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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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by: **Jeff Peires**

No. 312

THE IMPLOSION OF TRANSKEI AND CISKEI

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The South African government's policy of granting "independence" to the black reserves within its borders evoked considerable initial interest, particularly with regard to Transkei, the first black territory to be so blessed. Liberal writers approached the so-called "homelands" with sympathy, giving serious consideration to their possible viability, and exploring their potential as an engine for future change. Three well-known American academics went so far as to dub Transkei as "virtually the only ground where Africans can voice non-violent opposition to (the South African) regime."[1] More radical analysts dismissed such arguments as politically obtuse. They were more interested in the role of the new black middle classes who had inherited the privileges which white traders and civil servants had formerly enjoyed. "This class - co-opted already in conception - has .. vested interest .. in the maintenance of White capitalist domination in Southern Africa," declared Frank Molteno.[2]

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[1] G.Carter, T.Karis and N.Stultz, South Africa's Transkei (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), p.12. Other works in this tradition include J.Butler, R.Rotberg and J.Adams, The Black Homelands of South Africa: the Political and Economic Development of Bophuthatswana and KwaZulu (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), and N.Stultz, Transkei's Half Loaf (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

[2] F.Molteno, "The Historical Significance of the Bantustan Strategy," Social Dynamics (Cape Town), 3 (1977), p.25.

But once the homelands had become a firmly established feature of the South African political scene, there was a considerable decline in analytical interest. If we except KwaZulu and Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, a figure of national significance, then the last fully documented study of any South African homeland has been Roger Southall's South Africa's Transkei, which was published in 1982.[3] And even though the homelands have yielded numerous case studies with regard to health, education, ethnicity and gender issues, very little has appeared in the past decade on their political evolution since "self-government" and/or "independence." Writers such as Keenan and Harries have published occasional papers on Bophuthatswana and Gazankulu.[4] Students and political action groups have produced poorly distributed ephemera on Venda and KwaNdebele.[5] The only accessible profile of Kenneth Mopeli, Qwa Qwa's long-serving leader, is still the one in Joseph Lelyveldt's

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[3] R.Southall, South Africa's Transkei: the Political Economy of an 'Independent' Bantustan (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1977).

[4] J. Keenan, "Pandora's Box; the private accounts of a Bantustan community authority," in South African Research Service, South African Review 3 (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986); J. Keenan, "Counter-Revolution as Reform: Struggle in the Bantustans," in Popular Strugglesin South Africa, eds. W.Cobbet and R.Cohen (London: James Currey, 1988). P. Harries, " " in The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa (London: James Currey, 1989).

[5] Transkei Rural Action Committee, KwaNdebele, the Struggle aagainst 'Independence' (Johannesburg: Transvaal Rural Action Committee, n.d. [1986?]); M.S. Badat, "Profile of a Bantustan: Venda," in South African Research Service, Homeland Tragedy: Function and Farce (Johannesburg, 1982).

Move Your Shadow.[6] On the major homelands of Lebowa (pop. 2 million) and KaNgwane (pop: 550,000) one cannot find anything at all.

Empirical neglect has been parallelled by analytical neglect, so that one is hard put to find more than one theoretical article in the past decade on any aspect of the homelands.[7] Even the wave of army coups and attempted coups between 1987 and 1990 have escaped without any kind of detailed analysis. It is probably safe to say that most outsiders assume that their own ignorance of any internal changes within the homelands is a reflection of the fact that nothing much has changed.

But, on the contrary, some very astounding reversals have taken place, the significance of which has been largely ignored outside the homelands themselves. The most dramatic of these has taken place in Transkei, until recently a model apartheid homeland under the firm control of Kaiser Matanzima, Dr Verwoerd's most sincere black disciple. Today, Transkei is ruled by General Bantu Holomisa, whom the South African Foreign Minister has called the African National Congress's strongest supporter in the whole of

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[6] New York: Times Books, 1985, p.140.

[7] The one article is Johan Graaff,"Towards an understanding of bantustan politics," in The Political Economy of South Africa, Ed. N.Nattrass and E.Ardington (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Africa.[8] Less dramatic certainly, but equally galling to the South African government, was the behaviour of six other homeland leaders who pulled out of important talks scheduled with President F.W. de Klerk in April 1990, at the ANC's behest.

These events have made a mockery of the conventional wisdom that the homelands are far too economically dependent on the South African government to turn against it. It is a lesson that the government itself has been quick to absorb. As late as 1987, they were still attempting to force 'independence' down the throat of KwaNdebele. By August 1991, however, the National Party Congress concluded that the homeland policy should be abandoned. The context of this announcement implies that this volte-face was less a spontaneous concession than a retreat in the face of the collapse of the homeland system. It could even be argued that this collapse was one of the major considerations which prompted the "reform" initiatives of President de Klerk.

It is naturally impossible for me to give a comprehensive account of the entire collapse within the limits of a single paper. My object is the more modest one of relating the hitherto uncompiled history of the Transkei and Ciskei 'independent' homelands which spearheaded the process. By implosion, I do not mean to denote a catastrophe of literally astrophysical

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[8] R.F. Botha, on South African television, 23 Nov. 1990.

proportions. I merely use the word to imply comparison with the physical process whereby a weakness at the centre is unable to support the outer facade of a structure and results in its inward collapse. The weakness at the centre may be found in the disjuncture between the homeland leadership and the homeland bourgeoisie, who might have constituted their local class base. I will return to this subject in my conclusion.

I: Transkei - From Matanzima to Holomisa

The Last Days of the Matanzimas

The Transkei was the first black homeland to receive "self-government" (1963) and the first to take "independence" (1976).[9] If the homeland policy was going to succeed anywhere, it was going to succeed in Transkei. Transkei possesses about the same land area (4.4 million hectares) and the same population (3.5 million) as Latvia and Estonia combined. With two minor exceptions, it is geographically coherent and, unlike all the other homelands, it is not inextricably economically interlinked with any specific South African city. Local government is in the hands of powerful and conservative chiefs, and the tiny educated elite either work for the Transkei government or have acquired trading licenses through its good offices. There were no trade unions in Transkei before

[9] There is a considerable literature on Transkei during the reign of Kaiser Matanzima (1963-1986). The most comprehensive treatment is Southall, South Africa's Transkei.

1989, and the political repression was so severe that it was the only part of South Africa where the United Democratic Front was unable to establish itself. Above all, Transkei (and South Africa) possessed in the person of Prime Minister (later President) Kaiser Matanzima a true believer in the policy of territorial apartheid, a man who once declared that "Dr Verwoerd was sent by God to liberate the black people of South Africa."[10] The geographical isolation of Transkei, its rural character, its economic backwardness, and the greed and prosperity of its educated elite, all combined to create a climate where Transkei independence seemed a great deal more than a bad joke.

The wheels began to come off in February 1986, when Kaiser Matanzima term of office as President of Transkei expired, leaving effective power in the hands of the Prime Minister, his brother George. The notorious corruption of both Matanzima brothers has been extensively documented[11] but, whereas Kaiser had maintained a modicum of discretion, George threw all caution to the winds. On one occasion, for instance, he took delivery of R500,000 in a cardbox box in exchange for a housing contract. In another, more celebrated case he demanded and received R2 million from Sol Kerzner's Sun International in exchange for sole gambling rights in

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[10] Work in Progress (Johannesburg) 14, (1980).

[11] B. Streek and R. Wicksteed, Render unto Kaiser (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1981).

Transkei.[12] Some time in 1985 Jiyana Maqubela, the Auditor-General, slipped a motivation for a Commission of Inquiry into a pile of routine papers which George Matanzima unthinkingly signed. The first Commission of Inquiry, into the Department of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, began to hear evidence in February 1986. It was a slow-burning fuse, but it led inexorably first to George, and then to Kaiser himself.

The Matanzima brothers were also undermined by the emergence of discontent in the military. The Transkei Defence Force (TDF) had been created in 1975, and was black officered though South African trained. In 1981, however, Kaiser dismissed the three senior Transkeian officers, and hired a group of ex-Rhodesian Selous Scouts to run his army. The Selous Scouts provided Kaiser with security, but they were disliked by their black subordinates. Matters did not improve when Zondwa Mtirara was appointed Commander of the TDF in February 1986. He was the son of the usurping Chief Bambilanga Mtirara, who had taken over the Thembu Paramount Chieftaincy after Kaiser had driven Paramount Chief Sabata Dalindyebo into exile in 1983. The sharpest critic of the Selous Scouts within the TDF was its second-in-command, Brigadier Bantu Holomisa, who was detained on 21 January 1987 for complaining that

[12] The best short overview of these events is F.Kruger, "How Greed Toppled the Matanzima Dynasty," Weekly Mail, 25 Sept.1987.

the Selous Scouts used TDF facilities for their private security operations.[13]

With George Matanzima's concurrence, the TDF had also embarked on a foreign adventure.[14] Ciskei, the other Xhosa-speaking homeland, had long been a target of the Matanzimas. In September 1986, white mercenaries associated with the TDF staged a daring double coup, freeing Charles Sebe (the brother and rival of Ciskei President L.L. Sebe) from a maximum security prison, while simultaneously kidnapping Kwane Sebe (the President's only son). This triumph was followed by a full-scale military assault on the Ciskei Presidential Palace in February 1987. The attack was a failure, and one TDF soldier was killed. The Transkeian officers were furious, partly because they disapproved of the entire project, but mostly because George Matanzima attempted to evade his own responsibility by placing the blame on them.

George Matanzima's biggest problem, however, was his brother Kaiser. Barely six months after relinquishing the Presidency, Kaiser attempted a political comeback by nominating his own slate

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[13] Daily Dispatch, 16 April 1987.

[14] The full details concerning this episode have been hushed up, and it is still not fully understood. For the events, see Daily Dispatch 30 Sept, 8 Oct.1986; Eastern Province Herald 20 Feb.1987.

Congress of the ruling party chose Stella Sigcau as the new Prime Minister.[16]

Stella Sigcau, the daughter of deceased State President Botha Sigcau, had been in and out of Kaiser's cabinets since before Transkei "independence." There was nothing in her record to suggest that her political principles differed from those of her former colleagues. Yet once in office she proceeded to take a number of stands that deeply disturbed not only Kaiser Matanzima, but the South African government as well. She made statements to the effect that the "independence" of Transkei was not irreversible. When she went overseas, she declined to read the speech that had been thoughtfully provided for her by the South African Department of Foreign Affairs. Her younger brother, Chief Ntsikayezwe Sigcau, travelled to Lusaka and met with the ANC.

But her most fatal decision was to detain Kaiser Matanzima, who had started to bombard the press and the security police with calls for the overthrow of the "Communistic" Transkei government. Matanzima was soon released from detention "for health reasons," and went to Bloemfontein to recuperate. It is said that he planned the next coup from his hospital bed, with the assistance of high South African officials. On 30 December 1987, the TDF declared

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[16] Weekly Mail, 8 May, 25 Sept. 1987; Daily Dispatch, 9,16 May, 25 Sept, 6 Oct.1987.

of candidates for the September 1986 Transkei elections.[15] The electorate, preferring the easier master, chose George. Early in 1987, Kaiser and his supporters walked out of the Congress of the Transkei National Independence Party, and announced that they intended to take over the Government. Kaiser still had many friends in the discontented military, among them Craig Duli, the head of Transkei military intelligence. It was Duli who organised Transkei's first military coup (3 April 1987). The Selous Scouts were deported from Transkei, and their pet, Zondwa Mtirara, was removed. Bantu Holomisa, who was released from detention, was appointed commander of the TDF in his place.

Kaiser formed a new political party and announced his intention of taking over the government. George's image had been badly tarnished by the ongoing revelations of the Commission of Inquiry, and he was under considerable pressure to resign. But he refused to do so, and his supporters passed a constitutional amendment barring Kaiser from sitting in the Transkei Parliament. On 24 September 1987, the army struck again and forced the resignation of George Matanzima and 8 of his ministers. With Kaiser out of the running due to the constitutional amendment, the

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[15] Daily Dispatch, 22,24 Sept, 20 Oct.1986; 19 May, 23 Sept. 1987.

martial law and took over the Transkei government. Stella was out after only 86 days in office on the pretext that she had accepted a R50,000 bribe from George Matanzima.[17]

The most obvious beneficiary of the coup was Kaiser Matanzima. Although still officially banished, he presented himself before cheering crowds in Umtata on the day that the new Military Council was announced. Shortly thereafter, the banning order was rescinded. The new Transkei cabinet was packed with his supporters, and the following month it was announced that the hated Commission of Inquiry was to be wound up. The South African Security Police had a field day in Transkei, and intervened directly to clean up the Umkhonto weSizwe (MK) cadres who had infiltrated Transkei. Three suspected MK were gunned down in Umtata in broad daylight, two more were killed in Mount Fletcher, and a sixth was detained and shot in Butterworth. Bantu Holomisa, the new military head of state, was widely regarded as nothing more than a catspaw of the Matanzimas.[18]

Holomisa Takes Charge

But Kaiser had made a serious mistake. Holomisa had long been sympathetic to the liberation movements, and he gradually edged out of the Matanzima shadow. The catalyst for the break was the Thembu

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[17] Daily Dispatch, 1 December 1987, and personal sources.

[18] Daily Dispatch 7,23 Jan.1988; 3 Feb.1988; Weekly Mail, 3,19 Feb. 1988,

succession dispute, a "tribal" matter in which the South African government was unable to interfere.

Umtata, the capital of Transkei, is situated in Thembuland. Kaiser Matanzima is a Thembu chief, but so is Nelson Mandela. Bantu Holomisa is also a Thembu chief, albeit of a tributary clan. The late Paramount Chief, Sabata Dalindyebo, had been driven into exile in 1983 on account of his support of the ANC. Kaiser had installed Bambilanga Mtirara, Sabata's compliant brother as Paramount in his place. When Bambilanga died late in 1987, the succession was claimed by Buyelekhaya, Sabata's exiled son, and by Zondwa Mtirara, Bambilanga's son and Holomisa's old rival in the TDF. Kaiser, who hated Sabata's family, engineered the nomination of Zondwa as Paramount Chief. Holomisa, however, blocked Zondwa's formal installation and insisted that the dispute be referred to the Dalindyebo Regional Authority. When Kaiser protested that the government should not interfere in a tribal matter, Holomisa responded most cuttingly that Kaiser himself had initiated government interference in tribal matters by deposing Chief Sabata in the first place.[19]

It was war. Matanzima initiated two lengthy but unsuccessful legal actions, one to recognise Zondwa as Paramount Chief of Thembuland, and one to declare the Military Government illegal.

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[19] Daily Dispatch 16,22 June 1988; 14 April 1989; 1 May 1989

He also attempted to embarass Holomisa by exposing a rumoured adulterous love affair to the press. Holomisa reacted by dropping Craig Duli and two pro-Kaiser Cabinet Ministers from the Transkei government (April 1989).[20]

Although Holomisa had already established some contacts with the ANC leadership, he still remained the head of an unpopular homeland government, and by this time the United Democratic Front had belatedly made its appearance in Transkei. Again, the Thembu ramountcy issue served as a catalyst. The funeral of the late Paramount Chief Sabata had been conducted by Kaiser Matanzima, and it was suspected by Sabata's family that Kaiser had tampered with the body. At the initiative of Sabata's councillors, all ANC supporters, the decision was taken to exhume Sabata's coffin and give it an appropriate reburial.[21] The reburial, in October 1989, was attended by tens of thousands of people. The ANC flag was openly displayed in Transkei for the first time in thirty years, together with the revolutionary songs and dances already familiar elsewhere in South Africa. Holomisa, still seen by many as a homeland puppet, was not well received by the crowd and was clearly very embarassed. "We took over, we did not consult," he admitted, and he ended his short speech by suggesting that the government

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[20] Daily Dispatch 10,28 April 1989; 3,31 May 1989.

[21] Daily Dispatch, 19 May 1989. The most salient features of the reburial were not reported in the local press, but videos of it circulated in Umtata.

might hold a referendum on Transkei "independence." After Holomisa had finished speaking, the visiting ANC leaders scolded the crowd for their negative attitude towards Holomisa, and exhorted them to give the General their support. The alignment between Holomisa and the democratic movement, although still implicit rather than explicit, was finally in place.

The last quarter of 1989 was a tempestuous one for Transkei. Major strikes erupted in Umtata and Butterworth, and schools throughout the homeland were boycotted and burned. Against this increasingly stormy background, Holomisa's military government took a series of decisions that sharply contradicted South African government policy. Within a week of Sabata's reburial, the government released six MK cadres serving long prison sentences. Two more cadres facing execution were reprieved by a moratorium on capital punishment. And the Transkei government took the opportunity of the annual "independence" celebrations to declare their intention of unbanning the African National Congress and the Pan-African Congress. Walter Sisulu and other released ANC leaders praised Holomisa, and called on other homeland leaders to follow his example. The Transkei government continued to pursue corruption charges against Sun International, and to fight claims for R11 million demanded by JALC, a construction company with ties to the South African security establishment.[22]

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[22] Daily Dispatch 7, 27 Oct 1989; 27 Nov.1989; 15 Jan.1990.

Meanwhile, the conservative forces had regrouped and were planning to recover control of Transkei by force. They were led by Kaiser Matanzima and Chris Van Rensburg (a director of JALC), and included Craig Duli, Vuli Mbotoli (the head of JALC in Transkei) and various displaced civil servants. The group organised two unsuccessful attempts to assassinate Holomisa during the course of 1989. They also addressed a memorandum to Andries Venter, the senior civil servant responsible for the "independent" homelands, calling for military intervention to topple Holomisa.[23]

The South African government was not yet ready for military intervention, but it too had decided that Holomisa must go. Obviously, it was not possible to utter this thought openly. The demand for Holomisa's resignation was therefore encoded in the phrase "return to civilian rule," which they began to circulate in Transkei during the second half of 1989. At about the same time, South Africa started to flex its economic muscle. An important part of Transkei's revenue comes from quarterly payments of just over R200 million each, which are deemed to be Transkei's share of the Southern Africa Customs Union. In August 1989. South Africa threatened to stop these payments unless Transkei withdrew its ban on South African sorghum beer. This ban, which was intended to protect local manufacturers, was first imposed by Kaiser Matanzima

[23] Daily Dispatch 1 Aug.1989; 15 Jan.1990; New Nation 9, 16 August 1991.

in 1985.[24] South Africa did not protest then. Nor did it protest to the obedient governments of Ciskei and Bophuthatswana, who also maintained similar bans. But as Transkei was slipping out of Pretoria's control, the South African government considered manipulating these payments in order to rein Holomisa in.

South African President F.W. De Klerk and Foreign Minister Pik Botha visited Umtata on 11 January 1990. It was only three weeks before De Klerk's landmark speech of 2 February unbanning the liberation movements and promising a new South Africa. But De Klerk's attitude to Holomisa was anything but new. He "advised" Transkei to move towards civilian rule (at the very same time that South Africa was planning its own military coups against civilian governments in Ciskei and Venda!). He told Holomisa that, irrespective of the results of the proposed referendum, Transkei could not unilaterally reintegrate into South Africa. He raised the question of sorghum beer. Pik Botha went even further. He took Holomisa aside during the lunch break, and asked him to drop bribery charges against Sol Kerzner and Sun International.[25] When Holomisa stood his ground, South Africa threatened to delay the Customs Union payments over the sorghum beer issue. It also refused to ratify salary adjustments for civil servants which

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[24] Daily Dispatch 9,10 March, 29 Aug 1989, 17 Jan 1990.

[25] Daily Dispatch 12,16 January 1990; 19 March 1990. Pik Botha had already, on previous occasions, tried to persuade Holomisa to pay JALC the R11 million it was claiming from Transkei.

Holomisa had announced in December 1989, thus forcing the Transkei government to borrow the money from the state pension fund. The Department of Foreign Affairs leaked confidential information to the newspapers with a view to creating the impression that the Transkei government was financially irresponsible.[26]

Relationships between Holomisa and the South African government continued to deteriorate. In June 1990, Pik Botha informed the South African Parliament that he was considering withholding one million Rand that had been budgeted for Transkei. Things got even worse after August 1990, when Holomisa met Pik Botha and Inkatha leader Gatsha Buthelezi to discuss the violence on the Rand in which hundreds of Transkeians had been killed. Holomisa had requested the meeting, but he found on his arrival that the Department of Foreign Affairs had already prepared a meaningless "joint statement," which he was expected to endorse without any prior discussion. He therefore released his own memorandum, in which he blamed the violence on Inkatha and the South African Police and threatened to send Transkeian troops into the Republic to defend their people.[27]

But even this threat did not alarm South Africa half as much as the threat implied by the presence in Transkei of Chris Hani,

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[26] Daily Dispatch 16, 17 Jan. 23,24,28 March 1990.

[27] Daily Dispatch 6 June 1990; 22, 23 Aug.1990.

the Chief of Staff of Umkhonto weSizwe. For this presence, South Africa had only itself to blame. It had unexpectedly revoked Hani's indemnity from prosecution in South Africa, and Hani, an ethnic Transkeian, had taken advantage of Transkei's "independence" to take refuge in Umtata (July-August 1990). Hani was well received in Transkei, and a number of government facilities were placed at his disposal. At the same time, many indemnified MK cadres of Transkei origin were returning to their homes. Rumours began to circulate in South Africa (though not in Transkei) that Chris Hani was integrating MK into the TDF, that the TDF was sending its soldiers to be trained in Cuba, that Cuban soldiers had arrived in Transkei. There were also claims of Libyan and Nigerian involvement. It is probable that most of these rumours were deliberate disinformation, but the South African security establishment clearly began to apprehend that the turn of events in Transkei posed a concrete military threat to South Africa.[28]

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[28] Daily Dispatch 6,7,27 Nov 1990, 22 Sept 1991; Sunday Times (Johannesburg) 26 Aug. 1990; New Nation 16 Aug.1991. The British newsletter, Africa Confidential, has also been a target of this disinformation, and has published a number of misleading reports about Transkei, particularly the lead story on 22 Feb 1991 entitled "Inside Hani-land." Much of this is fantasy, for example with regard to the alleged TUWO aunties "who used to ululate in praise of K.D. [Matanzima] .. now perform the same service for Hani." Apart from the fact that there are no longer any TUWO aunties, it is not true that Matanzima's supporters have switched to Hani or the ANC. Even more serious, three out six people named as Communist supporters of Chris Hani on the ANC Regional Executive were not members of the Regional Executive, and two out of the other three were not Communists.

The Duli Coup

This increased nervousness about Transkei presumably led South Africa to lend a more sympathetic ear to the proposals from the JALC/Matanzima "Transkei Group," which they had rejected the previous year. With the adherence of Craig Duli, they had acquired their own independent military capability, and they began planning a coup in real earnest. Transkei repeatedly requested South Africa to extradite Vuli Mbotoli (of JALC) who had been implicated in the 1989 attempts to assassinate Holomisa. In April 1990, Duli, Mbotoli and Boetie Davis (a former Matanzima bodyguard) were arrested for illegal possession of arms, including assault rifles, mortars, mortar bombs and hand grenades. These arms were formerly the property of the defunct Lesotho Liberation Army, which South Africa had sponsored to fight against Chief Leabua Jonathan. Although the South African state is usually quite paranoid about unauthorised African possession of heavy weaponry, it proved remarkably tolerant in this case and released the three on bail. In November 1990, Duli and his associates moved into a luxury hotel on the East London beachfront as, in their own words, "guests of the South African government." They were constantly visited there by white men who have still not been identified. On 19 November 1990, just three days before Duli's attempted coup, Transkei lodged an official complaint about his activities with the South African government. The Department of Foreign Affairs responded that South Africa would

not allow acts of aggression on neighbouring countries to be launched from its territory.[29]

Two days after this pious declaration, Duli and a small group of about 30 insurgents entered Transkei from South Africa.[30] They arrived at Ncise army base just outside Umtata at about 3 am, and asked the soldiers there to join them. The officers equivocated, but the rank and file refused and were fired on. Duli then occupied the top floor of the Botha Sigcau building, a giant office block in the centre of Umtata which is the headquarters of the civil service. He was clearly expecting outside assistance, but Holomisa was equal to the challenge. The first thing Holomisa did was to offer the South African Embassy in Umtata TDF troops for its "protection". This must have been the last thing the Embassy wanted, and they told Holomisa that protection was unnecessary. Holomisa then went on the radio and used the Embassy statement as proof of his contention that the situation was under control. He emphasised that the Transkei government had not requested any help from anybody, and that any troops who crossed the border "whatever their colour" would be fired on. The warning must have been heeded, because nobody came to Duli's aid, and he was left to die in the ensuing shootout.

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[29] Daily Dispatch 23,24,30 Nov.1990.

[30] This account is based on Daily Dispatch reports, 23-8 Nov. 1990, and on personal observation in Umtata.

F.W. De Klerk and Pik Botha failed to apologise to Transkei for allowing their territory to be used as a springboard for an attack, just two days after they had promised otherwise. Indeed, De Klerk was so indignant at Holomisa's charges of South African collusion that he threatened to sever all financial and diplomatic ties unless the General kept quiet. Despite De Klerk's denial of South African involvement, it has been established that members of the security forces visited Duli's East London hotel after the coup, and removed all documents relating to their late guests. Nor did the South African government facilitate the extradition of Duli conspirator Vuli Mbotoli from South Africa. Mbotoli was the central figure in a second plotted coup attempt, scheduled for 25 April 1991, which failed to get off the ground when Holomisa's men kidnapped him on South African soil shortly before the deadline.[31]

There can be no doubt that some elements of the South African security machine was implicated in the attempted coup. They not only refused to heed Transkei's repeated appeals with regard to Duli and Mbotoli, but they actually abetted the coup plotters during their stay in East London, and covered their tracks after they were dead.[32] But it is still not at clear at which level of

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[31] New Nation 16 August 1991.

[32] This only came to light due to the determined reportage of Daily Dispatch reporters Patrick and Stan Goodenough. This is perhaps the best place to congratulate the Dispatch (one of only two mainstream South African newspapers not controlled by the Argus conglomerate) for its excellent coverage of events in the Transkei and Ciskei.

government the plot was approved. The most obvious direct link between the South African authorities and the coup plotters is JALC director Chris Van Rensburg, who sponsored Duli and Mbotoli and whom Duli telephoned from the Botha Sigcau building at the time of the coup. Van Rensburg was a long-time business associate of Kaiser Matanzima, and has suffered heavy personal financial losses due to Holomisa's refusal to pay JALC the R11 million it claims on account of a housing contract.

It would seem, however, that there is more to Van Rensburg's involvement than a mere financial grudge. Van Rensburg was associated with the old Department of Information in the days before the Muldergate scandal (1978), and it seems that he has continued to operate on the fringes of government. JALC has publicly hinted at its association with South African Military Intelligence, and Craig Duli was the head of its Transkeian equivalent. This close linkage between private business and the security establishment was a central feature of P.W. Botha's National Security Management System, which was operational right up to the moment that F.W. De Klerk took over, and whose present role is obscure. The 1991 plan to assassinate Holomisa was initiated by "International Research," Military Intelligence's Ciskei operation, which will be fully discussed in the next section. On the other hand, the South African Security Police (which falls under the Police, not the Army) seems to have opposed at least some of these

adventures.[33] Most people in Transkei believe that the coup was initiated and executed at the local level (the "Transkei group") but that it could not have gone ahead without consent from the very top.

A notable aspect of the attempted coup was the spontaneous outpouring of popular support for the Holomisa government. Literally thousands of elite civilians thronged the streets of Umtata, demanding arms to fight Craig Duli and the anticipated invasion from South Africa. It is believed that Duli had organised a widespread network of highly-placed individuals, who were cognisant of the plot but lost their nerve when confronted with the sheer extent of Holomisa's support among all classes of the Transkeian population. The attitude of the middle classes might be surprising to some, given the predictions concerning their reactionary tendencies provided by analysts such as Southall and Jozana.[34] But Holomisa had never interfered with the privileges of these classes. Indeed, on the question of civil service salaries, he had done as much as Kaiser Matanzima ever did. Holomisa's government also took the part of the Transkeian employers when their interests were threatened by the Workers Co-ordinating Council in March-April 1990, going so far as to send troops into

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[33] New Nation 9,16 Aug. 1991.

[34] See the concluding section for a detailed discussion.

Butterworth.[35] Chris Hani had also been active in reassuring black businessmen, and telling workers and students that these should not be regarded as capitalists.[36] Whatever nostalgia some businessmen might have felt for the good old days of the Matanzimas, their interests had not yet been sufficiently threatened to make them risk their lives in a military confrontation.

The failure of the Duli coup increased the feeling in Nationalist Party circles that the homelands should be done away with as soon as possible. Take, for example, the following editorial in the Beeld newspaper:[37]

> For South Africa, there is one big lesson to be learnt from the abortive coup against General Holomisa's questionable regime: as a solution to South Africa's constitutional problem, independent ethnic homelands are, and always were, a lamentable failure ...
>
> In a new set up, what is now known as the independent republic of Transkei will, at most, be a regional authority on a geographical basis, with restricted powers. The sooner that happens, the better.

This feeling was compounded by an even greater, though quite different, reverse in the neighbouring homeland of Ciskei.

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[35] This is an important issue, but it cannot be addressed here. See, for example, Daily Dispatch 7,26 March, 10 April, 8 May 1990.

[36] Daily Dispatch 25 July 1990; 27 August 1990.

[37] Quoted in Daily Dispatch 3 Dec. 1990.

II: CISKEI - FROM SEBE TO GQOZO

Like Transkei, Ciskei is a Xhosa-speaking area. But there all similarity ends. Ciskei, with a resident population of just under one million, is much smaller than Transkei but much more densely settled. Whereas Transkei is largely rural with a traditionalist peasant population subject to powerful chiefs, Ciskei is heavily urbanised and industrialised with a largely proletarianised population which scarcely respects chiefs and traditions. Whereas Transkei is relatively isolated and self-contained, Ciskei is little more than the black hinterland of Queenstown, King William's Town and East London. Whereas Transkei entered the national political mainstream slowly and belatedly, Ciskei was from the very first a stronghold of the trade unions and civic. In 1991, the Border region of the ANC, which includes Ciskei, had more paid-up members of the organisation than any other region outside the Transvaal.

The dominant figure in Ciskei homeland politics from 1973 to 1990 was Lennox L. Sebe.[38] Throughout his political career, Sebe battled to fabricate a distinctively Ciskeian national identity which could compete with the broader African nationalism of the ANC and the pan-Xhosa tribalism of Matanzima's Transkei. To this end,

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[38] For an overview of the recent history of Ciskei, see Anonymous [J.B. Peires] "Ethnicity and Pseudo-Ethnicity in Ciskei," in The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa ed. Leroy Vail. (London: James Currey, 1989).

he initiated a number of costly prestige projects - such as the "national shrine" at Ntaba kaNdoda and the "international airport" at Bisho - all of which ended in ridicule and failure. Unlike Kaiser Matanzima, Sebe possessed a stolid and avuncular personality, and was easily influenced by others, more especially by whites. It is also rumoured that he required an unusual degree of medication, which might explain why the Ciskeian Minister of Health was always white.[39] A weak man in a tough job, Sebe always depended on one strong man or another to help him cope. He was, however, somewhat more wary than he seemed to be, and as soon as the strong man of the moment overplayed his hand, Sebe dumped him and found somebody else. The most celebrated instance of this was the case of Charles Sebe, the President's younger brother, who ruled Ciskei through the dreaded Ciskei Intelligence Service until Lennox got rid of him in 1984.

The South African government found Sebe a pliable but expensive tool. His appetite for prestige projects and for personal enrichment made him an easy mark for foreign confidence tricksters, and he infuriated his financial minders in December 1988 when he insisted on a 40% across the board payrise for the Ciskei cabinet and a whopping R185,000 per annum for himself.[40] Even more alarming

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[39] See also Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 20 Nov.1988.

[40] Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 4 December 1988. Sebe had dubious friends in Austria (aeronautics), Israel (pharmaceutics), France (toxic waste) and Italy (drugs - the notorious Vito Palazzolo).

was the rise to influence of Sebe's only son, Kwane Sebe, on whom his father increasingly depended. Kwane was groomed for succession by his fond parent, and was placed in command of a new Police Elite Unit. Unfortunately, he was the kind of man who made enemies easily, and made use of his state powers to gratify his instinct for revenge. Colonel Z. Ngwanya, for instance, was once a close friend of Kwane's. But when he revealed Kwane's personal role in the Elite Unit murder of a trade unionist, Kwane ordered the Unit to bomb Ngwanya's liquor store.[41]

It goes without saying that the Sebe government was completely unable to check the rising power of the trade unions and the civic associations. But the truth is that Sebe was more concerned by the attempted military coup in Bophutatswana in February 1988. (This was the only attempted coup in homeland history that was not sponsored by the South African authorities, and the South African Defence Force suppressed it very quickly.) Sebe became obsessed with the idea that his generals were plotting against him, and he kept on calling meetings with them and begging them not to overthrow him. Ultimately, Sebe hit on the ludicrous idea of staging a coup against himself so as to install Kwane as President.[42]

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[41] Daily Dispatch 23 Aug.1990.

[42] This paragraph is derived from a highly-placed source within the Ciskei government. A slightly different version of the same story appeared in the Weekly Mail 9 March 1990.

This childish behaviour could not have come at a worse time for Sebe. Inspired by the heroic defiance of the Ciskei government by the village of Nkqonkqweni, a wave of popular resistance erupted throughout the homeland, symbolised by the mass rejection of Ciskei National Independence Party membership cards. The situation became even more inflamed after the release of Nelson Mandela, when Ciskei police fired at random into the celebrating crowds of Mdantsane, killing at least ten people. On 2 March 1990, Sebe left for Hong Kong on a "business trip" organised by the South African government, and two days later Brigadier Oupa Gqozo proclaimed a military government.[43]

Gqozo was born in the Orange Free State, and was a prison warder before joining the South African Defence Force. After that he was "military attache" to the Ciskei Embassy in Pretoria, and he only returned to Ciskei three weeks before the coup. Nobody in Ciskei had ever heard of him before he took over the government. The warning signs were there for all to see, but the people were so pleased to get rid of Sebe that they were happy to give the new man a chance. And indeed, Gqozo did start off on a very positive note. He adopted a democratic style and shared platforms with Mandela and the ANC, promising to meet the people and redress their grievances. He abolished the death penalty and reformed the labour laws. He arrested Kwane Sebe and set up a Commission of Inquiry to deal with

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[43] Weekly Mail 9 March 1991.

the corruption of the Sebe government. And even though he did crack down very heavily on a hospital strike, he was still sufficiently well-regarded by the workers to settle the bitter labour disputes which had broken out in the Dimbaza industrial area.[44]

But it soon became apparent that there was a darker side to Gqozo. This first manifested itself in his decision to drop the other members of the Military Council, leaving only himself and the aptly-named Silence Pita. In July 1990, he appointed the convicted drug-dealer Vito Palazzolo as Ciskei's Ambassador Plenipotentiary. The Ciskei's new constitution included a compulsory five year prison sentence for insulting the dignity of the head of state. Most extraordinarily, Gqozo's government refused to meet with the Mdantsane Residents Association on the grounds that it had no mandate from the people. In November 1990, Gqozo infuriated the people of Ciskei by apologising to KwaZulu over an incident at Klobane Colliery in which 11 miners (all Xhosa-speaking) were killed. It was also widely rumoured that Gqozo had given a multi-million Rand cheque to KwaZulu as compensation. This was the first sign of the warm relationship between Gqozo and Inkatha leader Gatsha Buthelezi.[45]

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[44] Weekly Mail, 9, 15 March 1991; Daily Dispatch 10 May 1990.

[45] Daily Dispatch 25 April 1990; 19,22 June 1990; 15 Sept.1990; 2 Nov.1990.

Paradoxically, the more Gqozo antagonised the Ciskeian people, the more confident he became. This confidence can be attributed to the arrival in Bisho (the Ciskei capital) of a security unit calling itself "International Research." The chief researcher was Anton Niewoudt, Gqozo's former lieutenant in the South African Defence Force and connected with Military Intelligence. Niewoudt had directed operations at Camp Hippo in Northern Namibia, where the South African Defence Force had trained Inkatha fighters. Niewoudt and two of his fellow researchers drew salaries of R120,000+ a year. The remainder of the research team consisted of former members of Koevoet (the notorious anti-SWAPO unit from Namibia) and 32 battalion (a unit of non-South African blacks recruited to fight in Namibia.)[46]

In January 1991, Gqozo and International Research lured Charles Sebe and M. Guzana (a member of Gqozo's original Military Council) into Ciskei, and butchered them in cold blood. Both men were unarmed, and both sustained more than ten bullet wounds. Gqozo even stated publicly that he had given orders that Charles Sebe should be shot on sight and not taken prisoner. It is true that Charles had made himself very much hated in Ciskei, but the brutal and gratuitous nature of his murder shocked even his former enemies. Gqozo claimed that Charles had been conspiring with the ANC to stage a coup, and he is also reported to have said that Chris Hani would also be shot dead if he set foot in Ciskei. It is

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[46] Daily Dispatch 30 July 1991; Weekly Mail 9 Aug.1991.

rumoured that Charles was killed to give International Research a pretext for cracking down on the ANC in Ciskei.[47]

Shortly after this, however, Gqozo found that he had a genuine crisis on his hands. The professional soldiers in the Ciskei Defence Force were very unhappy at the way in which they had been subordinated to International Research. They wrote a letter to Gqozo demanding his resignation, citing among other things, his dictatorial style, his unnecessary antagonisation of popular organisations and his alleged "blank cheque" to the KwaZulu government. Headed by the Commander of the CDF, Brigadier M. Jamangile, the senior officers went to the house in Bisho which International Research used as their armoury, and made arrangements to transfer the weapons to a CDF military base. They were interrupted by a squad from International Research, who opened fire and detained them all. Jamangile and the others were accused of conducting a coup, but one of the officers escaped and told the whole story to the Daily Dispatch. The Ciskei government has implicitly admitted the truth of the officers' version by dropping treason charges and releasing the affected officers, rather than allow the case to come to court.[48]

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[47] Gqozo was forced to back down on his claims, due to the public outrage over Charles Sebe's death. Daily Dispatch 29 Jan.1991;5 Feb.1991;5 June 1991.

[48] Daily Dispatch 22,23 Feb. 1991; 7 March 1991.

These revelations finally shattered whatever was left of Gqozo's credibility. Whereas Sebe had had, at least, some supporters and some legitimacy, Gqozo had none. He was completely unmasked as a stooge, entirely dependent on Military Intelligence. Nobody was more aware of this than the South African government. It had sent Gqozo to Ciskei during F.W. De Klerk's brief honeymoon with the ANC, in the hope that he would restore stability and control. The brutal and erratic behaviour of Gqozo and the International Research cowboys had only succeeded in alienating the people still further and had destroyed any hope of co-opting them into the system.

Gqozo's appalling mismanagement seems to have crystallised the shift in government opinion on the homelands that had been evident in the aftermath of the Duli coup. Two days after the shooting incident, Pik Botha flew to Ciskei and announced that South Africa would help to "restructure" Ciskei's government. Later the same month (26 Feb.1991), South Africa took over direct control of the most important ministerial portfolios, including justice, finance and state administration), and declared that it would assist in the maintenance of law and order. The Ciskei constitution was changed to make legal provision for Ciskei to relinquish its sovereignty. Gqozo declared that the agreement was the first step on the road of

reincorporating the Ciskei into South Africa. Needless to say, the people of Ciskei were not in any way consulted.[49]

Ever since then, Pretoria has ruled Ciskei with an iron hand. International Research dressed up as the Ciskei Police keeps order with teargas and birdshot. The Ciskeian Commissioner of Police has been replaced by a white policeman from the Transvaal. A new system of local government is being imposed by vigilante groups despite vehement protests from the people. Hundreds of activists were detained during a temporary State of Emergency in November 1991. Over 3,000 striking state employees have been fired. Four prominent ANC leaders have been put on a hit list. Radio Ciskei has been purged of its politically-minded staff, and the survivors are forbidden to mention the names of ANC, PAC or AZAPO. The radio has promised to become "highly musical."[50]

It is not clear how much longer Brigadier Gqozo will still be around to enjoy the music. Pretoria's first thought was to make his job "more ceremonial," and Gqozo kept a very low profile for a good few months. Lately he has re-emerged, with the intention of starting an Inkatha-style political movement in Ciskei. He was

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[49] Daily Dispatch 14, 16, 28 Feb.1991.

[50] Daily Dispatch 24 April 1991; 8,30 May 1991; 10,15 June 1991; 19,31 July 1991; New Nation 1,8 Nov 1991.

going to call it the Ciskei Freedom Party, but the name has been tactfully altered to African Democratic Movement.[51]

It is unwise to predict the future, but it is difficult to see the present status quo in Ciskei as anything more than a holding operation. The homeland has already been de facto reincorporated into South Africa under the 26 February agreement. Transkei and Venda have been asked to sign similar agreements, which South African government officials explicitly label "an interim step pending a decision on how to reincorporate all the homelands into South Africa."[52]

3. The Weakness at the Centre

Every serious analyst of the homeland system since Harold Wolpe in 1972 shares the view that the primary function of the homelands within the political economy of South Africa has changed from one of "being primarily the reproducer of cheap labour .. to the fundamental institutions for the containment and control of the country's absolute surplus of population of Africans."[53]

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[51] Daily Dispatch 14 Feb.1991; 9,31 July 1991.

[52] Daily Dispatch 29 June 1991. Transkei has refused to sign. The finances of Bophutatswana have been controlled by the South African government since 1986.

[53] Keenan, "Counter-revolution as reform," p.137. See also H. Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour-power in South Africa: from Segregation to Apartheid" (1972). Reprinted in The Articulation of Modes of Production, Ed. H. Wolpe (London: Routledge, 1980), p.314; Molteno, "Historical Significance"; M. Szeftel, "The Transkei: Conflict Externalisation and Black Exclusivism," Institute of

Once homeland governments lost their control capability, as they did in the Ciskei and Transkei cases, they became redundant and even dangerous to the security of the South African state. The public decision of the South African government to abandon the homeland system is the result of its desire to reassert lost control, rather than a manifestation of its commitment to reform. In this concluding section, I am going to try and generalise beyond the specific events which led to the implosion of Transkei and Ciskei, and to point up the essential weakness at the centre of the homeland system.

The Ciskei homeland never achieved even the first prerequisite of government control, namely legitimacy. To a far greater extent than any other homeland, Ciskei lacked an ethnic constituency, and all President Sebe's pseudo-ethnic gyrations could not create the semblance of a Ciskeian nation. The Ciskei government was equally deficient in any class support base, since the close proximity of King William's Town and East London produced not only a strong and unionised industrial working-classs, but a robust and independent black bourgeoisie which was not reliant on the Ciskei government for housing, employment, trading licenses or other economic necessities. The political alliance of the black middle and working-classes, expressed in the civic associations, threatened to

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Commonwealth Studies Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa, 3 (1973); D.Innes and D.O'Meara, "Class formation and ideology: the Transkei region," Review of African Political Economy, 7 (1976).

overwhelm Sebe's feeble administration, thereby prompting South Africa to replace him with the more energetic and apparently competent Oupa Gqozo. But Gqozo was not even a born Ciskeian, and he lacked even the grudging legitimacy that Sebe had accumulated over 17 years of personal rule. Once Gqozo's links with Military Intelligence had been exposed by the Jamangile incident, the question of control in Ciskei boiled down to the balance of brute force, where it still remains today [December 1991].

The events in Transkei are that much more analytically fruitful than those in Ciskei inasmuch as conditions in Transkei were that much more conducive to the homeland strategy. The relatively tiny Transkeian middle class depended on the homeland government for salaries, promotion, housing, licenses and other privileges. Roger Southall, who has subjected this class to a minute scrutiny, has dubbed them the "beneficiaries of Transkeian independence."[54] Innes and O'Meara speak of "elements of the petty bourgeoisie which seek to transform themselves into a bourgeoisie

[54] R. Southall, "The beneficiaries of Transkei Independence," Journal of Modern African Studies XV (1977).

through collaboration with the Apartheid state."[55] Jozana asserts that:[56]

> The Bantustan leaders, often seen as puppets by the liberation forces, have secured support-bases from various social groups that have emerged within white-created institutions. These groups have something to show for their gains: wealth, position, status and authority. To them, it is inconsequential that the status they enjoy is confined to their own circles. They will resist all attempts by the liberation movements to change the status quo.

Though Southall is more guarded ("the mere creation of a black middle class does not in itself guarantee that such an element will be non-revolutionary,") he concedes that:

> The extreme degree of economic dependence of Transkei upon the South African government will continue to ensure that the core of the petty-bourgeoisie will be tied to the white regime - and such a course is likely to promote a widening polarization between the collaborationists and the Transkeian mass.

The behaviour of the middle classes during the crisis of the Duli coup shows that they do not conform to the expectations of these analysts. Despite all appearances to the contrary, the putative homeland alliance between the South African state and the collaborationist bourgeoisie was just as devoid of existence in

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[55] Innes and O'Meara, "Class Formation," p.80. Innes and O'Meara do emphasise that "only a small proportion of the petty bourgeois agents in the region" can be accomodated in the alliance with the South African state. Their prediction that a "very small class" of capitalist farmers" would eventually emerge as a significant element in Transkei has not been borne out by subsequent events.

[56] X. Jozana, "The Transkeian Middle Class," p.102. R. Southall, South Africa's Transkei, p.198.

Transkei as it had been in Ciskei. In part, this can be explained by the historically ambiguous position of the black bourgeoisie,[57] and in part it can be explained by the subjective perceptions of the black bourgeoisie themselves. Even though the Transkei bourgeoisie might privately admit that they have benefitted from the system, they do not regard themselves as sell-outs nor are they satisfied with what they see as the crumbs which have fallen from the white man's table. They see their capital as Pretoria not Umtata, and they share a common interest with the black middle classes elsewhere in the country who would prefer a black South African government to the present white one.

More significantly, however, the failure of the Transkeian middle classes to support the Matanzimaist faction points to a vital disjuncture between the homeland state and the homeland bourgeoisie which has gone ~~completely~~ unnoticed in the literature, and which surely requires a complete re-evaluation of homeland political structures. Radical analysis has never, in fact, attempted to define the relationship between the homeland leadership and the local bourgeoisie. It has simply assumed that their interests are identical, and it has therefore tended to conflate the one with the other, either explicitly ("Matanzima .. functioning as the representative (and leader) of the collaborationist bourgeoisie") or by proceeding as if it were the

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[57] Extensively analysed in another historical context by Helen Bradford, A Taste of Freedom (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 198).

bourgeoisie rather than the homeland leadership who were the immediate clients of the South African state ("this emergent petty-bourgeoisie was marked out by Pretoria as a future subordinate ally, whose function would be to preside over the bantustan state.")[58]

This unthinking identification of the homeland leadership and the homeland bourgeoisie is both theoretically and empirically incorrect. It is theoretically incorrect, because no state can be reduced to the instrument of a particular class; certainly not in Africa where, as Leys has pointed out, the essence of a 'bonapartist' government is its ability to maintain itself in power, despite its lack of a firm class base, by juggling the interests of the various conflicting classes.[59] It is empirically incorrect because the overwhelming majority of the homeland leaders were not petty bourgeois but chiefs, and chiefs are not part of the middle classes, they are part of the state apparatus.[60] Thereby hangs a tale.

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[58] Innes and O'Meara, "Class Formation," p.85; Southall, South Africa's Transkei, p.142. For an even more extreme formulation, see Molteno, "Historical Significance," p.25.

[59] C. Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1975), pp. 207-9.

[60] It is symptomatic of the conceptual confusion in homeland studies that Southall, the most detailed of all the homeland analysts, discusses the chiefs under the heading, "the Transkeian bourgeoisie: chiefs and politicians." South Africa's Transkei, p.173.

Chiefs in the South African homelands, as elsewhere in Africa during the colonial period, have long depended on the government rather than their people for both political recognition and financial support. They can not be regarded as a 'traditional' ruling class because they have entirely ceased to represent the dominated remnants of the precolonial social order, although this fact has been deliberately obscured for ideological purposes. In South Africa, it is even questionable whether chiefs can be viewed as a social class at all, or whether they should simply be categorised as state functionaries like magistrates and policemen. Certainly, the chiefs who rose to prominence under the homeland dispensation were not the great hereditary aristocrats such as King Sabata Dalindyebo of the Thembu, but junior chiefs such as Kaiser Matanzima, Lucas Mangope and Gatsha Buthelezi, who depended on the South African connection not only for money and power, but even for their very status as chiefs. Lennox Sebe, who was not a born chief but had a chieftainship manufactured for him on the basis of a fake genealogy, is an extreme example of this process.

The incipient middle classes were barely consulted when they newly established homelands were instituted with built-in chiefly dominance, as in the Transkei Parliament where chiefly members outnumbered elected members 64 to 45. And even though their numbers burgeoned as the homelands flourished, their political influence

did not increase.[61] Attempts by the middle classes to gain political power were cynically suppressed with the connivance of the South African authorities, as happened in Venda in 1978 when the opposition party won the majority of Parliamentary seats but were locked up together with the electoral officers by Chief Patrick Mphephu. Political institutions which might have incorporated middle class aspirations, such as political parties and homeland parliaments, either became instruments of homeland patronage or died out altogether. The homeland bourgeoisie do not control, and are not even faithfully represented in, the homeland administrations, which are dominated by chiefs and are part of a state apparatus which is centred not in the homeland itself but in Pretoria.

To say that the homeland leaders are part of the South African state apparatus is not to imply that they are mere puppets or that they form part of a bureaucratic command structure. Such overt subordination to the white government would have destroyed the ideological legitimacy which the entire homeland system was geared to create. Homeland administrations therefore adopted a patrimonial style, patrimonialism being defined by Weber as "any kind of government that is organised as a more or less direct extension of

[61] The four homelands of the Eastern Transvaal - Lebowa, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele and possibly Gazankulu - seem to be an exception to this generalisation.

the ruler's household."[62] It is very personal style of government that is widespread in neo-colonial black Africa, and has the ideological advantage of seeming similar to precolonial chiefly rule.

Patrimonial government habitually makes use of "clientilist" networks, by which patrons distribute material resources to their clients in exchange for political loyalty.[63] The concept of clientilism is very useful for an understanding of the homeland segment of the South African state. The homeland leadership is neither the the puppet of the South African state, nor does it present the interests of the homeland bourgeoisie. Rather it is the intermediate link between the two in a clientilist chain of authority. This conception helps us to understand how the homeland leadership remains subordinate to the South African state but yet preserves some relative autonomy. It also explains how a local bourgeoisie is able to benefit from homeland self-government without acquiring any commitment to the homeland leadership. The Transkei bourgeoisie saw Kaiser Matanzima as a patron rather than

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[62] Quoted in T. Callaghy, The State-Society Struggle: Zaire in Comparative Perspective (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p.69.

[63] On clientilism, see for example R. Jackson and C. Rosberg, Personal Rule in Black Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp.38-47.

as a representative of their class interests. Once he had fallen from power and could no longer deliver the goods, they lost interest in him and transferred their service to his successor.

The clientilist relationship was absolutely necessary for the preervation of homeland legitimacy, but it also suited the convenience of the South African state in other ways. First of all, it reduced the relationship between the state and the black rural masses to a relationship, relatively easy to manipulate, between the South African authorities and individual homeland functionaries. A second characteristic of clientage is that its most important transactions take place in secret, thus enabling the homeland authorities to concur privately in measures which they could not publicly approve, particularly with regard to state security. Lastly, the clientilist relationship involved substantial government contracts, which set up innumerable fringe benefits for the South African functionaries who actually conducted the day to day business between South Africa and the various homelands. It should also be remembered that the homelands were a relatively specialised but low priority issue within the South African state's hierarchy of concerns. This allowed comparatively unimportant but specialised local agencies such as JALC to exert an influence out of all proportion to their lowly ranking within the structure of the South African state.

The disadvantages to the South African government of the clientilist chain of command were not perceived while things were running smoothly, but became all too apparent under pressure. Too much depended on the individual personality of the homeland leader. However pliable he might appear to be, a crisis might show him up as too old (Kaiser Matanzima), too corrupt (George Matanzima) or too incompetent (Lennox Sebe). Even worse, there were no institutionalised methods of replacing an unsuitable homeland leader. Bourgeois institutions had been much attenuated by patrimonial neglect, and were liable to throw up undesirable candidates (Stella Sigcau). Second-ranking homeland functionaries might be assassinated (like Piet Ntuli, the over-zealous KwaNdebele Minister of Justice in 198), but the leaders themselves were surrounded by bodyguards (Holomisa has survived three assassination plots). Military coups, engineered with the help of Military Intelligence, seemed the most appropriate and practical answer. But as Bantu Holomisa and Oupa Gqozo have demonstrated, albeit in very different ways, military coups do not necessarily provide the kind of person whom the South African state wants. The lesson of the homeland implosions for the South African government seems to be that government by remote control is simply not reliable.

The disjuncture between the homeland state apparatus and the homeland bourgeoisie is not necessarily permanent. It is entirely possible under the present circumstances that the homeland bourgeoisie might capture the local state apparatus. Indeed they

are well placed to do so, provided that they can refurbish homeland institutions to become properly representative of the middle classes. Once this has occurred there is no institutional reason why a bourgeois homeland leadership should not opt for the ANC rather than President de Klerk if it feels that the ANC is better placed to satisfy its class aspirations. Something of this sort already appears to be happening in the poorly documented Eastern Transvaal homelands of KwaNdebele, KaNgwane, Lebowa and Gazankulu.

But a homeland administration which serves the bourgeoisie does not necessarily serve the interests of the impoverished rural masses. This is apparent from the tension which has developed betwen the Inkatha-style bourgeois-based political movements in KwaNdebele, KaNgwane and Gazankulu and the mass-based local branches of the ANC inside these homelands. This situation poses a problem for the ANC and ~~an opportunity~~ a second chance for the South African government, which is better placed to satisfy the short-term economic appetites of the homeland bourgeoisie. Whichever way the bourgeoisie eventually tilts, however, it is clear that the distinctive state apparatus of the homelands have failed in their mission, and will gradually be phased out. Inasmuch as homeland structures may continue to exist, they will survive mainly as sinecures for the homeland bourgeoisie; as instruments of political control, they are clearly dead on their feet.