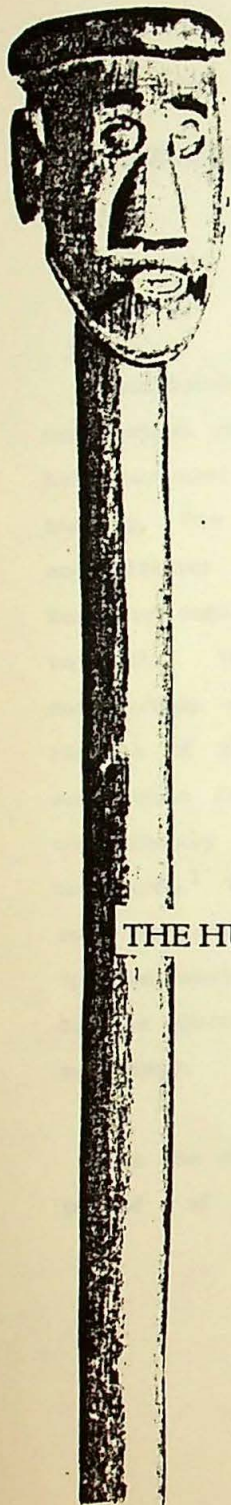


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THE 'MFECANE' AFTERMATH

towards a new paradigm

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THE HURUTSHE, THE DIFAQANE AND THE FORMATION
OF THE TRANSVAAL STATE 1820-1875

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The Hurutshe, the Difaqane and the Formation of the Transvaal
State,

1820 - 1875

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Considerable attention recently has been given to an examination of the ways in which certain central historical myths have pervaded political thought and policy in South Africa's recent history. The first myth was created by early traveller, Missionary and official accounts of South Africa's "empty land" whose void European settlers and Imperial interests therefore were at liberty to fill. The second myth concerns the notion that African communities existed in identifiable "tribes" grouped in defined regions of South Africa - a conceit which provided ideological sustenance for the policy of "separate development" of Africans conveniently divided into presumed ethnically distinct homelands.¹ The readiness of historians uncritically to imbibe and embroider such interpretations² imbued them with a "professional" stamp of approval, thus firmly embedding the fiction of the European right to the land in South Africa's political mythology.

At the core of this myth is the difaqane, usually considered a period of cataclysmic, African-engendered displacement and

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depopulation of Natal and vast areas of the central and western highveld. It has been upon this event therefore that the most valuable critiques of the white legitimacy theory have focussed.³ The boldest intervention has been that of Cobbing, who has switched the focus from a view which places the disruptive influence of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka as the cause of the difaqane to one which points to the overwhelming impact of white penetration upon African societies from the early nineteenth century. Cobbing's insertion of the role of white agency adds a powerful causative factor for the violence and social upheavals that spread across the region in the 1820s and 1830s.⁴ Yet important reservations have been raised regarding Cobbing's work, both at the conceptual level where his analysis is seen as exaggeratedly Eurocentric, and at an empirical level. Perhaps the most disturbing implication of Cobbing's work is that it permits an interpretation of an omnipotent European power, driven by imperial and capitalistic forces, which carved out at will new states upon South Africa's highveld, thus determining the geophysical structure of the modern South African state. This is in contrast to earlier "Africanist" historians of the 1970s and early 1980s whose writings accentuated the inability of these states to impose their ambitions on weakly submissive African societies.⁵

The intention of this paper is to revisit the world of African political action and choices by focussing on a Tswana-speaking community in the middle decades of the nineteenth century in the Western Transvaal, an area hitherto neglected in the

historiography, and in so doing to make a contribution to the difaqane debate. Specifically this article highlights the pitfalls in seeing a deterministic imperial ideology initiating and motivating all subsequent political and economic activity and interrelationships. This account examines the accuracy of the logical outcome of Cobbing's theory, showing that black/white relationships were not reducible to the simple pattern of (white) capitalist forces dominating (black) precapitalist societies. Moreover the greater availability and, generally, reliability of sources for the post-difaqane period eases considerably the difficulty faced by analysts of earlier periods of the "weighing of evidence only procurable through prejudiced channels".⁶ A precise examination of such a relationship throws into relief the shadowy pattern of earlier events, casting doubt upon the capacity of imperialist and capitalist interests to drive numerous ^{African} groups from their sites of occupation.

In the early nineteenth century the Hurutshe occupied land near the Madikwe (Marico) river on the western highveld. This had been an area long settled by this community, which by the end of the eighteenth century had capitalised upon the opportunities presented by European settlement and trading activities emanating from the Cape and from Delagoa Bay, to establish a strong trade-based confederacy in the region.⁷ The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century heralded a period of discord and conflict between the Tswana trading chiefdoms for the control of trade⁸ which might have sapped the strength of these communities and

rendered them vulnerable to the first interlopers displaced by the difaqane. This raises the possibility that the social cohesion of the Hurutshe may have been undermined by these trade imperatives, which opened up new economic activities and entrepreneurial opportunities which in turn challenged the ruling elites. Yet trade did not simply materialise among the Tswana as an unknown entity. It was well entrenched among them prior to the mid-eighteenth century, and ~~at least~~ the impact of trade demands on societies organised for exchange therefore would not have been that profound, though the scale of trade may have been expanded considerably due to European demands. It is worth noting that the continuous raiding and warfare from about 1770 constituted a "proto-difaqane" that owed nothing to direct European penetration. Conrad Buys, the first frontier brigand to reach the Hurutshe arrived in 1815 to find them locked with the Maletse in the east.⁹

The Hurutshe abandoned their capital at Kaditshwene in 1821 following raids by the Phuting and Patsa-Fokeng during which their chief Diutwileng was killed. They then divided into five identifiable sections. The largest, under Mokgatlhe and Moilola, brother and nephew of Diutwileng respectively, moved to Mosega, about forty kilometers to the south-west from Kaditshwene. They fell under Ndebele control from about 1826 onwards but, as Mzilikazi shifted his polity further westward in 1831, this group grew increasingly uneasy as the Ndebele began to stamp their control over Tswana communities living west of the Madikwe

region. In 1832 a significant portion therefore took pre-emptive action and fled Mosega. After a peripatetic interlude, during which they almost decided to link up with missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, Mokgatlhe and Moiloa's band settled at Modimong on the Harts river. From the mid-1830s they transferred their allegiance to the Tlhaping under Mahura who were building a loose confederacy from their base downstream of the Vaal/Harts confluence.¹⁰

In 1837 a Hurutshe force under Moiloa assisted the Trekkers in an attack on the Ndebele, and on the basis of their assumed accord Potgieter, the Trekker leader, promised Moiloa land in the territory now vacated by the Ndebele, provided the Hurutshe remained "loyal and obedient".¹¹ However, this section remained at Modimong until 1848. The reason for this delay in moving lay firstly in the general political uncertainties of the period which produced a contest for ascendancy among the Griquas, the Trekkers, the missionaries and certain Tswana chiefdoms and secondly in a struggle for control between Moiloa and the sons of his uncle Mokgatlhe.¹²

The other groups were numerically fewer and consisted of a party of refugees with the Rolong, a group who remained at Borutwe and became subjects of the Ndebele state; the faction which remained at Mosega after 1831 and were also incorporated by the Ndebele and finally a corps comprising some individuals who sought labour on white-owned farms in the Cape.¹³

In 1848 three factors convinced the largest Hurutshe component at Modimong to move back to their former homeland in the Marico district. Firstly the struggle for leadership resolved itself as Moiloa slowly established his authority over the community; secondly Tlhaping hegemony reached an unacceptably demanding level; and thirdly missionaries of the London Missionary Society, (LMS) with whom Moiloa had been in close contact, had prepared the path for remigration by establishing a station in the Marico District in 1847.¹⁴

This move implied legal recognition and acceptance by the authority of the colony of the Trekkers based around their centres at Potchefstroom and Magaliesberg who now, on the basis of having dislodged the Ndebele from the highveld, claimed all of Mzilikazi's former territory as their own. The first Trekkers into the Marico district arrived almost simultaneously as the Hurutshe, taking up farms along the Marico river as a reward for their participation in the battle of Boomplaats in 1848.¹⁵

Within a few months the first Trekkers had located themselves at Mosega and according to the LMS Missionary, Edwards, by September 1849 were "determined to occupy every available fountain and [were] resolved upon making chiefs and their people bow to their own rule".¹⁶

The Trekkers in the next few years attempted to translate their formal hegemony into a systematic and efficient system of control

and exaction, the execution of which led to frequent and random acts of violence. Hurutshe children were captured and turned into "inboekselings" under the notorious "apprenticeship" system that prevailed in the Transvaal.¹⁷ Another source of conflict lay in the labour tax, which enabled state officials to demand labourers from chiefs. By law such labour could only be requisitioned for a period of up to fourteen days, but some Hurutshe remained in employment for at least a year.¹⁸ Direct tribute in cattle or maize was periodically seized from the Hurutshe. A source of frustration to the Trekkers was the fact that they could not take possession of the excellent fountains sustaining the Hurutshe at their chief town, Dinokana. Had the advantages of this site been known to them they would almost certainly have directed the Hurutshe to a different location; once known to them it only quickened their cupidity to seize Hurutshe territory.

To worsen matters the Marico trekkers regarded the Hurutshe not only as tributaries but also as "allies" and demanded from them periodic spells of military duties. In 1852 for example a contingent of Moiloa's and Mangope's Hurutshe followers was forced to participate in a Boer Commando against the Kwena Chief Setshele, living beyond the authority of the Transvaal.¹⁹ The Hurutshe were also obliged to play the role of henchmen to the Trekkers. Negotiations between Tswana chiefs and Boer officials took place at Moiloa's town and the Hurutshe had to provide information about cattle thefts and the murder of local Boers in the Marico. The Marico veldkornets visited Dinokana to gauge the mood of the

African population in the district, reporting their impressions after each visit.²⁰

Consequently the early 1850s was an extremely torrid period for the Hurutshe. Not only did they feel the full brunt of Trekker exactions but, after their participation in the 1852 Commando, the Hurutshe were considered by the independent Tswana communities to be traitors. Moiloa was forced to abandon Dinokana for several months and had to placate Setshela by sending him slaughter oxen.²¹ Productive activities were severely disrupted, especially between 1849 and 1854. Furthermore the Hurutshe lost the protection and services of the LMS missionaries when the Society was driven out of the Transvaal in 1852 for objecting to the raid on Setshela and the simultaneous looting of the residence of David Livingstone, LMS missionary to the Kwena.²² Such circumstances led Moiloa to the disconsolate observation in late 1852 that he was no more than "a Dog of the Boers".²³

Thus far the history of the Hurutshe in these early years under white rule would tend to reinforce the idea of a powerful white society transplanting on the highveld an economic and political system which had been developed in the Cape. Cobbing's view would appear to stand up to examination. Not long was to pass however before the Hurutshe began to loosen themselves from Boer domination. The main reason for this lies in the determination of Tswana groups east of the Hurutshe to resist Trekker incursions and attacks. After the 1852 raid on Setshela's people, the Kwena and

the Rolong (who had also been victims of the Commando) sought to redeem the loss of their cattle and children, including Setshele's son. Cattle were raided from Boer farms between 1852 and 1853 and three Boers were killed in minor skirmishes. The result was that the Marico farms were abandoned and the Boers went into laager before finally leaving for Potchefstroom and Magaliesberg in January 1853.²⁴ In the winter of 1853 P. Scholtz, Commandant in the Marico (though resident in Lichtenburg) entertained the possibility of a Boer retreat from the district, an event which would have been analogous to the collapse of other frontiers of Trekker occupation in the Transvaal at Ohrigstad and Schoemansdal. The Trekkers returned in late 1854 though instability continued as a result of the murder of several Boers in the region. Though initially disruptive the effect of this development was to draw the Hurutshe into a closer though ultimately ambiguous relationship with the Marico Trekkers and the Transvaal state. The obvious inability on the part of the SAR to exert hegemony over the Tswana to their west and the importance of maintaining the crucial "Hunter's Road" open forced the Trekkers into an even closer relationship of dependence on African allies in the western Transvaal. Of these the Hurutshe came to be considered the most valuable. This mutually dependent relationship resembles that which developed elsewhere in the Transvaal between factions within African societies and Trekker communities.²⁵ This development was accompanied by a transition in local Boer politics from the dominance of a quasi-official policy (represented by Pretorius, Scholtz and Kruger - none of them Marico residents), which had

long-cherished the idea of subjugating the Tswana on the Republic's western frontier, to a more pragmatic and locally supported policy of accommodation with African chiefdoms living within and beyond the Marico district.²⁶ The reason for this change lay in the inability of the Transvaalers to effect either political or economic hegemony on their western border.

This shift in attitude was manifested in the changed tone of correspondence between the Transvaal state officials and the Hurutshe Chief Moiloa. Orders changed to "requests" - to pass on messages to Setshele, or to ascertain the aims and activities of the independent Tswana communities. When the Boers abandoned their farms in 1853 and in 1865 (following a second scare of a Kwena-led incursion) it was to Moiloa that they turned for the protection of their properties.²⁷

Accompanying this recognition of Tswana power, and the concomitant need to strengthen ties with the Hurutshe, was the realisation that labour could only be acquired from within the Transvaal. For the Marico trekkers this meant that the Hurutshe were their largest procurable supply of labour. However their proximity to the border provided the Hurutshe with an opportunity not presented to Africans in most other districts of the Transvaal, that of removing themselves from the jurisdiction of the South African Republic (SAR). This fact had been starkly underscored in late 1852 when the Hurutshe under Mangope, resident at Borutwe, decided to flee the Transvaal. They resented having been included in the Boer

commando of 1852,²⁸ and later that year Mangope's son, Kontle, fled to Setshele. The Boers then instructed Mangope to order his son back, together with his regiment, a command the chief could not obey. In 1856 more ill-feeling was created by the suspicion that Mangope's subjects had been responsible for the murder of a Boer at Swartruggens.²⁹ Persistent demands for labour however eventually forced Mangope to lead the rest of his community out of the Transvaal in 1858. This action incensed the Trekkers, who, according to one tradition, seized one of Setshele's wives as hostage for the return of the Hurutshe.³⁰ This strategy failed and a few months later Viljoen attempted to negotiate Mangope's repatriation. This too yielded no positive results.

This optional "escape route" for the Hurutshe, and the attendant opportunity for the Kwena and Ngwaketse to augment their followings, helped to place a limit on the coercive capacity of the state. Moiloa used the threat of migration on two occasions in the 1860s, once when the Marico Trekkers wished to displace him from Dinokana³¹ and once when the veldcornet interfered in a case between him and one of his subjects.³² This strategy, it should finally be noted, conforms with the phenomenon of the "protest migration" resorted to by Africans in Central and West Africa seeking a more tolerable form of local or colonial control.³³

The growing dependence of the Transvaal state upon the Hurutshe in maintaining relative stability on the western frontier in turn

allowed the Hurutshe to counter Trekker demands and to make certain of their own claims upon their rulers, thus mitigating further the harshness of white overrule. Two incidents reveal this quite clearly. The first, alluded to already, occurred in 1864 when the Marico trekkers sought to remove Moiloa from Dinokana so they could occupy the site as a centre in the Marico district. Moiloa threatened to cross over the border and refused to pay any taxes in 1865.³⁴ Fortunately for Moiloa's Hurutshe the scheme coincided with rumours of another impending Kwena raid, and Moiloa took the opportunity to inform Setshele that he wished "to be one of yours [i.e. Setshele's] instead of belonging to the Dutch",³⁵ a sentiment which Setshele was happy to convey to the SAR authorities. Faced with this response the Executive Council in Pretoria rejected the plan and pursued an alternative idea to site the town on the farm of a local Boer, Casper Coetzee.³⁶

The second originated in a demand made by the veldkornet in June 1864 for another 100 labourers from the Hurutshe. Moiloa wrote to President Pretorius expressing his unhappiness at having to provide men, pointing out that many Boer immigrants had arrived in the Marico since the agreement made to provide annual tribute in labour. Early in 1865 the case was discussed by the Executive Council and it was decided that the compulsory labour system would be abolished and replaced with a direct tax of two shillings on those Hurutshe not in labour with whites and one shilling for those already working. Moiloa would collect this tax for which he would be paid £25 p.a.³⁷ This decision provides a good example of the

way in which the "forms of exaction and administration [in the SAR] were shaped as much and probably more by local exigencies and possibilities as they were by state policy."³⁸ By relinquishing its capacity to extract labour from the Hurutshe the Transvaal state allowed them a greater degree of control over their own productive activities. The massive effort required by colonial governments and capitalist farmers and mine owners in South Africa to close down these activities suggest just how difficult it was to gain control over rural producers. To conclude this point, though the Hurutshe were subjects of the SAR their subordination to white interests in many respects was formal rather than real.³⁸ I The ability of the Hurutshe to reshape their political identity was due not only to their value as dependable allies of the Republic alongside an unstable border, but also to the disunited and sectarian nature of Trekker society. The sources of factionalism on the Marico frontier were twofold. Firstly a "Hunter's faction" led by the indomitable Jan Viljoen and comprised increasingly of English Hunters such as Selous, Westbeech and George "Elephant" Phillips,³⁹ pursued interests at variance with the farming community. The route to the trans-Limpopo hunting grounds, pioneered by the Marico hunters, depended on access through the territory of the Kwena and Ngwato.⁴⁰ Peaceful relations with these communities were therefore essential and bellicose actions or sentiments by local farmers or officials were regarded as potentially damaging to the ivory trade and were usually followed by recriminations against those responsible and the immediate repudiation of such expressions by the leaders of the "Hunter's

faction".⁴¹ Such divisions oblige one to question how intergrated and coherent capitalist interests were and how the capatilist system managed so spectacularly ~~to~~, in Cobbing's words, to "[break] down and explode"⁴² African states in the period shortly before.⁴³

The second source of division lay in political and religious differences within the Transvaal. Conflict arose when Pretorius' attempts to unify the SAR and the Orange Free State was challenged in the Transvaal by those who feared his machinations might promote British intervention in the affairs of both Republics. In this "Civil War" of 1863-1864 the Marico was a district that lent its support mainly to the "revolutionary" government, headed by Stephanus Schoeman under Pretorius' direction. This division coincided with a schism between the fundamentalist Gereformeerde Church and the parent Dutch Reformed Church (NGK). Headed by Viljoen a party of Marico trekkers (named the Volkslaer or "army of the people) attacked Kruger's opposition force at Potchefstroom in January 1864. The importance of the Hurutshe was underscored yet again when rival Boer groups rode into Dinokana to "mislead the Kafirs to attack and rob their opponents".⁴⁴ Furthermore during the strife several Boers and their farm workers sought protection in Dinokana leading to a shortage of food and an escalation of prices in the town. Religious disagreements lingered on in the Marico long after political differences had been overcome; in 1868 Viljoen assaulted and imprisoned clerics of the Gereformeerde Church when they attempted to establish a branch in Zeerust.⁴⁵

Trekker factionalism in the Marico was nowhere more apparent than in competition for public office. This in turn provided a means of land accumulation, the SAR frequently being forced to reward officials in land grants rather than salaries.⁴⁶ Acrimonious exchanges, petitions, counter petitions and wild allegations fill the Zeerust records, especially in the 1870s when no less than five landdrosts were appointed between 1873 and 1876. As a result no taxes were collected from the Hurutshe between 1874 and 1876.⁴⁷

The inability of the SAR to implant a durable state on the highveld was recognised all too well by the Tswana chiefdoms to the west of the Hurutshe. In 1868 brazen attempts by the SAR to put forward claims to the Tati Gold fields were rejected out of hand by the Ngwato regent Macheng. Two years later attempts to beacon off their land were resisted by the Ngwaketse, and later, at a meeting of Rolong and Ngwaketse chiefs with President Pretorius, the territorial integrity of the Tswana bordering the SAR was affirmed. In 1875 Khama of the Ngwato refused Boer hunters passage through his territory.⁴⁸ The determination of their independent Tswana neighbours to the west to keep the Boers at bay in turn strengthened the Hurutshe in their relationships with the SAR.

As the Hurutshe found political openings to reduce the level of exploitation by the Boers, so they were able to build and expand their economy. The extent and diversity of Hurutshe economic activity between 1860 and 1875 is fully recorded by the missionaries of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society (HMS) who arrived in 1859 and

by visitors to Dinokana. Productive growth was founded on irrigation, the introduction of new crops and an increase in cattle holdings. When the HMS missionaries arrived one reported that the Hurutshe "already know how to use waterducts; they are engaged in fairly extensive agriculture".⁴⁹ Four years later, after visiting Dinokana, Behrens, the superintendent of the HMS reported approvingly of conditions in the town:

The Bahurutshe... have so much corn as they haven't had for years. Here in the town of our Moiloo there are five wagons and about 200 oxen. You can easily imagine how much work can be done with them. In addition, chiefs, deputies and all who own oxen use the plough and sow wheat, like the farmers (Boers). Hunting provides one of the main branches of food. They hunt in great numbers and shoot... wild animals and ostriches, and bring back on their pack oxen - meat, skins and feathers. The skins are cured and various items are made of them, for their own use as well as for sale. The feathers are sold to dealers... Hunting is made a lot easier by guns of which there are many among these people. Here in Moiloo's stadt are several thousand guns, a man without a gun is a poor man".⁵⁰

By 1868 citrus fruits and wheat were being extensively cultivated. In 1875, the year of Moiloo's death the Czech naturalist Emil Holub wrote that the:

"Bahurutshe in Dinokana gathered in as much as 800 sacks of wheat, each containing 200lbs, and every year a wider area of land is being brought under cultivation. Besides wheat they grow maize, sorghum, melons and tobacco, selling what they do not require for their own consumption in the markets of the Transvaal and the diamond fields... they have become the most thriving agriculturists of all the Transvaal Bechuanas".⁵¹

This view was confirmed by the hunter Parker Gilmore who noted in the mid-1870s that there was "a great deal of cultivation in this neighbourhood, Indian corn and kafir corn growing for miles along the approach to this town".⁵² During Moiloa's reign Dinokana became an important trade centre. Many Boers, acting as middlemen for agencies in the small Transvaal towns, came to Dinokana to purchase hides, livestock or ostrich feathers. Roger Price, the LMS missionary with the Ngwato at Shoshong, twice visited Dinokana to obtain supplies in the early 1860s.⁵³ The rapid switch to commercial agriculture sets Moiloa's Hurutshe apart from several of the Tswana communities to their south and west, such as the Tlharo and Rolong near the Langeberg mountain range, whose economy "continued to be based on pastoralism and hunting right through the nineteenth century".⁵⁴

Conclusion

Cobbing is correct to point out that the making of the highveld states and kingdoms cannot simply be attributed to on-going currents of the difaqane. The character and very existence of the Sotho and Swazi Kingdoms for example owes much to Anglo-Boer relations and economic struggles in South Africa from the 1840s.⁵⁵ However a proper perspective needs to be maintained on the African role in shaping the highveld's demography, especially in the preceding decades. It was the Ndebele who were responsible for propelling the large Hurutshe faction from Mosega, for stripping them of most of their cattle and for forcing them into an

ambulatory existence along the Harts river.⁵⁶ Even after their return to the Marico the Hurutshe lived in dread of Mzilikazi's possible return to the region, a prospect suggested by continued attempts by the Ndebele to control events among the Ngwato. In fact the willingness of the Boers to ally with Sekhomo of the Ngwato against Mzilikazi in 1847 probably influenced Moiloa's decision to return to the Marico in 1848.⁵⁷ The Ndebele presence on the western highveld may have been ambiguous, imposing peace and stability upon a region accustomed to endemic raiding and violence, but the benevolence of Mzilikazi's rule should not nevertheless be exaggerated in an attempt to understate black agency.⁵⁸

By contrast though initially the Transvaal Boers appeared unlikely abettors of Hurutshe reconstruction and regeneration, ultimately they provided the conditions that allowed the Hurutshe to remake their identity between 1848 and 1875. Politically the community was welded together by Moiloa to reach a level of political cohesion that by 1870 matched the unity of the early nineteenth century chiefdom.⁵⁹ Access to land in the reserve, on white neighbouring farms and to cattle posts in Ngwaketse territory provided the basis for economic security. The commercial activities of itinerant traders and local trekkers provided the dynamic impetus for economic expansion. At a social level Moiloa was able to rebuild the essential props of traditional society that had broken down during the difaqane.⁶⁰

These developments arose not only out of the contest between two societies arriving in the western Transvaal at an almost identical period. By presenting themselves as "allies" a small and relatively weak community like the Hurutshe was able to exploit divisions within the Boers and to re-negotiate terms with the Transvaal state. This confutes the impression given by Cobbing of a consentient white society determining its locality and relationship with African groups on the South African highveld. If the Trekkers, as representatives of at least a "quasi-capitalist" society, struggled to establish these relations of production when settled on the highveld how tenable is Cobbing's claim that the early forerunners of this system, the colonial agents and frontier traders and raiders, could have been largely responsible for the upheavals and depopulation associated with the difagane? If, on surer empirical ground, we are forced to reassess the destructive impact of white penetration, historians must continue to take seriously the former Afrocentric explanation of a "self-generated revolution" among African societies in Southern Africa. However, it needs to be an explanation stripped of its fantasies and individualistic mythological elements and one which permits a role for white agency.

For example see M. Cornevin, Apartheid: Power and Historical Falsification, (Paris,1980); C. Hamilton and H. Webster, "The Struggle for Control over the voices of the past and the Socialising role of pre-colonial history", Perspectives in Education, 10, 2,(1988); S. Marks, "South Africa": 'The Myth of the Empty Land', History Today Keywords: The Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts (Cape Town,1988); J. Wright, "Jettisoning the mfecane (with perestroika)", joint presentation with J. Cobbing, University of Witerwatersrand Seminar Paper,1988; J. Wright "Political Mythology and the Making of Natal's Mfecane", Canadian Journal of African Studies, 23, 2,(1989); J. Wright, "Political Mythology and the making of Natal's Mfecane, Canadian Journal of African Studies,23,No2(1989).

2

See for example the works of Cory, Ellenberger and Theal for a depiction of the "empty land" theory.

3

See J. Cobbing, "The Case against the mfecane", unpublished paper, University of Cape Town,1983; "The mfecane as Alibi; Thoughts on Ditlakong and Mbolompo", JAH, 29,(1988); Cobbing and Wright, "Jettisoning the Difaqane".

4

See Hamilton's analysis in C. Hamilton " The Production of Shaka in the 1820s and the weighing of evidence only procurable through prejudiced channels", paper to the Conference on Enlightenment and Emancipation in the 18th and early 19th centuries, University of Natal, 1989.

5

For the Transvaal region which has most relevance for this paper see P. Bonner, Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires: The Evolution and Dissolution of the Nineteenth Century Swazi State, (Cambridge,1983); P. Delius, The Land Belongs to Us : The Pedi Polity, the Boers and the British in the Nineteenth Century Transvaal, (Johannesburg,1983); R. Wagner, "The Zoutpansberg : The Dynamics of a Hunting Frontier, 1848-1867", in S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds), Economy and Society in South Africa (London,1980).

6

Evidence is open to prejudiced evidence and it is less tendentious and impressionistic than earlier writings and arises out of real and prolonged contact with African highveld societies.

7

These developments are traced in A. Manson, "The Hurutshe in the Marico District of the Transvaal, 1848-1914", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1990, 36-53.

8

See Manson, "The Hurutshe", 50-52; N. Parsons, A New History of Southern Africa (London 1982), 48-50.

9

This tradition is first recorded by John ^{Gubbins}~~Gubbins~~ ^{Waring} in The Marico Chronicle, March 16, 1912.

10

See M. Legassick, "The Griqua, The Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries, 1790-1840", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, 1969, 479-500, 517.

11

See Bloemhof Blue Book, evidence of Moiloa, 142-143

12

See Manson, "The Hurutshe", 81.

13

See Manson, "The Hurutshe", 65-79. The major sources used for this account of events during the difaqane are S. Kay, Travels and Researches in Caffraria, (London, 1833), 225-227; M. Kinsman, "The Impact of the Difaqane on Southern Tswana Communities: With special reference to the Rolong", History Workshop Paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1984; R.C. Germond (ed.), Chronicles of Basutoland, (Moriija, 1967), 74-77; I. Schapera (ed.), Apprenticeship

at Kuruman; Journals and Letters of Robert and Mary Moffat,
(London,1951), 94-95. R.C. Rassmussen, Migrant Kingdom:
Mzilikazi's Ndebele in South Africa, (London,1978).

14

Manson, "The Hurutshe", 85-86; LMS Correspondence, Box 23,
W. Inglis to Directors of LMS, 26 September 1848.

15

The first group consisted of Jan Viljoen, Terreblanche and Oosthuizen. See P.J. Oosthuizen, "Die Geskiedenis van Marico tot 1900", unpublished M.A. Thesis, Potchefstroom University, 1976, 30. At Boomplats Boers in the Orange River Soverignty had attempted to resist British annexation of the territory.

16

L.M.S. Correspondence, Box 24, Edwards to Tidman, 4 September 1849.

17

The LMS missionaries observed the seizure of Hurutshe children. See J.J. Freeman, A Tour in South Africa (London, 1851), 274. For a full account of the system see P. Delius and S. Trapido, "Inboekselings and Oorlams: The Creation and Transformation of a Social Class" in B. Bozzoli (ed.), Town and Countryside in the Transvaal, (Johannesburg, 1983), 53-88.

18

See J. Chapman, Travels in the interior of South Africa, i, (London, 1868), 40.

19

It was during this attack that Livingstone's mission station was ransacked by the Boers. For the Hurutshe role see Chapman, Travels, i, 83.

20

Bloemhof Blue Book (to investigate competing claims to the Diamond Fields), evidence of Moilola, 317, evidence of Molema, 145; Transvaal Archives (T.A.) SS 12, r. 1127/56, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 30 July 1856; r 1067/56, Report from "Marico Burgers", 15 May 1856; T.A. SS 11, r 1126/56, r 2153/58, D. Bakker to C. Moll, 28 June 1858.

21

T.A. SS 5, r 513/53, J.W. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 16 April 1853

22

For an account of this affair see J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton, The Native Policy of the Voortrekkers, (Cape Town, 1928), 114-117.

23

Cited in a report dated 22 November 1852 by R. Moffat in R. Lovett, The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895, i (London, 1899), 596.

24

T.A. SS vol.5 r 531a/53, J.W. Viljoen to A.W. Pretorius, 19 May 1853; Bloemhof Blue Book, evidence of I. Buys, 229-231; Chapman, Travels, 84.

25

This occurred between the Swazi and the "Volksraad faction" of the Orighstad trekkers, between Potgieter's followers and the Pedi, and in the Zoutpansberg between the trekker community and the Tsonga and Venda. See Bonner, Kings, Commoners, Concessionaires, 65-85; Wagner, "Zoutpansberg", 313-337; Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, 32-37; C. Saunders, "Political Processes in the Southern Frontier Zones", in H. Lamar and L. Thompson (eds), The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared, (Yale, 1981), 149-171.

26

J.E. Grobler, "Jan Viljoen (1812-1893), 'n Transvaalse Wesgrenspioneer", M.A. Thesis, University of Pretoria, 1976, 224.

T.A. SS vol.68 r 782/65, 819/65, r 1206/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 12 July 1865, 21 July 1865, 13 November 1865.

Scholtz had claimed on this occasion that he had obtained the Hurutshe levy by "duplicitious means" and that "great trouble might arise". See T.A. SS r 413/52, P. Scholtz to A.W. Pretorius, 21 July 1852.

T.A. SS vol.11 r 1059/56, P. Kruger to M.W. Pretorius, 11 May 1856.

See C. Thlomeleng, "Bahurutshe Ba Manyane", Research essay, University of Botswana, 1977, 8-9; K.D. Kgabi, "Bahurutshe Ba Manyane Oral Traditions", Botswana National Archives, 1983.

³¹T.A. SS vol.57 r 953/64, J. Viljoen to M.W. Pretorius, 21 October 1864, SS vol.67, r 632/65, T. Jensen to M.W. Pretorius, 31 May 1865.

³²See T.A. Landdrost's Correspondence, vol.I, Statement by C. Magape, J. Magape, n.d.; Native Affairs Agent to Landdrost, Marico, 14 December 1874.

³³See for example, A.I. Asiwaju, "Migration as Revolt: the Examples of Ivory Coast and Upper Volta before 1945", in JAH, 17, 4,(1976); M.C. Mushambachime, "Protest Migrations in Mweru-Luapula, 1900-1940", African Studies, 47,I,(1988).

³⁴T.A. SS vol.70 r 1206/65, D. Coetzee to M.W. Pretorius, 13 November 1865.

³⁵T.A. SS vol.64 r 143/65, Setshele to M.W. Pretorius, 12 February 1865. (Letter signed also by Gaseitsiwe, Montshiwa, Mosielele, Mangope and Makhosi).

³⁶See Oosthuizen, "Geschiedenis van Marico", 60-68.

37

T.A. SS vol.57 r 482/64, Moilola to M.W. Pretorius, 13 July 1864; vol.164 r 2083/73, M.W. Pretorius to J. Viljoen, 1 February 1865.

38

Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, 147.

39

Westbeech hired a farm (aptly named "Klein Engeland" - Little England) from veldcornet D. Botha and ended up marrying Cornelia Gronum, the daughter of a Boer hunter at Mosega. There was hardly a hunter in the trans-Limpopo area who did not, at some time or other, enjoy the acquaintance or hospitality of Marico hunters such as Viljoen, Swart, Jacobs or Gronum. See Grobler, "Jan Viljoen", 258-269; C.F. Gronum, Boere en Jagters in Ou Marico, (Potchefstroom, 1974), 60.

40

See Gronum, Boere en Jagters. Viljoen had reached the Zambesi by about 1850 (probably seeing the Victoria Falls before Livingstone) and made contact with Mzilikazi which led to an agreement granting him access to hunting grounds in Ndebele territory. Cited in Grobler, "Jan Viljoen", p.201 from K.W. Krynaaw and H.S. Pretorius (eds.), Transvaalse Argiefstukke, r 215/50, 34.

41

Viljoen's bitter condemnation of Scholtz's "wanton" attack on Setshele and his role in restoring a status quo ante belum with the Kwena and Ngwaketse provides a good example of this. See Chapman, Travels, 84; Grobler, "Jan Viljoen", 224.

42

Cobbing's phrase in "Jettisoning the Mfecane," 15.

43

Cobbing's phrase in "Jettisoning the mfecane,15.

44

Correspondence of Hermannsburg Missionary Society (HMS), F. Zimmermann, "Affairs at Linokana", 1864, 14.

45

Oosthuizen, "Geschiedenis van Marico", 139-142.

46

See S. Trapido, "Reflections on Land, Office and Wealth in the South African Republic, 1850-1900", in Marks and Atmore (eds.), Economy and Society in South Africa, 350-368.

47

See T.A. SS vol.172 r 910/74, J. Becker to Executive Council; r 1104/74, P. Coetzee to T. Burgers, 6 August 1874; Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette, 24 June 1876; T.A. 55 vol.230 r 718/77, Report of Commission, 13 February 1877.

48

See L. Ngcongco, "Aspects of the History of the Bangwaketse up to 1910", Ph.D. Thesis, Dalhousie University, 1979, 184-185; S.M. Molema, Montshiwa: Barolong Chief and Patriot (Cape Town, 1966), 60-62; British Parliamentary Papers, 4141, vol.XLIII, Correspondence re Alleged Kidnapping by Transvaal Republic.

49

Hermannsburg Missions berichte (HMB), 7(1864), 99.

50

HMB, unnumbered (1864), 138.

51

E. Holub, Seven Years in South Africa, ii (Johannesburg 1972), 416.

52

P. Gilmore, The Great Thirst Land, (London, 1878), 213.

53

E.W. Smith, Great Lion of Bechuanaland - The Life and Times of Roger Price, (London, 1957), 131-133, 168.

54

Shillington, Colonisation of the Southern Tswana, 18.

55

Cobbing, "Case Against the Mfecane", 19-22.

56

See Germond, Chronicles, 107; Journal des Missions Evangeliques, 8,(1833), 203. Cobbing considers Mokathe's Hurutshe to have been "among Mzilikazi's worst subjects". See J. Cobbing, "The Ndebele

57

L.W. Truschel, "Accommodation under Imperial Rule; The Tswana of the Bechuanaland Protectorate", Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, 1970, 37.

58

Cobbing, on the reports of European eyewitnesses describes the Ndebele as a "flourishing, well-administered, grain-growing people with an expanding population". Presumably this opinion would be based on Moffat's sympathetic and probably distorted descriptions of Mzilikazi's benignity. The grain growers were mainly Tswana subjects of the Ndebele; The PEMS missionaries contrasted the fields of the Hurutshe with the lack of them among the Ndebele settlements in the Marico district. Germond, "Chronicles, 104; Journal de Missions Evangeliques, 8,(1833), 100-101.

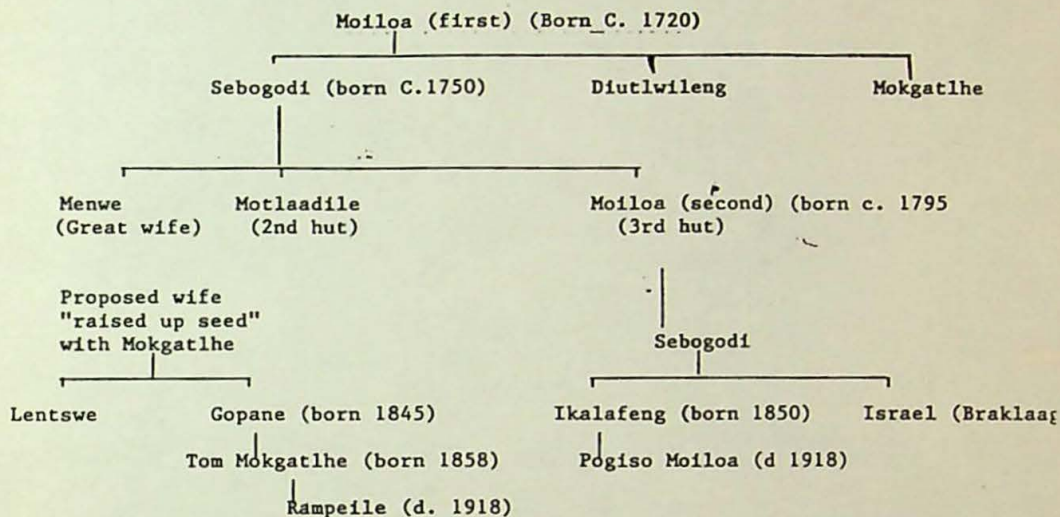
59

The phrase is Ross' in R. Ross, "The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture in the Cape: A Survey", in W. Beinart, P. Delius and S. Trapido, (eds.), Putting a Plough to the Ground, (Johannesburg, 1986), 86.

60

These are detailed in Manson, "The Hurutshe", 139.

GENEALOGY OF HURUTSHE OF GOPANE, MOILOA AND MOKGATLHE. (ADAPTED FROM P.L. BREUTZ)



HURUTSHE BOO MANYANE GENEALOGY

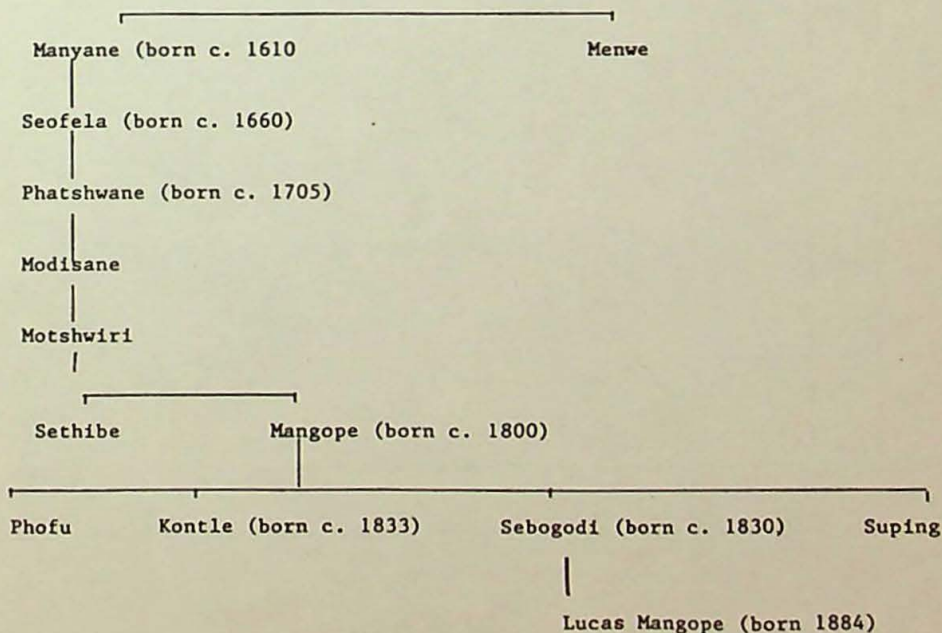
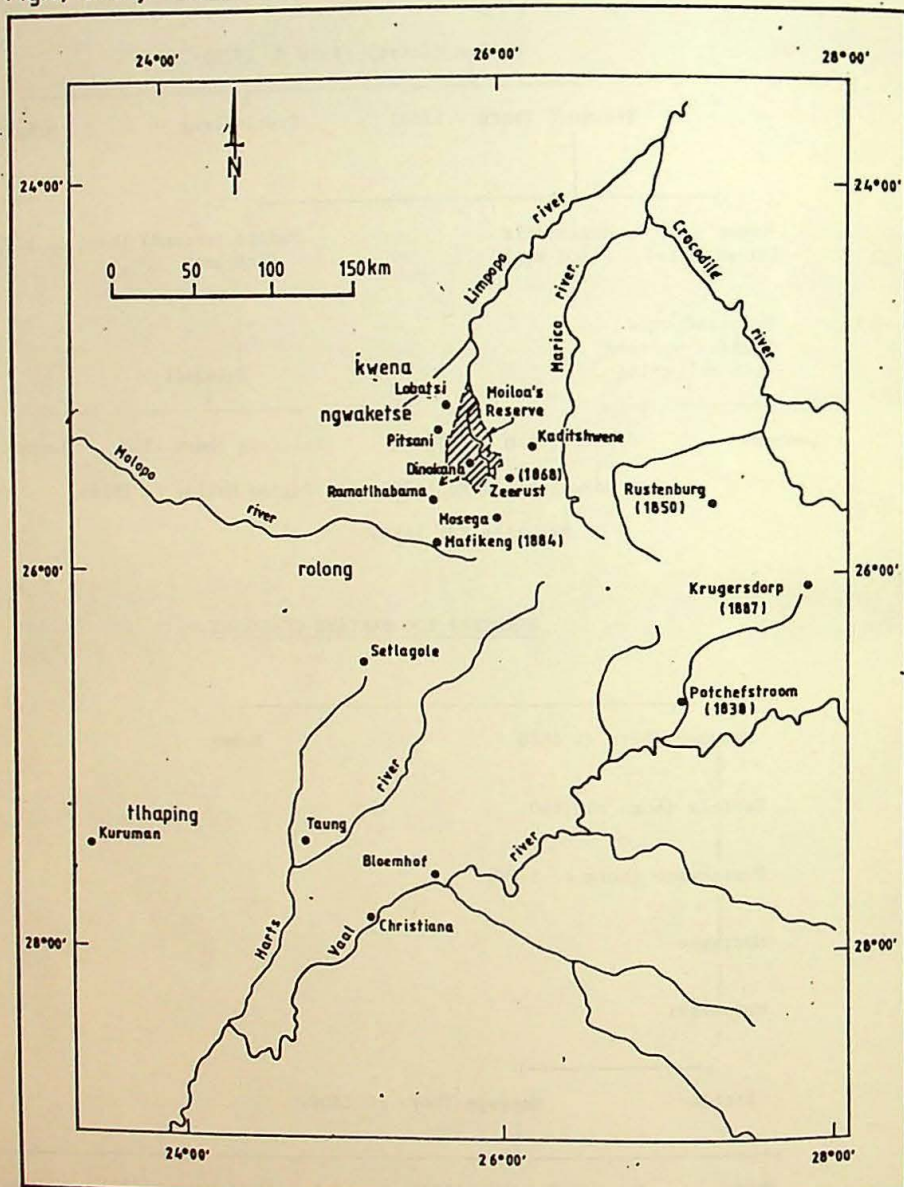


Fig.1; Study Area 1830 - 1850



Adapted from: Union of South Africa, Province of Transvaal - Magisterial District of HARICO. Sheet H9. (1925)
Boer Republics and Adjacent Territories 1852 - 1899. (1969)