

SUBMISSION TO THE
COMMISSION ON REGIONS

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TO: THE COMMISSION ON THE DEMARCATION OF BOUNDARIES

DATE: 2 JULY 1993

SUBMISSION BY: THE BOPHUTHATSWANA GOVERNMENT

SUBJECT: FUTURE BOUNDARY OPTIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

1. INTRODUCTION

The proposals of the Bophuthatswana Government are firmly embedded in its historical and cultural heritage which is regarded as one of the foundations for its existence as a people. In addition, intensive investigations by diverse interest groups on the best way to support optimal socio-economic development in the country not only support these proposals, but also establish a firm basis. These proposals were subsequently recognised as a feasible approach by an increasing number of individuals and interest groups throughout South Africa, and became a point of departure in motivating additions to and or deductions from the proposals formulated.

These findings, as contained in the attached Satswa Report, together with the covering comments as contained in this memorandum, represent the formal view of the Bophuthatswana Government. Representatives from the government are available to submit oral evidence and explain the contents of its presentation, if required.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

There is substantial evidence in literature to substantiate claims that people of Tswana origin were the first to occupy territories stretching from the Caprivi Strip and the Southern border of Zambia, to the Vaal River in the South.

T+ was bordered in the North-West by Zimbabwe and in the West

by Namibia. It is calculated that by the year 450 AD, Tswana
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Its culture and way of life were determined by the resource base and climate of this vast area.

The Batswana in Bophuthatswana and in Botswana are one people that is only divided today by way of artificial boundaries that were unilaterally and unlawfully forced onto them by Colonial Powers. There is thus no base, nor foundation for the continuation of this scar of injustice and suppression that is still found in Southern Africa today. The Satswa document - Pages 68 to 70 and other documentation submitted, clearly spell out in greater detail, the history of the Batswana and the reasons for its existing dispersed landblocks today.

Even though these separate landblocks provide administrative and socio-economic challenges of considerable magnitude, they also serve as an example of the importance of recognising Tswana culture and history and the close relationship between different Tswana tribes and traditions that have been maintained throughout the centuries. These facts must be carried forward into searching for a new dispensation for South Africa. It is thus the view that no logical basis exists to subdivide the existing Bophuthatswana into different regions. In fact, any effort to administer the affairs of the people living in Odi I, different from the affairs of the people living in Odi II could prove to be disastrous as existing tribal and family links, as well as traditional authority, could be seriously jeopardised. The same argumentation applies to why it is unthinkable to divorce Thaba Nchu from the rest of Bophuthatswana. (Refer Satswa document pages 68 to 70).

MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO

Bophuthatswana is a fully autonomous and independent country by virtue of powers and functions that were jointly agreed upon after prolonged negotiation between South Africa and the people living in Bophuthatswana.

These arrangements and understandings were enacted in legislation by both countries and although de jure international recognition is not given to its independence, the country is defacto and lawfully independent and a separate political entity.

The formal position of the government is that the country and its people are happy with their position as at present. They are proud of their achievements to date, they live in peace and harmony with all their neighbours and they enjoy the fruits of friendly and cordial relationships and economic co-operation. Close economic ties between South africa and Bophuthatswana will always be a precondition for continued economic growth and development, but this is not different from the position in many countries throughout the world.

Within the spectrum of 16 years, the country used whatever opportunity there was to fully utilise and develop its available resource base to restore dignity with its people and develop a nation that compares favourable with many countries today.

The first preference of the country thus remains to continue these very fruitful and rewarding relations of the past with South africa and to remain independent and autonomous.

The government is however also on record that it remains prepared and willing to consider any alternative option that offers a future as good or better than its present dispensation. To the extent that the existing investigation into boundaries, powers and functions of a future regional dispensation for South Africa offers such an opportunity, the Government is prepared to consider these implications on merit. The Government furthermore indicated that viable options will be presented to the people for a choice and that it is prepared to accept, through a democratically sound process, the will of the people.

BOUNDARY OPTIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Irrespective whether South Africa and Bophuthatswana decide to join forces in future, or continue as separate autonomies and independent countries, the need for economic co-operation and even integration in Southern africa, remains crucial.

It therefore remains in the interest of Bophuthatswana that a logical and economically feasible and viable regional dispensation develops in South Africa.

As indicated above, the success and/or failure in democratically finding an optimal solution regarding boundaries, powers and functions, could also influence a final decision on the advisability and prospects of joining forces with South Africa. From both these perspectives, it is in our interest to suggest the best possible solution for the future.

In this respect, the Bophuthatswana government is in full support of the contents of the Satswa document and its proposals as follows:-

The norms, values and principles to be promoted in a future region - pages 6-11 of the Satswa document;

The division of government functions between central, regional and local government -~ pages 13 and 14;

The development guidelines to guide and facilitate future socio-economic development and growth in a region - pages 15 to 64; and :

The Satswa Option-3 as explained and motivated in Chapter 5 with special reference to page 77 and the map Figure 5.4 and table following page 77 in the document.

The Government is in a process, in close co-operation with its partners in the region, to investigate the formulation of a regional constitution that could assist in giving further clarity regarding powers and functions for a new region.

Please note that the Satswa Option-3 proposals are widely supported in the region and that its acceptance was tested at various workshops, conferences and meetings. This proposal therefore truly represents the view of a large portion, if not the majority, of the people living in and adjacent to the region.

SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS SURROUNDING THE SATSWA INITIATIVE AND THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

The Government is aware that subsequent events and developments may necessitate a review and even adaption to the detailed proposals contained in the Satswa document.

This is totally in accordance with our policy and approach to allow the people and adjoining districts to submit their own views regarding incorporation or not into the proposed Satswa option-3. In this respect, cognisance was taken of the following: -

Indications by the RDAC Region-B (Northern Cape) that they would like to rather join forces with the Western Cape (Region B) but also subsequent developments indicating a preference in Vryburg and Kuruman to be part of the Satswa region.

Presentations by the Bushveld region in the Northern Transvaal (districts of Thabazimbi, Warmbaths, Waterberg and even Ellisras) to join the Satswa concept of values, norms, principles and regional government. These presentations support the Bophuthatswana view that its odi and Moretele districts are so much part and parcel of the Satswa region that it is unthinkable to even consider its positioning in another region.

confirmation by interest groups in the Orange Free State and Owa-Qwa that economic co-operation and development can best be promoted and accommodated into proposals very similar to the Satswa Optionâ\200\224-3 proposal.

Presentation by other districts, areas and interest groups that indicate a growing support base for the values, norms, principles and proposals as contained in the Satswa document.

Note was also taken of proposals to subdivide the Taung and Hartswater irrigation scheme in two different regions. It should be put on record that there is no logical economic and technical sense in this artificial sub-division.

CONCLUSION

This covering memorandum, the Satswa document and the other documentation attached, form the basis of the Bophuthatswana Government presentation to the commission. We trust that this will receive the necessary consideration and recognition in the formulation of proposals by the Commission.

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CONSIDERATIONS BEARING ON THE
CONSOLIDATION OF BOPHUTHATSWANA

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HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

by Richard Cornwell

Earliest Settlement and Dispersal

Any attempt to identify the territories occupied in earlier times by the Tswana people encounters difficulties in determining who exactly the Tswana

are and were. The very term "Tswana" is of relatively recent date and its

use today largely reflects the dictates of modern political and administrative convenience. Viewed across time we find that national and tribal groupings and identities are far from static or clearly defined, but represent reactions to prevailing social and cultural conditions. The institutionalised histories of European nation-states provide few usable models for the student of Tswana history, not least because of differences in the types of relationship between people and territory. In addition it should be remembered that traditional Tswana histories concern themselves mostly with genealogies of ruling groups. The function of these histories is largely that of explaining and sanctioning the customs and institutions of the present even at the unintentional cost of telescoping and modifying events in the distant past. In fact the processes of tribal and ethnic formation are far too complex to suggest simple lines of

cultural, political, linguistic or genetic descent.

The earlier orthodoxy that peoples of the Sotho-Tswana language group entered South Africa from across the Limpopo in a series of three distinct migrations is no longer unchallenged. Over the last few years increasing emphasis has been placed on the fact that traditional Tswana histories refer only to migrations over relatively short distances within the south-west Transvaal. It now seems more likely that the complex evolutionary processes that resulted in the mixture of cultural and linguistic characteristics which we now define as Tswana occurred

for the most part on the Transvaal highveld.

Although it is now clear that the Early Iron Age peoples who entered South Africa from the fourth century AD onwards were of Negro physical type it is doubtful whether they were Bantu-speaking. By the eleventh century AD, however, Late

Iron Age peoples were settling the highveld and these were certainly the physical and linguistic ancestors of the Bantu-speakers who inhabit South Africa today.

It is even possible that these peoples absorbed the earlier Negroid migrants and certainly over the centuries they assimilated some members of Stone Age hunter-

gatherer communities.-

The most densely settled area in South Africa's Late Iron Age was the southern Transvaal, which was well-endowed in pasturage, soil and iron. Archaeologists have made tentative identifications of a 'Buispoort culture' which dates from

the eleventh century and was centred in the Magaliesberg, whence it spread eastwards and southwards over the succeeding centuries. The closely-related and probably contemporaneous 'Uitkomst culture' flourished between Pretoria and Warmbaths. Experts maintain that these cultures exhibit unmistakable connections

with those of the modern Sotho-Tswana peoples.

Over the first few centuries of the millenium much of the western and southern Transvaal highveld was settled by these Iron Age communities, which shared a basically common culture. The growth in population and the nature of chieftainship within Sotho-Tswana society facilitated dispersal over a wider area. At

a time when land and water were abundant political differences and succession disputes within a chiefdom could be solved with relative ease. Dissatisfied members of a ruling lineage simply left the host community with their followers -to establish an autonomous political unit elsewhere. In time this process produced a cluster of chiefdoms linked by descent and by a complex of cultural, ritual and even political ties.

By the end of the fifteenth century two or three chiefdoms had already begun the process of fission and subdivision which created the major communities now comprising the Sotho-Tswana language group. On the southern highveld, branches of the Rolong crossed the Vaal by 1500 and soon spread across the Free State south of Orkney as far as Virginia. Near the confluence of the Crocodile and Marico

Rivers the Kwena-Hurutshe chiefdom also began to divide at this time. Over the next

three hundred years offshoots of this lineage-cluster spread themselves over the

western Transvaal highveld from Brits to Kanye and southwards to the upper reaches of the Caledon. Some Kwena peoples crossed the Vaal into the north-eastern Free State, inter-married with local Fokeng peoples and began a new series of

dispersals which eventually distributed them over much of the southern Transvaal and northern Free State. Other offshoots of the Kwena were the Ngwaketse and the Ngwato, who pressed into the Soshong hills. The Kgatla were also one of the founding lineages. Most of their dispersal occurred north of the Vaal and to the east of the Kwena. From this group stemmed the important chieftaincies of the Tlokwa and Pedi, among others. The expansion of Kwena and Kgatla clusters pushed the Rolong south-westwards where they based themselves on Molepolole towards

the end of the seventeenth century. Under the chieftaincy of Tau the Rolong

established their hegemony over an area bordered by the Molopo and Setlagole Rivers in the north-west and reaching to Molemane and Klerksdorp to the south-west, Taungs and Khunwana in the south. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the Rolong had divided into four sections, while the Thlaning had split off to form an independent chiefdom, driving the Rolong out of their southernmost

territories towards Setlagodi with the aid of the Korana.

This Korana intervention, welcome though it may have been to the Thlaping, represented an ominous portent for the Tswana as a whole, in that it marked the first introduction of European weapons and tactics to their political world.

From the middle of the eighteenth century groups of Korana and Griqua, themselves displaced by the expansion of the Cape Colonial frontier, settled along the Orange up to its junction with the Vaal. With their horses and guns these peoples effectively blocked any further southern migration by the Sotha-Tswana. Their frequent recourse to banditry exercised a disruptive effect upon the Tswana for

almost fifty years before the first impact of the Difaqane was felt.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century Sotho-Tswana communities occupied most of the arable land of the highveld. In the extreme south Sotho chiefdoms and scattered Nguni groups occupies the line of the Caledon up to the Maluti mountains. Along the upper reaches of the Caledon lay Kwena chiefdoms and to their south more Nguni. The Taung had settled the Vet and Sand Rivers as far north as the Vaal and to their east were the Sia, Tlokwa and Phuthing chieftancies in the foothills of the Drakensberg. North of the Vaal the Pedi dominated a large area from their nucleus along the Steelpoort River. To their west lay more Kwena chiefdoms along the

Apies and Crocodile Rivers from the Magaliesberg to the Pilansberg. The area dominated by the Hurutshe ran from the Pilansberg to the area around Rustenburg and thence westward to Zeerust, with their capital at Kaditshwene. To their south

and south-west were the Rolong, whose traditional territories were bordered by

the Molopo River, Taaiboschspruit, Schoonspruit, then along the Vaal and westwards to Warrenton, Vryburg and Mafeking. Their major centres were at Khunwana and Maquassie. To the south and west were the Thlaping, centered at Dithakong, and

fhe Korana, while to the north lived the Kgatla, more Kwena chiefdoms and the

Ngwaketse at Kanye.

The Difaqane

By the beginning of the nineteenth century a social and political revolution was under way in Zululand, the effects of which would be felt throughout southern and central Africa. The development of new fighting techniques soon led to the formation

of larger, highly-centralised military states which indulged in warfare and raiding on a scale unprecedented in southern Africa. The Sotho-Tswana chiefdoms were ill-equipped to ward off this new challenge, for despite their prosperity and the complex and highly developed nature of their social and political institutions they occupied territories difficult to defend and acknowledged no common

leadership which might have united their resistance.

In 1822 the Sotho-Tswana peoples felt the first shocks of the Difaqane as fugitive tribes from Zululand crossed the Drakensberg in search of plunder. The Tlokwa were the first victims and as their society collapsed they themselves embarked on a career of rapine. By 1828 virtually all of the country between the Orange and the Vaal had been denuded of stock and grain. The Sotho communities there were in a state of collapse, their dispossessed survivors forming migrant hordes which spread destruction over an ever-widening area.

By 1823 the effects of the Difaqane were felt north of the Vaal. The Phuting sacked the Hurutshe capital at Kaditshwene and the unfortunate victims then fell prey to a second wave of marauders, the Taung of Moletsane, who then pushed on to devastate the lands of the northern Rolong sections. A horde of Fokeng also crossed the Vaal at this time linked with another Fokeng tribe and under the leadership of Sebetwane became infamous under the name of Kololo.

Before the end of 1823 the rich herds of the Thlaning at Dithakong had attracted the attention of the starving raiders. The Phuting, Kololo and Hlakwane all converged on the Thlaping capital but were routed by the guns of Griqua horsemen summoned to the town by the resident missionaries. The Kololo then headed north to the Molopo river where they were joined by Moletsane's Taung in an attack on the Rolong at Khunwana in 1824. From here the Taung proceeded to Maquassie to strike the Seleka Rolong while the Kololo pressed into the rich Marico district where they defeated the unfortunate Hurutshe, whose chief they killed. Having devastated the Hurutshe country the Kololo and Taung attacked the Kgatla chiefdom at the confluence of the Crocodile and Apiesrivers. The newer threat from Mzilikazi's impis forced the raiding alliance to split, and the Kololo headed north-westwards into other Tswana territories. The Tlokwa were their next victims, followed by the Kweni at Dithubaruba. Even the powerful Ngwaketse

were unable to defeat the Kololo initially, though in 1826 with the help of two English traders they took their revenge. The Kololo then fled northwards to

raid the Ngwato at Serowe. The Ngwato were overwhelmed and forced to flee across the Kalahari to Lake Ngami followed by their tormentors. The Kololo handed out

another defeat, this time to the Tawana, then crossed the Zambesi and passed from the South African scene.

In the wake of this original destruction followed the greater menace of Mzilikazi's Ndebele who fled from Shaka's wrath in about 1823 to establish a highveld kingdom based on the Zulu model. Mzilikazi's first settlement on the highveld was on the Olifants River, but his initial failure to subdue the Pedi

and the desire to remove himself more effectively beyond the range of Zulu impis took him into the fertile and well-watered Magaliesberg. Here he wrecked the remnants of the Kwena chiefdoms and built a series of kraals along the Crocodile and Apies Rivers from which base he raided in all directions. Recognising this new threat, elements of the Griquas, Korana, Taung and Rolong combined to raid Mzilikazi's cattle-posts. Some damage was done to the Ndebele herds over the

next few years but clever counter-attacks by Mzilikazi reduced the effect of

these commandos and dissuaded the Griqua and Korana from more extensive operations. The Ndebele impis were also successful against the Ngwaketse, driving them into the Kalahari in 1828. By this time Mzilikazi had extended his control over the best lands between the Vaal and the Limpopo, exacting tribute, soldiers and workers from those Sotho-Tswana peoples who continued to live around the periphery of his state.

In 1832, however, Dingane despatched regiments to attack Mzilikazi and the latter sustained a serious defeat which compelled him to move his capital westwards once more. Nevertheless, he was still able to campaign effectively against the Ngwaketse, Kgatla, Kwena and the Rolong at Khunwana and by the end of the year had evicted the Hurutshe from Mosega. The centre of Mzilikazi's kingdom now lay

along the Marico River, with his major kraals at Mosega and eGabení.

Again he began clearing the veld around him to provide security against attack. His victims included the Rapulana-Rolong who submitted in 1835 but later fled southwards to join other Rolong sections at Thaba Nchu, while the Hurutshe were scattered in renewed flight from their settlements along the Harts River. The Ndebeles' scorched earth policy was only partially successful, however, for the danger from mounted Griqua and Korana raiders and from the formidable Zulus

persisted, and Mzilikazi began to prepare for a move towards the Limpopo.

Though short in duration Mzilikazi's sojourn on the highveld had a profound effect, following as it did upon the havoc brought by the earlier stages of the Difagane. Tribes which had lived in the area for centuries were decimated and their survivors 'scattered to eke out a precarious existence in deserts or caves

where they might avoid the attention of the Ndebele. Some Sotho-Tswana societies managed to survive, at the cost of being incorporated into Mzilikazi's state

as vassals, while individual tribesmen joined Sotho-speaking regiments in the Ndebele army. So successful was Mzilikazi's policy of absorption that it seems

that by 1835 the majority of his subjects were Sotho-speaking.

The Voortrekkers

It was the recent depopulation of the interior plains which dictated the direction of white migration from the Cape. Since 1825 white settlers had made sorties across the Orange River in search of pasture and water. Within five years this trekboer migration had assumed a more permanent character and some Boers even

left beacons along the Harts River, presumably by way of staking some personal claim to the lands there. Griquas, too, filtered back into Transorangia in

increasing numbers.

The arrival of the Voortrekkers north of the Orange marked a new departure in

the migratory pattern, in terms of scale, motive and effect. The Great Trek introduced to the interior new methods of economic exploitation and alien concepts of landownership and sovereignty. At first the trekkers spread out over the lands between Thaba Nchu, where a Wesleyan mission had been established, and the

Orange.

By mid-1836 parties of Voortrekkers began to move across the Vaal, where they ran into Ndebele armies who apparently mistook them for marauding Griqua. Two small groups were wiped out and the main body, under Andries Potgieter, withdrew with difficulty to Vegkop, where it fought a successful defensive battle but lost all its livestock. The Voortrekkers were extricated from their grave predicament by Moroka, the Seleka-Rolong chief, who provided oxen to haul the whites back to Thaba Nchu. Here the trekkers divided, some heading for Natal under Retief's leadership. Potgieter, however, determined to attack Mzilikazi and in January 1837 he led a mixed force of

The expedition cost the Ndebele several thousand cattle and many lives, and they withdrew to eGabení. On Potgieter's side the only fatal losses were suffered by the Rolong, and the Voortrekker leader advanced his base to Winburg on the Sand River. In June 1837 Mzilikazi suffered a serious defeat at the hands of Dingane and began to shift his people northwards. Before he could complete this move, however, Potgieter struck again with a stronger, composite force. In a nine-days

battle around eGabení the Ndebele power was broken; once again the only casualties

to Potgieter's force were suffered by the Rolong. Mzilikazi fled northwards with

sections of his people, abandoning many of his Sotho subjects to make what peace they could with the newcomers.

Andries Potgieter now claimed the whole Transvaal highveld as his by right of conquest. This act had more to do with entrenching his own political position against the British authorities and his rivals among the leaders of the Trek than with any attempt to promote immediate white occupation of Mzilikazi's old territories. By the end of 1838 a small settlement had been established on the Mooi River, moving to Potchefstroom's present site in 1842. From here white farmers filtered gradually into the area bordered by the Magaliesberg, Schoonspruit and Suikerbosrand. At the same time Mzilikazi's Sotho-Tswana victims began to return to their old homes on the highveld. Some individuals and small groups were quickly absorbed into the white communities as labourers, but most attached themselves to one or other chief trying to re-establish an autonomous political and social structure. In the central highveld most of these attempts were doomed, swamped by the influx of trekkers which continued steadily through the 1840's.

Most of the Hurutshe, Ratlou-Rolong, Rapulana-Rolong and Kgafela-Kgatla succumbed in this way, the social and political fabric of their tribes too badly rent by the ravages of the Difaqane to offer effective resistance.

The Expansion of White Settlement

Voortrekker society began to segment in the mid-1840's; Potgieter himself left Potchefstroom for the eastern lowveld and other nuclear communities were established at Ohrigstad and Zoutpansberg. This dispersal, which aggravated political differences within the Voortrekker camp, and the slow diffusion of white farmers from the denser concentrations, diminished the white military advantage relative to the stronger among the African chiefdoms. Thus, to the west of the Potchefstroom community the Tshidi-Rolong, Thlaping, Sechele's Kwena, the Ngwaketse and Ngwato were all able to maintain an effective independence. These tribes had emerged from the Difaqane with a measure of cohesion and were even reinforced by other survivors of Mzilikazi's fall.

Resistance to the Boers' westward expansion was strengthened by the missionaries who since the beginning of the century had established their presence in a series of stations among the Griqua and Tswana. In many ways the missionaries' penetration of Tswana society was but another form of conquest by an alien power, for they deliberately aimed at a transformation of the very foundations of tribal life and of the nature of chieftainship- Indeed, from about 1850 onwards the missionaries

began to appeal openly for the British Government to protect the field of their labours from Boer encroachment. For a while it seemed that they would manage to convince the Imperial authorities that British control of the 'Road to the North', which linked the mission stations and carried traders and hunters into the interior, was vital in order to preserve the Cape's commercial interests and Imperial security. In 1852, however, came one of those sudden reversals of British policy in southern Africa. Alarmed by the enormous and futility of attempts to control their erstwhile subjects north of the Orange and the Vaal, the British Government determined to disengage itself from the affairs of the interior.

In January 1852 Her Majesty's Commissioners Hogge and Owen put their signatures to a document which became known as the Sand River Convention. This accorded recognition to the independence of the Transvaal Boers and to Pretorius as leader of the inland republic. It also included a renunciation of all treaties and alliances between Britain and the non-white peoples north of the Vaal, and, perhaps most important of all, it opened the trade in munitions to the Boers and expressly closed it to non-whites.

This Convention obviously tilted the local balance of power heavily in favour of the Boers, who quickly proceeded to follow up their advantage. Until now it had been by the efforts of individual farmers rather than by any formal act

on the part of the relatively impotent Republican authorities that white sovereignty had been imposed over African tribes north of the Vaal. By extracting labour from neighbouring kraals control had been extended piecemeal over the weaker chiefdoms. Such impositions could, however, lead to flight on the part of chiefs and their subjects. One such fugitive, Mosielele of the Kgatla, sought refuge in 1852 with Sechele's Kwenya at Dimawe. The Republican Government decided to follow up the success of Sand River by demanding not only Mosielele's surrender, but that Sechele hand over all guns in his possession and that he

close the northern road to British traders and missionaries. Sechele refused and in the ensuing battle Dimawe and the nearby mission station of Kolobeng were destroyed, and Sechele was forced to flee to Dithubaruba. In a sequel to this incident, the Tshidi-Rolong were also attacked for Montshiwa's refusal to participate in the expedition against Sechele. Montshiwa himself was forced north to Setlagodi and Mosaneng, though his people remained along the Molopo with Molema. According

to Rolong tradition a second war followed, which was concluded in October 1853 by a treaty which restored the old boundaries of Rolong territory but sanctioned those white farms already occupied there. The measure of Montshiwa's independence may be gauged by his successful refusal to supply farm labour in 1865.

For more than a decade after the commandos against Sechele and Montshiwa the Boer republics were too distracted by internal political and ecclesiastical divisions to achieve permanent dominance over the Tswana chiefdoms. Nevertheless, white settlement continued to expand and in 1858 the Thlaping began to resist further encroachment across the Maquassisspruit. The Republic mobilised a strong commando to break the Thlaping and two chiefs were killed, Gasibone

and Phofuetsile. Mahura, the most important surviving Thlaping leader, evaded an attempt to convert him into a puppet ruler and refused the Boer leaders' offer

to recognize him as paramount chief of the Thlaping.

By the late 1860's white settlement had expanded further to the west, though it was still confined to pockets surrounded by Tswana chiefdoms. It should not

be imagined that the Republic's writ now ran wherever title-deeds had been

issued to farmers, however. The issue of title certainly did not imply effective, constant or even occasional occupation of a farm; indeed, surveying parties were frequently chased off tribal lands. Where Boer encroachment was most effective, however, was along important water-courses, for by occupying the headwaters of various streams and by damming their waters, white farmers incidentally reduced the carrying capacity of surrounding black territories and

compelled the occupants to seek pasture and arable land in less favourable areas.

In the 1860's the Tswana and Griqua leaders began to employ more sophisticated methods of protesting their independence, by seeking the aid of white land

agents as their representatives. The assistance they received was certainly not without its conditions, for the men they employed had their own political motives and also made their own extraordinary demands for commission in terms of land grants. In 1867 events took a new turn with two discoveries: diamonds were found on the Vaal near Klipdrift and gold was reported from Tati. President Pretorius soon issued a proclamation defining the boundaries of the South African Republic. To the east the frontier followed the Lebombo Mountains, including all of Swaziland, with a strip of land reaching Delagoa Bay. To the north it included the Shashi River and its tributaries, most of the Matoppos and the Tati Gold-fields, though it prudently excluded Matabeleland. In the west the borders were defined from Langeberg on the Orange directly northwards to Lake Ngami thus, with one stroke of the pen, incorporating virtually all of the major Tswana

tribes within the Republic.

The Keate Award

In a desperate attempt to save their lands from annexation the Griqua and Rolong appealed to the Crown to intercede. Eventually the Rolong, Thlaping, Griqua

and the South African Republic agreed to submit their respective claims to arbitration, in which the ultimate judgement would be given by Lieutenant-Governor Keate of Natal.

A complex series of problems faced Governor Keate when he tried to unravel the tangle of oral and written evidence presented before the Bloemhof Arbitration Court. In the south of the disputed territory the Griqua case was simplified by the Free State's refusal to participate at all in the exercise. Here it was largely a question of establishing to what extent the Griquas exercised sovereignty over those Thlaping and Rolong tribes whose lands were interspersed with the Griqua farms. Here, as elsewhere in the area in dispute, the essence of the difficulty was to lay down firm boundaries in an area where political and judicial

authority were exercised on a personal rather than a territorial basis. The Griqua were well served by their agents, however, and a series of treaties was led as evidence to secure most of what was demanded at the cost of certain Tswana

claims.

The issue between the Tswana and the South African Republic was even less clear-cut. In the area under consideration land was claimed under a multiplicity of titles. There were tribal claims by the Tswana in occupation, there were individual claims based on title issued by Potchefstroom and Pretoria and there were other individual claims based on private cession by Tswana chiefs. Again, private title did not imply actual occupation, nor did it solve the questions of whether tribal chiefs actually possessed the power to alienate land or whether

the transfer of title to private hands implied a change of sovereignty in favour of the white government. Once more, long catalogues were presented of alleged submissions by Tswana chiefs to Republican authority, or of white acknowledgements of Tswana autonomy. Pretorius allowed his more extreme claims of 1868 to sink into obscurity, but still appealed to the Sand River Convention and to the overthrow of Mzilikazi, a story in which he played down the role played by the Boers' Rolong

allies.

In the event, Keate decided to ignore the more extreme Rolong claims, which would have placed the boundary on the Schoonspruit and penned white occupation to the

Mooi River Valley. Instead he chose the Maquassi as the front%EEJ_giLh_Ihï~\201_liEE_____1 from its source to the headwaters of the Harts River.) Naturally any

judgement which atte evelopments of the

previous half-century was bound to have its imperfections. Nevertheless, for all its undoubted .flaws Keate's Award, published on 17 October 1871, represented the first reasoned attempt to define a western frontier for the South African Republic

and to secure the rights of the independent chiefs. Itâ\200\224Ã@sâ\200\224;hereï¬\201o;aâ
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F;;Bï¬\201ï¬\201eingzehe_:elexant parts of the Award :

"... I do award, order, and adjudge that henceforth and for the future the boun-

dary line of the territory of the Chief Gaseitsoie, of the Bangoaketsi tribe, shall commence on the west at Leganing, and proceeding by Lepaklapaling, Pattapatta, Lingoma, Pellayanging (narrow place), Deboganko or Schaapkuil Sepatobie (bare place), and Maclase, terminate at Kamaboelama (broad place),

where it abuts upon the line of territory of the Baralong tribes. That the boundary line dividing the territory of the Baralongs and Batlapins from the territory of the South African Republic shall proceed from Ramaboelama by the old Mission Station of Mosiega, at the sources of the Klein Marico River, pass out of the hills of Klein Marico along the waggon road leading from thence towards Lottakana, the chief town of the Baralongs, through Malemane, as far as the late farm of Jak Buurman, on the Molapo River, thence easterly up the said Molapo River to its sources, thence along a waggon road to Elandsfontein and Grootefontein, thence

to Relsobottle, the source of the Hart River, thence by Garemomare, Melsuepeltuane, Thaba, and Khiribening, upon the sources of the Pogola River or Maquassie Spruit down the said Spruit to its junction with the Vaal River; and I do further award, order, and adjudge that henceforth and for the future, from where the Pogola River or Maquassie Spruit enters the Vaal River, the boundary line of the territory of the Batlapins shall follow the course of the Vaal River to a point on the said river, at which a straight line drawn from the mountain called Platberg, situated

on the southern bank of the said Vaal River, passing north-east of Roelofsfontein

to a point on the north of Boetsap, which is situated on the north-western side of

the Hart River, would cut the said Vaal River, thence following the said straight line to the said point north of Boetsap, it shall run westward between Nelsonsfontein and Knoning, thence passing south of Maremane and north of Klipfontein,

it shall run in a straight line to the northerly point of the Langeberg.

And I do further award, order, and adjudge that henceforth and for the future the said line of boundary running from where the said line drawn from the Platberg Mountain cuts the Vaal River to the northern point of Langberg, shall be the dividing line of the territory of the said Batlapin tribes, and the territory of the Chief Nicholas Waterboer, Paramount Chief of the country known as Griqualand

West.ve."

Almost immediately after the publication of this judgement Griqualand became a Crown Colony, the Griquas having asked for annexation in order to protect their rights against the Free State and the unruly ponulation of diggers which flocked

to the diamond fields.

While thezland{SbÃ&i¬\201iggg;gâ\200\234Ã&i¬\201dâ\200\231 agents of the Tswana and-Griqua
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;Ifansvaal simply repudiated the Award. The Volksraad invoked a legal

technicality to dissociate itself from Pretorius' submission to the arbitration and then secured the election of a new President clever enough to mend the harm done. By 1873 President Burgers had found a way of exnloiting differences among the various Thlaping chiefs. Matlabane and Bothlasitse, the latter recognised for the occasion as paramount of the Thlaping, were induced to cede to the Republic all their territories between the Vaal and the Harts Rivers and to bind themselves as subjects to the Republic. In return they were promised that locations would be demarcated where they might rule their tribes in relative security. The chiefs themselves were evidently ignorant of the nature of this cession and believed that they were merely signing a treaty of alliance which would preserve them from British annexation after the example of Griqualand West. " Mankurwane, the other major Thlaping leader, was more circumspect and refused

to submit to the Transvaal.

The Conventions

In fact the administration of the diamond fields soon involved the Imperial authorities in far too much expense for any further annexations or even for the extension of formal protection over the Tswana chiefs. As a result, no attempt was made to counter the continued advance of white farmers across the Keate Award line, which remained unbeaconed. By 1877, however, the South African Republic itself was in difficulties which were aggravated by a disastrous war against the Pedi and the threat of invasion by the Zulu. Britain stepped in and annexed the Transvaal on the pretext of avoiding anarchy in the interior and in the hope of pressing through a South African confederation to consolidate British hegemony in the region. Far from bringing relief to the Tswana chiefs, however, the annexation of the Transvaal caused a deterioration in their position, as claim-holders advanced in increasing numbers across the Keate Award line confident that British arms would now enforce their title to lands there. In any

event the old order was fast breaking down to the west of the boundary.

In Griqualand West the Griquas themselves had in fact dissolved as an organised community. The turmoil of conflicting and overlapping land claims in the territory had led to the institution of a land court in 1876 and the resulting judgement dealt a mortal blow to the Griquas. Over the next few years these people bargained away what remained of their patrimony in exchange for money and drink. Their Thlaping subjects, too, had their lands sold from under them and

from 1876 until 1878 a series of clashes took place as Griqua and Thlaping attempted a futile resistance to the new order. White volunteer forces suppressed the rising with great loss of life and substance, and in 1880 Griqualand West was annexed to the Cape Colony.

To the north the unrest communicated itself to other Thlaping, Rolong and Thlaro peoples, who rose in arms against the social and economic change brought by the missionaries. The chiefs' inevitable defeat was followed by renewed missionary pressure for them to petition for British rule and a formal protectorate over Bechuanaland south of the Limpopo. Only setbacks elsewhere to Britain's confederation schemes prevented the realisation of this end, for the revolt by the Transvaal Boers threw the whole of Imperial policy in South Africa into question again.

While Boer and Briton wrestled for control of the Transvaal old Rolong feuds came to a head and Montshiwa of the Tshidi-Rolong became involved in a conflict with Moswete of the Rapulana-Rolong. Montshiwa hoped for some British support against his pro-Boer opponent and the retrocession of the Transvaal Republic

in 1881 came as a severe blow to him. The western boundaries of the Transvaal were now redefined by the Pretoria Convention in an arrangement based more on the hope of keeping the peace between white and black than on any concept of abstract justice. Rolong and Thlaping chiefs lost much of the territory vouchsafed them by the Keate Award. More serious was the fact that Moswete began to enlist white mercenaries to aid him in his struggle against Montshiwa. These

men would be rewarded with looted cattle and with land in the territory of the defeated chief. Massouw of the Korana also joined the assault on Montshiwa

and was himself attacked by the Thlaping chief Mankurwane. The Korana thereupon hired their own set of white volunteers, encouraged by the Republican authorities who saw this as an opportunity for further quasi-official expansion of their territories. Britain refused to intervene with force to defend the Convention

of 1881 and confined its response to verbal protests.

In June 1882 Mankurwane admitted defeat and saw most of his remaining lands divided up as farms for Massouw's mercenaries, who set up the Stellaland Republic with its capital at Vryburg. A few months later Montshiwa too was exhausted and concluded a treaty with Moswete. Almost three-quarters of his territory was handed to Moswete's white freebooters to establish the Republic of Goshen, centred on Rooigrond. The Transvaal Republic promptly extended its protection over these new states.

Stellaland and Goshen, however, lay across the "Road to the North", and to the clamour of the missionaries was added the protest of the Cape mercantile

interest, urging that Britain oppose this Transvaal expansionism. The new western border laid down by the London Convention of 1884 extended the Transvaal frontier even further into Thlaping and Rolong territory, but kept it to the east of the all-important road. Anarchy still reigned along the border, however, and

a combination of factors, including Germany's appearance on the colonial scene and some inept diplomacy by Kruger led to a firmer hand being taken by London.

A British expeditionary force was despatched to oust the freebooters, restore order and assume control over Bechuanaland. The Thlaping and Rolong west of the

. Transvaal and south of the Molopo readily accepted British protection as their

last remaining hope of preserving any of their territories. North of the Molopo, too, the Tswana had suffered from Boer pressure, and the principal chiefs of the

Ngwato, Ngwaketse and Kweni all submitted to a British protectorate.

.In 1885 the area south of the Molopo was annexed as the Crown Colony of British Bechuanaland, ten years later to be incorporated in the Cape Colony. This development did not preserve the independence of Montshiwa and Mankurwane, however, for they found themselves penned back in small reserves which represented only fractions of their former holdings. North of the Molopo the Tswana chiefs were more fortunate, and even managed to avert the wholesale transfer of the Protectorate to the British South Africa Company in 1895. Here too the powers of chiefs were far less affected by white officialdom than to the south where Tswana independence

was virtually extinguished.

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SOME IMPORTANT SITES IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE SOTHO-TSWANA

Map from J.D. Omer-Cooper: The Zulu Aftermath (London, 1966)
p. 88.

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