretse recognized the need to incorporate traditional authority in government, he sought in many ways to modify their traditional power. We shall situate these findings within a general theoretical debate in the concluding chapter. This is perhaps an illustration of Laclau's notion of interpellation where class interests which underlie the alliance of various groups is misconstrued.

b) Constitutional Changes Prior to Independence and the Creation of New Government Bodies after Independence

Preliminary discussions on a constitution for self-government began in 1963 and were completed six days later. The amended constitution provided for a national legislative assembly to which members would be elected by universal adult suffrage. Of its proposed 38 seats, four would be reserved for prominent figures whom the parliament itself wished to elect, 32 would be elected on a common role and two seats would be reserved for officials. Executive powers would be vested in the cabinet with a Prime Minister. The cabinet would, until independence, be presided over by the Queen's Commissioner who would exercise his powers with the advice of the cabinet. He ultimately retained independent executive powers, however. The chiefs were accommodated by being offered a house of chiefs separate from the legislative assembly. Legislation referring to "tribal" matters would be referred to the house of chiefs at least 30 days before presentation to the legislative assembly.

Under colonial government, as has been suggested in the

previous chapter, the powers of the chief had to some extent become dictatorial due to the lack of understanding by the British of the subtleties of tribal government where the consent of kgotla or tribal gathering in government was an important check on the autocratic powers of the chief. The administration would sometimes support individual chiefs against the will of their own people. The Lobatsi conference indicated that the power of the chiefs would in some way have to give way to democratic government, although it was realized that it could not be completely superseded.

Here we witness the emergence of a new class of politicians which threatens traditional authority directly and which yet perceives the importance of neutralizing traditional authority's demands.*

In the March 1965 elections the B.D.P. won a landslide victory, winning 28 out of the 31 seats and the B.P.P. winning only 3. Although the B.P.P. had organized a vigorous campaign it had been mainly restricted to the towns. All the while the B.D.P. consistently nurtured the rural constituency, often overtly or tacitly being supported by the local chiefs.

Early bills introduced by government effectively stripped the executive and legislative powers of the chief. Instead popularly elected district councils were established, these taking over many of the chief's former functions. Despite this, each more "modern" institution launched by the government included the chief as an ex-officio member or even as chairman.(17) Chiefs were paid a salary for the traditional functions which they still retained. Colclough and McCarthy write in the

*The concept of neutralization will be examined in the debate on Laclau.

following way of the particularly ambivalent position of the chiefs within the new organization of local government:

> 'The chiefs were individually faced with a dilemma. Either they could join the new bodies, which enabled them to act as chief and for which they were paid, but which constitutionally debarred them from party politics. Or they could resign the chieftainship and go into a political wilderness ... Most chiefs chose the former course and have settled down into a somewhat uneasy co-operation with the new order.'(19)

The initial influence of the District Councils was limited because they lacked man-power and financial resources to carry out projects in local services such as primary schools, health care centres, road maintenance, water supply and sanitation. But in 1970 a District Council committee was established in each district which co-ordinated between local representatives of government departments and the District Council. Prominent individuals were chosen to plan and co-ordinate development plans in the district.

Significantly, however, the chiefs still exercise considerable local authority and this authority is regarded as being legitimate. Given this they are able to swing election results as we shall see in the case of Chief Bathoen II of the Bangwaketsi. Also their influence can effectively check government plans. Thus although District Councils have taken democratic political structures closer to the people since councillors are often important men and women of some local influence and who represent the interests of their wards, traditional chieftainship, as we shall see in the next section, retains wide-spread legitimacy. In many ways the national government is distanced from local people. We have seen how this distance has historical roots in the way in which political parties emerged in Botswana. None of the parties ignored the rural constituencies and the B.D.P. which took them into account realized the importance of incorporating them in some way, but did not

seek in later days to represent rural interests. Colclough and McCarthy have stressed that although the District Councils are an attempt to involve people in their own local government, the B.D.P. is essentially not a mass-based party. It is thus dubious whether democratic structures imposed from above are able to generate democratic decision making. Thus:

> 'Unlike, say, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (C.C.M), formerly TANU, in Tanzania, (the B.D.P.) is not a mass party with local cells, indeed it scarcely exists between elections. To many people in the villages, the District Council must therefore seem almost as remote as the central government in Gaborone. In addition councillors and M.P.'s are generally drawn from an elite group, wealthier and better-educated than the populace as a whole and frequently with close kin ties with the traditional aristocracy of chiefs and headmen.'(19)

It is within this context that the kgotla remains the most effective and important means of expression of views by members of the local population and politicians are forced to use the kgotla as a means of gauging popular will.(20)

c) Further Elections and the Emergence of the Botswana National Front

There have been three subsequent elections after the initial 1965 election. The last one was held just after my departure from Botswana in November 1979. All three subsequent elections were won overwhelmingly by the B.D.P. As has been intimated, Seretse drew support from the wide-based rural population of Botswana. More specifically, 90% of the B.D.P. voters came from the largest groups of people in the territory, the Bamangwato and the Bangwaketsi and the Bakwena. Matante gained only three seats, two of these being in the north-east where the land was owned by the Tati-concession mining company and white settler farmers. These factors excluded Batswana from access to land. The third seat was won in the Bakgatla area where a popular local candidate received the support of the young chief Linchwe.

In 1969 the B.D.P. won the elections once again with an overwhelming majority. The B.P.P. retained its three seats and Mmusi's party, the B.I.P. gained one seat in the north east. By this time a new party had been formed, The Botswana National Front Party, a party which attempted to unite the various opposition groups in the country. The early independence years had, as we have seen, been plagued by a devastating drought in which at one stage 65% of the population had to be supported with food.(21) This national economic disaster provided a backdrop for diverse opposition from, the chieftaincy, the formal opposition and the new party which was brought into being under the guidance of Doctor Kenneth Koma. The B.N.F. managed to attract Chief Bathoen II of the Bangwaketse into its ranks and he resigned from the chieftaincy to join the party. Bathoen stood for parliament in one of the Ngwaketsi constituencies, winning the majority support from the tribe. The B.N.F. also won two additional seats in this election in the Ngwaketse region and managed, to the embarrassment of the B.D.P., to unseat Quett Masire, the then vice president who was brought back to parliament only through the special constitutional provision which allowed for the special election of four additional members to the national assembly. In the coming years the B.N.F. gained more support in the towns and the B.D.P. approached the 1974 elections with trepidation. The government launched what we have already referred to in the economic chapter as the A.R.D.P., the Accelerated Rural Development Plan. Campaigning was heavily concentrated in the areas which had been lost in the previous elections, with the consequence that Quett Masire was re-elected. Mochudi lost its seat to the B.D.P. Altogether the B.D.P. won 27 seats, the B.P.P. and the B.N.F. two each and the B.I.P. one. The B.N.F. now constitutes the most important opposition party in Botswana. The B.N.F. 1974 manifesto proposed, on the one hand measures such as the abolition of freehold land,

more protection and benefits for employed workers and the nationalization of all the essential means of production, communication and distribution, and on the other hand a federal type government in which the house of chiefs would be replaced by a house of nationalists to which the various groups and tribes in the country would send equal numbers of representatives and which would be superordinate to the national assembly.'(22)

The B.N.F. also had played a hand in organized labour, for example, in the 1975 strike at the Selebi Phikwe mine which led the President to speak of 'political subversives' who were trying to wreck Botswana society. As we shall see, this is a particularly prevalent theme in more recent electioneering campaigns where people are generally warned against the threat of "wild revolutionaries and communists". (Seretse Khama, Mochudi, 1979).

One prevalent feature of all election results has been the decline in the percentage of voting population. This proportion fell from 71% in 1965 to 31% in 1974. Many have speculated on the reasons as to why this percentage has so drastically declined. Of all the explanations, (we shall see some given by B.F.P. officials), the following seems the most plausible in the face of people's conception of government.

> 'Non-voting is a measure of apathy in the face of intractable poverty or actual dissatisfaction but without any perception that this may be expressed through the behaviour of voting.'(23)
> (My emphasis)

In the analysis which is to follow we shall see how, in fact, the government and national politics in general have failed to clarify party and voting procedures in the eyes of the population. Not only do the majority of people feel disaffected with government in general but they misunderstand the nature of party politics. This

points to the real lack of communication between government bodies and local people, largely due to the imposition of "democratic" structures which tend only to serve the elite. This further emphasizes the nature of the B.D.P. as not being a mass-based party. Although people are generally disillusioned with party politics, this does not mean that they are without critical observations of the type of government implied. People in general value highly traditional authority and the almost impenetrable barrier which they place on some levels between national politics and traditional authority points to the very real lack of communication between local communities and government. This polarity has led to an unfortunate passivity among the rural population in the face of the government. Government and its institutions are seen to partake in the ways of 'sekgoa", the ways of the white man, and in doing so are perceived by many to be indomitable, inevitable and yet inscrutable, thus sharing the attributes of the colonial administration. In this sense the government is avoided rather than confronted. However, as we have seen from the economic chapter, contradictions in Botswana are fast developing to a head which will perhaps lead to the realization that although the B.D.P. and its leaders retain strong links with the countryside, these links with the rural areas are perpetuated because they support the interests of the cattle-owning monopoly. As we have seen, there are increasing conflicts of interest between cattle owners and the majority of rural people which are exacerbated due to trends in economic policy.

3. HISTORY OF POLITICAL ALLEGIANCE IN MOCHUDI

a) Introduction

The people in Mochudi have until recently, always supported the B.D.P. More recently, however, the majority of

villagers have tended to withdraw from voting while the educated, teachers, professionals, businessmen and large farmers, have tended to vote for the P.P.F. It is important to note that the initial support which people gave the P.P.F. was due more to the fact that their young chief, Kaosi Linchwe, supported it, rather than any active campaign on the part of the party in this area.(24) If we recall, the P.P.F. was initially an urban-based party. Today it is generally in a state of disarray. However, it is interesting to examine some of the party members' objections to government policy or at least to the way in which this policy is implemented. These criticisms point to the central themes which we shall develop in this section concerning lack of communication and understanding between government bodies and people, and with this the perception of divergent interests between government and rural peoples, this divergence being accompanied by a general approximation of the ways of "sekgoa" on the part of the government, a factor which is seen to compound not only economic interests but also cultural interests.

In the following interview, I asked a P.P.F. spokesman and his assistant in what way they were opposed to the present government. Although part of their response indicated specific P.P.F. interests, most of their objections are generally shared by a great majority of people in Mochudi.

Spokesman: 'It is not so much the government policies I object to but the way in which they are implemented. No real attempt has been made to wake people up to the importance of party politics. There is no real interaction with the villages. Government plans are just forced onto us through government contacts in the village, namely the district commissioner, the landboard, the district council and the chieftaincy.(25) You will notice the sharp decline in voting since the sixties. This seems to indicate

that people are not satisfied but it is difficult to know exactly how they are dissatisfied.'

Assistant: 'I think that perhaps people may not be so dissatisfied since once people have voted and the person they have supported is in power they don't think it necessary to vote again. People remain with an unquestioning acceptance of those in power no matter what their actions are.'

Spokesman: 'The government is aiming too high, it is trying to change life in Botswana so that we no longer recognize it. Do you not think that it is better to improve what is already in hand than to force something foreign to grow here? We want to maintain the traditional way of life in the sense that we all have a right to land. We want cattle posts and land. Commercial farming benefits the government or the owner and takes the land away from us. The government people are just big-stomachs. They are trying to divide the rich from the poor. Still, many people are pleased with the jobs they have given us since independence although they are not enough.'

The central critique which emerges from the above is that the government, in an attempt to modernize Botswana, despite its "democratic" concessions to the past, for example the house of chiefs, and its attempt to establish "democratic" institutions within the village, for example the district council, is seen not as granting people autonomy but rather as something which imposes "external" and "foreign" policies. This element of imposition is central to the critique of government given in the chapter. Examining the interview in more detail we see that the critique of local government bodies confirms the point made in the previous section that these bodies are mostly manned by the elite within the village community and because of this are largely ignored by the population.

Also the latter portion of the interview stresses implicitly the importance of mediation between rural

communities and government and that an effective government will require the real participation of village people. This would necessarily include a real assessment of the values attached to rural communities.

b) Perceptions of Party Politics

i) Interpretation of party politics within a traditional framework

Many objections to party politics are based on the fact that the government and party politics in general lack traditional legitimation. In this context correction of its ways would imply the incorporation of traditional considerations. Many people therefore harbour traditional expectations of the government, expectations which cannot in any way be fulfilled by the party political structure. These expectations therefore reveal a general lack of understanding of the party procedure. If we, for example, examine the seemingly contradictory explanations given for lack of interest in voting in the above interview, we may conclude the following. Although the postulated dissatisfaction on the one hand and the unquestioning acceptance of authority on the other, may appear to be logically contradictory states on paper, both do exist and sometimes simultaneously, where on the one hand, unquestioning acceptance is seen within a framework of reciprocity where this kind of allegiance is carried through with the implicit assumption that those in power will act in the people's best interests even if their actions themselves are not fully understood.

I have chosen the following statement to indicate the lack of understanding of parties in opposition together with their totally different constitutions.

> 'Seretse is a crook. I say this because I am sure that the Botswana National Front should have won the 1974 elections. Why is it that people with different ideas cannot take turns in running the country? My nephew who is in the government came to me and showed me a piece of paper where it said that the B.N.F. had

> ...son more ...than the other parties. But that was only a piece of paper. For days after the elections the country was very quiet and no-one knew who had won. Surely it is better for people of different ideas to sit down all together and criticize each other rather than one party winning and making its ideas law without consulting others?'
> (Grandmother S-- Mochudi)

This statement indicates clearly the way in which party politics is perceived within a different ideological framework by those who uphold a traditionalist view, this being predicated on the type of government communication relevant to tribal social formations. The following statement indicates a disillusionment with governments in general, suggesting that they are removed from people and that their interests are always opposed to those of village people. They are perceived, however, as providing arbitrary "gifts". This kind of response implicitly implies the naturalization of oppressive relations and suggests the so-called inevitability of polarization within society.*

> 'A person should always vote for the ruling party. Ever if a new party took over tomorrow it would be better to vote for them. Although there is a law that there should be an opposition party what good does the opposition really do? They like to criticize the government saying that it has done nothing since independence. But if they came to power tomorrow they would be just the same. All they want is money for themselves. Every government will give us a few things like schools.'
> (School teacher M-- Mochudi)

A particularly interesting example of the lack of understanding of national government was evidenced in the village when Chief Linchwe became ambassador to America for the Botswana government. This indicated an attempt on his part to involve himself in national government but people perceived this "job" as one akin to going away on contract labour. They were concerned that their chief should leave the community and go and work elsewhere. One said that if he could not look after himself

*This naturalization of relations between oppressed and oppressor is achieved in factual terms and power simply is referred to in the structural conclusion.

or fast himself, the people would'. To keep him 'at home', the people 'helped to build him a palace and bought him a car'. (Elder R-- Mochudi)

In this instance the chief is reduced to figurehead and symbol. Because of his status as chief, any attempt to involve himself in district councils or development boards results in his automatic promotion as chairman and he is perceived as having too much power over ambitious members of the various committees in terms of decision making.

Thus there is conflict between government bodies and chieftainship since they are perceived by the villagers as indicating two qualitatively different kinds of power, traditional power being the more acceptable of the two as well as being better understood. Linchwe's attempt to resign from the chieftainship in order to enter party politics was strongly resisted by his people. Party politics as such becomes inevitably associated with traditional legitimacy as well. Thus:

> 'Seretse is president because he is chief. A non-royalist as president we cannot comprehend.' (GrandmotherS-- Mochudi)

ii) General suspicion of centralized government

General suspicion of centralized government is linked to the phenomenon of lack of understanding of party politics and the persistence of respect for the "puso a bokgosi" or chiefly rule. Lack of interest in party politics is closely associated with disillusionment about national government, (goromente). This particular disillusionment is linked to the perceived distance which government officials place between themselves and the people.[20] This distance is predicated on the adoption of a totally alien way of life on the part of government officials which blinds government to the real needs of rural dwellers. As we have seen, when party politics is

considered at all, parties are expected to co-operate, a co-operation predicated on the assumption of ethnic uniformity within the tribe. Thus although people suffer from the effects of widening class divisions and although they sometimes express these divisions by referring to "big-stomachs", class is sometimes ignored. When viewed negatively, parties are perceived to be all of the same ilk. Thus change in government is equated with change in personnel and not change in policy. Disillusionment with and disinterest in government is also reflected in the low attendance at kgotla meetings in which politicians specially visit the village.

We shall now consider in more detail, each aspect of disillusionment with government as we have described them. The following statement by Hoyt Alverson clearly indicates the indifference and scorn with which many adult Batswana view national government.

> 'In ... the smaller villages and lands areas ... it appears that the national government of Botswana and not the tribal government is moribund. Most of the non-educated (i.e. the vast majority) have almost no conception of the meaning of national government or of the Nation State, Botswana ... I have spoken to thousands of rural Tswana concerning their views on the national government and the typical reaction is one of contemptuous indifference. The government is perceived to be a body that proposes and promulgates changes, which most rural people find offensive or at least irrelevant. More seriously, they see the agents of government as rude, ignorant "big-stomachs" -- people living the good life in town who have lost touch with rural life, rural people and the values and culture of the Tswana.'(27)

Another important consideration is that although people view life in Botswana as being infinitely better to life in South Africa, they attribute this to the 'absence of sorrs' rather than to the policies of national government as such. The concept of "Botswana" for the majority of elders in Botswana does not indicate a nation state together with its government, rather it refers to the habitat which affords the material conditions for a way

of life which is situated within a normative "cultural horizon". The "Great Works" of Setswana are the ability to plant fields and to tend herds. These latter pursuits are dependent on rain and it is the successful pursuit of raising crops and tending herds afforded by rain which is referred to as the 'beauty of Botswana'.(2°)

The following extract specifically related to Mochudi indicates a general disillusionment with party politics as such and in opposition to this the general affirmation of chiefly rule.

> 'I once went to a B.P.P. meeting. What they have to say is better than the B.D.P. because they acknowledge the chiefs and because they say that whatever people possess belongs to everyone. Everyone has a right to land. But one cannot tell from words. Perhaps if they came to power they would be just as bad. If I was chief I would try and do away with elections and parties. Let the chief rule us. It would be better to be under the chief. We understand chieftainship. The chiefs are born to reign.' (Grandmother M-- Mochudi)

Referring to the lack of support given to M.P.'s visiting Mochudi, during my stay in the village I witnessed two different visits by cabinet ministers which very few people attended. Prior to the 1979 elections Seretse Khama and his vice president, Quett Masire, came on two different occasions to meet and talk to people. Seretse's visit was primarily a campaign visit for the elections. Although Masire's visit was also ultimately the same, the specific aim of his visit was to open officially various schools and health centres, no doubt with the aim of impressing upon people the government's aid in infrastructural development. On both occasions few people were there to meet them and the few who had come were by no means over jubilant in their welcome. A grandmother said, 'He is not our chief. It is not for us to welcome him. If it were our chief then you would hear us.' Over half of the people present on both occasions were school children. During Seretse's visit, the children were in

one case conducted in their applause by a school mistress who sat imperiously on a chair in front of them and who indicated when flags should be shaken in approval.

Aloofness of people in Mochudi from national government was also explained in terms of history. Local appropriations of history tend to stress the importance of Bakgatla autonomy especially in their flight from South Africa and their establishment within Botswana. The "flight" is perceived as being a means of achieving independence. People cite the historical experience of their oppression under the Boer Republic as having constituted a learning experience through which future attempts to destroy their independence may be quickly located and avoided. Opposition to and attempts to ignore government must be seen within the context of the desire to remain autonomous. Thus:

> 'Mochudi is known even in South Africa as "kwa ntsho ntsho" or the dark place, meaning that the people of Mochudi are impenetrable. Strangers cannot learn much about them because of their suspicion of others, a suspicion that has its roots in our history. Not only did we arrive in Botswana as a persecuted people but when we arrived we had to fight for our place in Mochudi. Even today we guard our independence and we oppose government policies affecting us.' (Young man -- Mochudi) (20)

and leading

Question: 'In what way are the people of Mochudi opposed to the government even if they do not fight it on a directly political level?'

> 'The Bakgatla came from South Africa where they were subjected to your grandfather's oppression. The Bakgatla are therefore educated in the womb. One doesn't have to be educated in a formal way to have the right instincts about these matters.' (B.P.P. spokesman -- Mochudi)

4. CENTRAL CRITIQUE OF GOVERNMENT: THE THEMES OF BUREAUCRACY, LACK OF COMMUNICATION AND THE APPROPRIATION OF THE CULTURAL OTHER ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT

a) Introduction

In this section of the chapter I intend to include miscellaneous criticues of government. Central themes which have already been suggested in the introduction to this chapter will be substantiated. We shall firstly deal with notions of bureaucracy. Bureaucratic practices are seen only to compound the hardships of people.

Another important theme is that of communication, or rather a lack of communication, between government bodies and ordinary people. For example, the government is able to institute alien laws which, despite their claims of morality, are worthy of condemnation precisely because of the kind of morality which they proclaim. This is arbitrarily imposed onto situations ignoring their specificity. For instance the notion of the rule of law is seen to be imported. With regard to law, the usurpation of the power of the chief to judge important cases is seen to have led to a situation of general lawlessness within the community. As we shall see, many of the themes are simultaneously contained within specific accounts.

Lack of communication is also seen to be due to the fact that the government is espousing foreign values; the ways of the "English", of "Sekgoa". Many people are aware of how the ways of the English have become internalized by others. Elitism and the tendency to make invidious comparisons between people is seen by some to have its origins within the nexus of this internalization. Another thing which people tended to value highly as opposed to government interference was their tribal autonomy. This must be seen in terms of opposition to

bureaucratic control. Government officials are seen in this case to be unnecessarily bureaucratic. The perversity of actually enjoying a bureaucratic role is condemned. Notice that although people are contemptuous of the government and its activities, many of them consider themselves to be relatively free of government control, or rather they operate within the social remnants of the past. Specifically a high value is placed on doing for oneself as opposed to being involved in wage labour despite the fact that the latter is seen to be a necessity at some stage in one's life. The government is often perceived to be a foreign body hovering on the edges of village life. It has made incursions into that life, precipitating irreversible changes but always, as it were, with a hidden hand. It operates within a paradigm of knowledge which is foreign to that of the past and has not as yet gained irrevocable control over the central and most highly valued aspects of people's lives, their interest in cultivation and animal husbandry.

We shall now reiterate an interview in which all the above implications are present. Following this, we shall expand in turn on each issue which arises out of it. The interview pinpoints the insecurity experienced by a migrant, not only while outside of Botswana, but also within the country and it suggests that the government misconstrues the position of the migrant and approaches the reality of migrant labour abstractly. In this case the man I was speaking to had been working in South Africa for 14 years and wanted to return to live permanently in Botswana although job opportunities there were practically nil. He is a young man with a wife and five children. He was born in Sophiatown but when still a baby went to live with his aunt in Mochudi, thinking that she was his real mother up till the age of 14. During all the years that he has worked in South Africa he has maintained constant contact with Botswana. He

is at the present time attempting to gain Botswana citizenship for himself and his family.

The Interview

1. The current government speaks of being a democratic government for the people by the people. However it benefits only the big shots who buy big tracts of land. They make a noise about being independent and are always saying how opposed they are to South Africa. But are they really independent from South Africa when so many people work there and when they purchase so much of their food there? People are concerned to help themselves as best they can. That is why we buy food in South Africa, because it is cheaper.

2. Before the whites came we used to walk freely all over Africa even up to the Victoria Falls, the smoke that thunders. But people did not impose the present country boundaries. They were put there a long time ago by the Boers and the British. We behaved as if they weren't there. We used to travel back and forth without worrying about papers. These papers always distort what you really are. When you come back to Botswana the border officials think you are exactly as your papers describe you because they like the power which the border gives them, a border which they did not create. I will explain. Some people, even though they were originally Batswana, obtained papers which would allow them to live and work in urban areas in South Africa. This was mainly because they did not want to be classified as "foreign Bantu"; if you are classified as a "foreign Bantu" you receive the lowest pay and you have no pension rights ever if you have worked your whole life in the Republic and only return home to die. So people obtain their dompass and some special rights under Section 10, some even Bantubatswana "passports" even though they have been born in Sophiatown or even in Botswana; all this to take the best advantage of the system. You have great trouble in getting Botswana citizenship after this even if you have spent most of your life there. Immigration forms into Botswana are even more insulting than the influx control forms into South Africa. At least in South Africa they leave it up to you to write what tribe you come from and do not ask you directly "Are you a Motswana?"

3. The government speaks about how its immigration procedures meet the requirements of international law as if international law ever assisted ordinary people! Better situation would be to grant people

access to the country. These people would then report to a police station so that local authorities would know of their presence in the area. If they did anything wrong the country would have a right to throw them away.

4. In the past a relative from a different tribal area would approach an uncle or a relative in another area for a piece of land in the village. This was certain to be granted to him. Today, however, a person who is supposedly of another tribe is allocated land outside of the village itself. I tell you it is true that Botswana is practising apartheid. Whites of course are allowed to settle anywhere provided they are involved with business.

5. Another way in which the government distorts things is the way in which they scorn the village people, calling them 'rural" people, whereas in fact towns have been established here for many years. The government tries to be clever and makes a "civilized" city out of nothing in a dead place, Gaberone. It is a town that really cannot be called a town because there are no jobs to be had there.
The government always says that it is independent from South Africa and even treats blacks who work there as if they were contaminated and yet the first industry which they build in Gaberone is the kgalakgadi breweries. If they are to be considered independent why haven't they developed something which would benefit people using local resources, for example a milk factory, instead of allowing money to go back to South Africa? Batswana work in South Africa and South Africa eats all their money.'
(Young father, S -- Mochudi)

b) Extending the theme of Bureaucracy and Lack of Communication

As has been stated we shall firstly examine various ideas within the previous interview elucidating the following points. The points which are dealt with in this analysis will be expanded by introducing further accounts.
(i) Bureaucracy: critique of papers and numbers.
(ii) Concepts of imposition; miscellaneous impositions; a) the rule of law, b) imposition of policies by the expert, c) imposition of nationalism where nationalism implicitly disguises class.
(iii) Invidious conceptions of village life due to the approximation of the cultural other by government officials.

a) conception of language, b) conception of "poverty".
(iv) Critique of Seretse: introduction of the cultural other.
(v) The ways of the English.

b) (i) Bureaucracy: critique of papers and numbers

Paragraph 2 of the preceding interview introduces us to a specific conception of the meaning of papers, or the most immediate level the power which they afford the petty official enables the curtailment of the freedom of the other. But it is chiefly the power of papers and numbers to misconstrue the identity and humanity of the individual which is specifically objected to. Many Batswana oppose the depersonalizing and coercive aspects of an imported bureaucracy. Many express their irritation with "papers and numbers".(30)

People have described to me kgotla meetings in Mochudi where government officials have arrived in the village to explain various policy decisions. Invariably they have attempted to read out government reports. A young man informed me how people respond to this tendency. People have said:

> 'If you want to talk to us, talk with us properly with your mouth and mind and heart. We are not interested in your papers. They are only pieces of paper. We can always read them by ourselves. We have not come here to see you hide behind your piece of paper. The important thing is that you have come to talk to us so let's speak together. If you insist on reading your paper you'd better go back to Gaberone, go back to where you come from. We are not interested in papers.'
> (Young man, P -- Mochudi)

Meetings of this sort often end in confusion because the particular member of government is told to pick up his paper and leave. Important here is that the formal presentation of the paper is perceived to be a means of erecting barriers between discoursants. The paper sows the seed of discrimination which attempts, by an implicit

appeal to "authority", to impose an issue on the receiver of communication. In this moment, communication becomes a one-way process in which the villager surrenders his status as an equivalent partner in discourse. Apparent communication between government and villagers now assumes the attribute of declaration on the part of the government and acceptance of that declaration on the part of the villagers, a relation predicated on relations of dominance.

(ii) Concepts of imposition: miscellaneous impositions

a) Conceptions of law and the rule of law

(Refer to paragraph 3 of preceding interview). Law in the European sense is seen in two fundamental ways. Firstly it is seen to have usurped the judicial power of the chief, a situation which is seen to have resulted in lawlessness. Secondly, because it is imposed and thus takes no cognizance of cultural particularity, it often falsely locates the criminal or does not chastize the criminal in a socially effective manner.

During Seretse's visit to Mochudi when people were invited after his speech to comment on the speech or problems in general, an old man lamented that the powers of the chief had diminished. The substance of his observations were as follows. The chief no longer had authority to try really serious cases. Government police interfered in the community on this level with the result that people no longer feared to commit really serious crimes. Cases of murder had increased. Thus,

> 'This democratic party has brought evil among us because people are no longer afraid to kill others. Many people die today, are killed by others and the killers go to jail where they are fed and even given money for what they have done. They are looked after for having done something very bad. Truly Seretse has brought trouble to the people with this freedom. People are no longer afraid to do bad things. When Isang was chief people were afraid to do terrible things. When Isang was chief people were afraid. If

> a man cut off someone's ear he would be taken to kgotla by his relatives. The chief would say to the relatives, "I am the judge here. Which one of you will take off his ear?" "I will," someone would say. He would take an axe and chop it right off. If people killed others, they would be killed. You know, there is a cave up in the hills over there. In ancient days the chief did not have any jail. If anyone did something really bad he was taken there and pushed into the cave to die. People were afraid and because of this they behaved themselves.'
> (Grandmother I-- Mochudi)

Lawlessness in the moral sense is to be feared. Implicit within the above is the critique of the democratic conception of law with its "freedom". Whereas this law ostensibly emphasizes the human rights of the individual, itself a historical notion, tribal society emphasizes, if you like, the human rights of the collectivity.

The following conversation between a young man and two boys at the cattle post illustrates conflicting conceptions of law. We had been offered milk by two young herd boys approximately 15 years old. We were nearing the bottom of the bucket.

> Young man: 'What would happen if I drank all the milk at your cattle post while you were not here? Would you have me arrested by the police?'
>
> Young boy: 'If you were passing and needed milk you would be welcome to all the milk we have. I would not send the police after you.'
>
> Young man: 'But you know there is a new law which would enable you to put me in jail.'
>
> Young boy: 'But that is not our law. I would not follow it.'

Another very interesting critique of law was given from an opposing position. In this case nationalist ideas as such were not objected to and neither was law in the modern sense, rather a specific application of the law was seen to be unjust. In this case, the school girl in question was referring to a particular trial. The trial

involved the Motswana soldier and his involvement in the shooting of the three Rhodesian soldiers who had entered the country in 1979. Most people considered that in doing so he had been totally justified since it was widely declared that they had tried to shoot at the Batswana soldiers. The school girl declared:

> 'In any case, they had invaded the territory and who was to tell whether they were not like some of the Rhodesian raiders who entered the country and killed people.'(31)
> (School girl - Mochudi)

The young school girl was singing a song praising Seretse for his cleverness when she suddenly interrupted it, saying:

> 'He isn't really clever, you know. He nearly killed one of our soldiers because he shot these Rhodesians. His head is landlocked like his country. The university students were protesting about Seretse. Everyone wanted to stop our soldier from being killed.'

(ii) b) <u>Impositions of government policy via the foreign "expert"</u>

> 'The only things one ever hears on the radio are statements by ministers of the present government. They speak about how much they are doing for the country, the development schemes, etc. and how this minister has just returned from London where he attended a conference of experts. They never actually say anything about the people themselves. We don't hear anything about the villages except that the government is sending truckloads of food to remote villages because of the drought. Sending truckloads of food increases people's dependence on government because no assistance is given by government to start the kind of works which would make people work for themselves. Giving out of food is well timed seeing that the elections are going to be next month. Many people say that Lady Khama will be handing out blankets and bags of mealiemeal because of this. This is how they gain support from the bushmen. It is just a way of getting simple people to vote for them as they had done in previous years when individual candidates doled out bags of meal to the hungry.
>
> 'What is the government doing with the money it's getting from diamonds at Orapa? Is it intended to build only immigration offices throughout the

country to restrict the freedom of people? Botswana is a country with few people. It can easily make room for thousands of refugees from South Africa but it seems that Seretse is afraid that his power will diminish with their influence.

'The government is using the radio in a similar way to the way in which the information people had tried to use newspapers and magazines in South Africa. But as much as they try and impress us about their running of the country we can laugh at them because they sometimes fail. On the radio I heard that not all ministers are happy about the country's achievements. The minister from Maun said openly that there were many problems and hardships in the country (Mathata). For instance there are no roads to the cattle posts. The only roads pass through the towns. If he deserved the title of minister he said he would be travelling around in an aeroplane instead of knocking around in a broken-down Landrover. His objections were made to quickly disappear by the radio people because they drowned his words with music. One minister had spoken of the severe drought in his area and had said that they had tried to sink 20 boreholes but that only four had been sufficiently free of salt to drink. He had been asked why not construct dams? He had replied that people from the area had been sent out to point out the best catchment areas, places where water had been found in the past. Why was it that a minister does not know the area which he represents? Why does he have to send out people to look for catchment areas and after this to send a government body to check the appropriateness of the sites? Not only does this show a lack of knowledge of his own area but it shows a lack of faith in the people themselves.'
(Young man S-- Mochudi)

Analysis

In this instance the knowledge of the expert is not mediated by the knowledge which people have of their own environment. Decisions within the country depend on discourse between the foreigner and the government official. Botswana stresses its links with the outside world thus averting its attention from the mass of rurally based Batswana, systematically excluding them from the process of government.

c) Imposition of nationalism where nationalism implicitly disguises class

The presidential address prior to the 1979 elections must be seen in terms of the aftermath of the land dispute. As we have indicated in Chapter 2, the Bakgatla refused to ranch their cattle in their territory because already the area is densely populated and ranching would afford the rich an unfair monopoly of land. The government had accepted this but because of its determination to begin commercial cattle ranches it suggested that the Bakgatla could apply to start ranches in other districts. In his address, Seretse Khama basically stated that the Kgatleng district was too small to develop commercial ranching and because of this ranches would be available in the Kweneng and Bamangwato areas. He went on to say that the Batswana should conceive of Botswana as one nation and not be reluctant to settle in other areas. In response to Seretse's appeal for national consciousness one old man asked contentiously:

> 'Is it true that Botswana is really one nation? Why then has Seretse made his son a chief? And why, if Botswana was one nation, could Seretse not extend the Kgatleng so that everyone could have more land rather than allowing a few people, big shots, to make applications for land outside the Kgatleng? In reality Botswana is not one nation and you, Seretse, should go back to where you come from, to your own people, the Bangwato.'
> (Elder M- Mochudi)

This critique upholds the principal of tribal autonomy which is implicit within much of what has already been said. It is important to note that this desire for autonomy is not purely sectarian, rather what is specifically objected to is the threat which wealthy people constitute for survival of the group as a whole in terms of access to land and water.

(iii) Invidious conceptions of the village due to the approximation of the cultural other by government officials

a) Conception of language

'As long as people speak in English at government level and even when making love to girls, people's minds will be colonized. I want to see the words of Setswana live again as a language powerful enough in its own right to colonize. People at the U.N. speak their own languages and have interpreters while Batswana speak in English. Seretse always speaks English.'
(B.P.P. spokesman)

Analysis

English is not neutrally spoken but implies as it is spoken various cultural presuppositions or affectations which are not simply different but which can be located within cultural horizons of opposing interests. A case in point is a conversation between government officials in the President Hotel, Gaberone. The conversation was conducted in English and compared the relative merits of city women and rural women.

'Village women are all right. They're obedient. If you tell them to do something they will do it without asking questions, but at least most city girls speak English.'

English, or the ability to speak it, now becomes indicative of one's degree of civilization and style.

b) Conceptions of poverty

'Nobody likes to be called "madidi" or poor people in Botswana. It is an insult. If you call a person poor he will respond by telling you that he could not possibly be poor since he depends on no-one but his family and himself. He takes nothing from you and does not eat off you. Batswana would certainly be angry if they knew that their government stressed their poverty overseas. Just because people do not conform to a certain way of dressing it does not mean that they are poor. People today are too concerned with dress. In the village they look you up and down so that they comment on your style. Shoes, trousers, suits and education are important.'
(Young man -- Mochudi)

The above statement indicates impatience with the government's negative definition of Botswana in the face of the outside world. Botswana is perceived as

constituting the negative image of the so-called "developed" industrialized world. This world is everything that Botswana is not. Botswana is seen to lack everything that the "civilized world" possesses. It becomes the negative space which surrounds the contentful material achievements of the industrialized. The statement attempts to destroy the imposed conception of negative space and attempts to populate this with important nuclei pertaining to another cultural horizon.

(iv) Criticism of Seretse

I have chosen to end this section with a general critique of Seretse, the president, since this critique prepares the way for a more extended exploration of the ways of Sekgoa, "the ways of the English". This critique indicates implicitly the attempt at approximation of the cultural other, on the part of the President, an attempt which is perceived to be only partly successful since he is forced to acknowledge the importance of traditional authority. The approximation of the cultural other is inevitably accompanied by a distancing between president and people, a distance which creates mutual suspicion. The second statement concerning the President's visit to Mochudi reveals this mutual distrust and creates a farce of the President's attempt at communication with people in the community, since this desire is seen to be contradicted by the presence of soldiers and security police in the kgotla.

> 1. Seretse married a white against the will of others and then in his cleverness created a liberal constitution which would accommodate his bastard children. Everyone referred to them as bastards because we did not approve of his marriage. They say that Seretse's son Ian tried to shoot his father once because he was so conscious of being a bastard. It is said that as a consequence of this he was sent to the military college in England (Sandhurst). The constitution was made to accommodate Seretse's children's illegitimacy and collapses the distinctions between different groups of people. There is

> no longer anything to differentiate white from black from bushman or any other. This shows that Seretse is far too clever. He was educated in a foreign place for too long. He has removed himself from his people. His cleverness allowed him to outwit others. First he denounced his chieftainship so as to marry a white woman by saying in the early sixties that the chieftaincy was a dead donkey and should be thrown away. Now we see he is planning to instal his son this year as chief of the Bamangwato, the largest "tribe" in Botswana. Not only is his son to be installed as chief but he is already in the police and in the army. We think that Seretse knows how important the chieftainship is in Botswana. We think that he will instal his son because he knows he cannot stay in power any other way.'
> (B.P.P. spokesman)

Apart from what this rather alarming account may indicate about the danger and potential for racist ideology within nationalist organizations, or what this may reflect about very general conceptions of chieftaincy, the important thing is that Seretse is perceived to be far too "English".

2. The President's visit to Mochudi prior to the 1979 elections

My more immediate observations of the gathering were as follows. Firstly it was primarily characterized by a lack of attendance. Very few adults were there and the crowd was made up mostly of schoolchildren. Notice too that most of the adults were elderly people who still valued the institution of the kgotla. In passing it is my contention that the schools are doing all in their power to give credit to the concept of nationalism.

The President, his wife and other village dignitaries sat on a covered dais close to the chief's administrative offices. People gathered around either side of the dais in a huge circle. The centre of the circle was singularly clear of people. Plain clothed policemen, immaculately dressed in suits and broad ties stared disarmingly into the eyes of all observers. At the entrance to the kgotla a Motswana soldier stood guard with legs astride

and a machine gun grasped in his hands. He stared vacantly ahead seeing nothing, vigilant so as not to meet the eyes of any of the people who continually streamed in and out of the kgotla, talking loudly and buying oranges to refresh themselves in the blistering heat. Soldiers had perched themselves on all of the houses surrounding the kgotla.

They had climbed onto people's roofs and the boulders in their courtyards on the hill No-one greeted the President with much enthusiasm, one old woman saying that they would reserve their ululations for their own chief. In fact, as we have already seen, children were told when to wave their flags as a sign of applause. The children generally lost interest in what was being said and paid attention only when local spokesmen made speeches. During the Presidential address some read love comics and others disappeared to buy oranges to refresh themselves. Although the security measures for the President were singularly simple in comparison to those for other heads of state, they were experienced as anathema by the people. That there should have been any security measures at all indicated the President's bad faith and fundamentally rendered this important meeting, this effort at communication, a farce in their eyes. Thus, although objections were directed at what the President verbally said, the whole manner in which he, together with his appendages of state, approached the people constituted a breach in courtesy. Many people were extremely indignant with the way in which the soldiers had invaded other people's lapas. One woman said that if they had been near any rich people's houses they would never have dared to behave in the way they had done. Wealth and money now came to legitimize any kind of interaction with ordinary people.

> 'Is the President afraid of the Bakgatla? Surely if they wanted to kill him they would not choose a public place such as this.'
> (Young woman - Mochudi)

The above clearly indicates the implicit and important acceptance of the notion of the collectivity where even enemies are assumed to be situated within it, the enemy is not yet relegated to the status of the other. Concepts of humanity, courtesy and trust are assumed to embrace all humans regardless of positions of power.

(v) 'The Ways of Sekgoa' (ways of the English)

We begin this exploration with observations of an elderly man. When I met him, he wore the remnants of his Second World War uniform with a red band round his arm with which he strove to convey an air of individual power and militancy. The war, as far as he was concerned, was not yet over.

He always wore this outfit to important social occasions where he invariably became drunk drinking the extremely potent drink, khadi.

> 'The government is trying to turn the people into whites, Englishmen. The whole world is trying to make everyone the same. One has no freedom to live the way one wants to. Seretse is only the chief of the Bangwato. He stays in Gaberone and thinks of himself as king over everyone. Why did he marry a white? Everyone will soon be marrying whites and men will no longer think black women beautiful. Seretse will only speak English and wants everyone to speak English. The world is going mad. Even the chiefs are running away from their chieftainship because there are so many problems. Linchwe ran away too (the chief once tried to resign from his position). If I could bring back the people from long ago I would bring back Molefi, Linchwe's father. He was a fighter.'
> (Elderly -- Mochudi)

In shebeens the installation of Ian Khama and also the Queen's visit were discussed at great lengths. Some of the comments concerning these events were as follows:

> 'Ian Khama could quite conceivably organize a coup one day. When the Queen came he was already acting like a king; he wore the same clothes as the Queen's husband at his installation (he wore a military uniform). Ian Khama will really seize power for the Bamangwato and then the guns will begin to talk.' (The implication is of increased coercion)
> (Young man -- Mochudi)

> 'During the Queen's visit Seretse had truly shown himself to be a white man. What did he mean by walking with two white women on either side of him (the Queen and his wife)? There wasn't a black woman near him during the Queen's visit. Does he not want to speak to us? When he married Lady Khama it was said that he could only get used to the white man's way of life. He would have money too. Given this his children would never want to marry blacks and in no time the royal house would be white. Whites would then rule the country and it would be like having the settlers back again.' (Elder-- Mochudi)

Despite the racist paradigm implicit within these evocations, they help to reveal in a very real sense the way in which the government as a whole is seen to have distanced itself from people. This distancing is perceived correctly to be ominous since it heralds an increase in the loss of political, economic and social control on the part of the villagers, specifically the introduction on a wide scale of private ownership of land. Although cultural and racial attributes become identified with class, perhaps what is most important is the way in which blacks are metamorphosed into whites. Black men too can become members of a dominant ruling class. As can be seen, these notions are contradictory. Precisely because race and culture are not differentiated from class and the economic relations which define it, racism becomes a possibility. The intoxicating and apparent power within cultural raiment itself seems to indicate the origin of power. Thus whites become innately clever and oppressive and western commodities together with their cultural meaning sometimes indicate degrees of so-called civilization on the part of their owners. It is important to note that, although by accumulating commodities materially and ideologically, one does not gain real power, ideologically one discards the past and obscures one's own oppression.

I now give an example of how the past is compared with the present. This too indicates the predominance of

wage labour today.

> 'Truly the government today is no good. In the old days when a woman got married she would go to the lands; she would be given a field to plough to look after herself and her children. Today she is no longer taken there. How can she go there when she wears these high heeled shoes and these stockings? She cannot walk properly through the grass. What the government is doing is to bring the town from England to Botswana. Today there are very few women who are prepared to work hard.'
> (GrandmotherS-- Mochudi)

(vi) Conclusion: Elitism and its negation: two themes

I would now like to examine briefly the two contradictory themes of elitism and its negation as they have emerged in the above. This will be of direct relevance to the animal fable which I shall shortly examine which will further help to elucidate this ideological ambiguity. Before doing this, however, I would like to examine a beautiful song which was composed by a very talented musician from Rasesa, a small neighbouring village directly adjoining Mochudi. This song, within the general context of what we have explored, constitutes a critique of Elitism in the form of racism; in this particular instance, a critique of the prevalent racism directed towards the Basarwa. The person in question sang this song in the kgotla when the Botswana broadcasting corporation wanted to record "traditional" songs so as to broadcast them over the radio. This song was generally spoken about in Mochudi and was admired for its audacity and the way in which it challenged old notions of prejudice.

> 'Botsomi ba le tsomong dikgokgo
> Le se ka wa tsmomela kwa Metlabeng
> le tla bolaya bo mmaswale
> kana bahasetlha Batswana le dikgokgo
> Mmatswalala ma wa lela
> ke fatlhetse go duduetsa segogwana
> Matlametlo a lela mo lebatleng
> Pitswene dia kopa dumelang
> ke raya lentseng le bosola lere
> ke Masarwa. Patho ha o ga se
> masarwa ke lo matswale ke ba nyaletse.,

> Hunters who hunt the wildebeest
> be careful when you hunt in the place of sand
> (Kalahari)
> You will kill my in-laws
> They are both grey; the buffalo and the Batswana.
> My in-law is crying
> I found a frog croaking
> A toad weeps on the open plain.
> Even baboons beg greetings.
> I mean those who live, who stay at the place of sand
> are Basarwa. But those people are not Basarwa, they
> are my in-laws. I am married there.

Elitism as a phenomenon infecting the whole of Vochudi society is most clearly suggested in section (iii) of the above which suggests not only the approximation of the cultural other on the part of the government officials but also on the part of the villagers themselves. Reference is made to the fact that young people make love to each other using English as a means of communication. Reference is also made to people's "consumptive violence" i.e. the importance with which they view commodities such as clothes and education. All these affectations are generally associated with a so-called degree of civilization and style. They tend to induce invidious comparison within the village community.

Elitism and its negation are most clearly brought out in people's critique of government and its mode of interaction with village people. Here, for example, the elitism implicit in the action of the government in reading papers aloud to villagers in order to explain their policy is clearly disclosed. The form of a paper exuding credibility and "objective" truth in the new order of things is perceived by villagers as concealing the aim to confuse and through confusion to force acceptance of government ideas. The government attempts to acquire legitimacy through appeal to authority, the authority which the format of a presented paper is supposed to necessarily exude, and not through the direct presentation of the content of ideas through discourse with the villagers. This ruse implicitly disguises the

following elitist assumption on the part of government. 'We know better than you'. This idea is negated strongly in the plea for discourse between equals on the part of the villagers. Just as this new kind of credibility is undermined because of its coercive root so modern procedures of law are regarded as an imposition and as an interference with traditional procedures. The interference of police in the village is seen to contribute to lawlessness. The liberal notions of the government in upholding the rights of the individual become elitist in a situation where people stress the importance of collective well-being, the way in which the modern conception of law is regarded as an imposition, is most clearly brought out in the cattle herder's response to the young man's question whether he would have him arrested for drinking his milk. 'That is not our law. I would not follow it.'

Also the government's formulation of government policy through discourse with the foreign expert and not the villagers is seen to be an indication of its distance from and lack of understanding of rural problems. This relationship is reinforced and becomes elitist in the approximation of the ways of "Sekgoa" or the ways of the white man on the part of government officials. The, for example, the notions of Seretse surrounding himself with whites and the conception of the royal house of the Bamangwato becoming "white" in the generations to come, reflects negation of the distance between government and villager and the elitism which is seen to be used to legitimize this distance.

5. LEINANE OR ANIMAL FABLE: "HOW THE ANIMALS BECAME DEPENDENT ON MVUTLA DURING A DROUGHT"

I now intend to relate a leinane or animal fable that people tell which, within the present day context, parallels the ambivalent way in which the rich are perceived. The word "rich" in this particular instance, indicates yet another "thick concept". It not only refers to the wealthy people of the past but more importantly to the rich of today who possess kinds of power which are not within the immediate grasp of rural people in so much as the activities of the rich and powerful have been privatized or hidden from view. This new kind of power differs from traditional power. The premises of traditional power are understood by people and are legitimized within a cosmological view of society whereas the premises of new kinds of power are not so clearly conceived. Specifically class differences have emerged. The rich have removed themselves from the community and partake of that "other world", the world of Sekoma. This new power which the other world engenders, if you like, the power of the ruling class, is often perceived as arbitrary and amoral, a power which sometimes extends what appear to be benefits to others but always with ambivalence because it ensures their economic subjugation and the psychological illusion of endless and therefore natural inferiority in the face of the other. Not only are the rich perceived as being more clever than anyone else, but they are a-priorily so. Their cleverness is perverse since it succeeds only in destroying and outwitting others. Thus, within a seemingly contradictory moment the rich are rejected because of their destructive power but perpetually enshrined because of the seemingly inescapable nature of their power over others.

Thus the one who is rich in this story, Mvutla, or the hare, is initially condemned because of his anti-social behaviour, but is ultimately admired because of his

cleverness in coping with a severe drought. In order to survive the drought all the animals turn ultimately to him for assistance. In the writing of this story and its analysis, its kaleidoscopic implications will hopefully emerge. It is important to note that I would never have juxtaposed contradictions in this story with contradictory perceptions of the rich if I had not obliquely gathered fragmented conceptions concerning perceptions of wealthy people today in my everyday interaction with the people of Mochudi. Obviously those people in Mochudi who constitute the economic elite, identify totally with the concept of the rich man as I have described it. They rationalize their position in terms of cultural pretensions to civilization [illegible] sions which have been internalized from whit[illegible] class ideology during the colonial era, and w[illegible] given present day affirmation by the contact which people have with such countries as South Africa. course, the concrete class differences which exist in Botswana today and their inevitable exacerbation in the future, facilitate this specific appropriation of the past. Note too that these people posture as carrying forward the benevolence of tribal authority, the rich of yesterday. The 'peasantariat',* as David Cooper has named the majority of people in Botswana, are people who are ambivalent about the concept of the rich man. As Paulo Freire observes, the oppressed, before they begin to conceive of an essentially different power structure, perceive the power of the ruling class as being the only conceivable kind of power and are therefore initially hard pressed to conceptualize social relations devoid of authoritarianism.(32)

The leinane

> The animals had all come to an agreement. They had a special water hole which they were keeping for times of drought and no one was supposed to drink from this water. Mmutla, the hare, however, had other ideas and he used to drink from this water

* Cooper,D. (1978) pp.7-8.

frequently. The other animals noticed that someone was drinking the water and they soon recognized that the footprints leading down to the water's edge were Mmutla's. The question now arose, how were they going to catch him? Many animals tried in succession. None of them succeeded. One day Kudu, the tortoise, told the animals that he would try to catch Mmutla. None of them thought it possible because he was so very slow. However, Kudu plastered his shell with a very sticky substance and slowly made his way down to the water hole where he waited patiently for Mmutla to arrive. When Mmutla came down he was amused to find Kudu sitting on the edge of the water. Kudu, because he was so slow, posed no serious threat to him and so he walked straight up to him and said, 'You really are a stupid to think you can catch me.' Kudu was silent and purposely ignored Mmutla. Mmutla was so sure of his safety that he decided to taunt Kudu. 'Kudu, I think I'll box you, you ugly old thing. Just to show you how stupid you are.'

Mmutla hit him with his left fist and it stuck to Kudu's shell. 'You think you can trick me, do you?' Mmutla screeched. 'I have another arm and this one's stronger.' So he hit Kudu with all his strength but his right arm stuck to Kudu's back. After this he thought he would kick the old fool with his left foot. When his foot suffered a similar fate he declared loudly, 'My right leg is very strong.' So he kicked Kudu with it, but all in vain.

As a last resort he tried to ward off Kudu with his head. He was now thoroughly stuck. The animals congratulated Kudu and they made arrangements for Mmutla's execution. Mmutla said to them that seeing he was going to die anyway, he might as well advise them on the best means of killing him. They were going to lose the cleverest animal and it followed that seeing he was the cleverest animal he had a right to decide how he should die.

The animals agreed to this. He told them to skin his tail and put fat on it, the executioner was then to swing him round above his head and crash his head on the ground. On the day of his execution all the animals gathered round to watch. Mmutla's tail was skinned and the fat prepared. The executioner smeared his tail with fat and began to swing him round in a circle above his head. The executioner lost his grip on Mmutla's tail because of the fat and Mmutla dashed away to make his escape. He disappeared down a hole and as people dug furiously to try to reach him, he was digging furiously in the opposite direction. He dug himself free and returned to the animals' houses because there was no-one there. He chose for himself an important-looking suit and

returned to the place where they were digging in pursuit of him. With all the self-opinionated authority which the suit and his manner implied, he asked the other animals, "What are you all doing here?' They explained Mmutla's escape and he said that he would help them to look for him. He took a pick from one of them and began to dig. He pretended to be very clumsy in his urgency to dig Mmutla out of the burrow. In reality he took careful aim at someone's leg and broke it with the pick. He was so profuse in his apologies that everyone thought he had just hurt the person by mistake. Too many legs were broken after that for them to believe that he was well-intentioned. They gave chase. They had recognized Mmutla. He ran into the bush and as he passed squirrel's house, he cried out to her to follow him because people were fighting furiously nearby her house and the fight would soon overtake her. So squirrel, who was generally called "khuta khuta tshwagong" -- one who is always sitting in a hole like an old woman who only goes out in search of food -- ran away in a fright and Mmutla jumped into her hole. When the animals passed squirrel's house they asked Mmutla, thinking it was squirrel, whether he had seen himself running by. Mmutla of course replied that yes, he had seen himself running by. When the animals eventually found squirrel far from her house, they realized what had happened. When they found Mmutla he was heading for the river. When he reached the river bank he realized that he could not get across it because it was so wide. He turned himself into a beautiful round stone and waited at the water's edge. When the other animals reached the bank, they thought in their frustration that Mmutla had already crossed the river. One of the animals picked up the stone that was Mmutla and said, 'You know, if I could see that Mmutla running on the other side of the river I would hit him with this stone!' So saying, he then threw the stone over the river as if he were aiming successfully at Mmutla. Mmutla in his glee turned himself back into his real self and taunted them by thanking them for helping him over the river. He ran away and disappeared.

It is said that after this Mmutla disguised himself and lived quietly in a beautiful brick house and on land that was always green. He lived apart from other people and nobody knew who he really was. They sent his nearest neighbours to go and find out something about him. They discovered that the stranger was in fact Mmutla. After this discovery all the animals went to Mmutla to ask him if he would help them through the drought and he agreed.
(Young man -- Mochudi)

One thing which must be recognized in a cursory reading of this tale as I have written it, is that so much of its vitality and humour is lost in transmitting it to paper. The humorous nature of Mmutla's capture was beautifully evoked in the telling of the tale through facial expression and gesture. Also the officious nature of Mmutla's manner once he had put on the suit was much more explicit than it is now in a written form. What is lost in gesture I have tried to substitute by inserting explanatory phrases within the text which were not present in the actual telling. Be that as it may, its beauty and the delight which people experience in witnessing such a tale being told, is lost.

Analysis

Briefly then, the tale indicates the following progression. Mmutla, through a succession of disguises, outwits the other animals. Initially, however, he himself is outwitted by Kudu the tortoise, because he fails to see the latent power within Kudu which is different from his own; this being Kudu's patience as opposed to his impulsive cleverness. The animals are duped by Mmutla's disguises in two cases because of their deference for what he has disguised himself as. Firstly they pay deference to Mmutla's allegedly superior intelligence and secondly to the authoritative figure which he represents in wearing the suit. Throughout, Mmutla's disguises are disclosed by the animals when they realize that he is tricking them. Eventually he escapes across the river and is unheard of for quite some time. The animals then discover that a beautiful western-type house has been built at some distance from where they are living and that the grass around it is always green. They, on the other hand, are starving because of a drought and they send an emissary to find out who this person is who lives in the beautiful house unscathed by the effects of the drought. They discover that the occupant is Mmutla, their old antagonist, but because of their dire state,

they acknowledge their dependence on him and ask him to aid them through their crisis. He agrees to do so.

If we penetrate the structure of the tale we see that i) it contains a linear progression whereby Mmutla is initially perceived as villain, especially in his ignominious capture by Kudu. In the end he becomes the reluctantly-acknowledged hero. ii) Also we encounter the following polarity. In all the other encounters between Mmutla and the animals, the animals pay deference to him in each of his many disguises. Ultimately they pay deference to him as Mmutla, without any disguise. iii) Mmutla is separated from the community of animals in two ways. Firstly in the numerous chases he is always just beyond the animals' grasp and secondly his oasis is set at a geographical distance from the drought-stricken area where the other animals live. iv) Note that the tale begins with an initial triumph over Mmutla, largely due to the perseverance and patience of Kudu; it ends, however, with the animals' subjugation and dependency, states which have now become necessary because of their own starvation. These structural contradictions parallel the ordinary man's relationship to those in power, whether at home or in South Africa. Ironically, it is Mmutla himself who has jeopardized the animals' chances of survival in a drought by drinking the water which they had saved for this very purpose. Just as Mmutla is perceived to be tricking the animals and is at the same time approached to save the animals from starvation, so the rich in Mochudi are on the one hand perceived as being as treacherous as Mmutla because they no longer uphold the interests of the poor, and on the other hand they are revered because wealth is still associated with traditional legitimacy.

Having established this parallel let us expand it by referring to occurrences in the community which simultaneously, for example, venerate intelligence and are

suspicious of it, which venerate dress and yet acknowledge its posturing aspect, which recognize the prestige of brick houses and yet acknowledge that the prestige afforded by these houses sets its occupants at a "distance" from the poorer members of the village community. It is not surprising that these contemporary symbols and the contradictions surrounding them, should find their way into the telling of tales. The tales themselves are older than these symbols and do not always offer a resolution of these contradictions, but often implicitly suggest their ramifications.(33)

Referring back to the tale, similar ambivalences and mutations may be located in its structure and the contradictions which it contains. However, the particular interpretation which I have given the tale is primarily based on the way in which the qualitative nature or the specific content of Mmutla's disguises informs the underlying structure. More specifically mainane (stories) are fascinating since no matter how old they are, new elements are continually introduced, new objects are incorporated which have immense significance within current appropriations of the world and which give the tales a contemporary immediacy.

Many of these tales, in expressing an incomprehensible morality, have been analysed in terms of a conception of the main protagonist, in this case Mmutla the hare, as trickster(34). Evans-Pritchard describes how the Zande trickster, Ture the spider, is an anti-social hero in that he inverts the values most stressed in Azande society. He is hero despite the immoral nature of his acts precisely because his life-style represents freedom from moral stricture.(35)

Mmutla the hare, is an extremely important character in many of the "mainane" or stories which old Batswana tell their grandchildren. His anti-social cleverness is symbolically internalized as a protective disguise by

migrants who leave Botswana often for South Africa in search of work on the mines. The particular interpretation which I give the tale is based on the ambivalent way in which Mmutla the hare is perceived by the other animals. A similar ambivalence is reflected in the way in which Batswana view wealthy people in Mochudi. In analysing the tale I have used it as a stepping stone to suggest the ambivalence of wealth in current society. This interpretation is far from exhaustive and seeks to concentrate on the contemporary content of the tale. It therefore does not negate the conception of trickster as suggested in the above. Just as the tales themselves express all manner of contradictions, so it is not surprizing that the polarities contained within the character of the trickster are used in different ways within the community. His anti-social behaviour is condoned in the migrant since the migrant often has to resort to trickery in order to survive the hostile environment in which he works. On the other hand the anti-social behaviour of the wealthy within the context of present social relations is condemned because it divides people from one another. At the same time the wealth is admired because it is simultaneously perceived within the framework of traditional legitimation.

Some of the particular contents or objects within the story focus in on particular contemporary symbols. For example, within the broader social context in which we want to situate the tale, the way in which Mmutla ignores Kudu's specificity, is mirrored in the way that the white man is seen to ignore the specificity of the Bakgatla. Thus many Batswana told me that the white man in South Africa, although he was in power, was stupid because in his arrogance he refused to speak any black man's language. His arrogance had made him foolish and blacks understood him more than he would ever understand them because the black man not only knew the white man's language, but because he was relegated to the realm of

of inanimate objects and thus tended to disappear despite his numerical preponderance, he knew some of the white man's most intimate secrets. Despite Kudu's knowledge as to his own specificity as compared with Mmutla, the animals are outwitted at the execution because of their deference for Mmutla's declared intellectual superiority. Villagers often express this belief concerning those in power as we have seen in some of their perceptions of Seretse Khama and, by implication, other government ministers. Specifically in relation to whites, they are also seen to be extremely clever. Their cleverness is associated with their ability to make money, to transform the world and to employ others. Notice the fact that whites are simultaneously perceived as being foolish and clever points to the tortuous situation in which he, like Mmutla, becomes the alien-hero. Particularly the commodities with which he surrounds himself, are admired. When, for example, Mmutla wears the suit, the animals do not see through his officious disguise and perceive his suit and his general manner as being indisputable signs of legitimate authority. Mmutla, as it were, takes over because of this and moves to the front of the burrow where he proceeds to break the legs of the animals. In the telling of the story the listener quickly perceived that the storyteller had assumed the identity of a self-opinionated person. The important thing was that he was acting out a role as he perceived it, exaggerating the nuances within the behaviour of a powerful person. In this sense the actor becomes self-conscious of the negative aspects of such a person's behaviour, whereas the actual person is without this self-knowledge.

Often a person in the community will assume such an identity for the sake of prestige. In all these attempts, however, it is obvious that he is acting. His behaviour is conscious; that is, he consciously plays for effect,

whereas a genuine petit-bourgeois is unconscious of the spectacle which he constitutes in the eyes of the oppressed. I once saw a man at a wedding. Despite the November heat he was dressed in a green suit complete with waistcoat, silk bow tie and hat. He had recently returned from the mines and sought to impress his relatives with his attire. As I was white and thus symbolically represented the presence of the powerful, he paid exaggerated deference to me, making sure that his behaviour was generally noticed. In the following chapter I shall discuss the way in which I was called upon to judge a beauty contest since I was white and therefore, according to the teachers, necessarily more knowledgeable about beauty matters than they were. They, of course, knew nothing of the contradictions within western society, nothing of the opposition to the beauty cult within the western world and its implications for women. They had internalized dominant ideological conceptions and thought erroneously that by imitating what they perceived as dignified behaviour in whites, they could vicariously experience what it is like to be the powerful alien.

Returning to the tale, eventually we find Mmutla living in a huge western type house, a house which is surrounded with green fields and which seems to be magically defying the drought.

A western type brick house is an extremely prestigious object within village society. It is not seen in terms of relatively neutral concepts such as durability and easier maintenance. Houses are literally "charged" with meaning. People have said such things as, 'When white people come to Mochudi they will say that it is really like a town with beautiful houses and trees.' A child's essay that I read proclaimed the superiority of "Meadowlands" or brick houses. Interestingly enough, brick houses of this type are referred to as (mitolente), meadowlands, after the district in Soweto of the same

name. An ex-domestic servant spent a considerable amount of time ecstatically describing to me her 7-roomed house. She had saved the money for it while working in Johannesburg. She told me that she would now be able to live like a white woman, especially once she had installed running water. She would have real status in the community. The idealization of "the house" is not altogether innocent. Often it becomes invidiously used in drawing distinctions between different members in the community and was used in one instance by the vice president himself, indirectly reinforcing racist and tribal conceptions of complacency. In his speech, he told those present that the Bakgatla had always been an extremely progressive people. Not only were they the first people to establish co-operatives and water syndicates, but they were the first people to build really beautiful houses. He continued that in fact, even today, when people came to visit Mochudi from Gerowe, the Bamangwato capital, they often confused the houses with shops or white men's houses. People listening to the vice president laughed particularly at this statement. Not only do people have to contend with notions of their "lack of civilization" which live on in survivals of colonial ideology and even today in the ideological message which is conveyed in the constant flow of foreign "experts" who come to perform ununderstandable conjuring operations in the various government departments, but more seriously, people in the village itself have suffered the self-negating effects of internalizing some of these notions. Notions of civilization are used in discourse and often disguise the fact that classes are emerging. This was particularly the case in the vice president's speech where he praised the people of Mochudi for their "civilized" superiority. The history of this house-building among the Bakgatla extends back in time and can be directly linked with to influence of the Dutch-Reformed missionaries who established themselves in Mochudi in the early days. Today a pathetic descendant

of one of the powerful tribal authorities of the past lives alone with two retarded sons in what remains of what was once her father's Victorian mansion. As a young girl she never did any work because of the servants who worked for her father. When she was abandoned by her husband she returned to the family home without any desire to work. She is slightly deranged and is unable to choose between contradictory desires, one of these being to restore her father's home. She is without any means to do so. Her "pretensions of civilization" are scorned by the newly rich within the community. Notions of hierarchy from the past have fused perniciously with psychologically devastating notions of racist hierarchy. In one moment at least the past has collided in an unfortunate way with present realities.

The digression aside, Mmutla's house is just such a house, an object exuding superiority and which insists on the self-recognition of inferiority on the part of the impoverished beholder. The animals, in acknowledging their dependence on Mmutla, resurrect the notion of tribal benevolence which becomes surreptitiously permeated with class interest in real life. The specificity and newness of class interest tends to be obscured by the illusion that tribal benevolence can survive in its previous form. Thus rich people say of the opposition leader of the Botswana People's Party, Matante, 'We dislike Matante because he has travelled too much, he wants to impose foreign ideas (socialist ideas), he has divorced his wife and he is poor. How can he help anyone, being so poor? He would give us nothing.'

6. TRIBAL MORALITY VERSUS PARTY POLITICS: A PARTICULAR CASE STUDY

I am going to supplement this analysis of the people's critique of the government by examining in detail the

conceptions of a particular individual. I shall refer to him in this analysis as Tramoodolo or Grandfather. Important in his observations is the indicated conflict between the old way of life and a qualitatively new one. He thus contrasts the qualities of the politician with those of the chief. These comparisons are extended in that they predicate alternative kinds of society, the first implying the incorporation of social morality, the second its assumed absence. Thus social relations which stress communication, courtesy, generosity and humanity (botho) are contrasted with coercive relations which lay the foundations for a social situation in which social beings become objectified. The demise of the latter day world and the encroachment of the new, point to a disintegration within the communit and herald an era of bureaucratic impositions on the villages on the part of the government which not only has the consequence of erecting barriers between government and local bodies, but also results in the people themselves sometimes internalizing the attributes of thinghood, thus bypassing moral communicative interaction altogether. It is important to realize that Bureaucracy is perceived to have originated elsewhere in the world. The bureaucratic nature of the outside world is ominous since it is here that the amoral destructiveness of military science is primarily located. The outside world is therefore unpredictable. Overtly powerful, it constitutes an omnipresent threat to a country such as Botswana. Science in almost all its guises is negatively conceived since it points to the depersonalization of men. They come together to constitute a reservoir of manipulable objects for powerful men, who disappear behind the veil of their manipulations to elude confrontation. In this situation, existing political power is seen to be illegitimate.

This exposition will illuminate perceived opposing realities, one which is predicated on the notion of

community and which incorporates the possibility of communication, courtesy and respect for human life within the precincts of a collectivity of human beings; the other which destroys even the possibility of such a collectivity and which sunders communication. It is a reality in which coercion becomes a material force in that it is taken for granted that one works for others and not directly for oneself.

Although this analysis explores the ideas of one person this does not imply that these ideas are not generally prevalent within the community. The importance of evoking extensively one person's "world view" is to show the extreme subtlety of traditional thought and, in relation to our theoretical aims, to reveal the indispensable role which "ethnic" history plays in interpreting the present and in fact struggling against and opposing oneself to current reality.

Thus one may agree with Alverson when he writes:

> 'Colonial industrialism does not usually succeed in radically altering the consciousness of labour by forcing the latter to "internalize" its own assumption about human nature. While it does alter self-identity, the actors -- the Tswana in this case -- play a creative and independent role in working out that altered identity. The Tswana have not become the "print-out" of industrial automation. While the Tswana incorporate elements of modernity into their self-identity, the synthesis is a novel creation. The change in identity is as much the result of meanings the Tswana invest in their changed material conditions as it is the result of meanings that the institutions of colonial industrialism seek to impose.'(36)

Moral social relations belonging to the past and to a certain extent to today are conceived of cosmologically or naturalistically.(37) Power is precisely legitimate when it is perceived to be naturally or a-historically valid. Colonial experience has led to an interesting incorporation of the missionary God within tribal cosmology. Bramoggolo proclaimed:

'There is only one God, a God whose essential attributes are humanity and courtesy. Traditional life is carried out under the surveillance of this God. Today the name of God is often misused. The ancestors understood the laws intrinsic to the good life although they did not call God by the same name as do people today. Despite this, the missionary God is the same God as the one of the ancient days. We find proof of this in reading the bible since it is possible to find instances of polygamy, initiation and chieftainship in this book. The ancestors are in fact indistinguishable from the angels of God. Just as it is possible for a Christian to dream of angels, so it is possible for a Motswana to dream of an ancestor he in fact has never seen. The ancestor is visiting his descendant in the dream. He is constant reminder of what is morally good in life. The ancestors also make the living aware of their presence by ensuring that their descendants are physically aware of them. If a Motswana wakes up with a sore neck he knows his ancestors have been visiting their child. No matter what age the dreamer is, he is still a child of the ancestors. During the night they have exercised his neck very much in the same way as mothers in the village exercise the limbs of their babies by stretching and interlocking them. They are caring for their child. His growth and welfare are their preoccupation.'

Chief's power is sacred in so far as it is legitimized through the conception of the birthright of chiefs. Although the conception of a birthright of chiefs seems to imply the sacredness of individual power, in other words the naturalistic conception of birthright can be used as a rationalization for the exigencies of individual autocratic power, this is not the perceived conception because the laws which govern society are seen to precede any particular chief and it is this aspect of the law which is stressed. Pramoolo graphically illustrated this point by using his hands to indicate that the law with which a chief rules his people is situated between God and man. The law is therefore more powerful than man and can crush him if he strays in wielding it. Pramoolo's words:

'The power invested in the chief implies true democracy.* There are four things which a chief must become: a mother (mma), a servant (motlhanka), a child (ngwana) and a bull (pôô). He is a mother in

*The informant used the phrase "true democracy" in English.

> that when travelling he is expected to observe the way in which other people conduct their lives. His motherliness ensures that he brings back knowledge of any beneficial or pleasing foreign custom. He must get goodness from other sources on behalf of his people. As servant, the chief is expected to listen to what others are saying. Because of this he is unable to act alone. The headmen of various wards are there to advise him. As child of the people, the chief is expected to be called by people at all times. When he is in the village (motse) people must be able to find him easily and once they have found him he must put aside any other activities and listen to what they have come to tell him. As bull the chief is protector of his people. When circumstances result in war with others, he must fearlessly lead people into battle.'

It is clear from the stated qualities of a chief that the chief's power does not ideally constitute autocratic power but rather is dependent on the will and assistance of the community. One aspect of the above exposition needs further clarification. As we shall see shortly the chief's identity as child refers again to the transcendental conception of social laws since he is a child in relation to his ancestors. The dead become the guardians of morality amongst the living. This idea is often expressed by the conception that one's ancestors are standing on one's shoulders, conception which not only implies the perpetuation of cultural origins or their continual evocation but also indicates the way in which these origins are connected with a "natural" morality which repeats itself in time. In this sense history is instituted through a reflective gaze directed towards the past and not towards the future. To extend the notion of chiefly benevolence to others apart from his actual people (sechaba) the hypostatization and centricity of the notion of collectivity within tribal cosmology has the consequence that the chief is not only perceived as the protector of his own people but also of any others who come to seek refuge within the community. Communication, humanity, courtesy and respect for human life embodied within the person of the chief are assumed to extend throughout society, since the chief becomes a

symbol of that collectivity.

The good life chiefly embodies the ability to maintain peace within the community and includes the incorporation of refugees of all kinds because, in the words of Tramocolo:

> 'To live peacefully with others implies the ability to accept even the poor and ragged stranger into the warmth of one's own blankets and to give him shelter for the night. It is possible for a stranger to find a home amongst the Bakgatla. Once such a stranger has seen the chief he is free to walk in the village and no dog will dare to bite him. Just as people are expected to treat a stranger courteously, so the stranger is expected to respect the hospitality of others by leaving without stealing from those who are willing to share porridge with him even if there has only been a little to share.'

Contrast a world view in which reciprocity is important even amon t enemies with a world in which reciprocity pales into insignificance and where it operates stripped of its social power between the interstices of social and economic relations. Given present power relations, tribal morality becomes obsolete although it provides a potent reference point for critique of the present government.

The Politician versus the Chief:

We now come to contrast the notion of the politician to that of the chief. The identity of the politician is in all ways antithetical to the ideal conception of the chief. Briefly, the politician pretends to have people's interests at heart, lusts for individual power, is destructive, and because of loss of origins imposes arbitrary definitions of the world onto people and because of this breeds abominations of one sort or another which disrupt peaceful living. The politician is linked to the wider world in that he is unscrupulous in the utilization of means to power (e.g. military science). The politician in what is to follow is clearly, although implicitly, placed within the realm of Sekgoa, thus

becoming the cultural other.

The politician is described by Rramogolo as being invariably 'a wolf in sheep's clothing'.

> 'The sheep, when you kill it, looks with trust into your eyes and doesn't even emit a sound when it dies. It is truly a human animal. The politician feigns trust in his people and dies noisily, like a goat.'

More extensively, Rramogolo stated:

> 'The politician is without traditional law, is anti-life, in fact treats life without respect. He acts by devious means to obtain desired ends. These include force and murder. He imposes himself rather than being acceptable to people. The politician too easily defines p[illegible] and directs hatred and madness towards thes[illegible] is incapable of judging people in terms of t[illegible]ure of their hearts. Why are so-called holy men [illegible]e Sithole and Muzorewa indulging in wars? Ar[illegible]s an example of this type of lawless politician
>
> 'Too many people hav[illegible]otten their origins and consequently are wit[illegible]dentity. If they do have identity it is often an evil one. In the past origins amongst the Bakgatla were kept alive through the knowledge of proverbs and rituals, both of which have largely disappeared. The Boers are an example of a lawless people who have also forgotten their origins, the fact that they came from Holland and spoke High Dutch. Today they speak a bastard language where many words are often strung together into a single word. The language has lost precision and denies distinctions. It too easily thinks of other people as being without humanity. Where did the notion of apartheid originate? It truly did not originate with the original God but is the Boers' creation. The Boers distorted the word of God by thinking that dogs and men are the same creature. At the entrance of what they call the house of God I have read the notice "Hond en kaffir mag nie hier binne kom nie". The Vorster and Smith governments which think of such inconceivable ideas have resulted in tides of war and who knows where those wars will lead us to. Even those who have been victims of their hatred are not unaffected by such matters. Religious leaders, Bishop Abel Muzorewa and the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole now wield the battle axe and are driven only by hunger for power. Given this hunger, they are incapable of respecting human life. Science, too, is evil since it has found ways of destroying people from afar without enemies seeing each other in the eyes. One can kill many people this way without any knowledge of them, without

> feeling. Another invention of science is the aeroplane, the biggest aeroplane being the spaceship which was sent to the moon. Europeans are too busy trying to name the world with scientific names. Because of this they no longer pay any attention to the way in which people live together. What is the point of discovering other forms of life, people perhaps, if one shows no respect for human life on earth?'

During the course of this exposition aeroplanes actually flew over our heads and Bramocolo jokingly referred to them as the "flying devils" because their noise had interrupted the flow of our conversation even here in the village. For a short while we were unable to hear one another.

> 'Science of basic things was good of food, corn, water and soil. It was good to preserve the trees, not to chop them out and be left with a wasteland. It was good to conserve water and wild game. These things give us life. One can observe that if we walk on a foot path when the rain comes it does not seep into the ground but runs along the footpath carrying soil with it. The next year it becomes bigger until it is like a river and then we have a donga.'

Often Bramocolo referred to science as being an "Aminish" or "Hitlerish" subject, clearly connecting it with coercive destruction, and was relieved to know that I was not studying it at the university. Perhaps it is fitting to end this account by relating an incident which Bramocolo perceived as teaching him how to deal with the historical changes which he so vividly describes.

From 1[illegible]2 he attended school in "Basutoland". One day his father sent for him.

> 'I went to my teacher and said "My father has called me". This teacher loved me and so he said, "If your father has called you, you must know that you are leaving another behind you. Because of this I will now give you some advice. You are going out into the world, a world which stares the individual uncompromisingly in the face".'

In order to cope with this, Bramocolo said, one had no alternative than to stare at the world in the same way. Only in this way would one be able to cope with evil.

One would not be broken by the world but would learn from it.

> 'The world is like a fierce animal, one has to stare it in the eyes to survive. Human beings are sometimes the most evil of animals. At the present time one has to look the wildness and disintegration of life straight in the face. One should not try to deny the fact that great changes are taking place. It is a good thing to travel under these circumstances because travel broadens the mind and allows one to come to grips with foreign worlds.'

Dramogolo also said that the meaning of his name and the identity which it gave him aided him in facing the world. Kgamanyane, his surname, means small hartebeest and indicates that one is an orphan because baby hartebeest often outrun their mothers soon after birth and because of this find themselves alone in the veld. Thus when someone is given the name Kgamanyane, he potentially becomes one who is essentially alone, who makes his own decisions but one who faces the world with the alertness of the startle-eyed kgamanyane, and consequently is not taken unawares.

Contrasting experiences of courtesy in the past and its erosion within the present

The following exposition on the nature of courtesy in the past and its dissolution today was given by the same informant, Dramogolo. These reveal the assumption of two socially and morally differentiated ways of being in the world, ways which have been suggested more explicitly in the above. Dramogolo gave two historical examples of a kind of courtesy which, he claimed, presupposed fundamentally different social conditions from those of today, a courtesy belonging to the past. In one example, Dramogolo described how a Boer farmer returned to Mochudi after the Anglo-Boer war of 1902. All his cattle had been raided by the Bakgatla during the war. He begged them to return some of them and this was done despite the fact that prior to the war this farmer had on one occasion grossly insulted the people of Mochudi.*

*Recall the fact of incorporation of enemies within traditional society mentioned in the comparison between chiefly power and the power of the politician.

The second instance referred to the way in which Sechele of the Bakwena was deposed.

> 'When people had serious grievances against the chief he is not to be killed as deposed leaders are today. Rather people force him to leave, saying "You are not looking after your people, we are throwing you away." We had respect for human life whereas today there is none.'

Bramoqolo contrasted this type of courtesy with an experience of his own in which he revealed how this courtesy had been overcome. Bramoqolo is in his 60's and was reluctantly persuaded to go to Gaberone one day for an interview with the Botswana Broadcasting Corporation. He was reluctant precisely because Gaberone represented for him all that was pernicious in the modern world. In our conversations he often made distinctions between town life and the village, the village being the last refuge of humanitarian and courteous living. He humorously stated that he had agreed to go to Gaberone only if he could return to Mochudi for the night. He refused to sleep in "such a wild place as the town". Of Gaberone he said:

> 'While all the people present were taking part in discussion we tried to find out why the young people of today are so rude and uncontrollable. Many of the young people there, said it was because of the influence of whites in the town so I observed that there were only a few whites living in Gaberone and that in any case people's goodness has to be located in their hearts and not in the colour of their skins like goats. If you say that all the country's problems are due to whites you avoid looking at yourself and your responsibilities. This makes it easy for many bad things to flourish, thieving, harsh sexuality where girls are forced to submit to men, murder, hot-air politicians, the dissolution of marriage and the problem where many more women are educated than men and who are they going to marry? People think that once whites have disappeared all these problems will disappear with them. The chairman of the meeting did not listen to me at all while I was telling the people this. He interrupted me because he was so eager to force his own views onto people without discussion. This was terrible seeing I was the oldest person present. Even I myself am still a child because my ancestors are standing on my shoulders. These other men are even more like children because

> they are younger than me. Is this true democracy where people cannot finish what they want to say? There are too many wild people around who are not really interested in peace.'

The loss of cultural roots and its social consequences as well as propositions for coping with this

The loss of cultural roots was linked by Rramogolo to a loss of identity on the part of the individual. This not only precipitated moral confusion in the village itself, but also led to the attempt to approximate the ways of sekgoa which were little understood.

Rramogolo drew on a specific creation myth which for him exemplified the general lawlessness of the community where social relations were no longer defined.

> 'Today people are all bats (bomamat[illegible]ane). We have a story of creation in which all men and animals are gathered together in order to receive social law via the chief of their particular species. The poor bat hovered between the community of birds and mice and proved unacceptable to both. Whenever he tried to approach one he was asked severely "O batlang?" (What do you want?) It is clear that he belonged nowhere. It is true that because people have lost their cultural roots and they admire the ways of sekgoa without understanding them, they too are bats and belong nowhere.'

Using the unclassifiable and anomalous creature of the creation myth, the bat, as a means of illustrating the confused identity of people today, admirably illustrates the way in which ethnic elements constitute a resourceful reservoir which facilitates a meaningful interpretation and critique of current reality. Apart from this, the tale beautifully illustrates the confused identity which many experience. History has almost imperceptibly changed the social relations of the past because, although overtly they seem to have survived despite the phenomenon of migrant labour, their meaning has changed fundamentally. People are also excluded fr m the relations of power within the new world. Thus the past coexists with a foreign

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reality and neither are exactly what they seem to be.

7. General Conclusion

The two most important themes which have emerged within the chapter are 1) the potential of traditional ideas to constitute a critique of current social relations and 2) the simultaneous emergence of elitism and its negation which is brought out by the ambivalence of many villagers towards those in power. With regard to 1, the government is seen to impose many things on village life. These impositions include foreign conceptions of law, culture, expertise and also in some cases the appeals to a national unity are seen to disguise internal conflicts The perceived distance between government and village is culturally interpreted as being the result of the government's identification with the "ways of Sekgoa". These are sharply contrasted with the "ways of Setswana". With regard to 2, traditional conceptions concerning wealth continue to be associated with new forms of wealth. Wealth, ever if it is associated with exploitation, is admired. Simultaneously people are aware of the fact that wealth or access to wealth is scarce, hence the invidious distinctions which people make between members of the same community.

In a more concise formulation, we see that the perceived distance between the ways of Sekgoa and the ways of Setswana is not uncomplicated. These cultural horizons have intermingled despite resistance. The perceived elitism of government has manifestations within the community itself in the form of consumptive violence and invidious notions of "civilization". Thus despite the fact that elements of Sekgoa and Setswana are used against each other in overt discourse, Sekgoa has entrenched itself. A critique of power afforded by the cultural horizon of Setswana recognizes the intrusive and disruptive influence of Sekgoa. Sekgoa coercively

challenges and erodes Setswana with the result that interpretation of contemporary forces is uncertain. This has given rise to the experience of an anomalous social order, as witnessed clearly in Kramodolo's utilization of a creation myth.

CHAPTER 4

1. Cf. GODELIER, M. 'Infrastructures, Societies and History'. New Left Review, November 1978, vol.112, pp. 84 ff.

2. Cf. SAHLINS, M.D. Culture and Practical Reason. Chicago University Press, 1977.

3. Wards are large kinship groupings in which people in the village are organized.

4. A description of the wards is as follows:
'Wards of the Bakgatla bakgafela, Mochudi, Botswana, are four and the fifth is the Kgosing (meaning: the metaphor of the ox is implicitly used, cattle being the most important form of property. The four wards; the Morema, Mabodisa, Tshukudu and Maramakgoto are the four legs of the village, the chief's ward, the Kgosing, being the head).'
PILANE, A., WITCHISON, N. "Wards of the Bakgatla-bakgaKgafela". Botswana Notes and Records, vol. 5. Gaberone: the Botswana Society, 1973, p.123.

5. Cf SAUL, J. "The Dialectics of Class and Tribe", Race and Class, Vxx4, 1979. Pp. 349-350.

6. CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS, The Savage Mind. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1973, p.17.

7. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.34.

8. SILLERY writes that between 1960 and 1964, more than 1 400 refugees entered the Protectorate.
SILLERY,A. Botswana, a Short Political History, Studies in African History -- 5. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1974, p.155.

9. STEVENS,R.P. Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland: the former High commission territories in Southern Africa. London: Pallmall Press, 1967, p.141.

10. Ibid, p.141.

11. Ibid, p.142.

12. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.34.

13. SEGAL,R. African Profiles. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth and Baltimore, 1962, p.48.

14. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.72.

15. STEVENS,R.P. (1967), p.145.

16. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.35

17. Ibid, p.38.

18. Ibid, p.38.

19. Ibid, p.41.

20. "Kgotla" means traditional meeting place.

21. STEVENS,R. (1967), p.155.

22. COLCLOUGH,C., McCARTHY,S. (1980), p.47.

23. PARSON,J. "Political Culture in Rural Botswana ", Journal of Modern African Studies, vol.15, No.4, 1977.

24. STEVENS,R.P. (1967), p.147.

25. Objection to the chieftaincy in this case indicates particular party ideology.

26. Referring to the distance created between government and people, ALVERSON has quoted an elder as saying '(Being rich in town) caus s our leaders of today to lose touch with their people. They all have big-stomachs, they've forgotten what hunger is like and what must be done to save hungry people. They don't feel hot sand on their feet They travel on their buttocks (i.e. in cars). They can't listen to their hearts because they are removed from Setswana life.' (Kgarhamadi elder)

27. ALVERSON,H. (1978), p.72.

28. Ibid, p.124.

29. Recall Bakgatla opposition to the T.G.L.P. (Tribal Grazing policy).

30. ALVERSON,H. (1978), p.133.

31. PHILIP MORGAN has written 'Rhodesian soldiers began violating Botswana s border in 1975, a process that has continued into 1978. By July 1977 the border had been violated over 100 times.' CARTER,G.M., O'MEARA,P. (1979), p.231.

32. FREIRE,P. The Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Herder & Herder (1970).

33. Similar themes to those encountered in the tale are to be found in the tales "The Hare and the Elephant" and "Musenga the Hare". SAVORY,P. Ntu Folk Tales from Southern Africa. Capetown: Howard Timmins, 1974, pp.176-180 and 184-189.

Also a tale dealing specifically with drought and Mmutla's deception may be found in "The Rogue Hare" from SAVORY,P. Fireside Tales of the Hare and His Friends.
Capetown: Howard Timmirs, 1965, pp.49-52.

34. Cf E.E. EVANS-PRITCHARD (ed) The Zande Trickster Claredon Press, Oxford, 1967, p.28-30.

35. EVANS-PRITCHARD writes in this regard:
'Ture is a monster of depravity: liar, cheat, lecher, murderer; vain, greedy, treacherous, ungrateful, a poltroon, a braggart. This utterly selfish person is everything against which Azande warn their children most strongly. Yet he is the hero of their stories and it is to their children that his exploits are related and he is presented with very little moralizing -- if as a rogue, as an engaging one .... Perhaps Ture also appeals to Azande because he does what he pleases, what in their hearts they would like to do themselves.'
op. cit. pp. 28-29.

36. ALVERSON,H. (1978), p.280.

37. Cf last chapter where ALVERSON draws links between morality and the state of the natural environment.

CHAPTER 5

CONFLICT BETWEEN THE WORLD VIEWS OF YOUNG AND OLD.

Banyana ba ikgansa ka disco fela
Makgoa a ikgansa ka milo fela
tuselele tuselele tuselele

Little children are only proud of disco dancing
Whites are only proud of drinking Milo
tuselele tuselele tuselele

(Children's song, Mahudi)

INTRODUCTION

In the introductory section of this chapter I shall deal with general accounts of the contrast in world view between young and old in the Kgatleng district as a whole.(1) We shall therefore draw on other people's research in the area, linking this with specific accounts from Mochudi itself. This will, on the one hand, register the disquiet on the part of the old concerning the total erosion of a traditional past as well as their explanations for this. On the other hand, accounts of the world views of the young will reveal a rejection of the past or an attempt to rationalize it in terms of, for example, scientific criteria. More specifically with regard to Mochudi, we shall also witness the attempt of the old to reincorporate the young within the community through the ceremony "mogoga", a specific sacrifice performed for the dead. Notice that in contrasting the difference in world-views between young and old I have appeared to collapse class differences which obviously incorporate both young and old. But it seems to me that the recurrent rejection of village life on the part of the young is a general phenomenon which spans different classes and their varying degrees of identification with petit-bourgeois aspirations or the ways of "Sekgoa". To me this indicates an endemic ideological crisis within any situation dominated by migratory labour.

With reference to the old, although the Kgatleng is a small area, most people have relatively equal access to land. There are few large land owners and few who are totally landless at present although we have pointed to the inevitable encroachment on land by big capitalist farmers due to government policies. These people who have some access to land use that access as a window to a past form of social organization. It is amongst these people that a critique of current reality via traditional

concepts is to be located.(2)

In comparing world views I shall deal with the issues listed in Section I of the chapter plan. In the second section of this chapter I shall examine primary school education in Mochudi in detail. This will attempt to show the disjunction between village life and school, i.e. how the school is imposed on the community and how what is learnt in school is totally irrelevant to the everyday life of the village. In this section of the chapter I shall more precisely examine the issues as listed in Section II of the chapter plan.

SECTION I

1. Attitudes to land as a resource

Older people in the village generally express a positive attitude to land. Its symbolic importance is clearly emphasized when, for example, the old compare the fertility of land in the past with its present state of barrenness and link this disparity with different social orders. Thus chiefly rule is conducive to general fertility of land while current lack of productivity is linked with the domination of Sekgoa. Continuing these parallels, rain or pula originally controlled by the chiefs has been replaced by another type of rain, money, equally indispensable in the new order.

Land is also highly valued amongst the old because of its potential ability to provide the basic necessities of life. The land continually reminds the old of their self-sufficiency in the past, this being one of the most highly valued aspects of Setswana.

The following passage clearly indicates the positive value attributed to the land and to cattle on the part

of those who harbour the memory of their own autonomy in the past. This account was given to me by a woman in her eighties who regularly ploughs and cultivates her field all on her own and who delights in the fact that she largely provides for her own subsistence.

> 'When white people come to the area you can be sure that in a few years they will be taking away the people's wealth. One white came to Mochudi and married a young girl here. I used to see him passing through the village in his car. He was driving towards her home. When he married her he bought some land and started to grow vegetables. He sold very good vegetables, better than the ones which come from South Africa. Better than those you could find in Gaberone. He has now built himself a couple of shops. Truly he is well set up now. It is sad to see people from the village refusing to plough and care for cattle, while others are taking their wealth from them. Even if some people have a lot of money, they are not really wealthy. The habitual life of the Batswana is to plough and raise cattle. This is really what one should call life. Collecting money is another work.'
> (Grandmother -- Mochudi) My emphasis

The above passage recognizes the rejection by the young of the land as a productive resource, land is naturalized by the young as being necessarily and a-historically barren. It marks this rejection with deep regret. Although this passage implicitly acknowledges the necessity of submitting oneself to current economic conditions it also forcefully rejects these in affirming the aesthetic satisfaction and autonomy which is derived from utilization of the means of production for one's own subsistence. The wage, the collection of money, is not seen to be rewarding work, it is simply a necessity in today's world.

The above contains an implicit critique of work as it exists under new social relations and is extremely valuable in that it potentially challenges the very nature of these relations. This challenge is rooted in a specific concept of land as a resource, and it is questionable whether this critical moment could exist without

this forceful conception from the past. The nature of this conception is that land is given aesthetic value. It is not treated as an object to be dominated by man as it is under capitalism. Man's autonomy rests precisely on this mediation between himself and the land. Man's access to land is a determining factor for the possibility of continued autonomy.

Of direct relevance here is the specific meaning which the Tswana traditionally give to the concept "doing". In Setswana doing is not simply a general-purpose verb of action, rather it denotes activity characterized by significant value -- that is to say desire or want.(3) Thus "doing" in this sense, is significantly different from the concept of doing in our own society where doing is often regarded as a means to an end.(4) Doing in itself is not necessarily regarded as being pleasurable and what we desire or want is often situated at a great distance from the context of our present activities of doing or work.(5)

Agriculture and animal husbandry comprise one of the "Great works" of the Tswana, activities in which doing and wanting to do are inextricably bound together. The potential self-sufficiency this kind of work affords is contrasted with wage labour. Selling one's labour in the mines is not regarded by the Tswana as "doing" anything at all. "Go dira", the verb to do and "go batla", the verb to want which also implies to seek thus establishing a necessary connection between wanting and doing are sharply contrasted with the foreign terms "go bereka" and "go sebetsa", to do work for a wage.

If we recall the account in the previous chapter concerning a grandmother from Mochudi who bemoans the fact that young women are no longer prepared to work the land and are, in any case, unable to do so because of their stockings and high-heel shoes, we see that this account

clearly indicates the rejection of the land as a resource and identification on behalf of the young with imperialist notions of culture and civilization. This rejection of the land on the part of the young offers no real critique of the polarization of rural and urban areas under new social and economic relations. It reflects the interests of neo-colonial ideology precisely because it rationalizes the underdevelopment of the rural areas by deceptively disguising the relationship between the urban and rural areas. They are not perceived as indubitably belonging to a totality, a single social formation in which the prosperity of the one is dependent on the impoverishment of the other. Rather the rural areas are treated as a poor relation, a ghost from the past which may ultimately be abandoned.

Let us now contrast the affirmation of the land as a valuable resource and a symbolic representation of past or alternative social relations with the young people's rejection of it. As I have attempted to show, the essence of this rejection is founded in a situation where the young seek their identity in an unobtainable external other, access to the cultural affectations of the ways of the English.

This longing results in vacuous affectation because although the young aspire to be outside the area they must inevitably return. Their "civilized" pretensions are rendered lifeless because they lack the underlying social matrix which would give them that life. They are drawn into the market place since they themselves constitute a reserve army of labour as well as a market for consumer goods. The accumulation of commodities whether material or cultural are unable to fulfil their false promise of surrendering power to their consumers. These are left only with a pernicious illusion of power. The following incident indicates a direct representation of the cultural other as I have described it.

As I was walking down to the community centre one day, I met a young boy; after a short introduction the conversation inevitably turned to marriage. Would I be prepared to marry a Motswana man and go to the lands? The inference was not so much that I should marry him, a racist pressure to prove my allegiance to the community, but rather I symbolized for him in my whiteness an embodiment of a certain kind of socialization that could no longer cope with the "arduousness" of the task of labouring at the lands, a state which he was rapidly approaching. I was used by him, as an embodiment of the civilized cultural other, as a material legitimation of his own "inability" to return to the rural way of life.

Another revealing conversation with a young girl clearly indicates on one level a rejection of village life, work at the lands and its implicit association with lack of prestige and uncivilized behaviour.

> 'Everyone wants to learn English so that they can speak to whites. I want to work in an office, a high building, because you can wear clean clothes and not be dirty like our grandmothers who work at the lands. Working in the village is boring. There is nothing to do but eat and work hard at the lands or the cattle post or at home. There is no money in the village. But in an office there is money at the end of the month.'
> (Schoolgirl -- Mochudi)

2. Attitude to the cities

Young people idealize the cities. The cities offer employment, money, entertainment, clothes, escape from communal obligations and sexual licence. The old are suspicious of the real benefits of the cities. For them the cities are the place of the big stomachs, "black white-men". The ostentatious commodities which the city offers are regarded as a means of diverting young people's attention from the real value of traditional life and culture. The work which is associated with the city is

seen as a necessity because money is a necessity in today's world, but this kind of work is seen to be associated with domination, with lack of autonomy. Money for its own sake is not so highly valued. The accompanying tapestry indicates the reservations with which older people regard the commodities which the city has to offer.(6)

3. Attitude to government and leaders

The young generally feel positive about the government and its leaders. The role of the school and of education must not be underestimated in this development. Government leaders are inevitably associated with education and its benefits. As we have seen in the last chapter, people have a decidedly negative conception of government and politicians. A number of young school girls in Mochudi showed me proudly pictures of the President and his cabinet ministers, carefully explaining who they were and what their position in government was.

4. Attitudes to village politics

Young people in general show little interest in village politics. As has been shown, their whole orientation is external to the village. They seldom, if at all, attend kgotla meetings, these being predominantly attended by the elderly. Older people too show little interest in village politics since they realize in many ways the impotence of the chief. They do not overtly assist government bodies such as the land board and the community council, seeing these bodies as primarily representing social services which exclude their active participation. Because people feel excluded from participation in government affairs and because they experience government involvement to be an imposition, there is no sense in which they perceive themselves as having an active role to play in national politics or even in



'You do not know what to tell children these days or how to help them. What can you say? They do not listen any more, anyhow, so sometimes your heart becomes very heavy. What can you say when they are told all the time about that smooth great life offered in the towns? Drinks, smokes, dress to kill. They do not care about what we, their elders, can tell them, so they all have to learn the hard way. Sooner or later they have to return to the village because, you see, the towns can offer them nothing but illness. This is a very hard thing because, when they return, they are lost ... they believe in nothing.'

Weavers:
Emah Mothlaledi
Odirile Ntsatsi
& Salome Tseko

This is our life; Tapestries from Botswana, p.33

village politics which largely involve government bodies. They view the government passively, perceiving it as having the wealth to initiate material improvements and seeing themselves as being devoid of this access to wealth. They therefore view their relation to government statically, expecting the government to introduce improvement in village life without assistance.

The disaffection of the people at large from, in some instances, the chief and from the government is expressed in the following observation by Kooijman:

> 'The tragedy of this period of transition is that the new institutions do not function effectively as yet. The old system may have been weakened but the new has not yet taken its place in the allegiance of the people.... Many do not view the new institutions as a legitimate alternative to chiefly rule, and certainly not as having the right to request their active co-operation. Only the chief is considered to have the right to request such labour or other services, although they will not necessarily obey him any longer. Neither the village district council nor the district councillor would be able to call regiments for self-help projects.'(7)

5. Attitudes to communal obligations

Because of the migrant labour situation and the breakdown of the family into smaller economic units, there is a constant battle between individual interest and communal obligation. Both are necessarily present since the very nature of migratory labour dictates that neither are sufficient. Young people tend to regard their obligations to their families as being onerous. Interestingly enough, many of them cannot conceive of the possibility of total independence and many of them suggest the importance of a group of friends to support them in times of need. This ambiguously defined group of friends is perceived to be more flexible than the family group. Older people are continually attempting to re-incorporate the young into the family group, not only ritually but

through imposing economic obligations onto them. They stress the unreliability of friends. Many also realize the breakdown of the family group as economic unit.

> 'The concept of lineage and ward is useless in today's world. Once the children get married, their life is their concern.'(8)

In the family with which I was staying, the grandmother was continually trying to involve her son in communal projects, such as the maintenance of a syndicate well and in the management of her cattle herd. These efforts he dexterously evaded, continually stressing his desire to be independent of others and to look after his family on his own. He looked forward to a time when he could stop his work in Johannesburg and live permanently in Mochudi, setting up an independent business of some kind. Other obligations, he felt, spread his limited resources too thin.

6. Attitudes to sexual mores

Sexual mores amongst the young exhibit the desire to imitate the cultural other, "the ways of Sekgoa". This is reflected in the desire of many young girls for white men who represent power, security and civilization for them. Much courting is also done in English. There are many songs which children sing which reflect this preoccupation. Witness the following song which is obviously influenced by the presence of Canadian volunteers in the country. (Spelling according to pronounciation).

> I've got a guy mother shoe baby
> He's a beautiful from Southren Canada
> He's a beautiful, what has happened to your shoe.
> Tell your daddy what has happened to your shoe,
> shoe, shoe.
>
> (Young girls -- Mochudi)

The following song expresses the propriety which "English" gives to the courting situation:-

This song in English reflects the sad parting of a migrant from his girlfriend or wife, however it also lends the whole scene an imported propriety by stressing certain kinds of behaviour and the prestige of certain objects:

> There is a lady sitting on the sofa
> There is a gentleman smoking cigarette
> There is a gentleman smoking cigarette
> 'Goodbye my dear', there is a gentleman smoking cigarette
> (Children's song -- Mochudi)

Contrast this song with another which records the same situation but without any of its cultural affectation:

> Sila sila mealie mealie
> ngwana wa batho (x2)
> dali wa tsamaya
> lerato le fedile (x2)
>
> Stamp the corn, stamp the corn
> child of the people
> darling has gone away
> the love is finished
> (Children's song -- Mochudi)

I have chosen to relate a story which the father of the house told me about a young woman whom he met while travelling in the train up to Serowe. This story explores, in a humorous fashion, the attractiveness accorded to white men by many young black women and the material promise which they embody. The white man represents the means to escape from village life into the other world of beautiful objects, money and prestige.

> 'I met a young woman in the train. She was a drunk and carried in her one hand a half-jack of wine. She was also in a happy mood and this caused her to talk a lot. One of the first things she did on the train was to go to the bar where some of the young men thought they could make the best of her drunken state by tricking her out of her wine. She bought another bottle and carefully made her way back to her seat in front of me. She began to talk to me, telling me this story. She came from Rasesa.(9) While still a young girl she soon had a number of children like many of us. Her mother treated her badly because of this and they were always fighting.

The old lady said she would never be any good and would never find a husband but would just eat the food at home. Her mother loved her brothers because, as she said, "they brought back beautiful things from the mines".(10) This young girl had really been desperate and she tried to find work for herself. She began working in an Indian's shop in Gaberone and in a short time she was sleeping with him. He gave her "a beautiful bed and cupboard, in fact a whole bedroom suite". She had a koelie child by him. Eventually she left him and went up to Selebi Phikwe with all her furniture. She arrived there one night and had nowhere to store her goods. Towards early morning she came across an old Scotsman who promised that he would store her things for nothing and for as long as she liked. She then began to stay at his house. Not long after this he began to propose love. She was horrified because he was just a monnamogolo (grandfather) with no teeth. She ignored him. Then for the first time in her life money came easily to her. Monnamogolo used to give her lots of it and she would go out and buy food and anything else she wanted. He told her to keep the change and this she used to deposit in her bank until she had saved over P200 in tips alone. She then said to herself, "You know, this old man is good. No other has ever given me anything like this before. Perhaps once a year a boyfriend will give you P10 and then they tell you that you are lucky." She then decided that he was very good to her and that she might as well sleep with him. She forgot about his lack of teeth and his age and everything went smoothly until she started going out to parties to see younger men. She would sometimes return to Monnamogolo for comfort because she had not been successful. They fought for about three months. She said, "You know, that man can be fierce. He could easily take a gun and shoot somebody. He's a real Scots." He eventually gave her enough money to build a 3-bedroomed house in Rasesa even with a flush toilet inside. She was very proud of her flush toilet. I tell you, she now had the courage to remain faithful to her old man. She had come down on the train to pay the builders and as usual the old man had told her to keep the change. She showed everyone her bank book and said that today she was a rich woman because she had P7 000. When I looked at it I saw that she actually had about P700, but to her this was a fortune. She took a key out of her bag, waved it in front of everyone and said, "You see this key, with this key I'm going to open the door of my very own house, the house where I will keep my old man. I can walk straight to the fridge and if I open the door it will be full of beers." Some people thought that seeing she was advertising

her wealth, she would be carrying a lot of money on her and they tried to sneak up and take her case. Although she was drunk she knew what was going on and whenever one of the young men came up to her she said, "I smell death, don't you?" and "I'm not stupid, you know I don't carry cash on me. It's all deposited in my bank book." Also when someone tried to grab her blanket she said, "Don't you touch that blanket. It doesn't belong to you and it's not even mine. It was bought with a real man's money. It's a real man's blanket." Because she too was bringing beautiful things home, her mother was suddenly very friendly again, but she said that she would never let the old woman or her family over the threshold into her beautiful new house. The old Scot would keep them out with his gun. On top of all this good fortune Monnamogolo wanted to marry her so that he could leave all his money to her. She was worried about only one thing. She knew he would die soon and, as a widow, other men would be careful about coming near her because widows are often in a dangerous state and they bring bad luck to their new husbands or boyfriends.'
(Young man$-- Mochudi) (My emphasis)

Briefly examining the passage we are able to locate a perceived rite of passage on the part of the young woman. Her good fortune has placed her within a new social category. She divorces herself from the past. She allocates all her family, the young men on the train, poverty, to a single category. She relegates herself, the white Monnamogolo, the house, the flush toilet, to another wholly exclusive category. Her disparaging remarks about the young men on the train, her vow to bar the door of her new house to all relatives indicates her rejection of her past. She wishes to render herself untouchable in relation to this past.

Many old people object to the way in which women imitate white women in their dress and behaviour. Wide-spread disapproval of Seretse's marriage indicated for them the encroachment of the "ways of the English".

The following account by an uncle of the family I was living with indicates in an unusual way an association

between sexual licence and the ways of the English.

'Today children no longer play in a Setswana way, they play in an English way. In the old days people would play with the bones of cattle. They would inspan two rows of bones and play as if they were herding cattle. Today they have forgotten the bones and think only of cars. Today all the young girls even of 14 years old are having babies. What do you English people do about it? Your young boys and girls play with one another and the girls eat pills. With us, people have forgotten all things Setswana and when we die all things will be forgotten. People call themselves Batswana; they are always saying, "We are Batswana", but they are Batswana of the mouth only. Young children today cover their bodies with clothes before they are grown. In the old days children wore nothing except makgabe and ditsega.(11) Their bodies felt the wind and they were not cold. Look at me, I am wearing so many clothes. I will get colder than you because you are not wearing so many. The wind will enter your body and make you strong. Children used to be strong in their bodies and minds before they had grown into adults. Children did not wear clothes until their early twenties, until they had grown hair properly under their arms and until their breasts were well formed. Their heads and their arms had then fully grown, there was no longer water in their heads. But today children, even small ones, wear clothes, the girls panties and the boys underpants.

'What happens to mabele when you put it in a pot, wet it and cover it with a lid? You have covered the mabele and it will grow.(12) The same applies to children. You have covered their genitals and they will grow. You feed them rich food like eggs and they will develop too quickly while there is still water in their heads. You will call a young girl to come and work but her veins will only be longing for thinking of a certain boy. She will not enjoy the work. You will call a boy to work and he will have disappeared because he is thinking of a certain girl. He is nowhere to be found when you need him. Today many girls are carrying babies but they and the boys are not ready for parenthood. Their heads are full of water and they only lust after one another, never considering the consequences. They are playing in the ways of the English. Especially those people in the villages. The young men at the cattle posts are better because they do not care about clothes and do not feel the cold even in June. When they return to the village they are strong and ready to have children. They are not like the sprouting mabele in pots. Rather they are

> like the mabele when it has been poured into a sack, dry and hard.'

7. Attitudes to technology

Both young and old attribute the white man's domination to their mastery of technology (sephiri sa tshipi, secret of iron). Neither group, on the whole, disputes their ability to gain mastery of technology, citing only differences in educational opportunities and the specific nature of relations of power as constituting an obstacle to this.(13)

Whereas young value technology as such because it symbolizes for them access to effective participation within the relations of power, the old, although valuing certain aspects of technological development which they perceive as being socially valuable, are suspicious of technology's destructive potential. Hence the following account by an elder from Mochudi:

> 'Science of the basic things is good; food, water, corn, soil. It is good to preserve the trees, not to chop them out and be left with a waste land. It is good to conserve water and wild game. These things give us life. One can observe that if we walk on a footpath when the rain comes it does not seep into the ground but runs along the footpath carrying soil with it. The next year it becomes bigger until it is like a river, and then we have a donga.'
> (ElderK-- Mochudi)

Dependence caused by technology and the exploitative relations, seen to be implicit within technology on the part of many older people, is compared with the perceived superiority of simplicity and self-sufficiency.

8. Attitudes towards traditional world views as a means of coping with current realities

Older Tswana view the personal independence which was endemic to the traditional modes of production and

social organization with great pride. They contrast it to the enslavement implied within new social relations of power and wage labour as such. Younger people on the other hand perceive only one aspect of these relations, the extra-generation of commodities which technology has made possible. They cannot perceive the benefits of past simplicity. Rather they see themselves to be indubitably incorporated within a world of money which has both advantages and disadvantages but which is, in any case, inescapable.(14) In many ways, by shutting the doors to the past, the young are unable to use it in any critique of the present social relations. They naturalize these relations despite sensing the ghost of the past behind them because they express the necessity of surrendering unconditionally to the new world. The following section which examines a conflict between young and old regarding different conceptions of schooling, points to this very closing of doors on the past.

9. Attitudes to schooling

Both young and old suggest the importance of schooling in the search for employment. Old people, however, tend to stress the importance of mediating current forms of education with the teaching of social laws or melao Young people tend to stress the qualitative difference between two forms of "knowledge", suggesting their incompatibility.(15)

It would be appropriate to relate a statement by an old woman in Mochudi which implicitly indicates the absolute goodness of traditional social relations and which implies the perceived destructive potential of modern day curiosity and knowledge.

> 'Young people today always want to know why. In the old days children were told not to do a thing by their parents and they knew it was right. They did not ask why but they did what they were told. If they were told to run at the sight of a person

> they would. Today people want to know why before they are mature. This is why there are so many babies today. In the old days young boys were told in the regiment not to touch a girl or they would die. They were allowed to touch her and if they did this they would boast about it amongst their friends saying, "You know I touched her tits." They would not touch her underneath so girls did not have babies. Today they do not care. They are not afraid to touch a girl there.'
> (Grandmother M-- Mochudi)

10 (i) Behaviour in villages on the part of the young

Before we end this section by briefly examining a "mogoga" ceremony to indicate an attempt at reconciliation between old and young, I would like to relate a statement concerning a particular young woman who seems to epitomize that category of young which for the time being wants to dissociate itself from village life. The account is based on my sustained interaction with her and another young woman. Hopefully it will evoke a much clearer picture of this type of young person. The account is a summary of my interaction with the two young women.

> 'Mapula and Mpho had previously worked at a bar in Gaberone called Adam's Rib. There were a number of girls who worked there. The clientele of the bar were mainly black petit-bourgeois. Each girl was officially supposed to earn P50 a month, in reality they sometimes earned as little as P12. Both women had children in the village. They were being looked after by their grandmothers. Both girls would arrive back in the village erratically showering their children with sweets and chips and tomato sauce and rice. Mapula bought her little girl a tricycle for P25. Most families, sometimes with as many as 7 people, spent approximately P20 on food per month when they had no access to mabele because they did not work the lands and because of drought. Even then P20 was a lot of money to spend on food. Many spent much less. The little girl was afraid of her present and ran away from it every time her cousins tried to persuade her to ride it.
>
> 'The mothers would visit the village for two days at the most and would return to Gaberone even though

they had staged a walk-out at the bar three months before because they were cheated out of their wages, the manager giving the excuse that the girls never came up with the P10 float which each carried on her person so as not to run out of change. The thought of working at the lands or the village horrified them both. The work was "too hard", there was "no money to buy clothes". Both wore very "modern" clothes and they were visibly new acquisitions. Despite the fact that both had been out of jobs they wore new clothes and brought home food and had money for the bus and glycerine and skin-lightening cream. They were both on the pill because as one said, they "didn't want any more children", they "didn't have time", they "wanted to move around a bit". The one girl told me quite simply that "Gaberone (was) a good place to be". There was lots of good entertainment. There was the discotheque, Shana's and the Holiday Inn. There you "could fall in love with whites whenever you wanted to and no-one would mind."

'We were sitting one day behind the lapa (courtyard) in an open area of ground next to a path and people were walking past. An old man walked past in the road with a tin of Castle lager in his pocket. Mapula spoke to him in a simultaneously contemptuous and provocative manner; contemptuous because she kept her distance that way and then provocative because she wanted the beer out of him. She contrived to be sexual with her body as if she couldn't help it and yet her face was as hard as stone. She could get rid of him if she really wanted to. She'd learnt this in the disco and Holiday Inn, she said. It was her way of making money. It gave her access to the clothes she craved and to the smooth, new way of life she thought was so superior. She now refused to listen to any gumba gumba, the music that people generally listened to, and now claimed she could listen only to the Soul Brothers, a group from Johannesburg. She gazed wistfully at the record cover. There was a picture of one of the musicians dressed in a floral shirt adding a degree of coolness and casualness to his appearance. He was leaning against a stop sign with the word "stop" eradicated and the name of a girl written in its place, "Deliwe". He was gazing rather melodramatically at the girl who was walking haughtily away from him. She was dressed in modern chic, tight jeans, platform shoes, a silk shirt, a belt and a long striped coat. She wore make-up and had grown her hair a little so that it stood out like a soft halo. Her hands were thrust into her pockets. The photograph implied the following melodrama. The young man had been jilted by the woman he loved and he now stood

gazing after her retreating figure. She was out to make new conquests and he was relishing the sweetness of her rejection. Only their poses were slightly too exaggerated. It was so obviously the idea of rejection which was so intoxicating and not the actual thing. It was the clothes which really stood out and which gave the exptessed sentiments their meaning. One had to look good in every situation, even the most intimate, because even if you were alone you were aware of being someone who was being looked at. Mapula put on the record and moved languidly to the sound, saying to her friends that she was missing Gaberone. She refused to help them stamp maize. She also told me she would love to live permanently in Johannesburg. She had stayed there once with a friend. "How beautiful the shops were, so much better than those in Gaberone and so many more, and the buildings were beautiful. Especially the Carlton Centre." I asked her if she had been inside the hotel and she said no. She had just stood outside and watched the whites going into it. I asked her if she had seen or stayed in Soweto. She said "no", she "had stayed in the suburbs with her friend who worked in the kitchen".

'I asked her grandmother what she thought about young people who didn't come back to the village and who didn't help at the lands.

'She said that her grandchild was only making money and that was a good thing. Implicit in her reply was that Mapula was basically committed to her village and those at home and was only doing what thousands of others had done before her, going out to make money as a kind of migrant. She did not fully understand how much Mapula despised her old way of life.

Analysis

In the above we are able to locate the following contradiction. Despite exploitation, low wages and unemployment in the towns, the prestige accorded to commodities available in the towns is highly valued. The acquisition of these commodities is associated with a specific type of high-life characteristic of the towns, freedom from social and moral strictures of village life. In many ways the prestige which commodities afford suggests a dichotomy between civilized and uncivilized ways of behaviour. Thus the village and the towns are clearly

contrasted. The towns are associated with freedom from economic activities at the village, for example, planting mabele at the lands. They offer freedom from the responsibility of looking after children. Whereas the towns are associated with excitement and activity, the village is associated with boredom, arduous tasks and moral stricture. Ironically the excitement offered in the towns does not imply real control of one's environment or the commodities which one regards as being prestigious. One is unable to gain total autonomy in the towns. Because of this the children continue to be supported in t e village and because of this periodic visits to the village become necessary. Despite the illusory power which commodities give to their possessor they are brandished on return to the village, firstly to indicate their owner's separation from village life and secondly, their superiority. Return visits to the village become a statement of one's difference from one's relations and friends. This statement is made specifically in the above through dress, record preference and refusal to stamp maize. Also the extravagant gift of the tricycle which in no way attempted to meet more pressing needs in the village suggested superiority. Given this idealization of foreign commodities, visits to the village are accompanied by lack of activity. No attempt is made to contribute to its upkeep through personal labour and involvement. Visitors from the towns attempt to gain respect from villagers through disdain and through expressing their wish to return to the towns.

10.(ii) <u>The attempt to re-incorporate the young within the community: a particular instance involving a "mogoga" ceremony</u> (16)

An aspect of the particular mogoga sacrifice on which I want to concentrate, is the attempt to unite the old and

the grandmother dreamt that her father had come to her complaining that the family appeared to be broken. Because she had not seen her son for a long time her father was unhappy. He was 'hungry and thirsty' and he called for a mogoga.

Preliminary preparations for a mogoga demand the presence of the extended family, all the uncles and the aunts, everyone directly connected to the deceased. Specifically the deceased's closest brother (paternal uncle) and wife's brother (maternal uncle, "malume") must be present. It is important that all these people come to the home of the deceased's descendants, in this case the son's home, and the burial place of the deceased. It is important that all the relations see and are introduced to the family who are in residence at the deceased person's home. Particularly the malume must greet the children of the homestead individually. Throughout the preparations for the feast it is important that the family be seen to be working together. All these people come together on an appointed day to discuss when the feast will take place. All the men and women in the extended family are involved in the preparations. Since mabele is the women's prerogative they deal exclusively with preparations of the beer and on the day of the feast, with the cooking of the porridge.

The women's work begins by everyone fetching water and bringing it to the deceased person's home. The mabele to be used in the making of the beer is blessed by the maternal uncle's wife (malume's wife) or her closest relative; someone who is able to act in her capacity. In this case it was the woman's sister-in-law. The woman herself is very old and blind and so she could not attend. The mabele is dedicated to the deceased in this case with an appeal to God to ensure the success of the mogoga. Specifically the appeal was addressed to God

young and to reabsorb the young into the community.

The mogooa in which a beast is slaughtered in order to communicate with a deceased relative, is a particularly appropriate tradition in which such reconciliations can be made. This aspect of the mogooa ceremony indicates in current circumstances the tension implied within the social structure in which peasant and capitalist relations are articulated. The young seek to establish their independence from communal obligations and the old seek to re-establish these.

General description

This particular mogooa involved the family with which I was living. The immediate family consisted of a grandmother, a married couple and their five children. The young couple's home was on the site of the great grandfather's home. He had been buried in the lapa (courtyard) of the old homestead. The young father worked in Johannesburg and often expressed the desire to live an independent life in the village without too many family obligations. Thus, for example, he had avoided contributing a sum of money to the upkeep of a syndicate borehole to which his mother had belonged. Also he had remained for long periods in Johannesburg without visiting his mother, although he often came to visit his wife and children on weekends. The mother had often expressed the desire that her son should go and see her cattle, the implication being that once he had seen them he would be obliged to co-operate with her in her economic ventures. He tactfully refused and often spoke of a desire to set up his own farm along the Limpopo river. He had bought two cattle which were being looked after by one of his old uncles.

He and his mother were very close although their relationship was often turbulent. After a year of separation,

asking him to bless the grain, to bless the gifts of the young father of the house to his grandfather, so that he would receive his gifts with ease and grace.

Once the mabele has been cleaned of the ash in which it is stored, it is poured into huge clay pots and mixed with warm water to encourage germination. The success of the mogoga very much depends on the harmonious spirit with which all the relations carry out the various preparations, i.e. how they symbolically, through the work, relate to one another.

Sickness is connected with morality and its presence indicates a state of danger which could potentially disrupt the harmonious continuation of the proceedings. Everyone who is in a physically dangerous state has to counteract their potentially disruptive influence. In this case several women who were menstruating, placed pieces of coal into the beer pots when handling the mabele to neutralize their presence. Once the grain has germinated and has been dried in the sun, female relatives return to the deceased's home to take away any germinated mabele to grind it with stones. They later return to cook the grain and fill the beer pot with water. The beer is then ready after a period of approximately three days. On the day of the mogoga, the women sift the grain from the beer and prepare the drinking cups, "diphafana". In the meantime the men arrive with the animal which is to be slaughtered.

Just as mabele is associated with women, so cattle are with men and they are responsible for selecting the animal, slaughtering it and cooking it. As the animal arrives at the homestead everyone is invited to look at the beast. Different parts of the animal are eaten by different kinds of relatives. The beast comes to symbolize the totality of the group of relatives and their

dependence on one another. The most important man present, "malume", is given the head and skin of the beast. Old men are given the feet or hooves and the rich soft organs of the animal. Old women, too, eat pounded kidneys and liver. At one point all the daughters-in-law, i.e. all the women married into the family, are called to one side. They sit in long rows and are given pieces of meat by prominent men in the family, which they place in bowls to carry home the implication being that daughters-in-law are well looked after and are an integral part of the family group. Before the feasting begins, a special pot of beer and the clotted blood of the slaughtered animal are put aside for the deceased. On the actual feast day many people are invited to take part in the feast and these need not necessarily be relatives. However, they are important witnesses to the occasion.

Once everyone has left, only the closest relatives remain; aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces of the deceased, sleeping on the premises. Everyone gets up in the middle of the night, including the children of the household. The aunts and uncles surround the grave, each holding in front of them one of the deceased's great-grandchildren. The paternal uncle stands close to the father of the house who is close to his eldest son. The deceased is them called and people, specifically the paternal uncle or brother of the deceased and the grandmother or daughter of the deceased, speak to him, explaining the disruption of the family and informing him of the food and drink which they have brought for him. Also reconciliatory statements are directed towards the living members of the family by the elderly people present, witnessed by the deceased and with his legitimation. In particular, the grandmother declared her allegiance to her son's children and asked them to overlook her harshness. The beer and blood were then

poured onto the grave and everyone walked away in a straight line without looking back at the grave. So ended the mogoga. The son was visibly moved by his mother's reconciliatory statements. During the mogoga, not only was the unity of the extended family symbolically emphasized but so was the continuity between immediate paternal relatives.

Analysis

The aim of this particular mogoga ceremony was to establish harmony within the family on the most specific level between mother and son. However, this particular relationship was affirmed and legitimized within a much larger nexus. On the broadest level the family's relation to the whole community as such was emphasized symbolically through the attendance at the mogoga ceremony of villagers in general.

On the next level the broad extended family, including both maternal and paternal relatives, was affirmed. In this particular instance the role of the malume or maternal uncle in a reconciliatory capacity is particularly important. On the next level the immediate patrilineal descent lineage is emphasized at the graveside of the deceased through the physical placing of the father's children in front of uncles and the grandmother.

The importance of both men and women within the family structure is emphasized in the symbolic affirmation of the traditional division of labour. Women are associated with mabele, the making of porridge and the brewing of beer and therefore by implication, with the agricultural production of mabele. Men, on the other hand, slaughter and cook the beast, cutting it into various parts. The beast symbolically represents the whole family group and in cutting it into various pieces,

parts of the family and their interrelation and economic interdependence are emphasized. The men therefore are associated with animal husbandry. The community and family are symbolically joined in the distribution of meat.

One of the most important aspects of the ceremony is the suggestion of family continuity through time. This is suggested through the importance of the malume greeting the father's children individually and the grandmother's appeal, not to her son but to her grandchildren, to forgive her for her harshness. This sense of continuity elevates the traditional family structure as being something good in itself which transcends any particular member. The young father's identity as individual is underplayed and his position within a particular social structure is emphasized. Recall that this ceremony took place after a long separation between mother and son and many abortive attempts by the mother to incorporate the son in common economic concerns. There had also been a lot of conflict between the grandmother and her relations because of the disparity between their everyday occupations. The young family were totally dependent on wage income for their survival while the grandmother energetically cultivated her own fields. Despite many requests for the young children to come and stay at the lands during school holidays, they had not been to stay with their grandmother. Also the young wife, although almost permanently living in the village, did not assist her mother-in-law in agricultural pursuits, preferring to stay in the village with her young children. The above tensions imply the specific context in which the mogogo took place.

SECTION II

1. Account of a typical school day

Introduction: I attended two primary schools during my stay in Mochudi. In one I spent approximately three weeks attending classes at all levels and taking part in extra-mural activities and sometimes teaching. After this I attended all important school functions. In this account I shall primarily concentrate on the highest form in the school since this form represents the culmination of a specific education policy and teaching methods and conceptions of schooling which pre-date any more recently proposed innovations. Before doing this I would briefly like to mention other forms in the school. Originally, the two initial years spent at school were all conducted in Setswana. Recently English has been introduced in these years since it was decided that the general standard of English would improve in the primary schools if this was the case. Also it has recently been considered essential to introduce children immediately to a disciplined class-room environment. Most of the youngest pupils still have their lessons outside and these often involve a lot of physical activity since these children are primarily taught through the medium of games. The predominant orientation in schools apart from teaching children to read and write is the emphasis placed on learning English and Maths. Access to these acquisitions is inevitably associated with the high value placed on white collar jobs by the teachers. This is despite the 1977 National Commission on Education which emphasized the relation of schooling to rural development and the development of organizational abilities amongst the pupils and the community itself.

The account

'The school day begins at 7.30. Children are careful not to be late, they are afraid of the headmistress's anger. They run into the open area

between the two rows of classrooms and they stand in long lines together with their class mates. Each child has a plastic packet containing school books. Each has a piece of wood in his or her hand for the kitchen's fire. Each has a bowl out of which he or she will eat vitamin-enriched porridge or a plate of beans at lunchtime, the food having been donated by a world food programme. Each wears an approximation of a school uniform, uniforms being compulsory. The teachers stand in an awesome line in front of the pupils. Several are armed with sticks. At a signal from the headmistress children burst into song, a Tswana hymn. The entire morning assembly is run on regimental lines. Brisk and uncompromising orders are followed by prompt full-throated responses. In the hymn children symbolically submit themselves to the absolute authority of God. Similarly the structure of the proceedings implies an absolute submission to the authority of the teachers and the headmistress.

The hymn is followed by a recitation of "Our Father" in English, after which pupils and teachers greet each other in English, "Good morning teachers", "Good morning pupils".

During the prayer and hymn, bowls, packets and wood have been placed in front of the children's feet. After the formal greeting the headmistress barks authoritatively in English, "Pick up your wood". When everyone has the piece of wood in hand and when they are staring straight ahead, bodies erect, they are told, "Go and put your wood on the fire". The children simultaneously make a left turn and then scatter to the kitchen, returning to the courtyard on the run. When properly in formation they are dismissed with the order "Left, left, turn". Each class marches off from the courtyard up the steps into their own classroom.

There is an uncompromising hierarchy between teachers and pupils in the school. The morning assembly is symbolic of teaching methods throughout the school. Pupils in the classroom are denied initiative. Teachers are attributed with absolute knowledge. Knowledge is so thoroughly equated with autocratic discipline that often the form, the disciplinary framework in which lessons take place, takes precedence over their content.

A Std. 4 English lesson

A little girl from another classroom brings in the school radio and places it on the teacher's desk. She curtseys and leaves the room. The teacher switches on the radio. The children are asked by the announcer if they remember the story of Bluebeard

which they read the week before. They are then asked to act out the story in class using English. The teacher does not attempt this, ignores it completely and goes on to a reading lesson. She reads in a simultaneous monotone with the children. They read as one voice, the children's eyes skim over the words. Some of them obviously are unable to read since their fingers trace words which are not being read. The children repeat and imitate the vocal sounds of the teacher, some not even looking at their readers.

An illustrative instance of lack of concentration and of imitation reveals itself when the teacher misreads a passage with the children misreading the passage after her. Throughout the reading some children dominate, reading as loud as possible, drowning the obvious confusion of others who sometimes visibly struggle and who at other times simply dream from the exhaustion of not understanding what they ritually repeat. When questions are asked at the end of this session only a quarter of the class is able to offer answers.

English oral lessons given to Std. 7

Lesson 1: Children are asked to recall their visit to Lobatsi, to the Botswana Meat Commission. Great emphasis is placed on the fact that Botswana is a member of the European Economic Community. One child mentions that the letters E.E.C. appear on all the boxes containing meat products which are being sent overseas. They mention that the goods pass through Cape Town and then go to Britain.

Lesson 2: The headmistress is concerned with the standard of English in this class since for the first time in 7 years these children are to write exams. Junior schools operate on a system of automatic promotion. Access to secondary school and jobs depends on the outcome of these exams, the rationale being that children are at school to learn skills as well as practical skills which will help them to find jobs or to create them for themselves. Despite this, no useful skills are learnt except for a smattering of English and maths.

The headmistress is visibly frustrated seeing that few children are able to produce a perfect English sentence. Children are making sentences beginning with the word "if" and with "then" joining a separate clause. Victims are chosen by the headmistress, who are obliged to give correct answers since she stands over them with a cane hoping that violent means will make up for the lack of qualified teachers in the school who, through no fault of their own, do not

speak perfect English and who teach in the way in which they were taught, through repetition which often obscures true understanding. The girl, in perfect respect, makes the sentence, "If we give wrong answer, then our teacher will hit us." The headmistress is furious. She proceeds to hit every child on the hands. The children are visibly afraid. Throughout the class they are afraid. This atmosphere is hardly conducive to risking oneself even if one makes mistakes so as to have them corrected and so in the process to learn from it. The consequence of this coercive behaviour is, ironically, to kill children's interest in learning and to submerge any initiative on the part of the individual child. Also the child is afraid to admit its lack of understanding.

The Maths lesson: Every day children in the upper standard have a double period of maths in the hope that a prolonged period will improve the general standard. Answers to problems are almost always supplied by teachers. Also here there is the conception that children will grasp the logical steps of a problem through endless repetition of exercises. There is little application of the principles involved in a problem to immediately accessible objects which children are familiar with in the classroom or in their general environment. Very little explaining is done by the teacher, rather lessons are orientated entirely to the text book. In one case the teacher is unable to add fractions correctly but must pretend that he is able because of the authoritative framework which is implicit to each class.

Setswana lesson for Std. 7: A lesson is given on the rivers of Europe, "Dinoka tsa Yropa", showing how many cities have grown up round rivers because people are able to travel up and down rivers in boats and sea-going ships. Sometimes cities are not on rivers, for example Johannesburg, because gold was found there. Other people use rivers for irrigation. People trace the Rhine, the Elba, the Danube, in their maps.

Geography for Std. 7: A lesson is given on the tundra regions of the world, in English.
'What are the big mountains of ice called here?'
'Icebergs.'
'Who was the first Englishman to reach the South Pole?'
'Captain Scott.'
'What are the icy winds called?'
'Breeze, blizzards.'
'What are the winds called across America?'
'Hurricanes.'
'Across India?'
'Typhoons.'

History lesson for Std. 7: The children are learning about the Industrial Revolution in Britain. It is a radio lesson. It is unequivocally stated that industry is more important than agriculture. It is stressed that handmade tools and machines involve prolonged work. They are negated. Thus implicitly by comparison, all Tswana handmade tools are supposed to be inefficient. The imported machine is fetishized despite the capital outlay involved.

Reasons given for the Industrial Revolution are as follows:
1. Growth of population
2. Better transport
3. Overseas markets
4. Freedom of trade at home
5. Plentiful raw materials from India
6. Suitable climate
7. Invention of machines in factories roads and canals (man-made rivers)

Revealing comments made by the announcer are as follows: 'I wish Botswana could grow like that.' 'Britain was a lucky country. There's no doubt about that!' 'Even here in Botswana there are machines.' and 'Our thanks go to British investors.'

The above lesson more than any other reflects the ideological prestige given to the industrialized countries. Implicitly invidious comparisons are made between these and Botswana. Botswana's underdeveloped state is not seen within its proper colonial and neo-colonial context, i.e. that of a satellite state tied in a crippling way to other countries with no chance of becoming an industrialized country like Britain, given current circumstances. The importance of assessing the qualitat[illegible]ly different position of underdeveloped countries from European countries prior to the Industrial Revolution is overlooked.

The negation of hand tools in the lesson strikes yet another blow at alternative technology and the full utilization of traditional skills together with their comparative low capital outlay in development projects in the 3rd world. Rather the machine, already made by the industrialized countries is fetishized and the potential independence and initiative which alternative technology together with intensive labour offers, is totally negated. One is yet again thrown into a position of passive dependence on the industrialized world. The spectre of migrant labour is naturalized.

During the lunch break teachers send children to the school kitchen to bring them "mokongkolo"

porridge or beans. Teachers look through clothing catalogues from South Africa and contemplate sending mail orders to these companies. Meantime a young teacher is coaching girls to walk properly for the beauty competition which the school will hold to raise funds for a trip to Gaberone. I ask the headmistress why most agricultural lessons are always cancelled. She says they have not come round to making a school garden and in any case English is more important. Meantime a little girl comes up to her and asks her for the school bell in English so that she can ring the bell for the end of the lunch break. The headmistress then informs me that the whole school is obliged to ask her all questions in English. She is determined to raise the standard of English in her school.

The lunch break ends and children return to their classrooms. The Std. 7 class is given a radio lesson in Tswana on how to milk cows. The lesson ignores the conditions of the cattle posts completely. For example the lack of easily accessible water. It assumes that all milking should be done on a commercial basis where no transport links have been set up in the cattle post areas, where there are no pasteurizing facilities and, given this, where the most sensible thing to do is to allow milk to go sour and to eat it as madila or sour curds. It recommends that cattle kraals be cemented so they can be washed properly. The place for milking should be roofed, the udder should be washed in hot water and disinfectant. One should have a strip cup to test whether the milk is diseased. One should not place it in plastic cans since it goes sour. The milker must wear a hat to prevent things from falling into the milk such as hair and ticks. he should wear a white shirt with short sleeves because it will show up any dirt. The milk should be sieved because of dirt, hair and ticks.

After the lesson the whole school begins a music practice for the national music competition which has been arranged by the teachers' union of Botswana. The youngest children are the only children who are to sing a song in Setswana -- a hymn. All the other standards group together to sing songs in English and Zulu. The songs in English are very old and are written in archaic English which few contemporary English speakers would understand, let alone Tswana speakers. Neither do many children understand Zulu. After this rehearsal the whole school is dismissed.

a) Brief discussion of content of education and its ideological implications

The main emphasis in all schools seems to be to teach children English and Maths since education is primarily perceived by all as giving one access to jobs outside the community. Concomitant with this external orientation is the glorification of all things foreign. The domestic environment is implicitly negated. Few attempts are made to create links between the immediate environment and the wider world. Where these linkages are made Botswana is inevitably perceived to be lacking in some way. Recall for example the history lesson concerning the Industrial Revolution.

The national commission on education of 19[illegible] has to say about the nature of educational content. These criticisms still hold.

> 'We have heard criticism of the present education system .... It tends in the opinion of many observers, to alienate students from their cultural roots and to create, not appreciation of their background, but rather a tendency to look down upon it. The education system should orient young people toward the social cultural, artistic, political and economic life of their unique society and prepare them to participate proudly in it.'(17)

b) Method of teaching and its consequence for learning and understanding

In one sense the external orientation of educational content and the method of teaching reflect one another. Just as educational content implements a passive attitude amongst the young to their own environment so authoritarian method dispels all initiative and individual exploration on the part of the pupil. Pupils are afraid of any public error so many sit quietly, making no attempt to tackle the specific problem at hand. Rather they remain essentially passive in relation to their work, waiting for the answers to be given by teachers.

In attempting to give a young friend extra Maths lessons I soon became aware that she was totally consumed with fear. She shook visibly and was too afraid to verbalize the reasons behind each step in the problem. Teaching methods which seek to exhort understanding through the threat of violence inevitably result in fear which literally petrifies the mind and the will to learn. Learning becomes co-terminous with parrot-like repetition.

2. Conflicts with government intentions

The government is, at least on a propaganda level, concerned with rural development. Much of the time it stresses the importance of self-reliance on the part of rural communities. However these efforts can only succeed with government support and a general re-orientation towards a more prominent emphasis on rural development. Given these reservations about the ability of education to generate rural development on its own even under optimal conditions, the authoritarian structure and educational content further inhibit this potential. It is also impossible to expect schools on their own to generate interest in rural development through extra-mural activities. This presupposes that education can generate rural development without the government taking stock of the nature of economic relations in society. Thus:

> 'One should not expect too much of teachers and schools. Even if education in Botswana operates in full support of the national principles, it cannot by itself bring about social change. It can only assist in the process. Other social forces and social policies such as rural development, income distribution, hiring practices and employment must pull in the same direction if education is to play its part .... If society is so organized as to distribute incomes very unequally, largely on the basis of educational qualifications, then it should not blame the schools for orientating themselves to helping their students to pass examinations. If life is better in the towns and if insufficient

> recognition is given to those who labour faithfully in outlying parts of the country, then education for rural development can hardly be given meaning.' (18)

Thus self-help projects which are designed to sustain and develop rural skills are in conflict with other ideological and economic forces. Although the governments ideological principles are decidedly democratic, they do not reflect life in the schools.(19). In attempting to institute democratic and innovative extra-mural activities which stimulate children, using the schools as nuclei, to utilize rural skills in order to benefit the community through productive labour, one has to battle against the authoritarian structures endemic in the schools which necessarily inhibit generative ideas and work. Not only is the structure of the schools authoritarian but also the teaching is decidedly academic with little practical application. This is hardly conducive to productive labour outside the school.

Radio lessons are often structured in a democratic fashion which attempts to generate exploratory thought and practical application amongst pupils. But as we have seen in the previous section this is not necessarily taken up by the teachers as in the case of the English lesson Bluebeard. Radio as a medium does not make up for a direct relationship between teacher and pupil which, in optimal circumstances, allows the teacher to continually monitor the child's understanding.

In relation to extra-mural activities which attempt to develop productive links between the school, the community, the government has instituted what they have termed 4-H clubs. Work began on a 4-H leader handbook in 1971 for interested teachers who were to assist children in their projects. These booklets were based on work done in Kenya on the 4-K Rural Youth Programme, and the projects to be encouraged included those which would maintain and develop rural skills amongst the youth.

Suggested projects for Botswana included weaving, knitting, basketwork, beadwork, sewing, helping mother in the home, cooking and general housework, teaching others to read and write, mastering the care of small livestock, carving stamping blocks, spoons, plates and stools, making objects out of tin, growing vegetables, learning general principles of health.

The more general aims of the 4-B clubs are to generate organizational abilities amongst the children themselves as well as initiative in that they are expected to suggest their own projects to their fellow club members and the club leader. The leader acts as a co-ordinator in that he or she keeps a record of each project and maintains an interest in their progress. The 4-B clubs are supposed to attract the interest of the community at large by displaying their completed crafts at a public exhibition. The club's motto and principles stress the importance of learning through activities and of working together, and of developing innovative organizational skills, for the general benefit of Botswana as a whole.

The motto: Learn by doing.
Principles, a pledge

1) Boitshwaro -- I will be a better citizen by training my head to think, to plan, to reason.
2) Boikanyo -- I will be trustworthy by training my heart to be kind, sympathetic and true.
3) Bonatla -- I will be a hard worker by training my hands to be helpful, useful and skilful.
4) Botswana -- I will help to develop Botswana's greatest resource, its rural youth, by learning and doing.

The 4-B club in one school I went to had not yet been started, although a teacher had the club's handbook and wanted to begin. She was being deterred by all the

other activities such as preparation for the inter-school music competition. In the other school the 4-B club consisted mainly of the occasional knitting class. The only other crafts being carried out in school was a general sewing lesson for girls and a hat weaving lesson for boys, both classes run on regimented lines clearly contradictory to the spirit of the 4-B club.

3. Extra-mural activities which reveal ideological commitment on the part of the teachers to the vacuously prestigious

a) Mmabontle -- beauty competition for Std. 4 pupils: This beauty competition was organized on a national level by the Botswana women's club. The importance of this competition was stressed because it was going to a regional and then to a national level. I became inexorably involved in this whole affair when one of the oldest teachers in the school, and one excessively interested in protocol, asked me if I would be a judge for the competition together with two other respected women, the one a teacher, the other a former teacher. As a white I was immediately and stereotypically perceived to be an expert concerning the attributes of beauty and poise. Before the competition the three judges gathered outside the school, the ex-teacher being prominent in the discussion. She immediately asked me what criteria should be used in judging. She handed me a slip of paper with the following suggested criteria and questions which I was to criticize:

i) Posture -- walking freely and smile
ii) Style -- dressing and colour
iii) Intelligence:

(After the contest girls were to be asked the following questions in English to supposedly judge their intelligence)

i) What's your name?
ii) How old are you?

iii) Who is your chief?
iv) Do you like school?
v) What's the name of the vice-president?

I decided to remain as evasive as possible to discover not only attitudes to beauty, but also conceptions concerning whites and their so-called monopoly of the aesthetically beautiful. The ex-teacher in question justified her criteria as follows. She said that women had to see to their complexion and their general appearance if they were to get any men, even although men were accepted just as they were. This was the way God had made the sexes. Even though the girls were scarcely over 12 they should be judged according to posture, which included general appearance and the type of smile on their faces, and style according to whether the colours which the girls wore suited them or not. The ex-teacher also stated that if the girls answered questions in full, perfect English sentences, this would be an indication of degree of intelligence. When talking about the importance of colour combinations the other woman voiced the following reservation:

> 'The girls are really very young. Is it fair to judge them on this point?'

She was, in fact, indicating the difficulty of dissociating oneself from the reality that most people have only a few sets of clothes, especially young children, which inevitably do not always suit the individual concerned in terms of colour combination. However, the ex-teacher ignored this point and confidently concluded:

> 'Today beauty competitions are quite an affair. One has to wear a number of costumes: a beautiful long dress, slacks, a day dress and a bathing costume. These competitions are really exacting because they examine every aspect of one as a woman from the inside to the outside including intelligence. In other words the total woman. This is a real test for women.'

After the competition the same woman asked me to give an example of what I thought dignified. I suggested a slow

dance and she immediately suggested a waltz. I told her that I had seen an old man dancing a very slow and controlled dance in the kgotla. I told her that I thought this too was dignified.

Interestingly enough, the perceptions of some other girls of the meaning of the beauty contest were decidedly different. Their interest in the competition was as follows: The experience of walking slowly in front of people was frightening and yet exhilarating because everyone was looking at you. This kind of moment was rarely experienced in real life because in the first place no-one looked so smart in everyday existence and secondly one was hardly ever such a focus of attention. The way in which girls dressed themselves for a beauty contest was unreal, 'out of this life and really only play-acting,' they said.

Returning to the competition as such. We decided to leave the criteria for judging as initially presented.

As we approached the classroom in which the judging was to take place, the ex-teacher made a joke about a little girl entering the classroom. She had only one shoe on and a shabby old dress. The judge laughed, saying 'Is that one of the contestants?' The standards set by the competition were obviously in contrast to the state of dress of many of the little children there.

All spectators sat on one side of the classroom. The judges sat at tables in front of the classroom, with tablecloths on them. The contest began with a prayer. Everyone got up and folded their arms. A teacher asked God to bless 'everyone in this work' of theirs. Each contestant walked out of a small room to one side of the classroom, when her name was called. A younger teacher put on the same single record each time a girl came

The article on this and the following page appeared in the Kutlwano government magazine in July 1975 (pp. 19, 20 and 21)



Beauty contests through the eyes of Paul Rantao

The years of Botswana'sindependence has seen great strides in all fields of achievement . Botswana girls have made their country internationally reknowned by participating in the Miss World Beauty Competition.

A lot of preparation goes into contests such as the recent Miss Botswana Beauty Contest. Families and friends often convince a contestant that she's the greatest thing since the Queen of Shebba or that of Palmyra.

Don t get jitters if you find some ladies with flooping bosoms, some even with sagging stomachs and others with flabby thighs parading in front of the audience. These are unwise ones who just jump into the contests without much preparations or consulting anybody for opinion.

Wise girls examine themselves in the mirrors first and consult their friends for opinion to know whether they too can qualify for the contests. They then take lessons indeportment and try to correct the imperfections of their figures with strict routine of diet and physical exercises. If they are in good shape they just concentrate on make-ups and fashions.

Then come contests themselves with a lot of excitement to people of all walks of life. As a fundamental rule, girls come looking their best. They come in confidence of their beauty. But of course there are many points to satisfy the judges and may be the girl with the most attractive face may have the most abhorent figure and vice versa. This is why many leave the hall disappointed by the judgement.



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For the judges, girls should go beyond their attractions. They must have basic beauty points to look for — facial beauty, teeth, smile, figure, body structure, hair, smarteness, personality and the way girls present themselves to the audience.

The most exciting moments are the parading of girls. This is when people laugh their lungs out. Others laugh until their ribs get tired and tears run down their cheeks. But they clap hands, shout, whistle — making the girl think that the more cheers the more chances for winning — which later disppoints many.

The parading time produce breathtaking variations of dragging motions, rheumatical shuffles, stomps and semi-jives which makes one think of beef cattle parading at the Botswana Meat Commission. All lovelies have to curtsy to the judges but one unforgetable character brought down the house by saluting instead of curtsying. 'No steaking' no stripping' but only sporting costumes parade is allowed.

Bearing in mind that whoever may be selected for Miss Botswana usually may have to visit London for Miss World Competition, visit other places and live in internationally renowned hotels, meet personalities, English knowledge is necessary, said Mrs. Mugwe, B.C.W. National Chairman to a reporter.

This answers one critic who was setting next to me during the Miss Botswana contest who wondered. "But why should English be the only way to judge a girl beautiful. How can you judge African beauty by European cultural standards."

Another one even said, "it seems that although African women are beautiful as they are, they do not stand a chance in the world contests where the judges are Europeans who probably go for slim figures while Africans tend to prefer a little flesh in a woman."

A curious feature of Botswana beauty contest is that there are at times prettier girls sitting in the audience than parading in front of the judges. This is usually due to the fact that some girls are simply too shy to contest.

Of course, some millitant women's libbers have often expressed themselves aghast at the idea of beauty contests where women are judged by flesh alone like beef cattle. They regard the whole business degrading to the female dignity and as being in tune with men's superior attitude towards women.

Be that as it may, other girls blessed with beauty are entitled to cash in on it and take courage to parade themselves before an audience of critical eyes on the look out for the slightest blemish or imperfection. So long as beauty contests offer big money to the Botswana Council of Women to develop this country, my comment is "more power to their elbow" because its money well earned. There is absolutely nothing wrong with something that brings development and entertainment.

My last word to those who wish to compete next year is that they should be themselves all time. There are some who become dull and look stupid during the contest. Such girls should have confidence in themselves and should always not forget to be natural, simple and charming.

No false long nails, no eyelids, and not too much bleaching of the skin or such other grotesque trends that seem not to fall under African beauty. Stop painting yourselves with red mascaras lipstick — all you require is advice on smooth, soft natural skins and deportment from Botswana's beauticians.

For the figure, avoid too much starches, sugar and animal fat. Fashion also plays an important part in any beauty. You don't necessarily have to spend your life savings on expensive clothing. Any dress can be elegant and simple provided they are in the right colours. Something that fits perfectly and that does not seem being as tight as a second skin is all that is called for.

All in all beauty contests are very entertaining things and raise a lot of money. That is why we have Miss Naweane, Miss Rollers, Miss UBLS and others to raise money and entertain.

forward. Each girl walked slowly round the room to the music, wearing a bright dress and platform shoes. Each girl was judged on each criterion out of a score of 10. After each girl had walked round the classroom a number of times, tea and biscuits were brought in to the judges on a silver tray. After each girl had been asked the set of questions which were supposed to judge her intelligence, the winner and her princesses were announced. The queen was crowned with a crown made out of silver paper and she was given a sash with the name of the school written on it. After the contest a male teacher told the girls who had not won not to be discouraged since, he said, th , would win next time. All contestants received a prize on his insistence since he basically disagreed with the preoccupation with beauty competitions, saying that they created rivalry amongst the girls and diverted their attention from school work.

Concluding the contest, the ex-teacher gave a formal speech describing why the winners had won. She emphasized that the winners had been the girls who walked most 'naturally', with ease, without 'clumsiness' and without affectation, for example turning the head at each corner of the classroom and smiling over their shoulders at phantom admirers.

Ironically, learning the aesthetic attributes of dignity and attractiveness as the judge perceived them, was precisely an affectation in so-called 'naturalness'. The judge recalled how the beauty competition had been introduced just after independence. Originally the contests had been interesting because of the exaggerated mannerisms of each contestant. The judge stated that people were learning to be more dignified as the years went by, i.e. mannerisms were becoming less conspicuous. Be that as it may, the search for 'dignity', for beauty, for the aesthetic norm, whatever its pretensions of naturalness, can only be seen in the context of a

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