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'Re Betha Trupa': The Construction and Negotiation of Identity Amongst the Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha with an emphasis on Diturupa Cultural Commemoration.

By

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609203

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in the Department of History, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand. 31 March 2021

D e c l a r a t i o n

This study represents an original work by the author and has not been submitted in any form to another university. Where use has been made of the work of others it has been duly acknowledged in the text.



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Abstract

Diturupa is a cultural commemoration that happens annually on the 26th of December in Makapanstad. It is primarily based on military drilling and parades done by soldiers. It incorporates Setswana traditional elements from the locality of Makapanstad amongst the Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha community. This study is a critical analysis of how Diturupa shapes the identity and ethnicity of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha community in Makapanstad. Diturupa has been sustainable for the past hundred years as a community based initiative rooted in custom and rituals linked to a diverse identity. Diturupa is linked to the SS Mendi tragedy where black South African soldiers lost their lives. It is also a commemoration of those who fought in World War I and World War II. Diturupa represents an inclusive commemoration rooted in a spirit of diversity, creativity, and togetherness. It is rooted in respect for chieftaincy and bringing the community together in the festive season. Diturupa has a rich material culture starting with the kilt (Scotch), kettle drums, Tempedi and soldier uniforms that are worn on the 26th of December. This material culture is rooted in Setswana culture but incorporates western elements to create a diverse identity. Performance is at the heart of Diturupa and brings together various elements to recreate and remember those who perished and sacrificed their lives on the many battlefields of the world wars. The legacy of Diturupa is an ongoing project that continues to be written and re written. It is safe to say that Diturupa will be with us for generations and represents a truly unique cultural heritage identity in the trans-provincial geopolitical region of Moretele.

Tshobokanyo (Abstract)

Diturupa ke ngwao le setso se se diragalang ngwaga o mongwe le o mongwe ka kgwedi ya Sedimonthole kwa motseng wa Makapanstad. Moetlo o, o diragatsa tlholego ya di brass band le metsamao ya masole. E kopanya setso sa morafe wa Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha kwa motseng wa Makapanstad. Thuto e ya patlisiso e gatelela sekaseko e ka mokgwa o Diturupa di thusang ngwao le botho ba Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha. Tiragalo e ya Diturupa e ntse e tswelela go tloga mengwaga e lekgolo e fetileng e ikagile ka setsong le setho sa motse wa Makapanstad. Moetlo o wa Diturupa o ikgolaganya le SS Mendi eleng sekepe se se nweletseng kwa ntweng ya lefatshe yantlha mo matshelo a masole a mo Afika a latlhegileng. Moetlo o, ke segopotso le keteko ya botlhe ba ba lwelang kwa ntweng yantlha le ya bobedi ya lefatshe. Moetlo o wa Diturupa o emela ikopopotso e ka yone e ikaegileng ka mowa o o akararetsang batho botlhe, boitlhamedi le kutlwisisano magareng ga batho. Di ikaegile ka tlotlo ya bogosi le go kopanya morafe ka nako ya keteko ya bofelo jwa ngwaga. Moetlo o wa diturupa o humile mo setsong sa khai go simolola ka kiliti (sekotšhe), meropa ya diketlele, Tempedi le moaparo wa masole o o apariwang ka di 26 tsa kgwedi ya Sedimonthole ngwaga mongwe le mongwe. Khai e, ke khai e e ikaegileng mo setsong sa Batswana efela e akaretsa dielemente tsa setso sa se Wesetene go tlhama bong jo bo sa kgethololeng. Tiragatso ke yone e e botlhokwa thata mo moetlong wa diturupa gonne e tlisa mmogo dielemente tse di farologaneng tsa go tlhama gape le go gopola ba ba tswileng ditlhabelo

ka matshelo a bone kwa mabaleng a mantsi a dintwa tsa mafatshe. Boswa jwa Diturupa ke porojeke e e santseng e tswelera go kwala le go boeletswa go kwadiwa. Go sireletsegile go buwa gore Diturupa di tlabo di ntse di diragatsiwa mengwaga e le mentsi e e latelang ka gone di tota di emetse ngwao boswa e e kgethegileng

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to acknowledge Modimo le Badimo for ho tsamaya letsholo la thuto lenna. Kea leboga lona ba bagolo ka go nkema nokeng le go ntshireletsa le go mpulela ditsela. Ahee marangrang le batho ba lesedi le khanya! Bana ba Mmamafura a theku. Magadimana ntweng, gabaja ga ba gadimane.

My wife Pulane Motlhamme thank you for your support. Thank you for being a pillar of strength and assistance. You really went the extra mile as I was going through the trial and tribulations of reading, writing and revising my work. You held my hand through the difficult times and listened to me and encouraged me to never give up. Thank you for being the star of the story behind this thesis. Your support has shown me what love is and how love perseveres despite the pressures and challenges.

I would like to also thank my daughter @Bogoman (Remmogo). You came into my life when this thesis was still in its infancy stages and helped to shape it. I remember needing to study during lockdown and you always wanting to come near to the laptop and touch it. I hope this study will encourage you in which ever field you will take in the coming years to study the condition of our people and make a positive contribution.

I thank My Mother and Father Mabel and Sam for raising me and for their guidance. Ke rata go leboga lesika le family yaame ka kemo nokeng yabone gonna. Bagaetsho ke thata kalona lotlhe. Letta Motaung le ba lesika for your readiness to assist. Johannes Motaung thank you for hosting me ko Moshabelong wa kwa Motaung.

I would like to acknowledge my supervisor Prof Sekibakiba Lekgoathi. Kea leboga Motebele. I have known you since second year and remember you telling my parents that I must return to Wits for my postgraduate studies and indeed I did return. Thank you for the generous criticism and for teaching me to be patient with myself and the processes of academia and intellectualism.

I would like to acknowledge my supervisor Dr. Neo Lekgotla laga Ramoupi. I met you along the course of this research and I am grateful for your encouragement of my scholarship. Thank you for helping to find my voice in academia and encouraging me to always trust myself in the academy. Your push for African centred knowledge remains an inspiration and an encouragement for young scholars like myself.

I would like to thank the Neame family and in particular Sylvia Neame for a scholarship in the History Department to pay for my tuition fees. Through Prof Lekgoathi's persuasion I was able to get assistance from you despite being a part time and working student. I hope your generosity can extend to other brilliant black students who have to work and study because circumstances do not afford them the privilege of only being full time students.

I am grateful to members of the History Department at Wits University who have shaped my scholarship in one way or another since 2012. Your assistance does not go unnoticed. I am particularly grateful to Maria Suriano for taking an interest in my scholarly work and for her encouragement and guidance. Thank you to Prof Noor Nieftagodien for the intellectual engagements. Dr Andrew Macdonald, Dr Saraah Jappie, Muchaparara Musemwa, Prof Peter Delius, Prof CI Hamilton, Prof Clive Glaser, Dr Stacey Sommerdyk.

There are other scholars who have influenced my intellectual trajectory and I would like to acknowledge them as well. Dr Zimitri Erasmus who taught me sociology in second year 2013. Dr

Prishani Naidoo who taught me sociology as well. Prof Robert Muponde who taught me African literature. Mr Tim Trengove Jones of the Wits English Department. Prof Michael Titlestad of the Wits English Department. John Masterson of the English Department. And Prof Victor Houliston. And Mrs Quinn Setshedi of African languages.

I would also like to thank scholars who have influenced my work from far and wide. The scholar activist tradition of African Americans is one I am immensely indebted to. The likes of the late Prof John Henrik Clarke, Dr Marimba Ani, Molefi Asante, Manning Marable, Yosef Ben Jochanan, Clenora Hudson Weems, Asa G Hilliard, Runoko Rashidi, Patricia Hill Collins, Itibari Zulu, Noliwe Rooks, Ama Mazama, Gerald Horne, James Conyers, Zine Magubane, Bernard Magubane, Yvette Abrahams, Archie Mafeje, Jacob Mohlamme, Robert Sobukwe, Steve Biko, Clement Keto, Eskia Mphahlele, and many others.

I am grateful to the people who work behind the scenes at Wits who make sure that we can resources and access to the institution. Thank you to Ntate Mulaudzi and Mme Gugu at the front desk of William Cullen library who make sure that we get the books we need. The staff of Wits Historical Papers thank you for your patience and assistance with regards to archives. Staff at the Wits Education Library Mme Chisholm and her team thank you.

Madam Rene Casterns of the Wits History Department thank you for your unwavering assistance. Staff at the Wits Education and Main library thank you as well for your assistance. The Wits humanities faculty staff at South West Engineering thank you for dealing with my administration issues, special thanks to Mpho Ntseare for dealing with my postgraduate administration. Mrs Yuri-sha Pillay thank you for assisting with Wits E and turn it in.

Thank you to the Library Genesis team and in Particular Alexandra Elbakyan and Z Library Team. As scholars/students in the global south, many of us do not have access to resources and endowed libraries with vast amounts of collections such as the Bodleian or Harvard Library. Through you, our work is able to reflect global understandings and readings because you are able to provide books for us to read that we would normally not find in our university libraries.

I would like to thank my fellow Masters' students Patrick Nyathi, Mphako Machete and Kefuoe Maotoane for always being a listening ear and assisting where necessary.

Thank you to the community of Alexandra for raising me. I am also grateful to the Alex Education Committee for helping me in my high school years in particular Frank Simmonds and Linda Toms. Carter Primary School for igniting my passion for reading and writing. Mr City Nkoane for the newspapers and intellectual engagements in Setswana and Sepedi. Mr Potsane at Eastbank High school and Mr Lungu at Highlands North Boys for your encouragement.

I would like to thank my colleagues at Highlands North Boys High School for their support. In particular Mr Masinge, Mrs Sithole, Mrs Mushagasha and Mr B Buthelezi. The learners for listening to me and showing interest when I spoke about Diturupa.

I am grateful to staff at the National Archives of South Africa in Pretoria. Your work is important people! I am also grateful to Ausi Lebogang at the North West Provincial Archives in Mafikeng. Pula e go nele Mokhatlha.

Mama Soni Mphake and Kagiso for hosting me in Dinokana as I went to the archives in Mahikeng.

To the gentleman who gave me a lift to Mahikeng when going to the archives thank you.

Johannes Motaung thank you for giving me accommodation at my great grandmothers home ko Moshabelong ko Makapanstad. Letta Motaung thank you for believing in my project and hosting me ko Moretele. Sonny Motaung kea leboga Tau for your assistance. Ntate Seleka ko Maropeng kea leboga Phuti for hosting me at my grandfathers home. Ntate Ranamane thank you for the informative discussions.

To the community members of Makapanstad who welcomed me with warm hands and spoke to me enthusiastically about Diturupa this is for you bana ba kwa Mosetlha! Gratitude to Lencoe Makapan and his unwavering assistance when needed as he helped me to get contacts and suggest people to interview. Rorisang Motaung for your help in getting interviews thank you.

To the people I interviewed in particular Mme Mputla, Mme Matlala, Ntate Matlala, Ntate Ranyawa, Mme Madikoata Mareme, Lucas Ledwaba. Ka sedimo re re ga di lebogwe. Bagaetsho gantle le lona nkebe ke le motho fela. Le nthusitse. Ke solofela gore re tlo tsamaya tsela ya botshelo ba botlhe ebile re tlile go berekisana ka go tlabolla kwa Mosetlha le go tliša diphetogo. Thank you Ntsele Dimati for your assistance.

Mike Milazi kea leboga Motswana o nkemeng nokeng e bile o rotloetsa thuto le patlisiso yaame ka Sekgatlha. Ke solofela go berekisana le lona ka ngwao le dikgangkhutswe tsa Bakgatlha, Batswana le batho ba bangwe ba naga yarona le Aforika ka Bophara.

Lencoe Makapan Rraetsho kea leboga ka thekgo yagago le go mpa pelo ka kitso le patlisiso ya Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha. Ke solofela gore teko yame e tla go natifisa e bule ditsela tsa go tlabolla bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha le metsana ya bone. Pula a e go nele Kgabo!!

I would like to thank the songs I would listen to while working on this dissertation. Amapiano as a musical genre has contributed to the rhythm of this work. Songs such as Amanikiniki, Areyeng

Sandton, Labantwana Ma Uber, Phoyisa, and Kokota Piano helped me to keep going. The spiritual music of Universal Khatisma was important as it helped me to connect with God and the ancestors whilst working on my study. I would also like to thank the music of Batswana groups such as culture spears, Makgona Ngwao of Namibia, Ditaola Cultural Group, Mmausi Lekoma, Nomtiti, Dikakapa, Maxxy wa le Khoisan, and Shumba Ratshega.

I am also grateful to the numerous social media groups that taught me a lot about African history, Diturupa and other topics related to my dissertation. It takes a village in my culture.

I would also like to thank myself for the spirit of enquiry and tenacity of wanting to know. It is important to go the extra mile as a researcher. I would like to thank my ancestors for always walking with me and helping me as I delve deeper into villages and interact with people who might not seem keen at first but become resourceful to the project as time goes by

Dedication

To my ancestors who once lived and touched my life in one way or another. This one is for you.

May your beautiful souls be reincarnated in the living.

Samuel Kgang Motlhamme 1945-2020. I love you Papa. Thank you for teaching me about life, love, education, politics and spirituality. Rest in peace and know that you are remembered, loved and missed. This work is dedicated to you.

Mmadiplase Mumsy Lesoro Mokgabudi 1937-2010

Moerane Motaung 2013

Arios Seleka 1923-1959

Mamoshabelo Motaung 1913-1993

Moserwa Motaung 1941-2018

Frank Simmonds 1939-2013.

Mmasha Motlhamme 1928-1993

Stoffel Motlhamme 1923- 2008

Ntatemogolo Mokgabudi

Rakgadi Nanny

Mam Mashawana

Keetseng Mametse

Buffalo Soldier by Bob Marley

Buffalo Soldier, dreadlock Rasta
There was a Buffalo Soldier
In the heart of America
Stolen from Africa, brought to America
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival

I mean it, when I analyze the stench
To me, it makes a lot of sense
How the dreadlock Rasta was the Buffalo Soldier
And he was taken from Africa, brought to America
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival

Said he was a Buffalo Soldier, dreadlock Rasta
Buffalo Soldier, in the heart of America
If you know your history
Then you would know where you coming from
Then you wouldn't have to ask me
Who the heck do I think I am

I'm just a Buffalo Soldier
In the heart of America
Stolen from Africa, brought to America
Said he was fighting on arrival
Said he was a Buffalo Soldier
Win the war for America
Said he, woe yoy yoy, woe yoy yoy yoy

Buffalo Soldier, troddin' through the land woah
Said he wanna ran, then you wanna hand
Troddin' through the land, yeah, yeah
Win the war for America
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival
Driven from the mainland
To the heart of the Caribbean
Singing, woe yoy yoy, woe yoy yoy yoy
Troddin' through San Juan
In the arms of America
Troddin' through Jamaica, a Buffalo Soldier
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival
Buffalo Soldier, dreadlock Rasta¹

¹ Bob Marley and the Wailers. (1978). "Buffalo Soldier". *Sony Music*. Date Accessed: 28 February 2021. URL: <https://www.jah-lyrics.com/song/bob-marley-the-wailers-buffalo-soldier>

Diturupa in Imagery



Figure 1: Diturupa Participants in Action at Motlhabaneng Section of Makapanstad.²



Figure 2: Diturupa participants parading at the Mosate Royal Headquarters³

² Ledwaba, L. (2019). "Figure 1: Ditrupa Participants in Action at Motlhabaneng Section of Makapanstad".

³ Ledwaba, L. (2019). "Figure 2: Ditrupa participants parading at the Mosate Royal Headquarters".

Terminology and Glossary

Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha: The community of Makapanstad and its neighbouring villages.

Borekhu: A tasty, sticky gummy substance that oozes from certain thorn trees found mostly in the bushveld. Herdboys often collected this borekhu and ate it while looking after goats and cows.

Dikarolo: name used for sections in Setswana.

Diturupa: An event that happens annually in Makapanstad on the 26 of December in Makapanstad.

Kettle Drum: Kettle drums are modern drums with higher sound beat than the traditional drum. They are widespread and found in brass bands, choirs, and military bands. They can be termed a western drum as they came with the advent of colonial and mission rule.

Kgoro: Kgoro is a traditional community village structure.

Kgosi: The leader of a community. In English the equivalent term can be monarch/chief/king.

Kwa Mosetlha: This is the historical name for the area. Often in most Basotho-Batswana communities villages and regions are informally called by leaders who made a huge impact on those communities. Examples include Ga Sekhukhune in Limpopo, Ga Mmabesi in Botswana to name a few.

Lebala: This is the ground/field that is used for Diturupa. In this context it is not a stadium.

Morethetho: Rhythm. The essence is rhythm and movement.

Moropa wa Letlalo: This is the traditional African drum. It is made out of wood and cow hide. It is a very heavy drum and takes years of practise to master. When it is cloudy you need to light a fire to make it play smoothly.

Mosate: Mosate is the royal headquarters of Mosetlha royals. Most of the deceased chiefs like Thipe, Seaparankoe and Motshegwa have homes in the yard. The current chief designate Nchaupe III does not live on the property but lives outside in another section. Mosate is where community meetings are held, village administration carried out. There are satellite offices for government services. It is also the first place where Diturupa gets performed

Motse: name for village in Setswana.

Pula: Rain.

Scotch: *Scotch* is the kilt worn by Diturupa participants during their performance. Scotch is an adaption of the Scottish kilt because it comes from Scotland and there is no local direct translation it was called Scotch.

Sekgatlha: Setswana dialect spoken in Makapanstad.

Tempedi: Tempedi is a popular Setswana instrument made of metal and cow hide skin. It is played with a stick and makes a sound that gels with that of a drum. It helps with rhythm and dancing during Diturupa.

Turupa: The singular form of Diturupa. It stands for one group performing at Diturupa.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Diturupa is important as a carnival because it changes our perceptions of events and the politics of commemoration. It challenges our thinking about who and what we commemorate when we remember the fallen of the First and Second World War. The word Diturupa is taken from the English word “troop” which means a group of soldiers. When translated into Setswana it also sounds like the French word *troupe* which means a theatrical performance. Diturupa started in 1918 after WWI when black South African soldiers came back from the war and wanted to commemorate their war-time experience.¹ Diturupa is the main focus of this work because of its ability to bring the community together. It is perceived as being cultural whilst other traditional ceremonies such as the *makgotla* (public meetings) perceived as political have poor attendance due to community perceptions that traditional leaders, are not improving living conditions in the rural villages today. Diturupa displays culture, tradition, ethnic diversity and the history of the Moretele region as troop groups change and adopt different symbols from the original Scottish kilts and military uniform of British soldiers.

The approach of scholarship to ethnicity in Southern Africa more generally, and Batswana ethnicity in particular, has been to explore one group in isolation from surrounding ethnic groups, as if there is no complex relationships between different communities. Historians writing about Batswana have always placed tribalism and chieftaincy at the centre of narratives and how they respond to colonial intrusion. This is exemplified in the way Batswana communities such as Bangwato and Bakwena and Bakgatlha ba Kgafela have been historicised as fixed “tribes” by authors such as Schapera and Breutz. Contemporary historians have to transcend and expand upon these historical trajectories to

¹ Grundlingh, A. (1987). *Fighting their Own War: South African Blacks and The First World War*. Ravan Press: Johannesburg. 122. Ledwaba, L. (2013). “Diturupa, a celebration of life”. *City Press*. Address: <https://www.news24.com/Archives/City-Press/Diturupa-a-celebration-of-life-20150429>

bring the wider trans-ethnic community into the conversation.² The focus here will be on how Diturupa has shaped the history, culture and identity of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha in contemporary times. It is about cultural adaptation and expression of identity by Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha in the context of inter-ethnic interaction, colonial encounters, materiality and as well as how Diturupa has become a symbolic representation of identity formation and construction for the people in and outside of Makapanstad., a rural community in the North West Province just outside Hammanskraal.

Rationale of the Study

Why BaKgatlha Ba Mosetlha?

Diturupa and Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha can help us get a different cultural history of carnivals and festivals from a marginalised community that refuses to be erased out of history and the heritage landscape. The Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha is part of the Bakgatlha family of the Batswana people in South Africa and Botswana. The early history records a community that split in the 1700s when Mosetlha, the first-born daughter of Kgosi Matshego contested for power against her brother Kgafela, which led to a split between the Mosetlha and Kgafela groups.³ Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha had a respected chief in Kgosi Nchaupe, also called *Seaparankwe* in the 1950s. They also speak a distinctive brand of Setswana dialect that is synonymous with *Sepitori*, which is a growing creole language based on the Sekgatlha dialect of Setswana spoken in Mmakau and Makapanstad, Sepedi, Sesotho, XiTsonga, Afrikaans and other languages spoken in the Pretoria, Hammanskraal and Bela Bela regions.⁴ This is an example of cultural fluidity and intermixing with other ethnic groups. The

² The work of Molosiwa Phutego on the Babirwa is a notable example. Molosiwa, P. (2013). ““The Tragedy of the Ababirwas”: Cattle Herding, Power and the Socio-Environmental History of the Ethnic Identity of the Babirwa in Botswana, 1920 to the Present. PH.D Thesis: University of Minnesota.

³Breutz, P. (1989). *A History of Batswana and the Origins of Bophuthatswana: A Handbook of the Survey of the Batswana, S Ndebele, QwaQwa and Botswana*. Ramsgate: Private Publication. 330

⁴ Ditsele, T & Mann, C. (2014). Language contact in African urban settings: The case of Sepitori in Tshwane. *South African Journal of African Languages*, 34:2, 159-165.

literature on Batswana in the past focused on groups who had an illustrious history of fighting colonialism and had hegemony over neighbouring ethnicities.



Figure 3: A map showing the villages of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha around Makapanstad.⁵

More recently, there is an academic shift towards the communities in the platinum belt of the North West Province.⁶ This research seeks to disrupt notions of what constitutes being *MoKgatlha* and aims to make a contribution by placing BaKgatlha ba Mosetlha in their myriad diversity at the centre of contemporary narrative. This research seeks to understand Diturupa as a phenomenon and cultural consciousness of the Bakgatlha people and the diverse communities around them. The community itself has a rich narrative of difference as people from different ethnicities and languages came to settle here and create a melting pot of diversity that is often not common in the rural areas of South

⁵ Nona.Net. (2020). "Makapanstad". Date Accessed 12/12/2020. URL: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCCSM-02-2019-0009/full/html>

⁶ A lot of the literature focuses on groups such as The Bangwaketse of Makaba II who was comparable to King Shaka in military strength, The Bakwena of Sechele who vanquished the Boers at Dithubaruba, Kgosi Luka Jantjie, Kgosi Galeshewe and Kgosi Toto Makgolokwe who led the Langeberg Rebellion in 1897. Manson, A & Mbenga, B. (2014). *Land, Chiefs, Mining: South Africa's North West Province Since 1840*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Africa. This is seen in how the language spoken is a regional dialect that is used as a lingua franca by people from different ethnicities and the settlement of diverse ethnicities such as Batswana, Bapedi, amaNdebele, amaSwati and vaTsonga people in the greater Hammanskraal region.

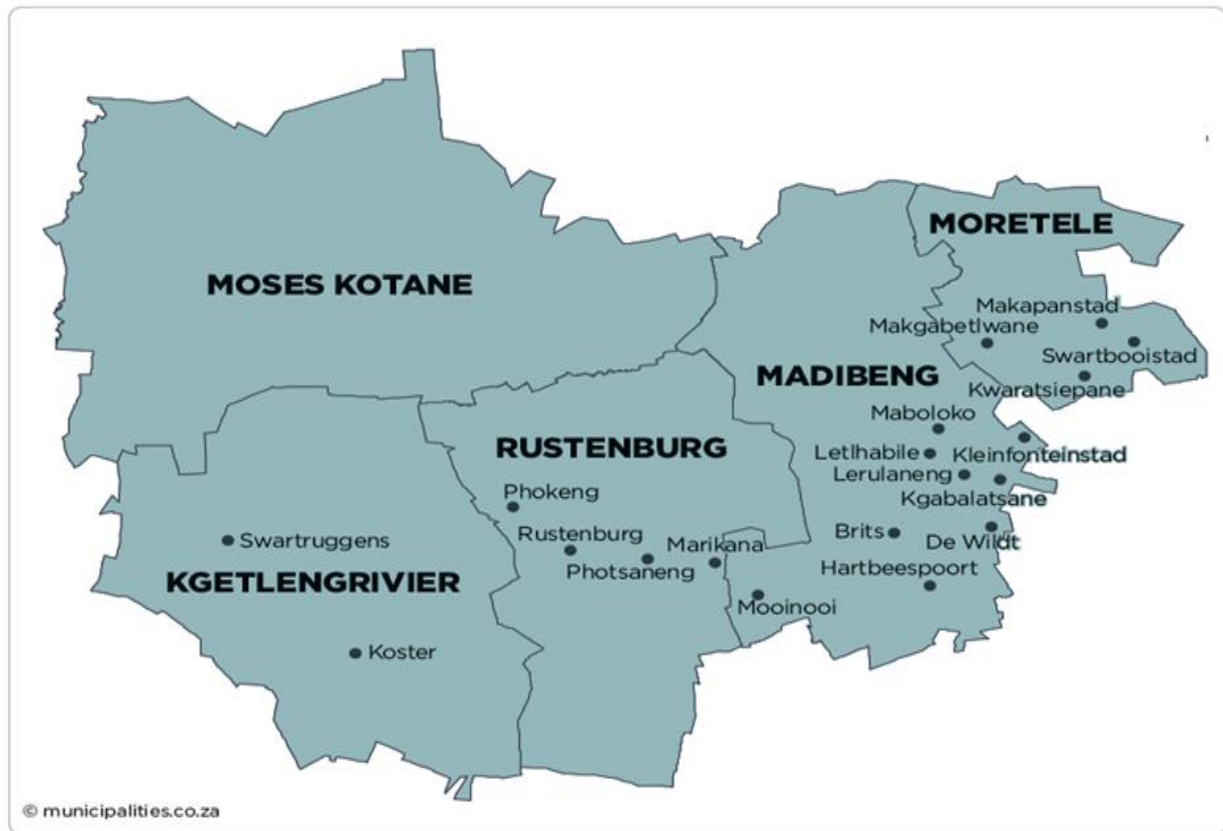


Figure 4: A Map showing the Bojanala District Municipality with Makapanstad in the Moretele local Municipality in the North West Province of South Africa.⁷

⁷ Municipalities South Africa. (2020). "Bojanala Platinum District Municipality". Date Accessed: 01/042019. URL: <https://municipalities.co.za/map/139/bojanala-platinum-district-municipality>

Why Identity?

Identity is important for helping us to understand how communities compose and constitute themselves. African communities had identities prior to colonial rule and they made, unmade remade their identities in the face of different contexts.¹ This research proposes to work on counter-narratives of fixed identities and offer examples of fluid identities using the Diturupa carnival as a metaphor for this identity construction and negotiation.² When scholars debate the origins of tribalism in African societies, they often forget to look at African identity in a complex manner.³ Due to European scholars not having access to some of the idioms and indigenous knowledges, they often used identity in relation to their own European conceptions of identity and simplified the complexities of African societies.⁴ By so doing they confused, misrepresented and misinterpreted African identities. Social structure and identity is vast and complex in African communities and cannot be reduced to one rubric or template of classification as communities change and incorporate new identities. The limited scholarship on Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha has focused on mapping the chiefly genealogies, the socio-economic status of rural life, the experience of women and how Christianity has eroded traditional belief systems within the life of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha.⁵ This research aims to contribute to

¹Msindo, E (2012). *Ethnicity in Zimbabwe Transformations in Kalanga and Ndebele Societies, 1860–1990* Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press. 34. Mamdani, M. (2012). *Define and Rule: Native as Political Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 36. Vail, L. (Ed). (1989). *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

² Hall, Stuart. (1996). “Introduction: Who Needs ‘Identity’?” In S. Hall, and P. Du Gay. (Eds). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage. Pp 1–17.

³Odora-Hoppers, C. (2002). *Indigenous Knowledge and the integration of knowledge systems: towards a philosophy of articulation*. Claremont: New Africa Books. 12.

⁴ Mkhize, N. (2018). “The Missing Idiom of African Historiography: African Historical Writing in Walter Rubusana’s *Zemk’inkom Magwalandini*”. In Bam, J, Ntsebeza, L & Zinn, A. *Whose History Counts: Decolonising African Precolonial Historiography*. Cape Town: African Sun Media. 57.

⁵ The limited scholarship is as a result of not having African students not enroll for postgraduate studies during the apartheid era. Another reason is the fact that scholars often study societies that have a larger body of archival material or fought wars against British or Dutch colonialists which the Bakgatlha did not do on a massive scale as compared to the role of Bakgatlha Ba Kgafela in the South African War of 1899, the AmaZulu in the Anglo-Zulu War and the Bapedi British War of 1877 which generates studies and literature on the societies mentioned above. Another reason is the dwindling prestige of historical studies in the post 1994 era and lack of funding to allow students to undertake research work.

this literature by looking at how Diturupa has shaped the cultural identity of a historically marginalised community and how Diturupa offers a window into the past, present and future of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha as it signifies a living and very public history and heritage.

Why Diturupa?

Diturupa was chosen as the main theme of this research because it happens on an annual basis and reveals a lot about the history and heritage of BaKgatlha Ba Mosetlha. Diturupa as a festival manages to attract people from diverse walks of life. Most rural festivities in the Setswana speaking world such as Dithubaruba⁶, Dikhwaere⁷ and Dikgafela⁸ often attract Batswana while Diturupa brings over 30 000 people from different ethnicities and cultures to Makapanstad.⁹ The cultural cosmopolitanism can be compared to those that happen in Cape Town during Kaapse Klopse and the carnival festivities in the Caribbean. Thus Diturupa carnival is chosen for its ability to illuminate cultural insights into the past and present realities of the Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha and their neighbouring communities living near to them. It is an opportunity to look at how marginalised communities can use heritage to give insight into their history of resilience and agency in the face of colonial administration.¹⁰ Diturupa also presents a study in ambiguity. It is an interface between tradition,

⁶ Dithubaruba is an annual festival held in the Bakwena Ba Ga Sechele town of Molepolole in Botswana and commemorates the battle of Dithubaruba in 1852 against the Trek-Boers in the former Transvaal.

⁷ Dikhwaere is a choir competition that sees different choirs competing and is popular in Botswana and South Africa and sees the choirs singing songs in Setswana and other African languages.

⁸ Dikgafela i giving thanks for the food harvest. It is usually held in September or October.

⁹ Informal Discussion s an annual cultural celebration held by Batswana communities that symbolises the first fruit offering to the King and giving thanks for the food harvest. It is usually held in September or October.

¹⁰ Informal Discussion with D Ranamane, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹⁰ Constant-Martin, D. (1999). *Coon Carnival: New Year in Cape Town, Past and Present*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers.

culture, custom, modernity and cosmopolitanism.¹¹ Some community members would like to see Diturupa keep its present format of accessibility while others want to see it commercialised.

Literature Review

There is a tiny body of literature that has specifically explored the history and culture of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha. Writing in the *Volkekunde* tradition, Van Warmelo and Breutz provides bits and pieces of the history of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha in the introductory pages of their ethnological publications. Their studies were mainly focused on giving a brief summary of the Bakgatlha's origins, their areas of settlement and their chiefly genealogies.¹² They tell us very little about Bakgatlha identity as their chief focus was on land settlement and chiefly personalities who held power in different centuries.¹³ The authors do not tell us what Sekgatlha identity meant for the people in the community and present identity in a fixed and limited context going back to the agenda of colonial ethnography and its intentions.¹⁴

H.J. van Zyl wrote his doctoral thesis as a sociological study on Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha in 1952, which got printed as a book in 1958. Like the two authors above, Van Zyl wrote in the Afrikaans academic tradition that supported grand apartheid - *Volkekunde*.¹⁵ This book covers the colonial history of Ba Mosetlha from an archival and ethnological perspective with an unreferenced use of ethnography and interviews.¹⁶ It is important as a source of empirical data on the history of Ba

¹¹ Giddy, P., & Detterbeck, M. (2005). "Questions regarding tradition and modernity in contemporary Amakwaya practice." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 59, 26-44. doi:10.1353/trn.2005.0048.

¹² Breutz, P. *A History of Batswana*, 333-335.

¹³ Ibid. 332. Van Warmelo, N. *The Bakgatla of Ba Ga Mosetlha*. Pretoria: Government Printing Works. 1944.35.

¹⁴ Ibid. 333. Morton, F & Boeyens, J. (2019). "The Tswana's antiquarian: the life and work of state ethnologist Paul-Lenert Breutz' (1912–1999)". *Southern African Humanities* 32: 109.

¹⁵ Sharp, S. (1981). "The Roots and development of Volkekunde in South Africa". *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1. 16.

¹⁶ Van Zyl, H. (1958). *Die Bakgatla van Mosetlha: An Poesisie en Bantoestame*. Johannesburg: Voortrekkers. 23

Mosetlha and gives an important overview of the history and the area under Kgosikgolo Hendrik Makapan II.¹⁷ I am impressed with the relative ease that the author is able to use Setswana terms relating to the culture of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha. Being a sociological and ethnological book, one gets a sense that the book is more about listing information in a census like style and not telling a narrative or story about Bakgatlha that puts them at the centre.

Volkekunde scholarship often puts African communities as static and only changing through European influence and applauds communities who collaborate with the apartheid system.¹⁸ There were other scholars such as Wilson, Hunter, Schapera and Kuper among others who became professional anthropologists and operated outside the frame of *Volkekunde*.¹⁹ This does not make them immune to criticism as they also worked in a Eurocentric ideology that was prevalent at the time. According to Webster:

Liberal anthropology and Bantu Studies at Wits did not question the European right to conquest, nor the posterity of white settlers in South Africa, and worked towards the establishment of a 'civilised' society based on the European model. The liberal notion that the major antagonism in South African society was Afrikaner nationalist segregation ideology functioned as an iteration of colonial unknowing in that it obfuscated the more fundamental problems of conquest and settler colonialism. Rather, the two traditions should

¹⁷ Ibid. 15.

¹⁸ Ibid. 220.

¹⁹ Bank, A. and Bank, L. (Eds). 2013. *Inside African Anthropology: Monica Wilson and Her Interpreters*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Carstens, P. "1985. "Agnes Winifred Hoernle (1885-1960): The Mother of Social Anthropology in South Africa." in *Anthropology Today*, 1(6): 17. Hammond-Tooke, W. D. (1997). *Imperfect Interpreters: South Africa's Anthropologists 1920- 1990*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press. 14.

be read as ideologically and politically consistent and unified within a project of white supremacy in South Africa.²⁰

A recent intervention by Petunia Mabokela, “Women of Makapanstad” (2018) is the latest addition to Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha historiography.²¹ Mabokela, writing from a political studies tradition drawing from feminist scholarship, uses a life history approach that looks at the experiences of Bakgatlha women from the generations of the 1930s, 1960s and 1990s. This study was influenced by the study of Mmantho Nkotsoe and Belinda Bozzoli called *Women of Phokeng* which looked at the lives of women of Phokeng from an urban and rural sociological perspective.²² These intergenerational experiences touch upon the impact of traditional leadership on their lives as well as community relations and the contexts of segregation in the early 1900s-1940s, apartheid from the 1950s-1980s and the democratic period from 1990s -2017.²³

Mabokela looks at a historical period as well as present day issues facing Bakgatlha from the colonial administration to Bophuthatswana and then the post-apartheid government. The strength of the thesis is that it sheds light on current struggles facing the community such as corruption by traditional leadership and poor service delivery from the Moretele Local Municipality.²⁴ The life history approach gives voice to previously marginalised women’s authority of experience and challenges the historiography of always giving prominence to men and elites in history and political studies.²⁵ The gap in the thesis, however, is its lack of engagement with a variety of sources

²⁰ Webster, A. (2017). “Silencing Africa: Anthropological Knowledge at the University of the Witwatersrand”. Unpublished M.A. Research Report: Wits University. 16.

²¹ Mabokela, P. (2018). “Women of Makapanstad: The Life Experiences of Rural Women Living under Traditional Leadership from Segregation to Democracy”. Unpublished M.A. Thesis: Wits University.

²² Bozzoli, B & Nkotsoe, M. (1991). *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

²³ Mabokela, “Women of Makapanstad”. 32.

²⁴ Ibid, 45.

²⁵ Ibid, 26.

on the history of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha such as the Mosetlha and Kgafela split and the challenges of Ntebeng Makapan as a Bakgatlha regent since it is based on women and gender in Makapanstad.

Mogapi Letebele has written a Master's thesis on Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha looking at the customs, beliefs, and Christianity in the community. His work focuses on the ways in which Christianity has decimated the cultural belief systems of the community. Through the missionary and colonial incursions, Bakgatlha culture and customs started playing second fiddle to the might of missionary and colonial indoctrination.²⁶ Although the research is about Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha, one of its weakness is that only two people are interviewed. The voice of ordinary people in different Bakgatlha villages would be interesting to hear regarding sweeping generalizations such as these:

All that is left of the BaKgatlha Ba Mosetlha is the name and not what used to define them as BaKgatlha; their identity is left only in their name. There was little or no serious crime and there was respect for authority, family life sanctity and community structures, but that is no more. There is very little hope for a future for the BaKgatlha peoples if the current trajectory is sustained and maintained. Christianity and colonialism have been accused of this degeneration or destruction of a culture, customs and beliefs.²⁷

Colonialism and Christianity need to be engaged in a complex manner and not only that of victim and conqueror type as Bakgatlha used their agency under these institutions and systems to negotiate their identity. Letebele, in a nostalgic approach, imagines Bakgatlha as a community that lived in utopia during precolonial and colonial times. Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha accepted the

²⁶ Letebele, M. (2019). "Customs, Beliefs, and Christianity within the Life of the Bakgatla Ba Mosetlha". Unpublished M.A. Dissertation: University of Pretoria. 20.

²⁷ Ibid, 8.

Hermannsburg mission from Germany on their land, something the author does not grapple with and how these missionaries did not only destroy African traditions but assisted with land buying and teaching people to read and write.²⁸ African communities such as Batlhaping under Kgosi Mothibi saw missionaries as a passport to acquiring guns and securing land title deeds as exemplified by the Bafokeng.²⁹ Letebele did not consult archives on the complex relationship between Bakgatlha and Christianity hence it becomes a one sided narrative of Christianity destroying African spirituality and culture.

Hammanskraal is the town closest to Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha. The historiography of Hammanskraal excludes Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha. They are mentioned in a generalised form but they are not named.³⁰ The conceptualisation of a history of Hammanskraal excludes those who stay in Greater Hammanskraal, thereby robbing us of complexity. Sarah Godsell looks at the history of how Hammanskraal came into being without interrogating the complex relationships in the Moretele region between the different ethnic groups and urban communities. She looks at how a group of Amandebele-a-Moetlane settled among Bakgatlha and kept their culture and ethnicity. In the 1880s, with the assistance of missionaries, they started buying the farms Leeuwkraal and Tweefontein from the whites.³¹ Under the leadership of Karel Kekana, they were slowly impacted by colonial rule and white settlers.³²

²⁸ Chisholm, L. (2017). *Between Worlds: German Missionaries and the Transition from Mission to Bantu Education*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 56.

²⁹ Shillington, K. (2011). *Luka Jantjie: Resistance Hero of the South African Frontier*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 35. Mbenga, B and Manson, A. (2010). *People of the Dew: A History of the Bafokeng of Phokeng-Rustenburg Region, South Africa, From Early Times to 2000*. Jacana Media: Johannesburg. 18.

³⁰ Godsell, S. (2015). "Blurred Borders of Belonging: Hammanskraal Histories 1942-2002". Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Wits University. 47.

³¹ Ibid, 47-48.

³² Ibid, 51.

Inter-ethnic Relations among African Societies

Literature on ethnicity and interactions amongst different polities in Southern Africa often draw upon colonial references, there is a need to rethink colonial taxonomies, historiographies and context. As Europeans took a central role in shaping and writing up much of African history, their theorisations and conceptualisations have taken hold and often remove the African voice out of history.³³

Terence Ranger, in *The Invention of Tradition* posits that traditions were created by colonialists who settled on the continent.³⁴ Ranger speaks about invented traditions as if they were absent on the African continent not in their particular form but in their essence. Concepts such as subordination and domination, class formation and governance were already in existence in different forms in African society.³⁵ For example, he says "...some Africans could become members of the governing class of colonial Africa."³⁶ This statement is paradoxical as there were already other social structures in African polities that allowed for conquered or assimilated groups to join the ruling lineage by performing particular tasks. An example of this is the Buthelezi chiefdom and its importance to the amaZulu royal family.³⁷ With regards to the tradition of subordination, this saw smaller polities and groups being absorbed by the hegemonic group. This was present in African polities long before colonial conquest. An example is the Bapedi Ba Maroteng, who as they became powerful were able to incorporate other chiefdoms into their administration by placing their

³³ Mkhize, "The Missing Idiom of African Historiography", 40.

³⁴ Ranger, T. (1983). "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa". In E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 211.

³⁵ Lekgoathi, S. (2006). "Ethnicity and Identity: Struggle and Contestation in the Making of the Northern Transvaal Ndebele, ca 1860-2005." Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of Minnesota. 8.

³⁶ Ranger, T. "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa". 220-221.

³⁷ Mzala, N. (1988). *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief with a Double Agenda*. London: Zed Books. 102.

own chiefs and headmen into newly conquered territories or marrying into the ruling family.³⁸ African communities did not become part of the modern world only when European colonists started to govern them. They had their own systems and traditions which also influenced colonial traditions, of which the European colonists took advantage of and incorporated them into the colonial system.³⁹

Mafeje writes about the ideology of tribalism and challenges the convention of using terminology like “tribalism” when analysing African societies. Mafeje locates “tribalism” as an ideology that encapsulated African societies into a timeless colonial dimension incapable of social change.⁴⁰

Mafeje adds that:

A relatively undifferentiated society, practising a “primitive” subsistence economy and enjoying local autonomy, can legitimately be designated as a tribe. When such a society strives to maintain its basic structure and local autonomy, even under changed economic and political conditions, perhaps it can be said to exhibit 'tribalism'. But to impose the same concept on societies that have been effectively penetrated by European colonialism that have been successfully drawn into a capitalist money economy and a world market is a serious transgression.⁴¹

Thus, we can see that Mafeje is arguing against the retribalisation of African societies who have been drawn into the colonial societies both in rural and urban areas. The ideology of tribalism is an important concept in helping us move away from thinking about rural societies as inherently tribal as compared to their urban counterparts. This work on Bakgattha seeks to complicate the

³⁸Delius, P. (1983). *The Land Belong to Us: The Pedi Polity, the Boers and the British in the Nineteenth-Century Transvaal*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

³⁹ Magubane, B. (1996). *The Making of a Racist State: British Imperialism and the Union of South Africa 1875-1910*. Asmara: Africa World Press. 32.

⁴⁰Mafeje, A. (1971). “The Ideology of Tribalism.” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9, 2, 253.

⁴¹Ibid, 258.

idea of identity beyond the notion of “tribe” and actually engage the Bakgatlha community in their myriad diversities. It also seeks to show us the folly of Bantustans. Which went against systems of African social organisation which were based on nation, clan and lineage which offers a comprehensive account of peoples’ identities; as compared to Bantustan states that lumped people together and differentiated others based on their ethnic affiliation without considering other deeper complexities.

Colonialism in South Africa

Colonial rule shaped identity in Africa in profound ways. However, it was not the only structure that solely shaped African societies. Different colonial powers came into the continent at different times, and they made incremental gains as they increased their territorial gains and subjected Africans to their rule.⁴² The particular brand of colonialism that we will be looking at is settler colonialism. Southern Africa experienced this form of colonial domination. This part of Africa was mainly the preserve of the British, Portuguese, the Dutch and Germans. Colonial rule used ethnicity to create a fixed identity for Africans and used that to codify people and differentiate them institutionally. Although pre-colonial identities were there, they had some nuanced fluidities that allowed flexibility and tolerance. The way ethnologists such as Breutz and Schapera used history and its allied disciplines to create ethnic separatism and discrimination affected people’s psychological and material reality and sense of belonging if they were between two shifting identities. My other way of thinking about ethnicity that informs this project is the way in which ethnicity and totemism coalesce. So, Ba Mosetlha are named for a Bakgatlha group but they fall under the general rubric of Batswana – which is a contested identity itself and in part a colonial construct.⁴³

⁴²Magubane, *The Making of a Racist State*, 309.

⁴³Schapera, I., Comaroff, J. (1991). *The Tswana*. New York: Routledge. 20.

I am interested in how Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha were impacted by colonialism. My particular focus will be on the traditions and customs of the Bakgatlha that get impacted by colonial control. Diturupa started to happen in a colonial context in the 1920s. I am interested in how Bakgatlha soldiers returning from World War I appropriated military drills and parades from the frontline of World War 1 and then went on to create, invent and craft a carnival that gave particular meaning to their lives as war veterans in the post-war period.

Scholarship on war and the military are silent on the emergence of carnivals like Diturupa,⁴⁴ which is a gap in the research of this scholarship that my work is filling and to which it is making a contribution. Diturupa started in 1918 after World War One.⁴⁵ It was a tradition that was empowering for Bakgatlha soldiers who had experienced racial segregation and poor remuneration after returning from the war.⁴⁶ Scholars like Grundlingh have written about black participation in the war but do not use specific contexts and focus more on the general economic and political ramifications of the war on black communities in South Africa.⁴⁷ They do not touch on the cultural consciousness that became part of the Black South African psyche after WWI as they saw military parades happening on the battlefronts.

⁴⁴ See Grundy, K. (1983). *Soldiers without Politics: Blacks in the South African Armed Forces (Perspectives on Southern Africa)*. Los Angeles: University of California Press. Nasson, B. (2015). *WWI and the People of South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers, Sherperd, B. (2017). *Men Of The Mendi: South Africa's Forgotten Heroes of World War*. Johannesburg: 30 Degrees South Publishers. Nasson, B. (2004). "Delville Wood and South African Great War Commemoration." in: *The English Historical Review* 119/480, 61-62.

⁴⁵Grundlingh, *Fighting their own War*, 23.

⁴⁶Mabokela, "Women of Makapanstad", 91.

⁴⁷Grundlingh, *Fighting their own War*, 167.

The idea of carnival will be looked at using literature from the African Diaspora, for instance from the former slave communities such as the Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago.⁴⁸ This festival arose out of a heritage of slavery, colonialism and a mixing of cultures from different continents;

The Trinidad Carnival not only syncretized these different forms into a unique spectacle but also cultivated a space that had the capacity to make public, real issues and experiences of injustice and discrimination through performance. The strength of the Trinidad Carnival performance lies in the performative, Carnavalesque ‘free abandon’ coupled with both: (1) the deeper significant African masquerade element evident in secret societies throughout the African Diaspora, as well as (2) the celebration of freedom from slavery.⁴⁹

Thus, we can see how carnival in Trinidad is a festival of entertainment that is laden with commemorative aspects of African culture and the symbolic freedom from slavery. I am interested in how Ba Moseitlha through Diturupa carnival address community issues whilst simultaneously reflecting on their colonial blood-stained history. In South Africa, The Kaapse Klopse⁵⁰ in Cape Town will be used to see what similarities these carnivals have with Diturupa in Makapanstad. I

⁴⁸ Dewis, A. (2014). “Carnival Performance Aesthetics: Trinidad Carnival and Art Making in the Diaspora”. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Cardiff University. 24.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 28.

⁵⁰ The Kaapse Klopse, also called the Tweede Nuwe Jaar Carnival happens in Cape Town amongst former slave communities who use it to celebrate their emancipation. Gregory, J. (2018). “A musical ethnography of the Kaapse Klopse carnival in Cape Town, South Africa”. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: Queen’s University Belfast; Oliphant, C. (2013). “The changing faces of the Klopse: performing the Rainbow Nation during the Cape Town Carnival”. Unpublished Master’s Thesis: UWC. Baxter, L. (1996). “History, identity and meaning: Cape Town’s Coon Carnival in the 1960s and 1970s.” Unpublished M.A. Thesis: UCT; Jeppie, S. (1990). “Aspects of Popular Culture and Class Expression in Inner Cape Town, circa. 1939 – 1959”. Unpublished M.A. Thesis: University of Cape Town.

will also interrogate the idea of the Carnavalesque in an oppressive society and what this narrative and agency from Ba Mosetlha mean in shifting World War I (WWI) and World War II (WWII) culture and perspectives from a Eurocentric to an Afrocentric lens and worldview.⁵¹ I will also look at the politics of appropriation and what they mean in this context. Appropriation coming to mean the fact that Diturupa is a concept that was taken from the European soldiers who had a culture of marching and parading especially after emerging victorious in war.⁵² Another angle of decolonising looks at how Diturupa is appropriating African methods of carnival such as *mekete* (ceremonies), initiation and commemorations of war in African societies.

Performance and cultural identity

I have looked at the Trinidad and Tobago Carnival and South Africa's Kaapse Klopse as two examples of carnival in Africa and the African diaspora. There are numerous other examples of carnivals/festivals and musical performances which will be explored that focus on diverse themes of carnival and how that carnival is connected to issues of identity, race, ethnicity and class. The Trinidad and Tobago Carnival is about identity in the sense that it is a celebration by people who were emancipated from slavery; while Kaapse Klopse becomes a cultural expression of a creolized community at the Cape in South Africa who also have a heritage of slavery and settler colonialism.

Neo Lekgotla la ga Ramoupi has written extensively on the use of songs in cultural solidarity and resistance amongst the political prisoners of Robben Island.⁵³ Musical performance on the Island took on resistance proportion and sustained inmates. According to Ramoupi:

⁵¹Keto, T. (1994). *The Africa Centred Perspective of History*. Chicago: Frontline Distribution. 28.

⁵²Grundlingh, *Fighting their own War*, 167.

⁵³ Lekgotla la ga Ramoupi, N. (2013). ““Izingoma zo Mzabalazo” Esiqithini! Role of Songs in the African Liberation Struggle of South Africa, 1960-1991”. A Culture History of Robben Island.” Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation:

Song has always been, and continues to be, at the heart of humanity's journey and has occupied a central position in the life of African and black people in southern Africa. Songs have preserved many elements of African culture throughout the African experience from time immemorial, before the African's encounter with Europeans, through the African experience in slavery, which in the United States of America became the black experience, and through the colonial and apartheid periods in southern Africa. In a region where white minority rule attempted to eradicate not only African culture but also the African's essential humanity, Botho/Ubuntu (humaneness) African and black southern Africans held on to and developed their songs as a way of resisting, protesting, remembering, enduring, celebrating, subverting, loving, and ultimately triumphing.⁵⁴

Ramoupi establishes songs as an important part of the African worldview and struggles from oppression against colonial rule.⁵⁵ These songs were sung by diverse prisoners on the Island in different languages such as English, Afrikaans, IsiZulu, Sesotho, Sepedi, Xitsonga, and IsiXhosa. These songs carried a meaning and were used as an encouragement for those kept on the Island on the quest for liberation.⁵⁶ The struggle songs fostered a culture of unity and a spirit of forging ahead in their quest for liberation. Struggle songs carry meanings and histories. Each struggle generation left its own footprint on the musicality of the struggle songs. This shows us that in thinking about political musical performance sites such as Robben Island were able to break the racial/ethnic/class/linguistic/political affiliation chain of struggle musical performance.

Howard University.105. Lekgotla laga Ramoupi, N. (2018). "Cultural Resistance on Robben Island: Songs of Struggle and Liberation in Southern Africa." In W.H. Worger, C. Ambler and N. Achebe (Eds). *A Companion to African History*. New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell. 459-482.

⁵⁴ Lekgotla laga Ramoupi, "Cultural Resistance on Robben Island", 464.

⁵⁵ This new wave of historical narrative takes particular events and places them at the centre and is often a collective history as compared to the histories of the Island which often focuses on big shot political leaders like Nelson Mandela.

⁵⁶ Lekgotla laga Ramoupi, "Cultural Resistance on Robben Island", 466.

David Coplan has done extensive research on Basotho migrants and their oral praise songs on the gold mines of Johannesburg. These poems are a break from the praise poetry found in Lesotho. They represent a new way of reconstructing oral poetry and incorporating it into song.⁵⁷ These songs are used on the way to the mines, during leisure hours, underground in the belly of the earth and on weekends when competitions are organised.⁵⁸ These songs reveal a break with the past traditions of focusing oral poetry on chiefs and their military exploits. They rather focus on the conditions miners face at the mines, the life and people they meet in Johannesburg. Oral praise poems have a moral authority of rebuking and chastising kings or chiefs when they err; while the oral performance by Basotho migrants does not rebuke the white mine supervisors but creates new meanings and forms of negotiation with authority.⁵⁹ This genre of oral poetic music reveals that Basotho ethnic and cultural identity is fluid and susceptible to change and challenges our thinking about culture and tradition as fixed and static phenomena to be found only in the countryside.

Deborah James has written on the musical performance of Bapedi men and women in a genre called kiba. This genre has its roots in the traditional music of Bapedi. Kiba is rooted in migrant culture as mediated and experienced by different Bapedi migrants. These migrants include men from Sekhukhuneland and other Bapedi areas, their wives in the rural areas of Sekhukhuneland and those who grew up on white owned farms and made their way to Johannesburg to work in different industries.⁶⁰ Through kiba, female and male migrants dance and sing as a way to con-

⁵⁷ Coplan, D. (1986). "Performance, Self-definition, and Social Experience in the Oral Poetry of Sotho Migrant Mineworkers". *African Studies Review*, 29 (1), 29-40.

⁵⁸ Coplan, D. (1987). "The Power of Oral Poetry: Narrative Songs of the Basotho Migrants." *Research in African Literatures* 18, 1. 5.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 14.

⁶⁰ James, D. (1997). "'Music of origin': Class, social category and the performers and audience of Kiba, a South African migrant genre." *Africa*, 67(3). 454

nect with their cultural roots, create social commentaries, while away their leisure time and organise competitions among migrant organisations who are deeply connected to their homes in Sekhukhune, Moletji, Molepo and other areas in Bopedi.⁶¹ Kiba is unique in that it straddles the ground between tradition and modernity as the migrant performers wear Scottish kilts and sing using drums and traditional music found in the rural areas of Sekhukhuneland.⁶² This musical genre gives a particular ethnic identity to its performers and strengthens ties to the rural homeland.

Beni Ngoma is an African Carnavalesque performance that is performed in the Swahili towns of Tanzania. Beni Ngoma originated from a fusion of Swahili coast Ngoma traditional dances and European military drills and brass bands.⁶³ World War I popularized Beni Ngoma, which is rooted in cultural expression, competitive rivalry and mocking the colonial administrators. Beni Ngoma was a form of escape and relief from the harsh realities of colonial rule as people were affected by loss of land, forced labour, migration, famine, and other oppressive traits of colonialism.⁶⁴ The success and popularization of Beni Ngoma was in its diffusion into inland Tanzanian towns who gave it their own meaning. Beni was an elite activity that saw its members incorporate various material culture such as Scottish highlander uniforms, British royal regalia, model war ships and military uniform.⁶⁵ The British took over German East Africa after WWI. Some

⁶¹ Ibid. 457. Maahlamela, T. (2017). "Sepedi Oral Poetry With Reference To Kiba Traditional Dance of South Africa." Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Rhodes University. Mapaya, M. (2014). "Indigenous African Music: A Descriptive Analysis of Mmino wa Setšo from a Northern Sotho Perspective," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 5(20), pp. 2211-2215.

⁶² Ibid. 455.

⁶³ The military drills are also at the core of ditrupa dance techniques. Ranger, T. (1975). *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa, 1890-1970: The Beni Ngoma*. Berkeley: University of California Press.10.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 30. Other scholarship on Beni Ngoma include: Strobel, M. (1979). *Muslim Women in Mombasa 1890-1975*. Yale University Press: New Haven. Tsuruta, T. (2003). "Popular Music, Sports, and Politics: A Development of Urban Cultural Movements in Dar es Salaam, 1930s-1960s." *African Study Monographs*, 24(3): 195-222. Gearhart, R. (1998). "Ngoma Memories: A History of Competitive Music and Dance Performance on the Kenya Coast." Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of Florida.

⁶⁵ Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa*, 45.

Beni Ngoma elites were still loyal to German colonial rule and wanted Beni Ngoma to not change. New modes of leisure emerged such as football and new cultural modes of expression such as *Taarab* and *Dansi* saw Beni Ngoma go into decline in the 1950s.⁶⁶ Beni Ngoma is a good example of how colonial rule and military cultures mixed with African traditional performances and created unique performative identities. It was criticized for its hierarchical, class exclusive and gender-based nature. This is a theme taken up by scholars such as Geiger who look at the role of women in the Tanganyika African National Union. This was a Tanzanian liberation movement that played a part in cultural consciousness and challenged the gender hierarchy of Beni Ngoma by forming female dance and music societies that also engaged in political activities.⁶⁷

Contribution of Study to Scholarship

This study contributes to the understanding of Diturupa as a cultural commemoration amongst the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha in Makapanstad. It also analyses the way identity changes and adapts to new contexts in a community. This study seeks to fill a gap with regards to cultural studies in rural communities. This study contributes to studies on performance and identity in rural areas and marginalised communities who use culture to preserve and negotiate their identity. It seeks to place Diturupa at the centre of discourse and academic analysis. This is done by observing and interviewing participants of different Diturupa groups and understanding how they make meaning of the annual Diturupa cultural commemoration. This study is an Afrocentric study that places African voices at the centre of scholarship. It is also the first study to attempt to trace the origins and

⁶⁶ Suriano, M. (2011). "Making the Modern: Contestations over Muziki wa Dansi in Tanganyika, ca. 1945–1961." *African Studies*. 70:3, 393. Taarab music is a fusion of pre-Islamic Swahili tunes sung in rhythmic poetic style, spiced with Arab-style melodies. Dansi is a musical genre that focuses on dance music and Jazz in a Swahili context.

⁶⁷ Geiger, S. (1997). *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965*. Heinemann, James Currey.

organisation of Diturupa as it happens in Makapanstad and the changes that happen over the decades.

Another key site of contribution is to the world war studies. Diturupa contributes to the scholarship on counter-memory and counter-commemoration of WWI and II. Diturupa was one of the first commemorations of black soldiers when the colonial and apartheid governments wanted to erase the black contribution to the war effort. Diturupa is to be counted amongst the commemorations of the SS Mendi tragedy as participants dance and drill in honour of those who lost their lives. Diturupa also helps us to make sense of hybridity and the cultural impact of colonialism from the perspective of victims who used their agency to craft a new cultural consciousness in the form of Diturupa cultural commemoration. Diturupa adds to studies on African material culture and how this material culture adapts and uses western material culture to its own advantage. This study also contributes to debates around modernity in the African context and the debate between tradition and modernity. One major part of contribution is centered on visual culture and performance. Diturupa is primarily a performance of drills, dances and songs by participants. By looking at the military drills and songs, we are able to get a sense of the military and cultural context that influences it. The proliferation of photographic material on Diturupa in this digital age means that visual narratives can be constructed from Diturupa and add to the meanings and cultural consciousness it embodies.

Theoretical Framework

The Afrocentric paradigm informs the theoretical conceptualisation of this research project. It focuses on an African centred knowledge base and respect for this knowledge.¹ Afrocentricity is explained as:

A frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person. It centres on placing people of African origin in control of their lives and attitudes about the world. This means that we examine every aspect of the dislocation of African people; culture, economics, psychology, health and religion. . . . As an intellectual theory, Afrocentricity is the study of the ideas and events from the standpoint of Africans as the key players rather than victims. This theory becomes, by virtue of an authentic relationship to the centrality of our own reality, a fundamentally empirical project . . . it is Africa asserting itself intellectually and psychologically, breaking the bonds of Western domination in the mind as an analogue for breaking those bonds in every other field.²

This framework is an African centred perspective of history. It acknowledges and uses other perspectives such as social history but emphasises analysis and interpretation in an African centred perspective and meaning. History, like most subjects in the humanities and social sciences, was used as a tool of empire and colonialism.³ In South Africa, our history was based on the historiographical models of British and Dutch colonialism. Afrocentric scholarship seeks to ensure that African voices in their different ways are represented in the historiography of South Africa without excluding or being hegemonic at the expense of other people.⁴ This approach is not unique to

¹Mazama, A. (2003). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Africa World Press: Trenton. 22.

² Ibid. 15.

³ Keto, *The Africa Centred Perspective of History*, 72

⁴Ibid. 117. Lekgotla laga Ramoupi, N. (2012). *Imperative of African-Centred Curriculum in South Africa*. Book, No. 16. Pretoria. Africa Institute of South Africa. <https://www.academia.edu/12365968/>

Afrocentric scholarship and is used by other approaches to South African historiography such as social history scholarship.

Afrocentricity caused a lot of controversy and consternation in the academic world in the early 1980s and 1990s during the so-called culture wars centred on multiculturalism in the American academy. The debates inside and outside of Afrocentricity prove that it is a diverse scholarly pursuit. Some scholars saw Afrocentricity as an academic movement and not necessarily a political movement. The tensions within Afrocentric scholarship involves the different strands of thought in it. Some Afrocentric scholars focus on the African American experience and fail to make links with African societies on the continent and make reference solely to ancient Egyptian society and culture.⁵ Another strand of the Afrocentric tradition involves a Pan African strand that sees scholars trying to combine the African continent and the African diaspora to bring them into conversation and debate with each other.⁶

Afrocentricity is the guiding framework for the theoretical and methodological conceptualisations of this research on Diturupa carnival. It is precisely chosen because it is about putting African people at the centre of scholarship and creating a consciousness of victory and not of victimization and sustained engagement with scholarly topics. It is also about recognising indigenous knowledge systems and how they are as valid as any intellectual source from the archive. It is also about recognising that one is not there to merely do research but enter into a lifelong collaboration with the community and work on other projects together. Afrocentric scholarship also recognises that

⁵ Asante, M. (1990). *Kemet, Afrocentricity and knowledge*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. Karenga, M. (2010). *Introduction to Black Studies* (4th Ed.). Los Angeles: University of Sankore Press.

⁶ Keto, *The African Centered Perspective*, 25. Dei, G. (1996). "The role of Afrocentricity in the inclusive curriculum in Canadian schools." *Canadian Journal of Education*, 21(2), 170. Marimba, A. (1985). *Yurugu: An African-Centered Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behavior*. Trenton: Africa World Press. Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications.

the politics of knowledge production are at play and that one cannot merely act like a neo-colonial scholar only interested in taking knowledge from a community and not give back in an equal partnership; not of subject and master relations. It is about making sure that voices of ordinary people are heard and taken seriously just as one would do with archival documents.

Methodology

This research used an oral history qualitative approach. Using oral history and archival texts to analyse and probe the history of the BaKgatlha ba Mosetlha. Oral history does not only cover interviews but focuses on a plethora of phenomena in the BaKgatlha Ba Mosetlha world. This includes spirituality, material culture, oral tradition, praise poetry and place names. The archival material is important because ethnologists such as Breutz and Van Warmelo often got the information from African informants and used educated Africans as interlocutors.⁷ This work cannot be discarded as it contains vital fragments of information that has been erased from public memory and remembrance. These scholars' work is controversial and problematic and needs to be read against the grain and to see what is often emphasised and what is silenced and how this creates a linear history of BaKgatlha Ba Mosetlha and legitimises some while delegitimizing others at the same time.⁸ Asante speaks about the importance of locating a text and it is important to locate the texts of government ethnologists who were writing these texts with a particular purpose to serve the grand apartheid agenda of separate development and the creation of ethnic Bantustan states.⁹ As part of contextualising the Afrocentric paradigm, I will be borrowing from Indigenous

⁷ Lekgoathi, S. (2009). "Colonial experts, local interlocutors, informants and the making of the archive of the "Transvaal Ndebele", 1930-1989". *Journal of African History*. 50(1), 63.

⁸See the article. Morton, F & Boeyens, J. (2019). "The Tswana's Antiquarian: The Life and Work of State Ethnologist Paul-Lenert Breutz (1912–1999)". *Southern African Humanities* 32: 109–34.

⁹Asante, M. (1998). *The Afrocentric Idea*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 132. Mazama, *The Afrocentric Paradigm*, 15.

Knowledge systems to ensure that knowledges such as clan praises can be used as valid historical sources.¹⁰ I will also borrow from historian Yvette Abrahams who implores those of us working from an African perspective to rehumanise and give dignity to those we study who have been dehumanised.¹¹

Sources

Oral Interviews

I have managed to interview 36 people for this project. The majority sample for the interviews focused on Diturupa leaders who are in touch with different dynamics and are experts on Diturupa in its different facets. I interviewed young Diturupa participants who are part of Diturupa groups to get a youth perspective. I interviewed middle-aged Diturupa experts and participants who are the ones making sure that Diturupa cultural commemorations happen. Community members were interviewed at Diturupa commemorations but the gist of the knowledge and information was collected from interviews conducted with expert participants who are at the forefront of Diturupa commemoration and its preservation.

Some interviews were informal and brief while others were more formal and thus used up more time. Due to Covid-19¹², social distancing measures were implemented during singular interviews¹³ and where necessary some interviews were done through telephonic calls and or email communication. I used a snowball method and relied on interviewees to assist me with getting other participants. Many people are suspicious of researchers and might assume that I work for the

¹⁰Odora-Hoppers, C. (2002). *Indigenous Knowledge and the integration of Knowledge Systems: Towards a Philosophy of Articulation*. Claremont New Africa Books. 34.

¹¹Abrahams, a scholar of Saartjie Bartmann, rehumanises her and studies her with dignity by clothing her and moving away from the colonial obsession with objectifying her buttocks. See Abrahams, Y. (2004) "Ambiguity' is my middle name: a research diary". In Mabokela, R and Magubane, Z (Eds). *Hear Our Voices: Race, Gender and the Status of Black South African Women in the Academy*. Pretoria: UNISA Press. 13.

¹² Dhama K, Et al. (2020). "Coronavirus Disease 2019 – COVID-19". *Clinical Microbiology Review*; 33(4):20.

¹³ It was not possible or feasible for me to conduct group interviews due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

government or their views will reach those in power. To ensure that evidence was corroborated, we spoke to different people instead of relying on one or two interviewees.

Oral interviews were conducted in the language of Setswana which is the mother-tongue of the community; thereafter they were transcribed from Setswana into English through writing. The material that relates to the focus of the topic is used as evidence and analysed. One of the controversial things about oral history is how historians who mine for data often miss key idioms that can reveal other insights.¹⁴ Although academic history often presents us with a set of predetermined questions, it is important for researchers to realise that oral history can lead to different insights and these can throw a new perspective on the research undertaken.¹⁵ Portelli tells us that oral history is more about meaning than the event itself.¹⁶ Through oral history and memory, we can reinterpret events and change over time. Portelli notes that oral and documentary history are not mutually exclusive, and can and should be used alongside one another in order to help create a more vivid picture of history.¹⁷ Oral histories are not used to find facts, but rather to find individual life stories which can be placed alongside facts found from the archives. Oral sources maintain a different credibility to that of archival sources, and Portelli argues that their importance is not based on their connection to the facts, but rather their “imagination, symbolism, and desire to emerge” and thus he believes that there is no ‘false’ oral sources as they still remain psychologically ‘true’ to the interviewee.¹⁸ He goes on to argue the importance of oral sources when they are by people who were actually at an event, which is a problem with many written documents, as they

¹⁴ Rassool, C and Minkley, G. (1998). “Orality, History and Social History in South Africa”. In S. Nuttall and C. Coetzee. *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*. London: Oxford University Press. .92-3.

¹⁵ Vansina, J. (1981). “Oral tradition and its methodology”. In Ki-Zerbo, J. (Ed). *General History of Africa: Methodology and African Prehistory*. London: Heinemann Publishing. 142.

¹⁶ Portelli, A. (2003). “What Makes Oral History Different”. In R. Perks & A. Thompson (Eds). *The Oral History Reader*. London: Taylor & Francis E-Library.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

are usually written by people who were not there.¹⁹ Although the way the historian makes use of this information is their own discretion, there are still extracts of facts and the individual interpretation by people at specific events which can prove to be useful for research.

Archival Sources

Archival sources that will be used include those that have been deposited in the National Archives in Pretoria. These sources give a brief analysis of the interactions between Bakgatlha chiefs in the early 1900s and the colonial administration. These sources reveal insight into the relations between Nchaupe Makapan, Ntebeng Makapan and the “Native” Commissioner for Hammanskraal.²⁰ The Dr NJ van Warmelo collection at the University of Pretoria will be used to understand the pre-colonial history of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha alongside the research by other ethnologists such as Breutz²¹ and oral accounts about the pre-colonial history of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha. The Van Warmelo archive has information about the origins of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha and the war of 1900 between Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha and Bahwaduba.²² The North West Provincial Archives in Mafikeng will be used to illuminate the historical context of the Bantustan of Bophuthatswana and its relationship with Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha. The information contained in the Mafikeng archive looks at the troubles for succession in Moema village and the succession of Thipe Malebye in Dikebu village.²³ Using archival resources, like oral history interviews, requires careful sifting of relevant material and interrogating the silences and the emphasis by asking critical questions of a

¹⁹ Ibid. 52-54. Thompson, P. (2003). “The Voice of the Past: Oral History”. In R Perks & Al Thompson (Eds). *The Oral History Reader*. London: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2003.

²⁰ National Archives of South Africa. J. (18/07/1900) Letter from Ntebeng Makapan to Native Affairs Department. TAB: NA57/01.

²¹ Mogorosi, B. (1940). “Short account of the Kgatla “tribes” (written in Tswana)”. *Dr N.J. van Warmelo Collection*: University of Pretoria: <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/64488>;

²² Musi, G. (1938). “Ntwa ya bogosi Makapanstad - troubles of 1900”. University of Pretoria: *Van Warmelo Collection*. Address: <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/72496>

²³ North West Provincial Archives. (1990). “Headmanship of Moema Village: Bakgatla ba ga Mosetlha.” *Bophuthatswana Papers, Office of the President*. 6/4/2 (231).

source, its meaning and its intended consequences.²⁴ Not every archival material on Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha will be useful, but can lead us to ask questions of what the archive holds and what the significance of that archive is.²⁵

Material culture, oral tradition and indigenous knowledge systems are other sources that will be analysed to enrich and add an alternative voice to the usual interviews and archival texts and photographs. Material culture includes objects in the built environment such as mountains and man-made objects such as cultural artefacts and clothing for Diturupa carnival worn by various troop participants. My analytical skills are still developing with regards to analysing these kinds of sources, and I will subject these alternative sources to the same rigorous standards of historical enquiry as oral history and archival texts. Another important source of evidence is praise poetry that can be used to help us decode historical narratives and events.

As a Motswana, Setswana is my first language and provides me with translation skills that allow me to translate praise poems with ease from Setswana into English; and then look at them critically and use them as part of historical evidence alongside other sources.

Positionality

It is important for a researcher to critically understand how their own positionality affects and influences their interpretations, analysis and the way they do research from their literature review, framing of questions, methods of data collection and the ideologies and theoretical paradigms that they use.²⁶ I am an insider in the research as I speak the same language as the majority of the participants – Setswana. However, I am also an outsider as I am not part of the community as I did

²⁴ Mazama, *The Afrocentric Paradigm*, 34.

²⁵ Hamilton, C. (2018). "The Long Southern African Past: Enfolded Time and the Challenges of an Archive. In Bam, J, Ntsebeza, L & Zinn, A. (2018). *Whose History Counts: Decolonising African Precolonial Historiography*. Cape Town: African Sun Media. 91.

²⁶ Allen, M. (2017). *The Sage Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods (Vols. 1-4)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. 34.

not grow up there. I am part of the Bafokeng Bakwena people of Phokeng. I have family in Makapanstad which assists me with contacts and legitimacy as people are more likely to open up to you if you have family in the area. These positionalities can strengthen or weaken one's research as one is likely to be influenced from these positionalities when doing research.²⁷ It is important for one to be grounded in thorough historical research and not only pursue research with a narrow political or cultural agenda. As a male researcher, I held an advantage of being allowed access into spaces such as the royal meetings and being allowed to address the chief and his headmen.

Limitations

One limitation was the Covid 19 pandemic as it did not allow for as many interviews to be carried out.²⁸ The Covid 19 protocols such as social distancing, sanitizing, wearing of masks and handling of documents were adhered to and respected by interviewees and interviewer alike. The focus of interviews in the Makapanstad region means that there are still narratives that have not yet been tapped into with regards to Diturupa. Diturupa is also prevalent and widespread in villages such as Marapyane, Lefiso, Phake, Tshikanoshi, Seabe sa Majatladi, Mmametlhake, Nokaneng, Masobe, Loding and Lefisoane in Mpumalanga Province. By understanding Diturupa and the contribution of these communities we can have a richer picture of Diturupa and what it entails and its contradictions. Another limitation was not having access to all the groups who participate in Diturupa and hearing their views which could bring about other themes, questions and research directions.

²⁷ Thompson, P. "The Voice of the Past". 27.

²⁸ Lupton, D. (editor) (2020) Doing fieldwork in a pandemic (crowd-sourced document). Available at: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1clGjGABB2h2qbduTgfrqbHmog9B6P0NvMgVuiHZCl8/edit?ts=5e88ae0a#>

Ethical Considerations

Ethics in research is an important and vital aspect that allows the researcher to do research work without harming the dignity and personhood of participants. It also makes one to realise that research cannot be fabricated or used to suit a particular agenda.²⁹ It is important for a researcher to understand the ethical issues regarding oral history. A project of this nature needs one to think about the ways in which interviews need to be conducted and the relationship between interviewer and interviewee.³⁰ As an interviewer, I realised the power and privilege that I possessed and reflected on the authorial voice and the ways in which I used the information in the interviews.³¹ How questions are framed using Setswana helped me as a researcher to level the relationship dynamics with research participants. I applied for ethical clearance from the university and my application has already been approved. Interviewees had full anonymity and confidentiality in the interview process as they will not be asked about themselves and their life histories, instead the focus of the project will be on Diturupa commemoration and how it adds to the culture and identity of the community in Makapanstad. The names of participants have been changed to reflect their anonymity.

Another ethical dilemma is interviewees expecting some form of compensation. I made it clear right at the beginning of the interviews that I did not compensate monetarily or otherwise as this goes against ethical research and compromises the fairness of research outcomes.³² As this is an Afrocentric project, it is not enough to just be a detached observer who comes into the community to mine raw data and use it in the academy without giving back to the community and realising

²⁹ Ritchie, D. (2015). *Doing Oral History*. New York: Oxford University Press. 75.

³⁰ Ibid. 146.

³¹ Thompson, "The Voice of the Past. 26.

³² Denis, P. "The Ethics of Oral History". In Phillipe Denis & Radikobo Ntsimane (Eds) (2008). *Oral History in a Wounded Country: Interactive Interviewing in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: UKZN Press. 72.

that scholarship needs to play a transformative role in society and needs to be shared with the community and not gather dust in the basement of the archival depository.³³ Ethical clearance also involved getting informed consent from participants and making sure that they understand what the project entailed. This was done in accordance with University regulations on ethics.

Chapter Outlines

The focus of chapter one is to introduce the topic and the key arguments contained in this dissertation. This chapter introduces Diturupa as an identity negotiation and construction amongst Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha community in Makapanstad. It adds to the discourse about the diversity in rural areas and challenges the dominant discourse about rural areas as sites of ethnocentrism. The chapter outlines the rationale for Diturupa as an important research topic. It critically examines the literature on performance, identity, rural communities, chieftaincy and carnivals around the world. This chapter looks at the contributions of Diturupa to scholarship on performance, identity, material culture and world war cultural studies. The theoretical lens taken by this thesis focuses on Afrocentricity and informs the thinking and conceptualization of Diturupa as an African centered performances appropriating from European military drills and using African cultural symbols. The methodological section deals with how research was carried out using oral history interviews, ethnographic participation, archival material and data from the internet and social media. The ethical considerations section focuses on obtaining clearance, keeping the confidentiality of the participants and doing the research with ethical integrity.

Chapter Two focuses on the historical context of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha. The community is noted for having had a split with the Bakgatlha ba Kgafela in the 1700s. It looks at how

³³Asante, *The Afrocentric Idea*, 173. Rassool & Minkley, *Orality, History and Social History in South Africa*, 93.

Bakgatlha interacted with other African communities such as the amaNdebele, missionaries and colonial administrations and the impact this had on their identity and social structure. It also focuses on how diverse ethnic identities shape Diturupa. Diturupa has a historical context and does not emerge out of a vacuum. This chapter is about how Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha identity has changed over time to include Diturupa as a unique cultural feature of the identity.

Chapter Three focuses on the origins of Diturupa cultural commemoration. It locates Diturupa as originating from the participation and involvement of black soldiers in WWI (1914-1918) and subsequently WWII (1939-1945). Diturupa is linked to the tragic SS Mendi disaster that saw over 600 black soldiers die at sea as they were about to participate in the war in France as part of the South African Native Labour Contingency. The history of and its change over time is discussed and it is found that Diturupa has gone through a host of changes but it tried to keep to its heritage and cultural traditions. The chapter also discusses the ways in which Diturupa is a counter-memory and counter-commemoration of the world wars as it did not receive official support or recognition by the colonial and apartheid administrations.

Chapter Four focuses on material culture and performance in Diturupa. Material culture is the instruments and equipment of Diturupa. The materiality of Diturupa is traditional and western in orientation. Traditional instruments and drums which were used in the formative years of the cultural performance are now used by a diminishing number of participants while the European kettle drum and the Scottish kilts enjoy wide acclaim from Diturupa participants. The wearing of military uniforms infused with African decorations shows the hybridity of the material culture as it blends both cultures and does not lean exclusively to one side. Performance in Diturupa focuses on military drills, dancing and singing while being in sync with the drums and instruments being played. The performance is a competition between different Trupa groups who show their

creativity, dances, drills and songs to become the yearly champions of Diturupa. The performance incorporates elements of African cultural traditions and European military traditions.

Chapter Five focuses on the legacies Diturupa has created in the community of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha. By looking at photographs that speak to the legacies of Diturupa, we can see that Diturupa is challenging gender stereotypes and placing women in leadership positions, making young and old to participate together, using eccentric costumes to show the exposures that happen to Diturupa participants. Diturupa is seen as a recreational activity that brings a sense of discipline for young people. It is also considered a cultural heritage of the Moretele region. In their own words, community members and participants in Diturupa are able to find everyday issues such as discipline, community culture, cultural consciousness and heritage commemoration as important features that define the Diturupa legacy space.

Chapter Two: Historical Context of the Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha

Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha a magana le kgomo Mosetlha the one who refuses with the cow

Mosetlha a magana le namane Mosetlha the one who refuses with the calf

Mosetlha a magana go buswa Mosetlha the one who refuses to be ruled

Ke motho wa bo Ntwesatwesane A person of Ntwesatwesane

Yo o se nang morwesi The one who will not be helped to wear

Bana ba Mmamafura a Theku Children of Mmamafura a theku

Maiyane a Kgabo Tona Maiyane of the ruling clan

The main aim of this chapter is to give a historical and contextual understanding of the community of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha in Makapanstad where the performance of Diturupa takes place on an annual basis. Like most cultural activities in our country, Diturupa does not happen in a vacuum and is tied to a history and particularity of context where it emanates. This chapter seeks to give a brief outline about the community of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha in Makapanstad, their identity and their interactions with other African communities and colonial powers and missionaries in the former Transvaal in the 20th century. It also seeks to understand how the community has gone through changes over the years and how this has affected their identity and impacted on a cultural event like Diturupa in the past and the present.

The Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha community are the senior branch of the Bakgatlha totemic morafe (ethnic group) amongst Batswana speaking communities¹. They reside in the Hammanskraal region, 70 kilometres north of Pretoria. They fall under the Bojanala Platinum District of the North West Province in the Moretele Local Municipality² as shown in figure 4.

The praise poem on page 55 is part of their heritage and cultural knowledge invoked at community gatherings.³ The poem is about Mosetlha who was a woman and the first born daughter of Kgosi Matshego. She refused to give power to her sibling Kgafela who was the patrilineal heir to the throne causing a split amongst Bakgatlha.⁴ Mosetlha refusing with the cow symbolizes the fight over chiefly power which meant the person who was in the chieftaincy was able to get wealth as cows meant wealth and power. The poem also refers to the fact that Mosetlha refused to be helped to wear the crown showing her power and strength in taking over from her father.⁵ Indigenous Knowledge Systems and oral traditions like the praise poem above are an important source of understanding the historical and present continuities of how oral tradition filters over time and is continued in the musical and poetic traditions of Diturupa.⁶

Very little information is known about Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha in the pre-colonial and colonial period of Southern Africa.⁷ They are part of the Basotho-Batswana group of people. Bakgatlha

¹ I use the term totemic because the totem was linked to rituals, customs, identity and language. As we move away from colonial concepts such as Tribe we must be careful not reinforce the same meanings and classifications that colonial anthropologists/ethnologists inscribed on African communities. These communities were characterized by diversity and fluidity. Lekgoathi, S. Colonial experts, local interlocutors. 61.

² This district consists of the Moretele Local Municipality, Madibeng Local Municipality, Moses Kotane Local Municipality and the Rustenburg Local Municipality.

³ Hofmeyr, I. (1993). "We spend our Years as a Tale that is Told": Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chieftom. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 4.

⁴ Van Zyl. *Die Bakgatla*. 35.

⁵ Makgala, C. (2009). *History of the Bakgatla бага Kgafela in Botswana and South Africa*. Pretoria: Crink Publishers. 48.

⁶ Vansina, J. (1985). *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Odora-Hoppers, Indigenous Knowledge and the Integration of Knowledge Systems, 15.

⁷ Information about this period is sketchy and inconsistent. Many older people passed on with the historical knowledge and this meant gaps and inconsistencies over time that has led us to work with the little information we

were originally one group of people and split up as succession fights, conflicts, struggles and wars arose between Kgafela and Mosetlha.⁸ The Afrikaner writing tradition of *Volkekunde*⁹ was pre-dominant in the study of African ethnic groups in the former Transvaal (present day Limpopo, North West, Mpumalanga and Gauteng Provinces.). The English speaking universities had their own form of social anthropology which was also premised on white supremacist notions of Africans as “primitive tribes” without history and living a static life.¹⁰ This is seen in the work of Isaac Schapera who wrote monographs on Batswana communities in Botswana, notably the Bakgatlha Ba Kgafela.¹¹ Thus, British and Afrikaner anthropologists in South Africa were entangled with the colonial government’s process of classifying African communities “tribally” and could not imagine these communities outside of the “tribal” lenses in a diverse and cosmopolitan world tied to language, resources, spirituality, customs, culture, lineage, ancestry, and allegiance.¹² Thus this study attempts to locate Diturupa in a cosmopolitan world and not only reduce it to a tribal affair. Many of the scholars writing during the 19th and 20th century about African communities did so from a Eurocentric and white supremacist gaze.¹³ This study seeks to problematize and challenge

have. Although we are grateful for the records that have been left behind, many of them are politicized and were used for a particular purpose by the previous governments when deciding the fate of black communities.

⁸ Van Zyl, HJ. (1952) *Die Bakgatla van Mosetla*. PhD Thesis: University of Pretoria. 12

⁹ This ethnographic tradition used oral history without really acknowledging the oral informants and referencing them properly. Their work often went in depth by focusing on the different elements and cultural life of the ethnic groups of South Africa and emphasized the mastery of language. The failure of this tradition was that it often justified white supremacy/apartheid and was an apologist way of defending the apartheid status quo. See Lekgoathi, S. (2009). “Colonial experts, local interlocutors, informants and the making of the archive of the “Transvaal Ndebele”, 1930-1989”. *Journal of African History*. 50(1): 61–80. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0021853708003976>.

Sharp, S. (1981). “The Roots and development of *Volkekunde* in South Africa”. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Special Issue on Anthropology and History, pp. 16-36 Van der Waal, K. (2015) “Long walk from *Volkekunde* to anthropology: Reflections on Representing the Human in South Africa.” *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 38:3-4, 216-234. Bank, A. (2015). “The Berlin Mission Society and German linguistic roots of *Volkekunde*: The background, training and Hamburg writings of Werner Eiselen, 1899-1924”. *Kronos*, 41(1), 166-197.

¹⁰ Webster, A. (2017). *Silencing Africa? – Anthropological Knowledge at the University of the Witwatersrand*. MA Research Report: University of the Witwatersrand. 12.

¹¹ Schapera, I. (1979). *The Tswana*. London: International African Institute. 34.

¹² Lekgoathi, “Colonial experts, local interlocutors”, 71. Mafeje, A. (1971). The Ideology of 'Tribalism'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9(2), 254.

¹³ Webster, “Silencing Africa.” 24.

the uncritical use of quotations and other sources which might be used as evidence and showing historical context but reinforcing colonial ways of knowledge production.

The Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha, according to oral tradition, are descendants of Bahurutshe. Mohurutshe is one of the earliest Batswana leaders and founder alongside Kwena and Ngwato.¹⁴ The etymology of the word Batswana means to come apart. According to Setswana culture and history, the Bahurutshe are the oldest and most senior amongst all Batswana. Their relationship with Bakgatlha goes back to chief Malope and Mokgatlha who gave them an origin point. Mokgatlha is also present in the genealogical family tree of Bahurutshe whilst Bakgatlha see the Bahurutshe as their seniors.¹⁵

Bakgatlha are related to Bahurutshe in the other sense that Bahurutshe use tshwene (baboon)¹⁶ as their totem while Bakgatlha use kgabo (monkey) as their totem which shows us the seniority status of Bahurutshe and the relationship with Bakgatlha as they chose a junior four-legged primate to symbolise their totemic affiliation and split from Bahurutshe.

Very little information is known about pre-colonial Bakgatlha chiefs. Most of the information was taken from oral history as no records and memory exist about a particular leader.¹⁷ To circumnavigate these issues, oral tradition, oral history, archaeology, indigenous knowledge systems, indigenous geography, and spirituality can help us to overcome the lacunae about precolonial African history.¹⁸

¹⁴ Makgala, *History of the BaKgatlha Ba Kgafela*. 46.

¹⁵ Van Zyl, *Die Bakgatla*. 18

¹⁶ These terms are not used in a racist and derogatory sense of seeing people as animals or inferior but as an affirmation and respect for the animal and its spiritual significance for the community who venerate and appropriate it. Horsthemke, K. (2015). *Animals and African Ethics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 69.

¹⁷ Historical writing and archiving is often done so for a particular purpose and cannot be divorced from the politics of the day.

¹⁸ Hofmeyr, I. (1993). *"We spend our Years as a Tale that is Told": Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chieftdom*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 105. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*. 21.

In precolonial times around the 1600s, Kgafela and his supporters felt that they could not be ruled by a woman Mosetlha, so they decided to express their unhappiness by voting with their feet, that is, hiving off from the main polity and establishing themselves separately, a common occurrence across many precolonial African societies. ¹⁹ Out of the group led by Kgafela, Kau and Mmanaana split and created their own chiefdoms. Of those who remained with Mosetlha, Mocha and Seabe split and created their own kingdoms. That is why today we have Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha, Bakgatlha ba Kgafela, Bakgatlha ba Mmakau, Bakgatlha ba Mmanaana and Bakgatlha ba Mocha and Seabe.²⁰

Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha venerate the blue vervet monkey as their totem animal. A totem animal represents the identity, culture and qualities of that animal in the community. A monkey is associated with being skillful, clever, enthusiastic and intelligent animal as well as being easily frustrated, irritable and impetuous. These characteristics are part of the community's moral fabric. During times of war, Bakgatlha changed their totem to that of monkey with a flame.²¹ This symbolized that they were at war as a fire represents conflict and destruction. When Bakgatlha greet each other, they say "Dumela Kgabo" (greetings Kgabo); and then the one being greeted responds "Agee Mokgatlha" (hello how are you Mokgatlha); and then the other one says, "A e namele setlhare" (Let it climb the tree) and then the other responds "Ae je borekhu" (let it eat a tasty, sticky gummy substance that oozes from certain thorn trees found mostly in the bushveld). This greeting is similar to "peace be upon you" and other friendly greetings. The totem is important as it is believed that it has a spiritual connection to the group that reveres it. In the past, one from an ethnic group such as Bakgatlha would not be allowed to eat or harm the monkey as this would

¹⁹ Makgala, *History of the Bakgatla бага Kgafela*. 49.

²⁰ Breutz, *A History of the Batswana*. 332.

²¹ Makgala, *History of the Bakgatla бага Kgafela*. 47.

invite bad luck and cause untold woes on the group as a whole.²² We find that this greeting of “Kgabo Mokgatlha ae namele setlhare” is used as a song during Diturupa competitions symbolising that Bakgatlha oral traditions have endured over the centuries and are an embedded cultural repertoire of performance and identity coalescing at the edifice of cultural commemoration.

Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha have lived at their present capital Makapanstad²³ for a longer time than all the other Bakgatlha groups. During times of trouble, they left and settled at other places such as Diroleng, Waterberg, Mabotse and Ntswanahatsane. When the chiefs left, other people came to be in charge that is why Moretele village was called Sutelong.²⁴ The people at Moretele had to shift and make space for the returning Bakgatlha chiefs at Makapanstad. Like most groups who were dispossessed of their land by invading settler colonialists, Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha saw their land being named with Afrikaans/Dutch names. This archival text is an example of colonialists having power over ba Mosetlha in 1893:

Report on Makapan’s location 1893.

This group belongs to the Bakhatla family. Assisted by their former missionary, the late Reverend C.H. Backeberg, they purchased the farms Booschbult No 78, measuring 2, 286 morgen 440 square roods and a portion of Goedgewaagd No 465, measuring 3750 morgen 40 square roods.²⁵

²² Horsthemke, *Animals and African Ethics*. 70.

²³ The Capital is also known as Mmamudu in Setswana and Makapans lokasie in Afrikaans.

²⁴ Mojuta Motlhamme Interview with Mokete Sepeng. Makapanstad: December 2019.

²⁵ National Archives. (1890). “Native Location Commission: The Location for the Chief Makapan.” *Native Affairs* Box No 2367.

Naming a place after your culture and heritage replaces the existing culture and heritage and causes the people to forget who they are and end up following the colonial culture.²⁶ This is why Makapanstad, which was called Mmamudu is an unusual capital name in Setswana history. The preponderance of Stad (Afrikaans for city) in most Batswana communities came as a result of trekboer settlers asserting their dominance over the land.²⁷ Batswana societies, like most African societies named their cities and capitals after events, plants, environment that occurred in the area. For example, Phokeng is named after the dew found in the area, Moruleng is named for the Marula tree, and Mahikeng is named for the rocks found in the area. After colonising people and taking the land, the Boers and the British started naming areas after the chiefs such as Sekhukhuneland, Zululand, Mothibistad, Makapanstad and others who were reigning right at the time of colonial conquest. Naming, in an Afrocentric context is important and as we work on decolonising the mind it is something we must be conscious of as the first act of African agency.²⁸

²⁶ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. (1986). *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African literature*. Portsmouth: Heinemann. 28

²⁷ Schapera, I & Comaroff, J.L., 1991. *The Tswana*. 15. New York, NY: Routledge. Manson & Mbenga. *Land, Chiefs, Mining*. 35. Magubane, B. (1996). *The making of a racist state*, 67.

²⁸ Mazama, *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. 48. Keto, *The Africa Centered Perspective of History*, 25.

Ethnic Interactions

Difaqane (in Sotho-Tswana languages), or Mfecane (in Nguni languages) was a time of trouble and prosperity for southern African societies in the early 1800s. The word Difaqane means crushing which means that those who were not strong enough were subsumed by the more formidable ethnic groups such as the amaZulu and amaNdebele under Mzilikazi ka Mashobane.¹ Cattle raiding, absorption of a group into another ethnicity, destruction of village settlements, environmental scarcity and internecine warfare and migrations were some of the hallmarks of the Mfecane period. Of course, Europeans who had settled at the Cape since the 1600s, did play a part by participating in slavery and trade which put pressure on African populations to meet this demand and stave off competition.

Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha were a migratory group during the pre-colonial era. Although they have stayed the longest at their ancestral home, they have moved around when conditions dictated so. The migrations often occurred due to environmental factors such as lack of water, famine, and other ecological disasters.² Due to Difaqane in the early 1800s, Bakgatlha had to move and hide for survival:

Sikwane succeeded his father but nothing is remembered from his time. What is important is that he was the father of Nchaupe I³ (aka Tlhabane) who is known as one of the legendary chiefs of the Bakgatlha Baga Mosetlha. Nchaupe's mother was Mmamotsepa a daughter

¹ Julian Cobbing caused controversy by asking historians to look at the wider causes of the Mfecane such as the infiltration of European settlers into the interior of South Africa and slave raiding. Cobbing, J. (1988). The Mfecane as Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo. *The Journal of African History*, 29(3), 487-519. Hamilton, C. (1995). (Ed), *The Mfecane Aftermath: Reconstructive Debates in Southern African History*. Witwatersrand University Press and University of Natal Press, Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg.

² Van Zyl. *Die Bakgatla*. 34.

³ Kgosi Nchaupe I is a modern nation builder of the Bakgatlha Baga Mosetlha. His name is still part of Bakgatlha lore and tradition to show that he is present in the communal memory and archive.

from the royal house of the Bahwaduba (Ndebele), a neighboring group. She was the first woman of royal descent to be taken as wife by a Chief of the Baga Mosetlha. At Sikwane's death, Nchaupe I was still too young to rule and Makanye (Sikwane's brother) acted as regent. During the reign of Makanye⁴ who still lived at Khupong, the Ndebele of Mzilikazi made their appearance in the Transvaal for the first time. Shortly afterwards, the Voortrekkers who were in attendance were also informed. Out of fear, Makanye fled with almost the entire community in a north-western direction – the same direction Mzilikazi had already taken. They fled across the Ngotwane River and here the community split because no consensus could be reached on where to go next. Makanye proceeded with little consequence and presumably settled in Ngamiland. It could also be that he went to the area of the Bamangwato or even to Barotseland.⁵

Makanye fled with a portion of the group due to the fear that they would be subsumed by the Ndebele of Mzilikazi as happened to many Batswana groups in the interior. That is why to this day the people of Barotseland have a similar language to Sesotho and Setswana.⁶ There is also a village in Limpopo called Ga Makanye who are descendants of Makanye who decided to stay in the Transvaal and not go across the Zambezi.

There is a place at Kgomo Kgomo village⁷ on the river which was used to hide the footprints of Bakgatlha from the marauding Amandebele of Mzilikazi. The Bakgatlha were under the direct rule

⁴ Regents in African societies were often tasked with leading the nation when the incoming chief was immature or young to take over the chieftaincy. Many of them fought with the heirs to the throne due to the power and material benefits that came with the chieftaincy especially in pre-colonial times where tribute was still observed.

⁵ Van Zyl, *Die Bakgatla Van Mosetlha*, 22.

⁶ Sebotoane and his group the Bafokeng ba Patsa also went as far as Barotseland in Zambia and settled there. Ellenberger, F. (1912). *History of the Basotho: Ancient and Modern*. Maseru: Morija Archives Press. Leonard Thompson. (1975). *Survival in Two Worlds: Moshoeshe of Lesotho, 1786–1870*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

⁷ One of the villages of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha near Makapanstad.

of Mzilikazi ka Mashobane as he built his capital near Pretoria.⁸ This meant that Bakgatlha either had to pay tribute and acknowledge the lordship of the Ndebele king or flee the area.

The Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha built strategic relations with the Amandebele a Laka/Langa west of Mokopane.⁹ These relations were flexible and porous and respectful of circumstances. African communities often sought refuge and help amongst each other when difficulties arose. An example is how the Bakgatlha ba Kgafela stayed among the Bakwena ba Sechele when they first arrived in Botswana in the 1870s.¹⁰ This relationship between Ba Mosetlha and amaNdebele a Langa endures in the fact that the Mosetlha ruling family took the name Mokopane¹¹ and made it a royal family surname that will be used by generations of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha chiefs as Makapane. More research still needs to be done on Bakgatlha-Ndebele relations in the Limpopo/North West region and how it has shaped both Bakgatlha and Ndebele communities.¹²

Difaqane changed the landscape and saw many communities settle in the Moretele region and others leave the area. All the communities in the Moretele region are related to each other linguistically and speak a form of Sekgatlha lingua franca.¹³ Communities such as Bahwaduba ba Mathibe have lost the Ndebele language and speak a form of Sekgatlha related to that of Ba Mosetlha. Other ethnic communities who have settled in the region include Baphuting бага Nawa, Amandebele a

⁸ Rankhumise, P. (2017). "The Bakgatla Ba Ga Motsha under the Native Policy of the Transvaal, 1852–1910". Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: University of North West at Mafikeng. 38.

⁹ Lekgoathi, S. P. "Ethnicity and Identity", 156. Mabokela, "Women of Makapanstad", 18.

¹⁰ Schapera, I., 1942. *A Short History of the Bakgatla ba ga Kgafela of Bechuanaland Protectorate*. Johannesburg: Wits Historical Publications. Makgala, *History of the BaKgatlha Ba Kgafela*, 96. Mbenga, B. (1997). "The BaKgatlha ba Kgafela in the Pilanesberg district of the Western Transvaal from 1899 to 1931". Ph.D. Thesis: University of South Africa.

¹¹ Makapane is a Kgatla version of Mokopane/Mankopane. It is not to be confused with the siege of Makapansgat caves where Boer commandos killed the Ndebele of Kekana.

¹² Because Bakgatlha and Northern Ndebele communities are under-researched, scholars in both communities speak past each other and do not link their work to come up with complex scholarship on trans-ethnic communities who defy colonial classifications.

¹³ Thabo Ditsele & Charles C Mann (2014) "Language contact in African urban settings: The case of Sepitori in Tshwane." *South African Journal of African Languages*, 34:2, 159-165.

Moletlane, and Bakgatlha ba Mocha Boo Maubane. Like other ethnic communities, dikgoro (wards)¹⁴ of the Bakgatlha are peppered with other ethnic groupings such as Bapo ba Mogale, Bakgatlha ba Mmakau, Bakwena ba Mogopa, amaSwati, Bapedi, amaNdebele, vaTsonga and others who although they live on Bakgatlha land, they still get to use their own totems and practice certain customs related to their identity.¹⁵ The migrations during Difaqane gave Bakgatlha ba Mo-
setlha a cosmopolitan identity. Even today, we can see that the Moretele region is a diverse and accommodating to different cultures, traditions and peoples who have made this region their home and can be observed at the ethnic diversity and identities found during Diturupa commemorations every year on the 26th of December.

Colonialism

The arrival of Dutch Voortrekkers from the Cape in the 1830s meant that the region had a new power broker who would define relations for the next 150 years. The trek Boers, led by Pretorius established the South African Republic in the 1850s and established towns like Pretoria, Potchefstroom, Magaliesberg and Stellaland. The Dutch started encroaching on the lands of Africans due to the fact that there were wars and African communities retreated to safer environments. Another issue was the idea of land that was not fenced off by African communities and this led to the infamous empty land thesis that is still dominant in Afrikaner historiography.¹⁶ The colonial

¹⁴ See appendix for a list of dikgoro (clans) and Dikgoroana (sub clans) tsa Bakgatlha which includes the big four: Mosate, Mmekwa, Mosadi Mogolo and Mmamarama.

¹⁵ African societies practiced hegemony in a different way. They co-opted people without forcing them to lose their language and customs. Which can still be debated as some people lost their culture after being absorbed into the hegemonic groups such as Amandebele and AmaZulu to give a few examples. African spirituality works with blood and hence people have to practice their customs and rituals according to their blood line and family rituals even if living in another community.

¹⁶ When one talks to community members they will tell you how their forefathers had to retreat as Voortrekkers made incursions on the land as their land stretched as far and wide reaching parts of Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Pretoria. Discussion with Dr Ranamane. Makapanstad. 2020. Landau, P. (2010). *Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400-1948*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Delius, P. (1983). *The Land Belong to Us: The Pedi Polity, the Boers and the British in the Nineteenth-Century Transvaal*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

powers took the best grazing lands, named mountains, rivers¹⁷ and the land they gave or sold back to Africans. In Makapanstad, most of the land has Afrikaans names like Haakdoornkraal. Due to the migratory nature of Bakgatlha, when they returned they found that their land was often named and occupied by the trekboers who gave the land Dutch names such as Boschbult, De Putten, Wildebeestkuil, Goedgewaagd, Buffelsdrift, Haakdoornbult and Vogelstruipan. When these farms were reoccupied by Ba Mosetlha they gave them African names such as Matlhwaela, Ngobi, Bollantlokwe, Mmamudu, and Dipetlwelwane.

Colonialism also meant that the social order, mores and values were reordered completely.¹⁸ The last regiments¹⁹ occurred at the turn of the century in the 1900s. After that, the format changed completely as colonialism took effect.²⁰ It has been close to 270 years since the Dutch came to South Africa and over 200 years since the 1820 British settlers arrived in the country. Colonialism affected African societies in many negative ways, but African societies must be given credit for adapting and forging to do better in spite of the massive hurdles they have had to overcome.²¹

From a military point of view, the Bakgatlha were not one of the strongest pre-colonial African groups who encountered European colonialists compared to amaZulu under Cetshwayo, Bapedi of Maroteng under Sekhukhune and Mampuru, Mzilikazi's amaNdebele who relocated further north across the Limpopo River into southwestern Zimbabwe, the Nzunza under Mabhoko and Nyabela

¹⁷ The Pienaarsrivier and the Apies River have African names Tshwane and Moretele. The colonial government privileged the use of colonial names and thus made African names disappear.

¹⁸ Magubane, *The making of a racist state*. 35.

¹⁹ Regiments or Mephato in Setswana are initiation schools that occurred for men led by a royal prince called Bogwera and one for women called Bojale by a royal princess.

²⁰ Confirmation regiments took place in the church. Those who still practiced initiation kept a watered down approach like going to the hospital for circumcision and only spending a few days in the wild.

²¹ Although colonialism was devastating, the agency and fortitude of Africans has to be acknowledged.

and many others. These are among African societies in the region that mounted fierce resistance against Boer encroachment on their land and demands for taxes and labour.²²

The Bakgatlha, like other less militarized ethnic groups, could have participated in raids and attacks on their neighbours by trekboers as this would guarantee them colonial safety and permanent security on their land.²³ The 1850s-1890s in the Transvaal and other colonies was a volatile time as African communities were being conquered and resisting at the same time. Many communities who assisted the trekboers were rewarded with land by the trekboers.²⁴

The arrival of Voortrekkers signaled a new way of doing things in the 1850s for communities in the former Transvaal region. Although the trekboers did not have total power over African communities, their presence and power started to be felt as they slowly conquered and set up territories on African lands on their great trek away from the Cape Colony.²⁵ Since African communities were displaced due to the internecine warfare during Difaqane, the trekboers took advantage by settling on ancestral land belonging to African communities. They also set up magistracies and demarcations around land territories which often took away vital sources of irrigation, ploughing fields and cattle grazing land for communal African farmers.²⁶ Trekboers were also involved in a slave trade called Inboeksellings which saw young African children being forcibly captured to

²² Delius, *The Land Belong to Us*. 34. Morton, F. (2009). *When Rustling became an Art: Pilane's Kgatla and the Transvaal Frontier 1820-1902*. David Phillip Publishers: Cape Town. Shillington, K. (2012). *Luka Jantjie: Resistance Hero of the South African Frontier*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. Hofmeyr. *We Spend our Years as a Tale*. 39. Guy, J. (2006). *Remembering the Rebellion: The Zulu Uprising 1906*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Kwa Zulu Natal Press. Laband, J. (2020). *The Land Wars: The Dispossession of the Khoisan and AmaXhosa in the Cape Colony*. Cape Town: Penguin Random House. Abrahams, Y. (1994). Resistance, pacification and consciousness: a discussion of the historiography of Khoisan resistance from 1972 to 1993 and Khoisan resistance from 1652 to 1853. M.A. Research Report: Queens' University Canada. Date Accessed: 2020/01/15. URL: <https://open.uct.ac.za/handle/11427/8489>

²³ Morton, *When Rustling became an Art*, 35.

²⁴ Mbenga & Manson, *Land, Chiefs and Mining*, 56.

²⁵ Magubane, *The Making of a racist state*, 67.

²⁶ Mbenga, & Manson, *Land, Chiefs and Mining*, 33.

work as slaves on trekboer farms.²⁷ Another often neglected topic is the fact that African communities in the Transvaal often used their agency to cooperate with the trekboers to advance their own cause against their African enemies or to secure their own kingdoms as exemplified by the Swazi state who helped the trekboers against the Bapedi kingdom.²⁸ When the trekboers went to war in the South African War of 1899-1902, African auxiliaries were enlisted to assist them but Africans were still seen as inferior and not worthy of equality with the white man.²⁹

This is also evidenced in the fact that names such as Hendrik were given to chiefs because the region was under the influence of the white people of Dutch descent. The impact of colonialism on Bakgatlha is still felt today. Due to colonial under-development, loss of land, water scarcity Bakgatlha Baga Mosetlha were reduced, like most African societies to penury and had to enter the colonial economy for their own survival.³⁰ Migrant labour to the farms and diamond mines and later gold mines meant that Bakgatlha men had to leave their families and go to areas as far as Kimberley and Cullinan to work on the farms and mines and bring the money back home to buy communal land for the community.³¹ Politicians like Helen Zille speak of the benefits of colonialism for African communities; but in communities like Makapanstad one sees the horrors of colonialism as people lack proper sanitation, clean water, tarred roads, economic activity and agricultural production.³²

²⁷ Ibid. 39. Eldredge, E. and Morton, F. (1994). *Slavery in South Africa: Captive Labor on the Dutch Frontier*. Boulder: Westview. 56.

²⁸ Delius, *The Land Belong to Us*. 29.

²⁹ Mohlamme, J. (1985). "Black people in the Boer republics during and in the aftermath of the South African War of 1899-1902." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Wisconsin Madison. Nasson, B. (2010). *The war for South Africa: The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.

³⁰ Interview with Mokete Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

³¹ Manson & Mbenga, *Land, Chiefs and Mining*, 23.

³² Al Jazeera. (2017. "Outrage over Helen Zille's colonialism tweets". *Al Jazeera Website*. Date Accessed: 26/05/2020. Address: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/outrage-helen-zille-colonialism-tweets-170316154748367.html>

Colonialism also changed identities of communities as they interacted with white people. Africans in the interior had minimal interactions with white people mostly as traders, missionaries, and adventurers. The arrival of the trekboers in the Transvaal and their militaristic domination of most African communities meant that identity was changed and adapted to the prevailing material conditions of the times.³³ This also meant that culture had to change and be closer to that of the colonial hegemon who in this Moretele region was the trekboers. Some African identities changed because they knew that if they could speak Dutch, they could negotiate with the trekboers.³⁴ They also started adopting some European cultural traits in dress, mannerisms, religion and way of doing things. In Diturupa, we find that some of its material culture (to be fully discussed in chapter 4) is of a European nature, such as the wearing of Scottish kilts, the adoption of trumpets and soldiers' uniform which were already part of the African psyche in the 1880s as formal colonialism was being finalised. Thus, the adoption of European elements in African cultural repertoires in the 1900s was a finalisation of a process that started in the 1800s when European colonialists started asserting their cultural hegemony and devaluation of African culture.³⁵ Colonialism meant that Africans had to negotiate, reconstruct, and reimagine their identity with regards to the prevailing political conditions of the time they were living in. Today, some of the basic freedoms we enjoy like wearing African clothes in formal settings was not always available to our African ancestors who had to assimilate to be taken seriously by colonialists and the colonial administration.

³³ Hofmeyr, *We spend our Years as a Tale*, 73.

³⁴ Ibid, 49.

³⁵ Asante, M. (2019). *The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony*. London: Routledge. 201.

Missionaries and the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha

The missionaries came to Makapanstad in 1867. The mission was called the “Mosetla mission”. It was administered by the Hermannsburg Mission Society on behalf of the Lutheran Church in Germany.¹ Hermannsburg is well known for its work in Kwa Zulu Natal and North West.² A book on the Bafokeng of Rustenburg details how the missionaries became useful to Kgosi Mokgatle and his people as they helped them to purchase land and keep it under legal ownership.³ The Mosetlha mission is not well known but a Lutheran pastor by the name Reverend Backeberg is the one who oversaw the mission.

The Hermannsburg Mission was invited by Kgosi Nchaupe I to settle amongst the Bakgatlha baga Mosetlha in 1867. Missionaries in the BaSotho-BaTswana communities became revered after the work of Missionaries like David Livingstone with the Bakwena at Kolobeng in Botswana, Eugene Casalis among the Basotho at Morija and Moffat amongst the Batlhaping at Kuruman.⁴ These missionaries were revered because they could help people learn how to read and write.⁵ Literacy meant bargaining power for African kingdoms and saw them being able to participate in the colonial economy and use the laws of colonialists to not be disadvantaged.⁶ This was the primary motivation for many African communities to allow and invite missionaries to live amongst them. Missionaries were also seen as an arbiter against colonial powers and could negotiate on behalf of

¹ Breutz, *A History of the Batswana*, 337.

² Chisholm, *Between Worlds*, 106.

³ Mbenga, B & Manson, A. (2010). *‘People of the Dew’: A History of the Bafokeng of Phokeng-Rustenburg Region, South Africa, From Early Times to 2000*. Jacana Media: Johannesburg, 29.

⁴ Shillington, K. (2012). *Luka Jantjie: Resistance Hero of the South African Frontier*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 79

⁵ Mbenga, & Manson, *People of the Dew*, 23.

⁶ Hofmeyr, *We Spend Our Years as Tale*, 41.

their converts and could also help them to buy guns and stave off colonial conquest.⁷ Many missionaries faced resistance from colonial powers and African kingdoms who treated them with suspicion and sometimes saw them as treasonous. Those chiefs who did convert to Christianity walked a tightrope as some sections of the population did not take kindly to chiefs not observing spiritual and cultural rituals such as regimental initiation, female initiation, rainmaking rituals, ancestral veneration, the use of clay and soil such as lechoku (red ochre) and sebito (clay), and polygamous marriage to name a few.⁸ Missionaries waged a war on African cultural practices that they did not understand.

There is one story of a man called Hans Apie who was an evangelist converting people to Christianity in Makapanstad in the 1880s. He was able to build a church and taught the chief to read.⁹ Hans Apie's story was a common thread of African missionaries/evangelists as he was part of a community of believers who converted and proselytized. Apie here, like most black evangelists and missionaries faced challenges of being undermined by their white missionary counterparts who saw them as inferior. Apie's reputation is cemented by the fact that the community preferred him over a preacher from the Hermannsburg mission.¹⁰ Being one of the few people to receive western literacy gave Apie and those of his ilk cultural capital as he was able to teach Kgosi Makapan how to read and write. He is also respected for his dedication by being recommended for the

⁷ Lekgoathi, "Ethnicity and Identity", 66.

⁸ Shillington, *Luka Jantjie*, 79. See Volz, S. (2011). *African Teachers on the Colonial Frontier: Tswana Evangelists and Their Communities during the Nineteenth Century (Bible and Theology in Africa)*. Berlin: Peter Lang.

Chisholm, L. (2017). *Between Worlds*. Comaroff, J & Comaroff, J. (1991). *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Landau, P. (1995). *The Realm of the Word: Language, Gender, and Christianity in a Southern African Kingdom*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

⁹ Millard, J. (2002). *Malihambe: Let the Word Spread*. Pretoria: UNISA Press. 4.

¹⁰ Ibid, 4.

ministry, which was a difficult path for black evangelists as the racialized system did not recognize them when it came to promotions.¹¹

Missionaries played an important role with regards to cultural assimilation and appropriation. They can be called the moral shock absorbers of colonial conquest. This means that they found it easier to rationalize and persuade African communities to assimilate and appropriate European cultural repertoires. Many African communities embraced Christianity primarily as a means to learn how to read and write. They sent their children to mission schools to acquire new knowledge that would give them cultural capital in a new colonial capitalist economy. However, mission education came with its own cultural baggage, including choral music, Christian hymns, and other elements of Western modernity. Thus, some of the elements associated with Diturupa in the 1920s such as western musical instruments, clothing, and songs were already a cultural staple from the 1880s as European missionaries had introduced these artefacts into the community and making them palatable so that cultural events like Diturupa in the 1900s could easily use them.

¹¹ Bickford-Smith, V. (2004). "The Betrayal of Creole Elites," in S. Hawkins and P. Morgan (Eds). *The Black Experience of the British Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 134-167.

Segregation, Apartheid and Democracy

1904 saw the arrival of the “native” commissioner in Hammanskraal which meant that the affairs of Bakgatlha would no longer be discussed and legislated at Warmbad (Bela Bela) in present day Limpopo.¹ The war between Bakgatlha and Bahwaduba in the early 1900s over the Bakgatlha chieftaincy soured relations between Bakgatlha and Bahwaduba. Ntebeng Makapan was a regent and refused to peacefully hand over power to Kgosi Solomon Nchaupe Makapan II which led to conflict. The site of the battle is called Dibotswane (small decays) because people felt that the area represents decay and moral degeneration in the life of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha.

A lot of political events happened in this period such as the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 which signaled the high noon of white settler imperialism. The British and Boers shared the spoils amongst themselves and created pariahs out of blacks in their own country.² This union only recognized four white provinces, Transvaal, Natal, Cape Province and the Orange Free State. Blacks were to be incorporated into these provinces and had one representative in parliament. These actions sparked the formation of political movements such as the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) which lobbied to have these segregationist laws rescinded especially for the mission educated elite.

The 1913 Land Act had a major impact on black communities along with the Land Act of 1936.³ These acts ensured that blacks would only receive 13 percent of landholdings. Bakgatlha were

¹ Godsell, “Blurred Borders of Belonging,” 47.

² Plaatjie, S. (1998). *Native Life in South Africa: Before and Since the European War and the Boer Rebellion*. New York: Gutenberg.

³ Matsetela, T. (1981). “Rural Change among Africans in the Ventersdorp District of 1910-1935- A Case Study of Bakwena Ba Mogopa”. Unpublished M.A. Dissertation: SOAS University of London. 10. Beinart, W & Delius, P. (2015).” The Natives Land Act of 1913: A Template but not a Turning Point.” In B. Cousins & C. Walker, (Eds). *Land Divided, Land Restored: Land Reform in South Africa for the 21st Century*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media. 24.

actively buying farms in the early 1900s through the help of missionary enterprise and their own collective communal spirit.⁴ The loss of land had a lasting impact on the community as farming is no longer practiced on a large scale. Due to colonial legislation such as the Glen Grey Act of 1893, African societies lost their subsistence farming way of life which gave way to migrant labour in the mining industry, agriculture, factories and other industries in newly emerging urban cities.



Figure 5: A picture from the 1927 royal coronation showing Seaparankwe Hendrik Makapan being flanked by Regent Diratsagae Makapan seated on his left. Seaparankwe is draped in leopard skin. Other headmen and royal princes are seated and standing. Note the patriarchal tone of the photograph as no women are present.⁵

Bakgatlha were led by the regent George Diratsagae Makapan from 1911 to 1927. Under his rule a lot of farms were brought and consolidated. There was tension because it was felt that he wanted

⁴ Volz, *African Teachers on the Colonial Frontier*, 23.

⁵ Lentsoe Makapan (2021). "Photograph of coronation of Seaparankwe Makapan".

to enrich himself materially with the wealth of the community. He gave way to Hendrik Mathibe Makapan alias Seaparankwe in 1927 who ruled until his death in 1966. Seaparankwe is well known amongst the BaKgatlha chiefs and was known as a paramount chief after accepting the Bantu Authorities act in the 1950s.⁶ He brought an air of dignity and respect to the chieftaincy.⁷ Seaparankwe ruled during a time where tradition was giving way to modernity. Seaparankwe is the BaKgatlha chief who really upraised the spirit of Diturupa and gave it a special place that allowed it to thrive and survive.⁸

Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha lived through the apartheid era from 1948-1994. This was mostly as part of the Tswana Territorial authority and the homeland of Bophuthatswana. Many Bakgatlha experienced apartheid when they went to town in Hammanskraal and Pretoria. The Pretoria region was one of the heartlands of Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid. The Moretele region, through various individuals such as Phillip Kgosana, Esther Kekana, Nchaupe Mokopane and Zipporah Nawa played their part in the struggle against apartheid and saw many community members join liberation movements to continue the struggle against apartheid.⁹ Black South Africans in townships

⁶ Delius, P. (2009). "Contested Terrain: Land Rights and Chiefly Power in Historical Perspective". In Aninka Claasens and B Cousins (Eds). *Land, Power and Custom: Controversies generated by South Africa's Communal Land Rights Act*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 229.

⁷ Interview with Lencoe Makapan, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 March 2020 (Translated).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Kgosana, P. (1988). *Lest we forget*. Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers. Mnguni, L. (2017). "Philip Kgosana's Contribution To The Fall Of Oppression In South Africa With Special Reference To The Langa Uprising Of 1960". Unpublished Masters Dissertation: University of Pretoria. 16. Polity. (2007). "ANC: Masela: Family tribute to ZN Nawa delivered to ANC Caucus". Polity.org. Date Accessed: 23/02/2021. URL: <https://www.polity.org.za/article/anc-masela-family-tribute-to-zn-nawa-delivered-to-anc-caucus-14112007-2007-11-30>. Sibanyoni, M. (2021). "Tributes for late BCM leader Dr Nchaupe Mokoape". *Sowetan Live*. Date Accessed: 03/01/2021. URL: <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/south-africa/2020-12-31-tributes-for-late-bcm-leader-dr-nchaupe-mokoape/>. Godsell, "Blurred borders of Belonging," 80.

and villages experienced apartheid and white racism differently and often reacted differently because of various factors such as language (most rural South Africans could speak Afrikaans in the Transvaal), cultural upbringing, vicinity to whiteness, political mobilization and other factors.

From 1967 until 2014, Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha were under the chiefship of Thipe Victor Makapan and his Brothers Tau Edwin Makapan and Motshegwa Makapan who held power at various times. Thipe was chief from 1967 after the death of his father Seaparankwe. He was seconded to the Bophutatswana government cabinet and this saw his brother Tau Edwin Makapan take the throne until he passed on in 1984. Thipe came back in 1985 to resume his throne but passed on in 1993. This saw Motshegwa take over the throne until 2014 when he passed on. The current chief designate is Nchaupe Makapan III.

The community is still facing socio economic challenges as drugs like Nyaope have become a scourge in the community. Bakgatlha faced challenges of service delivery protests over water scarcity and the unhappiness over the handling of land allocations in the community.¹⁰ These burning issues in the community came to a boil in 2016/2017 when the youth went on a protest and burned the Kgwading heritage site (a space for whippings in the 1800s and early 1900s). Kgwading represents a symbolic authority of Mosetlha royals as people were whipped here for causing problems in the community, engaging in criminal activity or damaging community property. The youth burning the site was a direct challenge to the Mosetlha royals and showed a shifting balance of power as the royal headquarters were closed and the chief had to seek refuge in Mahikeng.

¹⁰ Across South Africa, there is a population explosion of young people in the majority. The young people would like land to build their own shelters/houses but the chiefly authorities want them to get married first and also belong to a lekgotla from that particular community.

A recent headline making issue was the death of a young boy in 2018 after a young man who was in love with his sister killed him to get to his sister, which was a horrible passion killing and shows us that communities in rural area face similar challenges to their town, city and township counterparts on the urban divide and shows us that we cannot harken for a return to the old nostalgic way of rural life as idyllic, peaceful and relatively free from social ills afflicting urban life.¹¹

Ethnic identity and Diturupa

Ethnicity has played a major role in helping us to think about Diturupa through the years. Ethnicity is important in helping us make sense of the story of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha in relation to Diturupa. Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha belong to the Batswana ethnic community. They are connected to other Batswana by culture, customs and traditions that would distinguish them from isiZulu and tshiVenda culture, for example. Their totem places them in the Bakgatlha subgroup.

Bakgatlha occupy an ambiguous role in Batswana culture and ethnicity. Like the Baphuting ba Seleka and Bakgatlha ba Mocha, they have lost the “linguistic purity”¹² of Setswana that is often associated with the Mahikeng and Rustenburg regions as well as parts of Botswana.¹³ The Setswana spoken in the Moretele region uses a lot of Sesotho and Sepedi words and often forms

¹¹ Magano, T. (2018). “Boy stabbed in school toilet to be laid to rest in Zim”. Date Accessed: 6 June 2020. URL: <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/sundayworld/news/2018-11-29-boy-stabbed-in-school-toilet-to-be-laid-to-rest-in-zim/>

¹² I oppose the notion of linguistic purity as language and dialects are not a fixed thing. They change and grow with circumstances and cannot be marginalized because of the demographics in a community. Colonial missionaries wrote down and standardized African languages according to their own narrow agenda and communities they had encountered and believed that because of their military might or population, they represent the language as pure and wholesome, disregarding other dialects. Today children in schools are often marked wrong by teachers who emphasize language standardization and try to correct “deviant dialects” who are seen as an aberration.

¹³ Malepe, A. (1966). “A Dialect-Geographical Survey of the Phonology of the Central, Eastern and Southern Dialects of Tswana”. Unpublished Masters Dissertation: UNISA. Motzafi-Haller, P. (2006). “Setswana Dialects and Inter-Dialectical Variation in the Republic of Botswana”. *Journal of the German Oriental Society*. Vol. 156, No. 1 (2006), pp. 9-41. Batibo, H. (1999). “A lexicostatistical survey of the Setswana dialects spoken in Botswana, South African Journal of African Languages.” 19:1, 2-11, DOI: 10.1080/02572117.1999.10587376. Bagwasi, M. (2019). “Are dialects markers of ethnic identity? The case of Setswana dialects and ethnic groups”. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus (SPiL Plus)*, 56, 65-77. <https://dx.doi.org/10.5842/56-0-790>. Nfila, B. (2002). “Standard in Setswana in Botswana”. Unpublished M.A. Dissertation: University of Pretoria.

new words, not known in other Setswana speaking communities. Examples include words like “ashi” (meaning here you are), “ka ntlhela” (on the other side), which can also be found in Sepitori, a special language developed in Pretoria that is influenced heavily by Sekgatlha.¹⁴ Scholars such as Mokonyane have looked at the commonality between all Sesotho root languages and contend that provincialism/nationalism/ethnocentricity has eroded the linguistic unity of the languages as people can share customs, an ethnic name/totem but because they belong to a different national/ethnic culture, they will fail to see that it is not an aberration to use words and customs from another language as they are interrelated.¹⁵ Diturupa mixes these cultures with regard to language, culture and ways of doing things. Due to the influence of Sepitori and its knack for diversity, Diturupa attracts people from different ethnic backgrounds unlike other Batswana festivals such as Dithubaruba which is heavily based on Batswana ethnicity.

Diturupa is an event that is mediated by a language dialect that is between Sekgatlha spoken by the older generation and Sepitori spoken by the trendy and hip youth.¹⁶ It is often hard to distinguish the speech patterns of someone from Mamelodi, Soshanguve, Mathibestad, Garankuwa, Majaneng, Atteridgeville and Makapanstad on a linguistic basis.¹⁷ This allows Diturupa to attract people from different ethnic backgrounds. Diturupa is not an ethnically exclusive event. Different communities in the Hammanskraal region come and join in the festivities of Diturupa from Amandebele a Moletlane, Bahwaduba ba Mathibe, Baphuting ba ga-Nawa to Bakgatlha ba Mocha, Bakwena ba Mogopa, and Bakgatlha ba Mmakau. Some of the guests to have graced the occasion include the now deposed chief of the Bakgatlha ba Kgafela Kgosi Nyalala Pilane. Kgosi Phopolo

¹⁴ Ditsele & Mann, “Language Contact in African Urban Settings”, 161.

¹⁵ Monyakane, T. (2016). The Cultural, Social and Political Similarity of the Bafokeng, Bakuena and the Bataung Lineages amongst the Sotho. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of South Africa. 63.

¹⁶ Wagner, V.K., Ditsele, T. & Makgato, M.M., (2020) “Influence of Sepitori on standard Setswana of its home language learners at three Tshwane townships.” *Literator* 41(1), a1653. <https://doi.org/10.4102/lit.v41i1.1653>

¹⁷ Ditsele & Mann, “Language Contact in African Urban Settings”, 163.

Maubane of the Bakgatlha Boo Motsha boo Maubane. Kgosi Maloka of the Bakgatlha boo Motsha at Marapyane in Mpumalanga province. Princess Lesego Motsatsi of the Batsatsing. Kgosi Motheo Mamogale and members of the Royal family of the Bapo ba Mogale; the late Kgosi Molatlhegi Nawa and the current Kgosi Kabelo Nawa. These are some of the neighbouring royal families who grace the event on an annual basis. Diturupa are also performed during the annual King Silamba Day commemorations by the amaNdebele nation at Wallmannsthal about 30km northeast of Pretoria.

One of the curious things with regard to ethnicity is the fact that Diturupa never caught on in Bophuthatswana. The relations between Kgosi Mangope and Mosetlha royals were in high regard yet he never attended Diturupa.¹⁸ The fact that Diturupa was not funded under the Mmabana Arts and Culture organization meant that Diturupa could not become a household name and get institutional build up as Bophuthatswana had the most progressive arts scene, as well as radio and a television station.¹⁹ Perhaps the lack of incorporation of Diturupa into the Bophuthatswana arts scene means that it does not engender some of the extremities of ethnic nationalism that exist in most art and cultural formations in the former homelands where we find that cultural commemorations are based on ethnic affiliation.

Identity is an important part of helping us to understand Diturupa and its symbolic resonance in the community of Makapanstad and its neighbouring villages. Understanding the importance of ethnic identity allows us to understand the infusion of indigenous knowledge into Diturupa and its

¹⁸ Mabokela. *Women of Makapanstad*. 95.

¹⁹ Interview with Mme Mputla by Mojuta Motlhamme. Sefikantsoe section, Makapanstad. 20 March 2020. Barnett, Clive (1998). The contradictions of broadcasting reform in post-apartheid South Africa. *Review of African Political Economy*, 25(78) pp. 551–570. Hamm, C. (1991). 'The Constant Companion of Man': Separate Development, Radio Bantu and Music. *Popular Music*, 10(2), 147-173. Retrieved January 30, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/853058>

material culture through the use of traditional drums, whistles, African dances, and the traditional colourful fabrics influenced by patterns of Jeremane/Seanamarena/Leteisi (Sotho cultural Fabric). Ethnic interactions led by Difaqane and the cross acculturation of African communities who did not want to be incorporated into other groups meant that ethnicity was shaped and changed over time and makes it possible for events like Diturupa to have people from different ethnic groups. Due to the fact that the Tshwane region in the 1830s was one of the epicentres of the Mfecane meant that ethnic interaction was always going to be porous and not a fixed and static identity that could be mobilized for ethno-centric gains. Colonialism and missionaries also influenced a western identity on Africans through the use of Dutch and English and later Afrikaans as languages going into Setswana and giving birth to new loan words that were not previously available to Setswana linguistically. European influences have also staked their claim on Diturupa and shows that its identity and that of its performers is a shifting and changing identity that embraces diversity from the African and European worldview. The story of Diturupa, a military commemoration is also the story of ethnic identity and how it has changed to embrace different people and use their cultures to shape a cultural event and learn to embrace difference. Ultimately, the aims of Diturupa as it will be shown in the next chapters is how cultural fluidity and identity is performed and changes over time to embrace difference.

Chapter Three: Blood Stained Tears and Appropriation: The origins of Diturupa Cultural Commemoration 1918-2018

Tse dintshontsho tsa matutu re mabeta	We black forces are combatants
Re betabetanye le Mantariana	We wrestled with the Italians
Difofane tsa bona ra utlwa di feta,	We heard their aircraft passing by
Di lelekilwe ke matshubametsana	Being chased by sky rockets
A pagologang digodimo di fofa	Throwing missiles high in the sky
O bone di latlha diphuka di lefa	Catching a glimpse of disbursing wings ¹

This chapter deals with the context and origins of Diturupa. It takes cognisance of the fact that African oral traditions and historical accounts are not like their European counterparts and hence we have to think of new ways of probing and writing into existence the missing pieces of African history as we uncover and unravel them.² An African centred perspective of history asks us to use archival material, oral traditions, oral interviews, photographs, ethnography and come up with an interpretation.³

The poem above is from a poetry collection by Leetile Raditladi's from Serowe in Botswana who was writing in the 1940s and 1950s. This poem affirms African soldiers in the WWII and their bravery in spite of the dangers they faced against the Italians of Mussolini. This poem is an example of African participation in the war and shows us how African languages and oral tradition

¹ Matjila, S. (2009). "The Social, Cultural and Historical aspects Of Raditladi's Sefalana sa Menate". Ph.D. Dissertation: UNISA. 281.

² Asante, M. (2013). *An Afrocentric Manifesto: Towards the African Renaissance*. Cambridge: Polity. 13.

³ Keto, *African Centred perspective*, 33.

themselves hold a vast amount of memory that can be used alongside archival resources to bring a holistic perspective about Africans and the world wars.

This chapter seeks to give a brief overview of Black participation in the first and WWIIs as a framing background and wider contextual background of the military traditions that Diturupa emerges out of. Key themes and questions to be dealt with in this chapter will include the reasons why Diturupa was started and what Diturupa means to different community members. It will also look at different periods of Diturupa and how they have changed over time. The key arguments in this chapter is that there is clearly a strong connection between the participation of black men in World War One, the SS Mendi tragedy and the origins of Diturupa as Diturupa is essentially a commemoration of black participation in the WWI and remembering the sacrifices that black soldiers made on the battlefield. Another key argument is that the origins of Diturupa reflect the cultural consciousness of black soldiers and how they were able to institutionalise what they had learnt on the battle field even if they were just seen as “labourers” instead of soldiers. The chapter looks at how Diturupa has changed from being an event of conservative respectability and royal sacrilege in the early years to being a regional event that attracts throngs of supporters and participants from diverse walks of life.

The origins of Diturupa can be traced to 1918 after the WWI. This history and heritage have shaped the form of Diturupa and its interpretation. It is difficult to imagine Diturupa outside of the First and WWII and its attendant consequences for African societies. After the WWI, Africa was still colonized by European powers. WWII changed relations between colonised and coloniser. After fighting alongside Europeans, many Africans demanded total freedom for their countries.⁴ One

⁴ Jackson, A. (2006). *British Empire and the Second World War*. London: Humbledon Continuum. 267. Myrice, E. (2015). "The Impact of the Second World War on the Decolonization of Africa". *Africana Studies Student Research Conference*. 4.

cannot talk about Diturupa without this global context of world war and its associated socio-cultural interactions. This chapter attempts to locate the historicity of Diturupa, and its origins as a commemoration of the WWI and its impact on black communities in South Africa.

The literature on WWI in South Africa is vast and growing in abundance. The story of black participation in WWI has been told with excellence. A lot of the literature has dealt with the erasure of Black South African soldiers and the impact they made on the WWI and WWII battlefronts.⁵ This study and chapter seeks to contribute to this literature by showing how Black veterans and community members were able to create a living memorial in the form of Diturupa and give memorialisation and remembrance a specific locality with a continuing affirmation and celebration of those who have passed on. The literature on WWI and its impact fails to actually see the cultural manifestations and influences of the war on black South African communities by only locating the men as archival beings whose lives only ended up in the archives at that particular moment (1916-1918).⁶ Across the literature, only a few men's voices such as Dhyoba, Matli, and Stimela are fully captured as speaking about their experiences in WWI and their post WWI lives.⁷ The black men who participated in WWI and WWII have families, have histories and had lives outside of enlisting for service in the wars. Difficult as it is to trace their histories and their lives, we must see events such as Diturupa as traditions emanating out of some of these men imparting what they had learnt

⁵ Gribble, J & Scott, G. (2017). *We Die Like Brothers: The Sinking of the SS Mendi*. Swindon: Historic England. Clothier, N. Black Valour. (1987). *The South African Native Labour Contingent, 1916-1918 and the Sinking of the Mendi*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press. Grundlingh, A. (1987). *Fighting their Own War: South African Blacks and the First World War*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press. Nasson, B. (2015). *WWI and the People of South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers. Baai, S. (2017). *Black Sacrifice: The Sinking of the S.S. Mendi*. 1917. Johannesburg: Sandi Zinnia Baai Foundation. Willan, b. (1978). "The South African Native Labour Contingent, 1916–1918." *Journal of African History*, 19. 61.

⁶ Gribble & Scott, *We Die Like Brothers*, 15

⁷ Perry, J and Perry C. (Eds). (1975). *A Chief is a Chief by the People: The Autobiography of Stimela Jason Jingoos*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Clothier, *Black Valour*. 96, 55, 121.

on the battlefield to their communities and creating a living monument to their heroic effort in a communal manner.

World War One, SS Mendi and Black Soldiers

WWI started in 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. This war was global in scale as a lot of countries participated in it. WWI was a global war and not exclusive to one community. The primary battles were in Europe but because most of the world was under the colonial rule of European powers, they were able to mobilise peoples from their overseas dominions, colonies, and protectorates under their jurisdiction and control.⁸ The assassination of Austro-Hungarian heir Archduke Franz Ferdinand by the Serb-Bosnian assassin/freedom fighter Gavrilo Princip was a prelude and pretext to WWI. European powers were already having tense relations due to ethnic and nationalist sentiments.⁹ WWI was fought on different continents. In Europe, the main theatre was in France and Russia. The two opposing sides include the central powers which comprise of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire and the allied powers which were Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Romania, Japan and the United States. The war led to military advances and technological advancement. It also had a lot of casualties as over 20 million people died including civilians.

The mobilisation of Black soldiers has always been a bone of contention in settler colonial societies. Although Africans were mobilised during colonial times, it was always done in a way that would not threaten settler colonial interests.¹⁰ There was a genuine fear that military service and handlings of weapons would have a psychological impact on black soldiers and that they could

⁸ Grundlingh, *Fighting their Own War*, 10.

⁹ Stapleton. *A Military History of South Africa*, 114.

¹⁰ Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, 30-31.

launch an armed insurrection/rebellion. Africans were also recruited for military service based on their ethnic affiliations and strengths. There has also been a push to divide and manipulate African societies using military service and loyalty to settler colonists to reward them.¹¹ Chiefs played a central role in the recruitment of black soldiers as they had first-hand information about the physical strength and capabilities of their peoples.

WWI was fought on African soil and saw soldiers from the Union Defence Force¹² being marshalled to invade German South West Africa (Namibia) in 1915.¹³ South Africa was a British ally and was asked to invade German West Africa to take over important harbours and wireless stations.¹⁴ Over 35 000 Black soldiers were deployed to German South West Africa and they served in non-combat roles as loaders of war supplies, railway repair labourers, animal transport, drivers of ammunition and supply wagons.¹⁵ These Black soldiers played a major role in the success of the East African campaign which saw the important port of Lüderitz being captured and the Germans losing their colony of German South West Africa in 1915.

In 1916, the Union Defence Force was enlisted in the fight for German East Africa against the Germans of General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck.¹⁶ This was a long war in East Africa that only ended at the end of WWI. Again, over 18000 black men from South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland were enlisted as part of the Native Labour Corps under the Union Defence Force.

¹¹ Ibid. 31.

¹² The Union Defence Force was formed in 1912 and became the permanent force of the Union of South Africa doing away with the British Imperial Army and the Boer Commando system. Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, 4.

¹³ German South West Africa became South West Africa and in the 1990s was renamed Namibia after independence from Apartheid South Africa.

¹⁴ Gribble & Scott, *We Die Like Brothers*, 30

¹⁵ Grundlingh, *Fighting their own War*, 86.

¹⁶ Nasson, B. (2014). "More Than Just von Lettow-Vorbeck: Sub-Saharan Africa in the First World War". *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 40. Jahrg., H. 2, Der Erste Weltkrieg in globaler Perspektive. 160.

These soldiers worked as dockworkers, railway repairers, leading animal drawn vehicles, and porters.¹⁷ These men were an indispensable part of the East African campaign. The hardships that soldiers faced in East Africa included tropical diseases and parasites that were not easily found in Southern Africa. Many black soldiers succumbed to tropical diseases as they were constantly labouring to create paths, railways and unload ammunitions for their white counterparts.¹⁸ Black soldiers of the Native Labour Corps were not lauded in the South West African and East African campaigns, as Sol Plaatjie attests: “lest their behavior merit recognition, their deeds and acts must, on account of their colour, not be recorded”¹⁹ The efforts of Black soldiers was not recognized and was erased in political and academic circles.

The South African Native Labour Contingency (SANLC) was created by Britain for black people to participate in the imperial war effort abroad in 1916.²⁰ There was a shortage of labour on the battle front and Black soldiers were used in East Africa and then it was suggested that they be used on the Western Front in France.²¹ There was unease with giving black soldiers guns as this would have an impact on their psychological and social consciousness when they return home and might spark protests and rebellions in their home countries. Black soldiers were recruited through their chiefs. Most of the soldiers came from initiation regimental age sets because they could be easily identified and it created unity amongst the men. The black South African elite supported the enlisting of black soldiers because they felt if black people supported the British war effort then they would be granted reprieve from segregation, the Land Act and voting rights in the then Union of South Africa.²² This was to be a disappointment as they were not recognized and rewarded for

¹⁷ Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, 32.

¹⁸ Grundlingh, *Fighting their Own*, 18.

¹⁹ Gribble & Scott, *We Die Like Brothers*, 33.

²⁰ Clothier, N. *Black Valour*, 36.

²¹ The weather and climate in France is almost similar to South Africa barring the snowy winter.

²² Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*. 38.

their efforts on the battlefield. To make it worse, some of the Black Soldiers from the High Commission Territories (Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana) were accorded medals as were black soldiers who served in German West Africa.²³

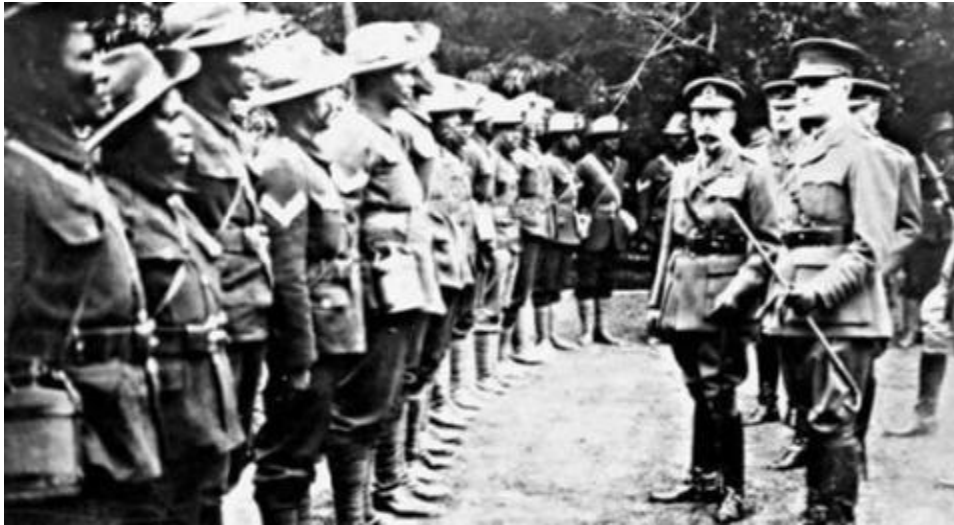


Figure 6: King George V inspects the South African Native Labour Corps -1918. George was the King of the British Empire that had colonized the Black people of South Africa.²⁴

²³ Gribble & Scott, *We Die Like Brothers*. 35.

²⁴ South African History Online. (2020). “King George V inspects the South African Native Labour Corps -1918”. Date Accessed: 30 October 2020. URL: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/image/king-george-v-inspects-south-african-native-labour-corps-1918>.



Figure 7: General Jan Smuts inspects an SANLC unit in France. This is one of the few photographs of Black South Africans involved in WWI.²⁵

The SS Mendi was a steamship from Liverpool. It was a commercial steam ship that was used to carry goods across Europe, Asia and Africa. The Mendi is a tragic symbol of black South African participation in WWI.²⁶ The story of how black soldiers drowned when the Mendi collided with another ship the SS Daro is a story of bravery and tragedy. Led by reverend Wauchope, some of the soldiers danced a drill of death. This has become part of the story of the Mendi signifying the spiritual acceptance of what was happening by the men.²⁷

²⁵ Plaut, M. (2018). "Joining British fight in WW1 no easy choice for SA". *Dispatch live*. Date Accessed: 29 October 2020. URL: <https://www.dispatchlive.co.za/news/opinion/2018-11-10-opinion--joining-british-fight-in-ww1-no-easy-choice-for-sa/>

²⁶ Clothier, *Black Valour*, 21.

²⁷ Gribble & Scott, G, *We Die Like Brothers*. 35.

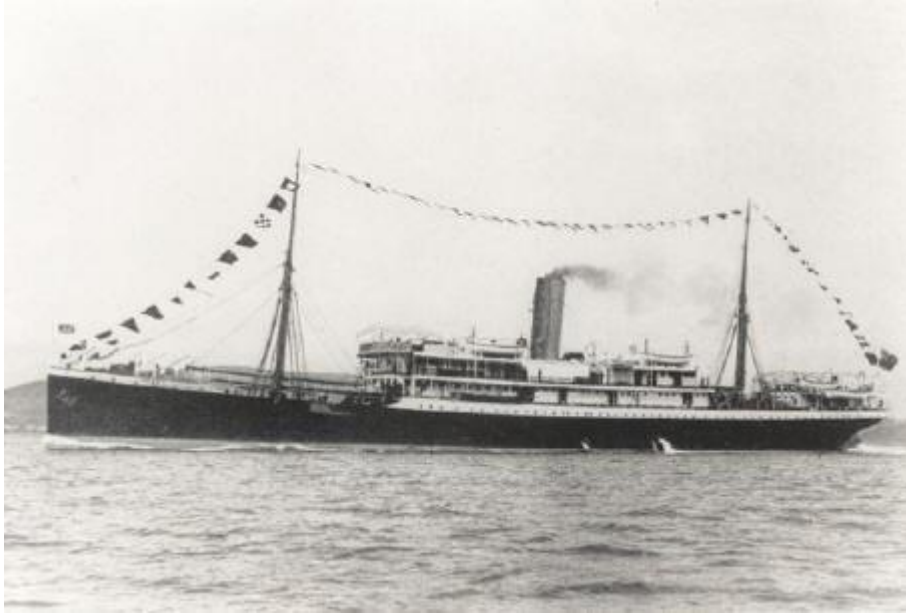


Figure 8: The Steamship SS Mendi en route to France in 1917.²⁸ Some 616 South Africans died when the SS Mendi (above) sank on 21 February 1917.

In his own words, Reverend Dyobha says to the men:

Be quiet and calm, my countrymen, for what is taking place now is exactly what you came to do. You are going to die, but that is what you came to do. Brothers, we are drilling the drill of death. I, a Xhosa, say you are all my brothers, Zulus, Swazis, Pondos, Basutos, we die like brothers. We are the sons of Africa. Raise your cries, brothers, for though they made us leave our weapons at our home, our voices are left with our bodies. The Reverend Isaac Wauchope Dyobha 1915²⁹

The death drill has elicited a lot of historical analysis and claims of mythmaking. Historian Clothier sees it as a truthful account whilst Grundlingh feels that it does not have any evidence backing it

²⁸ Swinney, G. (1995). "The Sinking of the SS Mendi, 21 February 1917". *Journal of Military History*. Vol 10 no 1. Date Accessed: 20 August 2020. URL: <http://samilitaryhistory.org/vol101gs.html>.

²⁹ Bell, B & White, M. (2017). "Dancing the death drill: The sinking of the SS Mendi. *BBC News*. Date Accessed: 8 July 2020. URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-hampshire-38971394>

up from eyewitness accounts of the SS Mendi tragedy.³⁰ The drill of death can be equated to the Khoisan trance dance that evokes and calls upon the ancestors for healing.³¹ Death is given a spiritual meaning and preordained. The fact that different black ethnic groups are now unified in fighting for a cause for the British Empire is ironic because they are uniting for a cause that will not bring them freedom. Inter-ethnic alliance have always been there since time immemorial and were flexible depending on various factors and interests and not only as a cause of colonial occupation.³² Blacks uniting under organisations like the SANNC was not a new phenomenon of black unity. The fact that the black soldiers die like brothers symbolizes the spirit of Ubuntu and how they did not abandon one another.³³ The last part shows that weapons are not the only way to resist and be part of war but voices are powerful and can spark revolution and social change.

Men like Joseph Tshite from Hebron and Jacob Matli from Mathibestad are examples of men from the Moretele region who enlisted for service in the South African Native Labour Contingent.³⁴ Joseph Tshite was schoolmaster from Pretoria, who encouraged those around him with hymns and prayers until he passed away.³⁵ One of the survivors of the sinking, Jacob Koos Matli from Mathibestad, described how the trauma stayed with him. He says: “Travelling on another transport ship during the war he recalled that ‘every time I heard the whistles I would jump up and tell the sailors that this ship was also sinking’”.³⁶ Stimela Jason Jingoos, a black soldier from the SANLC,

³⁰ Grundlingh (2011). “Mutating Memories and the Making of a Myth: Remembering the SS Mendi Disaster, 1917–2007.” *South African Historical Journal*, 63:1, 20-37, DOI: 10.1080/02582473.2011.549372. Nyamende, M. (2000). “The Life and Works of Isaac William(s) Wauchope”. Unpublished DPhil: University of Cape Town.

³¹ Low, C. (2015). “The Role of the Body in Kalahari San Healing Dances”. *Hunter Gatherer Research*. 1. 29-60. 10.3828/hgr.2015.3.

³² Lekgoathi, “Ethnicity and Identity”, 42.

³³ Gribble & Scott, *We Die Like Brothers*, 59.

³⁴ Clothier, *Black Valour*, 20-21.

³⁵ Bell & White, “Dancing the death drill”

³⁶ Imperial War Museum. (2020). “Why the sinking of the SS Mendi is remembered around the world”. Date Accessed: 20 November 2020. URL: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/why-the-sinking-of-the-ss-mendi-is-remembered-around-the-world>

narrated his biography to John and Cassandra Perry. His biography is important in helping us to understand the full context of life for a black South African who was involved in WWI.³⁷ Many perspectives do not contextualize the soldiers and just take soundbites out of their experiences. Unfortunately, this was outside of the scope of this project but in future more oral historical research needs to be done to locate the families of those who survived and those who died who might have some information about their kindred so that we move away from only seeing them as labourers who toiled for the British Empire.

After serving on the frontlines of WWI, Black South African soldiers went back to South Africa. Many did not get a rousing heroes welcome and medals. They fought against this exclusion but the Union of South Africa government under Jan Smuts did not budge. Political organisations such as the SANNC even sent a delegation to England in 1919 hoping to convince the British to support political freedom for black people in South Africa on the basis of black participation in the war.³⁸ Black soldiers returned to their lives but had improved job prospects and brought back with them stories of the frontlines as Stimela Jason Jingoos concurs:

Although at the time politics and independence were a long way off, we were aware, when we returned that we are different to other people at home. Our behavior, as we showed the South Africans, was something more than they expected from a black person, more like what was expected among them of a white man. We had copied the manners and customs of Europeans, and not only copied: we lived them, acted those customs right through.³⁹

³⁷ Perry & Perry, *A Chief is a Chief by the People*, 36.

³⁸ Grundlingh, *Fighting their Own War*. 135.

³⁹ National Archives. Stimela Jason Jingoos: SANLC Papers. GG. 548 9/93/211. Perry & Perry, *A Chief is a Chief by the People* 128.

Stimela shows that being part of the war did change Black South African soldiers and exposed them to European culture in a different manner. It has to be acknowledged that life in France was different from the union and that segregation was not as entrenched in that society.⁴⁰ This challenges notions that SANLC members were just apolitical soldiers who went into relative obscurity after their service ended. According to Grundlingh:

[T]here is no satisfactory evidence that ex-contingent [SANLC] members were in the vanguard of sustained and coherent black resistance to white domination. For example, no indication could be found that former members were involved in the black industrial unrest ... Nor does it appear, on a somewhat different level, that veterans acted as 'modernisers' in rural societies...Ultimately, then, military service was not a crucial variant in determining political behaviour.⁴¹

I take up issue with Grundlingh as Jingoos above reiterates that when they returned to their rural societies they came back with cultural customs and rituals that they were exposed to in France and other battle sites.⁴² It is not to say that they wholly modernized their communities but to agree that this going away to distant lands and engaging people from there did bring new ideas that were taken back to rural communities and as observed in cultural events like Diturupa they were used to keep alive the memories and cultural contacts they had made and the inspirations they had gathered on the battlefield. They might not have been heavily politicised but they did play a part in cultural diffusion.

⁴⁰ Clothier, *Black Valour*, 130. France is not necessarily a racist free society. See Conklin, A. (2013). *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850–1950*. London: Cornell University Press. Chapman, H. & Frader, L (Eds). (2004). *Race in France: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Politics of Difference*. New York: Berghen Books. Fysh, P & Wolfreys, J. (2003). *The Politics of Racism in France*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

⁴¹ Grundlingh, *Fighting Their Own War 1987*, 132, 152, 169.

⁴² National Archives. (1919). Stimela Jason Jingoos: *SANLC Papers*. GG. 548 9/93/211.

South African novelist and veteran journalist Fred Khumalo has written a historical fiction book called *dancing the death drill*. This book follows the life of Pitso Motaung, a child born of a Mosotho woman and Afrikaner man. In this novel, the central story is the sinking of the SS Mendi and how it affected Pitso Motaung who ended up deserting camp and staying in France after the war in 1918.⁴³ This fictional story is important in helping us to reimagine and remember what happened to those who died on the SS Mendi. The book illustrates how Africans in 1914 were exposed to European modernity through mission stations, schools, city centres, churches and farms.⁴⁴ Khumalo brings the story of the Mendi alive and shows the complexity of a character with a full life in Motaung who renounces his mixed race heritage, gets a decent education, sleeps with a white woman and kills two white men.⁴⁵ Although Motaung is a fictional character, the story shows how going beyond the archive into oral history and tradition can salvage and help us find the missing pieces of history. At the end of the book, this is the words Motaung leaves us with:

I am dancing my death drill. No one can take it away from me. This death drill is my truth. They made me leave my spear, my shield, back home those many years ago. So I am going to fight with my words, turn my words into bullets. This dance is my history, my heritage, my story that they tried to suppress. This is my death drill, my dance of death, my dance of truth.⁴⁶

Showing us the complexity of the death drill. The death drill is given human qualities of truthfulness. It is depicted as historical heritage. The death drill is bearing witness to history and gives the black soldier courage to face the enemy and fight. The book itself shows us how European cultural

⁴³ Khumalo, F. (2017). *Dancing the Death Drill*. Cape Town: Umuzi. 23.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 69, 78, 91, 98.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 10, 68, 77, 79.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 255.

infusion was happening in the countryside through mission stations and settler farms that saw interactions between black and white. Africans were not just passive recipients of European culture but used it and made it part of their own identity.

World War Two and Black Soldiers

WWII started in 1939 and ended in 1945. This war was caused by the German invasion of Poland in 1939. Adolf Hitler and his race towards armament is one of the primary causes of WWII.⁴⁷ South Africa was part of the allied cause. The same way the country was loyal to Britain in WWI, they kept the loyalty in WWII.⁴⁸ WWII saw more theatres of war being opened up and more people participating in it. One of the first campaigns that South Africa entered was in East Africa against Italy. The South African forces were deployed to North Africa at Tobruk in Egypt and El Alamein against Rommel's Afrika Korps.⁴⁹ South Africa participated in the pushing of German Soldiers out of Cassino in Italy. Black soldiers were recruited into the war by the union government. It is said that:

The Native Affairs Department, in co-operation with the military authorities, used a wide variety of means to encourage men to enlist in the Native Military Corps. Posters were placed in beerhalls, railway stations, cinemas and clubs, and on buses and trams... [Yet] discrimination was invoked again and again by many Africans as a reason for not enlisting.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Killingray, D with Plaut, M. (2010). *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War*. Suffolk: James Currey. 11.

⁴⁸ Jackson, A. (2006). *The British Empire and the Second World War*. London: Humbledon Continuum. 171.

⁴⁹ Grundy. *Soldiers without Politics*. 87.

⁵⁰ David Killingray. (2010). *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War*. Suffolk: James Currey. 72-3.

Most of the black soldiers were given non-combat roles. These were soldiers without reward just like their WWI counterparts.⁵¹ WWII conscientised soldiers from all parts of the world and saw troops return home with ideas of freedom and liberation. Wars and campaigns of independence were instituted at the end of WWII.⁵² Black soldiers have participated in wars waged by settler colonists from Dutch and British rule since the 1700s. These black soldiers often suffered as collateral damage and took heavy casualties on the side of the colonists. They were given uniforms and guns reluctantly. WWII was a continuum of a tradition of using black soldiers as cannon fodder. These soldiers were part of the Native Labour Contingency. They were enrolled to be field runners, messengers, stretch bearers, cooks and cleaners. One of the authors tentatively dubs them “soldiers without politics”, which is a misnomer as they being part of the battlefield was a political act.⁵³ They were fighting for a political entity that did not recognize them. This was a dilemma faced by black soldiers in the USA as well and other parts of empire.⁵⁴

Lucas Majozi was a member of the Native Military Corps during WWII. He was a stretch bearer who showed his military skills and exploits at the battle of El Alamein in Egypt.⁵⁵ He carried wounded soldiers off the battlefield and cared for others who were wounded. His bravery earned him the Distinguished Medal for Conduct (DMC). Lucas Majozi is an example of Black South African soldiers who put their bodies on the line. Majozi’s story is one of the remarkable stories of black soldiers who risked it all to ensure that wounded South African soldiers got to safety and

⁵¹ Mohlamme, J. (1995). “Soldiers without reward: Africans in South Africa's war”. *Military History Journal* Vol 10 No 1. Date Accessed: 10 July 2020. URL: Soldiers without reward- Africans in South Africa's wars South African History Online.htm.

⁵² Sikainga, A. “Conclusion: Consequences of the War”. In J. Byfield, C. Brown, T. Parsons, & A. Sikainga (Eds). (2015). *Africa and World War II*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 509.

⁵³ Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, ix.

⁵⁴ Mohlamme, “Soldiers without reward”.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

live to tell their stories. His heroic exploits and recognition show the impact of African soldiers in the WWII.

Job Maseko was a member of the Native Military Corps. He was able to blow up a German enemy ship in WWII. The fact that he learnt bomb making skills shows that the African soldiers did want to learn but were inhibited by the racial order of the day which demanded that they carry spears instead of guns.⁵⁶ Maseko's medal citation reads:

For meritorious and courageous action in that on or about the 21st July 1942, while a Prisoner of War, he, Job Maseko, sank a fully laden enemy steamer - probably an "F" boat - while moored in Tobruk Harbour. This he did by placing a small tin filled with gunpowder in among drums of petrol in the hold, leading a fuse therefrom to the hatch and lighting the fuse upon closing the hatch. In carrying out this deliberately planned action, Job Maseko displayed ingenuity, determination and complete disregard of personal safety from punishment by the enemy or from the ensuing explosion which set the vessel alight.⁵⁷

These are just examples of how black soldiers often put their lives at risk to ensure victory for the allied cause but the irony of them still being pariahs and second-class citizens at home.⁵⁸ WWII saw Africans participate in the war on a larger scale and come back home with notions and ideals of political consciousness that were to be put into use against colonial governments in the 1950s and 1960s through wars of liberation.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Killingray with Plaut *Fighting for Britain*, 179.

Diturupa as counter memory of World War I and World War II

Historical scholarship started taking memory studies seriously in the 1960s.⁵⁹ Memory is now seen as an important component in the politics and methodology of knowledge production in history.⁶⁰ How people remember, what they choose to remember, and how historians use the memory are important in helping us to deconstruct the power and meaning of memory in historical studies.⁶¹ The concept of counter memory is a theoretical strand that disrupts popular memory and instead looks at how people can remember events in an unpopular or unorthodox manner. I posit that Diturupa represents a counter memory of the two world wars and how they are remembered in mainstream consciousness. If mainstream consciousness remembers the world wars as events of heroic self-sacrifice, defending peace, technological innovation, victory over fascism and defending democracy; then Diturupa forces us to confront a counter memory of racial discrimination, unfair treatment of soldiers, colonial military coercion and resource exploitation in the colonies.⁶² The memory of African soldiers and their participation is significant and cannot be muted as Diturupa demonstrates. This counter memory remains an ongoing project of remembrance and memorializing the efforts of the disregarded black soldier who gave their service for European powers who did not see them fit for democracy and the fruits of freedom.⁶³

⁵⁹ Vansina, J. (1965) *Oral tradition: A study in historical methodology*. Chicago: Aldine Press. 27.

⁶⁰ Ritchie, D. (2015). *Doing Oral History*. New York: Oxford University Press. 67.

⁶¹ Portelli, A. (2003). "What Makes Oral History Different" in: R. Perks & A. Thompson (Eds). *The Oral History Reader* London: Taylor & Francis E-Library.

⁶² Mohlamme, "Soldiers without reward". Plaut, M. (2018). "How the First World War rewarded white South Africans, but not black compatriots". *The Conversation*. Date Accessed: 20/10/2020. URL: [How%20the%20First%20World%20War%20rewarded%20white%20South%20Africans,%20but%20not%20black%20compatriots.htm](https://www.theconversation.com/how-the-first-world-war-rewarded-white-south-africans-but-not-black-compatriots/100000)

⁶³ Clothier, *Black Valour*, 184.

Diturupa as counter commemoration of official military commemorations

There are many official commemorations around the ending of WWI and WWII. Ceremonies such as Armistice Day are held worldwide with grandeur and pomp in countries like England and France to mark the official ending of WWI in November and to commemorate the efforts of WWI and II veterans and casualties.⁶⁴ 2018 marked 100 years since the end of the WWI in South Africa and saw various institutions commemorate the soldiers who participated.

South Africa has an abundance of memorials honouring those who passed on during WWI and WWII. These include: The Delville Wood Memorial and Museum located in France that honours South Africa's WWI veterans and those who perished in the Battle of Delville Wood in France:

Delville Wood, a small forest adjacent to the Somme town of Longueval, was the site of the first substantial blooding of the 1st South African Infantry Brigade on the Western Front. For nearly a week in July 1916, South Africa's men stood their ground there against German advances. They emerged days later much diminished in numbers, but not defeated. Delville Wood and the exploits of the men who fought there would become the focal point of memorialisation of South African valour on the Western Front during the Great War — *white* South African valour. This did not change until the twilight years of apartheid when greater recognition was given to the contribution of black and coloured South African citizens in their respective manifestations of wartime valour.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Nasson, B. (2007). *Springboks on the Somme: South Africa in the Great War, 1914-1918*. Johannesburg: Penguin. 15.

⁶⁵ De Vries, J. (2018). "Commemoration, Cult of the Fallen (Union of South Africa)" in by U. Daniel, P. Gatrell, O. Janz, H. Jones, J. Keene, A. Kramer, & B. Nasson: *1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War*. Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin.

This is the most famous, well-resourced and biggest monument commemorating WWI with regards to South Africa. The Delville Wood Memorial has replicas in the form of the South African Delville wood Memorial at the Union Buildings in Pretoria (State President residence) honouring those who participated in the WWI. Another memorial is the Delville Wood Memorial in Cape Town's Company Gardens⁶⁶ heritage complex honouring the participants of WWI. Delville Wood is a name that is etched in South African military consciousness and is the centre of the South African military memorial complex honouring white soldiers and later adding black soldiers as a gesture of reconciliation.⁶⁷ Delville Wood memorials are Eurocentric in their nature and often feature triumphal arches similar to the French Champs-Élysées or Berlin's Brandenburg Gate. They are also noted for their arch stone marble granite and inscription of the names of those who participated in the War. They also have statues of soldiers often on horseback and either carrying rifles or a cannon facing the enemy. Events are held annually on 11 November by government and military associations to honour those who perished in the war and lay wreaths of remembrance.⁶⁸

The cenotaph in Cape Town was erected in 1924 and is used to annually commemorate Remembrance Day or Armistice Day in Cape Town's Heerengracht Street. The Artillery Memorial is another memorial located in the Company Gardens of Cape Town that shows a cannon and inscription that says "this memorial was dedicated to the memory of all artillerymen who laid down their lives for their country."⁶⁹

Johannesburg as a city has a host of memorials dedicated to the fallen of WWI. These include the National Museum of Military History which houses the military history of the country and has a

⁶⁶ Company Gardens was originally a garden constructed by Dutch colonists.

⁶⁷ Nasson, "The Memories and Mythologies of South Africa's Great War." *South African Journal of Science*, vol.105, nos.5-6, 2009, p.171.

⁶⁸ De Vries, J, "Commemoration".

⁶⁹ Crump, A & Van Niekerk, R. (1988). *Public Sculptures and Reliefs*. Cape Town: Clifton Publications. 42.

cenotaph erected on its ground to honour those who fought in WWI and WWII. There are numerous memorials dotted in parks, schools and churches that honour those who fought in the wars. Schools such as King Edward School and St Johns College have monuments and memorials commemorating the war from a British perspective. Bez Valley Park World War One memorial is another example of memorials that have decayed in the current day and will soon be relocated.⁷⁰ The Scottish have memorials in Parktown and Pretoria that are dedicated to the fallen Scotsmen in the two world wars. The key marker of these monuments is a statue of a Scottish soldier wearing Scottish military attire and the distinguished kilt.

Durban has an array of world war memorials such as the cenotaph in Farewell Square in the city centre, Memorial Park military cemetery, Glenwood High School war memorial, Durban High School Memorial.⁷¹ Durban, like Johannesburg has a vast array of Anglo-Saxon memorials due to KwaZulu Natal being historically under British control and colonial settlement in the former colonial territory of Natal. Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape also has a number of war memorials such as the Cenotaph war memorial and the memorial at Grey High School.⁷²

The Afrikaner people played a part in WWI and have monuments in Afrikaner towns. Although some Afrikaners objected to South Africa's participation in the war, some supported the war under the leadership of Jan Smuts. Monuments such as the cenotaph in Potchefstroom are indications of Afrikaner support of the war as Potchefstroom was a strong Afrikaner heartland and the ideological and intellectual birthplace of apartheid. The cenotaph in Potchefstroom reads: "This memorial is

⁷⁰ Pongrass, I. (2019). "Bez Valley World War I Memorial to Relocate Soon". *Bedford View Edenvale News*. Date Accessed: 20/10/2020. URL: <https://bedfordviewedenvalenews.co.za/411603/bez-valley-world-war-i-memorial-to-relocate-soon/>

⁷¹ Allatsea. (2017). "Durban High School War Memorial". Date Accessed: 20/10/2020. URL: <http://allatsea.co.za/blog/durban-high-school-wm/>

⁷² McClelland, D. (2016). "Port Elizabeth of Yore: Memorials to the Fallen in War". Date Accessed: 20/10/2020. URL: <http://thecasualobserver.co.za/port-elizabeth-yore-memorials-fallen-war/>

erected by the Guild of Loyal Women of Potchefstroom in honour of the officers and men of this town and district who have made the supreme sacrifice for King and Country in the Great War of 1914-1918”.⁷³ Another memorial in Potchefstroom is the National Gunners memorial dedicated to the gunners who lost their lives in WWI and WWII.⁷⁴ Other memorials include the German War Memorial in Pretoria, Krugersdorp and Districts War Memorial, Maraisburg War Memorial in Florida (Johannesburg), Modimolle (Nylstroom) War Memorial, Randfontein War Memorial and the South African Heavy Artillery Memorial in Kimberley. Many Afrikaner monuments are dedicated to the Anglo-Boer War and not necessarily the world wars, often English speaking South Africans erected the world war monuments in predominantly Afrikaner towns.

There has been a push to include African people in mainstream and official commemorations of the two world wars. This add on is a disadvantage because the monuments retain their colonial heritage and just add African names on the roll of honour and change their wording if it did not reflect all South Africans. Monuments and memorials have to be forced to deal with their colonial and imperial architectures of exclusion.⁷⁵ There are however new monuments that have been designed in the post-apartheid era that reflect counter commemoration and a different way of doing things by centering black memorialisation and commemoration of black soldiers alongside their white counterparts in the two world wars.

In Cape Town, we have the Mendi Memorial on the grounds of the University of Cape Town. This was where the 616 troops of the SS Mendi were to spend their last day in South Africa before going aboard the SS Mendi steamship. This monument is: “A sculpture by local artist Madi Phala,

⁷³ Van Vuuren, D. (2015). “Potchefstroom- World War Memorial.” Date Accessed: 20/10/2020. URL: <https://www.boerenbrit.com/archives/2393/dsc09472#main>

⁷⁴ Van Vuuren, D. (2019). “Potchefstroom- SA Gunners Memorial”. Date Accessed: 20/10/2020. URL: <https://www.boerenbrit.com/archives/32561>

⁷⁵ Gribble & Scott, *We Die Like Brothers*. 189.

represents a mock ship's prow cast in heavy metal, sinking into the ground. In front of it are helmets, hats and discs, symbolizing the men, officers and crew of the SS Mendi."⁷⁶ This memorial is important because it traces the trail/footprint of Black South African soldiers before they left the country. Another important monument is the Mendi Memorial at Avalon Cemetery. It has a roll of honour with names honouring those who lost their lives and a garden of remembrance.⁷⁷ It was unveiled in 1995 by Queen Elizabeth II of Britain. The memorial is designed using face bricks as a wall and the names on stone marble on the face brick wall. The Mendi memorial in New Brighton in Port Elizabeth is another important memorialisation as it is situated in a township. The memorial is situated as a cenotaph with a light on top and a garden on the ground. The inscription on the memorial reads:

This memorial was erected to the memory of the servicemen who lost their lives at sea when the troopship SS Mendi foundered near St Catherine's point on the Isle of Wight on 21 February 1917. Their sacrifice shall not be blotted out.⁷⁸

These inscriptions are a reminder of the tragedy and the participation of black soldiers who risked their lives under colonial rule. Another important memorial is the Mendi Memorial in Atteridgeville. A description about the memorial reads:

The memorial, with its poignant figurine by Phil Minaar is a simple yet effective structure, and it encompasses the many servicemen who know no grave but the sea. It was originally intended to unveil the memorial on 18 February 1996, but bad weather caused this date to

⁷⁶ Price, M. (2014). "SS Mendi Memorial Reminds us of Courage, Volunteerism, National Pride". UCT Communications Department.

⁷⁷ Blogging while all at Sea. (2010). "The Mendi Memorial in Avalon Cemetery". Date Accessed: 23/10/2020. URL: <http://allatsea.co.za/blog/memorials-and-monuments/mendi-memorials/mendi-memorial-avalon/>

⁷⁸ Blogging while all at Sea. (2018). "The Mendi Memorial in New Brighton Port Elizabeth". Date Accessed: 23/10/2020. URL: <http://allatsea.co.za/blog/mendi-memorial-in-new-brighton-port-elizabeth/>

be moved to 24 March 1996. The bronze statue is of the upper part of a soldier standing with one hand on the rail of a sinking ship, his other hand and eyes are stretched upwards.⁷⁹

The Mendi memorial in Atteridgeville is an engagement with the past and moves away from neutral memorialisation. It depicts the tragedy and sinking in an African context and moves away from the colonial silence of depicting the heroic bravery and tragedy facing the African soldier. There are other sites around the world in France at the Commonwealth Graves near the Delville Wood museum and memorial. Cemeteries and memorial at Hollybrook memorial in Southampton, the Netherlands and Sussex in England.

The SS Mendi has also spawned different forms of commemoration that can be termed counter commemoration. Like new forms of commemorations after 1994, these commemorations counter the colonial apartheid narrative that often centered the experience and contribution of white soldiers at the expense of black soldiers.⁸⁰ The government has instituted a national order of merit called The Order of the Mendi for bravery⁸¹. It has three categories: Gold, Silver and Bronze. This national order demonstrates careful thinking about indigenous knowledge systems and an Afrocentric way of imagining how African elements fit into a tribute. The Order of the Mendi is given to any member of the public who demonstrates bravery. There are numerous memorialisations, commemorations and digital images and motion pictures commemorating the SS Mendi and showing us how the narrative of the world war commemorations is slowly changing and becoming more inclusive and representative of Africans in South Africa.

⁷⁹Blogging while all at Sea. (2016). "The Mendi Memorial in Atteridgeville". Date Accessed: 23/10/2020. URL: <http://allatsea.co.za/blog/the-mendi-memorial-in-atteridgeville/>

⁸⁰ Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, 167.

⁸¹ The Presidency. (2020). "National Orders of Merit: The Order of the Mendi for Bravery". URL: <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/national-orders/order-mendi-bravery-0>

The concept of counter commemoration is important in enabling us to understand Diturupa as a form of commemoration. I am borrowing the concept from the work of Ali Khangela Hlongwane, an expert on South African heritage. Hlongwane uses the concept of counter commemoration in respect of his work on the June 16, 1976 Soweto Uprising, its commemorations and counter commemorations.⁸² There are official memorial events centred on June 16 such as the government sponsored June 16 trail and the Morris Isaacson June 16 precinct. Counter Commemoration focuses on how different forms of commemorations emerge and contest the narrative, memory and memorialisation of an event such as June 16.⁸³ Counter commemoration also involves protests against the official commemorations such as the ones in spaces like Sharpeville and Marikana who are against massacre tourism as the people in those communities do not see any changes or service delivery in their areas where people converge to commemorate the liberation struggle.⁸⁴ Diturupa is a Counter Commemoration of WWI because it did not gain official government support and recognition at its inception. It was a marginalized event that received support from community members who kept it alive.

Makapanstad as a community has benefitted from the inception of Diturupa in the community since the end of the WWI. It cannot be disputed that Diturupa has brought a renewed sense of community to Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha and neighbouring communities in the Moretele region. It is important to understand the values of Diturupa that entrench a sense of Ubuntu in the community

⁸² Hlongwane, A. (2015). "The Historical Development of the Commemoration of the June 16, 1976 Soweto Students' Uprisings: A study of re-representation, commemoration and collective memory". Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of the Witwatersrand. 9, 17.

⁸³ Hlongwane, A & Ndlovu, SM. (2019). *Public History and Culture in South Africa: Memorialisation and Liberation Heritage Sites in Johannesburg and the Township Space*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 175.

⁸⁴ Alexander, P. (2013). "Marikana, Turning Point in South African History." *Review of African Political Economy* 40 (138): 605

and gives people a renewed sense of pride in the face of socio-economic adversity.⁸⁵ I posit that Diturupa is a marginalised counter commemoration of WWI and WWII. Diturupa is also important because most of the commemorations and counter commemorations of WWI and WWII are often held in urban areas and elite spaces. One must have funds to access spaces like Delville Wood in France. Another important thing about Diturupa as counter commemoration is the fact that it is not a static memorialisation/commemoration but a living counter commemoration as young and old people participate in its construction and reconstruction.

The origins of Diturupa

Diturupa is a name given for a commemoration of the two world wars that happens annually at Makapanstad on the 26th of December. The name Diturupa/Diturupa is a Setswana linguistic appropriation of the English word troop.⁸⁶ It was influenced by the participation of black service men who appropriated and refined what they observed in military regiments and their culture. The fact that Diturupa wear a distinct Scottish kilt or as they say it in Setswana Sekwetshe (scotch) kilt speaks volumes about the inspiration of their military culture.⁸⁷ Military training for black soldiers was often limited and politicised because of the fears of white people in the Union of South Africa who feared an armed insurrection/mutiny from black soldiers.⁸⁸ Another influence on Diturupa is the proliferation of European colonial culture and military culture in the Union of South Africa that was often paternalistic and based on a civilising mission.⁸⁹ Another influence on Diturupa was the annual black commemoration of WWI called Mendi Memorial Day that was held annually on

⁸⁵ Nephalela, E. (2015). "Trupa keeping the kids off the streets". *Moretele Times Community Newspaper*. Date Accessed: 21 July 2020. URL: <file:///205/Trupa%20keeping%20the%20kids%20off%20the%20streets%20-%20Moretele%20Times.htm#.X5pUYHWxXIU>

⁸⁶ Mudzingwa, E & Ledwaba, L. (2017). *Troupes of War: Diturupa*. Johannesburg: MYA Productions.

⁸⁷ Hyslop, J. "South Africa and Scotland in the First World War". In D. Forsyth and W. Ugolini (Eds). (2016). *A Global Force: War, Identities and Scotland's Diaspora*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 150.

⁸⁸ Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, 38.

⁸⁹ Magubane, *The making of a racist state*, 49.

the 21st of February each year starting in 1928. The Mendi Memorial day unlike Diturupa, was more urban and politicised. Mendi Day was a call to commemorate and celebrate black men who served in WWI:

Held in many centres, sometimes addressed by prominent white guests. A typical Mendi day could include a march past, speeches, a war dance, music from visiting bands, besides the religious ceremony. For more than fifty years, the occasion took place, but as these men of the contingent faded away, so too did these ceremonies.⁹⁰

Mendi Memorial Day was initially a liberal affair but was later politicized by leaders such as AB Xuma as they felt that blacks were still being marginalised in the Union of South Africa. It was held in Johannesburg and had close to 2000 black people in attendances. The speech by white government officials were often a counter balance to their black radical counterparts who were yearning for freedom.⁹¹ The Mendi Memorial day is an important contrast and compliment to this research on Diturupa. Although Diturupa does not have an official archive in the 1920s, we find that the Mendi Memorial day has because it was addressed by elite government officials and African leaders. It also has some of the key features of Diturupa such as commemoration, military parades and performances. In my own observation, Diturupa and Mendi Memorial Day are part of efforts in the 1920s to commemorate black people who have participated in WWI.

Diturupa happens in December and is linked to the festive season. As koko (Grandmother) Mokete Sepeng an elderly grandmother who works with the royal family and has participated in Diturupa since the 1950s attests:

⁹⁰ Clothier, *Black Valour*, 174.

⁹¹ Grundlingh, "Mutating Memories and the Making of a Myth," 25.

Diturupa is a Christmas from the Sekgatlha culture. Trupa came with our grandfathers from the war (World War One). They got it from the Scottish. When they came back from the war, they were wearing Scottish Kilts. They drilled for Kgosi Seaparankwe (1904-1966). They did it until it became popular. The WWII made it more popular.⁹²

One of the reasons why Diturupa found resonance in Christmas was the fact that the festive season allowed migrants to come home and be part of the commemoration.⁹³ Seeing the white soldiers on parade had a profound impact on black soldiers. They then decided to emulate and appropriate what they saw in their own homes and context. According to Mr. Ranyawa who is a member of the Makapanstad community and one of the organisers of Diturupa:

During World War One, the government took soldiers in different occupations such as cooks, cleaners, runners etc. In the war you do not fight every day, you have breaks. Many people were impressed with Scottish activities when they were wearing Scottish Kilts and drilling in their uniform. They did this in particular during Armistice Day when the WWI ended on the 11th day of the 11th hour of the 11th month.⁹⁴

Military parades and victory drills formed the inspiration and backbone for Diturupa in its inception. The Scottish kilt became famous in the Limpopo and North West region after the Bapedi-

⁹² Interview with Mokete Sepeng by Mojuta Motlhamme. Mosate Section, Makapanstad. (2019).

⁹³ Bruinders, S. (2012). “Parading Respectability: An Ethnography of the Christmas Bands Movement in the Western Cape, South Africa.” Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. 185. Delius, P, Phillips, L & Rankin-Smith, F (Eds). (2014). *A Long Way Home: Migrant Worker Worlds 1800-2014*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. David Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals: The Word Music of South Africa's Basotho Migrants* (Chicago, 1994). Bozzoli, B with M. Nkotsoe, (1991). *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983*. Portsmouth: Heinemann. Maloka, E (2004). *Basotho and the Mines. A Social History of Labour Migrancy in Lesotho and South Africa, c.1890-1940*. Dakar: CODESRIA. Bonner, P. (1990). “Desirable or Undesirable Basotho Women? Liquor, Prostitution and the Migration of Basotho Women to the Rand, 1920-1945”, in C. Walker (Ed.). *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers. 221.

⁹⁴ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

Boer and British War of 1877. It alleged that Bapedi regiments saw a Scottish regiment wearing kilts and did not attack and thus lost the war.⁹⁵ Bapedi were also inspired by going to the Two World Wars and have incorporated the Scottish Kilt into Kiba dance and performance. Scottish culture in South Africa crystallized in the 1820s as a lot of Scottish people immigrated to South Africa and brought with them military and cultural elements.⁹⁶

Diturupa must also be seen as originating primarily as a living cultural activity. According to Lucas Ledwaba, a journalist who grew up in Makapanstad:

Diturupa is a culture derived from the participation of African men in World War I and II. It's made up of ensembles that dress up in military uniforms and conduct military style drills in celebration of those who returned from the war alive and to commemorate those who did not return.⁹⁷

We must remember that Diturupa is located in culture because in essence it is about elaborate military parades mixing with African culture in a rural community.⁹⁸ Another important observation here is the commemoration of those who did not return. Indigenous knowledge systems tells us about reincarnation and rebirth in African culture as symbolized by the relationship people have with their ancestors.⁹⁹

Another link as to where Diturupa originates, is from Professor Masoga who did research on Diturupa says that Diturupa came from a military parade in 1922 that saw General Jan Smuts saluting the troops. He says that Black South Africans in the audience took the military band music and

⁹⁵ James, D. (1990). "Mmino wa Setso: songs of town and country and the experience of Migrancy by men and women from the northern Transvaal." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: Wits University. 116-7.

⁹⁶ Hyslop, "South Africa and Scotland in the First World War". 150.

⁹⁷ Interview with Lucas Ledwaba, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Email, 26 September 2020.

⁹⁸ Nasson, 'Delville Wood', 85.

⁹⁹ Odora-Hoppers, *Indigenous Knowledge*, 34.

recreated it in their own context. According to Ntate Ratlhagane from Majaneng in Hammanskraal who has participated in Diturupa since the 1940s:

Diturupa started when we were in Pretoria and watched the army marshal in honour of Prime Minister Jan Smuts. I still recall the day - a day full of activities, marching, gun salutes, clapping of hands, black women from the periphery ululating in honour of 'heroes' - we watched and heard gun salutes - noises of bravery. Among these 'heroes' were Scottish armies - wearing the reddish and, for that matter, stylish Scottish costume - they had pipes, lyres, drums and skirts - Scottish skirts [kilts] - what a colourful event that was. We, the audience, were impressed to the extent that we wanted to start such performances in our local villages. We wanted to show our local fellows back home that a lot was taking place in Pretoria – the honour of seeing the prime minister of the country and his powerful army was something. We could not avoid sharing this knowledge with our local communities. Upon arriving back at our respective local communities we began recruiting performers - schoolchildren - we even went to the king's great place to request permission to stage such performances. The response from the king's great place was positive on condition that we had to start performing in the great place before showcasing ourselves to the entire village. We immediately started with our musical performance practices and created flags to identify ourselves with, gathered a group of responsible elders to act as guides to the children.¹⁰⁰

I do not disagree with this interpretation and find it enriching as adding to the archive and contested origins of Diturupa. One of the lessons from this narrative shows us that Diturupa does not have a singular narrative of only originating in the world wars but was also influenced by local military

¹⁰⁰ Masoga, M. (2004) "Scottish troops, Sekhwetshe and Turupa: Indigenising the West." *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa*, 1:1, 60-70, DOI: 10.1080/18125980408529732. 64.

parades which had a Scottish regiment. It is also important to acknowledge Diturupa as a regional phenomenon that does not necessarily belong to one ethnic group or geopolitical entity.

Another interpretation is from Ntate Mohalanyane who works in the Moretele Local Municipality. He says that Diturupa come from a historical area of the Bahwaduba named Mapakong.¹⁰¹ This was the only information he was able to relate upon further probe. Although it is just a snippet, you will find every community that participates in Diturupa creating their own Diturupa origin narrative to cement their involvement and cultural heritage. Even Diturupa from Makapanstad will arguably tell you that Diturupa originates from their village. As Mrs. Matlala, a resident of Mmaudu section and leader of Sefikantsoe Trupa attests:

Diturupa started when our grandfathers went to the World War I. when they won the war and saw Scotch (kilt) and decided to bring it back home to Makapanstad and show respect to Kgosi Makapan.¹⁰²

The importance of coming back to showcase what soldiers had learnt on the battlefield was important and is testified in the archives by figures such as George Mathibe who says to Koos Matli that:

Koos we are about to die, but one of us will live to tell at home how members of our community had died with the ship Mendi. But I hope it will be you so that you will be able to relate the story.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Interview with Mr. Mogalanyane by M Motlhamme. Moretele local Municipality. 24 March 2020.

¹⁰² Interview with Eveline Matlala by Mojuta Motlhamme. Makapanstad. March 2020.

¹⁰³ Clothier. *Black Valour*. 56.

The fact that George and Koos Mathibe came from Mathibestad which is 8 kilometers from Makapanstad tells us volumes about the influence of WWI in the origins and influences of Diturupa.¹⁰⁴ Instead of just telling the story in oral tradition, Diturupa incorporates the narratives of the world wars and black soldiers into performance which will be discussed in the next chapter.

If we are to write a proper history of Diturupa, then one has to realise its colonial roots, entanglements and ambiguities. A different view is taken by Patrick Motsinoni who contends that: “Diturupa is a reminder of imperialism. How the whites used us for their wars. I see oppression”.¹⁰⁵ This view is interesting in the sense that it was the only person I interviewed who located Diturupa in a culture of imperialism.¹⁰⁶ This goes to what Magubane argues that we cannot locate culture outside politics as politics influences our cultural elements.¹⁰⁷ This view needs to be read with sobriety as Black soldiers were not passive recipients of British and European culture but were able to learn and adapt the cultural symbolism they saw to their own material and cultural style and benefits.¹⁰⁸

Would Diturupa exist without soldiers having gone to serve the British Empire? It is an emphatic no, since Diturupa are in part a consequence and appropriation of what black soldiers saw on the world war frontlines and local military parades.¹⁰⁹ Diturupa is also a consequence of imperial hegemony over the local populace by settler colonialists who entrenched power by 1910.¹¹⁰ The

¹⁰⁴ Masoga, “Scottish Troops,” 61.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Patrick Motsinoni, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹⁰⁶ Page, M, & Sonnenburg, P. (2003). *Colonialism: An International Social, Cultural, and Political Encyclopedia*. Oxford: ABC Clío. 545.

¹⁰⁷ Magubane, B. (1971). “A Critical Look at Indices Used in the Study of Social Change in Colonial Africa”. *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 12, No. 4/5 (Oct. - Dec., 1971). 419.

¹⁰⁸ Masoga, “Scottish Troops,” 67.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 64. Ledwaba, L. (2013). “Diturupa, a celebration of life”. *City Press*. Address: <https://www.news24.com/Archives/City-Press/Diturupa-a-celebration-of-life-20150429>

¹¹⁰ Magubane, *The Making of a Racist State*, 67. Dubow, S. *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa 1919-1936*. London: Macmillan. 23.

likelihood of soldiers participating in marches and drills would have been minimal as the SA Native Labour Contingency was not a military trained unit but a labour force of volunteers from the different ethnic groups of Black South Africans.¹¹¹ Diturupa represents a mocking of military traditions and culture as it allows participants to carry guns and wear elaborate military attire; while the reality is that the majority of Black South African soldiers experienced tragedy, racial discrimination and were only allowed to carry spears and work as labourers on the battlefield.¹¹²

Another point is that this appropriation is blood stained due to the fact that black soldiers had a tragedy when the SS Mendi sank in 1916 on the French channel.¹¹³ Although Diturupa does not have any water-based rituals and actions to mimic the sinking of the Mendi; the performance by soldiers in Diturupa are performed as victorious and gallant heroes who serve their country with pride and determination.

Another issue is that soldiers who returned from the war were given a raw deal with regards to compensation for war veterans. Black soldiers were abandoned by colonial governments who paid out handsome rewards to white soldiers.¹¹⁴ White soldiers were given arable farmland, money to pay for school fees, monuments were laid down in their honour and medals were conferred on them. For Black soldiers, they received a pair of boots, jacket and bicycle for their efforts.¹¹⁵ In the USA, black soldiers who participated in the two World Wars were subject to racist Jim Crow laws when they returned home.¹¹⁶ In Makapanstad, the chief, Seaparankwe Makapan gave fields to returning veterans such as Ntate Takadi.¹¹⁷ This is a little told story that shows how African

¹¹¹ Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, ix-x.

¹¹² Killingray, D with Plaut, M. (2010). *Fighting for Britain*, 70.

¹¹³ Gribble & Scott, *We Die like Brothers*, 101.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. 184. Mohlamme, "Soldiers Without Reward".

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Lentz-Smith, A. (2009). *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I*. 38.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Lencoe Makapan, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 March 2020 (Translated).

communities, where they could, did honour their own heroes by constructing their own commemorations and rewarding their own community members who were shunned by the government which gave them a pair of boots, a coat and a bicycle.¹¹⁸

The politics of appropriation are very important for us when thinking about the ways in which Bakgatlha were able to take British and Scottish military culture and adapt it to their own popular culture.¹¹⁹ If they saw British soldiers paying homage to King George V, then Diturupa appropriates this act by seeing participants going to Mosate (royal Headquarters) to pay homage and tribute to the Kgosi of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha during the annual Diturupa event. This is an interesting contrast since King George and Kgosi Makapan represent two different cultures and societies.

Although Diturupa adds a layer of new identity and influences on the culture of BaKgatlha ba Mosetlha, it is not a totalising approach. The nuance of Diturupa is that it is influenced by the culture of Ba Mosetlha and they have turned it into their own cultural repertoire.¹²⁰ This will be demonstrated in the next chapter how colonial military traditions and Bakgatlha traditions come together to create an iconography of performance associated with Diturupa where tradition and modernity converge.

It is a difficult assessment to make on racial identity and its impact on Diturupa. The one mind boggling thing about Diturupa is that it was not institutionalized or used politically by the ruling classes of the day. According to Koko Mokete Sepeng a veteran elder of Diturupa:

¹¹⁸ Moloi, V & Wes, E. (2007). *A Pair of Boots and a Bicycle: The Story of Job Maseko*. Rare Earth Films.

¹¹⁹ Barber, K. (2018). *A History of African Popular Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 132.

¹²⁰ Masoga, "Scottish Troops," 67.

Apartheid was there, but it did not affect Diturupa. In the past, white farmers from Pienaars-rivier used to come, we were scared of them¹²¹

The fact that at some stage white farmers used to attend shows the regional attraction of Diturupa and how at some stage it bypassed the racial tensions that were prevalent in the country. The fear of the white farmer is invoked and shows that the performance could not achieve a racial utopia and that the white farmer in rural villages had a notorious reputation and was feared by community members as they were not in daily interaction with white people.¹²² Perhaps the key element of Diturupa is that it never caught on with the mainstream of white apartheid South Africa which could have meant that Diturupa might have been used as a tool of apartheid oppression or used to pacify blacks.¹²³ Diturupa is a purely black event and has never caught the excitement of the surrounding white community.¹²⁴ One reason could be that it's held on Boxing Day, Another reason could be that it is held in a village. Diturupa is open to everyone but it is still comprised of black villagers from Makapanstad and other neighbouring black communities in the greater Moretele region. It is quite perplexing that Diturupa was inspired by European culture but white settlers in South Africa were/are not interested in it. This can be attributed to the history of settler colonialism in South Africa and the devastating impact of apartheid on black communities.¹²⁵ South Africa, unlike the Southern States of the USA, had a serious obsession with racial contact, while in the

¹²¹Interview with Mokete Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹²² Dubow, S. (2014). *Apartheid, 1948–1994*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 101.

¹²³ Grundlingh, “Mutating Memories and the Making of a Myth,” 25.

¹²⁴ Interview with Bishop Mosipa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹²⁵ Dubow, *Apartheid*, 32.

USA, social contact between blacks and whites was not the central preoccupation of racial legislation.¹²⁶

Historicizing Diturupa

The Early Years 1918-1966

In its early years Diturupa was not a competition style format. It was centered on commemoration and saw many of the participants in WWI coming to Mosate and showing the chief what they had learnt on the battlefield. In the early years, Diturupa was based on custom and cultural obligations as espoused by Rakgadi Ntebeng Makapan, a daughter of Kgosi Seaparankwe who said:

When we were growing up in the 1950s, we would come to clean the fields in the Mosate royal yard. All the Trupa groups would come clean the field. The troops of today have changed.¹²⁷

This shows us how in the 1950s Diturupa was also used as a form of community service as members would come and clean the royal yard before the annual Diturupa commemorations and during the year.¹²⁸ The concept of go “tamisha kgosi”/”go locha ko kgosing” and “go dumedisa kgosi” (greeting the chief) was central to the early years of Diturupa. The reason why this was central was that during the world wars, the chiefs would be the ones who would recruit men from their mephato (military regiments) for the war effort.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Frederickson, G. (1981). *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study of American and South African History*. New York: Oxford University Press. 239.

¹²⁷ Interview with Rantebeng Makapan, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹²⁸ Oomen, B. (2005). *Chiefs in South Africa: Law, Power & Culture in the Post-Apartheid Era*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 87. Geschiere, P. (2018). “African Chiefs and the Post– Cold War Moment: Millennial Capitalism and the Struggle over Moral Authority”. In J Comaroff and J Comaroff (Eds). *The Politics of Custom: Chiefship, Capital, and the State in Contemporary Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp 49.

¹²⁹ Clothier, *Black Valour*. 35.

WWII saw Diturupa becoming a popular activity and growing in stature. With the support of Kgosi Hendrik Mathibe Makapan, Diturupa became a major cultural activity in the Moretele region.¹³⁰ Hendrik Mathibe was a big supporter of Diturupa and was a Kgosi who would slaughter cows and make sure that Diturupa participants are well taken care of when they came to Mosate to perform for the royal family.¹³¹ The eager participation of Kgosi Makapan meant that Diturupa would become an institutionalised cultural asset to the community of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha.¹³²

The early years of Diturupa crystallised the material culture of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha and European colonial influences to bring a syncretic culture of Diturupa. Diturupa in Makapanstad is based on sectional affinities located in geography. A section is defined as an area where people form a close knit community and have historical ties and are coordinated by Dikgosana/Bakgomana (headmen/traditional leaders in villages).¹³³ People from a particular section let's say Mmekwa would form their own Trupa. Using sections, it is easier to manage a Trupa group because the members come from a defined area and everyone from that section knows each other and attends funerals, customs, and weddings of each other.¹³⁴ The early years of Diturupa was symbolised by the fact that the material cultural artefacts of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha was in vogue. Traditional drums, whistles, clothing, and attire were in high abundance.

¹³⁰ Interview with Bishop Mosipa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated). Interview with Daniel Mashimong, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Interview with Madikoatla Mareme, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmekwa Section, North West Province, 23 March 2020 (Translated). Interview with Lencoe Makapan, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 March 2020 (Translated).

¹³³ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated) Letebele, "Customs, Beliefs, and Christianity," 26. Mabokela, "Women of Makapanstad". 37.

¹³⁴ Interview with Madikoatla Mareme, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmekwa Section, North West Province, 23 March 2020 (Translated). Mabokela, "Women of Makapanstad," 70.

Diturupa and its heyday 1967-1993

Diturupa reached its zenith in the late 60s and early 1970s. This was when Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha were under the leadership of Kgosi Thipe Makapan, the son of the late Kgosi Hendrik Makapan. This saw Diturupa move from being a cultural event for returning war veterans but become a community wide participatory event. What was interesting about this period is that war veterans joined ordinary members in doing the drills and marches. According to Frans Chabangu from Klipgat who participated in Diturupa as a young child recalls:

The really enjoyable moment of Diturupa was when the war veterans would join the parades. They would troop as if reminiscing about the war and their actions on the battlefronts. It was a sight to behold and unforgettable. They would Trupa as if they were real soldiers facing their opponents.¹³⁵

These reminiscences are part of the Diturupa cultural edifice and remembering of the past. Diturupa of yesterday was a collaboration between community members and war veterans. Diturupa groups were being formed in large numbers. They were based on family kinship ties. Mmekwa Trupa, Sefikantsoe Trupa and Special Springbok go back to this era of Diturupa and can be seen in their cultural capital as one of the oldest and most established Diturupa groups going back to the 1950s and 1960s.¹³⁶ Their cultural capital includes having a history of being the oldest Diturupa, having a proper storage location for their equipment and winning most Diturupa competitions.

¹³⁵ Interview with Frans Chabangu, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹³⁶ Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War*.

The 1980s introduced a different perspective to Diturupa. Diturupa as an event was responding to events happening on a national scale. Some participants went to join the armed struggle. Makapanstad was part of Bophuthatswana, which was also a highly militarized state that dealt swiftly with political dissent.¹³⁷ According to Mme M Sepeng, a teacher and one of the members of Matla a Sechaba group that organises Diturupa:

The apartheid era was difficult for most black people. We were lucky to be in the former Bophuthatswana. It allowed us some freedoms that we did not get when we went to Pretoria. Diturupa allowed us a chance to forget the crippling apartheid that was happening in the country. The advent of television and technology meant that we were now exposed to international fashion trends and incorporated them into our Trupa groups.¹³⁸

New groups were formed and they brought with them a change from cultural orientation to modern and funky of the 1980s. These modern groups perfected the modern cattle drum and came with a different mindset to Diturupa. If the Diturupa in the 40s and 60s observed custom and tradition, Diturupa in the 1980s was flamboyant and boisterous. It became a social event on the calendar of the Moretele region. It attracted people from different ethnic backgrounds such as the amaNdebele, Bapedi, vaTsonga and other communities in the wider former Transvaal region. New fashion such as jeans, styled t shirts, and different footwear beside the famed boots were brought in. The legendary kilt was experimented upon and new colourful iterations were brought about from the usual red and white colours.

¹³⁷ Ntsoane, O with Ndlovu, S. (2015). *Batswana and the Liberation Struggle: Pipelines, Thornbushes and Resistance*. Pretoria: Kitso Ya Setso Publishers. 173.

¹³⁸ Mabokela, "Women of Makapanstad," 74. Interview with Lerato Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

Decline and Rejuvenation 1994-2018

The early years of the transition saw Diturupa go through a decline as people found new forms of entertainment. In the 1990s age of Kwaito, Diturupa saw a major decline in membership, participation and interest from the community.¹³⁹ According to Mmankitseng Malebye, a participant in Diturupa:

The 1990s was a difficult time as many young people lost interest in Diturupa. As you know, young people are the engines of Diturupa and without their participation, it simply isn't the same and loses the intergenerational appeal. Diturupa in the 1990s was also poorly organized and not funded by the government.¹⁴⁰

This could be attributed to the fact that the Group Areas Act and Influx control was rescinded by the Apartheid government and saw people move into the urban metropolises and found new forms of entertainment.¹⁴¹ The 1990s saw the demise of the Bophuthatswana regime and democracy was thrust upon rural populations who were no longer under the central control of chiefs and traditional laws as like before.¹⁴² Diturupa groups such as Mmekwa kept the flag flying even when Diturupa was not a popular event.

In the early 2000s, Diturupa went through renewal and rejuvenation. A new effort to organize and formalize the event was conceptualized. A group of professionals in Makapanstad called Matla a Sechaba came forth and started raising funds to lift the spirit of Diturupa and make it into the tour

¹³⁹ Ndabeni, E & Mthembu, S. (2018). *Born To Kwaito: Reflections on the Kwaito Generation*. Johannesburg: Blackbird Books. Steingo, G. (2016). *Kwaito's promise: music and the aesthetics of freedom in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1. Livermon, X. (2020). *Kwaito Bodies: Remastering Space and Subjectivity in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Durham: Duke University Press.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Mmankitseng Malebye, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹⁴¹ Dubow, *Apartheid*, 226.

¹⁴² Ntsebeza, L. (2005). *Democracy Compromised: Chiefs and the politics of the land in South Africa*. Leiden: Brill Publishers. 274.

de force that we see today.¹⁴³ Working with the Moretele Local municipality and the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha traditional council saw a new effort to professionalise and make Diturupa attractive to different facets of South African society. Diturupa became fashionable as well due to its good story link to the African renaissance that was in vogue in 2000s South Africa under the Mbeki administration that sought to valorize black contribution to the country.¹⁴⁴ Diturupa in its revival started spreading to other communities in the Moretele trans-provincial region. Spaces such as Phake, Tshikanoshi, Marapyane, Nokaneng, Lefiso, Hammanskraal, Lebotloane, and Seabe started having their own Diturupa competitions and commemorations.¹⁴⁵

Diturupa grew from strength to strength in the early 2010s to the 2020s. the new age availability of technology means that Diturupa is part of mainstream digital consciousness and can be found on platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook. Diturupa is now considered an important cultural heritage of the Moretele region. Television and radio and newspaper reports are abound yearly about this event. Performances attract over 30 000 supporters in Makapanstad. Diturupa is one of the cultural tourist attractions of the Moretele Local Municipality and the North West province. Participants wear fashion inspired by global trends and often place their Trupa identity in accordance with what influences them. Diturupa was unfortunately cancelled in 2020 due to the Covid 19 epidemic. In a statement from the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha Royal Council:

¹⁴³ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated). Interview with Mokete Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹⁴⁴ Makgoba, M. (1999). *African renaissance: The new struggle*. Cape Town: Tafelberg. Diop, C. (2000). *Towards the African Renaissance: Essays in African Culture and Development, 1946-1960*. Dakar: Presence Africaine. 23.

¹⁴⁵ Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War*. Masoga. "Scottish Troops," 63.

We issued out notices to leaders of Diturupa to tell them that there won't be any of such activities taking place this year because of the global pandemic and the lock down that was announced by the President. We postponed the gathering to 2021.¹⁴⁶

In the past it was cancelled if a chief had passed on.¹⁴⁷ We will have to see what the new decade has instore for Diturupa. Diturupa forms an integral part of the identity of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha. It is the biggest cultural event to grace the calendar in the Moretele region on an annual basis. As Ledwaba, a journalist who grew up in Makapanstad attests:

I would say for a culture that has survived for almost a century, Diturupa has become an integral part of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha identity. It has given both young and old a sense of pride, something they feel that they own and represents who they are and their community's contribution to world history. So one could argue that it forms part of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha's cultural history and identity.¹⁴⁸

Diturupa allows Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha to stake their claim to world history. It entrenches Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha into a global history of warfare, colonialism, tragedy and victory on the frontlines. Although this story is ambiguous, it forms part of the consciousness and identity of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha in Makapanstad. Afrocentric theory speaks of a consciousness of victory that does not wallow in static victimhood when analyzing African history.¹⁴⁹ This perfectly fits the community of Makapanstad and their neighbours in the Moretele region who have not allowed

¹⁴⁶ Page 3 Reporter. "Makapanstad Traditional Council: "Small businesses will also suffer but we have to save lives, no Ditrupa this year." *Page Online News*. Date Accessed: 29 December 2020. URL: <https://page3online-news.co.za/makapanstad-traditional-council-small-businesses-will-also-suffer-but-we-have-to-save-lives-no-ditrupa-this-year/>

¹⁴⁷ Masoga, "Scottish Troops". 65.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Lucas Ledwaba, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Email, 26 September 2020.

¹⁴⁹ Asante, *The Afrocentric Manifesto*, 60.

their blood stained tears and history of subjugation, colonialism, and dispossession to be the only narrative about their community but forge their own path of a victorious consciousness and be part of the human story of commemorating WWI and WWII. In African countries, WWII is known as a war that brought political consciousness and laid down the seeds of anti-colonial resistance. This thesis aims to contribute to the scholarship of postwar studies and how war impacted societies. The argument here seeks to broaden the thinking about the war and the African continent. Diturupa here proves for us that it was not only political consciousness that came to the fore but cultural consciousness as evinced by Diturupa cultural festival.

Chapter Four: Performance and Material Culture in Diturupa

Nothing dramatises the eagerness of the African to communicate with each other more than their love for song and rhythm. Music in the African culture features in all emotional states. ... Battle songs were a feature of the long march to war in the olden days ... In other words with Africans, music and rhythm were not luxuries but part and parcel of our way of communication. Any suffering we experienced was made much more real by song and rhythm. There is no doubt that the so-called “Negro-Spirituals” sung by Black slaves in the States as they toiled under oppression were indicative of their African heritage.¹

Performances are African not because they display a preponderance of indigenous elements, but because Africans have chosen to perform them.²

The 26th of December in Makapanstad is about the performance and display of Diturupa material culture. Diturupa is essentially about marching, singing and drilling in a coordinated and spontaneous manner.³ This happens through using a drum to guide dancing and body rhythm. The drills are identical and different to the ones being done by military parades depending on the Trupa group performing.⁴ It is influenced by African dance fusing it with western military dance routines.⁵

The quotation above by Steve Biko tells us a lot about how song and dance are embedded in the African psyche and socio cultural space. Music, dance and rhythm are part of the everyday and

¹ Biko (1978). *I Write what I Like*. London: Heinemann. 43.

² Coplan, D. (2008). *In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre*. London: University of Chicago Press. 5.

³ Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War: Diturupa*. Masoga. “Scottish Troops,” 62. Interview with Johannes Lehutso, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

⁴ Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War*.

⁵ Welsh Asante, K. (2004). *African Dance*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers. 98.

not only reserved for the spectacle in African performance.⁶ Music and dance is part of the African DNA and needs to be understood as a political statement reflecting the times and context of the society at that moment. Coplan echoes the sentiment that Africans were not just passive receivers of colonial performances but have turned them into an African repertoire by choosing to perform them.⁷

This chapter focuses on material culture and performance in Diturupa. It is a key chapter of this work as the key elements that constitute Diturupa are to be found in it. Material culture focuses on the equipment and instruments used to make Diturupa what it is and how these equipment's come together as western and African elements. Performance is read as a symbiotic mixture between African indigenous elements and Western elements coming together to create this performative showpiece.⁸ The key findings of this chapter elucidate that Diturupa material culture is influenced by black soldiers who went to participate in WWI and brought back home these influences. Another key finding is that Diturupa performers commemorate and reconstruct the performance according to their own context and cultural influences. Another key finding is that a lot of the music of Diturupa is centred on local indigenous songs that have deep meanings for the community. Diturupa is centred on the Scottish kilt as a unique symbol of its identity and performance. Diturupa like most other performances has a gendered element between men and women that often changes depending on context.

The literature on performance in South African societies is important in helping us ground this study and its contribution. Studies on Kiba have shown us how Bapedi/Northern Sotho villagers and migrants in the Limpopo province use this dance form to preserve and negotiate their identity.

⁶ Ibid, 29.

⁷ Coplan, *In Township Tonight*, 5.

⁸ Masoga. "Scottish Troops," 65.

Studies on Kiba have highlighted the importance of oral praise poetry, songs composed by Kiba participants and the use of the Scottish kilt as part of Kiba material culture. James has shown how Kiba becomes a symbol of identity for migrants from Sekhukhune and other North Sotho communities such as Ga Matlala, Ga Mphahlele, and so on.⁹ Kiba and Diturupa share similar material culture but is influenced by different contexts and localities. Whereas Kiba remains about Basotho/Bapedi cultural formulation; Diturupa becomes a creolized identity between local culture and European military culture. Whereas Kiba has spawned numerous genres and sub cultures; Diturupa remains rooted in its core element of rural based constituency across the Moretele trans-provincial region.

Musicology scholars have written extensively about black music in South Africa. The work of Veit Erlmann, David Coplan and Denis Constant Martin are a case in point. These scholars point to the fact that music in South Africa has been influenced by and influenced global musical trends.¹⁰ This study seeks to contribute to global music cultures and ethnomusicological studies by showing the impact of Diturupa and its performance and how it adds to performance in a global black diaspora.

Carnivals and festival parades in different societies have a vast literature that is very relevant to this study. These festivals and carnivals are often part of cultural identity and heritage that gives a community a sense of pride in spite of oppressive political regimes of slavery, imperialism and

⁹ T. (2017). Sepedi Oral Poetry With Reference To Kiba Traditional Dance of South Africa. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: Rhodes University. Mapaya, M. 2014. "Indigenous African Music: A Descriptive Analysis of Mmino wa Setšo from a Northern Sotho Perspective," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 5(20), pp. 2211-2215.

¹⁰ Erlmann, (1999). *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination: South and the West*. New York: Oxford University Press. Denis-Constant, M. (2013). *Sounding the Cape: Music, Identity and Politics in South Africa*. Somerset West: African Minds Publishers. Mojapelo, M. (2009). *Beyond Memory: Recording the History, Moments and Memories of South African Music*. Somerset West: African Minds.

settler colonialism.¹¹ This study seeks to make a contribution to carnivalesque performances from a rural working class community whereas most of the carnival communities are in urban and elite spaces.¹² Like the literature on carnival festivals around the black diaspora, this study seeks to also understand and analyse the socio-political dynamics in the community and not only see a cultural activity as being devoid of context and history.¹³

The Material Culture of Diturupa

Material culture is the equipment, clothing and environmental products used during Diturupa and their symbolic meaning and interpretation.¹⁴ Material culture plays a key role in decoding the cultural constitutive elements of Diturupa and can show us change over time and how people at particular moments and times perform and create identities in Diturupa. Setswana traditional cultural elements have influenced Diturupa from its inception. Here one is talking about drums, animal hides, horns, praise poetry, songs, and clothes like *Jeremane* (Setswana Wedding Cloth).¹⁵ Although the returning Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha WWI veterans came back with influences from Europe, Setswana cultural elements and language have played a key role in sustaining Diturupa and making it the popular event it is today. Material culture is a key feature of Diturupa as it adds to the aesthetics and rhythm of the event. It is difficult to imagine and construct Diturupa outside of its immediate material cultural context.

¹¹ Constant-Martin, D. (1999). *Coon Carnival: New Year in Cape Town, Past and Present*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers. St. Bernard, Asha L. (2015). "Happiest People Alive: An Analysis of Class and Gender in the Trinidad Carnival." Unpublished Master's Thesis: University of Western Ontario. Dewis, A. (2014). *Carnival Performance Aesthetics: Trinidad Carnival and Art Making in the Diaspora*. PHD Thesis: Cardiff University.

¹² Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa*, 37.

¹³ Magubane, "A Critical Look at Indices", 420.

¹⁴ Woodward, I. (2007). *Understanding Material Culture*. London: Sage. 23.

¹⁵ Pilane, G. (2002). "An Analysis of the Construction of Tswana Cultural Identity in Selected Tswana Literary Texts". Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: North West University. 28. Mothoagae, I. (2014) *An Exercise of Power as Epistemic Racism and Privilege: The Subversion of Tswana Identity, Souls*, 15.



Figure 9: Members of a Trupa group beating kettle drums in Makapanstad. Kettledrums are western drums that are popular across many Diturupa groups as they are easily available and easier to use.¹⁶

Drums are an important part of Diturupa. Drums play an integral part in the rhythm and sound of Diturupa. Drums play an important role in African societies with regards to customs, performance, and rituals. In the Kaapse Klopse, drums called *Ghoemas* are important for a successful minstrel carnival in Cape Town on New Year's Day.¹⁷ In Setswana societies, drums are used to heal during the *malopo* ancestral ceremony, they are also used during *lekgotla* (meetings), they are also used during *bogwera* (initiation), they are also used by *seepamaru* (rainmakers) during a rainmaking ceremony and during community events such as *letsema* (planting) and *dikgafela* (harvesting).¹⁸

¹⁶ Nkwanyana, D. (2018). "World Class Choreography I witnessed in Makapanstad". Photograph. Date Accessed: 27/01/2021. URL: <https://twitter.com/LaDumezulu/status/1077979402384932865/photo/4>

¹⁷ Constant-Martin, *Coon Carnival*, 21.

¹⁸ Landau, P. (1993). When Rain Falls: Rainmaking and Community in a Tswana Village, c. 1870 to Recent Times. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 26(1), 1-30. Doi: 10.2307/219185. 11. Mothoagae, I. (2018). "The reordering of the Batswana Cosmology in the 1840 English-Setswana New Testament". *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 74(1), 4786. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4786>. 2.

There are two types of drums used in Diturupa performance traditional and modern. The traditional cowhide drum known as *moropa wa letlalo* in Setswana that plays alongside a *Tempedi*, a Setswana musical instrument which uses a stick to play on a metal surface and produces a particular and distinct sound that attracts public attention. At the start of Diturupa in the 1920s, *moropa wa letlalo* (cowhide drum) was used. According to Ntate Ranyawa:

We are trying to preach that our grandfathers used traditional methods in Diturupa but we cannot stop young people from using kettle drums. Most Trupa groups stick to what they know best between tradition and modernity.¹⁹

We can see the dialectical tension between modernity and tradition in the way it is felt that if the traditional drum is phased out then Diturupa loses a sort of authentic cultural feel for the elders.²⁰



Figure 10: A Traditional drum known as *moropa wa letlalo* in Setswana is the original drum used in Diturupa performances since the 1920s.²¹

¹⁹ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

²⁰ Suriano, M. (2011) "Making the Modern: Contestations over Muziki wa Dansi in Tanganyika, ca. 1945–1961." *African Studies*, 70:3, 393–414, DOI: 10.1080/00020184.2011.628800. 394.

²¹ Motlhamme, M. (2020). "Traditional Drum Photograph".



Figure 11: The author holding a Tempedi (Setswana musical instrument). It is a popular instrument made of metal and animal skin and used with a stick to produce a sound.²²

The other drum is a western modern drum called the kettle drum. This drum was appropriated from military parades and observing European soldiers using them during parades in the world wars.²³

It is a drum noted for its colourful and shiny metals and wide volume pitch. The kettle drum emerges out of British traditions that have stayed with South African national armies such as the Union Defence Force, the South African Defence Force and the South African National Defence Force. The kettledrum is the oldest military instrument used by armies since the Roman Empire in the west.²⁴

Drums provide us with the sound beat of Diturupa. Drums are also important because they symbolize African spirituality and the way Diturupa has come to fit into Bakgatlha cultural traditions.²⁵

²² M Motlhamme. (2020). "Tempedi Photograph".

²³ Picard, J. (1990). "Military Traditions with Special reference To South Africa". *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies*, Vol 20, Nr 1. Date Accessed: 20/012020. URL: <http://scientiamilitaria.journals.ac.za>

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²⁴ Ibid. 4.

²⁵ Denbow & Thebe, *Culture and Customs of Botswana*. Westport: Greenwood Press. 43. James, "Mmino wa Setšo." 15.

British military culture has influenced South African military culture and was appropriated in the conceptualisation and formation of Diturupa. However, Bakgatlha Diturupa pioneers were not only interested in taking what they observed in military camps and culture from a British perspective but wanted to incorporate their own culture into the making of Diturupa.²⁶ According to Mme Sepeng, a teacher and member of Matla a Sechaba that organises Diturupa:

The youth of today prefer the western kettle drum. We used the African cowhide drum. The lack of animals created the switch to western cattle drums. The drum that makes the best noise is the one made from donkey skin. Tempedi (metal lid) is from Kgopane (iguana skin). The sound of different animals makes Diturupa interesting.²⁷

Drums are an integral part of Diturupa and in the beginning, different animal skins were used in creating a traditional drum. According to Mme Mma Dikoatla Mareme a leader of Mmekwa Trupa: “Tempedi will never go out of fashion, without Tempedi there is no Trupa”.²⁸ Traditional and modern drums contribute to the debate over tradition vs modernity. According to Mme Mputla, a pensioner leader of Special Springbok Trupa:

The children we have today cannot easily use the traditional drum, it is also heavy. The young ones prefer the modern kettle drum as it is light and easy to use. The young ones do not want to use the traditional drum.²⁹

²⁶ This is noted in the fact that the Scottish bagpipe instrument is not a part of ditrupa.

²⁷ Interview with Mokete Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

²⁸ Interview with Madikoatla Mareme, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmekwa Section, North West Province, 23 March 2020 (Translated).

²⁹ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

There are three Trupa groups who are known for traditional drums: *Mmekwa*, *Segodimo* and *Special Springbok*. These sentiments are echoed by Mme Matlala a leader of Sefikantsoe Trupa who says: “We use modern kettle drums because it is loud and has rhythm. The traditional drum does not work well when it is cloudy and has a lower sound”.³⁰ The traditional drum needs elements like heat to stretch the cow hide so it can be heard.

Diturupa makes an interesting take on the debate between tradition and modernity. By accounts, the traditional drum and *Tempedi* have lost their popularity as craftsmen and traditional engineers of the drums are no longer widespread and available.³¹ The fact that it takes years of learning and skill to play the traditional drum shows that it is not easily accessible to a majority of young people.³² The western inspired kettle drum is widespread and brought from the Indian shops in Marabastad³³ which is located on the northwestern outskirts of the city of Pretoria. The kettle drum is seen as an ergonomical and auditory musical instrument that does not carry a heavy burden of expertise as compared to *moropa wa letlalo* the traditional drum.

While Africans lost economic independence (land) and political sovereignty, culture is perhaps one sphere where they showed a great measure of resilience and continuity with the past. (Even among Black slaves in the US, their Africanness was most noticeable in the cultural sphere).³⁴ An example of this is the *bojale* drum of the Bakgatlha ba Kgafela in Botswana which was uncovered

³⁰ Interview with Eveline Matlala, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Sefikantsoe Section, North West Province, 25 March 2020 (Translated).

³¹ Kirby, P. (2013). *The Musical Instruments of the Indigenous People of South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 19.

³² Ibid, 24. Interview with Thomas Ngobeni, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

³³ Friedman, M. (1994). “A history of Africans in Pretoria with special reference to Marabastad, 1902-1923”. M.A. Thesis: University of South Africa.

³⁴ Barber, *A History of African Popular Culture*, 164. Welsh-Asante, K. (1985). The Jerusarema Dance of Zimbabwe. *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 4, 383.

in the 1970s and shows the resilience of the sacred drums in most African communities.³⁵ These drums were used for initiation but became obsolete as initiation rites declined and were no longer being performed. Another community that is noted for drum preservation is the Balobedu Ba Modjadji in Limpopo Province who have kept their sacred drums despite the incursion of western modernity into their culture, performance and identity.³⁶

The Mosetlha royal family became Christians and did away with spiritual customs associated with African communities such as the royal traditional healer, praying for the rain, initiation school such as *bogwera* (male initiation) and *bojale* (female initiation), and certain customs such as *letsholo*, a hunt initiated by the chief in which all males from particular mephato (age sets) were required to participate.³⁷ This loss of material spiritual culture remains a major problem as the community is unable to bring forth some of these elements in cultural events like Diturupa.³⁸ Drums are accompanied by hose pipes used as drum beaters and tennis ball on a stick for playing the drums whereas in the past sticks were carved specially for playing drums.

Whistles are part of the cultural repertoire of Diturupa. In Setswana whistle instruments are called *dinaka* and *diphala*. In the 1920s, they were made using reed, horns and bones of animals such as the springbok and the *duiker*.³⁹ They provide a jazzy sound and blend well into the rhythm of sound, beat, and song that encompasses Diturupa. Whistles are also used to coordinate Diturupa

³⁵ Bojale is a Setswana initiation ceremony for girls. Setlhabi, G. (2014) "The Politics of Culture and the Transient Culture of Bojale: Bakgatla-Baga-Kgafela Women's Initiation in Botswana." *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 40:3, 459.

³⁶ Krige, E & Krige, J. (1943). *The Realm of a Rain Queen: A study of the Pattern of Lovedu Society*. London: Oxford University Press. 126. Mohale, M. (2014). "Khelebedu Cultural Evolution through Oral Tradition". Unpublished M.A. Dissertation: University of South Africa. 44.

³⁷ Makgala, *A History of the Bakgatlha ba Kgafela*, 39.

³⁸ Letebele, "Customs, Beliefs, and Christianity", 26.

³⁹ Kirby, *The Musical Instruments*, 127.

members and get them into a disciplined formation.⁴⁰ They are also able to create a spiritual atmosphere by the person playing and in the rest of the group, this atmosphere is called *morethetho* (rhythm). Wooden and traditional whistles have been replaced by western whistles brought from the shops. What one observes about traditional instruments is that they were very specialized with regards to construction and usage as it took years to master them.

Trumpets, trombones, bugles and other western musical instruments like flutes are also used. Traditional Trupa groups use horns but it has become a rarity. Diturupa here is not far off from the influences of Kiba from the Northern Sotho culture as these two cultural events influence each other.⁴¹ The Northern Sotho are notoriously known for their horn blowing pipes during Kiba performances and competitions. In the past, reed was used to make the instrument now because of environmental scarcity metal and aluminum pipes are now used.⁴² The sound of the pipe produced a melody in a call and response manner like that of whistles in Diturupa which coordinates the drilling.

By using instruments such as trumpets, we can see the influence of military parades on Diturupa. The Scottish bagpipe is absent from Diturupa and this could be an issue of finances and difficulties appropriating a key feature of Scottish military traditions.⁴³ What is emerging from the instruments shows us that Diturupa over the past 100 years have had to make choices about which instruments would be more economical. The fact that African communities were defeated and incorporated into a colonial system did not mean that Africans were forced to give up their instruments but they used their agency to learn and use western instruments while some sections of the community such

⁴⁰ Picard, "Military Traditions with Special reference To South Africa," 5.

⁴¹ James, "Mmino wa Setso: Songs of Town and Country," 57.

⁴² Maahlamela, "Sepedi Oral Poetry", 64.

⁴³ Picard, "Military Traditions with Special reference To South Africa," 4.

as traditional leader, traditional healers and cultural dances kept using African instruments like horns, whistles and drums for spiritual, customary and ritualistic purposes.

Flags are a central element of Diturupa. They represent the icon/emblem of a Trupa group. They range from an animal icon, to a person or a cultural item. Diturupa challenges military conventions as mostly flags are used to denote the conquering of an area whereas at Diturupa it is a marker of collective identity.⁴⁴ Each Trupa has an iconic emblem representing their section on a flag. Due to having the face of a chief, a Trupa was called to perform at his funeral:

The last time we buried Kgosi Motshegwa Makapan in 2014, the royal family asked for a trupa with his face on their flag to come and perform at his funeral. This Trupa is called Segodimo from Mmaudu section.⁴⁵

Flags play an important role of identifying a Trupa group with a section and symbolic identity. The animal or icon they put on their flag sets them apart and adds to their performative identities embodying the icon.⁴⁶ An example is Special Springbok Trupa whose emblem is a springbok which they embody by imitating a springbok on the ground when they do their Turupa performance.

⁴⁴ Interview with Kagiso Mathibe, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

⁴⁵ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

⁴⁶ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).



Figure 12: Lucy Mputla, leader of Special Springbok Turupa holding the flag of their Turupa group.⁴⁷

Diturupa was first performed at the Mosate royal yard in the 1920s on an open field or *lebala* in Setswana. At first it was held in Mosate royal court under the leadership of Regent Kgosi Diratsagae Makapan in the 1920s who ruled Bakgatla ba Moseitlha from 1911-1927 when Hendrick Mathibe 1927-1966 was old enough to become chief.⁴⁸ Over the years it was held at both Mosate and the Dan Letsoalo sports complex which was established in the 1970s. It was felt that the sports ground was too small as the crowd increased.⁴⁹ It was decided to move Diturupa to its current location in Motlhabaneng section which is spacious.⁵⁰ Over the years, with the support of the government, Diturupa has been able to create a fence, to separate fans from the performers, there is also a marquee tent for VIP guests and judges of the competition.⁵¹ The sports ground where Di-

⁴⁷ Motlhamme, M. (2020). "Photograph of L Mputla with Special Springbok Flag".

⁴⁸ Van Zyl, "Die Bakgatla van Moseitlha", 10.

⁴⁹ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

⁵⁰ Interview with Mothupi Malebye, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

⁵¹ Ibid.

turupa is held is an important part of its material culture. The *lerole* (dust) created by the performers is part of the cultural significance of Diturupa as it embodies the soil and ground of Makapanstad which is dusty like. In some years, rainfall pours over Diturupa events and it carries on in the mud.⁵² We need to be careful about over romanticisation of rural spaces and how because they are under developed certain things like dust and mud are part of a culture that cannot be changed.⁵³ Diturupa reflects the socio-economic conditions facing its community and poor service delivery from the municipality. Some of the people have complained about the fact that the stage is dusty and not conducive environment for Diturupa as it affects their eyes, and some have conditions such as asthma. As Lucy Mputla of special Springbok attests:

Our Turupa walks on eggshells, so grass would suit us. We don't want dust. We are clean. Other Diturupa want to shoot the dust. The place is called Kwa Mosetlha (Mosetlha is another name for the area; Mosetlha is also a Setswana word denoting someone covered in dust).⁵⁴

The issue of tradition and modernity is still a major one. The politics of grass and dust reveal the discourse in the community about who is who. These issues are reminiscent of the amaqaba and amakholwa debate in isiXhosa society that saw those who became did not become Christians being labelled as the amaqaba (red ochre people) while those who converted became the amakholwa (believers).⁵⁵

⁵² Ledwaba, L. (2016). "Diturupa, relics from a tragic past. Mukurukuru Media". Date Accessed: 30/01/2021. URL: <https://mukurukurumedia.wordpress.com/2016/03/10/diturupa-relics-from-a-tragic-past/>

⁵³ It is interesting to note that some of the things considered culture in the black community was a means for survival and not necessarily a cultural aspect of that community.

⁵⁴ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

⁵⁵ Peires, J. (1989). *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle Killing of 1856-7*. Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers. 23. Mda, Z. (2003). *The Heart of Redness*. New York: Picador.

Those who support the use of dust are seen as being dirty as implied by Mme Mputla above, while others prefer grass as it will not soil and spoil their attire. Others feel that the dusty soil represents their culture and where Diturupa originates from. The issue of the lebala (field) is a contentious one, according to Ntate Ranyawa:

We organize trucks to come and pour water. This is Makapan not Soweto with regards to the dusty grounds. When we bring water tanks, the Turupa participants complain about being splashed by water while drilling and marching. We are preaching to have grandstands as this will make it a better viewing experience for the audience. The lack of stands can create a stampede. We are applying for funding and still waiting.⁵⁶

These issues are all part and parcel of Diturupa material culture and the debate around the authenticity of Diturupa and where it should be performed. There was a push by some in the community to have a Diturupa event at Temba⁵⁷ stadium in Hammanskraal which is 22 kilometres away from Makapanstad but it did not materialize as some felt that Diturupa is the culture of Makapanstad and taking it to Temba on the 24th December 2019 would diminish its cultural significance and essence.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

⁵⁷ Temba is a township in Hammanskraal. It is close to the Babelegi Industrial precinct. It was developed in the 1980s as a model township and was at times called Kudube after the Kudube Spruit. See Tiro, G. (2014). "Son of Babelegi". Unpublished M.A. Research Report: University of the Witwatersrand.

⁵⁸ Interview with Sandra Masemola, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).



Figure 13: An overhead drone picture of Motlhabaneng section sports complex where the Diturupa competition is held every year on 26 December 2019. The field still needs development and investment. Over 10 000 people in attendance.⁵⁹

Venues are important in Diturupa. Some feel that the venue where Diturupa is held should be modernized and they are willing to pay an entrance fee to come and watch Diturupa on a grassy field with grandstands. According to Sandra Masemola, a young person from Makapanstad: “I think we should pay to watch Diturupa because the entrance fees can sustain Diturupa”.⁶⁰ Masemola makes an important point about financial sustainability; as Diturupa are dependent on the goodwill of community members to keep them going and do not have an endowment fund from any source to keep them going if financial difficulties occur for the sponsors such as the National Lotteries Commission. For Mme Matlala:

⁵⁹ Matshwantsha SA. (2019). “Motlhabaneng Drone Picture of Ditrupa attendance”.

⁶⁰ Interview with Sandra Masemola, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

They can build a stadium but we think people must not pay an entrance fee. This is a cultural entertainment. We are for socialism in this regard.⁶¹

This issue goes into the Botho/Ubuntu philosophy that encourages people to look after each other and share everything together. The exclusionary nature of capitalism would exclude the community from Diturupa and make it an elite event catering for the wealthy and shutting out the poor. Another view is that of safety and convenience as the event is held on an open ground:

We are preaching to have grandstands as this will make it a better viewing experience for the audience. The lack of stands can create a stampede. We have applied for funding and are still waiting.⁶²

The issue of grandstands shows the class position in the community where Diturupa is held and the lack of development by previous apartheid and Bantustan states that prioritized townships and urban centres as models of development such as Garankuwa and Mmabatho in the former Bophuthatswana.⁶³ Diturupa is still an inclusive event economically due to the fact that people from all classes can attend.

The capitalist approach might make Diturupa to lose its inclusive approach. South Africa has one of the most unequal societies on an economic basis due to the legacy of apartheid spatial planning.⁶⁴ Through the efforts of Moretele Local Municipality and Matla a Sechaba, these entities are trying to bridge the poverty gap as experienced through Diturupa. Another issue is the fact that

⁶¹ Interview with Eveline Matlala, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Sefikantsoe Section, North West Province, 25 March 2020 (Translated).

⁶² Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

⁶³ Godsell, "Hammanskraal Histories," 108

⁶⁴ Terreblanche, S. (2002). *A History of Inequality in South Africa, 1652 to 2002*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

other community groups want to have other Diturupa events outside of Makapanstad to the nearby township of Temba. According to Mme Matlala:

There was talk of a competition in Themba. They were offering us R10 000 and this competition fell on the 25th of December while Diturupa is held on the 26th and we only receive R2000 at Makapanstad. It would work for us to attend both events.⁶⁵

Thus we can see the financial attraction of moving Diturupa to other venues and contexts. In Makapanstad, it was decided to abolish the prize money and give each Turupa a flat rate amount of R2000 as it was felt that everybody was a winner for participating in Diturupa and that money would destroy the essence of what Diturupa stood for in an impoverished community like Makapanstad.

Diturupa has the potential to create economic growth for Makapanstad through tourism and creating employment opportunities for residents. It is by taking advantage of opportunities that residents can benefit from the trickle-down spending from Diturupa. For Ntate Ranyawa:

The whole community can participate by selling different goods/products such as food, alcohol, T-shirts, etc. No one is excluded. People book and reserve their own spots. We do not charge people as we are not a business.⁶⁶

Through Diturupa, the community can improve their financial livelihood as they can become entrepreneurs. Makapanstad still has a lot of work to do to keep people attending Diturupa to be

⁶⁵ Interview with Eveline Matlala, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Sefikantsoe Section, North West Province, 25 March 2020 (Translated).

⁶⁶ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

occupied and attracted by other local tourist sites. The lack of a centralised space to coalesce the material culture of heritage means that the community cannot attract tourists outside of Diturupa.

Diturupa groups also perform for community members at weddings and funerals. They are paid a meagre amount. Because they do not see Diturupa as a money making scheme they will perform for a lower fee.⁶⁷ To book a Turupa group, you organise them transport, food, and payment starting from as little as R500.⁶⁸ This confirms that Diturupa is a lower class event. It is able to cater to a majority of its community members due to its low cost. Class affects Diturupa as the more financial resources one can mobilise allows one to attract and retain more members in your Turupa group which needs a minimum of 40 members to be sustainable.

The Mosate royal family organizes traditional food for the participants who come to the royal house to greet and drill for the chief and their guests which is the first part of performance for Turupa groups. This food is traditional African food that is a symbolic material culture of the Bakgatla ba Mosetlha. This food consists of slaughtered cow meat, slaughtered sheep meat, *mabele a ting* (sour sorghum porridge) and *mosoko* (pap). The slaughtering of these animals and offering food is part of the services that the royal house must do as they are the symbolic leaders of Diturupa as the performance is done on their land. The Mosate royal yard is a complex full of material culture and houses the following complexes: The Lekgotla hall that is used on Mondays by Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha traditional leaders to deliberate on community affairs, the royal cemetery where past chiefs, royal queens and other members of the royal family are buried, the houses of Kgosi Hendrik Makapan, Thipe Makapan and Kgosi Boisy Makapan are standing and the satellite

⁶⁷ Interview with Mokete Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

⁶⁸ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

offices of the Moretele Local Municipality to help community members with government affairs. Mosate royal headquarters is a site of rich cultural history of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha and symbolizes the material culture of chiefship and cultural authority in this community.

Clothing is an important symbol of Diturupa. We cannot talk about Diturupa and not discuss the importance of clothing and its symbolic expression of Bakgatlha popular culture. Clothes are an important part of identity and tell us which culture one comes from. The most symbolic thing about Diturupa material culture is the appropriation of the Scottish kilt (Scotch). The kilt is the most visible symbol on the sports field as participants strut their drills, dance techniques and rhythm. Due to the influence of Scottish military traditions, Bakgatlha soldiers appropriated the Scottish kilt as their dress of choice.⁶⁹ The kilt allows participants to swing their figures in a way they would not be able to do with African traditional clothing such as Kgakana and Jeremane (Setswana traditional wedding & traditional garments).⁷⁰ As much as the kilt is a Scottish tradition, events such as Diturupa have localized it and made it part of the Bakgatlha fabric culture.⁷¹ The way the kilt comes to Makapanstad shows agency of African people who used culture to rail against colonial control and choice. The Scottish kilt has been appropriated by different communities and churches such as the ZCC.⁷²

Different *Scotch* (Scottish kilt) colours are used such as blue, red, maroon, and yellow, etc. The *Scotch* is made in the form of dresses and T Shirts. According to Ntate Ranyawa: “The uniform of

⁶⁹ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated). Hyslop, “South Africa and Scotland in the First World War,” 151.

⁷⁰ Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War: Diturupa*.

⁷¹ Some Diturupa such as Mmekwa Trupa have Adapted the colour of the scotch to blend in with local culture such as using brown as the colour of the kilt instead of the orthodox red and white.

⁷² Maahlamela, “Sepedi Oral Poetry,” 156-7.

Diturupa is *Scotch*, white socks, white shirts or khakhi, it is related to military attire”.⁷³ This uniform has changed over the years but in principle most troops keep to the spirit and traditions of Diturupa by wearing clothing resembling the first troops in the 1920s. Fabrics have always been appropriated across different cultures as people traded and travelled to different spaces. An example of this is the Jeremane cloth in Batswana culture which mixes German and Batswana cultural fabrics.⁷⁴ Another example is the *Seshoeshoe* fabric worn by Basotho women which was influenced by German settlers and assimilated into Basotho society and named after their leader Moshoeshoe I.⁷⁵ These examples of *Jeremane* (Setswana wedding fabric) and *Seshoeshoe* show that even clothing that is considered traditional has been influenced by contact with Europeans but has been assimilated and adapted into the local culture to give it a truly African identity just like the Scottish kilt in Diturupa. Due to European contact and mission education, many Africans abandoned traditional garments in favour of western clothing as they were easier to make and the loss of land and economic power due to colonialism created an identity crisis in most African societies.⁷⁶

Other clothing items worn by Turupa participants include white T-shirts, khaki T-shirts and *Scotch* T-shirts. Some Turupa such as Special Springbok also wear gloves as it matches with their attire.⁷⁷ Another important item for Turupa participants is the military uniform. Participants wear the uniform and carry mock guns usually made of wood. Participant uniforms resemble South African

⁷³ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

⁷⁴ Denbow, J & Thebe, P. (2006). *Culture and Customs of Botswana*, 125.

⁷⁵ Pheto-Moeti, M. (2005). “An Assessment of Seshoeshoe Dress as a Cultural Identity for Basotho Women of Lesotho”. Unpublished M.Sc. Dissertation: University of the Free State. 37.

⁷⁶ Page, M & Sonnenburg, P. (Eds). (2003). *Colonialism: An International Social, Cultural, and Political Encyclopedia*. Oxford: ABC Clio. 99.

⁷⁷ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

National Defence Force outfits, the uniforms worn by the guerrilla fighters of the liberation movements in exile, and military uniforms across the world.⁷⁸ Wearing military attire is symbolic and creates an atmosphere of being on the battleground and remembering the fallen and other soldiers who participated in the wars.

Uniform is part of the contestation between tradition and modernity. My observation during Di-turupa was that some Turupa groups introduced certain attire either to make a political statement or as a fashion item. One Turupa group wore *kufiyahs/hijabs* as part of their cultural repertoire, showing us that identity in spaces such as Makapanstad is not fixed as people are influenced by the arrival of other cultures.⁷⁹ Some Turupa use *Kente* cloth and other African material fabric, showing the relationship with the rest of the continent and the influence of migrants who come to villages like Makapanstad and settle there for economic opportunities and cheaper rental accommodation.

⁷⁸ Simpson, T. (2016). *Umkhonto WeSizwe: The ANC's Armed Struggle*. Cape Town: Penguin Random House.
Kondlo, K. (2009). *In the Twilight of the Revolution: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) 1959-1994*. Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien. Houston, G, ka Plaatjie, T, & April, T. (2015). "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, 1961-1981". *Historia*, 60(2), 24. Asheeke, T. (2019) "Black Power and Armed Decolonization in Southern Africa: Stokely Carmichael, the African National Congress of South Africa, and the African Liberation Movements, November 1967–December 1973". *The Journal of African American History* 104:3, 415. Lissoni, A. (2009). "Transformations in the ANC External Mission and Umkhonto we Sizwe, c. 1960–1969." *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35:2, 287-301, 30:253, 17.

⁷⁹ Barber, *A History of African Popular Culture*, 34.



Figure 14: A sergeant from Special Springbok Trupa wearing his regalia and insignia. He stands out, commands respect and leads the Trupa group at the front like a military commander.⁸⁰

Another element of material culture is the insignia and emblems used on the military uniforms. These resemble the ranks of soldiers and the medal decorations that were conferred on them at the end of the war. As the previous chapter has demonstrated, African soldiers on the battlefield were often given a raw deal and were not rewarded or held in high esteem like their European and white settler soldier counterparts.⁸¹ The sergeants of Diturupa groups often lead the drills and marches and wear elaborate insignia on their outfits as seen in figure 13.⁸² They wear car emblems, medals, badges of soccer teams, and company logos. When a sergeant/drill leader appears, you are struck by the ornamental picturesque decorations on their jacket. Like military generals, their uniform makes them to stand out. These generals are skilled in dance moves as they coordinate their team on the field and influence the perception of judges and the audience. Diturupa succeed in mimicking military culture but fall short on the fact that apart from soldiers and generals, the people who

⁸⁰ Motlhamme, M (2020). "Sergeant of Special Springbok Trupa".

⁸¹ Killingray with Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 179.

⁸² Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

wear scotch, mostly women, do not have any decorations or medals to show their rank or achievements. By not awarding ordinary members any medals, Diturupa plays into the colonial trope of only awarding Africans who stood out on the battlefield such as Job Maseko who earned a bravery medal for sinking a German ship in Egypt WWII and Lucas Majozi who got a distinguished medal for his bravery as a stretch bearer in Egypt during WWII. Ordinary black soldiers who did not do acts of bravery were not rewarded for their service.⁸³

There are no shields and spears in Diturupa. This means that African war material culture is not a significant factor in the cultural repertoire of Diturupa.⁸⁴ This could be another subversion of WWI and II and how these wars limited the role of the African soldier to carrying a spear while Diturupa sees them as soldiers. Another element that is absent is the use of cow dung. Cow dung can be used on the face and can also be used to decorate the *stoep*. Elements of African spirituality such as traditional beer, *imphepho* (incense) are conspicuously absent from the material culture of Diturupa, which perhaps illustrates the desire to move away from tradition and a yearning for modernity in constituting and constructing Diturupa. . Diturupa, like other Setswana musical forms has been impacted by the scourge of colonialism and urbanization as skilled craftsmen and musicians became fewer and fewer, meaning that certain traditional musical instruments got lost while others went out of fashion.⁸⁵ Diturupa has an ambiguous relationship with African cultural traditions as it uses them but at the same time claims a modern European identity through the use of cultural repertoires from European culture.

⁸³ Mohlamme, "Soldiers without reward".

⁸⁴ Basotho-Batswana communities in Southern Africa do not have a strong tie to the spear and the shield as observed in other African ethnic communities such as the amNdebele and amaZulu.

⁸⁵ Kekwaletse, M. (2018). "Traditional music and instruments in Botswana". *Music in Africa*. Date Accessed: 24 July 2020. URL: <https://www.musicinafrica.net/magazine/traditional-music-and-instruments-botswana>

Performing Diturupa

Performing Diturupa is about constructing, constituting and negotiating identity amongst the multitude of performers who each carry with them a history and identity that adds to the diversity of Diturupa. The performance that is held annually on the 26th of December brings together various elements and cannot be simplistically reduced to one unique thing. When schools close for the summer vacation, a drum is beaten in Makapanstad to signal the start of the holidays and commencement of Diturupa practice.¹ Diturupa is organised by Matla a Sechaba Trust, a group of professional adults in Makapanstad who wanted to give back to their community. Diturupa comprises of female and male adults, pensioners, adults, youth and young children and the LBGTIQA community (lesbian, bisexual gay, transgender, Intersex, queer, asexual). The queer community is represented in Diturupa. A prominent gay Turupa leader has crowds cheering in excitement when he performs at the show grounds at Motlhabaneng.² Diturupa has a class element in that some Diturupa groups are well endowed with resources such as storage space for their material, can afford to buy colourful clothing and instruments such as Sefikantsoe Turupa. Diturupa groups that have a lot of resources tend to attract more members who come from destitute families.³ The leaders of Diturupa groups often have a sense of comfort and affluence which is why their homes are the headquarters of the group.

¹ Interview with Mokete Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

² Interview with Lerato Sepeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

³ Interview with Eveline Matlala, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Sefikantsoe Section, North West Province, 25 March 2020 (Translated).

The LGBTI community is accepted in Makapanstad. It was not always the case as many people who are queer often face difficult challenges with being accepted in rural societies.⁴ Maybe because Makapanstad has always been a village that embraces difference, it became easier to change perceptions towards LGBTI people. South Africa's constitution recognizes the rights of homosexual people and protects them. This was not the case during the Apartheid era and saw activists such as Beverley Ditsie and Simon Nkoli wage campaigns for liberation movements such as the ANC to recognize queer people and protect their rights.⁵



Figure 15: A woman soldier from Winterveldt Troop. This photo rejects the idea that women cannot be soldiers in Diturupa as shown in the picture. It challenges the gendered nature of Diturupa as women wearing kilt dresses and men wearing soldier uniforms.⁶

⁴ Polders, S. (2006). "Factors Affecting Vulnerability to Depression among Gay Men and Lesbian Women". Unpublished M.A. Dissertation: University of South Africa. 72.

⁵ Canham, H. (2017). "Mapping the black queer geography of Johannesburg's lesbian women through narrative. *Psychology in Society*."(55), 84.

⁶ Winterveldt Troop. (2019). "A Soldier in Salute".



Figure 16: Men wearing kilts from Phomola Turupa. Showing us that Diturupa does not have a fixed gender identity as performers can wear what they like.¹

Gender roles and norms are disrupted and observed when Diturupa participants start their drills and marches. It is quite interesting that it is mostly women who wear scotch skirts while men wear the military uniform. Although in some cases this can change, it is a deeply entrenched gendered public role play.² In the early years men wore scotch as an emulation of the Scottish kilts they saw on the battlefield in Europe. Through Diturupa women are reclaiming their power and agency by becoming soldiers, leading Turupa groups and having a voice in the direction of Diturupa.³ But we must not forget the deeply patriarchal nature of South African society and the challenges that African women in particular still face today in our societies.⁴ In Makapanstad, a majority of Diturupa participants are women and most leaders and revivalists of Diturupa are women such as Mme Matlala, Mme Mma Dikoatla and Mme Mputla. Other women such as Mme Sepeng are

¹ Phomola Diturupa Cultural Festival. (2019). "Diturupa in Action Photograph".

² Dove, N. (1998). "African Womanism: An Afrocentric Theory." *Journal of Black Studies*, 28(5), 515.

³ Interview with Madikoatla Mareme, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmekwa Section, North West Province, 23 March 2020 (Translated).

⁴ Gqola, P. (2007) "How the 'Cult of Femininity' and Violent Masculinities Support Endemic Gender Based Violence in Contemporary South Africa." *African Identities*, 5:1, 111.

prominent members of Matla a Sechaba, the group that organizes Diturupa. Makapanstad has also seen a number of women being elected as traditional leaders, signifying the changing attitudes towards women in power, although I did not see a female leader at the lekgotla when I went to observe proceedings.⁵ Women participate in *kgoro* structures at local community level and strengthen the democratic order.

Matla a Sechaba, a Non-Governmental Organisation, is the convener of the annual Diturupa competition. They are responsible for making sure that Diturupa is organized and held successfully:

The work of Matla a Sechaba is to sponsor Diturupa. To buy school uniforms for orphaned and vulnerable children. To buy sports kits for mentally disabled children, to have a heritage and cultural day on the 24th of September and to give Christmas gifts to the elderly.

The economic situation makes many projects very difficult.⁶

A group started mainly by teachers and other community-based professionals, the organisation raises funds and gives back to Bakgatlha through Diturupa cultural commemoration and other community events mentioned above⁷. They organise prizes for each Turupa. Some feel that monetisation and commercialisation are a blight on the spirit of Diturupa and what it represents. Others feel that in a community riddled with poverty, Diturupa has to offer more money to attract and retain the participation of young people in the community.⁸ There are other recurring expenses such as maintaining the uniforms, drums and buying something for the Turupa members to thank

⁵ Mabokela, “Women of Makapanstad,” 112.

⁶ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Interview with Sandra Masemola, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

them for their stellar performance. In its current format, Matla a Sechaba gives each participant group a R2000 cash voucher as an honorarium for their performance.

Dancing and drilling are important elements in Diturupa. One cannot imagine Diturupa outside of dancing because it is a central element of Diturupa. Beni Ngoma, a similar cultural festival to Diturupa in Tanzania was based on military drills and marching as a group of troops.⁹ Dancing involves drilling and other dance techniques that sees Turupa members drilling in a coordinated manner and following the lead of the sergeant or lead dancer.¹⁰ The dancing is free spirited and shows the creativity of Turupa groups who weave contemporary dance moves into their ensembles. Diturupa incorporates various elements of dance, singing, drilling, creativity, use of space and presentation.

Dance in African culture has always been a central component of the arts, entertainment and life in the community.¹¹ There are many different dances in the Batswana culture which were also practiced amongst the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha. Denbow and Thebe offer the following detailed description of the different types of dance performed in Botswana:

The Setapa, for instance, is a coordinated processional dance done by both men and women—and especially among the Ngwaketse by men in celebration of weddings or the harvest season. During the dance, the men's leg and arm movements mirror one another in choreo-graphed fashion as they change styles during the dance. Phatisi is a dance that originates in the Kweneng district and includes both men and women dancing together. The vigorous foot-stomping movements of the dance are reminiscent of

⁹ Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa*, 5.

¹⁰ Interview with Lucy Mputla, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Segodimo Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

¹¹ Welsh-Asante, *African Dance*, 12.

the “gumboot” style associated with the mines in South Africa. The dance often begins with lively impromptu solo performances, common among the Kwena. Borankana, a dance named after the term “go rankana” or to jump about or behave in a boisterous manner, because it combines the styles of many dances, is performed throughout the country. Some people call it the Botswana dance, a combination of all the mentioned dances.¹²

These Setswana dances are an important aspect of Setswana culture and heritage. Many of the Setswana dance art forms are similar to those of the San people.¹³ Although Diturupa use military drills as a dance, there are some, such as Mmekwa Turupa, who use traditional dance methods such as Setapa as they strut their stuff on the field.¹⁴ Dancing during Diturupa performances is often boisterous and trendy according to the latest dance fashion by the youth such as *Kwasa Kwasa*, *Amapiano*, *Gqom* and other popular culture styles.¹⁵

Diturupa is unique because it blends songs into its ensembles. A number of songs are analysed below for their contribution to the Diturupa musical archive. Most of the songs are sung in Sekgatlha/Sepetori as it is the language of Diturupa. In Beni Ngoma from Tanzania, the military drills and brass bands would march and sing Swahili songs.¹⁶ Song plays an important aspect in every sphere of African culture as songs allow one to express themselves and show their creativity.¹⁷ Diturupa songs vary in range and often have a context in local community affairs. Mmekwa

¹² Denbow & Thebe, *Culture and Customs of Botswana*, 210.

¹³ Ibid. 211.

¹⁴ Interview with Madikoatla Mareme, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmekwa Section, North West Province, 23 March 2020 (Translated).

¹⁵ Ndabeni, E & Mthembu, S. (2018). *Born To Kwaito: Reflections on the Kwaito Generation*. Johannesburg: Blackbird Books.

¹⁶ Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa*, 5.

¹⁷ Coplan, *In Township Tonight!* 14.

Turupa is one of the few culturally rooted Turupa groups and had their own praise poet who passed away, one of their songs goes as follows:

<i>Dumelang thaka tsa rona</i>	Greetings our peers
<i>Re BaKgatlha</i>	We are from the baKgatlha people
<i>Re bina kgabo</i>	We venerate the vervet monkey
<i>Re bana ba Thipe</i> ¹⁸	We are children of Chief Thipe

This song is a taunting song sung by members of the Mmekwa Turupa from Mmekwa section of Makapanstad near the Mosate royal house as they enter the Turupa space and get ready to face their competitors. Mmekwa Turupa is composed of most elderly and middle-aged people who grew up during the reign of Chief Thipe (1941-1993). Kgabo is the totem of Bakgatlha and shows this Turupa's rootedness in their culture and its symbolic constitutive elements.

The Sefikantsoe Turupa from Sefikantsoe section of Makapanstad is led by Foona Matlala a pensioner. It was founded in 2008 and is one of the vibrant and competitive Turupa groups that have won the annual Diturupa festival competition a number of times. They have a cultural song that goes like:

<i>Morena Kgoshi Makapane</i>	Chief Makapane
<i>O re laele Makgotla</i>	Lay down the law for our traditional courts
<i>O re laele Kgosi Makapan</i>	Lay down the law for us Chief Makapan

¹⁸ Madikoatla Mareme. (2020). "Thaka Tsa Rona".

*Re seetse mo matlhomoleng*¹⁹

We have been left behind in a sorrowful state

This song is a plea to the chief to lay the law and bring order to community structures. *Makgotla* (traditional courts) serve more important functions than simply acting as the voice of the chief. These are spaces where discords or conflicts between members of the community are supposed to be settled or resolved. It is also a space where important decisions emanating from the centre (such as the need to organize letsholo (hunting/public works) are announced or publicized and also a space for deliberations over important political decisions.²⁰ This song is particularly pertinent due to the lack of adherence to traditional laws and customs.²¹ Modernity has brought challenges to rural life and often sees young people disrespecting the laws and rules conducted in traditional life.

Shining Stars Turupa was started by Frans Monaledi who started performing in the 1970s. This Turupa is known for their trendy dancing styles and decorative material culture and outfits. It is a Turupa composed of mostly young people and few middle aged people.²² They sing a song that goes like this:

Setlhare se se telele Ko Mosate A tall tree at the royal house

Ke sele Ko Mosate (X2) There it is at the royal house

Ka re rapelela ko Mosate Let us pray for *Mosate*

Pula ae ba nele ²³ Let it rain upon them

¹⁹ Matlala, F. (2020). "Morena Kgoshi Makapane".

²⁰ Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War: Diturupa*.

²¹ Mabokela, "Women of Makapanstad," 47-48. Letebele, "Customs of Bakgatla," 35.

²² Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War*.

²³ Ibid.

This is a song that Shining Stars Turupa led by Frans Monaledi performs when they enter the *Mosate* courtyard to greet the chief. The song has to do with the cultural customs of praying for the rain. Many Batswana communities stay in arid conditions and had a seer who was called *moroka pula/seepamaru* and was trusted to speak to the ancestors to bring about rain so that the community could prosper as rain is central to the agricultural life of the Bakgatla ba Mosetlha.²⁴

Batsadi is another evocative song by Sefikantsoe Turupa. It goes:

<i>Batsadi ba rona ha re ba tlole.</i>	We don't respect our parents
<i>Ha ba santse ba tshela rea ba kgupisa.</i>	We trouble them while they are still alive
<i>Hebasule mo</i>	When they pass on
<i>Re ba tlhabela dikgomo.</i>	We slaughter cows for them
<i>Raba isetsa.</i>	We take it to them
<i>Habana sepe le tsona.</i>	They don't care about them (our cows)
<i>Iyoooh iyoooh re senya chelate.</i>	Iyoooh Iyoooh we waste money
<i>Hebasule basule ba ithobaletse.</i> ²⁵	When they are dead they are dead and sleeping forever

This song is a call to community members to stop wasting enormous sums of money to buy cows which they slaughter to propitiate their parents who have died. The song seems to be calling upon the young ones to rather honour, respect or defer to the elderly while they are still alive rather than

²⁴ Letebele, "Customs of Bakgatla," 12. Denbow & Thebe, *Culture and Customs of Botswana*, 24.

²⁵ Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War*.

waste their money on ancestral ceremonies, making sacrifices to the elders who don't care about those sacrifices as they are now dead. It also has to do with giving parents respect and not causing them grief as when they depart the earth they will not return and slaughtering a cow to appease the dead cannot make up for the grief and disrespect they suffered at the hands of their children when they were still alive. Ancestors still play a major role in communities like Makapanstad and people consult traditional healers and find out that they must do a ceremony for their departed family member to appease their spirit. Due to the proliferation of Christianity and deepening poverty levels, ancestral ceremonies are no longer as widespread. *Batsadi* is one of the popular songs of Diturupa across the Moretele region.

Songs are an important part of Diturupa and communicate a very important message. South Africa is a country that loves to sing. Singing is one of the few cultural elements that kept the struggle going against the apartheid system.²⁶ It is quite peculiar that Diturupa does not embody any songs from the liberation movements or influences from such movements from my own fieldwork and observations. This might have to do with the context of Diturupa having its origins in colonial military culture that emphasizes different things as compared to liberation movement culture:

Veit Erlmann references an all too prevalent trope which has informed much ethnomusical research in South Africa in the past. This trope is that in the context of the country's history of coloniality and apartheid, the music of formerly marginalised population groups was only worth studying if it could be considered 'as sites of transformative action and creative agency', in other words, if it fitted into the anti-apartheid agenda.²⁷

²⁶ Lekgotla laga Ramoupi, "Cultural Resistance on Robben Island", 472.

²⁷ Fourie, P. (2019). "Parading Respectability: The Cultural and Moral Aesthetics of the Christmas Bands Movement in the Western Cape, South Africa". *Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa*, 16, 149.

The above statement is pertinent for all sites of study in South Africa and not only ethnomusicology as we often find that the bulk of research in the country is informed by its links to the struggle against apartheid.²⁸ As Jacob Dlamini shows in his scholarship, there were other sites of activities during apartheid that did not fit neatly into collaborator-freedom fighter trope but straddled the line between the two and forged a life outside of these dichotomies.²⁹

Creativity is important for the cultural flow of Diturupa. Without the creative spirit, Diturupa would not be what it is. Competitiveness brings out the creative spirit.³⁰ Diturupa try to outshine each other through cultural, material, dance and song techniques.³¹ During the year people get influenced by certain trends and often incorporate them into their Turupa. Those who are Rastafari will incorporate reggae culture into their Turupa and those who are gospel choir singers will incorporate gospel singing. This creativity makes a Turupa group to stand out in the crowd and makes them unique. Diturupa even practice their performances and styles at night to hide their creativity because they feel other Turupa groups will copy their style and take their shine.³²

Diturupa has elements of the Carnavalesque event in the Bakhtinian sense. It allows participants to disrupt the colonial notion of what a military parade is and who gets to participate in it since the

²⁸ Ndebele, N. (1986). "The Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Some New Writings in South Africa". *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12(2), 143.

²⁹ Dlamini, J. (2009). *Native Nostalgia*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media. Dlamini, J. (2020). *The Terrorist Album: Apartheid's Insurgents, Collaborators, and the Security Police*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Dlamini, J. (2015). *Askari: A Story of Collaboration and Betrayal in the Anti-Apartheid Struggle*. London: Hurst Publishers.

³⁰ Bruinders, S. *Parading Respectability: The cultural and Moral Aesthetics of the Christmas Bands Movement in the Western Cape*. South Africa. Grahamstown: AHP Publications. 128.

³¹ Interview with Thabo Mofokeng, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated). Interview with Joe Molele, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

³² Mudzingwa & Ledwaba, *Troupes of War*.

Carnavalesque is about disrupting power and the status quo.³³ Normally in a military parade, soldiers wear their uniform and march in a uniform line wearing their military attire. In contrast, Diturupa allow any interested community member to participate and join in the festivity. Military parades often have this solemn feel because they are commemorating fallen soldiers; but Diturupa is all about commemorating the departed while at the same time adding a feel of joyfulness and jubilation to the occasion. Diturupa also allows community members to forget their problems and challenges and become soldiers who strut their stuff on the grounds of Makapanstad cheered on by the crowd. The only notion that Diturupa does not let go of as a carnival is the respectability tag.³⁴ The fact that Diturupa is held in a traditional setting means that coming to greet at the royal house is a compulsory custom. This lack of rebelliousness against chiefly authority shows that the Carnavalesque is not sufficient in explaining cultural events like Diturupa that comes from a different context.³⁵ Unlike *Mardi gras* in the United States, where ordinary people become kings, Diturupa has a sense of traditional customs that cannot be easily shaken off or discarded as they form the basis of its founding, popularisation and sustainability.³⁶

Trinidad carnival is one of the largest carnival events in the world. Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago has its roots in slavery in the Caribbean. African slaves observed slave masters organizing balls and masquerades before the Christian holiday of Lent.³⁷ They created their own carnival influenced by African music and festivals. It is also rooted in musical competitions, dancing, steel bands and masque parades around the city of Port of Spain.³⁸ The difference between carnival and

³³ Knowles, R. (Ed). (1998). *Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin*. London: Macmillan Press. Pechey, G. (2007). *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Word in the World*. London: Routledge. 34.

³⁴ Schechner, R. (2004). "Carnival (Theory) After Bakhtin". In M. Riggio. *Carnival: Culture in Action – The Trinidad Experience*. New York: Routledge. 4. Bruinders, *Parading Respectability*, 4.

³⁵ Ibid. 4.

³⁶ Schechner, *Carnival (Theory) After Bakhtin*, 5.

³⁷ Dewis, "Carnival Performance Aesthetics," 12.

³⁸ St. Bernard, "Happiest People Alive," 23.

Diturupa is that Diturupa does not use mask as a central feature of its performance or identity.³⁹ Like Diturupa which commemorates fallen soldiers of the World Wars and the loss of independence of African communities; the communities of the Caribbean have a sense of dispossession from slavery and marginalization in their societies⁴⁰. This is seen when it is said that:

If The Haitian Revolution best narrates the attainments of Maroon resistance, the most complete transformation of plantation ritual into a dynamic, Contemporary site of power takes place in the Trinidad Carnival.⁴¹

Carnival and Diturupa allow for self-representation and self-actualization by performers as they can celebrate and commemorate in spite of oppressive elements having entrenched themselves in their respective societies.

Material culture and performance are two essential parts of Diturupa. One can unequivocally say that there is no Diturupa without these two quintessential elements. Diturupa is what it is because these elements come together. Diturupa identity cannot be simplistically reduced to British military culture or Setswana traditional culture. It straddles somewhere in the middle and brings different elements together and changes over time as new influences from different communities and societies are brought to Makapanstad and other Diturupa villages. Material culture shows us the constitutive symbols and materials that come together from different contexts to make Diturupa a colourful cultural festival that retains its uniqueness. Performance constructs and deconstructs the narratives about Diturupa as new ones are made on an annual basis. Through music, dance, and

³⁹ Dewis, "Carnival Performance Aesthetics," 29.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 39.

⁴¹ Ibid. 52.

military drills Diturupa perform their identity tied to history, culture, ethnicity, and stake their claim on the global stage of carnivalesque performance.

Chapter Five: The Centenary of Diturupa – A Legacy

The whistle with me has always been a must at groove [parties] because that is how I keep myself entertained. I guess one can say that the whistle thing came naturally because I have always wanted to play it and be the girl at the front of Diturupa, where the whistle is to direct the rhythm of the drums and the marching of the troops.¹



Figure 17: A poster commemorating 100 years of Diturupa.²

¹ Majavu, N. (2020). "Whistle girl blows her way to fame". *Sowetan Live*. Date Accessed: 30/01/2021. URL: <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/entertainment/2020-09-21-whistle-girl-blows-her-way-to-fame/>

² Bakgatla Ba Mosetlha Traditional Council. (2018). "Diturupa: 100 Year Anniversary Pamphlet".



Figure 18: A young Diturupa member from Phomola Diturupa.³

A young person dubbed the girl with the whistle in South Africa's *Amapiano*⁴ musical genre, Re-neiloe Seemane said she wanted to lead a Turupa group showing the resonance of Diturupa with contemporary popular culture musical genres. Her use of the whistle is very specialized and shows that by observing Diturupa she was able to learn to use the whistle and become an overnight sensation in *Amapiano* circles. In the next fifty years this young girl – and others of her age - will be a repository of institutional memory of Diturupa; again showing the cultural importance of this

³ Phomola Diturupa Cultural Festival. (2019). "A Young Diturupa Performer". Date Accessed: 20/02/2021. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/Phomola-Diturupa-Cultural-Festival-549129265423633/photos/1262715180731701>

⁴ Maneta, R. (2020). "The Birth of a Genre: Who gets to own Amapiano". *News 24*. Date Accessed: 20/02/2021. URL: <https://www.news24.com/arts/music/the-birth-of-a-genre-who-gets-to-own-amapiano-20201222>. Mohlomi, S. (2019). "Amapiano: a township sound with staying power". *Timeslive*. Date Accessed: 20/02/2021. URL: <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/2019-07-07-amapiano-a-township-sound-with-staying-power/>

carnival in the history of the community of Makapanstad in this particular region and the province of the North West in general. Figure 17 shows a pamphlet advertising Diturupa at 100 years in 2018 is shown. The pamphlet shows that Diturupa is a strong cultural heritage of Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha by depicting two heads of the totem of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha which is the vervet monkey. By invoking 100 years, the pamphlet speaks to the longevity and sustenance of Diturupa in Makapanstad. Figure 18 from Diturupa Phomola cultural festival shows a young person strutting it out on the Diturupa field. These photographs and statements are just some of the ways the Diturupa legacy plays itself out.

The legacy of Diturupa involves different elements and is an ongoing activity that cannot be fixed in time. This chapter looks at the ways in which Diturupa is creating legacies in Makapanstad. Some legacies are contested, others have ceased to exist but Diturupa continues to reinvent and reinvigorate itself even when it is going through periods of turmoil and decline. After 100 years of music, dance, drilling and colourful uniforms, Diturupa has become a permanent fixture in the Moretele/Odi/Hammanskraal regional cultural consciousness. Looking at it through an African centered lens means understanding the transformative power of Diturupa and its meanings in a decolonising society whose wounds (oppression and exploitation) are still fresh because of apartheid.⁵ Diturupa is an example of a performance based on hybridity and coming together of African and European culture to create a unique performance.

Diturupa, like most African initiated events of the 20th century faced a lot of hardships but persevered to become the more than hundred-year-old institution we know it as it is today. Come to think about it, Diturupa is six years younger the SANNC, which was formed six years before

⁵ Asante, M. (2013). *The Afrocentric Manifesto*. 30.

(1912) Diturupa's formation in (1918); the same year in which Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela was born. Whilst Mandela did not reach his centenary year in 2018 because he passed on in 2013; Diturupa celebrated its centenary year in 2018, as depicted by the pamphlet above. The 1920s saw a lot of African initiatives and a yearning to break from colonial oppression and paternalistic guidance by white people in South Africa. Like most parts of the African world such as the African American community who came up with the concept of the 'New Negro' and Marcus Garvey's 'Back to Africa Movement'; blacks in South Africa started to initiate their own movements and institutions to help articulate their expression of independence and self-worth such as the 'New African Movement'.⁶ Newspapers were started, political organizations such as the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), businesses, African independent churches, buying of community land, urbanisation, educational institutions, and a new black urban identity – all these came into existence at the time.

This chapter focuses on the legacies of Diturupa. What can we call the legacy of Diturupa? Diturupa is framed as part of African initiatives of the 20th century-South Africa, launched by black people to empower themselves amidst a crippling colonial domination. The second important element of the legacy is the visual culture that emanates out of Diturupa through the proliferation of photographs and video material. A further dimension of the legacy of Diturupa is the ways in which

⁶ For a comprehensive study on the New Negro see: Locke, A. (1999). *The New Negro: Voices of the Harlem Renaissance*. New York: Touchstone. Levering-Lewis, D. (1997). *When Harlem Was in Vogue*. New York: Penguin Books. Huggins, N. (2007). *Harlem Renaissance*. New York: Oxford University Press. Stewart, J. (2018). *The New Negro: The Life of Alain Locke*. New York: Oxford University Press. Masilela, N. (2013). *An outline of the new African movement in South Africa*. New Jersey: Africa World Press. Masilela, N. (2014). *The historical figures of the New African Movement. Volume one*. New Jersey: Africa World Press. Couzens, T. (1985). *The New African: A Study of the Life and Work of H.I.E. Dhlomo*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press. For studies on Marcus Garvey's UNIA see: Cronon, E. (1974). *Black Moses: the story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press. Hill, R, editor. (1987). *Marcus Garvey, Life and Lessons: A Centennial Companion to the Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Ewing, A. (2014). *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

this performance adds to community development by creating a sense of community participation, recreation, performing arts and creating a spirit of togetherness.

The literature on performances that are similar and comparable to Diturupa can help us to make sense of the concept of legacy. According to Deborah James, *Kiba* has bequeathed a legacy of incorporating tradition and modernity in its performative repertoire.⁷ *Kiba* forces us to rethink the rural urban ethnic dichotomy of modern and traditional. It also shows the ways in which women assert themselves as owners of performance and not only as objects and powerless spectators.⁸ *Kiba* has a rich legacy of musical experience of migrants who use this performance to make and unmake their identities in the metropole of Johannesburg. Diturupa and *Kiba* contribute to the legacy of performance as a way to enrich cultural legacy and preserve cultural activities for future generations.

Beni Ngoma in Tanzania reached its decline and near extinction in the 1960s. Remnants of the performance continue to exist and have been adapted into other genres such as *Dansi* and *Taarab*.⁹ Beni Ngoma was part and parcel of WWI cultural processes whilst WWII brought a different cultural experience for soldiers from the Swahili coast. Beni Ngoma in the 1960s, declined due to the decolonisation wave across the Swahili coast. It was performed in rural and urban settings and emphasised modernity, mimicry and protest against colonialism. Males and females had their own distinct Beni Ngoma groups which gave males more prominence with regards to public performances.¹⁰ Diturupa, in contrast, did not experience decline like Beni Ngoma and was not rooted

⁷ James, *Songs of the Women Migrants*, 22.

⁸ Ibid, 105.

⁹ Gearhart, "Ngoma Memories". 18.

¹⁰ Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa*. 35.

primarily as a political protest against colonialism which would lose its relevance as soon as colonialism would come to an end as Beni Ngoma was. Diturupa is performed by males and females in one procession and not as two distinct performances from men and women groups.

The Christmas bands of Cape Town have left a legacy of temperance, discipline, order and respectability.¹¹ This is something that is relevant and similar to the discipline-based nature of running a Turupa group. Christmas bands have left a legacy of commemorating the creolised culture of mixed-race communities in the Western Cape.¹² Similarly, Diturupa builds on a legacy of using the festive season and Christmas culture by bringing its own cultural perspective. Another important legacy aspect of the Christmas bands is the ways in which the uniforms of participants are revered and respected as a site of symbolic identity. This is also relevant for Diturupa as participants do not wear their uniform as an everyday casual clothing but as a distinct maker of identity and belonging to the Diturupa community. The Cape festive season parades complicate the richly layered heritage of Cape mixed-race communities and show that they have a rich cultural complex to offer South Africa that adds to the indigenous knowledge systems of the country's marginalised people whose cultural inclusion makes up for the cultural diversity of South Africa.¹³

Within the diaspora carnival in Trinidad is seen as a national heritage for the people of Trinidad and Tobago. It shows the multifaceted layers of identity, performance and creolization.¹⁴ By taking slave heritage and European culture and fusing it into a carnivalesque performance, the people of

¹¹ Bruinders, *Parading Respectability*, 112.

¹² Ibid. 13. Erasmus, Z. (Ed.). (2001). *Coloured by. History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town*. Cape Town: Kwela. Books. Adhikari, M. 2002. "Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and Change in the Expression of Coloured Identity in White Supremacist South Africa, 1910–1994." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: University of Cape Town.

¹² Constant-Martin, D, *Coon Carnival*, 49.

¹³ Ibid. 49.

¹⁴ Riggio, M. (2004). *Carnival: Culture in Action – The Trinidad Experience*. New York: Routledge. 108.

Trinidad have created a culture that they can be proud of and sustain for generations.¹⁵ Diturupa emerges from a context of colonial domination. Unlike carnival, which is rooted in a religious disposition, Diturupa emerges from military culture.¹⁶ Diturupa and carnival continue the debates about cultural identity and what it means to appropriate an aristocratic event and turn it into an accessible community event for mostly working class communities.

Legacy of Diturupa Community Perspectives

The legacy of Diturupa brings together different narratives and ideas of what legacy means to those in Makapanstad. Diturupa continues to create and recreate legacies in the Moretele region. Like other performative events, Diturupa brings heterogenous people together from communities in Makapanstad and other villages to converge on the 26th of December and commemorate soldiers who participated in WWI and WWII.

In their own words, community members realise the importance of Diturupa. According to Rantebeng Makapan, a member of the Makapan royal family: “Turupa is a specialty of Ba Mosetlha. We need to spread Turupa to other Bakgatlha.”¹⁷ Symbolising the way Diturupa is a marker of identity and cultural heritage to the Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha as a Bakgatlha group and gives them a unique cultural imagination.¹⁸ The spreading of Diturupa to other communities is shown in the way Diturupa has been adopted in communities such as Phake, Lefiso, Nokaneng, Marapyane, and

¹⁵ St. Bernard, “Happiest People Alive,” 23.

¹⁶ Dewis, “Carnival Performance,” 76.

¹⁷ Interview with Rantebeng Makapan, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mosate Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

¹⁸ Bruinders. *Parading Respectability*, 42.

Tshikanoshi in the Mpumalanga province; which is evidence enough that the institution of Diturupa has an impact in communities beyond the region of its birth.¹⁹

For Marcus Ranyawa, a member of Matla a Sechaba group said that “the legacy of Diturupa is to help us to get the youth off the streets. Helps them to listen to their elders. It also alleviates peer pressure and boredom.”²⁰ This is an important intervention as many rural areas lack recreational facilities and infrastructure.²¹ The fact that Diturupa helps with discipline is accredited to its militaristic background and origins where discipline and adherence to order and authority are non-negotiable.²² Diturupa reminds one of a bygone era of Mephato (age set military regiments) in villages which often gave young people a sense of purpose, belonging and adherence to authority.²³ This is not to romanticize the regimental system and make it seem like it was perfect and did not embody some toxic and totalitarian traits. For Mme Matlala, a leader of Sefikantswe Turupa, “Turupa gives elders a chance to give back to their community”,²⁴ which is an important aspect of Diturupa because most elders return home in old age after working their whole life in cities like Johannesburg and Cape Town.²⁵ Elders are carriers of knowledge and help to preserve the living

¹⁹ Page 3 Online News. (2020). “Nokaneng Traditional Council: “Any gathering of Diturupa in Nokaneng this year would not be endorsed by us””. *Page 3 Online News*. Date Accessed: 15/01/2021. URL: <https://page3online-news.co.za/nokaneng-traditional-council-any-gathering-of-ditrupe-in-nokaneng-this-year-would-not-be-endorsed-by-us/>

²⁰ Interview with Marcus Ranyawa, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmaudu Section, North West Province, 24 March 2020 (Translated).

²¹ Sepeng, M. (2019). “Examining the dynamics shaping water access for rural and peri-urban areas in the region of Moretele, North West Province, South Africa”. Unpublished M.A. Dissertation: Wits University. 81.

²² Clothier, Black *Valour*, 124. Grundy, *Soldiers without Politics*, 36.

²³ Morton, F. (2012) “Mephato: The Rise of the Tswana Militia in the Pre-colonial Period.” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 38:2, 397. Mosothoane, N. (N.d). “An ethnographic study of initiation schools among the Bakgatla бага Kgafela at Mochudi (1874-1988)”. *Pula: Botswana Journal of African Studies*. Vol.15no.1. 144.

²⁴ Interview with Eveline Matlala, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Sefikantsoe Section, North West Province, 25 March 2020 (Translated).

²⁵ Delius, P, Phillips, L & Rankin-Smith, F. (2014). *A Long Way Home: Migrant Worker Worlds 1800–2014*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 10.

archive and repertoire of Diturupa to help the young not to lose the essence of what Diturupa represents.²⁶

For Lucas Ledwaba, a journalist born in Makapanstad, the legacy of Diturupa:

Is a very rich legacy in which ordinary citizens, during a time when efforts were made by government and colonial structures to suppress the role of Africans in significant world events such as World War, ordinary people carried on the legacy for close on a century. In short, Diturupa played a significant role to keep the memory of the participation of African men in World War I and II.²⁷

Thus, in a sense, Diturupa helps in the recovery of hidden history of the African participation in these two world wars that History textbooks in general do not mention. Therefore, learning about Diturupa decolonizes history by including the African soldiers when the lesson is about WWI and WWII. Diturupa is an important event in the cultural consciousness of Makapanstad. It symbolizes a rich tradition of forging ahead with no resources but a willing spirit to create a cultural institution that is older than most efforts to centre the experiences of Black soldiers and their experiences during WWI.²⁸

Another legacy of Diturupa according to Mmankitseng Malebye, a member of Segodimo Turupa, is the fact that “Diturupa gets kids off the street. We live in difficult times where enjoyment is *nyaope* and alcohol”.²⁹ This shows us the ways in which Diturupa is contributing to the fight against social ills that are also afflicting rural communities and not only the urban ones. Social ills

²⁶ Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa*, 105.

²⁷ Interview with Lucas Ledwaba, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Email, 26 September 2020.

²⁸ Gribble, & Scott, *We Die Like Brothers*, 141.

²⁹ Interview with Mmankitseng Malebye, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

in rural areas are an example of how we cannot romanticise the rural context as peaceful and idyllic.³⁰ Another important part of Diturupa, according to Thabo Mabula, a Turupa participant from Makapanstad, is that “Diturupa builds a child and helps them to gain confidence. Every child fights to be the best.”³¹ This shows the character building work that an event like Diturupa is involved in and is not only an event for entertainment purposes but helps in a young person’s self-actualisation and character growth.

Another important element of Diturupa is diversity and inclusivity. According to Jane Thipe, a member of Segodimo Turupa:

We include people from different cultures. In our Turupa we have people from Xitsonga, Matebele, Basotho, Baswati and Batswana. We also include disabled people in our Turupa. We have one member who is disabled but we include her because Turupa is about community and inclusivity.³²

The diverse ethnicities are part of the identity of Diturupa and give its unique flavour. People from different communities enrich Diturupa. The inclusion of the disabled in Diturupa is an important step but is not a common occurrence as it only includes a few disabled people. Diturupa as conceptualized must deal with its ableism in its performance and infrastructure to be able to attract more disabled performers.³³

³⁰ Makgala, A *History of the Bakgatlha ba Kgafela*, 69.

³¹ Interview with Thabo Mabula, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

³² Interview with Jane Thipe, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

³³ Zitomer, M. & Reid, M. (2011) “To be or not to be – Able to Dance: Integrated Dance and Children’s Perceptions of Dance Ability and Disability.” *Research in Dance Education*, 12:2, 139.

Diturupa has come a long way and is changing some of the old traditions that it has been known for. As Virginia Mokone attests, “in the past, Diturupa would only go to Mosate to Turupa (perform) for the king.”³⁴ Diturupa has been democratised in the sense that one now finds it at the Motlhabaneng sports complex where the competitions are held to determine the Turupa champions. Diturupa has moved from being only a customary ritual that was based at the royal house to being a community wide event held at a communal space devoid of chiefly power and control.

An additional important element that Diturupa is trying to change is the sectionalism of Diturupa. According to Mme Matlala: “most Diturupa use sections, Diturupa started by the youth are trying to break these boundaries by including people from different sections”.³⁵ The sections are tied down to particular histories and loyalties going to lineage, heritage, ethnicity and spatial area. By forming new Turupa groups devoid of sectional kinships young people are giving a new legacy to the framing of identity of Diturupa and where they originate.

One more legacy element of Diturupa is the solidarity shown by Turupa members when one of their own passes away. The funeral of Mr. Kgaphola, a leader of Temba Turupa, in Temba Township; saw a hive of activity with his Turupa group being the main event at the funeral wearing their signature Scottish kilt uniform.³⁶ Diturupa shapes the way people relate and brings a sense of kinship.³⁷ According to Mme Madikoatla: “when a member passes on, we attend your funeral and

³⁴ Interview with Virginia Mokone, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

³⁵ Interview with Eveline Matlala, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Sefikantsoe Section, North West Province, 25 March 2020 (Translated).

³⁶ Moretele Times. (2020). “Thabiso Kgaphola laid to rest”. *Moretele Times Community Newspaper*. Date Accessed: 21 July 2020. URL: <file:///Thabiso%20Kgaphola%20laid%20to%20rest%20-%20Moretele%20Times.htm#.X5pUQHWxXIU>

³⁷ James, *Songs of the Women Migrants*, 27.

participate by wearing our Turupa attire and drilling at home and at the cemetery”.³⁸ Giving the departed a dignified funeral sent-off that shows a sense of belonging in this institution.

Diturupa has also left a continuing legacy of dance and physical activity in the communities who engage in it. For Thomas Ngobeni, a community member from Makapanstad, “Diturupa is enjoyment, fun, entertainment that is similar to the Boy Scouts movement.”³⁹ The boy scouts movement encouraged discipline, brotherhood and adventure among young South Africans who joined it.⁴⁰ For Joe Molele, an audience member at Diturupa 2019 from Tembisa, “Diturupa is important because it keeps people healthy and helps them to keep physically fit”.⁴¹ The physical activities Diturupa members are involved in helps them to keep fit and healthy amidst a crippled healthcare system that is overburdened.

Diturupa is seen as an important signifier of cultural heritage for the community. It proliferates at community weddings, government functions and events organised by the royal house. For Phumlani Makhoba, an audience member from Mabopane Township, “Diturupa is my culture, I grew up doing Turupa. It helps me to reconnect with my culture.”⁴² Illustrating for us the ways in which Diturupa is a reservoir for cultural connection and identity. Jacob Nkhura, a member of the audience, had this to say:

³⁸ Interview with Madikoatla Mareme, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Mmekwa Section, North West Province, 23 March 2020 (Translated).

³⁹ Interview with Thomas Ngobeni, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

⁴⁰ Johnston, S. (2012). “Looking Wide? Imperialism, Internationalism, and the Boy Scout Movement, 1918-1939”. M.A. Thesis: University of Waterloo. 59. Parsons, T. (2004). *Race, Resistance, and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 72.

⁴¹ Interview with Joe Molele, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

⁴² Interview with Phumlani Makhoba, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

For a culture that has survived for almost a century, Diturupa has become an integral part of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha identity. It has given both young and old a sense of pride, something they feel that they own and represents who they are and their community's contribution to world history. So, one could argue that it forms part of the Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha's cultural history and identity.⁴³

Diturupa represents a legacy of cultural heritage that refuses to conform to one system or identity.⁴⁴ It brings together elements of African and European heritage into one space.

Visual Culture

Another way to read the legacy of Diturupa is by looking at the way the visual culture of Diturupa is making a statement about how Diturupa is a cultural hybridity of African and European performance.⁴⁵ Through various archives on the internet and individual efforts, the pictorial legacy of Diturupa lives on. Although it would help if the Diturupa pictorial archive can be housed in an archival institution to guarantee access for future generations.

Archives are an important source for research. What makes Diturupa unique is the range of ways in which archive is performed intergenerationally. In the sense that every generation on the Diturupa stage and performance bring their own generational archive and mix it with those of other generations. The taking of Diturupa photographs from different eras can tell us a story about Diturupa in those times and how the culture has changed over time. By taking photographs and recording their own performances, Diturupa are contributing to a visual archive of black popular

⁴³ Interview with Jacob Nkhura, conducted by Mojuta Motlhamme, Makapanstad Motlhabaneng Section, North West Province, 26 December 2019 (Translated).

⁴⁴ Bruinders, *Parading Respectability*, 13.

⁴⁵ Van Eeden, J and Du Preez, A (Eds.). (2005). *South African Visual Culture*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. Coombes, A. (2003). *History after Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa*. Durham: Duke University Press.

culture that can be used on digital platforms and archiving databases for usage by researchers in the future.⁴⁶ It is also an important part of visual history and how photography fits into the historical narrative. Oral Interviews, social media discussions, television footage, newspaper writings, minutes of Turupa group meetings and documents from the organisers are part and parcel of Diturupa archival material that is not found in formal settings and is at risk of being lost as people dispose of the material/papers in their possession without having an archival repository.⁴⁷ This is an important part of legacy that stakeholders such as Diturupa groups and provincial Arts and Culture Departments have to engage and come together to preserve this archival material for future generations to benefit.



Figure 19: Diturupa participants from Sefikantsoe Turupa wearing masks.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Peffer, J. and Cameron, E. (Eds). *Portraiture and Photography in Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Brandt, N. (2020). *Recent Histories in Southern African Photography, Performance and Video Art*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts. 24.

⁴⁷ Hamilton et al. (2002). *Refiguring the Archive*. Dordrecht: Springer. 22.

⁴⁸ Mukurukuru Media. (2020). "Diturupa Exhibition." Date Accessed: 15/01/2021. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/Diturupa-Exhibition-1406911866109490/>

Figure 19 shows soldiers from Sefikantsoe Turupa wearing face masks. 2020 became a different year for Diturupa as the Corona Virus pandemic swept across South Africa and the world.⁴⁹ The mask in Diturupa is part of the material culture of Diturupa and goes back to military traditions. In the military, masks help with avoiding tear gas and smoke that can render soldiers ineffective.⁵⁰ Masks in Diturupa help with the dust as it is held on an open dusty ground. The mask is an interesting metaphor because Diturupa commemorations for 2020 were cancelled out of fear of spreading the pandemic, raising questions of how Diturupa as an event can prepare itself for a digital world.



Figure 20: Shows Diturupa being performed at Motlhabaneng Section.⁵¹

Figure 20 shows the way in which spatiality is used in Diturupa. As can be observed, the Turupa group is performing in the middle of the ground while the audience is surrounding the performers.

⁴⁹ Harding, A. (2020). "Coronavirus in South Africa: Unravelling the mystery". *BBC News*. Date Accessed: 23/12/2020. URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55333126>

⁵⁰ Clothier, *Black Valour*. 58.

⁵¹ Pikoli, Z. (2020). "Diturupa festival: Visual narratives pay tribute to the role of black soldiers in World War One". *Daily Maverick*. Date Accessed: 24/12/2020. URL: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-11-29-diturupa-festival-visual-narratives-pay-tribute-to-the-role-of-black-soldiers-in-world-war-one/>

This creates an intimacy that you would normally not get in a stadium that creates a distance between performer and audience. A legacy of Diturupa is its community inclusivity and spirit of togetherness as can be seen by the way the audience is huddled up together.⁵² As discussions continue about the future of Diturupa and how to improve its spatial conditions, it is hoped that these efforts and initiatives of the future do not lead to gentrification and exclusivity.⁵³



Figure 21: Shows Phomola Cultural Festival Diturupa in performance.⁵⁴

Figure 21 depicts the carnivalesque nature of Diturupa and its colourful costumes. One member of Phomola Diturupa group is shown wearing a gorilla costume. It adds to the mix and choreography

⁵² Constant-Martin, *Coon Carnival*, 97.

⁵³ Bruinders. *Parading Respectability*. 46.

⁵⁴ Phomola Diturupa Cultural Festival. "A Diturupa Performer wearing a gorilla mask in action". Date Accessed: 23/01/2020. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/Phomola-Diturupa-Cultural-Festival-549129265423633/photos/1070818356588052>

of a Turupa group to go the extra mile and show some flair in their creativity. The gorilla is also close to the popular totem in the communities of the Moretele region which is a vervet monkey.⁵⁵ The use of symbols representing identity adds to the legacy of Diturupa showing how participants use their agency to construct and negotiate their identity on the Diturupa podium.



Figure 22: depicts the changing gender relations of Diturupa.⁵⁶

Figure 22 shows that women are playing a more assertive role in Diturupa. Winterveldt Troop has female soldiers and a female sergeant. This not a common occurrence across Diturupa. This shows

⁵⁵ Letebele, “Customs, Beliefs, and Christianity, 12.

⁵⁶ Winterveldt Troop. (2019). “Figure 22: Women as soldiers in Diturupa”.

that gendered power relations are being contested and challenged as in the past this would not have happened. Gender has an important role to play in Diturupa.

The visual legacy of seeing women take center stage on the Diturupa performance landscape is an important part of legacy in Diturupa. Women are not just included as a tokenistic display of gender equality but are pivotal to the success and continuity of Diturupa as an institution.⁵⁷ The fact that in this photograph women are not wearing skirts but are depicted as soldiers in performance is indicative of the ways in which Diturupa has accepted the changing nature of gendered power relations.⁵⁸ The sergeant is the leader of the Turupa group and her being a woman symbolizes that women are not only reserved traditional roles of being at the back and only serving as background musical vocalists to an all-male performance. Diturupa has bequeathed a legacy of challenging gendered power relations and identity in a rural region where more often women are seen and not heard.⁵⁹ Thus, we can see that in this photograph, African women are fighting European colonial constructs of gender inequality that sees women as only belonging to the domestic sphere; whereas pre-colonial African political systems included women in the public sphere.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Bruinders. *Parading Respectability*. 143.

⁵⁸ Mabokela, "Women of Makapanstad," 23.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 5.

⁶⁰ Hudson-Weems, C. (2019). *Africana Womanism Reclaiming Ourselves*. London: Routledge. 46. Oyèwùmí, O. (1997). *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 26.



Figure 23: depicts soldiers of a Turupa group dancing to a song and rhythm they have created. This shows the influence of South African musical and dance styles on Diturupa.⁶¹

Figure 23 depicts the ways in which elements of dance are central to Diturupa. In this photograph, young soldiers from a Turupa group choreograph and dance to song and rhythm. This dancing is coordinated in a way that symbolizes the uniformity of a Turupa group.⁶² Although drilling was introduced from observing and learning European military drills, African dance rhythms as observed in the photograph have become a central element to the dancing Turupa group who do a delicate balancing act of drilling in European military cultural traditions and incorporating their own African rhythm and dancing that is dependent on popular cultural styles such as Kwasa Kwasa, House Music and traditional dances from the community culture.⁶³

⁶¹ Hafajjee, I. (2018). "[Watch] Diturupa: Festival honours Africa's World War I soldiers". *Eyewitness News*. Date Accessed: 23/01/2021. URL: <https://ewn.co.za/2018/01/10/watch-diturupa-honouring-africa-s-world-war-i-soldiers>

⁶² Welsh Asante, *African Dance*, 23.

⁶³ Ibid. 73. Ndabeni & Mthembu, *Born To Kwaito*, 28.

Diturupa has a syncretic legacy that is part of the Moretele trans-provincial region. Identity is often seen as having to be fixed and permanent to the individual and community, once this stability is threatened it is seen as an identity crisis. Stuart Hall sees identities as evolving and forms of representation that are influenced by the modern and as an ongoing process that can never be fully realized.⁶⁴ Thus, Diturupa falls into this theoretical strand of an ongoing process of identity that cannot be fixed into permanency but incorporates European military traditions and African cultural performance traditions. Thus the symbolic identity elements in Diturupa such as the kilt, social structure of a Turupa performance and the attire point towards a western orientation at first sight. Then as you delve deeper into the identity of Diturupa, one finds an element of African identity that is symbolized through the use of the traditional drum and instruments, songs in African languages and dance that is rooted in African traditions. These two cultural dichotomies come together to create Diturupa. Diturupa is African in its orientation but it cannot, for political or cultural reasons, dismiss its European roots and entanglements. It is a cosmopolitan cultural activity that happens in a 20th century obsessed with fixing identities into permanent categories that cannot be disrupted or borrow from other cultures.⁶⁵ One thing about Diturupa is that it proves that the African subject has a multiplicity of identities and cannot harken back to a pure pre-colonial African identity that is untainted by European colonialism.⁶⁶ This conception of the Afrocentric paradigm does not seek to essentialise Diturupa as a purely African cultural activity but to situate it as part of the 20th century spread of global identities mired in contradictions and ambiguities.⁶⁷ The legacy

⁶⁴ Hall, S. (1992). "The Question of Cultural Identity". In S. Hall, D. Held and T. McGrew (Eds). *Modernity and Its Futures*. Cambridge: The Open University Press. 273.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 278.

⁶⁶ Appiah, K. (1993). *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press. Appiah, K. (2018). *The Lies that Bind: Rethinking Identity*. New York: Liverlight Publishing.

⁶⁷ Keto, *The Africa Centred Perspective of History*. 35.

of Diturupa is an African agency of combining different cultures to create a unique cultural production that takes place on African conditions influenced and shaped by global considerations and exposures.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This research study has focused on Diturupa as performance, identity and historical narrative. It has sought to show the relevance and significance of Diturupa as a cultural event that commemorates black South African men who participated in WWI and WWII. This study is the first of its kind to have a sustained engagement with Diturupa. Diturupa is one of the neglected topics in South African research, especially with regards to the fact that there is a re-emergence of interest with WWI and WWII themes among the researchers, journalists, novelists and the South African reading public at large.

This research project on Diturupa has sought to fill a major gap with regard to cultural dissemination and influences of the two world wars. Since the mid-1980s scholars have started engaging with the role and participation of black soldiers in the two world wars and have started centering the experiences of black men and their voices. These noble efforts stop only at analyzing and interpreting the war experience. They do not go into the interiority of these men and their lives in their communities. One book that captures this so well is an autobiography of Stimela Jason Jingoes;¹ which narrates his life from different periods and his experiences not only as a soldier but as a member of his community who returns with influences from serving in Europe.

My study argues that Diturupa cannot be simplified as just a mimicry or appropriation of European culture. It has to be seen as a coming together of African and European cultural elements melting into a pot to create a cultural commemoration that is unique to the Moretele trans-provincial region. This region incorporates communities in North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga province. The distinct features of the Moretele region are the use of Sesotho and Sekgatlha dialect of Setswana

¹ Perry & Perry, *A Chief is a Chief by the People*. 24.

as lingua franca that permeates across the region. It is a region where identity is permeable and cannot be fixed. Makapanstad is part of this region and it is where we find the largest group of Diturupa performances that have national acclaim and historical privilege.

Identity in this research project become a major arc and moves between the traditional and the modern. Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha are not a static community but are shaped and influenced by their neighbours, region and global patterns of migrations, colonialism and popular cultures. If Setswana culture is a base identity of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha, then the Mfecane period continues a precolonial tradition of cosmopolitan identity. This sees Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha living with Ndebele, Bapedi, Amaswati, Xitsonga and Batswana communities in the Moretele trans-provincial region. Settler-colonialism shaped the identity of Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha and saw them use Afrikaans as a language that somewhat shaped aspects of their identity. Another major marker of identity is participation in Diturupa which shapes the negotiation of identity amongst Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha.

This project aims to contribute to the debates around ethnicity and the ways it has changed over time in rural communities. It also uncovers the contributions of black participation in the world wars and the cultural significance of their participation. The material culture of Diturupa is important as a symbolic element of bringing two different cultures to one table and creating a harmonization of different groupings. Musical and dance performance contribute to ethnomusicological studies about performance and how communities continue to use performance to narrate their own history. Diturupa has left a rich ongoing legacy that creates associational lives in rural communities based on performance. It also has a rich visual culture that allows a living archive to be constructed. Diturupa has to be conceived as a heritage for the Moretele region and can teach us a lot about moving away from the ethnocentric exclusivity of performance that is rooted in a monocentric ethnic identity.

Although this work is opening up conversations about Diturupa as subject worthy of rigorous scholarly inquiry, much work remains to be done. Ethnographic observations, recording of Diturupa performances and interviews with people who are at the forefront of Diturupa still must be done by a new generation of scholars. It is hoped that this work will spark renewed debates about what Diturupa means and how it can be a catalyst for cultural heritage, performance and counter commemoration of historical events such as the two world wars from a black South African perspective.

This work falls under the rubric of Afrocentric studies. It is however not a parochial approach to Afrocentric study. It is an approach that seeks to place Diturupa in a global African diaspora and global performances that have their origins in legacies of slavery, imperialism, colonialism and settler colonialism. Through Diturupa, it is hoped that the debate can be opened about what constitutes culture. Diturupa helps us to accept that culture is not static and that not everything has to be seen through the prism of settler and colonised binary but that there is space to create hybridity and creolisation.

Diturupa straddles between modernity and tradition. It is complementary binary as it allows Diturupa to draw from both repertoires and create a unique performance year in, year out. This research has found out that modernity dominates the performance and identity of Diturupa while tradition lags behind. There are several reasons for this: these include the fact that traditional instruments and their manufacturers have declined in numbers. It takes years of practice and skill to master the traditional drum. The loss of environment and habitat makes it hard to procure traditional instruments. Modern equipment is found in abundance. This proliferation and easy access make it attractive to a younger generation of Diturupa participants.

Diturupa has an element of socio-economic transformation for the community of Makapanstad. It can bring tourism, heritage and economic upliftment to throngs of community members. Thus, Diturupa is not only a cultural event but a respectable and dignified cash cow for community members who are able to benefit from the buying power of tourists coming to witness Diturupa. Through Diturupa, various socio-economic ills such as substance abuse and other antisocial behaviours can be dealt with and arrested. Makapanstad is still developing as a village township. Many of the residents survive on government pension and childcare grants. Migrant labourers send remittances to family members from the urban metropolises of Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Diturupa makes fresh contribution to the marginalized scholarship and uncovers the hidden history of African/Black participation in WWI and WWII; thus, decolonising the history of these two world wars to show their participation. Secondly, it is indigenous Knowledge Systems that shares a community's culture and heritage. Thirdly, its continental and diasporic comparisons make appealing for readers outside South Africa in the continent and internationally.

Appendix A

Sekgatlha/Sepitori dialect word pronunciation and their Setswana Standard equivalents¹

Sekgatlha	Setswana	English
Ka Ntlhela	Ka Fale/Ka Hale	There
Kaboshio	Ka Mamoso/Phakela	Morning
Khomo	Kgomo	Cow
Wirang	O dira eng	What are you doing
Mosate	Kgosing	Royal palace
Khabo	Kgabo	Vervet Monkey
Mola	Fale	There
Nthoela	Sele/sose	That thing
Mpya	Ntsha/Ntswa	Dog
Khoro	Kgoro	Royal ward
Bakgomana	Dikgosana	Sub chiefs/headmen
Nampile	Kgante	and then?
Bolela	Bua	Talk
Ashi	Ke Tseo	Here it is

¹ Ditsele & Mann, “Language contact in African urban settings”, 160.

Appendix B

Chiefs of the Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha²

1. Mokgatla
2. Legabo.
3. Pogopi.
4. Botlolo Masiasebaru
5. Mogale.
6. Phulane.
7. Mosetlha.
8. Mushi Mmusi
9. Mathibe Setshedi
- 9(a) Malebe.
10. Sikwane.
- 11., Tladi.
12. Mohapi.
13. Nchaupe Tlhabane: 1884
14. Hans Makapan: 1884-1893
Ntebeng Makapan regent: 1893-1899
15. Solomon Makapan Nchaupe II: 1902-1911
George Makapan regent: 1911-1927
16. Hendrik Makapan Seaparankoe: 1927-1966
17. Thipe Victor Makapan: 1966- 1973 1985-1993
18. Tau Edwin Makapan: 1973-1984
- 20 Motshegwa Boisy Makapan: 1993-2014
- 21 Nchaupe Makapan III: 2015- Present

² Breutz, *A History of Batswana*, 336.

Appendix C

Dikgoro le Dikgorwana Tsa Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha (Social Structure of Ba Mosetlha)¹

Kgoro	Kgoroana	Moetapele (Leader)
Mosate	Bakgosong	Kgosi
	Madibu	Mmusi
	Motshware	Motshwara
	Tshwane	Tshwane
	Malope	Moeng
	Matshirima	Morekhure
	Moratela	Manne
	Mothiba	Mothiba
	Khunwana	Khunwana
Mmekwa	Batsididi	Mareme
Mosadimogolo	Masonryeng	Setshedi
	Maswana	Mmushi
	Molema	Motaung
	Tsopye/Rantsima	Moloisane
Mmamarama	Modikwe	Kgope
	Radiale	Sepeng
	Pitsi	Tshire
Kgoka (Matebele) Tladi	Bathako	Tabane

¹ Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha Traditional Council. (2020). "Dikgoro Tsa Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha". Date Accessed: 22/03/2021. URL: <https://bbmtc.co.za/history/>

Appendix D

Village Names in the Moretele region²

Makapanstad	Jericho
Mmakaunyane	Makgabetlwane
Kwa Mmatlhwaela	Moeka
Sutelong/Moretele	Suurman
Kontante	Dilopye
Dipetlwane	Maubane
Kgomo Kgomo	Thulwe
Dikebu	Danhouse
Tladistad	Majaneng
Norokie	Temba
Bollantlokwe	Marokolong
Mmukubyane	Ramotse
Mathibestad	Lebotloane
Dertig	Ga Habedi
Swartdam	Selepe
Ngobi	Tlholwe
Lekgolo	Ratsiepane

² Bakgatlha ba Mosetlha Traditional Council. (2020). “Metse ya Bakgatlha Ba Mosetlha”. Date Accessed: 22/03/2021. URL: <https://bbmtc.co.za/history/>

Appendix E

List of Diturupa Groups 2019¹

Troop	Leader	Time
Tladistad		10: 00 -10:15
Dertig		10:20- 1035
Temba	Kgapola	10:40-10:55
Love and Peace	Johana Peu	11:00- 11:15
Thari e Ntsho	Jacob Nkuna	11:20- 11: 35
Morning Star		11:40- 11: 55
Moleketla	Sarinah Setshedi	12:00- 12:15
Utlwanang		12: 20- 12: 35
Lebyaeng		12: 40- 12: 55
Young Stars		13: 00- 13:15
Joining Free		13: 20- 13: 35
Mmekwa	Walter Moloisane	13: 40 – 13:55
Segodimo	Malebo Rakumako	14: 00 - 14: 15
Leratong	Mr Majatladi	14:20 – 14: 35
Mabenethi	Mr Ilale	14: 40 – 14: 55
Leseding	Marakane Malebye	15: 00- 15: 15
Special Springbok	Lucy Mputla	15: 20- 15: 35
Tshwaraganang	Solofelang	15: 40- 15: 55
Shining Stars	Frans Monaledi	16:00- 16: 15
Sefikantswe	Foona Matlala	16: 20 – 16: 35
Rolling Kids	Jacob Lekoloane	16: 40 – 16: 55
Lady Smith	Mpoko Sedibe	17: 00 – 17: 15

¹ Matla a Sechaba. (2019). “List of Diturupa Groups”.

Appendix F

Diturupa Performance Report¹

MATLA-A-SECHABA
DITRUPA FESTIVAL
Performance Report

Name of Troop: SEFIKANBWE

Total Number of participants: 82

Position obtained: 1.

		TOTAL	
1.	Number of Participants (min 40)	20	20
2.	Appearance/Attire	20	20
3.	Dance/Choreography		
	Creativity	10	10
	Use of Props/area/floor patterns	10	9
	Energy	10	10
	Marching technique	10	10
	Singing		
	Music selection	5	5
	Clarity	5	5
	Presentation	10	6
	TOTAL		95

Comments: Very Good Performance!

Signature: [Signature] Date: 26-12-2019

Signature: _____ Date: _____

¹ Matla a Sechaba. (2019). "Diturupa Festival Performance Report".

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