Land, Labour Migration and Politics in Southern Africa:

Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland

Donald Kalinde Kowet

Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala

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Preface

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Donald Kalinde Kowet

Source: Andrews, B., The Guide to Swaziland Mbabane, 1970.

Chapter 1.

Introduction

This study deals with three countries on the South African sub-continent: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Botswana and Lesotho obtained their formal independence in 1966, and Swaziland in 1968. They had all been "protectorates" under Britain since the second half of the 19th century, and they are all closely integrated in a regional political economy dominated by the Republic of South Africa. The region as a whole has been characterised by Samir Amin as a region of "labour reserves".¹ This term is used as part of a typology where he distinguishes mainly between three types of colonial penetration each placing its mark on different parts of Africa. The first type is what he calls "Africa of the colonial economy" and covers the former French West Africa, Togo, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Cameroon, Tchad, and the Sudan. The second type is called 'Africa of the concession-owning companies' covering Zaire, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, and the Central African Republic, while the third type, "Africa of the labour reserves", covers Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Malawi, Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa.

By using this term, Amin wants to emphasise that the main source of underdevelopment in the region is the systematic reduction of large areas of land into "reserves" of cheap labour for the sectors of the economy controlled by European capital. Not only Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, but also Mozambique and the more distant Malawi have been closely tied to the South African mining and industrial economy as suppliers of migrant labour. At an international level, it corresponds to the relations established within the Republic itself between the European controlled industrial areas and the "Bantu homelands". The self-government of the Bantustans clearly exists only in the official rethoric of the Apartheid leaders. But also in the case of the three independent countries discussed here, their effective integration in the South African economy has imposed serious restrictions on self-government. Unlike Malawi and Mozambique, they are virtually encircled by South African controlled territory. As can be seen from the map, Lesotho is completely surrounded. Swaziland has only a short border with Mozambique but is otherwise also a mountaneous enclave within the

Republic. The vast mostly desert Botswana is similarly encircled, with European controlled Rhodesia on its North-Eastern border.

By 1969, 120,000 Basothos were working in the Republic. This corresponded to roughly 45 per cent of the adult male Basotho population.³ The corresponding figures for Botswana and Swaziland were 50,000 and 20,000 representing 25 and 18 per cent respectively.⁴ Most of those who go to work in South Africa are forced to leave their families behind. Most return to their homelands after completing their contracts. The vast majority work in the gold mines and provide the core of the labour force on which "white" prosperity in South Africa is built. 70 per cent of the labour in the South African gold mines were migrants from other countries in 1969. Of these, 17.5 per cent were from Lesotho, 4 per cent from Botswana and 1.5 per cent from Swaziland.⁴ The low percentages from Botswana and Swaziland reflect the extent of South African mining and farming inside these countries which generates internal labour migration within Botswana and Swaziland. The abundant supply of cheap labour from these and other "reserves" within or outside the borders of the Republic is the chief attraction for the American, European and Japanese companies which continue to invest in the South African economy.

The purpose of this study is to examine how colonial penetration and internal economic and political organisation interacted in creating and maintaining a structure where the three countries function as labour reserves for the South African economy. It is argued that the way in which people were dispossessed of land or prevented from obtaining land was one important factor explaining this structure. It is therefore the main purpose of this study to examine how colonial and local forces interacted to restrict access to land. The study emphasises the way in which this interaction was manifested in the development of political institutions and policies in these countries. The process is followed from its origins in the 19th century up to the post-independence period. It is argued that the control over scarce land resources in these countries is a major basis for the exercise of political power. Continued labour migration is therefore also an important condition for the survival of the local political leadership as it disposes of the "surplus" labour of the land based economy.

In his description of the labour reserve economy of Southern Africa, Samir Amin draws the parallel with the role of "enclosure acts" during the time of the industrial revolution in England when the peasants were forced off the land and were made available as labour for the expanding manufacturing industry.⁵ In the case of Southern Africa, a similar process took place when the established agricultural and pastoral economies were forcibly broken up by European colonisation. The land available to the

African people was drastically reduced. A large section of the population was forced to seek their livelihood as migrant workers in the agricultural and industrial sectors controlled by the Boers and the British. Territorial separation ensured that little benefits accrued to the homelands of the displaced peasants and pastoralists. Not only did they receive little "development" in the sense of modern technology, except in the European controlled enclaves, but they were actively underdeveloped by being dispossessed of their main productive resources, *land and labour*. The surplus produced by the millions of migrant workers in the Republic was appropriated by European capital and used for the benefit of its overseas principals and the local whites. The combination of racial and territorial separation served to maximise the underdeveloping impact of colonialism in the region. Underdevelopment in this sense does not indicate the state of society prior to the "modernising" impact, but rather the outcome of colonial penetration.⁶

Access to productive land determines economic opportunities and the social organisation of production in peasant and pastoral societies as those of Southern Africa. To understand how these three countries were turned into labour reserves of the South African economy and maintained as such, it is therefore crucial to examine the impact of colonialism on *land relations* and how these developed under colonial rule. Access to land continues to determine the basis of the labour migration economy also in the post-independence situation. By land relations I mean both the way in which access to land is regulated and the way by which land is actually distributed. External factors, such as colonisation, territorial separation, have interacted with traditional patterns of land relations in restricting access to land. Chiefs who continue to play an important role in the government and politics of the three countries have until recently held a strategic position in the local system of land distribution.

The maintenance of these countries as labour reserves for the South African economy necessitates the fragmentation of political power within the "Bantu homeland" and the obstruction of modern Pan-African oriented political leadership. Within South Africa itself, this is achieved by the policy of administering the Bantustans through puppet chiefs. The means of intervention in the "independent" countries of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland are not direct, but it can be shown how the South African Government continues to manipulate political development within the three countries by more sophisticated means in order to achieve the same ends. Special attention must therefore be paid to the connection between the chiefs and the institutions of colonialism and neo-colonialism and its consequences for the maintenance of the labour reserve economy.

Organisation of the Study

The study is organised in two parts. The first (chapters 2–4) is historical and deals with the development of the colonial political economy evolving as a result of the interaction between external and internal social forces. Chapter 2 looks at the period of the European scramble for land and the gradual extension of European economic and political control in the region as a whole. The account is mainly concerned with the developments in the 19th century up to the time of final consolidation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. This is the period when the three “High Commission Territories”, as they were called, became administered by the British High Commission (embassy) in South Africa and received their present borders through a series of successive wars and treaties, involving Boers and British as well as other African peoples in the area, notably the Zulus. Chapter 3 examines the impact of colonial penetration and the massive appropriation of land by the new rulers on the economic, social and political organisation of the areas within which the Sotho, Swazi and Tswana people had been confined. Chapter 4 looks more specifically on the pattern of labour migration and its foundations in the interaction between the expansion of the South African European controlled economy and the underdevelopment of the “Bantu homelands”.

The second part of the study (chapters 5–7) is concerned with the mature pattern of neo-colonial dependence as it has emerged over the last decades with special attention to the post-independence period and the problems of political change. Chapter 5 looks at the economic integration of the three countries in the economy of the Republic of South Africa. The Customs Union is one important mechanism whereby this integration is maintained. The monetary and banking system is another. Chapter 6 examines the politics of neo-colonial dependence and the interaction between external and internal political forces which also in the post-independence period continue to uphold the flow of cheap labour to the Republic. Chapter 7 discusses the attempts to break or reduce the dependence on the South African economy. The limited achievements in this respect are examined in relation to the basic limitations which have been built into the economic, social and political organisation of the three countries. Chapter 8 summarises the main argument of the study concerned with the historical growth and contemporary manifestation of these restraints on development which continue to reduce Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to the role of reserves for South African capitalism.

There are important differences as well as similarities between the three countries. Before I outline in greater detail the organisation of the study and

the type of research which has been undertaken for the various parts, it is therefore necessary to present certain basic information about the South African sub-continent as a whole and about the BLS countries, as they usually are called for short.

Looking first at the whole region, it can be taken to include Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malagasy, Malawi, Mozambique, Rhodesia, the Republic of South Africa, Namibia (South-West Africa), Swaziland and Zambia and has an area of six and a half million square kilometers with a population of about 60 million people, of which 20 million are in the Republic itself.

Economically, the region is dominated by the Republic. In 1968, she had a GNP of about 10 million Rands (one rand is about 1.25 U.S. dollars) which was about twice that of the rest of the region.⁷ About 10 per cent of her total area of 103,000 square kilometers were under agricultural use producing about twice the total maize production and about twelve times the amount of wheat produced in the rest of the region. In mining, gold production for the whole region was about 1 million metric tons in 1969 and the Republic's share was about 970,000 metric tons.⁸

As part of this economic domination, the Republic of South Africa relies on the supply of migrant labour for her mining, agricultural and manufacturing industries from most of the other countries of the region. In 1969, the distribution of migrant labour in the gold mines from some of these countries was as follows:⁹

Lesotho	59,407
Botswana	19,595
Swaziland	5,551
Angola	6,076
Malawi	52,901
Mozambique	88,352

Although the Republic's major markets in minerals are in Western Europe, Japan and North America, the bulk of her exports of manufactured goods, food and beverages goes to the other members of the region with which she had a favourable balance of trade. In fact her trade in the region increased from R6.2 million in 1965 to R130 million in 1968.¹⁰ One of the reasons advanced for this pattern is that the Republic is unable to compete on world markets with such mass producing countries as Japan, the United States and Western Europe due to her "high cost economy" created by the system of "job reservation" by which Africans are excluded from most of the skilled jobs. As a result, the Republic is said to be unable to expand her manufacturing industries within the country because of "shortage" of skilled

"white" labour. In recent years, some manufacturing industries have been set up in border areas which have been partly exempted from the clause of "job reservation". These new industries can therefore exploit African labour more fully and are able to undercut those in the old established industrial areas because of their "low cost" production. Thus, virtually all imports into Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland are, in actual fact, re-exports from the Republic of South Africa.

The three countries examined in this study are those most closely integrated with the South African economy to which they have served, since the period of colonisation, mainly as appendages. They have been under constant threat of becoming entirely swallowed up by their powerful neighbour.

Botswana has a vast area of 220,000 square miles, about the size of Kenya, with a population of some 700,000 (1971). In the earlier census of 1964 when the population was given at 540,000, it was reported that the total included some 3,900 Europeans and about the same number of "other non-Africans". In every census carried out in the country, there is a figure recorded as "absentees", i.e. mainly people working in the Republic of South Africa. In 1971, this figure was 64,000.

The country is divided into three types of land, namely, the "tribal lands" (about 100,000 sq. mls.), "crown lands" (about same size) and the "freehold lands" (some 10,000 sq. mls.). The first contain the bulk of the population and is located mainly in the Eastern part of the country. The second is mainly desert land with only a small population of nomads. The third part, finally, is the most fertile part on the South-Eastern border which has been alienated to European settlers. While average density in the country is very low, population is at the same time heavily concentrated in small part of the area where pressure on land is considerable.

Although the majority of the people live on sorghum, maize and millet, the economy of the country is dominated by livestock agriculture. Between 1962 and 1968, it accounted for more than 90 percent of the total exports while crops and minerals only accounted for between 3 and 4 percent. The principal markets for livestock are the United Kingdom, South Africa, Zaire and Zambia."

Imports are dominated by South Africa. During approximately the same period 66 per cent of all imports and about 90 per cent of all transport and machinery came from the Republic of South Africa.

By 1970, the country had few manufacturing industries mainly owned by South Africans and Rhodesians. Apart from the Botswana Meat Commission which is the single largest enterprise employing about 900 people, the rest, which in 1970 were about a score or so, none with more

than 120 employees, produced goods ranging from skins, furniture, clothes to beer and hats.

Lesotho is only one twentieth of the size of Botswana with an area of about 12,000 sq. mls. and has the largest population among the three countries. In 1970, it was estimated to be a little over a million. In the 1966 census, there were 850,000 people of which 1,600 were Europeans and 800 "other non-Africans". The number reported as absentees was given at 117,300.

The largest part of the country, about 85 per cent, is composed of mountains. Most of the population live in the lowlands while the foothills and the mountains absorb some 20 and 30 per cent respectively. Although the average density for the whole country was by 1960 about 76 persons per sq. mile, most of the lowlands had as much as 300 persons per sq. mile.¹²

Unlike Botswana, and as we shall see Swaziland, Lesotho has no "freehold lands" occupied by Europeans in the sense this applies to the other two countries. But as early as the founding of the nation by Moshoeshoe in 1833, missionaries began entering the country in large numbers and in the years that have passed since then, they have acquired large tracts of land and, therefore, constitute an important group of landowners. A significant number of foreign traders have also acquired land. From 1963, the Paramount Chief started leasing out land for a 50-year period through the Basutoland Factory Development Company and this process was continued until the introduction of the *Pioneer Industrial Bill* in 1969 which was to provide the basis for leasing out land for development projects.¹³ As these are leased on commercial terms one can say that there are also "freehold lands" in Lesotho although not of the same pattern as in Botswana and Swaziland.

Like in Botswana, the majority of Basothos live on sorghum, maize and millet. Production for the market is dominated by wool and mohair. In 1968, these two accounted for 38 per cent of the total exports with cattle and other animals accounting for another 37 per cent. Other crops and minerals accounted for only 11 per cent each. Nearly all the country's imports and exports either originate in or are destined for the Republic of South Africa.¹⁴

Like Botswana, Lesotho has no major industries. Only 7 per cent of the labour force was reported to be in paid employment which included the Government sector.

Swaziland is the smallest of the three countries with an area of only 7,000 sq. mil. and a population of about 400,000 of which 9,000 were Europeans and 4,000 "other non-Africans" in 1969. About 19,000 people were reported as "absentees". This is a much smaller portion than in the other two countries, but as we shall see, in Swaziland, the labour reserve economy operates to a greater extent within the borders of the country with large European farming and mining enclaves. The country is divided first, into

four geographical regions (Highveld, Middleveld, Lowveld and Lubombo) and second, into land-ownership areas (Swazi Nation Land with 1,640,000 acres and the European owned "freehold land" with 1,918,000 acres). In the 1966 census, some 260,000 Africans lived in the Swazi Nation Lands while about 80,000 Africans lived on the European "freehold lands" either as employees or squatters. Some 20,000 lived in urban areas. Europeans control about half of the total land. If we turn to the quality of the land, maldistribution becomes even more marked. The middleveld region, representing about 26 per cent of the total area of the country is the most productive and is largely in the hands of Europeans. The bulk of the European land is at the same time farming land.

Unlike Botswana and Lesotho, Swaziland's export economy has for a long time been dominated by mineral production – asbestos, and until recently, iron ore accounting for about 57 per cent of the total exports. The number of Africans engaged in mining and agriculture in the European controlled areas was about 2,000 and 18,000 respectively in 1967.¹⁵ Their conditions are largely the same as in the Republic of South Africa itself. They have no permanent right of settlement in the European areas and continue to be mainly a migrant labour force with its "home base" in the "tribal" areas. In recent years, agricultural exports have taken on a growing importance. But also in this case, the origin is mainly in the European controlled areas with Africans engaged as "temporary" labour, as in South Africa.

As compared with the other two countries whose exports and imports are dominated by the Republic of South Africa, Swaziland has a more diversified pattern of foreign trade although South Africa and Britain still remain the principal markets of most of her raw materials.

Turning to the historical process of colonisation, as will be discussed in chapter 2, we find that there were important differences in the way in which the three countries were colonised. By the end of the Napoleonic wars, the British had established full control over the Cape Colony, originally founded by the Dutch East-India Company in the 17th century. During the 19th century British control was successively extended towards the North-East. The original European settlers, the Boer colonists, moved at the same time ahead, seeking new land to expand their pastoral and farming economy and to avoid British political overrule. In the 1830's, the "great trek" was such a massive breakaway attempt by the Boers.¹⁶ It meant at the same time repeated wars between the colonisers and the African nations in the region, including in particular the dominant Zulus. It led to chain reactions where the retreating Zulus in turn were involved in wars with other African people, including the Swazis, BaSotho and BaTswana. By the 1850's two Boer republics had been established in the great plains to the west of the

Drakenberg mountain range, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. The British in their turn had extended control on the east coast in the Natal. The BaSothos and the Swazis were now surrounded by Boer and British controlled territory.

But looking first at *Botswana*, the former Bechuanaland, we see how the BaTswana people were pushed back by the expanding Boer republics. Large areas were annexed. The discovery of gold in the northern part of Botswana, the presence of Germans in South-West Africa who were conspiring with the Boers against the British, the British missionary interests in the territory, and the ambitious plan of Cecil Rhodes to have the territory under the control of his British South African Company created a situation where both the British and the Boers sought to press their claims. The various colonialists started to divide the country amongst themselves according to their own economic and political interests with no regard to those of the local inhabitants. In the process, the mineral-rich northern part of the country was brought under the control of the British. The Southern part was handed over to the Boers in an effort to check their northern advance and partly in settlement of a deal for the newly found diamond areas in South Africa whose ownership was in dispute between the British and the Boers, while the eastern part of the county was given to the British South African Company for its ambitious rail project to connect South Africa and the North.

In *Lesotho*, the colonial appropriation of land took the form of outright wars waged against the BaSotho by the Boers who were trekking away from British rule. Their aim was directed at conquering the fertile area around the present Orange Free State and across the Caledonia valley. Fierce battles broke out between the Boers and the BaSotho while the British, at first, took a "neutral" stand despite various protests and appeals by the BaSotho chiefs to the British Government at the Cape. As it became clear to the British that the Boers were also attempting to secure a sea-outlet independent of British control, the British became now involved in the conflict. Finally, after several wars in which the BaSotho lost more than two-thirds of their land, the British in the cloak of "mediator" promised "British protection" to the BaSotho people while at the same time confirming in a treaty all the areas conquered by the Boers as belonging to the latter.

In *Swaziland*, wars of conquest were accompanied by bribery through which British and Boer interests secured control over trade, minerals and farming land. Operating through a weak Paramount Chief, the colonisers, taking advantage of the disputes between the Zulus and the Swazis, made "alliances" with the latter by offering them "protection" against the former and by pouring in various types of "gifts" in the form of money, blankets, dogs and horses. The Swazi chiefs in turn, fearing at this point the Zulus more

than the imperialists, interpreted this as a gesture of "friendship" and, in return, offered the latter large land concessions amounting to more than two-thirds of the country. This created a situation where even the colonisers realised that it would be in their own interest to preserve, at least some of "the natural rights of the natives to live, move, cultivate, graze and hunt".

The process of colonial penetration created *land shortage* in the three countries. But "shortage" was determined not only by the total land available, but also by the manner of *distribution* and, consequently, by the control over the remaining land. Before land was appropriated by the imperialists, the chiefs had no absolute control in this respect. There was a tendency of "free" movements from one chief to another. A good chief attracted more subjects and the more subjects a chief had the more was his security and power assured. In this way, as long as land was relatively abundant, chiefs felt obliged to satisfy their subjects by distributing land as widely as possible.

Politically, chiefs were dependent on their subjects through a "parliamentary" system called *Khotla* in Botswana, *Libandhla* in Swaziland and *Pitso* in Lesotho. These institutions functioned as checks on the power and authority of the chiefs. When the British took over these countries as "protectorates", however, the internal political, economic and social structure changed. Land became an important asset in short supply both to the chiefs and to the colonial government.

In Swaziland and Botswana, the territories were divided – one area exclusively belonging to the colonialists and the other one under the official control of the chiefs. It meant virtually two sets of government in the same territory. The division created a situation in which the "tribal" areas functioned as labour reserves for the "European" areas also within the territories themselves. The process was reinforced by mechanisms which operated in the "tribal" areas with respect to the distribution of land. The chiefs looked increasingly upon the colonial government rather than on their own subjects for their survival. They had been made the beneficiaries of colonial taxation. The old pattern where political checks could be exercised through the "parliamentary" system was no longer operative because the chiefs were now "protected" by the colonial government. Land shortage was used to coerce and exploit the subjects both by the colonialists and the chiefs.

In Lesotho, there was no clear division between "European" and "tribal" areas on the pattern found in Botswana and Swaziland. But the mechanisms operated in the same way through the colonial government which was supported by missionaries and traders on one hand and the chiefs on the other.

In all the three countries, the political hierarchy included the chiefs, their families, counsellors, minor officials and members of the ruling clan. These were set apart from the "commoners". At the bottom of the social hierarchy were those belonging to other peoples and slaves. Land and its size was allocated according to status within this hierarchy. The established political order sought actively to restrict the "widening of economic opportunity and growth of independence and individualism among the rank and file".¹ Such developments were viewed as a threat to the power and authority of the chiefs. Through the mechanisms of "tributes", the latter made large claims on whatever was produced by the peasant. As taxes on land were shared by the chiefs and the colonial government, a political "alliance" was forged between the two. The pressure imposed on the peasants by this alliance forced large numbers to seek work in the "European" areas, outside as well as inside the "protectorates".

The European plantations and the few mineral areas within the territories could not effectively absorb all the "free" labour which had been created by land appropriations, unequal land distribution, and taxation. The discovery of diamonds, gold and other minerals on the Rand and elsewhere created a natural outlet for this "surplus" labour. In fact, land policies in the protectorates must be understood in terms of this growing demand for labour. But also the European agricultural sector had developed a strong demand for outside labour. The labour reserve economies of the three territories developed in response to the ups and downs of the conjunctures of the South African mining and agricultural economy. With British colonial support, their surplus labour was placed at the disposal of British industry and Boer agriculture in the new Union, as finally consolidated in 1910.

Thus, there developed a three-tier system of periphery-centre relationship. The first was within the countries themselves, between European and "tribal" areas. The second was between these countries and South Africa while the third was between the South African region as a whole on one hand, and Britain on the other.

The labour reserve economy was maintained through a system of external dependence which was institutionalised by the South African and British colonial government in cooperation. In 1910, a customs union was created by the British and South African governments by which the three countries were virtually integrated into South Africa without consulting the inhabitants. The document of the union itself was signed by one man on behalf of the three countries and South Africa in his capacity as Governor-General of South Africa and High Commissioner for Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. The creation of the customs union served to restrict any industrial development in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which

could compete with South African goods and consolidated, at the same time, the structure of labour migration.

Nearly all plantations, mining and trading enterprises in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were subsidiaries of South African based companies and were, thus, operated under South African law. The profits of these companies were used to develop industries in South Africa. There was little room for any further industrial development in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which could absorb the "surplus" labour locally. Consequently, the flow of labour continued as the "demand" increased in South Africa.

Banks operating in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were all subsidiaries of South African banks regulated by South African law. Credit facilities for local agricultural projects required some security guarantees by the banks. The local inhabitants, because of land restriction and the system of land tenure, maintained by the local conservative political leadership, could not qualify for credits. The only group which could were the Europeans, as land was held by them on the basis of individual tenure. While the banks restricted credit facilities for local development, an examination of the relationship between deposits and advances in the three countries points at the same time to the fact that more than 75 per cent of the savings were exported to South Africa. Currency in circulation in the three countries was South African and was, thus, subject to South African trade fluctuations. Any fall in trade between South Africa and Britain or other West European countries directly affected Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Local conservative traditional groups and local Europeans, in alliance with outside forces, helped to maintain this pattern of effective integration in the South African economy. Existing land relations suited their economic interests. Their political alliance found support from outside. In South Africa itself, land relations were based on the policy of creating reserves. It implied also that non-Europeans were to be governed by their conservative traditional leaders. This support of local conservative traditional leaders found its counterparts in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. The South African Government has taken an active part in maintaining this system.

The first political parties in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were founded by "detrified" urban Africans on a Pan-African basis. Their programmes and policies on land were directed against the Europeans and indirectly the chiefs. They attacked the pattern of land distribution (chiefs) and the system of ownership (Europeans). Such attacks were not only a threat to the local conservative traditional leadership and the local European interests but also a threat to the whole system of labour migration. This was not only a challenge to the *status quo* in the three countries but also a threat to the South African economy. In reaction to these threats, the local

conservative leaders were able to use their control over land to coerce the people. Those supporting the Pan-African movements were threatened with being deprived of land.

If these countries were to come under the control of the Pan-African movements, the whole South African political, economic, and social structure would be threatened. The policy of "bantustan" itself would not function. The South African Government, therefore, insisted that Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland should be more closely integrated with the Republic. It threatened that in case the three countries refused to cooperate, South Africa would expel the migrant labourers and thereby create chaos in the home countries which were unable at the time to provide a living locally for the large number of "absentees". The local traditional leaders feared that they would lose control over land distribution and political power if labour migration was discontinued. It would drastically raise local pressure on land and encourage a revolutionary situation where the mass of landless workers would demand a change in the distribution both of land and political power. To the Pan-African leaders, on the other hand, the flow of migrant labour was seen as a liability to the growth of national economies and they were strongly opposed to a closer integration with South Africa.

The local European population was divided into two sections – one favouring integration and the other prepared to accept independence under the local conservative traditional leaders, but not under Pan-African leadership. The latter group was stronger than the former and, as such, it was able to forge a political alliance with the local traditional leaders. In Botswana this alliance was expressed in the formation of a *Joint Advisory Council* by the two groups, while in Lesotho, it was shown by the active support of the traditional leaders by European traders and missionaries. In Swaziland the two groups cooperated within the framework of each of the councils.

These alliances were also supported by external political forces. This support was more openly expressed in Lesotho and Swaziland than in Botswana. In Swaziland, the Paramount Chief was advised by his South African legal adviser – a member of the governing Nationalist Party in South Africa to form a political party to fight the Pan-African movement. The party stood for the continuation of local conservative leadership. Locally, it was supported by two main forces – the local Europeans and the traditional hierarchy. The former saw "in tribalism, in the very low living standards of the vast majority of the Swazis and in the maintenance of all the barriers against social and economic mobility for the Swazi, security from competition and from democratisation of economic power".¹⁹ The latter sought to secure their own survival which in turn was closely related to the

system of land distribution. Both groups were able to use economic pressures to support their case. The local Europeans, who were controlling farming, mining and trade, threatened to sack their employees if they supported the Pan-African movement. Chiefs, on the other hand, used their control over land for the same purpose. Both groups restricted holding of party meetings and rallies in their areas; trade unions and trade associations were restricted. It meant serious obstacles to the political work of the Pan-African groups.

Externally, the alliance was supported directly by South Africa and Britain. Most of the local Europeans belonged to South African political parties and the services rendered by a team of South African legal advisers to the Swazi Paramount Chief served to insulate the chiefs from the approaches made by the Pan-African leaders. In Lesotho, a strong conservative Catholic hierarchy was highly influential. It branded the Pan-African movements as "communist" when they attacked the system of labour migration and the pattern of land distribution. Being a large landlord and sharing economic power with local traditional leaders and European traders, the Catholic church strongly advised its adherents not to support the Pan-African movement. The church threatened with ex-communication, the local European traders with expulsion from work, and the local traditional leaders with deprivation of land. The South African Government openly supported the latter with money, food, helicopters and advisers during the political campaigns.

In Botswana, there was no open South African support of the traditional leaders, but members of the European Advisory Council functioned as a channel of external support. Land deprivation and threats of redundancy were also used by these groups in an effort to stop the penetration of the Pan-African movement in their areas.

The interaction of these local and external forces ensured that the pre-independence elections were won in all three countries by the conservative traditional leaders who now found themselves steering the governmental machinery while at the same time retaining their traditional authority in relation to land distribution. But the withdrawal of formal British control led to an intensification of internal contradictions. The radical nationalist forces, although defeated in the little but free general elections, continued to agitate. The contrast between the booming South African economy and the stagnation and underdevelopment of the three newly independent states was more glaring than ever. The poverty of the masses grew while the Europeans raised their profits and standards of living.

In response to these growing pressures, the post-independence governments of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland sought to raise their share in the regional economy without questioning the basic role of the

three countries as labour reserves. With independence, the governments expected instead to bargain with the South African Government on equal footing for better and increased wages for their people. They also sought to ensure that a greater portion of the earnings of the migrant workers were brought back to the homelands. The Lesotho Government for example, demanded that wages of their people be directly sent to Lesotho instead of being kept in South Africa until their contracts expired. Some of these efforts were ignored by the South African Government.

The independent governments also demanded a revision of the 1910 customs union agreement. It resulted in a new agreement of 1969 which did not alter the pattern of 1910 in any more fundamental respects. Infact Lesotho's share of customs duties in the 1969 revised agreement was drastically reduced while that of Botswana and Swaziland were slightly increased. At the same time, the restrictions on the development of industries in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, although slightly modified, remained virtually the same. South African competition undermined any viable industrial development in the three countries. The continued use of South African currency was a particularly embarrassing sign of continued dependence. Swaziland was the first to introduce her own currency. But within the framework of effective integration in the South African economy, such measures could not achieve any important effects on their own.

The continued flow of labour to South Africa could not prevent land distribution from becoming an increasingly controversial issue in the local economies of the three countries. The independent governments, although firmly in the hands of the land owning or land controlling classes, sought to introduce certain reforms also in this field.

In Lesotho, a commission of enquiry, the *Thornson Commission*, was appointed in 1967 to look into the matter. In Swaziland, a bill, the *Land Speculation Bill* was secretly discussed in 1971 by the traditional leaders and rushed through parliament while in Botswana, the *Tribal Land Act* (No. 54 of 1968) was amended by *Act No 48 of 1969* to deprive the chiefs of their functions of land distribution.

In Lesotho, the chiefs resisted any far reaching land reforms while the opposition stepped up their attacks on the pattern of land distribution. A general election was won by the opposition in 1970 with a clear majority but was followed by a coup whereby the conservative traditional leadership ensured its continued political control.

In *Botswana*, the united front of the traditional leaders was breaking up. The section of chieftancy in control of the central government sought to reform the system of land distribution and place it more firmly under its control. The attempt to deprive chieftancy of its functions in this respect

resulted in a split within the traditional leadership. One chief resigned in protest, joined one of the opposition political parties and won all the three seats in his constituency in the post-independence elections using the same weapon of land deprivation. The chief himself defeated the vice-president of the government.

In *Swaziland*, the attempted land reforms resulted in a split in the old alliance between the local conservative traditional leadership and the Europeans. *The Land Speculation Bill* sought to prohibit the sale of land and landed property to non-Swazis. The Europeans, naturally, attacked the Bill and threatened to close down the flow of capital into the country. The African opposition, on the other hand, although not represented in the parliament, continuously attacked the pattern of land distribution, labour migration and the pattern of dependence, as well as working conditions in Swaziland itself. These attacks found support among the workers in the Europeans farms and the urban Africans. During the post-independence elections of 1972, the opposition, for the first time in the history of the country, managed to secure three seats in the parliament. Having now found a platform in the parliament, the opposition became a direct threat both to the local Europeans and to the conservative traditional leaders. In 1973, the Swazi King abolished all political parties declaring that the "western parliamentary system" was not suitable for Swaziland. Swaziland was to return to traditional rule through the chiefs and not to be ruled by political parties. The coups in Lesotho and Swaziland were both supported by the South African government.

Post-independence development in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland points at the growing tensions and conflicts both within the traditional leadership and within the alliances established in the pre-independence period between the latter and local European interests with more or less open support from South Africa. Labour migration and its linkage to the land question within the countries themselves continues to play a major role in influencing economic, social and political development. While conservative traditional leaders have consolidated their hold in Lesotho and Swaziland, moderate reformist moves in Botswana has kept down the level of political repression.

A final note will have to be added about the nature of documentation in the various sections of the study. For the historical analysis in chapters 2 and 3, I have mostly relied on secondary sources. The early literature available covering colonialism and land appropriations in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland is largely based on a "legal" interpretation of the process as understood during those times. Both South African and British documents are full of arguments attempting to justify the colonial history. The authors

I have used include Ashton, de Kiewit, Hailey, Kuper, Leistner, Marawick, Pim, Sheddick, Sillery, Smit, Spence and Tylden. It should be pointed out that some of these authors have at one time or another served in these countries in the colonial service. Using references in the works of Stevens and Halpern whose books were banned in the Republic of South Africa, I have been able to collect information on land concessions in Swaziland by interviews. Similarly, it has been possible to supplement Schapera's work on concessions in Botswana. These interviews assisted me to obtain information, after an examination of the concession documents and the correspondence between the chiefs and the colonial office, on the tribal or traditional interpretation of granting land to non-tribal or foreign people. This helped me to assess the validity of the "legal" interpretation as understood by the chiefs on one hand, and the colonial officials on the other.

In the chapter dealing with labour migration (chapter 4), I have relied on primary sources in the form of official government policy documents, official statistics, surveys and oral interviews. The last two were undertaken for two reasons; first, to supplement statistical data quoted in government publications which often contain distorted figures to suit official purposes. The second reason for undertaking surveys and interviews was that the figures themselves did not include any precise information as to the social and family background, let alone the motives of the migrant workers. No such studies seem to have been undertaken in the region before. Early authors dealing with the problems of labour migration have only dealt with the social aspects of the problem on the "family" without even clearly defining the nature of the family, for example, a married man with or without children – or, merely a member of an extended family. Some recent authors seem to be interested in the economic aspects of the system in terms of wage returns. My respondents in this chapter were workers assembled at the main recruiting depots in the three countries. I also interviewed former migrant workers who had now settled in the villages.

In chapter 5 which deals with the overall pattern of economic integration, I have relied on three main types of primary sources, namely, government documents, policy speeches and interviews. My respondents were government officials, company officials, trade union officials, chiefs, large and small scale farmers or landowners, traders and peasants. These are the main groups which are affected – one way or another – by the policies.

For the chapter dealing with the political aspects of integration (chapter 6), I have used party programmes and policy documents, parliamentary debates, and oral interviews. The last two sources were used to check the nature and basis of party affiliations, the regional distribution of such affiliations and its influence on electoral results. My respondents were party

officials, chiefs and a small sample of voters in selected districts.

Finally, for the chapter dealing with the attempted reforms (chapter 7), I have also used surveys and oral interviews alongside with official documentation. The interviews were used to assess the difficulties and problems before and after the reforms were introduced and to assess which groups were directly affected and in what ways.

Turning to the literature on the three countries it is surprising that so very little authoritative work has been done. On the individual countries, one can mention the works of Khaketla and Selwyn on Lesotho. The former, *Lesotho 1970: An African Coup Under the Microscope*, only covers the events leading to the coup in Lesotho with valuable information on party intrigues. The author himself was a participant in the party politics and no wonder the book itself reflects more on his own party. Selwyn's *Industries in Southern African Periphery* is more authoritative and deals with the problems of dependence. On Swaziland, the work of Potholm, *The Dynamics of Political Modernisation*, which deals with the success of traditional leaders in holding on to their powers despite the trend in Africa of sweeping away the chief only reflects the one-sided picture of the political atmosphere in Swaziland before and after independence. His earlier work on Southern Africa perhaps sheds some useful information on the region. Another useful work on Swaziland is that of Leistner and Smit with the title *Resources and Development*. This is a somewhat economic survey and like most of the books produced by the Africa Institute of South Africa, it reflects South African government opinion, justifying integration, dependence, and migration. The book is only useful in as far as it releases some of the information which would be otherwise embarrassing for the Swazi government to document on how far Swaziland is dependent on South Africa. Mardock's and Jones' *Development in Swaziland* is another useful work which looks at the patterns of "development", but to an outside person one would easily assume that the *development*, they are discussing covers the whole Swaziland. On Botswana, Smit's *Resources and Development* is also a survey with the same tone and style as that for Swaziland. All these books cover the post independence period.

The historical books for individual countries include the works of Sillery, Schapera, Redfern, Munger and Thomas. Except for Shapera whose works include Tswana Law and Custom and another work on the problems created by the concessions, these other authors only deal with the history of the country in general.

On Lesotho, Ashton and Sheddick are useful works – the former deals with the general history of the BaSotho and includes such useful information as the hierarchy of the traditional institutions while the latter deals with the land tenure system.

On Swaziland, Kuper's two works *The Uniform of Colour* and *The African Aristocracy* provide useful information on the relationship between the Europeans and Africans in Swaziland and the traditional hierarchy of the Swazi respectively.

Finally, the British official surveys by Hailey and Pim covering the three countries provide a clear picture of British colonial aspirations.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Amin, S., 'Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa', *Journal of Peace Research*, No. 9, 1972.

2. Lesotho: *First Five Year Development Plan*, Maseru, 1970, p. 11.

3. For Botswana, see Smit, *Botswana: Resources and Development*, Pretoria, 1970, p. 75. For Swaziland, see Leistner, G.M., and Smit, P., *Swaziland: Resources and Development*, Pretoria, 1969, p. 49.

4. Wilson, F., *Labour in the South African Mines: 1911-1969*, Cambridge, 1972, pp. 70-71.

5. Amin, 1972, p. 106.

6. Cf. Rudebeck, L., 'Political Development: Towards a Coherent and Relevant Theoretical Formulation of the Concept', *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 5, 1970. - See also Frank, A.G., *Sociology of Development and Underdevelopment of Sociology*, Zenit Reprint 1, Kristianstad, 1968.

7. *Southern Africa at a Glance*, Africa Institute (S.A.), Pretoria, 1972, p. 10.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

9. Leys, R., 'South African Gold Mining in 1974: The Gold of Migrant Labour', *African Affairs*, April 1975, p. 199.

10. Molteno, R.V., *Africa and South Africa: Are Economic Ties in the Interests of the African States?*, undated (mimeo).

11. Smit, 1970, p. 112.

12. Lesotho: *First Five Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 1.

13. Leistner, G.M., *Lesotho: Economic Structure and Growth*, Pretoria, 1966, p. 23.

14. Lesotho: *First Five Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 15.

15. Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 59.

16. The Great Trek is defined by South Africans as a "mass emigration of colonists, mostly of Dutch origin, from the Cape of Good Hope in the 1830's . . .". Causes of (which) included "the lack of understanding by the British Colonial Office". See *Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa*, London, 1973, pp. 228-229.

17. *Swaziland Annual Reports*, Mbabane, 1960, pp. 11-13.

18. Stevens, R., *Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland*, London, 1967, p. 246.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

Chapter 2

Colonial Penetration, Land Appropriation and the Development of Group Conflicts

The late precolonial and early colonial history of the peoples of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland is connected with certain major events starting around the year 1800. These events occurred at a time when different clans were driven from one area into another events which have been described as the "Wars of Calamity". The main cause of these events was the conflicts in South Africa involving three major European powers, namely, the British, the Germans and the Dutch. The arrival and expansion of the Dutch and the British in the previous century caused unrest among the various clans they confronted and consequently, these various clans spread the unrest into the neighbouring countries. The sudden and enormous expansion of the Zulus caused major disruptions. All these groups had one interest at this stage, i.e. land for farming and grazing. In the years that followed, minerals added to the already existing conflicts and antagonism between the major powers themselves.

The first part of this chapter is connected with the early "Wars of Calamity" between different African groups, and the fundamental effect of these wars in consolidating the BaSotho, BaTswana and Swazi people into relatively large political units. The second part of the chapter considers the later history of these peoples, as the Boers moved into the interior in the Great Trek. The underlying dynamic was a drive for more land which had to be taken from the Africans. However, the survival of the BaSotho, BaTswana and Swazi as political units, and the actual area of land which they were able to retain, was determined not so much by the conflict between themselves and the Europeans, as by the conflicts between the different European groups. In particular, these were conflicts between the Boers and the British over land, minerals and an outlet to the sea; between Germany and Britain; and, at a lower level, between Boer farmers and the missionaries attached to African tribes. These intra-European conflicts defined the field of manoeuvre, in the later period, of such chiefs as Moshoeshe or Khama. Their outcome, whether in collusive compromise to remove African rulers, or in the assertion of imperial power to uphold African rulers of particular areas in order to forestall Boer expansion, decided the political geography of the region.

2.1. Intra-African conflicts: Disintegration and consolidation

The 1820's were a time of unrest. Raiding parties, often refugees from Zulu expansion, disrupted existing communities. In Bechuanaland, the earliest of these events occurred in 1822 when a Chieftainess from Basutoland* by the name of 'MaNthatisi later returned to Basutoland in 1823.¹ During the same period, another raid led by another chief from Basutoland, Sebetwana, swept through the southern part, up to the northern ones near the town of Serowe.

Events changed, however, with the arrival of Mzilikazi, the break-away leader from Chaka, the Zulu King. Mzilikazi had broken away around 1825 and from this period until his defeat in 1837 was a continuous source of harassment in Bechuanaland.

In Basutoland, the "Wars of Calamity" followed almost the same pattern as in Bechuanaland. The return of 'MaNthatisi from Bechuanaland in 1823 was the first event of any significance. During this time, Moshoeshoe, the Bakwena Chief, was involved in a conflict with 'MaNthatisi. Like the raids in Bechuanaland, this incident also involved cattle raiding as 'MaNthatisi had brought a lot of booty from her raids in Bechuanaland.

There were a number of conflicts of this nature between various chiefs in Basutoland. In 1830 occurred the first of the so-called "Wars of Calamity" between Moshoeshoe and the Korana which, for the first time, introduced the use of firearms. A year later, Mzilikazi, who had been harassing the tribes of Bechuanaland from 1827, sent a force to attack the BaSotho. This expedition failed but it confirmed the historical link between the tribes of Basutoland and Bechuanaland. The failure of the expedition, despite the strength of the Zulus, was due to the fact that Moshoeshoe was defending a hill which was a natural fortress. This period of BaSotho history has been described as "a classic epic of the struggle of a small nation to survive in an environment rendered hostile by dangers of annihilation by larger and more powerful tribes".²

Swazi history before the ascendancy of Ngwane is not clear,³ but it would appear, from the evidence available, that they themselves settled in Swaziland through conquest of other minor tribes, particularly, Sotho and other Nguni tribes.⁴

* Bechuanaland was the name used in Botswana during the colonial period while Basutoland was applied to Lesotho.

³ The Swazi call themselves 'Bantu Ba ka Ngwane' meaning 'people of Ngwane'.

It was not until the reign of Ndvungunye and Sobhuza I (1815–1836) that the Swazis really came into conflict over land with the Ndwandwe of the Zulu clan.⁵

Although the Swazis experienced the encroachment of the powerful Zulus, the raids in Swaziland were of minor significance compared to those experienced by the BaSotho and the BaTswana. The Swazi King avoided direct confrontation with the Zulu Kings through presents and marriages and, hence, they have a direct connection with the Dlamini clans. It was only in 1836 that the Swazi encountered a direct confrontation with the Zulus, when the latter were driven off from Swaziland.

These early conflicts over cattle and grazing land had one major significance in all three countries, namely, that the different clans and tribes consolidated into one or another major clan or tribe. Those which did not were either absorbed or annihilated by the stronger ones.

In Bechuanaland, there were, at this time, six major principalities, each being independent of each other. The raids were mainly experienced by four main tribes, namely, the BaNgwaketse, the BamaNgwato, the BaKgatla, and the BaKwena. There were also minor tribes bordering with the main tribal groups and the largest of these minor tribes were the Kalaka and the Shona. As the raids continued, these minor tribes attached themselves to the larger ones. The Kalaka and the Shona, for example, joined the BamaNgwato.⁶

The absorption of minor tribes in Bechuanaland did not take the form of conquest. The minor groups and tribes accepted the rule of the major ones and, consequently, most of them were allowed to retain their language and culture. In some cases, they retained their own chiefs, while the chief of the major tribe demanded their services as subjects. Given the instability of the time, it was natural that a network of interdependence should be built up between chiefs (with their subjects) to contain the raiding conflicts.

In Basutoland, the process of consolidation took a natural course. Although Moshoeshoe had conflicts with other BaSotho clans, the BaSotho were almost a homogeneous tribe: they had the same language and customs, so that they were not in exactly the same position as the tribes of Bechuanaland. Consequently, by 1831, when Moshoeshoe's power reached its peak, "... he could easily check any contenders for power as leaders of tribal fragments joined him to form the Basuto nation".⁷ The only exception was the BaTlokwa tribe whose Chieftainess, 'MaNthatisi, had already harassed Moshoeshoe as early as 1823. At any rate, Moshoeshoe, by this time, had unquestionable leadership over the major clans in Basutoland.⁸

In Swaziland, the process of consolidation followed a different pattern from those of Bechuanaland and Basutoland. Although the structure was as

homogeneous as that of Basutoland, the ruling clan of Swaziland, the Dlamini, came to dominate other tribal groups by sheer conquest. They followed this by the introduction of their language and culture. Even at the early stage of Swazi history, tribal groups such as the Sotho who had weak leadership were either annihilated or totally absorbed: so much so that there has been a distinction in Swaziland up to now between the "True Swazis" and the "non-Swazis". The former are usually linked with the Dlamini family – the founders of the Swazi nation, who are described by Kuper as the "Aristocrats".⁹

2.2. Intra-European conflicts

In the period between 1820 and 1870 the entire pattern of threats to the people of Bechuanaland, Basutoland, and Swaziland changed. Some conflicts during the period discussed so far had been a result of territorial expansion, for example, the Zulu raids in Bechuanaland, and to a certain extent in Swaziland. But the usual form of conflict had been cattle raiding by mobile groups. Boer farmers, on the other hand, were interested in permanently occupying land. It is worth quoting a description of the Boers by Sillery:

(They) "had an inexhaustible appetite for land, and land of all sorts was to all appearance inexhaustible. The pastoralists of the dry interior required far larger areas for their cattle than the Coastal belt farmers needed to grow their crops. The frontiersman was raised in the firm tradition that his birthright was a farm of 6,000 acres or more, very roughly measured, occupied at a tiny rent on conditions that almost amounted to freehold".¹⁰

Conflicts were no longer dominated by cattle-raids and they entered a new era in which sophisticated weapons were to be used for the purpose of the massive appropriation of land by Europeans.

The other main European party were the British. The establishment of the Cape as a permanent British possession (in 1815) changed the whole pattern of relationship between the main contending European interests for the control of the interior. But initially the Boers were moving away from British rule, and the only Europeans they came in conflict with were the missionaries.

2.3. The Missionaries and the Boers

The histories of the BaSotho, BaTswana and Swazi diverge somewhat, so that, after a section on the missionary/Boer conflict, the remainder of the

chapter is taken up with separate sections on each. The fundamental forces remain the same, however, as indicated by the sub-headings.

The first intra-European conflict in the interior was between Boers and missionaries who were attached to various African groups. The missionaries were sometimes advisors to chiefs in their dealings with the Boers, but their principal power, such as it was, lay in their special access to the British imperial and colonial authorities.

As a result of the British rule in the Cape, the famous "Great Trek" had already started in the 1830's from Cape Colony.¹¹ The missionaries had, in the meantime, established themselves and were consolidating their "civilising mission". It served as a prelude to the exploration of the interior on the "Road to the North". It was not, therefore, to be long before they were to confront the Boer Trekkers who were also pushing northwards.

By 1820, missionaries had already started finding their way into Bechuanaland and the first missionary, Robert Moffat, established a mission in the southern part of Bechuanaland. As was usual in those pre-colonial days, the same routes followed by the missionaries were usually followed by traders and by the 1840's there were already a number of traders and hunters in Bechuanaland. One of the most famous trader to arrive during this period was Samuel Edwards – himself a son of a missionary,¹² who was later to influence the allocation of concessions in the country.

By 1837, the Boer Trekkers, under the leadership of Potgieter confronted the Matebele leader, Mzilikazi, and they were able to defeat him with the help of the BaRolong tribe. With the defeat of Mzilikazi, the Boers had no contending enemies on their way into the interior, except the missionaries.

There were already differences and conflicts between the missionaries and the Boers, starting from the 1820's in the Cape. A London missionary, John Phillip, had not only led the campaign against Boer illtreatment of the Hottentots but had also obtained the 50th Ordinance of 1828 in the Cape parliament which legislated against such illtreatment. At the same time, the Boers suspected that missionaries were supplying firearms to the tribes they stayed with, which could be used against the Boers.¹³

Against this background, in Bechuanaland, the Boers in 1852 attacked the BaKwena chief, Sechele, who had been a host of a missionary, Dr. Livingstone.¹⁴ This incident happened at a time when the British Government, through the Sand River Convention, gave the independence of Transvaal to the Boers, who were now left almost free to penetrate into the neighbouring Bechuanaland. Despite the protests made by the chief and the missionaries in Bechuanaland to the British Government, the British declined to take any action to restrain the Boers.

In Basutoland, because of the proximity of the country to the Cape and

the Orange Free State, Boer Trekkers appeared at a much earlier stage, near the Caledon River around 1831 and it did not take long before they were followed by parties of cattle ranchers in the fertile valley. Their appearance was an immediate threat to Moshoeshoe. Moshoeshoe had heard of the conflicts in Bechuanaland and, particularly the intervention of the missionaries and, by 1833, he invited missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Mission. One of the missionaries, Casalis, became a personal adviser to Moshoeshoe on European affairs. More and more missionaries came in and, unlike Bechuanaland where the London missionaries predominated, Moshoeshoe was careful to invite as many religious sects as possible. By 1862, the first group of Catholic missionaries from the Order of Oblates of Mary Immaculate arrived.

In Basutoland, the missionaries did not immediately come into confrontation with the Boers. The BaSotho had learned the use of firearms and horses not through the missionaries, as the Boers suspected in Bechuanaland, but through the Korana, and they had even purchased their own weapons from the whites. Nevertheless, the Boers regarded the missionaries as enemies since they became advisers to Moshoeshoe. There were various conflicts over land around outlying mission stations. The most direct confrontation between the Boers and the missionaries happened in the war of 1858, when several stations were attacked and mission buildings burnt. After defeating the BaSotho in 1866 the Boers retaliated by closing mission stations in the areas previously controlled by Moshoeshoe.¹⁵

2.4. BECHUANALAND: The Road to the North

British interests in Bechuanaland did not diverge from those of the Boers for some time after the conclusion of the Sand River Convention, despite the missionaries' dreams of their "Road to the North". But the history of Bechuanaland entered a new chapter in 1866 when Carl Mauch discovered gold in the Tati area of northern Bechuanaland. This became a turning point for both the Boers and the British. During this period, the Boer government of Transvaal was having financial difficulties and, in its anxiety to profit from the new discovery, completely disregarded the Sand River Agreement. As it turned out, the Boers were not only concerned about the gold, but also the territory of Bechuanaland through which the missionary "Road to the North" passed. The president of the Boer Republic of Transvaal, Pretorius, immediately proposed "protectorate" status to the chief of the BamaNgwato in whose area lay the gold fields. Before a reply was received from the BamaNgwato chief, Pretorius annexed the area to his Transvaal Republic.

The missionaries, led by Mackenzie, were deeply concerned at the annexation, for their missionary road to the North now became jeopardised. At their advice, the chief of the BamaNgwato requested the British to occupy the area itself. As the British did not react to this request, Pretorius now went further to annex a further strip of land which would have led him to the sea-port, Delegoa Bay, which at this time was claimed by the Portuguese.¹⁶ With mounting pressure from many interested parties, including the Portuguese, Britain, at last, refused to recognise the annexation of both areas.

The conflicting interests between the Boers and the British that were to affect the geographical position of Bechuanaland did not take long to repeat themselves. In 1868, diamonds were discovered in Griqualand. The British and the Orange Free State (which had just been ceded to the Boers in 1854) were at loggerheads over the ownership of the diamond area. The diamonds were actually in the Boer area but such discoveries opened further roads inland, as the case of Tati demonstrated. The British wanted the "Road to the North"; yet if the Boers were to be left unchecked, the discovery of the diamonds would drive them north. As a precaution, the British decided to create a buffer-zone in the area and annexed Griqualand West, held by the BaRolong and BaThlaping tribes of southern Bechuanaland. This area became known as British Bechuanaland and did not include the rest of Bechuanaland. The new colony was, thus, separated from the rest of the country.

It was about this time that Khama ascended to the BamaNgwato throne. He had carefully followed the conflicts between the British and the Boers and was, thus, aware of the dangers of European settlements in his area. He, therefore, accepted only a few settlers and made it clear that the settlements were not to be taken as permanent.¹⁷

It was not long after his installation as Paramount Chief when further Boer Trekkers passed through Bechuanaland to South-West Africa. A number of the Trekkers settled in the Western part of Bechuanaland close to the South-West African border. Remembering the disturbances caused by the Boers, Khama appealed for British Protection. As the harassment by the Boers continued, the British, instead of answering the appeals from Khama, entered into yet another agreement with the Boers. This agreement, the Pretoria Convention of 1881, simply reaffirmed the boundaries after the annexation of Griqualand West although it included an undertaking of territorial integrity to be observed by both sides. In essence, it did not restrain the encroachment on the people of Bechuanaland.

Only two years after the Pretoria Convention, i.e. in 1883, a group of Boers who had left the Transvaal crossed into Bechuanaland and established two

“republics”, Stellaland and Goshen. This action provoked the British because by this time, Cecil Rhodes had a wider vision of the “Road to the North” than the simple “civilising mission” of the missionaries, and Rhodes seemed to attract attention in the British circles. Rhodes, who was at this time a Parliamentary Leader of the Opposition at the Cape, strongly defended the preservation of the “Road to the North” on the grounds that it would be the only link to the north for British economic interests. He was at this time building his economic empire through the British South African Company which he intended to pass through Bechuanaland, to Rhodesia, and, possibly to Cairo. He led a strong campaign, not only in the Cape Parliament, but also in London, and, with missionary arguments for their “civilising mission”, Rhodes managed to win sympathy for his cause.

It was, however, clear that the two views were on opposite poles. The missionaries wanted complete British protection for Bechuanaland so that they could operate freely, while Rhodes did not want interference from London in his economic exploitation – the most interference he was prepared to accept was incorporation of Bechuanaland into Cape Province: he preferred his own company to run the affairs of Bechuanaland. Whichever view prevailed, it was solved by the London Convention of 1884 which did not differ much from that laid down under the Pretoria Convention of 1881. It would appear, however, that the British Government was more influenced by Rhodes’ economic arguments than by the missionaries, because Bechuanaland was not at this stage declared a British Protectorate, and both Stellaland and Goshen were left under occupation.” The contest of interests between the British and the Boers reached a climax a year before the signing of the London Convention. A new threat to the British interests was now inevitable because the Germans had already reached South Africa and had claimed South-West Africa. This new development altered the strategy of the British Government. South-West Africa was not only bordering with Bechuanaland but also with South Africa. Buffer-zones would therefore not be enough. The British feared that any combined action by the Germans and the Boers into Bechuanaland would virtually cut the British out – not only in Bechuanaland itself but in the whole of South Africa including their possessions in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal. More important, if the “Road to the North” fell to the Boers, it would not only make it possible for Transvaal Boers to have a sea-route but the whole structure of the British zones would crumble.

It was this reasoning which eventually led to the declaration of Protectorate over Bechuanaland by the British Government on January 27, 1885. The issue at stake was the closure of the “Road to the North” to the Boers and the Germans. To appease the British colonists at the Cape, who

had been at odds with the Home Government, the British Government handed over the southern part of Bechuanaland to the Cape colonists. Thus, the people of Bechuanaland not only lost a large part of their territory, but were also divided. Their people in the south were later handed over to the Boers when the Union of South Africa was created.

2.5. BASUTOLAND: Conquest and Resistance

Although the parties of Boer Trekkers were not large at the beginning, the nature of the economy was reason enough to pose considerable problems with the BaSotho because the latter were also pastoral farmers. During this early period, the Boers did not attempt to antagonise Moshoeshe and some of them even went to the extent of offering him small gifts and presents. Moshoeshe, in return, felt obliged to give them permission to graze on his lands.¹⁹

The concept of these gifts in exchange for the use of land for grazing was misunderstood by both parties. For the Boers, individual title to land was a clear and unambiguous concept which could only be formalised through boundary lines; for Moshoeshe and his people, allowing the Boers to graze cattle on his lands constituted hospitality rather than permanent ownership.²⁰ This difference of view became acute as more Boers with traditions of title to land and property arrived in large numbers after leaving the Cape. Under such circumstances, conflicts were inevitable. By the late 1830's there were open clashes involving cattle raids on both sides.

As these increased, Moshoeshe decided to complain to the British Governor at the Cape. The latter did not react. Nevertheless, Moshoeshe, on the advice of his missionary advisers, renewed his requests for a treaty with Britain, in the hope of support against the Boers.

The Governor at the Cape was, during this period, Sir George Napier, and given the British interests at the Cape, he decided to create a buffer-zone in the disputed area. This resulted in the *Napier Treaty* of 1843.²¹ The treaty recognized Moshoeshe as 'a friend and ally' of the Cape Colony. Under the treaty, Moshoeshe was to undertake to maintain 'order and peace' in his area and to restrain his people from causing disturbance in the areas inhabited by the Boers. In return for his services, Moshoeshe was to receive an annual salary of seventy-five pounds sterling. There were no clearly drawn up boundaries between the Boer areas and Moshoeshe's in the Treaty. A new governor renewed the Treaty in 1845, and appointed a British Resident in the Free State area. Moshoeshe was to provide a force at the

request of the Resident Commissioner if need arose, and peace was to be maintained on both sides.”

The BaSotho placed considerable significance on the Napier Treaty. As it was not concluded under duress or conquest, it meant that they were now under British protection. However, conflict between the Boers and the BaSotho continued in spite of the physical presence of the British Resident. The Boers continued to graze in the territory of Moshoeshoe, and cattle-raids went on.

As the conflicts over land continued, the new Governor, Sir Harry Smith, was determined to put them to an end once and for all. With zeal, he personally visited the areas in dispute and decided that, instead of having one area under British control, both areas should come under the British, and the subjects therein should become British subjects. He communicated his decision to the leader of the Boers, Pretorius, and Moshoeshoe was also informed of the new situation. In 1848, he declared the whole area a sovereign area under the Queen.

Even apart from the fact that the Boers and the BaSotho were competing for the same land, it was unlikely that the Declaration of Sovereignty and the Napier Treaty would make much impact on the Boers – for they had many grievances against the British. The whole basis of the Great Trek was to get away from British rule. It took, therefore, barely five months for the Boers to flout the British and in July 1848, Pretorius, the leader of the Boers, who had been a party to Smith’s decision occupied Bloemfontein, the seat of the British Resident.

The Boers were not, however, successful on this occasion. Harry Smith rushed to dismantle Pretorius’ forces. The success of the British forces was limited only due to differences of opinion between the home government in London and that of the colonists at the Cape. The latter wanted expansion of British possessions in Southern Africa to fill their coffers with taxes from the subjugated people, but the home government did not wish to have any financial responsibility for the running of the territories. Smith’s victory over the Boers coincided with a request from the Cape for self-government. Moshoeshoe now realised that he could no longer depend on the British if their efforts were to be concentrated in protecting the Cape. He also knew that the British and the Boers had common interests and if the worst came, he would undoubtedly be deserted by both. Moreover, the British forces in the Cape were dwindling and could not be spared to defend the BaSotho against the Boers. It was during this time that Moshoeshoe decided to prepare himself for the worst by arming his people against any possible attacks by either the Boers or the British. It is estimated that he was able to mobilise “a force of 7,000 mounted men” within a short period.”

Although the Boers were still coming into the area in large numbers, there was less tension for some time. The Boers realised the strength of Moshoeshoe's forces and did not therefore attempt to antagonise him. Conflicts, however, arose between the British and the BaSotho. A new demarcation line (the Warden line), drawn up by the British Resident major Warden, removed a large area of Moshoeshoe's land. Raids continued, between African groups and between Africans and Boers. The new British Governor at the Cape, Sir George Cathcart, blamed Moshoeshoe for most of the raiding in the area. Despite the treaty of alliance between the two countries, Sir George Cathcart decided to show a force of arms against his 'ally', when the latter refused to submit to an ultimatum to pay a considerable number of cattle in compensation for a raid. Sir George Cathcart sent a force to attack Moshoeshoe and in the battle that followed, Moshoeshoe's forces proved to be equally strong. The British were forced to withdraw.

In spite of his near-victory, Moshoeshoe did not wish to antagonize the British and he still wanted "protection" from them. The war had a psychological impact on the Boers and confirmed them in their intention to acquire more land from the BaSotho by force. The War proved to the Boers that treaties were no more than simple pieces of paper. On the other hand, Moshoeshoe realised once again that the British were by no means committed to protect his land against the Boers.

Moshoeshoe's point proved true in August 1854 when the British government handed over to the Boers the Orange River sovereignty. By this act, Moshoeshoe and his subjects were no longer under the British "protection"—nor were they "allies" of the British government in accordance with the *Napier Treaty* and the *Declaration of Sovereignty* of 1843 and 1848 respectively. It also meant that the Boers, who were now in control of the border area, got a free hand in their ambitions to conquer Moshoeshoe's territory.

Nevertheless, the handing over of the Orange River sovereignty did not, immediately, cause friction in the border areas. The new President of the Orange River made overtures of friendship to Moshoeshoe and there was an exchange of State visits between them. This did not last long, however, and after the replacement of Hoffman as president, there were constant clashes between the Boers and the BaSotho on the border. Finally, in 1858, the Boers declared war on the BaSotho in order to push them from the disputed areas demarcated by major Warden. The war was one of the most fierce ever fought between the two peoples. The Basutos, however, withstood the assault and the war was concluded through a British mediator, Sir George Grey.

A period of peace followed, but Moshoeshoe now knew for certain that

with his age, he could no longer defend his territory. It was for this reason that in 1860, once again, he requested British protection in the often quoted dramatic message he sent to the new Governor at the Cape, Sir Phillip Wodehouse:

If the Government sends Magistrates, the Basuto will not understand; it will be like a stone that is too heavy for them to carry, the Queen's Agent could practice the Basuto and gradually teach them to hear magistrates, while he is helping me in political matters . . . I will be under the Queen as her subject, and my people will be her subjects also, but under me . . . so that the Queen rules my people only through me. . . I wish to govern my own people by native law, by our own laws, but if the Queen wishes after this to introduce other laws into my country, I will be willing; but I should wish such laws to be submitted to the Council of the Basutos; and when they are accepted by my Council, I will send to the Queen and inform her that they have become law."

During this time, Moshoeshoe's territory had been tremendously reduced in size – the larger part being that captured by the Boers, and the Boers were continuously pressing for new annexations. The BaSotho cattle were therefore getting more and more congested in the remaining area. The British, on their part, were still governing Natal and the Cape after having handed over the Orange Free State. With Boer interests still concentrated on Moshoeshoe's territory, his request for British protection met with opposition. The Boers, were not only concerned with pasture lands – the proximity of Basutoland to the Orange Free State was reason enough for their desires to annex it completely, to avoid further claims. The British, on the other hand, were still hesitant, and nothing was done on their side to meet Moshoeshoe's request.

Because of their distrust of British intentions, the Boers at once launched their strongest attack yet on the BaSotho (in May 1865). Only two years earlier, the British had tried to mediate in the border dispute. The purpose of the war, 'The Great Basotho War', was to secure further land beyond the disputed borders so that, in the event of further border settlements, they would be in a better bargaining position.

As it proved at the end of the war, the Boers had not only pushed the BaSotho back, but had left them at the point of starvation after having confiscated their food supplies as well as a large number of cattle. The war was temporarily concluded by the Treaty of Thaba Bosiu.

The defeat of the BaSotho and Moshoeshoe's plea for British protection renewed the conflict of interests of the Boers on one hand and those of the British colonists on the other hand. After their occupation of BaSotho areas where missionaries had established stations, the Boers, once again, wanted to demonstrate that they were actually in control. They decided to close down some of the mission stations because they considered the missionaries to be BaSotho sympathisers.²⁵ In the meantime, the British opinion was

divided between that of the colonists in Natal and at the Cape on one hand, and that of their home government on the other hand. Concerned over the closure of the mission stations, the British colonists in Natal made strong representations to the home government for protection for the BaSotho. They preferred the country to be made part of the 'Greater Natal'. Those of the Cape wanted Basutoland to be within their domain, while the home Government was reluctant to make any decision at this stage.

In the meantime, the Boers' ambitions extended far beyond mere taking of BaSotho territory. As in the case of Bechuanaland, where the Boers were aiming at a sea-outlet at Delagoa Bay, the Boers of the Orange Free State also wanted a sea-outlet.⁴⁶ The British realised that if this was achieved, their own interests would be at stake. Realising at the same time that the BaSotho were now more or less at the mercy of the Boers, and that their existence as a nation was almost at an end, the British government finally accepted Moshoeshoe's plea for protection in 1868.

The outcome of the settlement, however, showed that where British interests were not threatened, collusion with the Boers became acceptable British policy. The Boers were anxious for a settlement which would allow them to retain the territories gained during the two wars. On the other hand, the BaSotho were expecting, given British protection that negotiation between the British and the Boers would enable them to get back the areas lost in the two wars. As in Bechuanaland, where British interests converged with those of the Boers and resulted in handing back Southern Bechuanaland to the Boers, the final Convention of Aliwal North resulted in fixing the border lines of Basutoland on far more favourable terms to the Boers than the British had ever recognised before: so much so that they were even awarded the BaSotho areas which today form the greater part of the districts of Fouriesbourg, Ficksburg, Ladybrand, Thabanchu, Wepener, and Zastron in the Orange Free State.⁴⁷

The country of Moshoeshoe was now placed under the jurisdiction of the British colonists in Natal, despite the fact that Moshoeshoe wanted his country and people to be directly under the protection of the British imperial government. The BaSotho chiefs were concerned about the attitudes of the settlers of Natal with regard to taxation, but even more concerned about the 'white settlements' being proposed by the Natal colonists in the restricted area within which the BaSotho were now destined to survive after the Boer conquest. Britain, for her part, did not care who ruled Basutoland as long as it did not cost her anything. The Cape Government was, during this time, being granted self-government and it suited the British interests to have Basutoland transferred to the government at the Cape. In the Cape Parliament itself, preparations were already underway to annex Basutoland,

and by 1871 Basutoland was formally annexed by the Cape, without any negotiation with the chiefs of the territory.

Although Moshoeshoe was now dead (he died on March 1, 1870), his successor and all the Chiefs of Basutoland understood "protection" in a different sense from that actually practised by the colonists. Moshoeshoe's famous letter to Wodehouse explicitly made it clear that he did not want any BaSotho laws changed without the prior approval of the BaSotho Council. He also stated that the Queen would only rule his people through him. After the annexation, however, the BaSotho people came to experience new laws and taxes, and later they were even forbidden to carry arms. It was this last restriction passed by the Cape Parliament that brought them directly into confrontation with the Cape Government and resulted in the famous *Gun War* in 1880. The BaSotho felt that they were still living in a "state of war" with the Boers, who were still on their lands; to be disarmed would mean complete annihilation with no means of defence. As a result of the Gun War, Basutoland became difficult and expensive to govern; the Cape Government became unpopular both to the Boers and the British, and eventually, Britain took over Basutoland as a British Protectorate in 1884.

2.6. SWAZILAND: Concessions

The economy of Swaziland was the same as that of Bechuanaland and Basutoland, i.e. cattle-raising, although the Swazi revered it in a different form from the BaTswana and the BaSotho. To the Swazi, cattle were "our life, our bank, the property which established us. . . cattle do not rot like corn, and they multiply with time".⁸ But so was the land except that the land did not multiply. The Boers during this period also based their economy on cattle, and they were looking for land. Naturally the conflict over land was as central in Swaziland as elsewhere.

Nevertheless the form the conflict took was different from its form in Basutoland. In Swaziland the Boers obtained land not only by conquest, but by Court intrigues resulting in land concessions. The reasons for this, and for the eventual survival of Swaziland as a political unit, can be seen in the nature of the conflicts involved, and the changing roles of the Boers and the British. Swaziland bordered with the Boers in Transvaal and the British colonists in Natal. But initially it also faced the powerful Zulu nation. The British and Boers could offer assistance against the Zulus – at a price.

During the time of the Zulu raids on Swaziland, the Swazi King, Mswati, felt the need of support from the Boers and the British, and it was to the

British Resident, Theophilus Shepstone, that he turned for British protection against the Zulu raiders. His trust for the Boers and the British was so complete that in 1845, he sold a large part of his territory which was inhabited by Sotho tribes to the Dutch South African Nation. Eleven years later, he handed another large area to the Lydeburg District. His relationship with the Boers was so strong that he even went as far as assisting an attack made on his former subjects who were resisting the Boers' authority in the Lydenburg District.

It was during this time of "friendly" overtures towards the Boers that more and more of them started coming into his country with various interests. By 1844, the first missionary, James Allison, arrived in Swaziland. Most of those who arrived were traders and hunters, but by the early 1860's a large number of cattle farmers also found their way into the country. It was during this time that the Transvaal Republic experienced harsh economic difficulties: a number of these later arrivals had been driven out by these economic problems and were seeking better land for their cattle. September 1860 saw the first concession transaction signed by Mswati covering some "1,000 square miles" to Coenraad Wermark in exchange for cattle and a rent of five pounds per year.²⁹

Because of the nature of exchange (concession) of land between Mswati and the Boers, the system introduced suited the interests of the Boers who preferred permanent ownership for the areas they were farming and grazing. In time, the Boers were to claim a strip of land which passed through the large river basin of the River Usutu in their first attempt to secure an outlet to the sea.

When Mswati was succeeded by his seven-year old son, the Boers were able to play a court intrigue in favour of a puppet they strongly believed would continue to favour their concessions. The seven-year old son was poisoned in 1874 and the conflicts that prevailed in the Royal Court led to the choice of *Mbandzeni* as a King. It was during this time that the Transvaal Boers gained a strong influence over the Swazi chiefs through the manoeuvre of their leader, Rudolph, in concluding an "alliance" with the most influential chiefs at the court. It included the "ratification" of the concessions already granted by Mswati.³⁰

As more and more whites found their way into the "land of opportunities" gold was eventually discovered in 1879. Swaziland now turned into a battle ground for white interests with the "gold rush". The most important groups were the British and the Boers. Each wanted to outdo the other with all sorts of gifts and presents into the royal court of *Mbandzeni*. The Swazis also found it necessary, as they had done before with the Boers, to assist the British to suppress a tribal group under the leadership of Sekukuni across the border

in Natal. In return for this help, both the British and the Boers signed a treaty with the Swazi King when the Transvaal Republic was established, which included a "clause" to the effect that both the Boers and the British recognised the "independence" of the Swazi nation. This Treaty was signed in 1881, and was reaffirmed in the Convention of 1884 which read in part that both parties had agreed "to recognise the independence of Swaziland within the boundaries laid down in the Conventions".

As in Basutoland and Bechuanaland, treaties were treated by the Boers as simple and meaningless pieces of papers. In fact the treaties did not contain any clause to deter the encroachment of the Europeans on Swazi territory. With the discovery of gold, the interests of the various parties were brought into conflict. While the Boers sought grazing and farming rights, the British and other Europeans sought mineral rights. This created innumerable problems because these interests all concerned land. It was, therefore, not surprising to find that most of the concessions were in fact overlapping. The situation has been described by Way:

Mineral rights may be vested in the Crown (owing to lapses or cancellations) or owned by private interests or both; the surface rights in the same areas may be vested in the Crown, owned by private interests, or held in trust for the Swazi natives; so that some eighteen different combinations are possible."

By the late 1880's Mbandzeni had given away more than two-thirds of his large empire to the concessionaries. As a result there was tremendous confusion in the whole country between various groups over who owned what and where. The Swazis were virtually left landless as they were driven out from the areas which had been sold.

As Mbandzeni saw his land being made a battle ground for white interests, he appealed for British protection in 1886, but without success. A year later, he renewed his appeal and was, once again, rejected. He, therefore, turned to the British authorities in Natal who sent Shepstone's son, Theophilus, as an adviser to Mbandzeni on European affairs. Both the British and the Boers were, however, strongly entrenched – the former in mineral exploitation and the latter in farming and grazing. The appointment of Shepstone as an adviser became a strong threat to their interests and neither group trusted him.

In the meantime, the farming Boers, realising that Shepstone himself was British, sent a petition to the Boer government of Transvaal Republic requesting that Swaziland be incorporated into the Transvaal. The Boers during this time, dominated Swaziland and Shepstone himself seemed convinced that the country would be better managed by the Boers. Mbandzeni was, however, reluctant to fall into this trap and he requested the withdrawal of Shepstone from his service. Mbandzeni died in 1889.

Source: Smit, 1970.

The Boers' petition, however, coincided with Rhodes' scheme in Bechuanaland, involving his British South African Company, which, as we have noted, attracted the British Government. Rhodes preferred not to antagonise the Boers and strongly believed that they (the British and the Boers) could co-exist and cooperate in the exploitation of Southern Africa. Britain, therefore, felt that if the Boers got their way in having Swaziland incorporated into the Transvaal, Rhodes' scheme would be accepted by the Boers. A compromise was reached in the Convention of 1890. This stipulated that Swaziland was to be governed by the two contending powers through a "Provisional Committee" headed by joint Commissioners. Under the act, the committee was to look into the white interests and ensure that

there were to be no more encroachments on the remaining Swazi areas. Concessions granted after the convention were not to be recognised without the prior approval of the British and Boer governments and those already granted were to be reviewed by a court. The Swazis were to be left alone to manage their own affairs. Shepstone was appointed as an adviser by the new Regent after the death of Mbandzeni and when the scheme was presented to her, she agreed to it.

The Swazi leaders thought that this arrangement would provide a solution to their land grievances with regard to the concessions. As the convention had questioned the validity of these concessions, the Swazis assumed that land would be returned to them. Most Swazis argued that Mbandzeni's transactions did not amount to outright selling of the areas but, as was understood in the existing Swazi customs, merely to temporary hospitality in view of the gifts he received from them. The British and the Boers held a different view. To them, Mbandzeni understood the transactions and was even quoted as saying that "I know the concessions are bad, but I have white men all around me. By force they have countries of all my neighbours. If I do not give them rights here they will take them. Therefore I give them and they pay. Why should we not eat before we die".³³

When the court began examining the concessions, there were three judges on the bench. Two of them withdrew and the remaining judge *alone* confirmed 352 out of 364 concessions.³⁴

In the meantime, the Boers pressed for complete control of Swaziland. British interests in Bechuanaland were, during this period, stronger than in Swaziland – strong enough to warrant a bargain with the Boers. To the British, Rhodes' "Road to the North" was indispensable. A further element was the interest of the land-locked Transvaal Boers in a sea outlet. The British representative in South Africa, Sir Francis de Winton, also favoured Boer involvement in Swaziland in exchange for British designs in Bechuanaland.³⁵

In 1894, the Boers got what they wanted. The joint rule with the British ended and the Boers now had "the rights and powers of jurisdiction, protection and administration over Swaziland though without incorporation thereof into the South African Republic"³⁶

The Transvaal Boers ruled Swaziland from 1895 until 1899. The events which had obliged the British government to take over Bechuanaland as a protectorate repeated themselves in Swaziland. The Boers were not simply concerned with the taxes they introduced in Swaziland, nor with "protecting" Swaziland: first and foremost, they wanted a right to secure an outlet to the sea. To this end, they were prepared to do anything, whatever

³³ not to be confused with the present Republic of South Africa.

- Swaziland as it is today
- The Swazi Kingdom as it approximately was in 1868.

Source: Andrews, B., The Guide to Swaziland Mbabane, 1970.

the cost to their relationship with the British. As in the conflicts in Bechuanaland, the Boers found it expedient to invite the Germans into South Africa, and Britain retaliated in the same way as in Bechuanaland (where she had annexed Griqualand West) by annexing Tongoland near Swaziland. As the tension reached a climax, Britain assumed full control over Swaziland when the Boers were defeated in the *Boer War*.

Conclusion

The colonial appropriations of land defined the boundaries of the new political entities of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This division emerged from the history of the area in the latter part of the 19th century.

The internal geography of Bechuanaland under colonial administration showed a country divided into "European" and "Native" or "Tribal" areas as shown on the map of the land tenure. In the northern part of Bechuanaland, a strip of land claimed by both the Matebele Chief, Lobengula of Rhodesia – a descendant of the Zulu tribe – and the BamaNgwato Chief Khama of Bechuanaland was ceded by the former to Europeans as a concession. This strip came to be known as the Tati Concession. The areas which were claimed by Rhodes through his British South African Company were sold to Europeans. These areas came to be known as *Blocks* and included Lobatse, Gaberones, Tuli and Ghanzi. The southern part of Bechuanaland, as already pointed out, was handed over to South Africa.

In Basutoland, once the country had become a protectorate, no Europeans came to settle, in the true sense of acquiring free-hold title to lands as in Bechuanaland. It was in fact one of the cardinal achievements of Moshoeshe's laws that they were able to prevent the establishment of European settler farms. It is worth quoting in full this famous law on trade which included a clause dealing with European settlements:

I Moshoeshe, write for any trader whoever he may be, already in my land, and for any who may come to trade with Basuto; my word is: Trade to my tribe is a good thing; I wish to promote it. Any trader who wishes to establish a shop, must first obtain permission from me. Should he build a house, I grant him no right to sell it. Further I do not grant him liberty to plough the field, but only to plant a small vegetable garden. The trader who fancies that the place he is sejourning in belongs to him must dismiss the thought; if not he is to quit, for there is no place belonging to the whites in my land, and I have granted no white man a place, whether by word, or by writing."

The position of Basutoland, therefore, remained what it was at the Convention of Aliwal North by which the BaSotho lost large areas to the Orange Free State. Lesotho "shares with the Republic of San Marino the distinction of being one of the only two countries in the world to be entirely enveloped by another country, to have no access to the exterior except through that country, and thus by that country's grace and favour".

In Swaziland, not only was the Swazi Kingdom reduced to less than a third as shown on the map but also the fact that what remained of Swaziland was further demarcated into "European" and "Swazi" areas – the latter retaining only a third of the remaining area. This latter situation was described as follows:

AREAS RESERVED FOR SWAZIS 1909-1910

Source: Leistner and Smit, 1969.

Practically the whole area of the country was covered two, three or even four deep by concessions of all sizes for different purposes, and for greatly varying periods. In but very few cases were even the boundaries defined; many of the areas had been subdivided and sold several times, and seldom were the boundaries of the superimposed areas even coterminous. In addition to this, concessions were granted for all lands and minerals previously unallotted or which, having been allotted, might lapse or become forfeited. Finally it must be remembered, that over these three or four strata of conflicting interests, boundaries and periods, there had to be preserved the natural rights of the natives to live, move, cultivate, graze and hunt."

Thus, the Swazis were for all practical purposes pushed into unproductive mountain areas and other patches of land in various parts of the country while two-thirds—the most fertile part—became concessions. From an aerial view, Swaziland looked like a surface full of lakes (concessions) as shown on the map.

Notes to Chapter 2.

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2. Spence, J.E., *Lesotho: The Politics of Independence*, London 1968, p. 8.
3. Kuper, H., *An African Aristocracy*, London 1969, p. 12.
4. Hailey, 1953, p. 351.
5. Potholm, 1972, p. 8.
6. Hailey, 1953, p. 186.
7. Stevens, 1967, p. 16.
8. Halpern J., *South Africa's Hostages*, London 1965, p. 66.
9. Kuper, 1969, pp. 11–18.
10. Sillery, A., *Botswana: A Short Political History*, London 1974, p. 24.
11. See note 18, chapter 1. Among the conflictss between the British and the Boers were conflict over taxes and land that kindled the Great Trek which spread over to Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland.
12. Sillery, 1974, p. 31.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
15. Sanders, P., *Moshoeshe: Chief of The Sotho*, London 1975, pp. 87, 231.
16. de Kiewit, C.W., *British Colonial Policy And The South African Republics 1848–1872*, pp. 260–261.
17. Mockford, J., *Khama: King of Bamangwato*, London 1931, p. 80.
18. Hailey, 1953, p. 91.
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20. Spence, 1968, p. 10.
21. Hertslet, E., *The Map of Africa By Treaty*, London 1909, p. 184.
22. Lagden, G., *The Basutos*, London 1909, p. 75.
23. Halpern, 1965, p. 70.
24. Cited in Hailey, 1953, p. 37.
25. See foonote 13 above.

26. See footnote 16 and Halpern 1965, p. 75.
27. Coates, A., *Basutoland*, London 1966, p. 1.
28. Kuper, H., 1969, p. 150.
29. Halpern, 1965, p. 95.
30. Hailey, 1953, p. 360.
31. Way, H., *Mineral Ownership as Affecting Mineral Development in Swaziland*, Special Report No. 2, Mbabane 1949.
32. Hailey, 1953, p. 366.
33. Bulpin, T.V., *Storm Over The Transvaal*, Cape Town 1955, p. 142.
34. Potholm, 1972, p. 11.
35. Cited in Lord Hailey, 1953, pp. 366-367.
36. Lagden, 1909, p. 302.
37. Tahane, T. *Lesotho - The Realities of Landlockedness* (mimeo), A paper delivered at the Seminar on the Land-locked Countries of Africa, Oslo, September 1972.
38. Cited in Stevens, 1967, p. 178.

Chapter 3. Chieftainship and The Control of Land

Colonial land appropriations created serious land shortage in Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland. Land shortage enhanced the importance of the chiefs as controllers of land distribution. The colonial government weakened the constitutional restraints on the chiefs' powers. Consequently, the chiefs developed into an increasingly exploitative stratum allied to the colonial government. The combination of these factors increased the political as well as economic pressures on the peasantry and thus forced people to migrate. The principal beneficiary was imperialist capital in South Africa; but local chiefs and the colonial government had a joint interest in encouraging labour migration, as pressure on land would otherwise have threatened the local system of economic and political control.

In this chapter, section 1 deals with the social structure of each one of the three countries. In section 2, we will describe the powers of the chiefs. Section 3 deals with the land tenure system while section 4 will be devoted to the exploitation by the Europeans of the peoples of these countries.

3.1. Social Structure

The central concerns here are two: the ways in which separate clans were integrated into the nation; and the social classes which were produced by the relationships between chiefs (of various grades) and commoners.

Bechuanaland.

3.1.1.a. Semi-independent tribal areas:

When the British government took over the administration of Bechuanaland, the BaTswana were living in semi-independent areas, each area under a Paramount Chief. These areas were loosely demarcated to tribal and ethnic groups, although within each tribal group, there were also

different tribal groupings which, as we have already noted in chapter 2, had attached themselves to the larger ones for protection during the inter-tribal wars and, later, the Boer wars. The earliest population figure given is that of 1904 when the population for the whole country was recorded as being 120,776.¹ During the initial period of British colonial administration, recognition of the tribal areas was only extended to the larger ones, namely, BamaNgwato (1899), BaTawana (1899), BaKgatlwa (1899), and BaKwena (1899). Some years later, three more were recognised, namely BaMalete (1909), BaTlokwa (1933), and BaRolong (1943).

The late recognition of the last three tribes was a result of the land conflict connected with the operations of Rhodes' British South African Company on one hand, and the handing over of the southern part of Bechuanaland to the Union of South Africa on the other hand. The BaTlokwa had, for a long time, been living in the area which later became known as Gaberone block – having been named after their chief, Gaberone. The British South African Company's railway line was designed to pass through this area which was brought under the company's control. When the company liquidated its holdings, it sold the area to European settlers and, as a result, the tribe found itself squeezed into a tiny area completely surrounded by European farms. The fate of the BaMalete and the BaRolong was somewhat similar. Both were victims of the demarcation of the southern part of Bechuanaland and its eventual handover to the Union of South Africa.² As a result of this, a larger area of both tribes was included in the Transvaal and most of the people belonging to these tribes found themselves living under South African jurisdiction. In the case of the BaRolong, their chief had for a long time, been living at Mafeking in the Union of South Africa.³

Another area which did not fall within the definition of a "Tribal area" was a "Reserve" created in the Tati district, which had been in dispute between the BamaNgwato and the Matebele during the concession period. Before the Matebele Chief sold this area, it had been inhabited by two tribes, the BaKhurutse and Kalaka. The former had fled to the BamaNgwato during the Matebele raids in the area while some of the latter remained behind. When the Tati Company was established, those who had remained behind became tenants and were paying rent to the company. In 1895, the Bakhurutse decided to return to their homeland and negotiated with the company under the same terms as the Kalaka.

In 1930,, the size, area, population and density of the "tribal areas" were recorded as on table 1 on page 53.

From that table, it is seen that the most densely populated areas were those directly affected by the colonial conflicts and interests, namely, the BaTlokwa, BaMalete, and Tati areas.

Table 1 – Area And Population Of The “Tribal Areas” in Bechuanaland.

Name	Area in sq.mls.	Population	Density per sq.m.
BamaNgwato	40,000	108,800	2.7
BaTawana	34,500	35,000	1.0
BaKwena	15,000	29,000	1.9
BaNgwaketse	9,000	26,000	2.9
Bakgatla	3,600	16,000	4.4
BaRolong	432	5,000	11.6
BaMalete	178	7,000	39.3
BaTlokwa	67	2,000	29.9
Tati Reserve	331	8,500	25.7

Source: Pim Report, p. 160.

3.1.1.b. Structure within tribal areas

We have already pointed out that tribal areas were semi-independent of each other under a paramount chief and that the areas also contained other tribes which attached themselves to the larger ones.⁴ Political, economic, and social activities were dominated by the ruling groups and a social hierarchy was created along the lines of differences in origin. On top was the paramount Chief himself, whose village also became the tribal capital. He was surrounded by members of the ruling group. Below him were *Dikgosana* – chiefs, or members of the nobility whose dwellings were situated close to his *Khotla* – a tribal kraal. Below this group were the *Bathanka* – commoners, mostly drawn from his own tribe. Below them were the *Basimane ba Kgosi* – an alien group that was absorbed into the tribe long ago and was therefore given the status of “attendants to the chief”. On the bottom of the social structure were the *Bafaladi* – alien tribes. In addition to this hierarchy, there were also serfs belonging to very minor alien tribes who had no rights at all in relation to the other groups above.

It was the chief alone who was responsible for the allocation of land for building huts, cultivation and grazing. This function could be delegated to subordinate authorities who exercised it on behalf of the chief. In most cases, the chief delegated such powers to one of his relatives – a son, his brother, or an uncle. Only in few cases could appointments be made of a chief, or headman belonging to the allied tribe itself. Although these latter appointments could also be hereditary, they were dependent on, and subject

to the good-will of, the paramount chief, who had power to remove them and install one of his relatives as he pleased.

A ward was allocated to a tribal group and was under a ward-head, *the Modisa*. A modisa was responsible to an area or district chief who, in turn, was responsible to the paramount chief. In allocating a dwelling area, the modisa first chose his own place, after which he allocated to each head of a family a plot according to the size of the family. If the head of the family had a number of wives and many children, the plot allocated to him was big enough to cater for many huts. The head of the family was responsible to the modisa.

The allied tribes were incorporated into this structure, since each tribal area was governed by a ruling tribe belonging to the tribe of the paramount chief himself. The number of "allied" tribes varied in each area and, in some of them, the members of "allied" tribes outnumbered the ruling tribe; for example, in the BamaNgwato area, the ruling tribe, the Ngwato, only constituted a fifth of the total population of the area.⁵ In the Tawana area, out of a total population of 38,724, that of the ruling tribe was only 7,543.⁶ Similarly, the Kalaka predominated in the Tati Reserve.⁷ In some of the tribal areas, however, the reverse was true, but the general tendency of having "allied" tribes in all the areas remains:

Even the Tlokwa, smallest of all, include many groups or families of alien origin, which became part of the tribe through conquest, voluntary submission, immigration, or some other cause.⁸

The allocation of homesteads was done in such a way that the "alien" tribe was established as far away as possible from the tribal headquarters. In this way, the delegation of power to the Paramount Chief's relative was one of the ways to control the "alien" tribes. This is best illustrated by a description of a Kgatla tribal area:

All the wards in the tribe are for administrative purposes grouped into five main sections: Kgosing, Morema, Tshukudu, Mabodisa, and Manamakgote. Kgosing (embracing all the royal wards) in the centre and west; Morema is north-west of the Kgatla, and Tshukudu south and south-west beyond Morema. The sections are ranked in the order that they have just been named. The effect of their location, accordingly, is that the outskirts of the town are inhabited by the wards least in order of seniority, mostly peoples of alien origin. The royal wards, on the other hand, are situated immediately around the chief and his Kgoda.⁹

This hierarchical organisation and the related system for allocating land made it almost impossible for a member of a tribal group to move from one section to another. This immobility was supported by a system of controls vested in the ward-heads (who were relatives of the paramount chief) through restrictions in the economic system, such as the allocation of arable

land and grazing areas which will be discussed in the section dealing with land tenure system.

A member of a group was not allowed to move to another group. Similarly, a family was not allowed to move from one group into another. For all practical purposes, the groups, therefore, became closed units. An entire ward or village could, however, be moved from one area into another area where no ward existed, if the paramount chief desired to do so. Such movements were very frequent, and among the reasons were congestion, conflicts with nearby wards or villages, witchcraft, or a mere desire by the paramount chief to use the area for other purposes – or even move an alien group in order to settle a group of senior status.

Thus, the social and the political structures paralleled each other.

Basutoland

Like BaTswana, the BaSotho were divided into clan groups and these were: The Fokeng, Kwena, Khoakhwa, Kholokwe, Sia, Tibeles, Taung, Tlokwa, Phuti, Fingo, Hlakwana and Hlubi. The first to have settled in Basutoland were the Phetla, Polane, and Phuti. These were later followed by what have been termed the “first BaSotho” – Peli, Phuti, Sia, Tlokwa, Fokeng, Kwena, and Taung.¹⁰ The different clans lived under semi-independent rulers until the rise of Moshoeshe of the Kwena. The semi-independence of these clans is supported by their early history, particularly, that of the Tlokwa clan under the Chieftainess ‘MaNthati who, as we noted in Chapter 2, was involved in a conflict with Moshoeshe.”

However, the events of the 19th century moulded the BaSotho, unlike the BaTswana, into a single political unit, under a single paramount chief. This process occurred, as we saw in Chapter 2, at the time of the Wars of Calamity and the subsequent struggle with the Boers. The nation was created from the remnants of clans scattered in this process, defeated by raiders, the Boers, or by Moshoeshe himself. Most, therefore, came directly under Moshoeshe’s rule; some groups, however, such as the Taung, who were allied with Moshoeshe and joined him as a single unit, still kept their own chiefs.

Basutoland was, thus, one entity, unlike Bechuanaland, with a single paramount chief who governed the whole country: the structure was not the BaTswana one of semi-independent tribal areas, each with its paramount chief. As the status of paramountcy was achieved through war, the groups that assisted him were rewarded and given ranking status in relation to the other groups, while those who rebelled were degraded. The BaKwena, on the basis of the paramountcy, became the ruling group. Below the BaKwena

were the Khoakhwa who enjoyed semi-independent status. This senior status was given to them as a reward: apart from being one of the founding clans, they rendered assistance to Moshoeshe in preventing other Nguni tribes from invading the country. Another senior group was that of the Taung, who also enjoyed semi-independent status for their service in refusing to join the Tlokwa clans who had for a long time rebelled against Moshoeshe.

This system of direct control was originally established by Moshoeshe as a means of counteracting any would-be rivalries.

Moshoeshe divided the country into three regions, each one under one of his three senior sons: "Molapo was established in the northern Lowland strip, Masupha immediately South of him, and Letsie in the centre as his father's deputy. In the South were Moshoeshe's two brothers, Poshuli and Mohale, who had a not clearly defined control over local "allied" tribes".

This arrangement carried the danger of his sons disputing the succession to the paramouncy, or refusing allegiance to the paramount chief. Moshoeshe vigorously fought and conquered all the chiefs who challenged his supremacy in the country. Once the country became a colony, any chiefs who tried to challenge the supremacy of the paramount chief were equally defeated by Moshoeshe's heirs with the help of the colonial administration, who regarded his supremacy as essential to the maintenance of order in the country.

Letsie followed this pattern after his succession as paramount chief when his father died. But after Letsie, and beginning with Lerotholi, the system, which now became to be known as the system of "placing", was extended far beyond mere administrative convenience. Each chief who had been "placed" also "placed" his sons or brothers and, in effect, divided and sub-divided the country into smaller and smaller units, each under a chief. Except for the areas which were semi-independent, all areas were divided among the "Sons of Moshoeshe" in varying degrees.

Originally, "placings" were confined to the most senior sons, i.e. the eldest sons of the first house, but, subsequently, it became a common practice to "place" even sons from the junior houses and favourites. The system should also be viewed in the light of the polygamous practice that existed among the chiefs:

"... the number of their sons and son's sons multiplied exceedingly. As there was a limit to the carrying capacity of the country and the number of additional positions that could be created, many of these new authorities were imposed on or substituted for existing authorities. ... Pim could quote. ... the remark of a speaker in the National Council, 'that there are now as many chiefs in Basutoland as there are stars in the heavens' ".

In 1939, the local administration under the chiefs was divided into 18 districts, 316 sub-districts, and 1,006 wards." The 1938 list of chiefs

recognised 1,340 and, "it was said that there were about an equal number of headmen of various kinds who might have claimed similar recognition".¹⁵ Of the 32 principal chiefs, 27 were of the Kwenana clan.

The chiefs themselves were in ranking order. On top of the hierarchy was the *Morena o Moholo* – the paramount chief. Below him was a *Morena* – chief, who was followed by *Morenana* – a sub-chief. The lowest in the hierarchy was the *Ramotse* – a headman (usually of a village). Unlike Botswana where the system was rather uniform, in Basutoland, except for the post of the paramount chief, there were two, three, or more on each rung of the hierarchy, depending on how many units were created for each post.

Swaziland

In Chapter 2 it was mentioned that there was a distinction in Swaziland between the "true-Swazis" and the "non-Swazis".¹⁶ It was this basic division around which social stratification in Swazi society was organised. In this respect it resembled Bechuanaland more than Basutoland, while in terms of political hierarchy, it was closer to the latter.

When the Swazis settled in the country, other tribes were already living there. As the Swazis established their authority over these tribes, distinctions were made between three groups. The first group was the *Bomdzabuko* – the true Swazis composed of the ruling clans and their subjects. There were altogether about 35 clans and sub-clans in this group. The second group was the *Emakhandzambili* – "those found ahead" – the original clans founded by the Bomdzabuko when they established their authority in the country. These were composed of about 10 clans and sub-clans. Finally, there was a group *Labafikemufa* – late-comers composed of 34 clans and sub-clans.¹⁷ Thus, the second and third groups were not considered as "true-Swazis", in the sense that they did not belong to the ruling group of clans; the first group were the "true-Swazis" and the ruling clans has always come from this group.

Within the groups themselves, however, there is also a ranking order of clans:

The clans are graded into a rough hierarchy, and the rank of the clan is measured by its position in the national structure. . . . Lowest in the hierarchy are clans with no centre, no recognised national representation, no claim to national ritual, and no effective relationship with any powerful groups.¹⁸

In the first group, for instance, the top position is occupied by the *Dlamini* clan, i.e. the ruling clan. This is the clan which has provided the Kings of Swaziland. Below the Dlamini clan is the clan which is termed *matalenkosi*, i.e. the clan that has provided the Queen mothers of the nation.¹⁹ Below the

Ematalenkosi is a clan that has provided medicine and ritual heads, and they are followed by the clans that were defeated by the Dlamini clans. On the bottom are alien clans – *Amathonga*.

The domination of the Dlamini clan is demonstrated in the composition of the chiefs in Swaziland. In 1949, for example, out of 172 chiefs, 119 belonged to the first group of clans – out of which 75 were of the Dlamini clan, 26 belonged to the *Emakhandzambili* while only 27 were drawn from Labafikemufa.²⁰ But also many of the non-Dlamini chiefs were related to the royal family. Kuper examined a list of twenty-five chiefs from the non-Dlamini clans and found that twenty of them were related to the king through marriage.²¹

Social and political hierarchy is affected by the high rate of polygamy. In fact polygamy went with wealth and it was, thus, a special characteristic of the ruling group whose members are said to have had as many as twenty wives.²² The present king is said to have about 90 wives.²³

The political hierarchy is similar to that of Basutoland. Unlike either that country or Bechuanaland, Swazi political structure has changed little in recent years. It is for this reason that we use the “present tense” in some of the paragraphs dealing with these aspects in the pages that follow.

On top of the hierarchy, there is a power-sharing balance between the *Ngwenyama*, the King, and the *Ndlovukati*, the Queen mother. Swaziland is perhaps the only country in the world having a dual monarchy, with both members functioning equally at the same time. The King and the Queen mother are, thus, the highest authority in the whole country. The country is divided into principalities (or regions) each under a Prince. Under the Swazi custom, important princes were not allowed to live at the capital of the king. It was feared that an ambitious prince was likely to be a potential danger to his father and might even kill him in order to take the throne. As the number of princes increased, other regions were created. The system of “placings” described in connection with Basutoland prevailed.

Below the principalities are *Tindvuna* – governors – who are followed by *Tihulu* – hereditary chiefs, – while the bottom rank is filled by village headmen.

There is, however, an overlap of the areas due to the way the areas reserved for the Swazis transpose with those occupied by the Europeans. As a result a chief may have followers in two *Tiganga* – (districts), and at the same time, more than one chief may live in one *Siganga* – (a district). This is also due, partly, to the system of “placing”. If a ruler existed in a region and the king sent a prince there, such a ruler stepped down and became an *Indvuna* – Counsellor to the Prince.

Between the monarchy and the prince, there is also another official called

Tinsila. These rank above the princes but are never chosen from the ruling Dlamini clan. Their duties include advising the princes of the principalities, but more important, they are supposed to watch the activities of the prince and in case of planned treason by the princes, they are supposed to report to the king.

At the Capital of the Royal Village, there is also an important post, the *Induvuna Lenkula* – Counsellor General – who is appointed after consultation with the important princes and, as such, cannot be dismissed except by the King-in-Council.

3.2. The power of the chiefs

The chiefs had three main functions of authority. These were:

- A) The distribution of dwelling areas.
- B) The allocation of arable and grazing lands.
- C) Judicial functions.
- To these must be added for Swaziland (only)
- D) Mystical/religious functions.

In principle, chiefs were not permitted to be despotic. Each country had a strong tradition that “a chief is a chief by the people” – that is, an idea of mutual service. There were institutions which kept the chiefs in check, notably councils. But in each country, colonial rule undermined these institutions, and bolstered the power of the chiefs, who were then able to exploit their subjects.

Bechuanaland.

Ultimate authority rested in theory with the paramount chief, but was in practice exercised by his subordinates in the same hierarchical order as outlined above. His headquarters, the *Kgotla* (a tribal council) functioned both as an administrative headquarters and a Court of Appeal for all cases coming from the districts, sub-districts, and villages. The paramount chief was subject only to the decision of the Tribal Council.

A *Kgotla*-sitting was composed of the paramount chief or his deputy, all the chiefs, headmen and commoners. Debates of the *Kgotla* were held in the open and members of the public were expected to participate fully in expressing their opinions of any issues that affected them directly or indirectly. Even deeds which were committed by the chiefs or the paramount chief were, in this way, discussed. The subjects could also use the *kgotla* platform to complain against a chief or the paramount chief:

should he commit an offence against one of his subjects, the victim can complain to the men at the kgotla, or at one of the chief's relatives."

If a rivalry at the royal court existed, the chief's relatives could use such a complaint, and support the subject until the chief was removed from his office. But in practice, the interdependence of the chieftainship in the hierarchy, and the appointments of close relatives as chiefs or chief's representatives in the districts, meant that the system became almost impenetrable by commoners who wished to have their complaints rectified. Furthermore, a commoner would rarely risk the repercussions that would follow if the outcome of the complaint went against him: in a system where his entire existence and survival depended on the goodwill of the chief, he chose not to take the risk. It was the chief who allocated land to him; it was the chief who determined where he was to build his hut, and it was also the chief who imposed punishment on him in the court. In short, the chief controlled his life and, above all, the chief had the power to banish an undesirable subject to remote areas; the definition of "undesirable" lay in the interpretation of the chief himself.

Commenting on the misuse of the powers by the chiefs in the kgotla after the colonial government took over the administration of Bechuanaland, Sir Pim remarked that the system seemed to be dictated by the paramount chief because it was 'almost equivalent to saying that it remained in the hands of the chiefs; . . . by existing custom among the Bechuana tribes the chief is much more independent of the advice and consent of a tribal council than is usual among Bantu tribes . . . a practical autocracy was developed by a number of chiefs of whom Khama is best known'."

Finally, the various sub-groupings in the system made it possible for the paramount chief to accumulate immense powers and thereby use the instrument of the kgotla system to his advantage. These were: the Bagakolodi, the confidential advisers to the paramount chief, and the Dikgosana the councils of headmen.

The former was composed of close relatives and noblemen, some of whom were directly hand-picked by the paramount chief. Most important issues were discussed by this group before they were recommended for further discussion at the kgotla for decision. The paramount chief could easily manoeuvre its deliberations to his own advantage, and since some of its members directed the opening discussions at the kgotla, they could easily sway public opinion in favour of the paramount chief. It was through this technique that, in practice, most decisions were first reached by this group, and then simply received the rubber-stamp of approval by the kgotla.

The council of headmen was even less influential and effective. In the first place, most of its members were directly appointed by the paramount chief,

and in most cases, at the advice of *Bagakolodi*, although such appointments were hereditary. In practice, however, the survival of the members of *dikogosana* depended on the good-will of the paramount chief himself on one hand, and that of *bagakolodi*, on the other.

In a system where the office of chieftainship was accompanied by economic advantages,²⁶ fear of loss of these advantages and prestige encouraged the chiefs to maintain the system for their own selfish ends.

Before the arrival of the European powers, a minor chief, or any other community, could challenge the hierarchy, because the chiefs (particularly the major chiefs) competed among themselves for control over land and cattle and, thus, were dependent on their subjects to wage successful wars. The famous Tswana proverb: *Kgosi ke kgosi ke Morafe* – a chief is a chief by grace of his tribe – was applicable during those conditions of interdependence.²⁷ A chief's prestige and power was dependent on how many subjects he had; how much territory he controlled, and how much cattle he had for his people. It was, in this way, common for a subject to move freely from one chief to another – whether in search of good land, or protection. A good chief also sought for suitable incentives to attract many subjects in his domain. It was partly for this reason that some of the subjects from the conquered tribes, or those fleeing from the Boer wars, offered allegiance to chiefs in Bechuanaland.²⁸

This pattern of interdependence between the chiefs and their subjects changed when colonial rule was introduced. The chiefs found themselves to be more secure and, consequently, strengthened their own positions, through the support they received from the colonial administration. In order to counteract any uprising or challenge to the established authority, the colonial authorities rendered help to the ruling groups, and, in essence, boosted their authority at the expense of the other sections of the community. The paramount chief became even less dependent than before on the decisions of the tribal councils.

Basutoland

As in Bechuanaland, the BaSotho chiefs had power over the distribution of land, dwelling places and judicial powers. Whereas in Bechuanaland the ultimate authority lay in individual paramount chiefs of the various tribal areas, in Basutoland it was vested in one man, the *Moreno o Moholo*, or the paramount chief. He delegated these powers to his subordinates, mostly, his sons and relatives. His headquarters also functioned as an administrative capital. In exercising his powers, his decisions were subject to the *Pitso* – the Tribal Council, (equivalent to the BaTswana *kgotla*).

The famous BaSotho proverb: *Morena ke Morena Ka Batho* – the chief is a chief by the people – was closely connected with the Pitso institution. This was a public assembly composed of the paramount chief, all the principal chiefs, sub-chiefs, headmen, and all adult BaSotho males. The council was held in the open and every person who cared to speak had a right to do so. The early chiefs, particularly Moshoeshoe himself, could not make a decision of national importance on their own without the final voice of the people through the pitso. Moshoeshoe's early speeches, for example, his message to Sir Phillip Wodehouse in 1860, frequently mentioned the word "council" – that no decision could be made without the approval of the council." The importance of this council as a check against despotic tendencies was described by Theal as he analysed the limitations of the powers of the BaSotho chiefs generally, and Moshoeshoe in particular, in their interdependence with their subjects before the colonial powers established themselves in the country:

No native chief is despotic in the sense that he can carry out any measure in opposition to the will of his people, and of all the chiefs known to us at that time, Moshesh was one who could least afford to disregard the inclination of his subjects. . ."

In fact the MoSotho of those days had reason to be proud of the institution of the pitso for the freedom of expression it provided for common people.

This is our parliament, though it is a very disorderly parliament, because we are all mixed up, young and old; and we cannot accept any measure without discussion. . . We have a proverb which says that a man who makes a mistake in a public assembly cannot be killed. . ."

Most of the decisions affecting the relationship between the British and the BaSotho on one hand, and those affecting the Boers and the BaSotho on the other hand, were discussed at the pitso, before Basutoland became a British colony. The institution was also developed at the local level, from principal chiefs to headmen, who consulted their subjects on major issues: at each level there were pitso.

After Moshoeshoe the institution weakened. There are many reasons for this. In the first place, the arrival of the Europeans disturbed the procedure of the working of the pitso institution. Casalis, for example, quotes instances when military commanders and Cape government officials demanded "quick decisions" from the BaSotho chiefs, limiting their time for the normal consultation with their subjects. This created "despotic tendencies" on the part of the chiefs. Secondly, the chiefs, as they multiplied after the arrival of the colonial administration, increased their own personal security – particularly the paramount chief and his relatives who were the main chiefs of the country. This security was in the form of "recognition" offered by the colonial authorities.

The Pitso as a national institution disappeared in the late 1880's during the reign of Lerotholi, whose power had been strongly strengthened by the colonial administration. In 1903, it was replaced by a National Council of Chiefs; although the chiefs, realising the powers that they now commanded, at first rejected the idea of its establishment for fear that it would turn out to be a platform for criticising them. As if to reaffirm and consolidate their powers, the chiefs in the National Council began their business by formulating laws – which became to be known as *The Laws of Lerotholi* – which dealt with practically every aspect of their powers and rights, including hereditary and the distribution of land.

Describing the despotic powers of the chiefs, Ashton wrote:

“... they obstinately opposed economic development that might enrich and emancipate their subjects, and were given, even then, to the practice known as ‘eating up a person’: namely, punishing a prosperous man for some misdemeanour by seizing all or the greater part of his stock”¹

As we shall see in the section below, “eating up a person” was not the only means through which the subjects were oppressed. The system of tribute, the distribution of land and the courts were equally effective to punish subjects.

In the Basutoland situation, the unitary system of the chieftainship made it more difficult for a subject to escape the system. In Bechuanaland, a subject who found his rulers intolerable could move to another tribal area and accept the status of being alien. Early history indicates that there had been free movement of people from the area of one chief to another in Basutoland as well. This movement was based on the fact that there was enough land before the arrival of the Europeans. Early missionaries complained of the frequency with which people moved from one chief to another.²

The arrival of the Europeans, accompanied by the rise of Moshoeshe eventually changed this pattern. There was, therefore, only one escape as the chiefs became more and more despotic: migrating to South Africa.³

Thus, the growth of the political and economic power of the chiefs, sanctioned by the colonial administration, weakened the original institutions which checked their excessive powers; and consequently, the chiefs, as they multiplied and received economic benefits through their offices, not only disregarded their subjects, but also used their powers to oppress them through economic sanctions that will be considered below. Moreover, their usurpation of power increased the gap between the ruling groups and commoners.

II.3. Swaziland

The Swazi King and his mother share power in the administration of land, courts, production and in mystical-religious functions. It is even said that one authority cannot function without the other. They have to be complementary at all times. This sharing of power has been described by Kuper in the following way:

He presides over the highest court, and formerly he alone could pronounce the death sentence. But she is in charge of the second highest court, her councillors may take part in discussions at her son's court, and her hut is a sanctuary even for men sentenced to death. He controls the entire army, but the commander-in-chief may reside at the Queen mother's village. He has his own chosen regiments stationed at his home; she has regiments at the capital under the leadership of princes. He has power to distribute land; together they work the rain that fructifies the soil. He may take cattle from the royal herds; she may rebuke him if he wastes national wealth. He represents the line of past Kings; she speaks to the dead in the shrine of the capital and provides beer for the libations. . . Conflict between the two is a menace to the entire nation."

The Swazis, like the BaTswang and BaSotho, also believe that the "King is a king by the people". In this connection there are two councils, the *Liqoqo* – the inner council – and the *Libandla* – the National Council. In its original form and outlook, the inner council was a family council composed of the most senior members of the family, the princes, the queen mother, the counsellor-general, a number of chosen chiefs and other advisers who might be called from time to time when need arose. The council is informal and only seeks advice from those called upon; in most cases, it has no permanent regulations. Most of the Swazis do not even know the membership of the council.

The second council, the Libandla, can be compared with the BaSotho Pitso in that it is composed of the king and his mother, all princes, chiefs, headmen and all male adult Swazis. Its meetings are held in public and everybody present is allowed to take part.

The meetings of the Libandla are usually opened by an important prince, usually a member of the Liqoqo, who outlines the object of the meeting (since no agenda is sent out, although perhaps, most of the chiefs get to know through *tinsila*.) After the opening address, members of the public are given a chance to express their views, and finally the king summarises the discussion and all those present take the final decision. The decision of the Libandla is supreme and cannot be overridden either by the monarchy or Liqoqo.

In practice, however, the national council, like its BaSotho equivalent, suffers from the organisational structure of Swazi society. The ruling clan with its dominant position influences nearly all of the decisions of the

council. Apart from the fact that all principalities are headed by princes and that the majority of the chiefs are from the Dlamini ruling clan, the local units of each district are so closely interlocked that decisions from above are never effectively criticised. As we shall see below, the subjects are completely dependent on their headmen and chiefs through the distribution of land, courts, and tribute systems; as a result most of the peasants attending the national council come only to acclaim decisions already reached by the monarchy and the Likoqo.

This subordination of commoners is achieved through the district and local institutions which are organised on the same principles as the central authority:

Within the national political organisations are a number of interlocking units varying in size and importance. Government extends from the smallest local unit, the homestead, upwards to the central administration. In each unit of the hierarchy similar principles are at work; the functions of the authorities are roughly similar in kind, though different in degree; the personnel is chosen on similar grounds and, where numbers permit, is subdivided into similar departments.³⁴

Thus, a local head will have his queen mother, his own likoqo and libandla, his governor, and his tinsila, etc., and above all, he will also demand the same services that the highest authority in the country demands. He has his own court, imposes fines and he distributes land.

Through this interlocking power structure and functions, the system becomes despotic. It must be added here that the Swazis look upon their leaders as spiritual representatives and that their existence depends on them. Rains have to be made by them and the eating of the first fruits has to be announced by them. This belief in magico-religious character explains a common Swazi comment that "without the King, we would no longer be a people", because he is said to have "a direct physical association with the health of his subjects and the fertility of the soil".³⁵ The powers of the chiefs of Swaziland are, therefore, inherent in this mystical bond between the ruler and the subjects.

Thus, on the local level, the subject will regard his local ruler in the same mystical reverence as the national leader. The pattern of appointment, their numbers and functions are virtually the same.

The Swazi institutions suited the colonial administration in their pursuit of their economic interests. Unlike in Basutoland where the Pitso was replaced by a Council of Chiefs, the institutions found in Swaziland were left intact. Since there was no effective local opposition to the system (unlike Basutoland), the British encouraged its growth, as did the few Europeans who owned the concessions because it provided security to their interests. The institutions remain the same today.

3.3. Land tenure and the process of production

We can identify here three separate but interlocking elements: the system of land allocation, the ownership of cattle, and the system of tributes rendered to the chiefs.

Bechuanaland

Control over land was central to the system of political authority. The eight Paramount Chiefs were responsible for all land in their districts or tribal area and, in principle, they allocated it to their subjects. This was done through their subordinates in the same way as the allocation of dwelling places. After choosing, for himself, his family and relatives, large tracts of the most fertile land close to his capital, a paramount chief divided the rest into districts, each under a chief or chief's representative. The paramount chief's tract consisted of *Masotla* – public fields – and personal tracts for his wives. The chief's representative followed the same pattern; he first chose the largest and most fertile tract and divided the rest among the village headmen. It now remained for the latter to allocate it to heads of families in his area.

Thus, the privilege of the chiefs, from the paramount chiefs to the village headmen, lay in the priority of choosing the largest and most fertile share of the land. Land in Botswana is never allotted to individuals but to tribal groups, in the same way as dwelling places are allocated. In other words, a tract of land is set aside for a particular tribal group under a village headman who, in turn, distributes it to the heads of families of that particular tribal group. The family cannot alienate land, but a chief can through his right and power of removal of one group (a whole village) from one place to another. In reality, therefore, it means that *while an individual family has no title to land, the chief has*. This structure has been summarised by a former Acting Tribal Authority of the BamaNgwato tribe:

The Tswana thus make a distinction between title and right of possession and use. While title as such cannot be alienated, the right of use and possession can be alienated. The rights of use and possession are qualified rights because they are subject to the overriding right of the chief in whom the title vests for the whole community. . . The Chief as holder of the trust can alienate the right of use. He can give possession and authority to use to groups, units of the community. He can order the removal of whole groups from one area to another and give the group another area of land to use. He can, as the most senior member of the community, allocate to himself the most fertile parts of the land – the basis of this is that as the head of the group, his comfort receives priority in the allocation of the use of all things which belong to the community, because there is always a presumption that his first concern is for the community as a whole."

As we noted in the previous section, the dwelling areas closer to the headquarters are allocated to tribal groups in the order of their seniority.³⁹ At a time when the population of tribal groups was small enough, this raised no problem. But as it expanded, the result was that most of the arable land for minor and alien groups lay far away from their dwelling places.

It is important to mention here that, under customary law, arable land is separated from dwelling places. At the same time, no family is allowed to have a permanent dwelling place in the areas reserved for ploughing. There are seasonal trends which dictate the movements from dwelling places to arable lands. Normally, all the people are expected to be in their dwelling places. When the first rains start, the paramount chief gives an order – *Go Ntsha Letsema* – to give out the seed-time – through the kgotla to all members of the tribe to start ploughing. Nobody is allowed to start before the order is given. Similarly, when the harvest time is over, all members of the tribe are ordered back to their dwelling places.⁴⁰

Separation of dwelling places from arable lands, and the structure of allocating arable land according to tribal seniority, affected the production system and pattern of the different tribal groups. Most of the areas allocated to the minor and alien groups (who, as we noted, outnumbered the ruling tribes in some of the tribal areas) were areas found to be less attractive and productive than those allocated to the ruling groups.

The second element we have to consider in this section is that the chiefs and members of the ruling groups owned vast wealth in cattle. Seniority, wealth and prestige in Bechuanaland were closely connected with cattle ownership. Apart from inheritance, chiefs were able to accumulate cattle through court fines and tributes.

This interacted with land tenure. In the economy of Bechuanaland, cattle and land went together – those who had enough cattle also had enough land, and at the same time, land could not be effectively utilised without the use of cattle. Since their arable lands, and those of the ruling groups and other senior members of the community, were closer to their dwelling places, they experienced little difficulty in travelling to their arable lands. Finally, with the oxen at their disposal for draught power, they were able to produce more crops than the average members of the community. The position of the minor and alien tribes was just the opposite. It was summarised as:

... Although people now sometimes have their fields as much as thirty or thirty-five miles away, they are usually reluctant to go much further out. This refers especially to the poorer members of the tribe, who, lacking wagons or oxen, experience more difficulty than others in arranging for the transport of equipment, provisions etc., and for the conveyance of water in the winter when they are reaping. It must be remembered in this connection that people are not allowed to live at their fields, but must have their permanent homes in the town or villages; transport can therefore become a serious problem if the fields are too far away.

Moreover, the extension of arable lands leads to encroachment upon the grazing, and incidentally exposes the growing crops to the risk of being injured by cattle from neighbouring posts."

Two qualifications should be made with regard to the visible wealth of the chiefs in cattle. Chiefs and the ruling groups viewed cattle with jealousy and, consequently, those who had a number preferred to conceal ownership through the system of *Go fisa* – through which cattle were placed in the care of another person. Secondly, land tenure was also connected with the herding of cattle through the system of "cattle-posts", by which grazing areas were set aside for a particular district, at which cattle of the chiefs, headmen, and some members of the tribe grazed together. No one could distinguish the distribution of ownership of cattle in the posts except the owners themselves and to a lesser extent the keepers of the cattle-posts.

Land tenure and production were also affected by the *system of tributes*. It has already been pointed out that among the tracts of land chosen by the chief, was one called *Masotla* – the public fields. It was also pointed out that the ploughing season was regulated through the order *Go Letsema* of the paramount chief. These two systems were complimentary. Before the chief gave *Go Letsema* to the tribes to start ploughing, they were expected to work on the *Masotla* by cultivating, planting, and harvesting. The result was that by the time they finished these large tracts of land, and *Go Letsema* was finally announced it was already late for them to attend their own fields. Consequently, particularly if the rains themselves had been late, the commoners found themselves producing less than they could have done.

A harvest tribute was also paid to the chiefs, the *Dikgafela*. There was also a hunting tribute, the *Sehuba* – through which the chiefs were entitled to the "breast-portion" of every animal killed. In other tribal areas, people who went to work outside their areas, especially those in wage labour in South Africa, were liable to pay a tribute of one pound sterling to their chiefs upon returning to their areas.

Thus, the land tenure system and tribute strengthened the power of the chiefs politically and economically, while at the same time, it provided a basis for class structure in which the poorest, mostly minor and alien tribes, were forced to cling to the lowest position of the social ladder.

All these mechanisms – allocation of land, ownership of cattle and the system of tribute – underline the conclusion of the previous section that the hierarchy became an instrument of control through the powers of economic distribution, and the peasants became more and more dependent on the chiefs and their ruling classes. It should be emphasised again that the new allies of the chiefs, underwriting the system, were the colonial authorities who allowed no challenges to the chiefs.

Basutoland

Laws of Lerotholi No. 8 reads: "All Chiefs and headmen must by law provide people living under them with lands to cultivate".

We have already noted that Moshoeshoe promulgated the Law of Trade which included the prohibition of occupation of land by Europeans.⁴ This cardinal law has made Basutoland the land of the BaSotho, only. The land is for every MoSotho with the Paramount Chief as a trustee for the whole nation. In principle, however, the powers of distributing land are delegated to the chiefs, and in practice, it is the headman, and sometimes an administrator of the headman, who actually distributes the land to the subjects. Every married person who has paid his tax is entitled to three pieces of land for cultivation called *matimo*. There was no standard size of a *Tsimo*. The average holding (all fields together) at the time of the first agricultural census, in 1950, was 5.8 acres. It would certainly have been larger earlier in this century.⁵ Theoretically, each *tsimo* was for a particular crop – stressing those crops which constituted the staple food of the BaSotho, namely, wheat, maize and sorghum.

The tenure lasted as long as the owner's family lived in the area utilised the land, and paid his taxes.

Local chiefs, were allowed to keep a certain percentage of the tax collected. Consequently, some chiefs, demanded that only those who had paid their taxes should be given land, and in some cases, eviction could be enforced on those who had not paid their taxes for a long time.

In addition to the three plots, a family could also use a small garden close to his dwelling place. The difference between the arable land – *tsimo* – and the garden was that the former ceased to be an individual's fields after harvest time when they reverted to communal grazing and ownership, while the latter remained an individual's property the year round and could, therefore, be fenced.

The normal procedure of granting land was the same as that practiced in Bechuanaland, namely, a family was granted land in the ward to whose chief he owed allegiance. He received the land from the headman under whose chief he lived. (In the case where land was not available in his area, such a person could be loaned to a neighbouring chief who had enough land. In effect, he would then be under two overlords, that is, the chief where he lived and the chief where his *tsimo* was situated).

In Basutoland, most of the areas are extremely congested and the population has been expanding. The mountainous interior of the country was occupied at the end of the last century, but it was a short respite, and the average size of holding has steadily fallen.

We have already noted the multiplication of chiefs since Lerotholi. The

chiefs were, as in Bechuanaland, entitled to large areas of land, from the paramount chief all the way down to the village headman and his administrator. Large and fertile lands were therefore taken and occupied by this group and their children. The chiefs and their families thus got more than their fair share. In 1950 there was already a shortage of land in the country as will be seen in the table below:

Table 2 – distribution of land.

Size of holding (acres)	number of households	% of households
Nil	11,700	7.2
0.01–3.99	53,520	33.1
4–7.99	59,620	36.9
8–14.99	29,920	18.5
15–29.99	6,170	3.8
30–79.99	570	0.4

Source: Basutoland Agricultural Survey 1949–50; by A.J.A. Douglas and R.K. Tennant, pp. 89–91.

A household in the table is a family of on average, four people. The above table did not include the holdings of the principal chiefs who controlled the districts. The 1960 Agricultural census, which did, showed 385 households (2% of all households) with more than 40 acres: in all, these households occupied 21,700 acres (2.5% of all cultivated land).⁴ If the number of unmarried men who were not entitled to land were included, the landless figure would have been higher than that shown in the table. The development of land shortage in Basutoland has been part, and the major part, of its history, as Ashton writes:

the present landlessness is, however, nothing new – it was anticipated by observers like Mabile many years ago when the Basuto were threatened with the loss of their agricultural land to the Boers and finally did lose them after 1865–68 war: it was first remarked upon by Dietelem early in this century. Since he wrote the position has still deteriorated. In the Highland district of Qach's Nek, for instance, 80 percent of a group of tax-payers of less than 5 years standing, 32% of those between 5 and 10 years and 17% of those over 10 years standing, were recorded in 1934 as having no stock; and 84%, 30% and 9% respectively, no land.⁴

The correlation of stock ownership and land ownership noted here is important. We have already noted that the chiefs acquired cattle partly through fines in their judicial functions, apart from those they inherited.

Cattle were originally almost a monopoly of the chiefs; raids were organised to accumulate cattle, which were meant for distribution to the subjects. Cattle also commanded prestige because, unlike land, cattle can multiply, which meant secure investment.

The use of cattle, apart from the traditional ceremonies and marriages, was on the land. The oxen became indispensable as a means of cultivation. The BaSotho had a "share-crop" system through which a person with an ox could enter into an agreement with a person who had none – mostly poor peasants. The former ploughed the land and in return, the latter paid him half of the produce from the plots. In some cases, payment was made in the form of alienating one of the plots to the person cultivating. It was estimated that about a quarter of the plots in Basutoland were cultivated in this way. Since it was mostly the chiefs and their relatives who had cattle, much of the produce from the peasants found their way to the chief's storage house.

It has always been difficult to obtain information on the distribution of ownership in Basutoland, as in Bechuanaland, because of the system called in Sesotho *Mafisa* – through which cattle are "loaned" to another person. Originally, the practice was done by the chiefs to gain support, by distributing the chief's cattle to subjects as a means of strengthening mutual social bonds. The system, however, developed into a way of concealing ownership.⁶

It was partly in reaction to the practice of "eating up a person" that the peasants who managed to acquire some cattle also turned to the practice of *Mafisa* in an effort to prevent the chiefs from robbing them of the few cattle they had through court fines.

The chiefs benefitted additionally from the way grazing areas were allocated. All cattle grazed on all plots after the harvest. The chief's cattle could therefore graze on the peasants' land. The allocation of grazing areas other than this – in the mountains in summer, and reserved grazing in the lowlands – followed the same principle as described for the BaTswana: grazing districts were allocated to chiefs, and any subject of that chief could graze his stock all over that area, once the chief had opened them. There were no individual titles to grazing, as there was to arable land. Nevertheless, within this system, some wealthy stock owners were "enjoying, as a result of some close and private understanding with the chief, rights more extensive than they could hope to claim in the normal course of events."⁷ The chiefs' control over the opening and closing of grazing land gave them considerable leverage in this respect.

In addition to share-cropping, *Mafisa*, and the control of grazing areas, there was a system of tribute which enhanced the dependence of the peasants on the chiefs. The first of these was the *Lira* system. Tsimo ea Lira was a public field belonging to the paramount chief. In its original form, the

field was supposed to provide produce for the entertainment of the paramount chief's guests, messengers, public feasts, and to provide food for the poor and strangers. It was attached to the office of the chief and it was not personal property. It was cultivated by a regiment commanded by the paramount chief. During the time of Moshoeshoe, the paramount chief was only supposed to have one such field and it was only the latter who had this privilege.

When Letsie succeeded his father, Moshoeshoe, he followed the same routine. But when Lerotholi came to power at the time when the colonial administration was fully established in the country and the power of the paramountcy was at its peak, the system of *lira* changed. Instead of one field, Lerotholi acquired many; and instead of the field being attended to by the regiments, Lerotholi ordered all the subjects to cultivate plant, harvest, and transport the produce to his storage houses. From the time of Lerotholi, the practice of limiting the privilege of the *lira* system to the paramount chief also changed. All chiefs and village headmen established their own *lira*. The subjects who did not make themselves available to work the chief's *lira* were punished by fines.

The system not only meant additional accumulation of wealth by the chiefs, but also inhibited the cultivation of the peasant's own plots, since, at key moments in the agricultural year, a significant part of their time could be spent at *matsimo ea lira*. With the multiplication of the hierarchy, it meant that commoners would, one day, work on the headman's *lira*, the following day, on the sub-chief's *lira*, and another day, on the chief's *lira* – all they way to the paramount chief. A commoner is quoted complaining:

What is the land of *lira* and how many of these are we to weed? I find we have too many of them. Each chief's son has such a field and sometimes people weed over a hundred of them. Are the goats of the nation to be eaten for failing to attend to them?"

This labour working on the *tsimo ea lira* was known as a *Letsema* (plural *Matsema*). But *matsema* were also called upon to render a number of other "services" to the chief, such as working on his personal fields (as distinct from the *lira* fields), building a house for the chief's first son when the latter was "placed" in a certain district, acting as a chief's messenger, or collecting firewood for the chief". In its original form, it was a sign of showing respect and renewing a social bond between the chief and the subject. In turn, the chief would be pleased with his subject and even give him some land, meat or beer, as a sign of appreciation. The services were restricted to the young men. But, like the *lira* system, it was misused by most of the chiefs, so that it amounted to unpaid labour. Some chiefs used it for share-cropping by ordering young men to go and cultivate fields where the chiefs received half the produce.

The tribute system reinforced the mass exodus of young people to the Union of South Africa. By the early 1950's, however, the matsema system was abandoned as there was chronic shortage of labour for both the chiefs and the colonial government, as the latter also exploited the free labour system as elaborated in section 4.

The development of chieftainship in an increasingly exploitative direction was a creation of the colonial system; whatever checks existed before, they were weakened or manipulated to serve the system. The position of the paramount chief was particularly strengthened.⁴⁹ The checks provided by the Pitso system and the relative independence of lesser chiefs and other clans were eliminated by the colonial administration.⁵⁰

The significance of the chiefs' unchecked control over land was greatly enhanced by the loss of the largest arable lands to South Africa. It had been the general pattern, formerly, for the people to move freely and acquire as much land as they needed.⁵¹ The land tenure system served originally to protect the interests of the people and their access to land. The continuation of land shortage and the manipulation of the chiefs by the colonial power made institutions which were originally acceptable, such as, the Tsimo ea Lira and Matsema, increasingly oppressive. As in Bechuanaland, the chiefs allied themselves with the colonial administration, which facilitated the exploitation of the peasants through unpaid labour, and otherwise.

Swaziland

The Swaziland tenure system is similar to that of Basutoland. In principle, the land belongs to the King, who is supposed to distribute it to his subjects. The actual distribution is delegated to the local authorities. The country is divided into 160 chiefdoms each under a prince; the prince allocates areas to the chiefs and these in turn to headmen. It is in the headman's area that a homestead is located. An individual cannot build or cultivate where he pleases: "Nor has every Swazi an equal claim to the soil – Swaziland tenure is determined by the hierarchical structure. In Swazi ideology the land and the people are interlocked, and the political bond between rulers and subject is based largely on the power the rulers wield over the soil on which people live. . . ."⁵²

Since the king and his mother have final authority and the power to remove a person or group from one area to another, the availability and distribution of land in Swaziland depends on the importance of the chief or prince in the area. Not all princes are equal in status and hierarchy. A favoured prince will be given a larger and more productive area. The prince, in turn, has the privilege of choosing the largest and most fertile part.

Furthermore, the king himself has royal houses all over the principalities, where some of his wives live. To each of these, a royal "garden" is attached.

Thus, the allocation of land in Swaziland, like appointments to political and ritual posts, follows the pattern of social ranking. For a person to be considered for land, he must be a full subject. A subject is defined in terms of a person who undertakes to *Khota*, that is, those who show economic obligations and offer loyalty and homage to the chiefs. On moving from one area to another, the subject must also offer to *Valelisa* – a tribute which will ensure his admission into the next area, and enable the former chief to close the tax book. The *Khota* system also extends to the higher authorities. Chiefs desiring special favours and privileges must offer *khota* to their superiors. Thus, the chief must offer *khota* to the king. Explaining one of the reasons why the king has many fields, Kuper writes:

The gardens of the rulers are more extensive than those of any subject, and throughout the country are *emasimiwenkosi* (Royal fields) from which they receive the harvest from the crops cultivated by kinsmen and subjects. Some of the royal fields lie on the fertile sites of old royal villages. Others are unused plots selected by councillors. And a few chiefs, anxious to win royal favour and show respect, set aside a field and plant on it 'for the Inkosi'. Within the principalities the size of the chief's gardens depends largely on the size of his family, and in addition he has a large field cultivated under his supervision by his people."

The tribute system in Swaziland developed along the same pattern as that introduced by Lerotholi in Basutoland. Apart from tribute on *emasimiwenkosi* (royal fields), each authority in the hierarchy has a right to demand a tribute from his subjects called *umemo* – "to shout for". Thus, every political authority can "shout" for tribute. On the other hand, should a chief need more labour than he has from his area, he can get additional free labour from his neighbour, while the king can get it from the entire nation. The princes, chiefs, and headmen have also a right to demand labour for their relatives.

In Swaziland, as in the other two countries, there is a correlation between land ownership and cattle ownership. Cattle are obtained by the political authorities through gifts (tribute), court fines, marriage, and inheritance. We are, by now, familiar with all these except marriage. We have already pointed out that the Swazi society is largely polygamous. The daughters of the king, princes, chiefs and headmen command a lot of cattle in the form of *lobola* – bride-price; but when their sons get married, it is the subjects who have to contribute to make up the *lobola*, as a "sign of respect" to their rulers. Thus, the political authorities accumulate both when their daughters and sons get married.

However, the system of land tenure and its components cannot be looked upon in isolation from the historical factors that divided the country into two opposing interests, namely, British and Boers. The king, princes, chiefs and

headmen exploited the situation imposed on the country by colonialism. The early Swazi history affirms the greater freedom of the peasantry that existed before the colonial intrusion. There was enough land for the chiefs and their people.⁵⁴ Since the arrival of the British and the Boers, there has been shortage of land. The colonial administration confirmed the concessions granted by Mswati and Mbandzeni. The Swazis protested, but their protests achieved nothing. When the present king ascended the throne, he fought the issue in the colonial courts up to the Privy Council in London. Again, the case was lost. British and South African interests prevented any rectification of the land problem.

In 1950, ownership of land in Swaziland showed these divisions:

Table 3 – land ownership in Swaziland (1950)

Ownership	Acreage
Swazi Nation Land	1,779,380
Individual Swazis	13,548
Land Settlement Scheme	346,078
Colonial Land	40,000
Colonial Development Corporation (CDC)	218,523
European Land	1,881,471

Source: Hailey, p. 388.

In 1946, more than 25,000 Swazis were reckoned to have no land at all out of a population of some 180,000. This was a conservative estimate as it did not include unmarried males and females. Yet, as the above figures show, nearly two million acres were held by Europeans who numbered only 2,740 – most of whom were in the colonial administration.⁵⁵ Land shortage, mainly caused by the massive European appropriations, not only created a growing landless population, it also increased the oppressive and exploitative character of chieftainship.

The history of concessions and its menace to the social structure, the system introduced by Europeans of individual title deed ownership of land and minerals – all these created the conditions for the continuation of Swazi land tenure, as a reaction. In a fascinating study carried out by Hughes, the reactions of the Swazis to these external influences, caused by the conflicting interests of the Boers and the British, clearly show their attitudes to these opposing systems:

The majority appreciated that there were certain disadvantages in this (Swazi) system, and certain definite advantages in a system of individual tenure. However, they argued that the disastrous social consequences of any change would far outweigh any economic advantages which might result.⁵⁶

Being aware of the conditions that have been created by the concessions, the *Swazis* added that:

People who are too poor to buy lands or provide security for loan can be slaves of those with lands . . . the unfortunate (landless) ones would become their (landowners') servants, working for the land which once belonged to everybody, and they that are workers will never recover, they could remain workers for life, as they are not paid.⁵⁷

The position described in this final remark can be directly observed in the European areas where these conditions exist, and we turn to them in the next section.

3.4. The Europeans and the factor of land relations of exploitation

So far, we have dealt only with the so-called "tribal areas". The increasing exploitation of the peasants by the chiefs found its parallel, however, in the areas directly controlled by the Europeans where farms and mines were established, drawing on the abundant cheap labour from the tribal areas. The special position of the mining industry and large agricultural plantations in Swaziland is far beyond the limited scope of this study to be included in this section. References will, however, be made in the next chapter dealing with labour migration. Nevertheless, Bechuanaland offers a clear example of the mechanism of exploitation, and this concludes this chapter. But first Basutoland, where European exploitation of BaSotho peasants *within the borders of the country* was much less significant factor.

Basutoland

It has been pointed out that Moshoeshoe's law of trade included the prohibition of Europeans from acquiring land tenure rights in Basutoland; as a result, there were no significant European land holdings in the country. However, it would be wrong to suppose that there was no European exploitation at all. The three groups concerned were the colonial administration, the missionaries, and the traders. We have seen they were allies of the chiefs; they were also able to benefit from the use of the same mechanisms as the chiefs.

First, the colonial administration was prepared to use unpaid labour, in *matsema*, for specific purposes. The regulations of the colonial administration were included in the Laws of Lerotholi to support unpaid labour:

It shall be the duty of Chiefs, Sub-Chiefs, and Headmen to summon "matsema" for the destruction of wild oats. . . Each village community shall be responsible for the repair and maintainance of those works which are constructed in their local village site or communal grazing areas. . . It shall be lawful for Chiefs, Sub-Chiefs and Headmen to summon "matsema" for the purpose of planting trees to provide fuel for the people. . ."

The traders, as well as buying cheap to sell dear, were able to manipulate BaSotho systems to profit from cattle. In time of good harvest, some peasants sold their crops to the traders at very cheap prices. Later in the year, particularly after a bad harvest, the same peasants came back to the traders to buy the crops and, since most of them could not raise cash, they paid in cattle. Most of these traders accumulated large herds of cattle and used the system of *mafisa* to ensure their anonymity. Some of their cattle were used in the share-cropping system, through which they accumulated more produce for sale in their shops.

The missionaries were able to use land, share-cropping and unpaid labour. Though the cultivated land they owned was only a tiny fraction of the total cultivated area, nevertheless, outside the colonial administration and the traders, the missionaries became the largest land-owners after the chiefs. Land holding by missionaries is not a new development. It started with Moshoeshoe. Although the original idea was to provide the missionaries with an area for buildings and a small garden for growing vegetables, missionary activities expanded beyond the scope contemplated. They built schools, churches, handwork centres, and hospitals. In addition, they included in the schools "demonstration fields" for agricultural and animal husbandry.

The technology of the missionaries was used in the share-cropping system. Their tractors were at work on peasant plots where they collected the share of the crops produced. In the end, the mission farms in effect were extended, as they used some of the peasant plots themselves, as payment for share-cropping; some of the peasants were, consequently, left with very little areas for their own use.

Unpaid labour was often employed by the missionaries in the form of "services" to the church. The weekly "Sunday Offerings" were often made in crops by the peasants.

Thus, the BaSotho land tenure and tribute systems were exploited by the colonial administration, traders, and missionaries. We now turn to Bechuanaland where, like in Swaziland, the problem was of a different order: the Europeans brought their own separate systems.

Bechuanaland

Unlike Basutoland, relatively large part of Bechuanaland had been conceded to European farms and mines. Here we will take the specific case of the Tati area, which illustrates clearly the nature of the exploitative links between Europeans and BaTswana.

It was pointed out in the concluding part of Chapter 2 that the Tati area had been conceded by Lobengula—the Matebele chief—to the Tati Company. The Bakhurutse tribe, who had taken refuge in the BamaNgwato area returned to the Tati area in 1895.⁹ Their chief, Rawe, entered into an agreement with the Tati Company to occupy a small portion of land for his tribe. The conditions laid down by the company included the payment of 10 shillings for each hut built in the area. Furthermore, it was laid down that:

“... the Chief Rawe and his people shall agree to provide labour for the mines within the limits of the concession and for other purposes ... that he and his people grow as much corn as possible and shall sell ... to the company's stores ... that they shall purchase all their goods from the company's stores, provided the company can sell as cheaply as they can purchase elsewhere. . . .”

On the 1st of June 1899, these clauses were made more explicit and read:

“... You are to supply labour to the mines when called upon to do so, and shall replace such labour from time to time as boys leave; and the company may call upon you to keep them supplied with labour to the extent of 20 per cent of your male adult population. You are to pay your hut tax regularly and collect for us from Mapoli and other sub-chiefs. . . You are not to trade corn with anyone besides the Tati Concessions without special permission. . . Your are not to allow your men to go and work at any mines outside the Tati Concessions. . . Your are to encourage and assist in any way you can all Zambesi boys that pass your way on their route to the mines. . . .”

It should be pointed out that Chief Rawe of the Bakhurutse was not a party to the concessions signed by the Matebele Chief, Lobengula, and that his return to the area was undertaken in the circumstances that the area had now returned to the Bechuanaland administration, and not to Rhodesia where Lobengula was a chief. It is therefore fair to assume that Rawe expected to retain his area as a chief of his people – just as his host, the BamaNgwato Chief, had during his refugee period.

Furthermore, the mining concessions were of dubious character, and there were contradictions in the definitions of what was actually ceded. To most of the chiefs, minerals, such as gold and diamonds, were those stones found underground and not on the surface. Since most of them considered that land occupied by their subjects was not to be alienated, it was possible that, in considering mineral concessions, this alienation of land was never excluded from their customary law and practice. In the circumstances, they considered “underground” as not part of the surface area and could not, therefore, grant concessions that included the surface area.

The circumstances of the agreement signed by Chief Rawe with the Tati Company under the above terms raised considerable doubt, as concessions in general did, as to whether the chiefs understood them or not. None of them understood English, and it was always missionaries who acted as interpreters. The missionaries themselves had economic interests in the transactions and, as we have already noted, the Tati Concessions signed between the Matebele Chief, Lobengula on one hand, and Dobbie, Dodds and the Francis brothers on the other, was made in the presence of Samuel Howard Edwards, a son of a Missionary, who himself later became not only a trusted friend of Lobengula, but also a representative of the Tati Concessions. It would therefore, seem fair to assume, in this respect, that undue pressure connected with economic interests was exercised on the chiefs.

We also need to analyse the relationships between the colonial administration and the British Government, and between the Mining Companies and the British Government. The interests of these parties in the disputes in question could affect the policy decisions in respect of the inhabitants of Bechuanaland. Every policy is based on the interests of the parties concerned – whether the decision of such policies is achieved through inducement, bribery, or sheer force. The interests can be either direct or indirect – depending on the parties involved.

We will examine this hypothesis with regard to the Tati area as it affected Chief Rawe and his subjects. We have already noted that the Tati area was not only inhabited by the Bakhurutse tribe. There were Kalaka tribes during the later part of 1889, a number of BaTswana tribes under chief Kgari, and some BaRolong tribes from the Orange Free State under chief Moroka also settled in the area. In 1904, the total number of all the tribes in the area was given as 8,000; they were settled in an area of approximately 1,200 square miles.⁶² The Tati area tribes, therefore, became the third most congested in the whole country. They altogether owned about 7,488 herd of cattle and 32,217 sheep and goats.

Chief Rawe, as a spokesman of all tribes in the area petitioned the British High Commissioner through the Resident Commissioner. He was, particularly, concerned about the clause imposed by the Tati Company dealing with compulsory labour, compulsion to sell corn only to the company, and compulsion to buy only from the company's stores.

A letter by the Resident Commissioner to The High Commission contained interesting paragraphs as to: the ownership of the area; the confusion over the nature of the concessions and doubts as to the validity of the agreement between the chief and the company; the unfairness of compulsion of labour; the unreasonable prices offered by the company in

respect of corn and cattle; and, above all, the convergence of interests between the company and the British home Government. These interests are illustrated in a subsequent decision by a commission appointed to enquire into the extent and situation of land necessary for the subsistence of the tribes. We will here quote the most important substance of the letter, *the Despatch From the Resident Commissioner to the High Commissioner* of October 13, 1903:

"There appears to be no doubt that the Bahurutsi people, of which this section at least is now represented by Rawe, did actually inhabit a considerable area of that portion of the Protectorate now known as Tati Concessions. . ."

The Resident Commissioner had consulted both the tribal leaders and a Legal Adviser about the extent of the concessions. He pointed out in the same letter that:

"Dr. Ward, the legal adviser of the Protectorate Government, is of the opinion that by these concessions, the Tati Concessions Company did not acquire surface rights of the land. . ."

The convergence of interests between the home Government in London and those of the Company was exposed when the Resident Commissioner pointed out that:

"... Your Excellency has been informed by the Secretary of State that it is the *intention** of His Majesty's Government to give the Company surface rights, and to treat the matter as if such rights had been actually the property of the Tati Concessions. . ."

* italics by the author

Doubting the validity of the agreement between Chief Rawe and the Company the letter continued:

The statements made by Mr. Vigers of the status of the Company, in belief of which statements the natives were *induced** to sign the agreement of 23rd October, 1895, the interpretation given by Mr. Swinburne in his letters to portions of that agreement, and the manner in which the Company and the natives by their actions since 1895 have construed that agreement, all need enquiry in the interests of both the Company and the natives. . ."

* italics by the author

On labour and compulsion to trade with the company alone, the letter stated:

Compulsion to supply labour for the mines, compulsion to sell cattle and corn to the Company only, compulsion to buy only at the Company's stores, and compulsion to abide by not only rules which were in force at the time the agreement was made, but by rules which the company might hereafter make, with a penalty that the breach either of the terms or rules should involve ejectment, are surely provisos outside the limits of an agreement. . . The agreement uses the words 'reasonable prices' in respect of sale to the Company of cattle and corn, while in respect to the purchase by the natives of goods, the words 'provided the

Company can sell as cheaply as they (the native) can purchase elsewhere' are inserted. But who is to interpret this agreement and these provisos? Complaint has been made by the natives to me and to the Assistant Commissioner, Colonel Panzera, but whenever we have instituted the slightest enquiry, or made any attempt to arrive at a fair understanding of matters in dispute, we have been met with a complaint by the *London Board**, direct to the *Colonial office of the Imperial officials in the Tati Concessions*. ."

* italics by the author

The letter went on to state that the prices offered by the Company in respect of cattle and corn were far below the market prices and that the Company had made further rules to the extent that the tribes were to be allowed to hire their wagons and oxen to no other person than the Company itself.

The pressure exerted on the British Government by the London Board was so strong that the Colonial Office felt obliged to take the interests of the Company before those of the tribe. The Resident Commissioner had always been aware of this fact as he stated in his letter:

"I gather from despatches which I have received from the High Commissioner from time to time that the Secretary of State has not viewed with approval the desire of the Government on the spot to enquire into and adjust these disputes, and I am therefore somewhat at loss to know what course to adopt. ."

The Tati Company had already decided to move Chief Rawe and his tribe, under the pretext that they had been cutting timber which was necessary for the running of the mines. It was proposed by the Company that they be moved further south of the area they occupied.

When the Commission of Enquiry visited the area in question, it was found that it would not only be more congested than the one they were occupying, but that there was no water at all in the new area. The Commission recommended another area but the interests of the Company were put first – there was a chance that valuable minerals might be discovered in the new area:

There is an objection to the occupation by natives of this area in the fact that there is a gold belt where much prospecting has been done, where many claims have been pegged and where many mining interests are involved, on the west bank of the Vukwe, but the actual or possible discovery of gold bearing reef in almost any portion of the Tati district is common, and we think that the difficulty could be overcome by defining an area which would take in all the discovered gold formation, within which natives should be prohibited by the government from intruding."

This situation also prevailed in the other "European owned" lands, although the Tati area was more explosive, partly because of the large number of tribes living in the area. The other "European-owned" lands had fewer tribes but, considering the size of the areas in relation to the Tati area, they were equally congested. Tribal areas such as that of the Malete and the Batlokwa,

who were directly affected by the demarcation of the European-lands after the British South African Company sold them, were more congested than any other area in the country. The immediate result of this was the mass exodus of migrant labour to South Africa which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

For the present, it will be enough to say that there developed a pattern of exploitation through convergence of interests in the European area.

Exploitation in European versus Tribal areas

We have at length dealt with the Tati area as an example of the conflicts in the European areas; and the tribal areas as an example of conflicts in the native reserves. There is a connection between the two. In each structure, there developed a systematic pattern of exploiting the peasants. In each type and structure, the exploiting group was supported by another group with convergent interests: that is, the European areas found support in the colonial Government, and in the case of the Concessions Company, this was exercised through the intervention of the London Board to the Imperial Officials at the Colonial Office in London; while in the reserves, the chiefs (of the tribal areas) found their support through their recognition by the Colonial Administration in the country. In both cases, therefore, it was the colonial factor which influenced the trends.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Hailey, 1953, p. 149.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 241–242.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
4. See Chapter 2.
5. Hailey, 1953, pp. 274–275.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 261.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
8. Schapera, 1943, p. 26.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 70–71.
10. Note the similarities with some of the tribes of Bechuanaland, see also Hailey, 1953, p. 25.
11. See Chapter 2.
12. Hailey, 1953, p. 45.
13. Ashton, E.H., *The Basuto*, London, 1962, p. 200.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
15. Hailey, 1953, p. 75.
16. See Chapter 2.
17. Hailey, 1953, p. 353.
18. Kuper, 1969, pp. 111 and 113.

19. The importance of the Queen Mother will be discussed in the section dealing with the powers of the chiefs.
20. Hailey, 1953, p. 353.
21. Kuper, 1969, p. 58.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
23. Normally, the most senior wives are known including those in his Regional Headquarters scattered all over the country. Within these there are also King's wives attached close to the Royal Kraals and it is these whose numbers are not known.
24. Schapera, I., *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, London, 1938, p. 84.
25. Cited in Stevens, 1967, p. 128.
26. These economic advantages will be discussed in the section dealing with Land Tenure System.
27. Schapera, 1938, p. 84.
28. See Chapter 2.
29. See Chapter 2, note 24.
30. Theal, G.M. *Basutoland Records*, Cape Town 1883, p. 48.
31. Cited in Halpern, 1965, p. 116.
32. Ashton, 1962, p. 220.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 217.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 221.
35. Kuper, 1969, p. 55.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
37. Stevens, 1967, p. 192.
38. Khama, S. *Traditional Attitudes to Land Management of Property with Reference to Cattle*, A paper delivered at the Conference on Sustained Production from Semi-Arid Areas with Particular Reference to Botswana, October 1971, Gaborone (mimeo).
39. See section 2.
40. Schapera, 1943, p. 185.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
42. See Chapter 2.
43. Douglas, A.J.A., and Tennant, R.K., *Basutoland Agricultural Survey: 1949-1950*, Maseru, 1952, p. 79.
44. Morojele, C.M.H., *Agricultural Census of Basutoland; 1960*, Maseru 1960, pp. 13, 19.
45. Ashton, 1962, p. 174.
46. Sheddick, V., *Land Tenure in Basutoland*, London 1954, p. 103.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
48. Cited in *ibid.* p. 149.
49. Hailey, 1953, p. 71.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
51. Ashton, 1962, p. 145.
52. Kuper, 1969, p. 44.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
55. The number of landless is taken from Kuper, 1969, p. 32 while the population of the Swazis is taken from the 1971 *Statistical Abstracts*, p. 7 with a deduction of foreign Africans who were in the country.
56. Hughes, A.J.B., 'Some Swazi Views on Land Tenure', *Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. XXXII, No. 3 July 1962, pp. 261 and 265.
57. *Ibid.*,
58. *Basutoland: Laws of Lerotholi*, 1946, Part III, items 3 (3), 4 (10) and 6 (1).
59. See section I above.
60. *White Book Africa (South)* No. 427, p. 717.
61. *Ibid.*,
62. See Table 1 for the density.

63. *Despatch from the Resident Commissioner to the High Commissioner* No. 118 H.C., October 13, 1903.
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*
69. *White Book Africa (South)*, No. 59, p. 763.

Chapter 4. The Economics and Politics of Labour Migration

Introduction

Labour migration from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland was influenced by the interaction of periphery-centre economic and political relations. In its original form, it was influenced by the forces of colonialism which penetrated traditional structures. This penetration which resulted in land shortages created the basic conditions of *push* and *pull* factors. The further growth of periphery-centre relations increased the growth and development of the push and pull factors thereby intensifying the forces of *supply* and *demand*.

Three periods can be distinguished in the development of labour migration from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to South Africa. The first period began with European land appropriations as described in Chapter 2 and lasted up to the establishment of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland as British protectorates and the creation of the Union of South Africa. During this period, South Africa was both economically and politically dependent on Britain. The latter exploited the former in extracting raw materials from the former for the manufacturing industries of the latter. Part of the labour for this was extracted from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Britain was, thus, the centre while the whole Southern African region was the periphery. The second period started at the time of the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910. This period can be divided into two parts – the first ending in the early fifties. The second part of this period ended at approximately the time of independence of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Important economic and political changes took place in the whole region during this period. By the end of the second world war, South Africa ceased to be a periphery when her economy dominated the whole Southern African region and, instead, became a centre-periphery while Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and the South African reserves remained as peripheries. Finally, in the third period, Britain's role as a centre was shared by Western Europe, the United States of America and Japan. Economic and political changes in the region with extensive activity of international capital made the Republic of South Africa an important centre of the periphery. Within Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, the penetration of this international capital through the Republic of South Africa also created embryonic centre-periphery relationships between the "white" enclaves and the African reserves.

In this study, we have avoided including an economic history of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland prior to the penetration of the colonialists. The inclusion of such an analysis would have been useful in determining in detail the consequences of the penetration on changes in distribution of resources. Unfortunately, the accounts and data available on that period are limited to missionary accounts which lack concrete data on the distribution of resources in the countries as a whole. For example, John Barrow writes that around 1801, Europeans had travelled from the Cape Colony to obtain cattle in Botswana to replace their own which had been affected by drought. In a description of the BaTswana and their economy, he writes that they had "arrived at that stage of civilisation which is not satisfied with mere necessities of life supplied to them abundantly from the three sources of agriculture, grazing, and hunting; they are by no means insensible of its conveniences and its luxuries."¹ Similarly, in Lesotho, Casalis points out that "habits of serious and diligent husbandry are to be sought for, not among the Boers, but among the Basuto".² By 1863, Lesotho was described as "the granary of the Free State and parts of the (Cape) Colony."³ Similar accounts are supported by the values and volumes of exports but in none of them do we get a clear picture of the extent of distribution of resources.

Such accounts must be treated with some caution for several reasons. The most important of these is to be found in the relationship between the missionaries and chiefs during this period. It is known that most of the missionaries lived with the chiefs as their advisers. It is quite possible that their accounts of "abundance" are calculated from their observations of the resources the chiefs had as we pointed out in Chapter 3 rather than the entire economy. In Lesotho, for example, it is stated that sometimes "missionaries were disappointed with chiefs because they were so oppressive of the people for their own enrichment".⁴ There are many accounts of chiefs' enrichments in Botswana and Swaziland.

In this chapter, we examine the major economic and political forces which determined labour migration from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland into the Republic of South Africa. The focus is on the interaction of the "pull" factors in South Africa and the "push" factors in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland on the other. By push factors, I mean those which push the migrant labour away from their home labour markets, while by pull factors I mean those factors operating in South Africa. But both push and pull factors can also be present within the receiving market. A distinction between an "economic" and a "political" factor in the Southern African regional context is also of crucial importance in view of the ideological differences between the Republic and the three countries in the analysis of the interaction of these forces. For example, a political push from South Africa to strengthen

economic push from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland can reinforce economic pull from South Africa. It is, therefore, important to distinguish this connection.

In section I in this chapter, we will introduce the foundation of the push and pull factors up to, approximately, the time of the union. In section 2 we discuss the development of these factors from 1910 to the early 1950's. Section 3 deals with the interaction of the colonial government and the chiefs in encouraging labour migration while section 4 deals with the development of labour migration during the post-independence period of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

4.1. The pre - 1910 period

Although there is no common agreement on the precise date when the flow of migration labour started from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland into South Africa, most of the historical works on South Africa generally point to the period around the time of the wars of land appropriations, i.e. about 1840. In Botswana, for example, Schapera writes that as early as 1844, there were a number of Kwena tribesmen serving on European farms in what is today the Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa.⁵ In Lesotho, Lord Hailey writes that migration labour to South Africa "is indeed as old as the contact of the Basotho with Europeans".⁶ Casalis also points out that as early as 1861, there were many Basothos travelling to the Cape Colony to work.⁷ In Swaziland, according to the evidence presented to the Transvaal Labour Commission in 1904, the recruiting agents confirmed that they had persuaded the chiefs to encourage Swazis to work in the mines of the Transvaal.⁸ In South Africa itself, the select committee of 1879 and 1892 dealing with the shortage of farm labour pointed out that before the discovery of minerals, there were "many thousands of Makatese" working on European farms.⁹ The actual number of migrant labourers at this time is difficult to establish. There was hardly any institutional framework to register either the number who left Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland or those who arrived and worked in South Africa. The scattered information from the missionary accounts does not give much precision.

Before we focus on the outflow of labour, we should first mention the flow in the opposite direction. While many Africans remained in the areas occupied by the Boer settlers, many moved out of South African controlled territory into the much reduced areas left for Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This process created additional pressure on limited land.

In Botswana, migration in the opposite direction started towards the 1840s when the southern part of the country was claimed by South Africa. It continued as part of the territory was surrendered to Cecil Rhodes' British South African Company for the construction of the railway line. Among the most affected tribes were the BaTlokwa, BaMaletle and BaKgatla. In the northern part of the country, the Bahurutse, as pointed out in chapter 3, after having been driven off their land, returned to settle in an extremely congested area.

There was a similar influx into Lesotho. Spray, for example, points out that "there was a particular influx from the conquered territory after 1868, of whom the Bataung are only the most compact group" – thus causing increased congestion.¹⁰

In Swaziland, influx started as soon as the larger part of the country was taken by the Boers and incorporated into the Transvaal. This process continued during the period of concessions and reached a climax when the concessions were ratified by the colonial courts. Most of the people who lived in the areas claimed by the concessionaries were driven off through the *Partition Proclamation No 28 of 1907* which had limited the "grace" period to five years after the ratification.¹¹ In the case of Swaziland, this influx from the concession areas was of a significant magnitude compared to the population in the areas left to the Swazis. As we pointed out in chapter 2, only a third of the area was left to the Swazis. Thus, by 1912, the Swazis who had continued to use land in the concession areas were forced to cede their rights to the Europeans.

Estimates of those who sought work in South Africa vary. Schapera estimates that in Botswana, about 2,000 people from the most affected tribes left for work in South Africa in 1881. Schapera continues: "the number going to work vary from one tribe to another; in some like Kwenā, Kgatla and Maletle, as many as 40 to 50 per cent of the able-bodied men may be away simultaneously".¹² For Lesotho, Tylden points out that by 1894, there were as many as 30,000 Basotho going to South Africa each year.¹³ We have no estimates for Swaziland.

Pressure on land was the most important factor pushing people out of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Land shortage affected the level of food production. Hailey points out that "during the early period of the wars with the Free State, numbers of Basotho sought employment in order to earn food".¹⁴

Minerals in South Africa were not discovered until 1874. From the early part of the 1800's until the beginning of the twentieth century, migrant labour in South Africa was engaged in agricultural activities. Agriculture in South Africa was still in a primitive stage and, therefore, highly labour

intensive. Most of the Boers were cattle ranchers. The development of the mines, however, also demanded increased output in agriculture to feed the mine labourers. Food production became an important source of income both for the Boers in South Africa and those who had enough land in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. A considerable number of the Boers were now either switching over to food production or combining it with cattle ranching. Some of the Boers allowed their African labourers to use land as tenants or on share-cropping basis.

The expansion of mineral production and the increased demand for food raised the demand for labour in both agriculture and mining. Some of the male migrant labourers left the European farms for mining employment leaving their families on the farms. Competition between the farms and mining for migrant labour became intensive. The South African government had introduced tax measures to force the Africans into farming and mining sectors, but shortage of labour was still an increasing problem. The colonial government introduced hut taxes in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland between the years of 1870 and 1899. In spite of these measures, the Select Committee in South Africa investigating the shortage of labour testified in 1892 that there was a continuous shortage of labour in the country.¹⁵

There may be several reasons for the failure of hut taxes in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland as an effective measure to push people out of the three countries. One was that the tax only applied to heads of households most of whom had land. Since agriculture was an important source of income, most of them were able to pay their taxes through the food they sold. There may also have been various ways of dodging the tax collectors.

The success of African food production and its consequences for limiting the number of migrant labourers available to European farms and mines caused concern. Important measures were taken to restrict African agricultural trade. In 1875, for example, the Free State imposed a levy of one pound sterling on grain produced outside South Africa and by 1894, she imposed duties on a number of other imports from Lesotho.¹⁶ Similar measures were undertaken by the Transvaal in 1887.

Within the Cape colony, the parliament passed the *Glen Grey Act* in 1894 which increased taxes while at the same time limiting the use of land by the African population. In recommending the act, Cecil Rhodes, the Prime Minister of the Cape, pointed out that it was intended to "remove them (the Africans) from that life of sloth and laziness. . you will teach them the dignity of labour. ."¹⁷ The *Glen Grey Act* also affected Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. *The Report of the Transvaal Commission* went to the extent of recommending "the abolition of native locations and native reserves like

Basutoland and Swaziland (and) the distribution of the natives on the land held by white owners."¹⁸ In Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, the hut tax was replaced by poll tax including extra levies which will be discussed in more detail below. But the replacement of the hut tax meant that it was no longer applicable to male heads of households alone. The new poll tax was to be paid by every adult male regardless of whether he had neither land nor employment. This process had been described in these words: "having pushed the native possessors off their soil, the whites felt the need of pulling native labourers to it."¹⁹

Until the beginning of 1900, there was no organised system of recruitment of farm and mine labour either within South Africa or outside. Various channels were used in this early period. A first was the use of local traders. The major inducement offered by these was credit either in cash for taxes or food. The latter method was frequently used during bad agricultural seasons when many peasants were unable to produce enough food for themselves. Those who could not pay in time could be recruited as labourers. The trader received a commission from white farmers and mining companies for their services. This method of recruitment continued also in later periods but was used less frequently.

A second method was the appointment of individual agents who were sent to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to recruit migrant labourers. Some individuals established themselves as independent recruiting agents; others formed cartels. For unemployed whites and "coloureds" (people of mixed blood), this was considered a profitable occupation. From the time of the expansion of mining and agriculture, the number of such private recruiters increased tremendously. In 1898, the Resident Commissioner in Botswana described the country as having been "flooded by both white and coloured persons calling themselves Labour Agents, persons who, in most cases do not care to work for themselves, but who visit our country to try and induce our natives, by flattering promises to go to Johannesburg to work in the mines."²⁰

The operations of the private agents required the assistance of the chiefs. Most of the agents paid the chiefs commissions. Others presented them with various types of gifts in order to induce them to persuade their subjects. In a testimony before the Transvaal Commission, for example, an agent testified that he could not have got enough Swazis for the mines had it not been through the cooperation of the Queen and the Chiefs. He told the commission that the Queen was paid for persuading her subjects to be recruited.²¹ On the same occasion, another agent operating in Botswana testified that Chief "Khama does the whole recruiting himself and sends messages to the men to come to him".²² Since the chiefs controlled the

population through their land allocation functions, the participation of the chiefs was of crucial importance particularly when the payment of taxes also included those who were not eligible for land, i.e. the non-heads of households.

4.2. 1910 to the early 1950's

The South African economy continued also after the creation of the Union in 1910 to be largely dependent on mining and agriculture. Mining was a mixture of capital and labour intensive production, while agriculture was largely labour intensive. The former contributed the largest share of the national income. The capital for the mining industry was foreign – mainly British. The companies sought to maximise profits by holding down labour costs through the use of cheap migrant labour. There was only little manufacturing industry before the 1920's. Manufactured goods – both capital and consumer were imported. This international division of labour suited the mining companies who advocated “free trade” and opposed the imposition of tariffs. The imported goods were to be paid for by the large earnings of mining.

As pointed out above, the development of mining industry required the expansion of agriculture to feed the mine labourers. But the higher wages paid by the mines undercut the recruitment of farm labourers. However, both sectors continued to be worried about the “shortage of labour.” In 1900, the Chamber of Mines, after failing to persuade the government to create labour bureaus, formed a joint recruiting organisation – the *Witwatersrand Native Labour Association* (WNLA). The activities of the WNLA were initially limited to Mozambique under the *Miler Agreement* which specified the following terms of exchange for labour:

in return for the grant to the gold-mining companies of the right to recruit African labourers in Mozambique, the railway freight rates between Lourenco Marques (Maputo since 1975) – and Johannesburg, . . . and the customs duties on goods entering the Transvaal from the British Colonial ports (would be lowered).¹³

This package deal between South Africa and the colonial government of Mozambique did not alleviate the “shortage” of labour in the mines. Twelve years later, another recruiting organisation – the *Native Recruiting Corporation* (NRC) was established. Initially, it was to concentrate its recruiting activities inside the South African reserves and in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In 1913, its operations in the northern part of Botswana were suspended due to high death rates of migrant labourers from the tropical areas. They were, however, resumed in 1934.¹⁴

By the time of the establishment of the NRC, the shortage of labour was so acute that the South African government felt obliged to impose further restrictions on the land available to Africans. In 1913, the *Land Act of 1913* was introduced and, as a consequence, the area reserved for Africans was reduced to 13 per cent of the total.

The economic structure of South Africa was forced to be restructured after the first world war. These changes significantly affected labour requirements in general and the conditions of migrant labour system in particular.

During the war, Britain was unable to keep up the level of exports to South Africa. The latter was obliged to start its own manufacturing industries rather suddenly. Although most of these were small, they received tremendous support from the government. By 1921, they had nearly trebled their net product in less than a decade. The policy of tariff-free trade advocated by the mining companies was reversed to protect the new manufacturing industries. The mining and agricultural industries were exempted from the tariffs." The reversal of the policy was also motivated by the fact that the war had left many whites from the farming areas out of work. Protection was, therefore, also a means of ensuring their employment in these new industries.

The entry of manufacturing industries in a predominantly mining and agricultural labour market also created complicated problems of labour policies. The government which came to power after the war and which was responsible for the introduction of the tariffs was a coalition of white labour and farming interests. Pressure from the farmers for more labour was strongly exerted on the government and, in particular, for the maintenance of the migrant labour system. As a consequence of this pressure, the *Native (Urban Areas) Act* was introduced in 1923 which restricted Africans to the homelands reserves while declaring the rest of the country as "white areas". The control of the act was exercised by the *Influx Control* through which Africans were evicted from the urban areas and sent back to the reserves. In practice, this ensured the flow of migrant labour as it was impossible to absorb this fresh influx into the congested reserves.

The introduction of the Native (Urban Areas) Act was, however, in direct conflict with the interests of the manufacturing industries which, in contrast to the mining and agriculture, sought the establishment of a permanent labour force as against one based on migrant labour.

During the second world war, imports were again restricted. The effect was not as strong as during the first war. Local industrial production had improved both in quality and quantity. As a result of the *Gold Standard Crisis* in 1932, the pact between the white labour and farming interests crumbled.

The leader of the farming interests, General Hertzog united with the leader of the mining interests, General Smuts. Hertzog had, however, been a controversial figure in British "liberal" circles while Smuts was more acceptable. A controversy over supporting the British Government in declaring war against Hitler led to the defeat of Hertzog and the regaining of power of the mining interests led by Smuts in 1939.

The Smuts government attempted to please its British allies by advocating "liberal" labour policies. It went to the extent of pointing out that the labour policies applied to non-whites partly contributed to the limited and one-sided growth of the economy – mining and agriculture. The government attempted to stimulate growth by offering African labour higher share of income. Disparity in wage levels based on colour was considered to be in conflict with the total needs and prosperity of the country as a whole.²⁶ Invariably, this also meant that the traditional policy of regarding the Africans as temporary and migrant labourers was to be abandoned.

This policy challenged the interests not only of the mining companies whose policy was to reduce labour costs but also those of other powerful mining interests within Smuts' own government as well as those of the farming interests. These contradictions raised also political problems. The barriers to keep Africans away from the urban areas were directly connected with the desire to protect and expand white employment.²⁷

Between 1939 and 1946, the manufacturing industry grew very rapidly. Wages paid to the Africans increased more than in both mining and agriculture. The ratio of White/Black wages in the manufacturing industries was reduced from 5.5:1 to 3.7:1 between 1935 and 1946. In the mining sector, the corresponding ratio was 10.6:1 to 11.1:1 respectively.²⁸ Employment for both Africans and whites increased. Infact, more Africans were seeking employment in the manufacturing industries than in mining and agriculture, to the extent that in both the latter sectors there was an annual decline in the number of new recruits.²⁹

This tendency was clearly a threat to the established mining and agricultural interests. In 1948, the liberal-oriented government was defeated by the architects of apartheid – the Nationalist Party whose election platform was based on white supremacy and the suppression of Africans. The new government rejected the reforms and, instead, supported the mining and agricultural interests in their desire to promote migrant labour and to increase control over the influx of Africans to the urban areas.

From 1948 onwards, the pro-apartheid Nationalist regime was strongly entrenched on the political scene of South Africa. By 1964, it was estimated that there was a total of 497,000 migrant workers, half of which were drawn from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.³⁰

According to Simson, a report from a single mine showed that almost 90 per cent of its migrant labour force was drawn from the ages between 18 to 37.³¹ This clearly indicates the extent of those who were not eligible for land and those who had no cattle. The number of people affected by the influx control in the period between 1948 and 1962 rose from 176,000 to 384,000. In 1969 alone, the number was 632,000.³² Thus, the high figures of foreign migrant labour cannot be explained by pure economic factors. Rather, it must be seen in the political context of apartheid. According to Leistner, most of the main industries preferred the employment of foreign rather than local migrant labour because the employers "expressed the conviction that the foreign Bantu is a better worker than the indigenous Bantu".³³ This line of argument is, however, difficult to follow in view of the various economic and political "push" factors in operation within the country. In particular, the argument becomes more difficult to follow when the country was continuously said to be "short" of labour.

Let us now return to the factors encouraging migration in the labour exporting countries.

4.3. Encouraging migration: colonial government and chiefs

In analysing the growth and interaction of the economic and political forces of migration in the peripheries of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, it is important to examine the policies of the colonial government at the time of the establishment of the union. These policies must be seen in terms of the creation of conditions for labour migration. It must be remembered that the South African economy was, during this period, dominated by British capital and that the British government was at the same time the colonial power of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

As early as 1904, the Resident Commissioner of Botswana wrote that the policy of the colonial government was to permit "a very wide latitude to the paramount chiefs in the management of their own people."³⁴ This policy was equally applied to the other two countries. In the case of Botswana and Swaziland, however, the policy was limited to the African reserves and did not apply to the Africans in the European enclaves. Theoretically, this policy could be seen as an expression of "respect" for the political autonomy of the "protected" people. The economic implication, however, was that of doing "as little as possible", that is, keeping them underdeveloped."

The colonial government promoted economic interests of the white

Source: Wilson, 1972.

communities while at the same time suppressing those of the Africans. Until the beginning of the late 1950's Africans were restricted from trading through licence restrictions and regulations. In Botswana, for instance, before and even after independence, apart from the high licence fees imposed, health "regulations" included the requirements of "concrete floors, plaster walls, dust proof ceilings, corrugated metal roofs" and others which most of the Africans could not afford.³⁶ In Lesotho, the Africans were prohibited from trading in their own major products – wool and mohair.³⁷ In Swaziland, Winter points out that it "was extremely difficult for Swazis to obtain trading licences and heavy fines were imposed for illegal trading".³⁸

Local whites, mostly of South African origin, and South African companies, on the other hand, were allowed to operate trading posts and labour recruitment organisations. The two were complementary. They were spread in all rural areas either side by side, or, where one was absent, at least the other was present and became the agent. The spread of NRC and WNLA in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland is shown on the map on page 95.

Economic underdevelopment of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland was similar to that of the African reserves in South Africa with the exception of the European enclaves in Botswana and Swaziland. It is, therefore, important to examine the role and interaction of the office of the chieftainship and the colonial government in the major analysis of the growth and interaction of the economic and political forces of labour migration. This internal interaction is important for understanding the functions of the push and pull factors and, thereby, of the interaction between the internal and external economic and political factors.

The number of migrant labourers from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland between 1911 and 1966 have been estimated as in the table on page 97. These figures are based on the number of passes issued. If the number who left their countries without passing through the official channels were accounted for, the figures would have to be greatly increased. For example, the total number of migrant labourers from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland recorded in South Africa was said to be 234,000 in 1964.³⁹ This may be compared with the number of passes issued in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which represented their own estimates of the total number of migrant labour force outside the countries. This figure was 181,000 in 1966.⁴⁰

From the outset, the South African recruitment organisations were established in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland with the support of the colonial government. The development of mining, agriculture and manufacturing industries in South Africa was considered by the colonial government as a desirable source of income in these countries, especially

	Botswana	Lesotho	Swaziland
1911	2,592*	25,000	8,500
1921	3,345	47,000	5,990
1936	10,441	101,000	9,561
1946	n.a.	127,000	8,077
1956	n.a.	155,000	11,728
1966	45,000	117,000**	19,219

Source: For Botswana up to 1936, see Schapera, 1947, p. 122. The 1966 figure is taken from Smit, 1970, p. 75. For Lesotho, see Spray, P. "A Tentative Economic History of Lesotho from 1830" (mimeo), p. 10. For Swaziland, see *Annual Statistical Bulletin*, 1971

* The low figures for Botswana were due to the temporary suspension of recruitment as pointed above.

** The drop in Lesotho was probably due to those who returned at the time of independence expecting jobs within Lesotho.

against the background of the policy of doing "as little as possible" in terms of local development efforts. The colonial administration also needed funds to finance the administration which during this early period was dominated by police expenditure.⁴ The cooperation of the colonial government is demonstrated by the evidence of the Assistant Resident Commissioner of Botswana when, in 1903, he told the Transvaal Labour Commission that:

It is my most earnest desire to assist in my power the native labour movement. I have talked to all chiefs and headmen about the advantages of work, etc. I recently got Khama to call a public meeting to try and induce his people to go out. .⁴

As we have already pointed out (in the preceding sections) taxes were introduced as soon as the three countries were colonised. By the time of the establishment of the Union, these taxes had become an important "push" factor in the context of growing shortage of land and the economic underdevelopment. According to a survey conducted by Schapera in Botswana in 1943, about 68 per cent of the migrant labour force mentioned taxes as a main reason for going to work in South Africa.⁴ We have no comparative data for Lesotho and Swaziland during the same period.

The rate of taxes was periodically increased with additional levies on each taxpayer. For example, in Botswana, a levy of five shillings was imposed in 1925. In addition to this, additional taxes were imposed on "extra" wives.⁴ Of special importance was the relationship between institutional

recruitment and the payment of tax advances. An examination of the number of recruits and the amount of tax advances paid by the recruitment organisations to the colonial government in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in 1958 reveals that the number of recruits was nearly equal to the total number for whom tax advances had been paid. In Botswana, there were 18,400 recruits and the amount paid by NRC and WNLA to the colonial government was 55,000 pounds sterling. The native tax was two pounds plus an additional one pound for graded tax. In Lesotho, the number of recruits was 50,000 and the amount collected was 60,000 pounds. In Swaziland, there were 7,600 recruits with 14,000 pounds being collected by the colonial government.⁴ Tax rate in the last two countries were one-pound fifteen shillings and two pounds respectively.

The role of taxes as an instrument for encouraging labour migration must also be seen in the context of the internal power structure of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This can be seen from the interaction between the colonial government and the South African recruitment organisations on the one hand, and the chiefs, on the other.

In chapter 3, we examined the land tenure system in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In particular, we emphasised that the political power of the chiefs was derived from their land distribution functions. Colonial penetration and conquest sharply reduced the amount of land available for distribution and, thus, made it a scarce commodity. In section I of this chapter, we pointed out that hut taxes in Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland had been introduced as early as the years between 1870 and 1899. Although these taxes had been resisted by the chiefs, most of them actively contributed to the recruitment of migrant labour through taxes by the time of the establishment of the Union. The role of the chiefs in this respect was a consequence of the colonial conquest which had radically altered their political and distributive powers both by making land a scarce commodity and by removing constitutional restraints on the exercise of these powers.

In Botswana and Lesotho, the chiefs were made responsible for the collection of taxes. As a reward for their services, they were paid a fixed percentage of the total amount collected. In Swaziland, however, taxes were collected by the colonial tax clerks but, the chiefs were responsible for calling all the eligible taxpayers to "tax camps".⁵ In the case of Botswana and Lesotho, chiefs who collected less than the average amount were sometimes harassed by the colonial government. In Swaziland, chiefs who neglected calling the people to the "tax camps" were "liable to a fine" of ten pounds.⁶ No remuneration was, however, paid to the chiefs in Swaziland as was the case in Botswana and Lesotho.

The consequence of the pressure exerted by the colonial government on

the chiefs was to raise the pressure being exerted by the latter on their subjects. In the case of Botswana and Lesotho, chiefs found that the migrant labour system was not only an important means of increasing their own income through the percentage received on recruitment fees; it was also a convenient way of raising earnings through direct taxation of the recruits as traditional tributes. In Botswana, for example, the chiefs of the Kgatla, Malete and Tlokwa – the three most congested areas of Botswana, imposed a tax of one pound to every returning recruit as a “personal tribute” to the chiefs.⁴⁸ In some of the relatively less congested areas where the income of the chiefs was also relatively less, the chiefs went to the extent of “drafting” tax defaulters and handing them over to the South African recruitment organisations. Where such measures were insufficient, some chiefs sent their “regiments”, i.e. to work on the mines.

The most important source of income of the chiefs was, however, derived from the various levies imposed on their subjects. It will suffice here to mention the most important. In Botswana, as early as 1903, the Kgatla chief, for example, imposed a levy of five pounds on every able-bodied man in the “regiment”. This practice continued until 1932.⁴⁹ It was followed by the chiefs of Ngwaketse, Malete and Kwena in 1910 who imposed a levy of three shillings on every taxpayer. By 1919, the levy system was institutionalised in the whole country by the colonial government and was included in the poll tax as a *native fund*. The levy was increased to five shillings in 1924–25. In 1932–33, it was further increased to eight shillings.⁵⁰ Other examples of levies were the imposition of six pounds and ten shillings or an ox by the Kgatla chiefs for “water boring” and five pounds by the Malete chiefs for “purchase of land”. Few of these levies had any economic justification. Most served the personal enrichment of the chiefs. For example, Chief Isang in 1930 imposed a levy of five pounds on “almost every able-bodied” man to be paid in cash only. Those who refused were fined five times the number of cattle equivalent of the cash value.⁵¹ According to Hodgson and Ballinger, the majority of the chiefs in Botswana made personal fortunes ranging from 7,000 pounds in the case of the BamaNgwato chief to 2,750 pounds collected by the Kwena chief. The other chiefs made between 3,000 to 4,000 pounds jointly.⁵²

In Lesotho, the unitary rule of one paramount chief prevented individual chiefs from imposing personal levies on their subjects. Instead, there was a uniform levy which was also institutionalised by the colonial government and credited to the *education fund*.⁵³ But, individual chiefs resorted instead to the use of their judicial functions by imposing severe fines on offenders. The system of “placing” described in chapter 3 multiplied the number of courts in the country and the chiefs were said to be “fed” by “eating” the fines of

the courts.⁴⁴ In a country which was extremely congested, the majority of the offenders paid their fines by allowing themselves to be recruited as labourers and thereby obtaining advance payments from the South African recruiting organisations to pay the fines. The extent of the abuse of the courts by the chiefs resulted in a recommendation by a committee in 1943 to reduce their numbers from 340 to 117. By 1949, they were further reduced to 106.⁴⁵

In Swaziland, the system of levies was more or less similar to that of Lesotho. The first levy was imposed in 1916 at a rate of 2 shillings per taxpayer. It subsequently became institutionalised by the colonial government and was credited to the *Swazi National fund* for the purpose of education.⁴⁶ Fees from courts were also credited to the same fund which was subsequently transformed into the Swazi National Treasury. The most important type of levy which pushed many Swazis to the South African labour market was, however, the levy imposed by chief regent Gwamile soon after the establishment of the Union. She persuaded Swazis to migrate to South Africa to earn money in order to "buy" back the land lost to the Europeans.⁴⁷ By 1946, the colonial government exploited the scheme which was named the *Lifa Fund*. The government proposed that Swazis should also sell their cattle and use the money to purchase land from the Europeans for settlement schemes. Those who had no cattle to sell were required to pay the sum of five pounds to the fund.⁴⁸ Although many Swazis were recruited and others sold their cattle, the fund itself was subsequently forced to be abandoned for two main reasons. The first was that most of the money collected was misappropriated – presumably, by the chiefs themselves. The second reason was that as the scheme involved land, cattle and taxes – the main grievances of the majority of the Swazis, it was subject to suspicion, particularly as it was introduced and "encouraged" by the colonial government.

Chiefs had a strong vested interest in migration as it provided a direct source of revenue. But they had also a wider political and economic interest in reducing the heavy surplus of labour and the excessive pressure on land. Labour migration allowed chiefs to keep control over land distribution. It provided the *safety valve* without which the traditional system would have faced immediate collapse. In Lesotho, for example, the chiefs complained to the Resident Commissioner for allowing some Basotho migrant labourers to work in Johannesburg where, because of the absence of stringent compound regulations, the men "were free to come and go when not at work".⁴⁹ Some of the men were returning to Lesotho instead of remaining at work.

Around the beginning of the 1930's the colonial government sent an official Sir Alan Pim from Britain to investigate the financial position of

Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. The investigation resulted in the publication of three separate reports – one for each country.⁶⁰ The Reports, which have been collectively known as the *Pim Reports*, were very critical of both the chiefs and the colonial government. The latter was condemned for encouraging the system of “indirect” rule through the chiefs which perpetuated the system of oppression.⁶¹ The system of “indirect” rule, the reports went on, resulted in lack of financial control. The excessive powers of the chiefs were severely attacked in the reports.⁶² The reports made certain recommendations for each country. In the case of Botswana, it proposed direct rule by the colonial government and certain institutional changes instead of the old policy of doing “as little as possible”. In Lesotho, the report recommended the reduction of chiefs’ courts which, as pointed above, were used in the system of being “fed” by “eating” the fines. In Swaziland, it proposed institutional changes for the effective control of finance. What was remarkable in the reports, however, was the absence of any recommendations with regard to the distribution of land and its product of labour migration.

Despite the fact that the reports were published between 1932 and 1933, it took more than seventeen years for the colonial government to implement some of the recommendations proposed in the reports. The colonial government only implemented the institutional proposals. The most important were the amalgamation of the African and European Advisory Councils in Botswana in 1950, the *Proclamation No 39 of 1950* in Lesotho which provided for the re-organisation of the Basutoland Council and, the *Native Administration Proclamation of 1950* in Swaziland which established the Swazi National Treasury under the Swazi National Council.⁶³ In the case of Lesotho, as already pointed out the number of chiefs’ courts had already been reduced by 1949; but even those who ceased to be “fed” by “eating” fines continued to distribute land as well as keeping their own large land holdings.

While these reforms were aimed at increasing the political functions of the councils, they also served as a basis for widening the scope of migrant labour system. In Botswana, the monopoly enjoyed by the chiefs and the colonial government was now penetrated by local Europeans who joined the Joint Advisory Council. Local European interests had been seriously affected by the exclusive flow of migrant labour to the Union. There were two main reasons for this. The first was that wages in the European enclaves were much lower than those paid in South Africa. A second reason was that the colonial government and the chiefs preferred recruitment to be channelled through the institutional framework within the services of the NRC and WNLA. These two organisations, as we have pointed out, cooperated with

the colonial government and the chiefs in collecting tax advances on behalf of the recruits. The local European farming interests had attempted unsuccessfully to put pressure on the colonial government and the chiefs to limit the flow of migrant labour to South Africa during the ploughing season. In 1926, for example, a motion was introduced in the European Advisory Council in Botswana which sought to ban migration labour during that period. The colonial government supported by most of the traders rejected the motion by pointing out that such a ban would be ineffective as most of the people would, nevertheless, manage to slip across the border.⁴ The rejection by the colonial government was motivated by the loss of income involved in an uncontrolled migrant labour system. As we pointed out above, most of the traders cooperated closely with the South African recruitment organisations. A ban on migration would also involve loss of income to the traders. A colonial District Commissioner, therefore, has been quoted as saying:

Were it not for the Union market for our Native labour, the Government would long ago have ceased to collect any tax, the trader would have gone out of business and Natives, while the least affected, would be depending more than ever on Providence.⁵

The establishment of the Joint Advisory Council in Botswana, however, widened the distribution of migrant labour so that the local European enclaves were ensured of their supply.

In Lesotho, the re-organisation of the Basutoland Council did not change its basic structure. A minority of "commoners" were added to the Council. Most of these, however, were, in fact, "selected" or "nominated" on the recommendation of the chiefs and their headmen. In spite of the fact that the number of the chiefs and courts had been reduced the previous year, this did not alter the basic power structure. Those chiefs who were not "gazetted", i.e. those who ceased to preside over the courts, lost the salaries paid by the colonial government and the fines. But they were compensated for this loss of income from other sources. They became more stringent in the allocation of land under their control. In many instances, they refused to allocate surplus land and, instead, rented it to those who had none.⁶

In Swaziland, the political reforms of the 1950's came at a time when there was already close cooperation between the chiefs and the Europeans in the white enclaves. There, there was no real change. If anything, the reforms helped to strengthen cooperation although the two Councils were not formally amalgamated as was the case in Botswana.

The labour policies of the chiefs and the Europeans in Swaziland were on the same line as those applied in South Africa. The chiefs saw the increased economic activities of the rank and file Swazis as a threat to their own power

structure. Part of the labour in the European enclaves was drawn from outside the borders. For example, between 1962 and 1964, the percentage of foreign migrant black labour was between 20 and 22 respectively. It was reduced to 15 per cent in 1966.⁶⁷ This percentage should be seen in the light of the total labour force in the country. In 1966, for example, there was a total labour force of 183,000. Out of this, 41,000 were said to be employed within the country while 18,000 were said to be migrant labourers in South Africa. The remaining were said to be in "subsistence economy", "inactive" and "unemployed".⁶⁸ It should be emphasised here that the meaning of "subsistence" in Swaziland is not different from its equivalent use on Africans who have no land in South Africa. It would appear from these figures that more than half of the labour force was unable to find employment within the country while at the same time the country was able to import 15 per cent of unskilled labour force from outside its border.

Swazis were not only subjected to loss of employment through the application of foreign migrant labour system. They were also subjected to a contract system which was enforced by regulations similar to the influx control system. For example, between 1955 and 1960, 412 Swazis were convicted for breaking their contracts and 146 of them were imprisoned for the same "offence".⁶⁹

4.4. The Consolidation of the Economic and Political Forces

The early 1970's was a period of important economic and political changes both within the Republic of South Africa and in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In the Republic, the political consolidation of apartheid policy which increased the push factor of the Africans into the Bantu homelands was consolidated in the *Bantu Laws Amendment Act of 1969* followed by the declaration of "independence" of the Transkei and Ciskei. This implementation of the Bantu homelands policy was intensified by the increased application of the influx control.

The most significant economic changes in the Republic were not only the increase of foreign capital but, more important for our analysis, the decentralisation policy of the economy both within the Republic and, to a limited extent, to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. For the present purpose, we are more interested in the latter. The economic consequences of this policy on Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland will be discussed in Chapter 5.⁷⁰

The original decentralisation policy within the Republic was intended "to halt and ultimately reverse, the flow of Africans from the Reserves to the

cities". While this policy was primarily aimed at the Africans in the South African reserves, it was in conflict with the basic labour migration policy outlined in section 2 of this chapter. This conflict was also inherent in the policies of the early 1960's when the Republic outlined that the border industries were aimed at relieving unemployment in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland." The conflict can, however, be explained by two related factors. The first one is a purely economic one. By decentralising the economy, the Republic was more interested in solving the internal economic crisis created by the centralisation of the economy while at the same time aiming at the domination of the markets of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. The internal crisis also developed as a result of the conflict of the labour policies. Most of the small industries were unable to compete with the larger established ones in the face of controlled labour. The classification of jobs according to the pigment of the skin rather than merit contributed to the failure of the small industries. The Transvaal and other major industrial areas were congested. The second factor was a political one. Decentralisation was a political weapon on Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in the face of chronic unemployment and stagnation of the economies of these three countries.

Neither the internally directed nor the externally directed labour policy achieved their goals by decentralisation. Only half of the total annual rate of employment was reached. Maasdorp points out that "an increase of some 25,000-30,000 jobs in 7,5 years due to border areas incentives can hardly be regarded as spectacular" in the light of the increase of the number of industries and the incentives offered by the government."

A number of factors which were inherent in the conflict in labour policy were responsible for the failure of the border industries to increase African employment. The most important of these was the problem of how to reconcile political and economic labour policies basically in conflict with each other. Most of the new industries were situated closer to the "white" areas rather than being established in the interior of the reserves. This was a geographical problem which has been responsible for the inviability of some of the Bantu homelands as geographical entities." As a consequence of this, the limitations imposed by the application of the influx control also limited the recruitment from the African reserves. This created the conditions for "limited" recruitment of foreign migrant labour – precisely similar to the conditions existing in the central mining and manufacturing industries. Thus, only a small number of the migrant labourers in the border industries came from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

The second factor is connected with the limitation imposed by the concentration on capital intensive rather than labour intensive industries.

This was true both within the border industries and also in most of the South African industries established in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Examples of the latter ones were the mining industries in the three countries.⁷⁵

Thus, the decentralisation of industries' policy both within the Republic and in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland contributed to generating an extra surplus migrant labour force both within the Republic and in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. As table 2 shows, the post-independence total migrant labour force from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland increased despite the establishment of the South African industries within the three countries. The low figures from Swaziland are explained by the increase of the internal migrant labour force within the country as will be shown below.

Table 2. Migrant labour from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to South Africa: 1967-1975.

	Botswana	Lesotho	Swaziland
1967	45,000	125,000	12,000
1970	50,000	140,000	16,000
1973	55,000	175,000	15,000
1975	60,000	200,000	18,000

Source: For Botswana, see the 1968-73 *National Development Plan*, p. 2 and Norrlöf, Claes., *Botswana landanalys*, SIDA, 1976 p. 15. For Lesotho, see the 1970/75 *National Development Plan* p. 11 and the 1975/80 *National Development Plan* p. 14. For Swaziland: based on estimates of the Labour Dept.

In Botswana, present political conditions were created immediately after independence. The main one was labour legislation which increased government control on labour movements while at the same time regulating wages so as not to exceed those paid in the South African industries. These regulations were aimed at attracting foreign and South African industries while at the same time reducing dependence on the latter.⁷⁶ The labour regulations were more or less similar to those applied in the Republic of South Africa except for the fact that in South Africa, Africans are not allowed to strike while in Botswana they are legally allowed to do so. The second one was an economic reform which was aimed at increasing production in the rural areas by expanding the capitalist mode of production. Since the activities of the foreign enterprises were limited, the restrictions imposed on labour movements did not prevent an increase of

the number of squatters in the urban areas while increasing the number of unemployment. Consequently, the number of migrant labourers increased both within the country and to the Republic of South Africa.

As we pointed out in the previous section, income derived from labour migration was of great importance both to the chiefs and to the colonial government. When the new regime, which was composed of elements of the chieftainship, took over at independence, the contribution of income from migrant labour was considerably reduced. By 1969, it accounted for only 6 per cent of the total revenue.⁷ But its important role lay in the fact that it reduced the pressure on land with its political consequences and, hence, facilitated the survival of the regime.

Thus, labour migration in Botswana was consolidated by the interaction of external and internal economic and political forces. As far as external forces were concerned, the limited role of international and South African capital ensured the limited use of the surplus labour through concentration on capital intensive activities. Internally, the legislation catering to the needs of international and South African capital and the economic reforms ensured the continuation of migrant labour both within the country and to the Republic of South Africa.

In Lesotho, similar legislation and reforms were carried out by the new regime with the same effects as in Botswana and need not be repeated here. What was different in the case of Lesotho was the increased revenue from migrant labour in relation to the total revenue. In 1973, revenue from migrant labour in the form of deferred payment scheme was 38,7 per cent of the total revenue but decreased in 1974 to 34,3 per cent. The decrease in 1974 was connected with the decrease in the number of migrant labourers which was caused by unrest on the mines in South Africa resulting in some of the workers returning to Lesotho.⁸ But, when calm was restored, the revenue in 1975 was equivalent to 44.3 per cent of the total revenue.⁹ The dependence on revenue from migrant labour in South Africa was so extensive. In the words of the Second Five Year Development Plan:

Not only migrants, but also some of those permanently resident in South Africa remit funds to relatives and friends in Lesotho and this contributes substantially to incomes in the country.¹⁰

As we pointed out already, most of the pro-migrant elements of the chieftainship took over the regime after independence. The first plan also gives credit to the migrant labour for its role in relieving pressure on land and, hence, the maintainance of the power structure.¹¹ If these two factors are combined, it is quite clear that the process of consolidation of labour migration was both economic and political.

In Swaziland, the important role played by labour migration during the post-independence period has been more internally-oriented than externally-oriented. Similar legislation and reforms were also carried out by the new regime and had the same effects as in the other two countries. As will be seen in chapter 5, however, more industries were established in the country than in the other two countries. But as we pointed out above, Swazi industries operated on the same labour policies as their counterparts in the Republic of South Africa, i.e. the recruitment of foreign rather than local migrant labour force. During the latter part of the post-independent period, however, this policy was relaxed. By 1969, the percentage of foreign migrant labour force had decreased from 15 in 1966 to about 9 per cent." The number of Swazis employed as migrant labourers within the country was about 26,000.

As will be seen in chapter 5, the relaxation of employing foreign migrants was accompanied by offers of gifts in the form of shares by the foreign companies to the Swazi rulers as an attempt to consolidate the system. This did not, however, solve the entire problem of unemployment in the country as a whole. Nor did it halt the flow of labour migration to the Republic of South Africa. A considerable number of Swazis continued to migrate to South Africa where wages were higher than those offered by their branches in Swaziland.

Thus the pattern of labour migration was consolidated by the interaction of internal and external economic and political forces. The foreign industries, while increasing their activities in the country, created conditions which limited the expansion of employment by interacting with the local forces in legislating for lower wages. As in the other two countries, the spreading of local and external migration was a means to relieve land pressure and maintain the power structure of the Swazi rulers.

Conclusion

Labour migration from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to South Africa was a direct consequence of massive appropriations of land by the British and the Boers. But, it was also influenced by the interaction of external and internal economic and political forces. Externally, it was influenced by political forces which were enforced by both economic and political measures. The most important of these economic measures were the taxes, the Land Act of 1913 – both of which were strengthened from the Glen Grey Act. These were enforced by the application of the political forces, such as, the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 which, in turn, was enforced by the

influx control. The effects of these economic and political forces served to push away the internal Africans while at the same time serving to pull the foreign migrant labour to replace them. This "replacement" was possible by the application of economic and political forces in the peripheries.

Since the periphery was controlled by a colonial power, some of the economic forces were "political" in the sense that they were introduced in spite of the resistance of the local people. The most important of these were the deliberate underdevelopment of the African reserves which was replaced by the promotion of foreign traders, the introduction of taxes and the establishment of foreign recruitment labour organisations. These foreign forces also interacted internally with the traditional forces which, effectively, resulted in further land restrictions. Consequently, the interaction of these forces with the external forces created the conditions for the regulation of supply and demand both internally and externally.

But labour migration from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland must also be seen in a wider major context of the forces of international capital. This may underestimate the fact that in the case of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, labour migration was already in motion before the establishment of capitalism in South Africa. As we have pointed out, the economy of South Africa was as primitive as that of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in the early part of the 1880's. The creation of the push and pull factors was preceded by military and political domination in the area which served to create the main economic and political forces. As these interacted with the traditional forces, they also served the process of expansion of the capitalist forces which began to emerge in South Africa. As the three periods in this chapter clearly demonstrate, the growth of capitalism in South Africa through international capital also created the conditions for the development of the economic and political forces of land and labour migration both within South Africa and in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. As these two interacted, labour migration did not only increase but was also consolidated, so much so that it became part of the system maintaining the region as a whole.

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75. See Chapter 5.
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Chapter 5. Economic Integration

Three important factors interact to preserve Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland as labour reserves for South Africa's economy. I have in mind the *Customs Union*, the special *economic relationship between each of the three countries and the Republic* and their *financial institutions*, which are controlled by South African interests.

The *Customs Union* maximises the extraction of raw materials from the three countries, for processing in the Republic.

The special *economic relationship* inhibits the growth of industrial manufacture in the three countries by external control of ownership and marketing.

Growth was further hampered by the *financial institutions'* credit restrictions. This combination prevented the establishment of large-scale industries capable of competing with those of the Republic and absorbing the large local labour pool.

The Republic's pro-government *Journal* of February 1968 illustrates these mechanisms in South Africa's policy towards its neighbours:

"Our economic and political objectives in Southern Africa are to harness all natural and human resources from Table Mountain to the border of the Congo River. . Countries like Rhodesia, Malawi, Portuguese East Africa, will be amicably persuaded to adopt the Rand currency. . . There is already a Resources Planning Council for Southern Africa which has to investigate and advise all countries in Southern Africa to avoid duplication of certain industries, which duplication could lead to extravagance and unnecessary competition between countries. Member countries of the Common Market would complement one another. For example, the Republic of South Africa could manufacture machinery, chemicals and electrical appliances – while the Transkei could produce jute, Swaziland sugar, Botswana beef, and Lesotho water.¹

This chapter examines how the above three mechanisms worked to reduce Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to the status of labour reserves for the Republic's economy. *Section 1* examines the background of the Southern African Customs Union, and its defects. *Section 2* outlines the principle features of the current Customs Union agreement of 1969. *Section 3* deals with the economic structures of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, and the direction of trade, control and ownership. *Section 4* examines the dual rôle of the financial institutions, in both supporting the foreign and settlers' externally directed economies, and suppressing the establishment of viable indigenous industries through credit restrictions and capital export. The interaction of these mechanism exposes the myth that the Customs Union agreement is reciprocal, and shows the vulnerability of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

5.1. The Southern African Union – A Background

Although the *South African Act* of 1909 did not come into operation until May 31, 1910, Botswana and Lesotho, together with the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State, were brought into a customs union in 1893, which established free trade, a common external tariff and equitable distribution of customs revenue between the members.¹ Swaziland was not included until the 1910 customs agreement with the Union of South Africa.

The 1893 and 1910 customs agreements were substantially similar, providing for the same preferential trading terms. The only major difference was the distribution of revenue between the enlarged Union of South Africa and the other three members: in the 1910 agreement, all revenues from customs duties were pooled together. Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland received a fixed share of 1.31 per cent, while South Africa kept the rest. The 1.31 per cent for the three countries was distributed as follows:

Botswana	0.27622 per cent
Lesotho	0.88572 per cent
Swaziland	0.14900 per cent

Total	1.3109 per cent
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These percentages were based on the 1906–1908 import levels for the three countries. No machinery was created to re-adjust them in the event of changes in these. They remained fixed for fifty-five years, until 1965.² Thus, for over half a century the three countries were deprived of customs revenues accruing to them from their increased volume of imports.

The period between 1909 and 1965 was marked by a wide debate on the eventual incorporation of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland: the *1909 Union Act* had made provision for such incorporation and various South African representations were made to the British Government about the matter.³ Because of British hesitation, the South African Government resorted to economic blackmail on the countries by imposing quotas on South African imports from the three countries particularly cattle. This was in defiance of the Customs Union clause on “free trade” and “free interchange of goods”. On many occasions the South African Government imposed a complete quarantine, on “veterinary” grounds. As one British official commented:

“Veterinary science waits upon economic and political exigencies.”

Although this blackmail was primarily meant to show the British that South Africa could cripple these countries, it was also a local economic expedient. For example, after the 1909 quarantine was lifted in 1923, South African

farmers immediately sought government restrictions to protect their own cattle; consequently, quotas were imposed the following year through "weight" restrictions on all cattle from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.⁶ There were no abattoirs in these countries (until Botswana's only abattoir was opened in 1954 and Swaziland's in 1965). This meant that all cattle had to be driven live to South Africa for marketing. As European traders transacted cattle sales to the Union from these countries, the various restrictions led to smuggling rackets which in turn deprived the three countries of their due revenue.⁷ The three governments depended largely on revenues from cattle exports during most of this period, as duty on the sale of cattle was the sole form of taxation. As a result, revenue fell sharply in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.⁸

In 1925, South Africa introduced tariff restrictions to protect her manufacturing industries from competition.⁹ The imposition of these tariffs not only meant that Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were deprived of revenue because of a drop in imports, but it also meant that they were subsidising South African industries by paying for uncompetitively priced South African goods. In 1925, for example, duty was imposed on cotton and blankets, and, consequently, import levels halved.¹⁰ The only "commodity" unaffected by these restrictions was the export of labour to South Africa from these countries, although even this was threatened. It is worth quoting Hyam on the extent of the political and economic war waged by South Africa in her efforts to incorporate the three countries:

The case presented by Hertzog in 1932, with some reinforcement from Smuts after 1933, essentially hinged on threats of economic pressure . . . they said, the question of transfer had been engaging more and more attention in South Africa until 'owing more particularly to economic considerations in connection with Union markets. . . Economic facts . . . made the Territories entirely dependent on the Union' there was practically no other market for their produce or outlet for their labour supplies. Most banking and other business was controlled from Union, and the Territories were already being dealt with as one entity with the Union for customs and excise purposes. . . The Depression had much accentuated the demand to ban Bechuanaland or Swaziland tobacco and maize, and Basutoland wheat. . . A further main consideration, he said, was the question of reserving jobs in the Union for Union Africans as far as possible. Unless the territories were handed over he did not see how they could avoid making such an unfortunate distinction. . ."

Although the movement of labour was not covered by the 1910 customs union, and in spite of the above threats, no MoTswana, MoSotho or Swazi were expelled from the Union's mines. On the contrary, the flow of labour from the three countries to the Union grew.

Events prior to the 1969 Customs Union Agreement

The various quotas and quarantines contributed to widening the economic

gap between the Republic and the three countries. This was widely recognised in the three countries during the early sixties and it was also realised that very little could be done to increase their standard of living, as long as the customs union was in its current form. The three countries were also connected by another customs union with the then Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1956;¹² but since both Lesotho and Swaziland lacked common frontiers with the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland, this rather limited agreement applied only to Botswana. Swaziland had a common frontier with Mozambique which provided her with an outlet to the sea; Lesotho, however, was dependent solely on the South African market. Consequently she was the most seriously affected of the three, although her share in the 1910 customs agreement was the greatest.

The main complaint in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in the early sixties was that they had no control over revenue, as all import alterations and tariffs were fixed by the Republic in her own economic interest. The loss of this control (which, in other developing countries, was a major "instrument for economic policy") was, they felt, responsible for their economic stagnation. Furthermore, the requirement that South African Railways be the only authorised transporter of goods to and from the Republic was discriminatory. Above all, they argued, the volume of imports into their countries had substantially increased without any compensation from the Republic.

In recognition of these and other demands, the British Government sent a Government Statistician to assess the 1910 customs agreement. His report of 1963 recommended a redistribution of revenue among the three countries according to each one's level of imports. This was to be effective from 1965. The new formula was as follows:

The Lewes Formula of 1965

Country	Percentage
Botswana	0.30971
Lesotho	0.47093
Swaziland	0.53033
Total	1.31097

Thus, the Lewes formula almost halved Lesotho's tiny share to pay Botswana and Swaziland – yet South Africa's share remained constant at 98.7 per cent of the total revenue.

When Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland achieved independence, they declared that the existing customs union arrangements were unsatisfactory. The Government of Botswana declared:

The Customs Agreement, whilst relieving Botswana of the burden of costly customs administration, means that increased revenue accruing to the Exchequer from this source is not related to the growth in economic activity within the country. High protective duties imposed to protect South African industry tend to diminish the total revenue collected and therefore that part accruing to Botswana Exchequer. In such cases the diversion of consumers from cheaper overseas imports to more expensive South African manufactures results in a transfer of spending power from Botswana consumers to South African producers or, in other words, the subsidisation of South African industry by Botswana. . . . The Botswana Government will therefore seek to negotiate with the Government of the Republic of South Africa a more equitable customs arrangement."

Although the *Lesotho First Five-Year Development Plan* did not specifically mention the customs union, it complained of the union's consequences. "Rapid economic expansion in South Africa has not resulted in an expansion of the productive capacity in Lesotho; it only maintained the demand for Basotho labour from South African firms, mainly from mines."¹⁴ In the same tone, the Swaziland Plan stated:

. . . . Swaziland belongs to the Southern African Customs Union and uses the currency of the Republic of South Africa. This imposes certain limitations on the Government's freedom of action in matters of economic and fiscal policy."¹⁵

Although these statements indicated concern at the operation of the customs union and its effects on the three countries' economies, a common strategy for confronting the Republic was difficult. Each country was aware of the economic risks involved in negotiating a new agreement with the Republic, and aware also that it was in direct competition with the other two. We have already noted that the Lewes formula of 1965 did not actually alter the total share of the three countries, but instead reduced Lesotho's share, in order to pay Botswana and Swaziland.

Economic surveys showed good prospects for Botswana and Swaziland during the early seventies, but there were no such hopes for Lesotho. Botswana had just discovered rich diamond pipes and deposits of copper and nickel, while Swaziland's iron ore resources and agriculture held promise. Lesotho was therefore more cautious."¹⁶

The Republic wanted to exploit this situation in her favour. Before the negotiations started, she demanded a voice in these countries' industrialisation policies, in exchange for a much larger share of the customs revenues.

Considering the amicable relations that existed between Lesotho and the Republic, Lesotho could have been carried away by such financial promises, had it not been for other developments that put Botswana's and Swaziland's

case on a more favourable platform. The first was that South Africa's intentions had already been leaked to the press.¹⁷ Secondly, the *Franzen Commission*, set up by the South African Government to re-appraise its fiscal structure and policy, had just published its report; this recommended the introduction of a sales tax at the point of manufacture on goods going outside the Republic, to replace direct tax; this was to be effected in 1969. This recommendation became the focus of concern over the customs agreement, in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland – particularly because of its effect on consumers. This made a re-negotiated settlement an urgent priority for the three countries. Talks started towards the end of 1968 and were concluded on December 11, 1969.

5.2. The Main Features of the 1969 Customs Union Agreement

In contrast to the 1910 Customs Union Agreement which did not pay any attention to the position of the less developed partners, the 1969 Agreement specifically called for the need to ensure the development of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland and the “diversification” of their resources.

Ostensibly, therefore, the 1969 Agreement offered certain advantages to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, by recognizing the need to “encourage the development of the less advanced members”; it contained six important clauses which favoured the less developed members. These clauses were:

- A. The Distribution of Revenues,
- B. Free Interchange of Goods,
- C. Consultation,
- D. Freedom of Transit,
- E. Trade with Non-members of the Union, and
- F. Protection of Infant Industries in the less developed regions.

Some of these clauses had been included in the 1910 Agreement but, as we noted in the previous section, the Republic took advantage of the defencelessness of the weaker partners by continually violating the agreement. This vulnerability stemmed partly from the structure of their economies and the Republic's ownership and control of their financial institutions.

In this section, we will only discuss the apparent intentions of the six main clauses of the 1969 Customs Union Agreement. The way they operated in practice will be discussed in the last section of this chapter, after an analysis of the structure of the economies of the three countries and the limitations imposed upon them by the Republic's financial institutions.

A. Distribution of Revenue

By the 1969 agreement, the shares of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland did not substantially increase. The Republic still retained the lion's share:

Country	Percentage
Botswana	0.74
Lesotho	0.89
Swaziland	0.95
Total	2.58
South Africa	97.42

However, the real income from customs duties was increased by the introduction of a multiplier factor to compensate for polarisation – something that was missing in the previous agreements. The percentage was reached by a formula involving:

$$\frac{A + B + C}{D + E + F + G} \times H \times 1.42$$

A comparison of the revenues received by each country before and after the 1969 customs union shows the agreement's effects:"

Year	Botswana in Rm	Lesotho in Rm	Swaziland in Rm
1965/66	1.5	1.4	1.8
1966/67	1.3	1.5	2.0
1967/68	1.7	1.9	2.2
1968/69	1.4	1.6	1.9
1969/70	5.1	4.9	7.5
1970/71	4.6	6.3	6.7
1971/72	8.2	5.9	8.5
1972/73	12.5	6.7	13.3

Source: For Botswana, see Hermans, Q. 1975, p. 113.

For Lesotho (up to 1969) see *The First Five Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 13 and from 1970 to 1973, see Winai Ström, 1978, p. 121.

For Swaziland, see *Statistical Abstracts*, 1971, p. 59.

The overall share of the poorest country in the region, Lesotho, was again reduced compared to the other two, despite the intention claimed in the new agreement's Preamble: to ensure in particular that these arrangements encourage the development of the less advanced members of the customs union."

B. Free Interchange of Goods

The second important feature, which had also been included in the previous agreement, was that of "free interchange of goods" between the member states (Articles 2 and 3). Although there was nothing new in this clause, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland presumably regarded its inclusion as an agreement between independent states, unlike the 1910 one, which had been concluded and signed by one man in his capacities as both High Commissioner for the three countries and Governor-General of the Union of South Africa. It was pointed out in the preceding section that the Republic frequently defied this article by imposing restrictions and quarantines. The three countries, therefore, felt that they would be free thenceforth to compete on an equal footing in the Republic's markets. As Landell-Mills wrote:

... free and unrestricted access to the rich South African market is of *critical importance to BLS** ... BLS may now concentrate on producing a specialised range of manufactures, primarily for export to South Africa, in areas where they have comparative advantage."

* italics by the author

The "comparative advantages" which Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland had over the Republic were in their labour costs: "Restrictive labour policies in South Africa aimed at 'job reservation' for whites increase labour costs".²¹

C. Consultation

The third feature of the customs union, "consultation", was unprecedented. It was to be channelled through a Customs Union Commission, meeting annually. No specific powers were assigned to the Commission, other than as a review body. The word "consultation" seemed to have been ambiguously used in the most sensitive areas of the trade. For example, Article 12 provided for consultation "for regulating the marketing of Agricultural products" while Article 18 dealt with "zoo-sanitary and phyto-sanitary" matters. Perhaps the ambiguity of "consultation" was better expressed in Article 14 (7) where, while the Republic retained "the right to determine the customs, excise, and sales duty tariffs", she was also, under the same article, required to "consult" Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

D. Freedom of Transit

The fourth feature of the agreement dealt with "freedom of transit". This article was not specified in the 1910 customs union. Its inclusion in the 1969 agreement must have been initiated by Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, because it does not essentially differ from the clause dealing with the "free interchange of goods". Two possible reasons might have compelled the three countries to press for its inclusion. The first was perhaps their awareness and past experience of being landlocked: the Republic had refused to be a party to the United Nations Convention on Land-locked Countries. The second reason was undoubtedly connected with the monopoly enjoyed by South African Railways on the transport of goods to and from the Republic. The article was not, nevertheless, left without loopholes. A clause was added to the effect that each country reserved the right to ban certain goods which were considered against "public morals, public health, or security".

E. Trade with Non-Members of the Union

The fifth article of the agreement dealt with trade with non-members of the union. Although this was also new, it was unavoidable: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland had formerly been connected in a customs union with the then Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1956, and Botswana's participation in that union continued after the break-up of the Federation. Botswana was, however, forced to ban certain imports from Rhodesia, such as beer and tobacco, as a gesture in support of the United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia. At the same time, the Republic concluded agreements with Rhodesia (1964) and with Malawi (1967). The former was a long-standing union dating back to the colonial days that had been re-adjusted on several occasions to suit local political changes." For Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, however, this article was seen as a possible means to divert their trade, should their access to the Republic's markets be again disrupted. Certain loopholes were, however, closed to prevent the granting of concessions to non-member countries which would result in fierce competition.

F. Protection of Infant Industries

Finally, the agreement provided for the protection of infant industries (Article 5) in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This, again, was a measure to prevent competition.

This clause was, in theory, specifically included to protect new industries

in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland against competition from long-established enterprises in the Republic. Although such industries were initially expected to supply local markets, further expansion, to supply the markets of the whole Southern African Region, was envisaged. In principle, the use of local raw materials was to be protected, but the clause dealing with trade with non-member countries implied that external raw materials could also be used if they were cheaper.

How these arrangements worked in practice will be discussed in the final section of this chapter. We will first analyse the economic structures of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, and their relation to the Republic.

5.3. The Economic Structures of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland and their dependence on South Africa

Trade between South Africa and the three countries in the early seventies was characterised by exports to South Africa being mostly raw materials, while imports were manufactured goods. Details of the three countries' trade are shown in Tables 1-4 on Pages 121 and 122. Differences existed between the three countries, however; Lesotho's main imports were food and consumer goods, whereas Botswana's and Swaziland's were consumer goods and machinery. Secondly, except for Swaziland, the countries had large trade deficits. Third, although a breakdown of origins of imports was not shown for Lesotho or Botswana, it seems that, like Swaziland, most of their imports came from South Africa.

Roughly 90 per cent of Swaziland's imports came from South Africa. Up to 1969, around two thirds of Botswana's imports were South African and a quarter Rhodesian. Subsequently, South Africa's share rose by a quarter.³³ Although no reliable figures are available for Lesotho, her geographical situation dictated that most of her trade was with South Africa.

Unlike Botswana and Swaziland, Lesotho had no trade links with Rhodesia or Mozambique. Nearly all Lesotho's trade was with South Africa.³⁴ Lesotho's largest export items, wool and mohair, had always been marketed through the Republic's Wool Board and Wool Commission.³⁵ Botswana and Swaziland's exports went further afield. Between 1970 and 1972, under 20 per cent of their exports went to South Africa.

To see why trade was dominated by the exchange of raw materials for manufactured goods, and how this maintained Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland as labour reserves, we will turn to the economic structure of each country and the way this structure was affected by the customs and monetary union.

Table 1. Imports of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland 1972

	Lesotho	Swaziland	Botswana
Total (R1.000)	42,972	53,309	85,987
Item (Approx. Percent of Total)	%	%	%
Manufactured Goods	48	31	34
Foodstuffs and Livestock	24	9	9
Machinery and Transport Equip.	11	26	39
Mineral Oils	6	8	4
Chemical Products	5	11	3
Beverages and Tobacco	4	4	4
Inedible Raw Materials	1	1	1
Commodities and Transaction	0	8	2

Source: Botswana, *Statistical Abstracts*, 1973.

Lesotho, *Statistical Abstracts*, 1973.

Swaziland, *Statistical Abstracts*, 1973.

Table 2. Exports of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland 1972

	Lesotho	Swaziland	Botswana			
Total (R1.000	6,093	65,485	44,810			
Item (approx. percent of Total)		%	%		%	
	Wool	33	Sugar	29	Minerals	44
	Miscellaneous	21	Woodpulp	17	Meat	42
	Mohair	18	Iron Ore	14	Miscellaneous	13
	Livestock	15	Citrus Fruits	11	Hides	2
	Beans	8	Asbestos	7		
	Diamonds	3	Wood	5		
			Meat	3		
			Canned Fruits	3		

Source: Same as table 1.

Table 3. Exports in relation to Imports 1972

	Lesotho	Botswana	Swaziland
Imports	100	100	100
Exports	14,2	52,1	123

Source: Same as table 1.

Table 4. Destination and Origin of Swaziland's Trade – 1972

Origin of Imports:	
South Africa	94%
Other Countries	6%
Destinations of Exports:	
South Africa	15%
United Kingdom	34%
Other Countries	55%
Not Specified	6%

Source: Statistical Abstracts, 1973.

Botswana

Until late in 1969, the economy of Botswana depended entirely on cattle-farming; in the 1970/71 Statistical Abstracts, the population of cattle was estimated at about 2 million. In 1969, cattle and cattle products constituted about 78 per cent of the country's total domestic exports, providing about 62 per cent of the total Government revenue. However, the majority of the population – about 54 per cent – owned less than ten head of cattle,²⁶ while only 4 per cent owned about 30 per cent of the country's cattle. Moreover, 20 per cent of all cattle were owned by European farmers in the concession areas. In 1967/68, it was estimated that 21 per cent of the population had no cattle at all.²⁷

In 1954, the only abattoir in the country – the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) – was established. Before then, all cattle had been marketed, live, in South Africa. The factory was the only enterprise in the country, and held the largest number of employees, about 1,500 in 1974.²⁸ Located in the southern part of the country, at Lobatse, a short distance from the South Africa's border, it was operated by the Colonial Development Corporation – a British private enterprise – which later changed its name to the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC). In 1955, the CDC obtained a monopoly to market all the country's cattle for ten years and also held all the controlling shares in the BMC. Six years later, half of the shares were split between the Government and farmers (25 per cent each). The latter were mainly European farmers in the concession areas who had organised themselves into a Livestock Producers Union.

The existence of the abattoir and the cattle potential of the country created intrigues over shareholding and control. The Government's action

in acquiring the 25 per cent shares from the Corporation was, perhaps, a token to protect the interests of the Africans. In practice, the dividends from the shares were used by the treasury to pay the salaries and expenses of British officials. In 1966, ownership of the BMC was broadened. Another private company, the Export and Canning Company (ECCO) was established as a subsidiary of the BMC, with responsibilities for "overseas marketing". The BMC's shares in the new company were 60 per cent, while the remaining 40 per cent were retained by the owner, Mr. Hurvitz, who had large commercial interests in the Republic.

Since July 1966, the BMC had been a statutory corporation, apparently controlled by the small group of the BaTswana, who owned large stock of cattle, and the European farmers. In 1970, it was estimated that the latter provided about 30 per cent of the total cattle slaughtered at the abattoir. The participation of the small-scale BaTswana farmers through the cooperatives was estimated to be only 9 per cent in 1972.²⁹ There have been demands from the workers at the abattoir for a localisation programme.

Botswana's second largest industry was mining, whose share in the domestic exports was about 44 per cent in 1972. The two principal mines were for diamonds, at Orapa, and for copper and nickel, at Selebi-Pikwe. The former started production in July 1971, and its diamond pipe was said to be the second largest in the world outside the Soviet Union. The latter started production in 1973.³⁰ The mining industry did not, however, alleviate the unemployment problem as much as was hoped: in 1972, only four hundred were employed at Orapa, although production was estimated at R20 million. Selebi-Pikwe had fewer than a thousand employees.

The diamond mine was controlled by the De Beers Prospecting Company, which held the majority of the shares. The company, however, offered 15 per cent of its shares to the Government of Botswana and, in the Development Plan of 1973, the Government stated a policy of participation with the private sector. Apart from the Government-appointedees on the policy-making body of the Board, it envisaged the acquisition of "shares in the range of 15 per cent to 25 per cent, free of charge, with option to purchase additional shares".³¹

Marketing of diamonds was done through a De Beers subsidiary, the Selling Organisation (CSO), in London, after being valued by the Diamond Development Company – also in London.

The construction of the Selebi-Pikwe mining project involved both the Government and the owner of the mine – the Bamangwato Concession (RST). The former was to undertake the development of the project's infrastructure, at an estimated cost of R57 million. Individual countries and organisations which assisted the Government through loans included

Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, IBRD, IDA and UNDP. The Company raised some of its funds from the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of South Africa, the United States and its parent company, the RST. The first phase of the project to be financed by the company cost R120 million, of which the Federal Republic of Germany provided nearly half. The German backing involved a commitment by the producers to sell all copper and nickel to Germany for a period of fifteen years. By-products, such as sulphur, were to be sold to South Africa's Triomf Fertilizer Company.

The mineral industry's failure to provide employment disappointed many people. The Government had already expressed apprehension about the operations of such capital-intensive industries, before mining started. It had predicted that the operation would create a maximum of three thousand jobs by 1975.³² The project at Selebi-Pikwe, however, immediately created a squatter township of some twenty thousand jobless people.³³ The same problem was only avoided at Orapa mine because the Government, in its concern over diamond smuggling, declared the area a security zone. Furthermore, the mine itself was located in a sparsely populated area where access to water and arable land was scarce.

Various companies were also prospecting under concessions from the Government. Brine was being prospected near Francistown by Makgadi-kgadi, a member of the RST group, manganese by the Cyril Hurtvitz Exploration Company, asbestos at Mashaneng by the Johannesburg firm of Consolidated Investment and coal at Morupulule by the Anglo-American Corporation.

Besides the meat and mineral industries, other economic activities in the country contributed little to total domestic exports. The names of these other companies, their products, location and the number of employees in 1970 is given in Appendix I.

There were also various undertakings in the European-held concession areas. The most important of these were Ghanzi, Lobatse, Tati and Tuli. Except for Ghanzi, which bordered with Namibia on the west, the rest were the main economic links and outlets to South Africa along Botswana's eastern frontier. Ghanzi and Tuli were mainly farming areas concentrating on cattle and crop farming. The exact extent of their output was not known, since most of the products, such as oranges, potatoes, onions and flower bulbs, were directly marketed in the Republic. Most of the cattle from Ghanzi block were marketed in the Republic – and so were also excluded from domestic exports. Minerals were also known to exist in the Tati area. But, as these areas were outside the control of the Government of Botswana, a Mineral Rights Tax was imposed by the Government, in an effort to force the owners to develop the area.

The mineral rights in a relatively small part of Botswana are privately owned. They have been in private hands for more than sixty years. . . . During most of that period, little exploration or development took place.³⁴

The underdevelopment of the potentially rich Tati area was dictated by political rather than economic reasons. The area was located in a strategic position adjacent to the borders of South Africa and Rhodesia. The concession owners were loyal to these white interests, rather than to Botswana. There were unconfirmed reports that the area contained large deposits of uranium and that South Africa had conspired with the concession owners never to disclose these resources to the Botswana Government when the latter achieved independence after the failure of the Republic to incorporate the country.³⁵ The area had been of considerable concern to the Government since independence. It became subject to land speculation and the landless BaTswana who inhabited it were subjected to high rents imposed by the Tati Company. The Government's concern over the area was expressed in the 1970/75 Development Plan:

This concession was granted under special legislation in 1911 and residual rights are held by Tati Company Limited. The Company failed over the years to develop the concession adequately, but instead devoted its energies to collecting rents from squatters and to land speculation.³⁶

Apart from the imposition of taxes in 1972, no further revenue for Botswana was derived from this area.

Lesotho

Lesotho's exports – mostly confined to agricultural products – were on a much smaller scale than Botswana's or Swaziland's. In the early 70's, Lesotho's exports were equivalent to about 11 per cent of Botswana's and 7 per cent of Swaziland's.

The largest single contribution was livestock. In 1970, the country had about 400,000 head of cattle, 2 million sheep and 900,000 angora goats. The value of livestock and animal products, including wool, mohair, hides and skins, was R2 million in 1971. This constituted about 66 per cent of the exports of domestic origin. Details of ownership are not clear, but, from scattered information, it has been estimated that about 70 per cent of the population owned livestock.³⁷ In the draft copy of the Second Development Plan, however, it was stated that only about "half of all rural households keep stock and the national herd."³⁸ According to the same source, about 95 per cent of the total population lived in rural areas. When these facts are combined with the fact that only 21,000 persons, or 5 per cent of the adult

population, were engaged, or partly engaged, in agriculture, with a net income of R150 per annum in 1970, it would certainly appear that the majority of the population had no livestock at all. Income from the export of crops and other food items provided only 25 per cent of exports in 1970. Twice this value of food was imported in the same year.

Unlike Botswana, Lesotho has no abattoir and, consequently, the figure given as "engaged in agricultural activities" referred only to the few large owners of livestock and a number of those who were on subsistence living. The export and marketing of livestock in South Africa was mostly done through European traders and "trade firms with strong ties in the Republic of South Africa". In 1973, the government established the Livestock Marketing Corporation, a parastatal organisation to handle all marketing of Lesotho's livestock in the Republic.

This was intended to counter exploitation of livestock owners by the Europeans. These traders negotiated directly with private traders in the Republic, to avoid the standardised prices laid down by the South African Livestock Board. Cattle sold to European traders fetched an average of R45, compared with the norm of R75 on the open market. The livestock producers' position was worsened by Lesotho's dependence on a single market for its products, the Republic. Lesotho differed from Botswana in this respect.

Neither the Livestock Marketing Corporation nor the growth of new livestock producers' associations succeeded in diverting trade from the hands of traders.³⁹

The causes of this failure were many: the first was the maintenance of the *Mafisa* system, discussed in Chapter 3. Second was the system of credits and loans provided by local European traders to individuals; this was discussed in Chapter 4 in connection with the recruitment of migrant labour. The shortfall of peasants' crops in the years of drought invariably led to this type of indebtedness.⁴⁰ Thirdly, most of the cattle was informally bartered, with only a "modest cash payment".⁴¹ Furthermore, owners were prevented from selling their livestock directly in the Republic by border regulations.⁴²

The government made no attempt to intervene in the export of other animal products – wool, mohair, hides and skins – despite their major contribution to export trade (roughly 43 per cent). Private trade associations were on the increase during the period, but even so most trade was left in the hands of European speculators. In 1970–71, trade associations accounted for only 3 per cent of Lesotho's sheep. Little use was made of the woolsheds provided by the government since 1950.⁴³

As with the handling of livestock and animal products, the export of wheat, pulses and other crops was largely controlled by Europeans and

"outstations of . . . large South African trading companies." These crops made a significant but irregular contribution to domestic exports: 11 per cent in 1971, but almost a quarter in 1970.

Besides agriculture, the only other significant contributors to Lesotho's export trade were diamonds, mining and light industry. Diamonds contributed about 8 per cent of total exports in 1971 and 15 per cent in 1970. Their somewhat erratic exploitation was carried out by "informal sector" employment, engaging a large number of the landless and unemployed – mostly former migrant labourers.

Before independence, the legend of large deposits of diamonds pre-occupied many Basotho, and with the country's land tenure system, which effectively prevented European settlements, diamonds were a source of national pride for the Basotho. A number of foreign prospectors, among them, Stockley in 1947, Colonel Scott in 1955 and 1959, De Beers in 1959, RTZ in 1963 and Lonrho in 1963, investigated deposits. All of them reported that there were no economically feasible diamond deposits in the country.⁴

Before the establishment, in 1967, of the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC) – a parastatal organisation responsible for stimulating the establishment of industries – a number of individual BaSotho obtained licences from the Government to dig diamonds. By 1969, there were as many as 4,000 diggers in the country. When the LNDC acquired mineral rights from the Government, the BaSotho diggers operated under contract with the LNDC. In 1969, the diggers together produced 29,787 carats of diamonds, valued at R1,173,502, contributing about 24 per cent of the total exports.

Although the official production of diamonds fluctuated between 4,333 and 29,787 carats from 1964 to 1969, such figures give a false impression: there were no marketing facilities in the country and diamonds were far more subject to speculation than livestock or crops. The presence of diamond mines in the nearby Orange Free State in the Republic made it easier for Lesotho's products to find their way to Kimberley. Smuggling rackets, involving prominent chiefs and Government officials, developed in Lesotho. The illegal traffic operated in both directions; stones were smuggled from the Republic into Lesotho by operators who feared arrest in the Republic.⁵ Many of the local European traders made fortunes from these transactions.

Finally, the development of Lesotho's light industry deserves mention, not only because of the Government's anxiety to promote industrialisation but also because of its contribution in absorbing a fraction of the large landless and unemployed population. Most industrial enterprises were established following the passing of the *Pioneer Industry Act*, which enabled the

Government to set aside land for this purpose. The lease on this land was awarded to the LNDC, which undertook to erect buildings, advise potential industrialists and, in most cases, participate in shareholding.

Besides the gambling facilities and hotels, provided for the Republic's tourists, factories have been set up for clothing, lamps, diamond polishing, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, candles, rugs and tapestry, tyre re-treading and grain milling – all of them producing on a small scale for either tourists or local consumption. Their contribution to domestic exports was marginal. Nearly all of them were situated around the capital, Maseru. Their total number of employees was no more than 2,000 of whom 45 per cent were in manufacturing, 23 per cent in hotels and 12 per cent in handcrafts.⁴⁷

Swaziland

Any analysis of Swaziland's economy must consider the activities on European-owned "freehold" land and the "Swazi Nation" land as separate entities. Politically, socially and economically, the two are fundamentally different.

Potential arable land in the freehold area was 17.8 acres *per capita*, compared with 2.8 acres in the Swazi Nation land. Yet around 80 per cent of the country's labour force were engaged in freehold areas, mostly as migrant labourers. Each sector operated independently of the other, except for the transfer of labour from the Swazi Nation land to the European sector.⁴⁸

"... 76 per cent of the country's Europeans living in the core areas have very little economic contact with the 78 per cent of the country's indigenous Africans who live in the peripheral areas. The core exists almost as enclaves 'attached by a sort of umbilical cord to the dominant economies' which lie outside Swaziland. The periphery, by contrast, is isolated from the major centres of vigorous economic activities."⁴⁹

Although, like Botswana and Lesotho, Swaziland's main exports are agriculture and minerals, her economy is much more diverse.

According to the post-independence Development Plan, export commodities, in order of value, were iron-ore, sugar, wool products, asbestos, meat products and citrus. The contribution of these was 89 per cent in 1971.

There were three major mines in the country, but, like all capital-intensive activities, mining in Swaziland did not provide substantial employment: from 1966 to 1972, employment in mining and quarrying increased from 4 per cent to 6 per cent of the total labour force.

The largest mine – the Ngwenya iron-ore mine – started production in

1964. In 1967, the mine employed about 370 non-Europeans.* The value of its output varied between R10 million and R12 million between 1967 and 1971, representing an average of about 22.2 per cent of domestic exports. Situated in the European-owned zone of the western region, the mine was operated by the Iron Ore Development Company, controlled by the Anglo-American Corporation in the Republic. The other shareholders in the company included the British firm Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds and the CDC. In 1969, the company offered the Swazi Nation an equity stake of 20 per cent. As will be seen, shares were offered by companies to Swaziland in two ways. Those offered to the Government were, in principle, for the use of the central government, while those offered to the Swazi Nation were for use by the tribal organisation of the Swazi National Council, which was independent of the Government. The majority of the shares offered by the companies to the King were through this latter channel; the King received them as trustee "for the Swazi people". It was not clear whether the Central Government received any part of this from the tribal treasury; however, the tribal council was responsible for running certain social services, including schools.

The establishment of the Ngwenya iron-ore mine necessitated the only railway line in the country, for the transport of ore to the port of Lourenco Marques (now Maputo) in Mozambique. The railway was financed by a British and South African consortium. Those involved included the Anglo-American Corporation, the South African Mutual Life Assurance Society, the CDC and the Rand Selection Corporation. It was built by South African firms – Roberts Construction, Murray & Stewart, and Rand Earth Works Construction.⁹ Most of the ore produced by the mine was exported to Japan under a ten year contract with the Anglo-American Corporation from 1964 to 1974. It was later renewed to 1979.

Swaziland's second largest mine was the Havelock Asbestos mine, which in 1967 employed about 1,500 Swazis. In 1971, the number was almost the same. The mine was opened in 1939 and, for many years, it provided the largest share of domestic export: it reached 57 per cent in 1958, but dropped to 11 per cent in 1971. It was located in the north-west European zone, close to the Transvaal border, and, while it was ultimately owned and controlled by the British firm of Turner and Newall, local operations were in the hands of the New Amianthus(pty)Ltd. Until 1971, Swaziland's share-holdings in the

* The term "non-European" is used because the number included non-Swazis. In Swaziland, as in the Republic, a distinction is made between Swazis (Africans) and Euro-Africans (people of mixed race). A small number of this latter category was included in the figure above.

company were not made public, but the register of companies showed that there were two South Africans on the Board of Directors. However, in 1972 the Swazi Nation negotiated a 40 per cent equity share participation in the company.

The asbestos was transported through an aerial ropeway of fifteen miles to the nearest railroad at Barberton in the Republic. Most of the asbestos produced was exported to the United Kingdom. The rest was exported to various countries. In 1971, for example, out of a total output worth about R6 million, 56 per cent went to the UK, 25 per cent to the Republic, 7 per cent to Eire and the remaining 12 per cent was shared between three countries in Africa, five in Europe, and the United States and India.

The third mine, for coal – initially intended to supply the railway – opened in 1964. The mine was operated by the Anglo-American Corporation through their subsidiary company – Swaziland Colliers Ltd. Because of the demands of the railway, little coal remained for export to Kenya, Mozambique and Italy, although deposits were said to be large enough to warrant expansion and production for export.

A few other minerals were produced in small quantities. These were Kaolin, Barytes, pyrophyllite and quarry stone. The kaolin was produced for local building companies, while the others were exported to the Republic. Their total value was insignificant, nationally, and they were all owned and operated by South African firms.

Swaziland's next major enterprise was its sugar industry, which employed about 2,000 Swazis. Its production was controlled by a complicated network of British and South African firms. The two largest estates accounting for half of the total sugar production, were located in the north-east and south-east – both close to the Republic's border. The first was operated by a subsidiary of a South African firm Sir J.L. Hulett and Sons, called Ubombo Ranches, the Swaziland Sugar Company; the second one was operated by the CDC. In addition to these two companies, 25 individuals – mostly South Africans – owned sugar plantations. These accounted for about 46 per cent. The only large scale participation by Swazis was at Vuvulane, where some 168 Swazis had plantations on freehold or leasehold tenure sponsored by the CDC. Their output was 3 per cent of Swaziland's sugar production in 1971.⁹⁰ The rest – about 1 per cent – was produced at Sihoya in the Swazi area.

There were two sugar mills in the country, located in each of the two largest sugar estates, and operated by their owners. About 90 per cent of the sugar produced was exported, while the rest was refined to white sugar, mostly for local consumption and supply to two local firms – a sweet factory owned by the South African firm of Turnwrights Chocolates and Sweets Ltd. and a fruit cannery owned by the CDC.

When South Africa left the Commonwealth, conflict developed between Swaziland and South Africa, and also between Swaziland and the remaining Commonwealth countries, over quota allocations. Until then, it had not mattered that Swaziland's sugar was indistinguishable from South Africa's, as the UK had bought a quota of sugar from South Africa. When South Africa left the Commonwealth, the UK continued to buy sugar from her, "in return for South Africa continuing to count all Swaziland production as her own."¹ The position was complicated by the fact that the CDC was British controlled, and its investment was now around R45.5 million," but eventually Swaziland was granted the Commonwealth quota with "preferential rights to sell 95,200 tons" per year to the UK. Smaller quotas were also extended to her by the USA, Canada, Malaysia and Zambia.

Although Swaziland was forbidden under this agreement to trade sugar with the Republic, she continued to sell the by-product of sugar – molasses – to the South African firm, Pure Nace Molasses (Durban) (Pty) Ltd., while the official statistical abstracts recorded the molasses as sold "overseas".² Swaziland's embarrassment was also reflected in the blank columns in its statistical abstracts where the quantities of some exports were not recorded, but instead was written: "volume not published by agreement with exporters". These remarks appeared in most of the products where dubious "British" and South African capital was involved.³ Swaziland's only gain from the sugar industry, apart from the taxes paid to the central government, was in the CDC's technical assistance to the Swazi farmers at Vuvulane and the employment.

The third most important economic activity in Swaziland was forestry. The extent of this industry was reflected in its total employment, which in 1971 was 6,213 – or 15 per cent of the total wage-earning labour force. It occupied about 5 per cent of the country's total land area, and about 90 per cent of this was in the European-owned area. In 1971, its share of domestic exports was 24 per cent.

Forestry was started in the country by a private South African company, Swaziland Timbers, around 1942. This company was followed in 1947 by another, Peak Timbers, a subsidiary of the Anglo-American Corporation. In 1948, the CDC also stepped in by buying 500 acres of land. Apart from these three, four small companies operated throughout the country in the European areas. The large plantations have been developed near other major European-owned enterprises: thus, most of them were around Havelock, Piggs's Peak, Malkern and Mbabane. The larger ones were planted around Mankaiana, from where they were taken to the nearby South African mills at Lothair, for processing.

The CDC established a wood pulp mill with Courtaulds Ltd. in 1959, to

produce unbleached sulphate pulp. Production started in 1962, and by 1971 unbleached wood pulp accounted for 64 per cent of the wood exports – most of it being exported overseas and to many African countries. The Republic only bought about 6 per cent of the wood pulp – but she was the largest single buyer of unprocessed timber – altogether 92 per cent of the total produced.

This remarkable demand for timber by the Republic was observed in 1972 by the South African Government in a document entitled “South Africa Needs More Forest”. This demand provoked indiscriminate planting of trees in Swaziland for quick profits, which encroached on arable land.” During the same year, the Swazi Government introduced *The Control of Tree Planting Act*, which classified the country into three areas, “agricultural”, “intermediate” and “marginal”, to control the loss of arable land by afforestation. Under this law, permits were required to plant trees in the “intermediate” areas, while in “marginal” areas, there were no restrictions. Permits would only be granted in the “agricultural” areas for “exceptional reasons consonant with efficient land management and rational use of land in relation to the surrounding area”. The new law, however, only affected Swazi areas, and so was of little effect, as over 80 per cent of afforestation took place in the European-owned areas, where plans were going ahead unhindered : Paradoxically, the Second National Development Plan stated in connection with forestry:

Consideration will be given by the Government to ways of increasing both public and private participation in the development of the sector Government is at present also reviewing proposals to purchase land for afforestation.”

Wood products, like sugar, were also politically sensitive items on some markets because of their dubious integration with South African capital. The Swazi Nation was given 50,000 7 1/2 per cent cumulative shares in exchange for two pieces of land acquired by the CDC. These shares yielded about R7,500 annually.”

The fourth main economic activity in Swaziland, livestock, was perhaps the oldest. Although its rôle declined appreciably with the introduction of the other economic activities in the European-owned areas, it still contributed to exports. Livestock ownership was dominated by Swazis, not Europeans. In 1971, for example, Swazis owned 468,150 cattle out of a cattle population of 571,587 – about 82 per cent. The percentages for goats, sheep and horses were 98 per cent, 85 per cent and 82 per cent.” This does not mean that all Swazis owned cattle: the system of *Mafisa* was more common in Swaziland than in Botswana or Lesotho, because of Swaziland's greater urban development, both in European industrial settlements and the tribal capital at Lobamba, which attracted many traditional leaders.

Consequently, although livestock were kept in rural areas, local residents often did not even know the owners. A typical response was:

"I don't know – probably some people in Mbabane, Manzini or Lobamba"

Even the Veterinary Department was unable to track ownership of cattle in rural areas – a problem which sometimes led to a crisis between officials in the Agriculture and Veterinary Departments.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, unofficial estimates indicated that at least half of all livestock in the country belonged to the chiefs and their families.⁶¹

Before 1965, when the only abattoir in the country was established, Swaziland's livestock were even more exposed to market forces than Lesotho's. Swaziland had a much larger resident population of European farmers and entrepreneurs, willing to sell livestock in the Republic. Furthermore, the Republic had obtained winter grazing rights in the country, bringing an average of 150,000 sheep, a few goats and horses into Swaziland every year.⁶² Many of them returned to the Republic with Swazi stock.⁶³

The establishment of the abattoir at Matsapa by the Swaziland Meat Corporation partly solved the marketing problem. (The abattoir was jointly owned by the Imperial Cold Storage and Supply Company and the Anglo-American Corporation.) However, many cattle were still sold live to the Republic, about 2 per cent in 1971. Total livestock sales during the same year were R2.2 million, about 4 per cent of the value of total domestic exports. The Republic's share of these exports included all live cattle, all sheep and 83 per cent of the goats. Most other cattle products were exported to the United Kingdom and small quantities to Zambia.⁶⁴ The Swazi Nation had no shares in the Swaziland Meat Corporation, but Swazis were given one or two seats on the Board of Directors, as a gesture.

Perhaps the most controversial Swazi product, as far as integration with the Republic was concerned, was citrus. It was grown entirely in the European-owned zones and its export value in 1971 was R4,338,000, which was almost 9 per cent of all exports. It was grown by firms and individuals from the Republic. Like sugar, citrus production was also an innovation in the country, beginning in 1950. Although it had only accounted for 3 per cent of exports in 1966, it rose markedly over the next three years.

The only cannery in the country was established in 1953 at Malkerns by John Heath Cannery Ltd. Three years later, this firm was taken over by CDC. Controversies arose between the CDC and South African farmers, which nearly resulted in liquidation in 1968. During this period, the Republic had difficulties in selling its citrus products overseas. The Swazi producers, in the meantime, organised themselves into the Swaziland Citrus Board, affiliating

themselves with the South African Cooperative Citrus Exchange in 1969. This amalgamation paid off through the backing of the Swaziland cannery. It was later announced that the cannery had been taken over by the Government, when in actual fact the Anglo-American Corporation, the South African Preserving Company and the Metal Box Company of South Africa were the owners of the factory. In official circles, these companies were said to have been appointed by the Swazi Government as "advisers" to the factory. Consequently, products of the Swazi cannery were indistinguishable from South African products, which some countries, notably in Scandinavia and the Middle East, found unacceptable.⁶⁵ For example, in the 1971 Statistical Abstracts (for the export year of 1969), the country of destination was not specified, as in the case of some other exports. Instead, the word "overseas" replaced the individual countries. Late in 1972, after pressure from many importing countries, Swaziland products started bearing their own labels, although in reality most of the products were from the Republic.

In February 1972, some local Swazi farmers brought large quantities of pineapples to the cannery. The management of the cannery refused to accept them, on the grounds that they were too small to fit in the cannery machines. There was an immediate danger of the pineapples being thrown away, resulting in a tremendous loss to the farmers. When the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture were forced to intervene on behalf of the farmers, it turned out that the cannery management had wanted to pay lower prices and send the pineapples to a cannery in the Republic, which had run short of fruit. The processed cans were then to be returned to Swaziland, and so bear a Swazi label for export overseas. The argument was that "fruit that is not suitable for the export market and cannot be consumed in Swaziland itself is exported to South Africa where most of it is processed in factories".⁶⁶

In addition to the above industries, there were also a number of smaller enterprises – the most important of which were a cotton factory, a sweet factory and a brewery.

Cotton was first planted in the country in 1906, in rather small quantities, in the Pigg's Peak area. During that time, the demand for cotton was very small as the Republic had not yet developed her textile industry. During the sixties, however, the demand for cotton increased, and by 1963, cotton in Swaziland constituted about 20 per cent of all agricultural produce. Most of the cotton was grown on European-owned farms, and the estimated share of the Swazi production was only 15 per cent of the total. This was an underestimate because of the marketing system, through which most of the Swazi producers sold their products to the European farmers for "bulking up".⁶⁷

In 1965, the only cotton mill in the country was established at Matsapa by the Cotona Cotton Ginning Company – a subsidiary of a South African firm. The mill operated at only a half of its production capacity, as most of the cotton grown in the country was instead processed in South Africa, at Barberton and Pongola. The cotton handled at Matsapa was valued at about R2 million, which was about 3 per cent of the total export in 1971. All the cotton was exported in the form of seed cotton, cotton lint and raw wool to the Republic. There was no textile industry in Swaziland.

The sweet factory was opened in 1968, after the conclusion of an agreement between the Government of Swaziland and the South African firm of Turnwrights Chocolates and Sweets Ltd. The company was already connected with the Mhlume (Swaziland) Sugar Company, operated by the South African firm of Sir J.L. Hullet and Sons, which supplied refined white sugar to the sweet factory. But the milk for the factory was supplied from local sources. The Republic and Zambia were the only importers of sweets from Swaziland – 96 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. The share of sweets in export value was only 0.9 per cent.

The brewery factory was established in 1967 at Matsapa by the German firm Heinrichs, which was later taken over by the Lonrho group. The company had intended to use locally – produced maize for the manufacture of Swazi beer, but when it expanded to produce bottled beer the factory often imported South African maize, as well as malt and yeast, which were not available locally. The factory employed only sixteen workers, and its contribution to exports was only 0.4 per cent in 1971. When the factory opened, the King of Swaziland, was presented with a 25 per cent shareholding “as a trustee of the Swazi Nation”.

Thus, the economic enterprises of the less-developed members of the customs union were directly owned or controlled by the Republic, or served her interests.

In *Botswana*, all mining industries were controlled by the Republic's companies, Agriculture by a mixture of some local traditional chiefs and European settlers – the latter with economic interests in the Republic. Nearly all the manufacturing industries were controlled by Europeans who had economic ties with Rhodesia or South Africa.

In *Lesotho*, agriculture, including livestock, although locally owned by some few traditional chiefs, was controlled by the Republic, because products were marketed by European traders, who had economic interests with the Republic. The same applied to the diamond industry, before and even after the establishment of the LNDC, as we will see in Chapter 7.

In *Swaziland*, more than ninety per cent of the entire economy was controlled and owned by local or foreign Europeans, mainly through British

and South African capital. The only assets the local Swazis had, like their counterparts in Botswana and Lesotho, was labour and limited land.

We will now turn to the financial institutions that supported the economic structure discussed in the foregoing section.

5.4. Financial Institutions; BLS's and S.A.'s Policies and the Customs Union

Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were connected in a monetary union with the Republic, without any formal agreement.⁶⁸ The commercial banks, the Standard Bank and Barclays Bank, operated in the three countries as well. These banks, although British-owned, operated in the three countries as branches with headquarters in the Republic, and were thus governed by the Republic's commercial regulations, particularly her loan and credit regulations. None of the three countries was represented in the South African Reserve Bank.

This monetary integration led to three main economic disadvantages for Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. First, as they were not represented in the South African Reserve Bank, they were unable to influence monetary policies that were likely to affect their economies: devaluation or revaluation of the Rand could affect their exports and imports of commodities. Monetary policies like devaluation or revaluation of the Rand were designed to benefit the Republic, but could also harm her partners' economies. The Republic never consulted her partners when she decided to change any currency regulations. When the Republic devalued the Rand in 1971, the authorities in the other three countries only heard about it through the radio and newspapers.⁶⁹ In the same year, the Republic had balance of payments problems, because of a drop in the price of gold and an increase in oil prices. Consequently, South African banks tightened up credit over the whole monetary union. This slowed down all development programmes in the three countries which depended on bank loans.

Second, although the Rand currency circulated in the three countries, they received no income from the foreign exchange reserve accruing to the Republic. Where the same arrangements existed elsewhere, for example in the West African monetary unions, profits were distributed among the member countries "on the basis of the known currency" in circulation.⁷⁰ When Botswana used Cape currency, around the 1890's, she received about 1 per cent of the notes in circulation in Botswana until 1911. Similarly,

Rhodesia received about twenty-seven thousand pounds from the Republic, for South African currency circulating in Rhodesia.⁷¹ The amount of the total notes and coins in circulation in the three countries was not accurately known, but the 1966 estimates for Botswana were put at R2.5 million, while in 1972 the estimate was R12 million.

Third, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were unable to control the outflow of capital from their countries generated by the economic activities described in the preceding section.⁷² Table 5 shows the relationship between deposits and advances from the two commercial banks operating in the three countries:

Table 5. Deposits and Advances of the Commercial Banks 1969–1972

	1969	1970	1971	1972	
Lesotho	20.5	26.5	37.3	37.6	Advances as a percentage of deposits
Botswana	50.6	50.3	82.1	58.1	
Swaziland	129.3	93.2	94.9	74.8	

Sources: Lesotho – Second Five Year Plan (draft),

Vol. 1, P. 62.

Botswana – National Development Plan, 1973–78.

Part 1, P. 26.

Swaziland – Annual Statistical Bulletin, 1971,

P. 57.

The poorest of the three, Lesotho, had an average of only 30 per cent. Advances in Botswana and Swaziland declined after the devaluation of the Rand in December 1971. Thus, capital funds left the country into the Republic. The high percentages for Botswana and Swaziland reflect advances to the European-owned enterprises. Advances for local Swazis and BaTswana were minimal, since they could offer no security in the form of land; only European areas were freehold.

In addition to the above commercial banks, several insurance companies from the Republic operated in the three countries. Until 1969, these companies were not allowed by the Republic to invest any of the capital derived from their operations in the countries. The Republic also restricted the movement of funds from South Africa. Any amount in excess of R100,000 required a special government permit.⁷³

Evidently, these measures functioned to prevent the establishment of any viable industries in these countries which could provide employment for larger numbers of the population. In response to these restrictions, the three

countries set up their own Development Banks – the National Development Bank in Botswana was established in 1965, the Lesotho Bank in 1972 and the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank in 1965. Their main purpose was to “provide finance for agriculture, housing and small business”. However, being in the same currency union whose foreign exchange rates were operated and determined outside, the creation of the development banks did not solve the overall problem. Their policies followed those of the foreign commercial banks. Commenting on the activities of the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture in Swaziland wrote:

Activities of the Bank will be required to improve in order to induce more and more farmers to use their credit available. Policies now used by the Bank in regards to farmers will need drastic change lest it be called the Bank for the title deed farmers whose homes are based in neighbouring countries.”

About 90 per cent of the loans provided by the Swaziland bank went to European-owned farms – thus subsidising raw materials for South Africa. In Lesotho, “. . . much of the finance for the foreign-owned hotel” was provided from the savings of the Basotho in the Post Office Savings Bank.” Similarly, the Lesotho Second Year Plan (draft) comments that although the aim of the Bank was “to provide credit facilities to local farmers and businesses” it only succeeded in promoting the “accumulation of Savings” and failed in its main objective.”

We have already noted that the Republic’s policy in the customs union was to import only raw materials from these countries. Such raw materials were mostly those which were not likely to compete with the Republic’s own. Swaziland was able to respond to this opening, but Lesotho, the poorest of the three, could not – in spite of the declared policy of the customs union “to ensure in particular that these arrangements encourage the development of the less advanced members”.

The international finance houses tended to offer credit to European owned capital-intensive enterprises in the three countries, rather than to locally owned labour-intensive activities. Thus, their investment provided little local employment, and left the countries as dependent as ever on employment in the Republic. Most credit was offered in Swaziland, where European industry was best established: the CDC invested R42 million in Swaziland, compared with R1.3 million in Botswana and nothing in Lesotho. British “aid” followed the same pattern: from 1945–1967, Swaziland received R36.05 million, whereas Botswana and Lesotho combined received R10.83 million.”

From 1967 onwards, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland became

recipients of foreign aid. This, in principle, gave them greater freedom in planning their own development. This new connection with overseas countries also encouraged them to re-negotiate the customs union to obtain outside markets. The Republic had already interpreted such aid as attempts by the international community to "create little Hong Kongs" on the Republic's doorstep.⁷⁸

As the economies of the three countries continued to stagnate, while the flow of migrant labour into the Republic continued to rise, the policies of the three governments were now directed towards the creation of larger industries to compete effectively with those of the Republic, since the Republic's markets, they assumed, were now open to them. New institutions were created to operate alongside the Development Banks. The Botswana Development Corporation was established in 1970 "to promote the economic development. . . . through creation of viable business ventures in partnership with private Capital. . . ." It was also "to provide financial assistance to prospective investors, both local and expatriate. . . ." Almost the same purpose was declared for the Lesotho National Development Corporation, established in 1967, and the National Industrial Development Corporation of Swaziland, established in 1971. The desperate position of the economies of the three countries can be seen in the advertising of the new institutions. The Lesotho National Development Corporation wrote:

Lesotho's free access to the EEC and the markets of South African Customs Union, other African markets, as well as labour reserve, lower wages than neighbouring areas and six years tax holiday are advantages not yet fully known abroad. To this has to be added the sound finances of the Government, no tribal conflicts. . . ."

Using the same tactic, the Botswana appeal states:

Although the market for consumer goods in Botswana is very small, Botswana's membership of the Southern African Customs Union gives manufacturers in Botswana completely duty-free access to the whole of Southern African Union market. At the same time, goods manufactured in Botswana have access to the African Countries north of the Zambesi. Most of these markets prohibit imports of goods manufactured in South Africa. Hence, the possibility of export elsewhere offers great potential investment."

The National Industrial Development Corporation of Swaziland offered these attractions to investors:

Strikes, absenteeism and other work stoppages that plague industry in many countries are virtually non-existent in Swaziland. An ample labour force is available. Minimum salaries apply only to the hotel industry and a few others. There is little unionised labour. . . . wages are modest by South African and European standards."

Botswana's emphasis on having access to African markets which "prohibit imports of goods manufactured in South Africa" is reminiscent of the manoeuvres of Swaziland's fruit industry. Both sought to take advantage of

bans on South African goods outside the Customs Union area. Overseas companies operating in Swaziland were particularly successful in this respect. South African companies, on the other hand, tended to exploit markets inside the Customs Union.

Despite Lesotho's and Botswana's claims to have free access to the whole Southern African area, in practice South Africa found ways of restricting their sales of manufactured goods. When Swaziland attempted to establish a fertilizer plant, which a feasibility study estimated would supply the whole Southern African union, the Republic persuaded Swaziland to abandon the project. The Republic simply announced that it would not buy fertilizer from Swaziland, although it was cheaper. According to initial plans, Swaziland was to use Iranian ammonia and phosphoric acid which cost R40 and R85 per ton respectively, while the Republic sold these at R60 and R108 per ton. This would have meant that, with the lower labour costs in Swaziland, the fertilisers would have been much cheaper than those offered on the Republic's market. Both the South African producers of ammonia and phosphoric acid exerted pressure on their Government to stop the Swazi project. In Lesotho, two projects were abandoned in the same way. The first was a Japanese project to assemble Honda cars and the second was the Malimabatso water and electricity project. In both cases, the Republic simply told Lesotho that she was not prepared to buy her products. Lesotho had no other market for them, and was thus forced to drop its plans. In Botswana a soap factory was forced to close, because the Republic, using the "free exchange" clause in the customs union, simply dumped mass produced soap at low prices on Botswana's markets.

These tactics were also applied elsewhere. Rhodesia was stopped from marketing her radios, textiles and footwear in the Republic, despite a trade agreement between them." Similarly, the Republic's trade agreement with Malawi allowed the Republic to export both agricultural and manufactured goods to Malawi on preferential terms – but Malawi was only allowed to export agricultural products to the Republic."

Some of the restrictions were supported by certain factions within and outside Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In these countries, nearly all the hotels catering to the Republic's tourists bought their food requirements from the Republic, despite the fact that most of these were available locally. On the other hand, farmers from these countries, particularly the local African farmers, who attempted to cross the border and sell their products like eggs, chickens, vegetables and fruit, were turned away by the Republic's Customs and Health Officials under the "health" clause in the customs agreement. Nearly 90 per cent of the local farmers could not sell their products because of this."

Another effective method used by the Republic to hinder her neighbours' manufacturing potential was the establishment of border industries. Initially, these projects were intended to decentralise industry from the crowded 'core' zones of the Republic, and so limit the flow of Africans into the urban areas. Industries were set up close to the Tswana, Sotho and Zulu "homelands" – which border on Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Instead of selling their products to the Transvaal, where a tension had already developed between manufacturers of the borders and those of the core areas, they dumped the goods in the three countries.

The conflict between 'core' and border manufacturers was over competition. The latter were able to produce more cheaply for two reasons: firstly, African wages were lower in rural areas than towns, and secondly, the government had exempted the border industries from the job reservation regulations. These regulations stipulated that skilled jobs should be reserved for Europeans, who were much more highly paid than African workers. The new border industries were allowed to employ Africans in skilled jobs. As well as upsetting business in the Republic's core zones, the border industries upset trade in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, and made their own products less competitive.

Conclusion

The Southern African Customs Union has been from the outset a device for extracting raw materials and cheap labour from the less developed member states for the use of manufacturing industries in the Republic. Although, in principle, the agreement offered advantages to the less developed members of the union, certain mechanisms operated in a way that made the less developed members vulnerable and defenceless. For example, important projects such as a soap factory in Botswana, a car assembly plant in Lesotho and a fertilizer plant in Swaziland were virtually stopped by pressure from the Republic. This vulnerability of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland was largely due to the structure of their economies, which were controlled and owned by foreign interests connected with the Republic.

From the point of view of the control of the means of production of the economies of *Botswana* and *Swaziland*, it is obvious, from the analysis of this chapter, that the economies were dominated by foreign and settler bourgeoisies. The former owned and controlled mining and large-scale agricultural plantations, while the latter owned smaller-scale enterprises in agriculture, trade and industry. Companies such as Anglo-American, DeBeers, Roan Selection Trust and Bamangwato Concessions represented

the first group in Botswana, while the Tati Concessions represented the second group. The CDC, Anglo-American, Courtaulds, Turner and Newal, to mention but a few, represented the first group in Swaziland, while the small farmers producing citrus, sugar, cotton and tobacco represented the second group.

Below these groups in the two countries were a middle class and petty-bourgeoisie comprising local Botswana and Swazis (mainly chiefs) as well as European settlers (mainly small concession owners and traders). In Botswana, most of the owners of the companies listed in Appendix I represented the European settler group, while retail traders and small-scale farmers represented it in Swaziland.

In *Lesotho*, where the land tenure system prevented European settlement, the economy was dominated by a foreign bourgeoisie represented by the Frasers Company, which was joined by the Holiday Inn group and the Anglo-American after independence.

Below this group, as in Botswana and Swaziland, was a middle-class represented by local chiefs, missionaries and traders.

The economic activities of these groups responded to the Republic's needs in two main ways. The first one was the promotion of capital-intensive enterprises as against labour-intensive ones – particularly in the mining industry – which did little to absorb the local surplus of labour. Secondly, the credit restrictions made by the financial institutions prevented the establishment of any locally owned industry. In particular, the financial institutions functioned in such a way that local savings generated in these countries were exported to the Republic, as shown in Table 5.

Consequently, land restrictions, the action of foreign companies, financial institutions and the customs union agreement interacted in maintaining the three countries as labour reserves for the Republic's economy.

In the next chapter, we will turn to the *political interaction* of the different strata as enumerated above with the colonial government and the Republic of South Africa during the process of decolonisation.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. *Africa South*, February 1968, p. 4.

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4. A good analysis of this discussion is contained in Hyam, R., *The Failure of South African Expansion: 1908–1948*, London, 1972.

5. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 131.

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7. Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs II*, pp. 139-140.
8. Hermans, 1974, p. 98.
9. Robertson, H.M. and Kooy, M., 'The South African Board of Trade and Industries: The South Africa Customs Tariff and the Development of South African Industries', *South African Journal of Economics*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1966.
10. Hyam, 1972, p. 134.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136.
12. *High Commission Notice 63 of 1956*, Cape Town, 1956.
13. Botswana: *Transitional Plan for Economic and Social Development*, Gaborone, 1966.
14. Lesotho: *First Five Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 1.
15. Swaziland: *Post Independence Development Plan*, 1969.
16. Author's interview with a Botswana government official, September, 1971.
17. *Financial Mail* (Johannesburg), January 24, 1969.
18. Winai-Ström gives the impression that the low levels of Lesotho's share were due to inflation and the devaluation of the Rand after 1973 and that the government of Lesotho, in effect, had negotiated for a better share. This view is not, however, shared by the author of this study. The annual shares of the customs union are based on each country's levels of imports which in practice depends on each country's economic activities. From this table, it will also be noticed that Lesotho's share fluctuated even before 1973 when the factors of inflation and devaluation were absent. A typical example of these fluctuations as a consequence of each country's economic activities is, perhaps, offered by Botswana. When mining development started, Botswana was able to import machineries and her share of the customs union rose in 1973/74 from R20.9 million to R30.4 million in 1974/75. But when the imports of machinery decreased after the mining plants were fully established, her share of the customs union also dropped to R24.6 million in 1975/76.
19. Muzorewa, B.C. *The Customs Union Between Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland*, Roma, Lesotho, 1971 (mimeo).
20. Landell-Mills, 1971, p. 269.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Trade Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of Southern Rhodesia*, Salisbury, 1964; *Trade Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of Malawi*, Pretoria 1976.
23. Smit, 1970, p. 113.
24. Lesotho: *First Five-Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 15.
25. Leistner, 1966, p. 34.
26. Botswana: *Statistical Abstracts*, 1970.
27. Berlesen, V., 'Search for a Meat Market: And Social Unrest', *African Development*, February, 1976.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Botswana: *National Development Plan*, 1973-1978, p. 204.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
32. Botswana: *National Development Plan*, 1970-1975, p. 2.
33. Berlesen, 1976.
34. Botswana: *National Development Plan*, 1973-1978, p. 211.
35. Author's interview, 1971.
36. Botswana: *National Development Plan*, 1970-1975, p. 17.
37. Lesotho: *First Five-Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 10.
38. Lesotho: *Second Five-Year Development Plan* (draft), 1975, p. 111.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
40. Authors' interview, 1972.
41. Lesotho: *First Five-Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 98.

42. Kowet, 1973, p. 253.
43. Lesotho: *First Five-Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 97.
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46. *Ibid.*, p. 162.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
48. Fair, T.J.D., Murdoch, G. and Jones, H.M., *Development in Swaziland*, Johannesburg, 1969, p. 64.
49. Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 129.
50. Swaziland: *Second National Development Plan*, 1973, p. 79.
51. Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 154.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
53. Swaziland: *Statistical Abstracts*, 1973, p. 40, see also Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 180.
54. A typical example is the cannery factory, Swaziland Canneries, which in official circles is said to be wholly owned by the Swaziland Government when, in actual fact, it is owned by the Anglo-American, South African Preserving Company and The Metal Box of South Africa.
55. It takes about 15 years for most of the trees, particularly the pulp wood to mature in Swaziland as against 40 to 50 years in most of the European countries. See Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 116.
56. Swaziland: *Second National Development Plan*, 1973, p. 98.
57. Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 182.
58. Swaziland: *Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture*, Mbabane, 1971, appendix III.
59. Author's interview in six selected villages in Swaziland, cf. February, 1972.
60. Author's interview with the Department of Veterinary officials, February, 1972.
61. Author's interview.
62. Swaziland: *Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 1971, appendix XIII.
63. Author's interview with Swazi farmers, February 1972.
64. Swaziland: *Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 1971, see "exports".
65. Swaziland: *Second National Development Plan*, 1973, p. 81.
66. Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 158.
67. Swaziland: *Second National Development Plan*, 1973, p. 87.
68. Robson, P., *Economic Integration in Africa*, London, 1968, p. 256.
69. Author's interview with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Mbabane, Swaziland, February, 1972.
70. Robson, 1968, p. 263.
71. Muzorewa, B.C. 'Botswana's Share of Revenue from the Use of the Rand Currency: A Note', *Botswana Notes & Records*, 1975, p. 225.
72. Robson, 1968, pp. 262-263.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
74. Swaziland: *Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 1971, p. 1.
75. Selwyn, P., *Industries in the Southern African Periphery*, London, 1975, p. 134.
76. Lesotho: *Second Five-Year Development Plan*, (draft) 1975, p. 39.
77. Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 115.
78. Landell-Mills, 1971, p. 269.
79. Botswana: *National Development Plan*, 1973-1978, p. 247.
80. *African Development*, February, 1976, p. 157.
81. Botswana: Ministry of Commerce and Industry: *Investment Opportunities in Botswana*, Gaborone, p. 1.
82. Winter, p. 8.
83. Kowet, 1973, p. 252.
84. *African Institute Bulletin* (South Africa), June 1967, pp. 134-135.
85. Author's interviews with small and medium-scale farmers in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, 1971-1972.

Appendix I.

Industries in Botswana, 1970

LOCATION	NAME	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Gaborone	<i>Botswana Manufacturers</i> (Domestic and office furniture)	26
	<i>Botswana Steel Furniture (Pty) Ltd.</i> (Steel household and office furniture)	16
	<i>Cliff Engineering</i> (Metal products, wagons and farm implements)	8
	<i>Botswana Breweries (Pty) Ltd.</i> (Traditional beer)	31
	<i>International Arts and Leather</i> (Tanned game skins, goat skins and leather products.)	12
	<i>Botswana Paint Manufacturers Ltd.</i> (Wide range of Household paints)	—
	<i>Botswana Liquor Manufacturers (Pty) Ltd</i> (Brandy, gin, vodka and oozo)	12
Lobatse	<i>Abattoir, Botswana Meat Commission</i> (Cattle, sheep and goat carcasses, canned meat bone meal, carcass meal, blood meal, tallow, horns hooves, hides, hide trimming, skins, and offals)	927
	<i>Lobatse Mills (Pty) Ltd.</i> (Maize milling)	67
	<i>Acro Engineering</i> (Metal products)	26
	<i>Botswana Cap & Helmet Manufacturers (Pty) Ltd.</i> (Hats and Chevrons)	12
	<i>Progress Clothing</i> (closed down-made textile goods)	
Francistown	<i>Botswana Garmets (Pty) Ltd.</i> (Wearing apparel)	20
	<i>Botswana Game Industries (Pty) Ltd.</i> (Game skins and curios)	120
	<i>Chibuku Breweries</i> (Traditional beer)	12

	<i>Radiators Botswana (Pty.) Ltd.</i>	
	(Radiator cores)	3
	<i>Botswana Bonemeal Factory (Pty.) Ltd.</i>	
	(Bonemeal)	—
	<i>Pan African Hat Industries</i>	
	(Hats)	12
Palapye	<i>R.A. Bailey (Pty.) Ltd.</i>	
	(Wearing apparel and made up textile goods)	20
Maun	<i>Botswana Tanning and Taxidermy</i>	
	(Tanned Game skins)	9

Source: Smit, P., *Botswana: Resources and Development*, pp. 238–240.

Chapter 6. The Politics of Decolonisation

The economic subordination of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to the Republic of South Africa discussed in the preceding chapter also shaped the political groupings which emerged during the transition to independence. These formations were centred on two major ruling groups, those controlling land and those in control of the modern European sector of the economy. The former was mainly composed of the chiefs while the latter included those we classified in the preceding chapter as the bourgeoisie, middle-class, and petty-bourgeoisie – mainly foreign and settler Europeans, (including missionaries).

During most of the colonial period, the chiefs in all the three countries exercised political power that was virtually unchallenged, as we outlined in Chapter 3. The economic basis of this power was gradually appropriated by European settlers and mining companies. Nevertheless, the chiefs' control of land distribution gave them control over their subjects. It was this control that provided the basis of their alliance with the Europeans. The latter controlled the production and distribution of both food and manufactured goods. They were responsible for trading links with the outside world. The relationship between the two groups was described by Kuper in these words:

By possessing a constant supply of foodstuffs, the trader occupies a key position in the economic system. In the conservative milieu, goods circulate along routes defined by political and kinship obligations, with the chief as the centre of production and distribution. . . he has fertile garden land worked by his subjects, and he provides food on public occasions. Formerly his economic privileges were unsurpassed: today they are usurped by the trader. Money can buy food from the shop when the chief himself is impoverished.¹

We have seen how chiefs supported the supply of labour to European enterprises through land restrictions, taxation, fines, political oppression, etc.. The European interest in the chiefs was largely due to their ability to control the population politically:

Between trader and aristocrat there is often a more friendly relationship than between any other natives and Europeans. . . The interest in the chief is really directed to their followers, the masses, the labour force for the mines and farms, the purchasers of most of the goods.²

The chiefs were expected to control the political attitudes of their people and provide labour for European employment, thereby preventing the disruption of the colonial economy. On the international level, this interaction between the chiefs and Europeans required external political and economic support to maintain the internal stability of the countries as labour reserves.

Modern political parties in these countries were formed at a time when chiefs and local Europeans composed a solid conservative alliance. Consequently, their emergence hindered genuine decolonisation. The new conservative forces found allies in both the South African and colonial authorities.

In this chapter, *Section 1* deals with the development of political parties; *Section 2* looks at their structures. In *Section 3*, we discuss the electoral systems; *Section 4* deals with domestic and foreign policies of the parties, their local support and the campaign issue. *Section 5* discusses the external reactions to the internal politics of the three countries. Finally, *Section 6* deals with the elections leading to independence and the structure of the new regimes.

6.1. The Development of Modern Political Parties

In chapter 4, we pointed out that, as a result of the recommendations of the *Pim Reports*, the colonial government only implemented the institutional reforms in 1950 which resulted in the widening of the *councils*. There were five possible reasons why the colonial government undertook to implement the institutional reforms:

1. To block the emergence of national anti-colonial political forces wanting to change radically the position of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in the South African dominated economy.
2. To appease international pressures for decolonisation.
3. To satisfy South African desires to secure its own influence by strengthening the position of the local white South African communities.
4. To prop up and broaden the constitutional basis of the chiefs – being the principal allies of the present regime.
5. To appease local European communities fearing decolonisation.

The councils differed from one country to another, according to the extent of land control exercised by the different racial groups. However, they all carried out similar consultative roles.

Before the implementation of the reforms in *Botswana*, where a significant number of Europeans owned land, there were two councils in that country – one composed of all the Paramount Chiefs or their representatives and the other composed of European farmers and traders. Representation in the former was automatic, while the Europeans were the elected representatives of different economic interest groups. The Resident Commissioner acted as chairman in both the European Advisory Council (EAC) and the African Advisory Council (AAC). In addition to these, there were also “official” members drawn from the colonial service, who acted as “shadow ministers” in the departments.

In *Lesotho*, however, where Europeans were not supposed to own land, there was only one council, representing all the principal chiefs, and, of course, the Resident Commissioner and other "official members". These were indirectly representing the interests of the European traders and missionaries.

In Swaziland, there was a large European population. The control over land was unevenly divided between the chiefs and the Europeans. The ratio between the Africans and Europeans was 58:1. Two councils were created, along the lines of Botswana's. Swaziland's EAC was much more powerful than Botswana's, because European business was so much better established and had strong links with South Africa and the United Kingdom.

The limited functions of the advisory council were perhaps easier to carry out in Lesotho. Their debates concerned the rivalry of different chiefs on questions of land, labour, their own positions and the relationship between their country and the Republic; in short, the preservation of the *status-quo*. But in Botswana and Swaziland, councils ranged beyond purely internal problems and cut across the limits of the racial groups. It was common, for example, for the EAC to discuss matters affecting the African population as well as foreign matters. Thus, in Swaziland, for example, the EAC discussed the political role of the University in Lesotho, seeing *education* as a threat to the preservation of the labour reserve economy and to political stability:

I want to ask if the Government is satisfied with the political atmosphere of that institution . . . it is essential the atmosphere of any College to which our future Swazi teachers are sent for training should be sound. To send young men who will have the moulding of the Swazi youth when they come back in many cases to a place where they get undesirable ideas instilled into them and live in undesirable atmospheres – it seems to me to be a bit dangerous.'

Topics ranged from the control of "undesirable" African immigrants from the Republic to the encouragement of stronger ties with Whites in South Africa and Rhodesia. Indeed, the EAC's in both Botswana and Swaziland went as far as to propose amalgamation.⁴ This accorded with the economic interest of their members. In Swaziland, for example, Mr. Carl Todd, their spokesman, was not only the largest land-owner with a chain of businesses in the country, but was also a partner in a South African law firm and a director of more than thirty companies in the Republic, including the influential South African Explosives and Chemical Industries, Anglo-American Group, Imperial Chemicals, American-South African Investment Company, the Netherlands Bank of South Africa and the National Industrial Credit Corporation.⁵ In Botswana, traders such as Van Gass, Steinberg and Haskins had similar interests in South Africa and Rhodesia, while in Lesotho the Frasers group and the Roman Catholic Church had South African involvements.

Before the establishment of the legislative assemblies, Botswana's colonial government decided to amalgamate the EAC and the AAC into a Joint Advisory Council (JAC) in 1950. The system and composition of representatives was the same as before. The creation of the JAC strengthened the alliance between the two groups and provided a convenient forum for opposing *immediate* independence, favouring the control of labour and trade unions, consolidating land control and enhancing Botswana's relationship with South Africa and Rhodesia. For example, Mr. Steinberg openly spoke of the need to strengthen the relationship with South Africa in a discussion about currency arrangements.⁶ Sir Seretse Khama, now President of the Republic of Botswana, then a senior member of the JAC, proposed Botswana's membership of the now defunct Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.⁷

In Swaziland, members of the EAC proposed a similar Joint Advisory Council. This was, however, rejected by the chiefs, not because they did not wish to cooperate with the Europeans but because they feared such a council would lead to a European style electoral system. The paramount chief regarded party politics and the system of "one man – one vote" as not only foreign to the Swazis but also dangerous to their interests.⁸

Carl Todd was not only connected with the Republic economically, but also politically, with the Afrikaner Nationalists. On a number of occasions, he was host to visiting South African ministers.⁹ In 1963, his right-hand man in the Council, Mr. R.P. Stephen, who became Minister of Finance after independence, proposed federation with the Republic.¹⁰

The idea of links with the Republic came to the fore on the eve of the creation of the legislative assemblies. There were several reasons for this. The first was that modern political parties began to appear on the scene. As they did, they immediately found support in the United Nations and the Organisation for African Unity, as these two international bodies had strong misgivings about the Republic's intentions.¹¹ Secondly, the African chiefs feared that integration with the Republic would mean losing their control of land and labour, as had happened to their counterparts in the Republic. Consequently, the government found itself in a rather embarrassing position, as international criticism mounted.

It was partly for these reasons that the idea of creating Legislative Assemblies was accepted by the colonial government in the 1960's. In *Botswana*, the system of election to the Assemblies was based on consolidation of the *status-quo*. The JAC, representing about 3,000 whites and 320,000 Africans, elected ten members from each racial group and a further two appointees for each group, to make 24 members. The system of election for the Whites was the same as in the previous EAC, but that of the Africans

was modified to ensure the election of the Chiefs. Each village council elected an area council, which became an electoral college for the districts. The districts in turn elected the members of the assembly. Since the village councils were virtually controlled by the chiefs themselves, the Paramount Chiefs were elected. The additional two members were also recommended by the chiefs. In addition to the 24 members, there were three seats reserved for the officials of the Colonial Administration, plus seven nominated. With the Resident Commissioner as Chairman, the overall composition of the assembly was twelve Africans and twenty-two Whites. The modern political parties were not represented, as only one of them had existed a month before the "election" took place.

Unlike Botswana, where the creation of the Legislative Assemblies preceded the formation of political parties, *Lesotho's* legislative assembly was a direct consequence of the agitation of the parties. The absence of a European Council there was made up for by another system which ensured the preservation of the *status quo*. The 1959 constitution provided for the creation of a legislative assembly of eighty members, composed of twenty-two Principal Chiefs, fourteen members nominated by the Paramount Chief and four *ex officio* members from the Colonial Administration. The other forty were to be contested by the political parties through indirect methods at district level.

In *Swaziland*, the proposals for a legislative assembly were not only vehemently opposed by the Paramount Chief because of the threat of party politics; they also provoked intense political activity among the educated Africans. The Paramount Chief maintained that the traditional system, which centred power in the Swazi National Council (SNC) was adequate, since it made all laws affecting the Swazis. Paradoxically, the EAC supported the traditional viewpoint on the maintainance of the SNC, but was less opposed to the creation of an assembly. In this vein, Todd insisted that "it is vital to preserve and defend Swazi institutions, rather than undermine them . . . we should preserve at all costs institutions of the Swazis which are our sheet-anchor. . ."¹ The SNC and the EAC were agreed on their main argument: the opposition of "one man – one vote" for the Swazis. Eventually, they settled on a system of representation by which each side was to return an equal number, elected according to its own system. This would have meant that the SNC would choose their members traditionally, while the EAC would be elected by adult suffrage.

The "50–50 basis" was severely criticised both within and outside the country as a "sell-out" to the Republic. The Colonial Government found itself in an embarrassing position, particularly as Botswana and Lesotho had gone through with a *limited* franchise. The Government, therefore, rejected the

proposals of an alliance of the SNC and EAC. But the rejection immediately brought angry reactions from both sides. Addressing the EAC, Stephen pointed out that the Swazi system of election was misrepresented by outside forces as undemocratic because it was “controlled by the chiefs. . .” In defending the system, he argued that it was more democratic “than the Westminster system”, that it was “understood by the Swazis” and that it “suited” them.¹⁴

Unfortunately for the Paramount Chief and his SNC, all the educated Swazis, including some of his relatives, students and the workers, strongly opposed the “50–50 basis”. Instead, they all joined the modern political parties. To these elements, the EAC pointed out that “those Swazis who do not agree with Ngwenyama’s theme . . . and who may desire some more advanced method of western democratic functioning . . . have a part to play amongst their own people where they have affinities and outlook that is common to the Swazi . . .”¹⁵

In the meantime, pressure from the modern political parties for independence continued. The Paramount Chief and his SNC sought advice through the offices of the EAC from the Republic. After testing the opinion of the majority of the illiterate rural Swazis, he was advised to form his own party to fight the modern political parties on a “one man – one vote” basis. To ensure the position of the Europeans and the Republic, in particular, all the Europeans and Euro-Africans from that country resident in Swaziland were allowed to vote, but not the Africans.

The new legislative assembly provided for twenty-four members. Of these, eight Swazis were to be elected through the “traditional” methods, eight Europeans were to be elected on two different electoral rolls – four on a reserved European roll and the other four on a “qualified” national roll. The rest of the eight seats were to be contested by all races on a national roll. The SNC supported the EAC to the extent that the results more or less reflected a one-party system composed of the two. Of the twenty-four members, there were six whites belonging to the conservative wing of the EAC, one white independent, one white sponsored by the SNC and sixteen Swazis belonging to the Paramount Chief’s party.

6.2. The Political Parties: Leadership and Programmes

The political parties in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were based on two influences, *land* and *labour*, which were, as we have pointed out, the common factors between the two major ruling groups.¹⁶ Ironically, it was also these two factors that linked the local ruling groups with the Republic, for, aware

of the land shortage in those countries and their dependence on employment abroad, the Republic sought to influence political developments in these countries by offering to return the “conquered” territories. The price for such an offer was to be the maintenance of the *status quo*:

If South Africa were to be, or to become, the guardian, protector or helper of these adjacent territories, instead of the United Kingdom . . . We would do what is customary in our country under the 1936 Act, i.e. *to re-purchase areas** now wrongly occupied, in order either to include them in the white areas or in the black, according to where they rightly belong . . . We would be prepared to apply our border-industry policy by establishing industries near to our boundaries with the states so that their people need not go far afield *for work*. * We would aim at making them democratic states in which the masses would not be dominated by small groups of authoritarians. Instead, coupled with representative democracy as in the *Transkei** – We would lead the whole population to democratic rule.”

* italics by the author

In this section, we will see how the structures of the political parties, their leaderships and their programmes reflected the dominance of land and labour. Unless otherwise stated, the factual basis of this section is derived from Halpern and Stevens.

Botswana

In Botswana, the first political party, the *Federal Party*, was formed in 1959 by Leetile Disang Ratidladi. Although Ratidladi was a member of the ruling Bamangwato royal family, he belonged to its dissident group, which opposed the Khomas.¹⁸ Seeking support both within the traditional hierarchy and from European elements, the party programme emphasised “the enhancement of the institution of Chieftainship” and “tribal autonomy” alongside “multi-racial unity”. In the interests of such “unity”, it opposed the principle of “Black Majority” rule and regarded immediate independence as “dangerous”. As the Federal Party’s programme upheld the combined interests of chiefs and Europeans, Ratidladi was able to secure himself a seat in the Legislative Assembly with the support of some of the chiefs.¹⁹ The party, however, declined with the advent of new political forces in the late sixties; its fall was hastened by a powerful faction of the traditional ruling hierarchy. Ratidladi tried to join these new forces, but was rebutted, because of his former political activities. Furthermore, because of its highly conservative programme, the party failed to obtain support from Botswana’s educated “elite”.

Towards the end of December 1960, the first Pan-Africanist party, the *Bechuanaland People’s Party (BPP)* was formed, under the leadership of

Kgeleman Motsete. Unlike the Federal Party, the BPP demanded immediate independence and condemned the institution of chieftainship and the participation of chiefs in politics.²⁹ In an apparent reference to the white community, the BPP promised to abolish racial discrimination and to protect citizens' rights "against foreigners and immigrants". In another reference to the chiefs, the party condemned tribalism, which it considered to be "a narrow, exclusive, totalitarian outlook, communal chauvinism, stagnating conservatism, nepotism, patronage, belief in a mystical hereditary divine right of precedence. . ."

The leadership of the party was recruited from members of the rival South African nationalist parties – the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-African Congress (PAC). Although the founder and its first president had served on the Bamangwato Tribal Council as its first Secretary, none of the leaders, which included the Vice-President, Mr. Matante, and the Secretary, Mr. Mpho, had any connection with the chiefs. Both Matante and Mpho were commoners – the former from an allied tribe in the Bamangwato and the latter from a serf tribe in the BaTswana. These two had been politically active in South Africa – Matante had worked with the ANC and Mpho with the PAC.

Motsete has been described by a journalist, Jack Halpern as a "self-effecting intellectual and educator turned politician". His appointment on the Tribal Council was based on his merits, as he was said to be the "best-educated person of any race" in the country at the time.

The BPP established a number of branches within the country and a few in Johannesburg among the BaTswana workers. The party drew most of its supporters from among the educated and the small urban proletariat. The party was, however, unable to penetrate the rural areas where the vast majority of the population lived, because of its opposition to chieftainship. Permission by the chiefs to hold meetings in these areas was often refused: the chiefs referred to party workers as "corrupters of the youth" and "communists".³⁰ Those leaders who attempted to address meeting without formal permission from the chiefs were often heckled with questions like: "Whose son are you? Whose soil is this?" in a tone intended to remind them of their traditional status.³¹ The failure to attract the support of the vast majority of the rural population reflected also the party leaders' inferior traditional status. Matante came from the Bokalaka tribe – subjects of the Bamangwato, who had for many years been deprived of land by the Tati Concession's intrusion.³² In addition to this, European land-owners, industrialists and those who controlled the recruitment of labour for the Republic's mines openly campaigned against the party. Of particular significance were the landowners, whom the BPP called "foreigners and

immigrants” – for the Bokalaka tribe was situated in the Tati Concessions.

Internal splits in the BPP resulted in the overthrow of Motsete – who set up a splinter group” – and the emergence of Matante as the new leader of the original BPP, while Mpho formed his own party, the *Bechuanaland Independence Party* (BIP).

The Europeans’ reaction to the BPP programme was sharper than expected. Their demand for civil rights in opposition to foreigners and immigrants” was directly interpreted as a call for nationalisation of “white property”. Led by Louis Mynhart, the white farmers sent a delegation to the Republic with a plea for amalgamation, with the threat that they would otherwise declare their own independence. More dramatically, a similar delegation was sent to the United Nations. Another section of the white community, after failing to get immediate help from the Republic, sought the support of the white minority in Rhodesia.

Angered by the reaction of the European settlers, the nationalists then demanded nationalisation of all white-owned land in the country – including two extensive holdings owned by two South African Ministers. Although the BPP had concentrated its campaigns among migrant workers in South Africa, the threat of nationalisation to white property mobilised whites against the party. In areas such as Ghanzi, it was virtually impossible for the BPP to hold meetings. The nationalists thus found themselves restricted on two fronts; in the traditionalist rural strongholds and in the White farms and industrial areas.

Early in 1962, as the BPP was gaining strength among the unemployed and the educated, Seretse Khama, a member of the Executive in the Legislative Assembly, announced the formation of his own party, the *Bechuanaland Democratic Party* (BDP). Seretse, a former heir to the throne of the most powerful Bamangwato tribe – and himself the single largest land and cattle owner in the whole country – recruited ten of the twelve African members of the Legislative Assembly, all of them chiefs.” Thus, from the outset, the party had not only the support of the legal arm of the Colonial Administration, but also the patronage of the Paramount Chiefs throughout the country.

Like the Federal Party, the BDP did not demand immediate independence. Instead, it stated that its aims were “to attain one man one vote and an African majority in the Legislative Council by the next election”, “self-Government based on a proper Ministerial system by the following elections” and “an economically viable and fully independent state thereafter”. In a departure from the BPP, the BDP not only defended the “rights of White settlers, whatever their citizenship” but also appealed to them to stay and create a “multi-racial” society. This alone was enough to

mobilise the support of Europeans already in the Council, as well as the divided pro-Republicans and pro-Rhodesians. Although the party pledged itself to a "substitution of constitutional rule for the exercise of arbitrary powers by the chiefs", the chiefs did not interpret this as a measure to reduce their powers. On the contrary, they interpreted it to mean the consolidation of their powers through "constitutional" means, as opposed to Colonial patronage. It was in this belief that even the strongest advocates of the chieftainship, like Chief Bathoen II – a long-time friend of the Khamas – strongly supported the party.

The BDP was acceptable both to the Republic and the to colonial government. Seretse himself was even decorated with the colonial insignia of "The Order Of The British Empire", as was Bathoen II. He was also later decorated with the title of "K.B.E" (Knight Commander of the British Empire). Together with Bathoen, as members of the Legislative Assembly, they were sent to the United Kingdom for Ministerial "trainee" courses.

The attitude of the colonial government towards the BDP was influenced by its fear of the radical BPP. The Republic had already made it known that she could not tolerate the establishment of "communist-oriented" governments in Botswana, Lesotho or Swaziland. The BPP's programme was identified with communism. Furthermore, members of the former EAC who were now in the Legislative Assembly identified themselves with the BDP, and, like Seretse and Bathoen, two of their own members were sent to the United Kingdom for Ministerial "trainee" courses and received the same colonial decorations. In the crucial elections of 1965, as we shall see, it was because of the support of the white traders and farmers directly, and that of the Republic indirectly, through the members of the Legislative Assembly, that the BDP received official recognition from the Republic.

Perhaps the strongest boost yet given by the colonial government to the BDP was the introduction of a number of laws that would hinder the BPP's chances in the coming election. Although the Assembly was not a representative body, as it was created before the establishment of political parties, in 1964 it passed laws against "subversion", banning societies or parties considered to be "dangerous to peace", imposed imprisonment for "learning the use of arms" and restricted "assemblies". These laws were carbon copies of the South African legislation aimed at the ANC and PAC. In the case of Botswana, where the holding of any meeting required the permission of a chief, the BDP emerged as the only party which could expound its manifesto unhindered, since both the chiefs and the white settlers in the Legislative Assembly gave their blessing to the new laws.

Lesotho

Political parties in Lesotho appeared at a much earlier stage than in Botswana. Education contributed to this early emergence of parties; the literacy enjoyed by the BaSotho was regarded to be the highest in Africa.²⁶ Education in Lesotho was accompanied by mass poverty, unemployment, land shortage and the encirclement by a hostile, powerful and rich neighbour. The BaSothos were “fully mobilised with no place to go”.²⁷ An intense political awareness led to a diversity of rival political parties, each with its own strategies for Lesotho’s economy and her special relationship with the Republic.

The first political party, the Basutoland African Congress (BAC) was formed by Ntsu Mokhehle in 1952.²⁸ Mokhehle had no chieftainship connections and his father had risen in the civil service to the post of Inspector of Schools. The leadership of the party was drawn, mainly, from the educated petty-bourgeoisie, particularly teachers and civil servants, although some chiefs also supported the party. It was thus concentrated in the lowlands where most of the educated lived, including students, members of youth organisations and members of the co-operative movements.

The party, which changed its name to the *Basutoland Congress Party (BCP)* on the eve of the first election, initially concentrated on attacking the Colonial Government for not making the Basutoland Council more representative and giving it legislative powers. Ironically, the Chiefs, who were members of the Council, also supported the BCP’s demand.²⁹ The party’s policy towards the chiefs was reflected in its comment, made to the More Committee, that the “rights of the chiefs”, including their control of land, were an “inseparable” component of Basotho society. As the party gained strength, however, its support of the chiefs became less definite. Although the party was committed to “strive for the maintainance and enhancement of the position, status and dignity of the Paramount Chief as the sole ruler of Basutoland”,³⁰ many minor chiefs became alienated from the BCP and provided ammunition for the opponents of the party.

Like the BPP, the BCP demanded immediate independence, which it saw as essential “to negotiate on an equal footing” with South Africa. The party’s association with other Pan-African parties was seen as a threat by two major interest groups in Lesotho – the European traders and the Roman Catholic Church. They felt that the BCP’s aims threatened Lesotho’s internal stability and her relationship with South Africa. Missionaries and traders were further offended by the party’s description of them as “ticks” and “bloodsuckers”.

Mokhehle had built up his party along the lines of Nkrumah’s CPP. He had travelled extensively in Africa and also had connections with European

Socialist countries. These connections, and the fact that his BCP leadership base was predominantly Protestant, hardened opposition to the party. Although the traders were not significant enough to influence large numbers of people, the Catholic Church had a large following in the country through its extensive networks of schools, hospitals, printing works and farms. Also, Mokhehle's Pan-African and Socialist connections were interpreted by the Republic as "communist-inspired".³¹

The party was further damaged by splits and expulsions. The first of these splits resulted in the formation of the *Marema-Tlou* by Chief Samuel Matete in 1957. Matete's break with the BCP arose from a dispute about the role of the Paramount Chief. In the early sixties, he was one of the strongest advocates of Prince Bereng's claim to the throne, when it was occupied by the Regent.³² After failing to persuade the BCP leadership to take an active stand on the issue between the Prince and the Regent, Matete resigned. As his party's policy centred on this issue, he secured the support of the chiefs who had advocated the installation of the young prince. Once Bereng had been successfully installed as Paramount Chief, the party demanded that he should have an executive role in the future constitution instead of being a mere figure-head, as advocated by the BCP. As the issue of the royal succession only interested the hierarchy of chieftainship, the party was unable to secure large support from the common people and its strength was thus limited to the Paramount Chief's area.

In 1959 a third political force appeared in Lesotho to fill the gaps left by the BCP and Marema-Tlou, with the creation of the *Basutoland National Party* (BNP) by Chief Leabua Jonathan.³³ The leadership of the BNP was drawn from the anti-Bereng factions – mostly minor chiefs – and Leabua had the help of Chiefs Manyeli and George Bereng. While not advocating immediate independence, the party, like the Marema-Tlou, called for the unification of the chiefs and links with the Colonial Government. Ironically, the BNP supported the position of the Paramount Chief as executive head of state – the Marema-Tlou's proposal. The "Unification of chiefs" was undoubtedly aimed at enlisting the support of the Pro-Regent elements, which included Jonathan himself as an adviser to the Regent.³⁴ The proposed links with the Colonial Government were aimed at attracting the traders and missionaries, who were disenchanted with the BCP. But the BNP went further than this: equating "communism" with atheism, the party made it known that it was dependent "upon God" – thus appealing to the Roman Catholic Church, of which Jonathan, Manyeli and Bereng were all strong adherents.

In the meantime, the BCP's splits continued with the resignation of one of its strong pillars, Mr. Khaketla, who had provided the party with its only

mouthpiece through the *Mohlabani* newspaper. Khaketla, who was from a peasant family, formed his own party, the *Basutoland Freedom Party* (BFP) in 1961. The rivalry of the BFP did not damage the BCP as much as the defection of Khaketla himself, which reduced the BCP to an opposition party in the Executive Council.³⁵ His BFP programme was no less conservative than the Marema-Tlou and the BNP. It advocated “co-operation with the chiefs and the administration in leading Basutoland to responsible Government”. The party had no ready-made base, unlike the Marema-Tlou, BCP and BNP, in the struggle for the support of the chiefs. It could, therefore, only attract a few dissatisfied BCP drop-outs. The party, which was predominantly Protestant, tried to join the Catholic BNP, but failed. In 1963, however, it merged with Marema-Tlou and became *Marema-Tlou-Freedom Party* (MFP) with Chief Matete as the new leader, Khaketla as its deputy and Dr. Makotoko as its Secretary. In the merged MFP, the Marema-Tlou’s traditionalist policies became dominant. It also advocated immediate independence – a departure from the BFP line. The party did not survive the conflicts that arose from the differences in personality between Chief Matete and Dr. Makotoko. Himself a son of a senior chief, Dr. Makotoko wanted to radicalise the party programme. This resulted in a break with Matete, who reverted to his original party, and Dr. Makotoko emerged as the new leader of the MFP.

Between 1961 and 1962, two parties briefly appeared on the political scene. Although their support was small, their policies significantly affected the major parties and the Republic’s attitudes.

The first of these was the *Communist Party of Lesotho* (CPL), founded in 1961 under the leadership of John Motloheloa, a trade unionist. Although the rank and file of its membership was not fully known, the CPL was sympathetically received among workers and students. Significantly, the CPL was at that time said to be the second “legal” communist party in Africa.³⁶ Consequently, it had a big psychological impact on the Republic. It condemned the class structure of all Lesotho’s political parties because they “represented mainly Chiefs – or middle-class intellectuals”.³⁷ The CPL was the first party to attack the Republic directly as a “common enemy” and pledge itself to bettering the conditions of BaSotho workers in the Republic and the return of areas, to Lesotho, “wrongfully” occupied by the Republic.

The second of these parties, *The Basutoland Labour Party* (BLP) was almost the antithesis of the CPL. Founded in 1962 by Elliot Lethata, the BLP, while endorsing the policies of the conservative BNP, ruled out Lesotho’s survival without the Republic. By its very name, the party sought support from among workers who were dependent on migrant labour in the Republic. The party maintained that “the Republic and ourselves are fated to remain

good neighbours as we have always been".³⁸ The Republic allowed the leadership of the BLP to address meetings in the Republic among the BaSotho workers.

Swaziland

In Swaziland, the political parties established before the Paramount Chief himself entered the race offered similar programmes to those in Botswana and Lesotho – ranging from "traditionalism" to "Pan-Africanism". What distinguished them was their leadership base, which was entirely drawn from the traditional circle of the Paramount Chief. Yet some parties completely rejected their traditional connections, while others sought to cling to them. Thus, unlike the major parties in Lesotho, which generally made use of chieftainship in their attempt to establish a power base, Swaziland's parties looked to the urban and working classes for support, as well as the chiefs. This situation arose because of the land distribution between the Europeans and the Chiefs and the consequent economic structure which resulted in the alliance between them.

The first modern political party in Swaziland, the *Swaziland Progress Party* (SPP), had an unusual origin in traditional and colonial organisations. It dated from 1929, when the Resident Commissioner, with the Paramount Chief, agreed to the formation of the Swaziland Progressive Association. It was an association of the elite within the SNC and the colonial civil service. Although it was seen as a forum to deal with social problems of "common interest", it was directly affiliated with the SNC, in an effort to control its activities. Dominated by government appointees, the association became a tool for the government and SNC.

When it became apparent that the SNC and the EAC were looking for positions in the proposed Legislative Assembly, the association changed its name to the Swaziland Progressive Party in 1960 under the leadership of John Nquku. A South African by birth, Nquku had served with the government as a teacher and later as an inspector of schools. He also served on the traditional Swazi National Council as an adviser on educational matters.

The programme of the SPP drawn up by Nquku reflected the stand of the old association in its broad general demands for non-racialism, a franchise, opposition to incorporation in the Republic and the respect of human rights. The association had been tackling these issues for years, and it was partly out of frustration at their failure that many of its members, including Nquku and Zwane, resigned from government service.³⁹

In 1962, a rift in the party led to Nquku's dismissal by Dr. Zwane, who now led the *Ngwane National Liberatory Congress* (NNLC), taking with him Dumisa Dlamini as Secretary. The leadership of the NNLC was a curious combination. Dr. Zwane was a medical doctor with direct connections with the traditional hierarchy. His father was a Councillor to the Paramount Chief and he himself was one of the Paramount Chief's private doctors. Dumisa Dlamini was a nephew of the Paramount Chief. Among the leading figures in the party was also the Paramount Chief's eldest daughter, Princess Bethusila.

The NNLC's programme was different from its predecessor's, which had not demanded independence. Demanding independence by 1965, the party called for "equitable land distribution"; the establishment of communes in the unoccupied land under the crown ownership; the right to form unions; better wages; the abolition of unjust taxes, and a halt to forced reduction of cattle. The party promised an "honourable position" for the chiefs with the status of "constitutional" monarchy for the Paramount Chief. Externally, it pledged "solidarity" with Pan-Africanist forces, while internally it promised to build a "socialist" state and abolish tribalism and racialism. This programme directly threatened the established economic and political interests.

The first reaction to this threat was the formation, in 1962, of the *Swaziland Democratic Party* (SDP), by a mixture of African traditionalists and white liberals under the leadership of Simon Nxumalo. Behind the formation of the party was a Polish immigrant, Major Rozwadowski, who settled in South Africa after the Communist take-over in Poland. Conditions in South Africa did not suit him, so he decided to settle in Swaziland, where he made the acquaintance of members of the Swaziland Progressive Association. Seeing the NNLC as another communist party, Rozwadowski gave his support to Simon Nxumalo – a son of the brother of a wife of the Paramount Chief.⁴⁰ With Rozwadowski's liberal ideas, the party did not attract many whites within the country, but it did receive financial support from white liberals in the Republic.

The SDP's programme stressed "human dignity", the protection of private property and improvement of education and social welfare. While not demanding immediate independence, the party advocated a "limited" franchise and the achievement of a constitutional monarchy, under the British Government. It also rejected Pan-Africanism as incompatible with the achievement of multi-racialism.

The second reaction to the NNLC was an amalgamation of two parties, the *Mbandzeni National Party* (MNP), led by Clifford Nkosi, and the *Convention Movement* (CM), led by Dr. George Msibi, into the *Mbandzeni National Convention* (MNC). Clifford Nkosi, who was related to the royal family, also

had close contacts with a firm of lawyers in the Republic. The programme of the MNC was far more in line with traditional aspirations. The party pledged its support of the Paramount Chief and the creation of a single trade union under the leadership of the SNC." On Chieftainship, the party recognised the "rights" of the Chiefs and further pledged that "all laws shall be valid and legal when they bear the signature of the King, the Ngwenyama of Swaziland, an expression of the Counsel of the Council of Chiefs and the Authority of the Swazi people as vested in Parliament".⁴

On the European side, two similar political parties appeared. The *United Swaziland Association* (USA) appeared in 1963 as an extension of the EAC. It was almost exclusively for the *Afrikaans-speaking* community under the leadership of Willie Meyer and included such leading figures as Todd and Stephens – the manager of the giant complex, *Peak Timbers*. The programme of the party was identical with the political philosophy of the Republic's Nationalist Party of "separate development" or "Bantustan". While backing the Paramount Chief in his demands for control of minerals and land (in the Swazi area), the party stood for "co-operation between racial groups which are to be kept separate", and the "promotion and defence of the institutions of each group". This was to be compensated by the reservation of "white seats" in any government in the country.

The second "white" party, the *Swaziland Independent Front* (SIP), was formed in 1964 under the leadership of Corbett, van Heeder, Lockhart and Braun. The group, as a whole, represented the *English-speaking* community. Their programme rejected the separatist philosophy of the USA, although the party supported neither the "multi-racialism" of the SDP nor the Pan-Africanism of the NNLC.⁵

Finally, in April 1964, the Paramount Chief (the Ngwenyama, as he is popularly known – or the King) announced the formation of his own party, the *Imbokodvo* (the grinding stone) National Movement. The party was, strictly speaking, only an extension of the SNC, not a political party. The historical sequence leading to its formation distinguishes it from the other parties.

As many political parties appeared on the Swazi scene – a few of which really supported the institution of Chieftainship and the role of the SNC – the Paramount Chief was in constant touch with his South African lawyers through Todd. Neither the Ngwenyama nor his allies within the EAC were sure of the support they commanded among the electorate. To test this, a referendum was held, in which the electorate were asked to choose between the Colonial Government (representing the proposed constitution) and the Ngwenyama. The referendum, popularly christened the "Reindeer Referendum"⁶ because of the symbols used to identify each side (the

Colonial Government was represented by a reindeer, while the Ngwenyama was represented by a lion) was held on January 19, 1964. Most of the rural, illiterate Swazis identified the symbol of a lion with the power and personality of their Paramount Chief, and voted accordingly. On the basis of this "testing of opinion", the Paramount Chief was advised by his South African lawyer, van Wyk de Vries, to form his own party. The Paramount Chief was cautioned that if he acted otherwise, he would eventually lose his control of land.

The Imbokodvo's leadership was provided by the SNC which served as its decision-making body, unlike the other parties, whose leadership was vested in executive committees. The SNC was also responsible for appointments to any position. Thus, despite the fact that Dr. George Msibi later became the Secretary of the party, he was never appointed to any post in the first post-independence government because of his lack of connection with the SNC. Six of the eight Imbokodvo candidates were members of the SNC.

The Imbokodvo's policy reflected the aspiration of the SNC in general. The party pledged its support to the institution of chieftainship, adding that "in Africa, Kings are Leaders as well as Kings". Attacking the nationalist parties, the Imbokodvo pointed out that it was determined to oppose "the present official policy which is destructive of the Swazi Nation and the established authority and its institutions, laws and customs".⁷ Furthermore, the party advocated that it would never support trade unionism in Swaziland, but would co-operate "with other political movements, especially European organisations with similar policies".⁸ This was a clear reference to the EAC and the USA.

Thus, the political parties in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland can roughly be classified in three broad groups in their relationship with the colonial government and the Republic of South Africa: left-oriented, centre and right-oriented. In Botswana, the two largest parties, the BPP and the BDP were at the opposite of each other on the scale. The BDP advocated a slow pace of political evolution while its allies – the Europeans – were pro-South African and Rhodesia. The smallest party, the BIP was more radical than the BPP in its demands for independence. In Lesotho, BCP and BNP were at the opposite of each other respectively. The smaller parties clustered around this scale: the CPL was more radical than the BCP while the BLP was ultra-conservative in its relations with South Africa. In between these main parties, the BFP and MFP were leaning towards the colonial government than the South African government. In Swaziland, NNLC and the Imbokodvo movement were at the opposite of each other. The other smaller parties, the SPP, SDP and SIP were on the centre. The USA was, however, more extreme in its relationship with South Africa. It should be

pointed out that the Imbokodvo's anti-colonial strategy was not directed towards independence *per se* but, more important, it was an attempt to stop the NNLC and its allies from taking political control when the colonial government had agreed to start the process of decolonisation."

6.3. The Electoral System

The electoral system devised by the colonial government for the three countries had one major purpose: to broaden the constitutional basis of the chiefs and their principal allies.

Botswana's independence constitution provided for two Houses – the National Assembly and the House of Chiefs. The Assembly consisted of thirty-one elected members plus an additional four specially elected by the Assembly, while the House of Chiefs consisted of eight of the country's Paramount Chiefs, three sub-Chiefs and two "specially-elected" members. The "specially-elected" members in each House were to be recommended by the Assembly or the House. This means that the dominant party had the decisive advantage.

In Lesotho, there were also two Houses – the National Assembly and the Senate. The Assembly consisted of sixty members – all directly elected – while the Senate consisted of thirty-three members. Out of these, twenty-two were the Principal Chiefs, while the remaining eleven were nominated by the King.

Swaziland also had a National Assembly and a Senate. The former consisted of thirty members. Of these, twenty-four were directly elected, while the remaining six were nominated by the King. The latter consisted of twelve members, half of whom were nominated by the National Assembly and half by the King.

The electoral systems in the three countries differed considerably after the introduction of common franchise – which replaced indirect elections through the District Councils. In Botswana and Lesotho, the new system adopted was the "simple-majority" system, in which members were elected in single constituencies. In Swaziland, however, a complicated system of proportional representation was introduced, by which the whole country was divided into eight constituencies, each returning three members to the National Assembly.

The constitutional powers of "nomination" affected the overall strength of the parties in the Assemblies, the Senates and the House of Chiefs. This was more true of Swaziland, where the effect was felt both in the Assembly

and the Senate particularly, when the King himself was politically active. Furthermore, as the country was already demarcated between Swazi and non-Swazi areas, electoral gains in the urban areas were outweighed by those in the rural areas. In Lesotho, although the Paramount Chief was supposed to be politically neutral, his political affiliation was evident from the nomination of a large number of the so-called Independents, who in actual fact were his own supporters.⁵⁰

6.4. Party Support and Campaign Issues: The Interaction of Internal and External Forces

It is inadequate to analyse party and electoral systems alone to understand the political base of the regimes of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland;⁵¹ nor is it sufficient to analyse a party's programme to understand its support. We also have to analyse party support and campaign issues. Potholm, for example, concludes that the success of the Imbokodvo in Swaziland was due to the party's adaptation to what he calls "modernity" in party systems:

The transitional nature of the 1960's suggested to many observers that the forces of change would lead to a break-up of the Swazi traditional hierarchy. These miscalculations concerning the political efficacy of the new forces thrust the Ngwenyama into the maelstrom of modern politics . . . and ultimately caused the defeat of the very forces that seemed headed for triumph.⁵²

These conclusions could easily have been applied to Botswana, where the BDP appeared rather late on a political scene dominated by Pan-Africanist forces. Yet the adaptation of parties to "modernity" does not account for their success: the structures of the defeated parties in all the three countries were better organised than their opponents. The factors must, therefore, be found elsewhere. In the case of Botswana, we have tried to trace these factors from the Parliamentary debates.

Botswana

The election of 1965 in Botswana coincided with a national drought. The election was naturally dominated by this and the other pressing issue, unemployment. All the Paramount Chiefs sat in the Legislative Assembly, together with the members of the former EAC. The BDP had already enlisted the majority of the Chiefs and a number of the wealthy Europeans. In addition to these, most of the traders in the country supported the BDP.

According to opposition members of parliament, the BDP handed out foodstuffs and clothing, supplied by the traders, to the electorate –

particularly in the worst hit areas.³³ Europeans provided the BDP with trucks, land-rovers and even an aeroplane hired from the Republic.³⁴ The plane made an enormous psychological impact on the electorate – most of whom had never seen an aeroplane in their lives. Furthermore, labour-recruiting organisations and some chiefs required proof of membership in the BDP as a condition of employment. The Chiefs had a strong influence on the electorate. In certain areas, the chiefs were directly supported by the colonial District Commissioners. In the Bokalaka area, for example, where the BPP had its strongest base, the District Commissioner informed the electorate that “if you vote for the People’s Party, you are not going to plough”.³⁵ Although the constitution specifically required the chiefs to resign their posts, if they wished to participate actively in politics, the definition of “chiefs” appeared to refer only to the eight Paramount Chiefs. The BDP nominated its candidates from among the minor chiefs and those directly supported by the Paramount Chiefs. The minor chiefs, however, were as important as any other chiefs – for it was directly through them that land was distributed to their subjects. Even if a chief decided to resign his chieftainship, he remained psychologically a chief as far as his subjects were concerned. Although Seretse Khama was not legally a chief, he was regarded as such by a majority of his people³⁶ – as he himself admitted in parliament:³⁷

.. but I am traditionally a chief in the Bamangwato area, although in actual fact I am not.

A member of parliament for Molepolole pointed out that “I do not want to deny that certain people voted for the Democratic Party because its leader is a son of a Chief.”³⁸

Some of the chiefs regarded themselves as the natural inheritors of the colonial government which they had faithfully served. Chief Bathoen II was quoted as saying that:

I have worked for the colonial Government for thirty years, for thirty years I did good work and what about Matante an immature politician to take my office. . . .”

Their traditional rights were demonstrated during the constitutional talks. Matante’s statement in parliament on the “divine rights” of the chiefs, though comical, demonstrated the differences between the parties of the “common” people and those of “divine” hereditary leaders:

When His Excellency the President made his first speech in the conference in London that he had a mandate of taking Bechuanaland to Independence. . . I was sandwiched between two Chiefs as an ordinary subject. (Bathoen) stood up and said “History repeats itself: my grandfather Bathoen I and Seretse’s grandfather petitioned Queen Victoria for protection. We have come as Chiefs to request independence.” I said, “What?”³⁹

The commitment of the major chiefs to the BDP was not in return for any specific "promises" of the BDP leadership; the majority of them simply assumed that they would automatically be appointed to important posts in the BDP Government. Their first duty was, therefore, to block the BPP and other "commoners' " parties in their areas;⁶¹ as Chief Bathoen pointed out, "We do not listen to immature politicians".⁶² This was exceptionally effective for the BDP's bid to attract the electorate. The calling of meetings in the rural areas was usually a prerogative of the chief. Not only was he responsible for calling his people to such meetings, but he also chaired them. He was able to threaten individuals with regard to their access to land and their chances of employment. Thus, "Chief Mosojane actually received instructions from a District Commissioner in Francistown not to allow the People's Party to address political meetings in his reserve" — otherwise they would get no land.⁶³ Similarly, a sub-chief at Mathethe told recruits that if they did not vote for the BDP, "he would not give them jobs on the mines".⁶⁴

The drought had an indirect impact on the BDP. The World Famine and Relief Organisation provided food, clothes and medicines to help relieve the victims. Innocent as this donation was, it was effectively manipulated by the BDP. Instead of providing the relief free to the needy, the BDP, with the support of the Chiefs, introduced the *Impeleng* (food for work) programme. In a country faced with such high unemployment, the programme appeared to alleviate the problem. A government back-bencher who found out that "employment" through *Impeleng* was unfairly allocated in his constituency, raised a question in parliament, demanding a *fair distribution*: he asked "whether in implementing the relief measures, (the) Ministry would ensure that every constituency get an *equal quota of employment*".⁶⁵ Often "employment" was first given to supporters of the party. Opposition supporters who failed to get "employment" were in this way encouraged to desert their parties. A member of parliament of the BDP was impressed by the political influence exerted by *Impeleng*, when he dutifully reported in the Parliament:

In my Constituency, Molepolole North and East, there are two members who have joined me. I have *appointed** them as clerks for the *Famine Relief Project*. * Very soon we shall give the Hon. Leader of the Opposition a *job* to keep him quiet."⁶⁶

* italics by the author

Although chieftainship in Botswana was based on the autonomy of each of the eight principalities, BDP's support from individual chiefs was assured as long as it was clear that the BPP and others opposed the chiefs. The BPP's other policies did not arouse nearly as much hostility as its attitudes to the chieftainship. One BDP member of parliament, himself a chief, commented:

"If the BPP had won, all the Chiefs should have been sent to Lobatsi to be slaughtered."⁶⁷

In contrast to the BDP, the BPP and its allies continued to attack the system of land distribution and migrant labour. In the urban areas, the main attacks of the BPP were against the structure of the civil service, the lack of "Africanisation" and the elitist nature of the educational system. In the two main strongholds of the party, Francistown and Tati, the party concentrated on the Europeans' responsibility for the unequal distribution of land because of the concessions; the party committed itself to immediate nationalisation and the return of land to the "right" owners. At the same time, it condemned the Bamangwato Chiefs for having made the land deals through the concessions. The monopoly of trade was also attacked and the party promised that it would change the system of licensing so that the BaTswana would have an equal share in trade.

Lesotho

In Lesotho, the office of the Paramount Chief was the centre of rivalry between different factions among the chiefs – particularly the Principal Chiefs. The Paramount Chief himself was no supporter of the minor chiefs. In 1962, he attacked the institution of chieftainship in a direct reference to the minor chiefs in an address to the Legislative Assembly and called on them to "adapt themselves to the changing circumstances of the times".⁶⁸ On another occasion, he dismissed Senators who were minor chiefs for voting against his own position in the Senate.⁶⁹ The rivalry among the chiefs dated back to the Basotho's wars with the Boers, when certain chiefs sided with the latter, including Leabua Jonathan's father. But with the accession of the present King to the position of Paramount Chief, this rivalry reached new heights, resulting in two factions – one supporting the King and the other supporting the Regent. Lesotho's political parties grew up around the issues of chieftainship and the King's position; Consequently, chieftainship and the control over land "are the most explosive issues in Basotho politics".⁷⁰ It was for this reason that chiefs, minor and senior, were to be found in most of the political parties either as supporters or members – some of them very active.

Campaign issues in Lesotho, therefore, frequently changed, according to the degree and circumstances of the Chiefs' support. Although all the parties needed the support of the Principal Chiefs in the Senate, where they automatically became members, the support of the minor chiefs was just as important for electoral purposes. Their control over the distribution of land gave them influence among their peoples. Another politically influential groups was the Churches – particularly the Roman Catholic Church. Apart

from the government, it was the largest employer in the country through its chain of schools, hospitals, farms and handcraft works, including printing works. Through its large farms, the Catholic Church was, after the chiefs, the largest landowner in the country. The third influential group was that of the traders. As a group, they controlled all wholesale and retail business; their monopoly of food and luxury supplies gave them a special significance for both chiefs and ordinary people. Finally, the labour-recruiting organisations were influential – though only indirectly through the traders, chiefs and, ultimately, the relationship between Lesotho and the Republic.

The 1965 election campaign in Lesotho started at a time when the BCP controlled the majority of the District Councils. Its support was less in the Executive Assembly, where the party was virtually in opposition, as a result of a coalition of appointed chiefs, officials and the other parties. Consequently, the party found it difficult to rule effectively in the districts it controlled. Most of the chiefs regarded the party's rule as an encroachment on traditional authority.⁷¹ As a reaction to this, on the eve of the 1965 election, the party embarked on a campaign against the chiefs – threatening them with deposition, the elimination of their land allocation functions and even openly saying, "We shall do away with Chiefs".⁷² Such sweeping statements made the chiefs protect themselves against the party by banning its meetings in their areas – notably the mountain and foothill areas. Consequently, the BCP's campaign reached only the towns and lowlands, students, teachers, urban workers and the returning migrant workers.

The close relationship between most of the chiefs and the Roman Catholic Church and the Church's open support of the opponents of the BCP created another issue. The party's leadership was predominantly Protestant and, in its campaign, the party lumped together the Chiefs, missionaries and traders as "trouble-makers". In return, the Catholics openly supported the BCP's opponents and, along with the Republic, sought to identify the BCP with "communism". The party, therefore, lost support, particularly among women, most of whom were not only staunch Catholics, but also traditionally-oriented.

Finally, while the party's stance on the future relations with the Republic was restricted to the migrant labour system and the conditions of work, it was interpreted by many of the chiefs as constituting a direct confrontation with the Republic. The BCP advocated a take-over of the recruiting agents, claiming that mainly the chiefs, but not the country as a whole, benefitted through their operations.

The BNP took full advantage of these characteristics of BCP's campaign. On Chieftainship, it not only appealed to the Principal Chiefs but also to the minor chiefs and headmen – most of whom either were long-standing

opponents of the King or objected to the BCP's rule in the districts. "Protection" was the key-note of the BNP's campaign, which increased the proportion of Chiefs in the party to a record of fourteen out of the thirty-one Members of Parliament and seven of the nine Ministers after the election." Chief Leabua constantly reminded the chiefs who supported him that he too was a chief, and so had the interests of the chiefs at heart. This assurance meant, for the chiefs, the continuation of migrant labour and their traditional functions, as it was only the BNP leadership which had the "goodwill" of the Republic.⁶

The political significance of religion had been unexpected, although it was known that the BNP had been founded with Catholic support. Twenty-eight of the thirty-one BNP Members of Parliament and eight of the nine Ministers were Catholics. The BNP and the Catholics combined, to create a political and religious image of the BCP as a "communist" and "anti-religious" organisation. They claimed that the BCP would "turn the Churches into Kraals", eject the nuns "into forced marriages" and accused the priests of "spying". The Catholic Church warned its adherents from the pulpit against the BCP, urging its members to vote for "good candidates, candidates who are acquainted with the laws of God and of His Church, and capable and desirous of having them respected". A letter published in the Catholic newspaper, *Moeletse oa Basotho* (Adviser of the Basotho) concluded by saying that those who supported the "communist" would be supporting a "tyrannical Government" and would be risking ex-communication from the Church.⁷ Not content with their influence in church and in the press, some priests went as far as canvassing for party workers and potential voters from door to door.

The number of traders in Lesotho was not large enough to have a significant effect by itself on election results. It was known that the largest trading group in the country, Frazers, had donated large sums of money to the BNP campaign. The same applied to the labour-recruiting organisations. But their importance in influencing election trends in Lesotho was more especially in their role as the unofficial representative of the South African interests and hence, the BNP's policy towards the Republic: as has been pointed out by Weisfelder, "Substantive decisions made by the Government of Lesotho involve serious issues of foreign policy".⁸ BNP's most important issue in the campaign was the country's dependence on the Republic, as an employer and food supplier. Putting his party forward as the only one that the Republic would co-operate with, Jonathan argued that, of all the candidates, he alone could drink tea with the Republic's Prime Minister. The party assured its members that it was going to negotiate with the Republic for the return of "conquered territories", but cautioned them that "it is in the

interest of the people to co-operate with South Africa on matters of mutual interest". Furthermore, the party was also going to negotiate the sale of water to the Republic. In return, the Republic "would be given first preference to establish industries" in Lesotho." In contrast, Lesotho would never establish diplomatic relations with any Communist regime. The BNP invented an ironic slogan as a reminder of Lesotho's economic dependence on South Africa – "think of your stomachs!" The party also emphasised the necessity to co-operate with the chiefs in maintaining the relationship with the Republic, and reminded the voters that only passports issued by a BNP Government would be acceptable to the officials in the Republic.

The MFP's campaign was limited to the issue of the King's constitutional role. The only significant departures from this were the party's attitudes to trade unionism and the country's rights to its natural resources. Both were directed against the main parties, the BCP and the BNP. The MFP insisted that trade unions should be "free from control by political parties" – a clear reference to the BCP: the leader of the *Lesotho Federation of Labour* was the brother of the leader of the BCP, while the powerful *Lesotho African National Teachers' Association* was headed by the BCP's deputy leader. The policy on "natural resources" was in response to the BNP's pledge to sell water to the Republic.

Swaziland

In Swaziland, the Imbokodvo's campaign emphasised the need for the continuation of the tribal Government under the guidance of the SNC and the Ngwenyama. The party used its affiliation with the SNC to instruct *all* chiefs in the country to ban all meetings organised by the other parties in their areas. In an unsuccessful attempt to revoke this, the other parties complained that:

the Chiefs control the allocation of land to the Swazi people and exercise wide jurisdiction over the people in their areas. These powers of the Chiefs are now being abused to force people to vote for the Imbokodvo Candidates under threat of ejection from land holdings and banishment from the Chief's area. All over the country these powers are used to obstruct or prevent the activities of the political parties in the Chiefs' areas."

In reply to this complaint, the Imbokodvo's Information Secretary stated that the party was the ruling organ of the SNC and, as such, was justified in using all its resources, including funds and *land* "for its own aims". Convinced of the total loyalty of all the chiefs throughout the country, the party tried to widen its support beyond the chiefs. Its pledges were directed at the

opposition and included promises of "localisation", the creation of social welfare, health care and the development of a "non-racial" state." The party did not wish to take chances on the explosive issue of employment. It promised to make room and give opportunities to all who supported the party. This offer led to the defection to its ranks of some of the Imbokodvo's staunchest opponents, including some opposition leaders.

The NNLC and the other parties found themselves completely blocked from the rural areas, where about 80 per cent of the population lived. The Imbokodvo's threats of land deprivation and other penalties for those who supported the other parties were applied to the full. In a desperate attempt to form a united front, the NNLC and its allies campaigned on issues which avoided confrontation with the traditional set-up, as they were afraid of losing what little support they still had. What emerged from the front were partisan attacks on the NNLC from these latter groups. In labour relations, for example, the neo-tribalist parties took the stand of the MFP in Lesotho, in attacking the NNLC's control of the trade unions.

The NNLC broadened its campaign beyond the issues of land distribution and the depoliticisation of the chiefs. Seeking support among the workers in the European-controlled areas and the towns, the party emphasised "the need to overturn European domination and to establish a Government that would put Swaziland in the forefront of the Pan-African movement".¹² The party singled out the meagre wages paid to the workers and the conditions of work, which were even worse than those for migrant workers in South Africa, and demanded the immediate nationalisation of all foreign-owned enterprises, including transport. It further attacked the Republic for interference in Swaziland's affairs – a reference to the support given to the Imbokodvo and its allies.

6.5. External Reactions to the Internal Politics of the Three Countries

The policy statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic, Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd cited below threatened to deprive the people of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland of labour opportunities in the Republic in order to force them to comply with the Republic's intentions. Before the 1965 election were held, Verwoerd in an address to the South African Senate on June 5th, 1964, warned the politicians and chiefs in these countries that:

If this is their place of employment, if this is the source of their revenue . . . then any individual Government that is established there must maintain friendship – in the interests of its own people."

Immediately after the elections in Botswana and Lesotho, when the defeated Pan-Africanist parties were waging an offensive at the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity against South Africa's involvement, Verwoerd made it known that the Republic did not want any changes in the *status-quo* in the three countries – "... it is in our interest to see that the people in these three Territories have a sober outlook."⁵⁴ Admitting his country's involvement in supporting the traditional parties, he went on to say that "... we give friendship to such parties in these Territories when, as now, they are also the ruling parties... as Tshombe was helped in Katanga and then in the Congo."⁵⁵

The threats on land and labour influenced the rank and file of the political parties in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Particularly for the landless and the unemployed, the closure of labour opportunities in the Republic would certainly create, they felt, unprecedented economic hardship. For their chiefs, such a situation would create political chaos, because of the pressure on land. This was summarised by the leader of the BNP when he said that "repatriation to Lesotho would be the beginning of an economic squeeze, ... disastrous to Basutoland."⁵⁶ Their fears were well grounded: as early as 1963, the South African government commissioned Froneman to examine the position of foreign labour. The Report recommended the repatriation of such labour, in preference to local African labour. During the same year, the Republic outlawed all aircraft overflying the Republic to and from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In addition to this, as we have already pointed out, most of the leaders of the modern political parties were banned in the Republic.

In Botswana and Swaziland, the European members in the Government were keen to develop good relations to the Republic. In Botswana, for example, Mr. Steinberg of the BDP stressed the importance of this relationship on every topic that touched the Republic.⁵⁷ From the Republic, there were overtures towards the BDP leadership. Immediately after the 1965 election, the ban on Seretse Khama in the Republic was lifted, although the ban was not directly connected with his political activities⁵⁸ – but the ban on the BDP's opponents remained.

In Lesotho, the Republic openly backed the BNP. An estimated R15,000, including transport and vehicles, was donated to the party in the 1965 election. The BNP leader was also allowed to address meetings in the Republic, while most of the opponents of the party were banned; those who switched their alliance to the BNP had their banishment lifted. In an effort to influence a by-election soon after the 1965 election, the Republic sent 100,000 bags of maize to the leader of the BNP as a "gift". The BNP leader had lost his own seat, and was to stand in the by-election in a safer

constituency. The "gift" arrived immediately before the by-election, when Lesotho, like Botswana, was faced with drought. A large part of the maize was distributed in that constituency." Commenting on this and other "gifts", the South African newspaper, *The Star* wrote that "Nationalist observers here believe that in view of Chief Leabua Jonathan's slender hold on power it is important that his authority should be bolstered with economic aid from South Africa".⁹⁰

A critical issue in the relations to the Republic was the issue of the return of land to Lesotho. The BNP had made promises on this point during the elections. In public and official circles, the Republic had committed itself to negotiations.⁹¹ The two sides, however, had different objectives with this "land-deal". The BNP wanted more territory for Lesotho, to distribute to the already poverty-stricken, landless BaSotho – something that the chiefs, particularly those who had nothing to distribute, desired. But the Republic wanted to "return" the land by enlarging the Sotho homeland, as part of the Bantustan policy. Whatever these differences were, the negotiations were a political success for both sides. In Nationalist circles in the Republic, this was a convenient way of evicting unwanted "Bantus" from the urban areas.

The Republic's press and radio had considerable impact for the BNP. The only local paper widely read in Lesotho was the pro-BNP Catholic Newspaper. In the towns, however, most people bought South African papers. Similarly, although Lesotho had its own radio, most people preferred the Republic's "Radio Bantu", which broadcast in SeSotho with a wide coverage of news, including political events in the country. While the influence of South African media was strongest in the towns and lowland, their news coverage was spread in the rural areas by chiefs and teachers. The Republic's support for the BNP was summarised by the South African opposition party's newspaper, *The Rand Daily Mail* when it commented that:

Rather ironically, Chief Leabua is . . . backed by Pretoria. . . All instincts of the South African National Party are in favour of supporting tribalism, the institution of the Chieftaincy and reactionary tendencies generally in African Culture and Politics."

Unlike the BDP in Botswana and the BNP in Lesotho, the Republic's support for the Imbokodvo in Swaziland had a long history. The Imbokodvo, unlike parties in the other two countries was founded through the advice of prominent South African Nationalists. Mr. Van Wyk de Vries – the man behind the formation of the party, was not only a prominent lawyer, but also a member of the neo-fascist wing of the Nationalist party, the *Broederbond Society*.⁹² His achievement in helping to create the Imbokodvo, and thus swaying the political development in Swaziland, was rewarded in his appointment as a judge by the South African Government. Furthermore,

prominent Nationalists like Dr. Donges were invited to visit the Ngwenyama, through Mr. Todd, the spokesman of the EAC. On the eve of the formation of the Imbokodvo, two highly influential ministers from the Republic, Mr. Vorster and Mr. Le Roux, visited the Ngwenyama at his hunting lodge.⁴

As with all the meetings of the secretive tribal organisation, the *Liqogo*, discussions between the Ngwenyama and the Nationalist party officials were never revealed. The other parties in the country, however, concluded that a secret deal was made, for it was immediately after these meetings that the King announced the formation of the Imbokodvo. This was followed by repeated broadcasts over the South African radio by Mr. Todd – propagating support for the Imbokodvo, and on the pledge of the South African Government to support the economic development of Swaziland.⁵ Furthermore, Todd advised all the Europeans in Swaziland to support the main aims of the Imbokodvo – the recognition of the Ngwenyama as King of Swaziland and the development of land and minerals by Europeans in the Swazi areas after the mineral rights had been transferred from colonial ownership to the Ngwenyama. Van Wyk de Vries had already cautioned the Ngwenyama that “It would be of great assistance to have the support of the Europeans...”⁶

6.6. Election Results and the New Regimes

The results of the elections leading to independence in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland were as follows:

BOTSWANA (1965)			LESOTHO (1965)			SWAZILAND (1967)		
Party	% Poll	No. of Seats	Party	% Poll	No. of Seats	Party	% Poll	No. of Seats
BDP	80	28	BNP	41.6	31	Imbokodvo	80	24
BPP	14	3	BCP	39.7	25	NNLC	14	0
BIP	4	0	MFP	16.5	4	Others	6	0
			Others	2.2	0			

Source: For Botswana, see *Politics and Society in Botswana*, 1976, p. 207.

For Lesotho, see Macartney, 1973, p. 475

For Swaziland, see *The Times of Swaziland*, April 28, 1967 and *African Report*, June 1967, pp. 49–54.

In *Botswana*, the party that was supported by all the chiefs and local Europeans as well as certain elements in the Republic, the BDP, emerged with a clear majority. In three of the thirty-one constituencies, BDP was unopposed. In most of the constituencies where the chiefs actively campaigned for the party, BDP's percentage poll was as high as 98. In contrast, the main opposition party, the BPP only secured victories in the home area of its leader where it captured two of the three seats. The third seat was captured outside this area – but with the support of the only major chief in the country who did not support the BDP. The percentage turnout in the 1965 election in Botswana was estimated at 75.”

In *Lesotho*, the party that commanded the support of the “lower ranks of chieftainship and certain of the major chiefs”⁹⁸, the BNP, emerged with a slender majority. Its victory was concentrated in the mountain areas – the strongholds of most of the lower ranks of chieftaincy. The main opposition party's success was confined to its strong-base – the lowlands, where it captured 22 of its 25 seats. The “royalist” party, the MFP, was also confined to its strong-base – the royal capital.

In *Swaziland*, the Imbokodvo, the party supported by the SNC, local Europeans and South Africa captured all the seats. Percentage polls for Imbokodvo candidates were as high as those of Botswana's BDP. Only in some urban areas did the Imbokodvo's candidates face close trails from the NNLC's candidates.

Thus, in all the three countries, the victorious parties fought the election leading to independence on the platform of chieftainship, land and labour. They were supported, internally, by elements with South African interests on the same issues and, externally, received direct and indirect aid from the Republic. In giving such aid, South Africa hoped to further her Bantustan policy, by obtaining greater control of the *land and labour* of her neighbours.

The formation of the government was a sensitive exercise in all the three countries. Since the election was fought and won on land relations, it was difficult to accommodate so many powerful factions in a single government.

In *Botswana*, apart from the leader of the party, not one of the eight Paramount Chiefs was represented in either the government or the National Assembly. Instead, the BDP chose tribal civil servants and minor chiefs – who all had direct connections with most of the eight Paramount Chiefs in the ministerial team. Their long service in the tribal administration was evident from the fact that more than half of them had colonial decorations, like their leader, Sir Seretse Khama. Out of the European representatives – who were all former members of the EAC and JAC – only one was directly elected with the support of the BDP. The other three were nominated, as representatives of the traders and farmers. One of these was

made Minister for Commerce and Industry. He was the richest person in the country and was also the main commercial link between Botswana, South Africa and Rhodesia. His business empire included ranches, farms, monopoly over distribution, agent of the main economic activities in the country, representative of the only rail link between the South and the North. He was also a leading figure in the main employers' organisation, the Chamber of Commerce. The team as a whole was drawn from a wealthy group of land-owners and controllers of the modern sector.

In *Lesotho*, the BNP Government was drawn mainly from the chieftainship. However, neither the BNP cabinet or its team in the National Assembly controlled land over the whole country, because of the political divisions in the chieftainship. The fact that many chiefs sided with the MFP illustrates these divisions as a "basic difference in economic and political interests at the higher and lower levels of the hierarchy".⁹⁹ Although there were no Europeans in either the Government or the Assembly, a powerful team of South African advisers was appointed, which included the Chief Justice, the Attorney General, the Chief Electoral Officer, an Economic Adviser, an Adviser on Industrial Development and a Constitutional Adviser.¹⁰⁰ Dr. Anton Rupert was, perhaps, the most influential in providing the main economic link between Lesotho and the Republic. Apart from being an Afrikaner Nationalist, he was also a major industrialist in the Republic and owner of the giant Rembrandt Tobacco Corporation.¹⁰¹

In *Swaziland*, the Government and the National Assembly were dominated by the King's own sons, relatives and members of the SNC. This domination has often been referred to as the "Dlamini affair" – reflecting the ties between the two leading figures in Swazi politics, the King and the Queen Mother. Out of the nine Cabinet Ministers, three were from the King's own clan, the *Dlamini*, and two from the Queen Mother's clan, the *Nxumalo*. In all, six had served on the SNC and seven were sons of previous members of the SNC. The National Assembly had a similarly exclusive structure: all the four European members were nominated, and one of the four, Mr. Lovell, became the Minister of Finance. A former South African Member of Parliament, he was the main link between Swaziland and the Republic, assisted by Mr. Todd, who was nominated to the Senate.¹⁰² All the nominated European members were former members of the EAC.

In all three countries, the structure of the Government and National Assembly reflected the interests of the middle and upper classes and their domination over the control of land and the modern sector of the economy. There was, however, a small but significant element ideologically separate from the traditional elements and the Europeans. This elite group which will be described in detail in the next chapter was particularly influential in the

civil service. Its main aim was to share the economic and political privileges, hitherto monopolised by the traditional elements and their political allies.

Conclusion

The decolonisation of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland was shaped to protect the economic and political stability of the Republic of South Africa and the maintainance of the three countries as labour reserves. The constitutional reforms of the 50's ensured to block the emergence of national anti-colonial political forces wanting to change radically the political and economic position of these countries from South African domination. The reforms, instead, broadened the pro-colonial forces of the chieftaincy and of the local Europeans. These two groups controlled land and the modern European sector of the economy. It was through this control that the two groups were able to strengthen their political power base.

In *Botswana*, the creation of the Joint Advisory Council brought the chiefs and local Europeans closer together into a solid conservative alliance. As the national anti-colonial forces started to emerge, the conservative alliance sought to protect itself and strengthen its political power base by threatening to deprive those who supported the national anti-colonial forces of land and labour opportunities. The BDP whose strongest base was in the chieftaincy used its control over land distribution to manipulate the electorate. Its allies, the local Europeans, also strengthened their political power base with the backing of their South African allies. The colonial government strengthened the BDP and their allies through the electoral system which ensured the broadening of the constitutional basis of the chiefs and their allies.

In *Lesotho*, the conservative elements of the chieftaincy were strengthened by the colonial government during the transitional period between the establishment of the Basutoland Council and the Legislative Assembly in the late 50's through the constitutional arrangements which broadened the political power basis of the principal chiefs. This provoked the historical rivalry among the minor and principal chiefs for political control centred on the Paramount Chief on the one hand and the relation between Lesotho and South Africa on the other. As this rivalry increased, various political parties emerged with different programmes on the issues of land, labour and the relationship with South Africa. The BNP emerged as a party representing the interests of the chiefs with a programme of closer relationship with South Africa. Within the country, the BNP was supported by the Catholic

church, the traders and South African labour recruiting organisations. The interests of South Africa were represented by these groups. As the intensity of political activities increased, the Republic of South Africa openly intervened to support the BNP and its allies. The chiefs used their control over land distribution to manipulate the electorate; the Catholic church threatened with ex-communication while the labour recruiting organisations and the traders used their resources to uphold the BNP for the benefit of South African interests.

In *Swaziland*, both the SNC and the EAC advocated a strategy where each side sought to protect its interests. But the emergence of the anti-colonial forces in the late 50's changed this strategy. Although no Joint Advisory Council similar to that of Botswana was formally established, the two sides worked closely together in their efforts to block the anti-colonial political forces. Both sides were actively supported by the Republic of South Africa. The Imbokodvo movement – the organ of the SNC which was supported by all the chiefs was established through the advice of South African lawyers from the ranks of the Nationalist Party. Its main ally, the USA – the main organ of the EAC – was mainly composed of the elements of the Nationalist Party who controlled the modern European sector. While the Imbokodvo used its control over land allocation to manipulate the electorate, the USA used its base as the main employer.

Thus, the political victory of the conservative parties in all the three countries was a consequence of the land and labour relations established during the long period of colonial rule. These land and labour relations were important for the economic and political stability of the Republic of South Africa. It was largely for this reason that the Republic of South Africa openly supported the conservative parties in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland until their ultimate victory.

This victory was a result of an alliance of internal and external social forces: chiefs and local European interests and their South African backers. How stable was this alliance? Could it continue to function as the basis for South Africa's successful economic and political domination also in the post-colonial period? In the next chapter, we will examine the internal contradictions of the post-colonial regimes and their attempts to reduce their dependence on South Africa.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Kuper, H., *The Uniform of Colour*, Johannesburg, 1947, p. 136.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.
3. Swaziland: *Minutes of the Eighth Session of the Third Reconstituted European Advisory Council*, Mbabane, 1962, p. 45.

4. For Botswana and Swaziland, see Halpern, 1965, pp. 283 and 340 respectively.
5. *Who's Who of Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, 1960, p. 620.
6. Bechuanaland Protectorate: *Minutes of the Joint Advisory Council*, April, 1959, pp. 18 and 20.
7. Halpern, 1965, p. 341.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 294.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 339.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 340.
11. This was connected with the creation of Bantustans in South Africa.
12. See page 1 above.
13. Swaziland: *Minutes of the Fourth Reconstituted European Advisory Council Third Session*, 1962, p. 29.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
16. See page 1 above.
17. *The Road to Freedom for Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland*, South African Department of Information, Fact Paper 107, 1963.
18. Halpern, 1965, p. 286.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 286.
20. Segal, R., *African Profiles*, London, 1962, p. 48.
21. Botswana: *Hansard* 30 (Official Report, National Assembly), 1969, p. 236.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
23. See Chapter 3.
24. It is not clear from the information available whether the split was based on ideological differences. According to Matante, however, there were external infiltrations within the leadership. *Interview* with Matante by the author, 1971.
25. Legally, Secretse Khama was not a chief but was and continues to be regarded as such by a majority of his followers including most of the chiefs. For example, he is still widely known as *muKgosi mukguru* – the Paramount Chief.
26. Weisfelder, R., 'Power Struggle in Lesotho', *Africa Report*, January, 1967, p. 6.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
28. There were a number of other "associations" prior to the formation of the party and the most important of these was *The League of the Common Man* of which Mokhetle himself was a member. For a more detailed information of this, see Winai-Ström, 1978.
29. Stevens, 1967, p. 60.
30. Cited in Halpern, 1965, pp. 146–147.
31. *The Friend*, Blomfontein, October 21, 1964.
32. There were two factions to the throne – one led by Prince Bereng and the other led by the Regent.
33. Khaketla, B.M., *Lesotho 1970*, London, 1971, p. 18.
34. See note 32 above.
35. Khaketla was a member of the Executive Council on the ticket of the BCP. The other members were from Marema-Tlou and the Progressive Association.
36. Stevens, 1967, p. 65. This information does not, however, seem to be correct. There was already a Communist Party in South Africa itself before it was banned. The same is true of Sudan. In Tunisia, the Communist Party even participated in the 1956 general election. See Rudebeck, L., *Party and People*, Stockholm, 1967, p. 208 under footnote 6.
37. Halpern, 1965, p. 162.
38. Cited in Stevens, 1967, p. 66.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 205. Dr. Allen Nxumalo later led the party when Simon Nxumalo stepped down.
40. Halpern, 1965, p. 353.
41. Stevens, 1967, p. 208.
42. This had long been the practice and was supported by both the SNC and the EAC.

43. Cited in Stevens, 1967, p. 211.
44. Potholm, 1972, p. 105.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 102–103.
46. Halpern, 1965, p. 358.
47. *Imbokodvo Emabalabala Constitution*, Imbokodvo National Movement Mbabane 1967, (mimeo) p. 1.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 2
49. See Section 6 for the election results leading to independence.
50. In the election leading to the Legislative Assembly, the Paramount Chief nominated 9 independents, 2 BNP's and 1 dissident BCP. Both the BNP and BCP nominees had been defeated at the polls.
51. See, for example, McCartney's 'Lesotho General Elections of 1970', *Journal of Government and opposition*, October, 1973, on Lesotho and Potholm's 'Swaziland in Transition of Independence', *Africa Report*, June, 1967 for Swaziland.
52. Potholm, 1972, p. 46.
53. Bechuanaland: *Hansard* 14 (Official Report, Legislative Assembly) 1965, pp. 80, 91.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
58. Botswana: *Hansard* 30 (Official Report, National Assembly) 1969, p. 361. The Member of Parliament was also "deported" to a ministerial post (to keep him quiet) for his criticism of his own party in the Assembly. Most of his criticisms were almost in line with the opposition's as the latter acknowledged with shouts of "Hear! Hear! Hear!".
59. *Ibid.*, p. 337.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 339 and 340.
61. See note 22 above.
62. Botswana: *Hansard* 30, 1969, p. 337.
63. Bechuanaland: *Hansard* 14, 1965, p. 130.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
66. Bechuanaland: *Hansard* 16, 1966, p. 28.
67. Lobatsi was the town where the Botswana Meat Commission was situated, see *Hansard* 27, 1969, p. 251.
68. *Basutoland National Council, Legislative Council Debates, Second Meeting, Second Session*, Vol II, March 1962.
69. Weisfelder, 1967, p. 10.
70. McCartney, W.J.A. 'African Westminster? The Parliament of Lesotho' *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, Spring 1970, p. 137.
71. Weisfelder, 1967, p. 12.
72. *The Drum*, Johannesburg, February 1965.
73. Khaketla, 1971, p. 60.
74. Weisfelder, 1967, p. 10.
75. Khaketla, 1971, p. 31.
76. Weisfelder, 1967, p. 11.
77. Cited in Halpern, 1965, p. 150.
78. Weisfelder, 1967, p. 7.
79. Stevens, 1967, p. 84.
80. Swaziland Democratic Party: Minutes, May 30, 1965 (mimeo), p. 1.
81. *The Times of Swaziland*, Mbabane, July, 16, 1965.
82. Potholm, 1972, p. 125.
83. Cited in Halpern, 1965, p. 437.
84. *The Star*, Johannesburg, October 1, 1965.
85. *Ibid.*,

86. Khaketla, 1971, p. 29.
87. Botswana: *Hansard* 30, 1969, p. 149.
88. Seretse Khama had been banned because of his controversial marriage to an English woman which was, according to the Republic of South Africa's laws a contravention of the *Immorality Act*.
89. Khaketla, 1971, p. 32.
90. *The Star*, Johannesburg, May 5, 1965.
91. *The Friend*, Blomfontein, January 1, 1966.
92. *The Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, June 28, 1966.
93. *The Boederbond Society* is an underground fascist organisation composed of prominent members of the Nationalist Party in the Republic of South Africa.
94. Le Roux was responsible for Botswana while Vorster was responsible for all the three countries.
95. See note 17 above.
96. Cited in Halpern, 1965, p. 358.
97. Stevens, 1967, p. 152.
98. Weisfelder, 1967, p. 10.
99. *Ibid*, p. 11.
100. Khaketla, 1971, p. 120.
101. *Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa*, London, 1973, p. 492.
102. See note 5 above.

Chapter 7. The Post-Colonial Reforms

The post-colonial regimes in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland drew up comprehensive programmes for social and economic development. These programmes were, however, in conflict with the internal political, economic and social structure inherited from the colonial rule. At the same time, the programmes also challenged the basic foundation of the external relations with the Republic of South Africa.

The Government of *Botswana*, for example, drew up a four policy-programme:

- (a) to secure the fastest possible rate of economic growth in a manner designed to raise the living standards of the great mass of the inhabitants of Botswana,
- (b) to achieve budgetary self-sufficiency, in the shortest possible time consistent with rapid economic growth,
- (c) to maximise the number of new job opportunities and,
- (d) to promote an equitable distribution of income, in particular by reducing income differentials between the urban and rural sectors through rural development¹

In *Lesotho*, the four policy-program was:

- (a) to attain an average annual rate of growth of gross domestic product of not less than five per cent,
- (b) to create 10,000–15,000 new employment opportunities, mainly in non-agricultural activities,
- (c) to end the dependence of the Government recurrent budget on external aid and,
- (d) to strengthen the economic relation and co-operation between Lesotho and other African countries and, in particular, with the countries of the South African Customs Union.²

In *Swaziland*, the four policy-program was:

- (a) the main objective is to improve the living conditions of the mass of the people,
- (b) intensify efforts to mobilise foreign capital funds for the public investment programme, paying increased attention to non-British sources of aid,
- (c) to welcome capital for investment in the private sector and provide reasonable terms and,
- (d) to mobilise foreign capital resources (which) will be supplemented by determined efforts to increase the internal resources of the country, in particular, domestic savings.³

All the three Governments aimed at “economic growth” and Lesotho and Swaziland were more specific than Botswana that this would be achieved through non-British sources – a clear reference to the Republic; hence Lesotho’s reliance on high-powered political and economic advisers from South Africa and Swaziland’s appointment of Lovell and, later, Stephens as Minister of Finance.⁴ In Chapter 6, we pointed out that, while the political victory of BDP in Botswana was ensured through the active participation of the chiefs, it was impossible to accommodate all the powerful factions in the

new regime. In Lesotho, the BNP did not command all the powerful chiefs in the country and the BNP government was only able to use most of the minor chiefs and a few of the major ones. In Swaziland, the Imbokodvo government was dominated by the King's and Queen Mother's relatives and members of the SNC. How, then, is the commitment to the creation of employment reconciled with the structure of the labour reserve? How do policies ostensibly for economic and social reform maintain the *status quo*?

In this chapter, we will examine the economic and political reforms in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In *Section 1*, we will examine the political measures taken by the regimes to reduce internal conflicts and appease the Republic of South Africa in implementing the policy Programmes. *Section 2* deals with the economic problems of the three countries. In *section 3*, we examine the major reforms of the three countries in their attempts to withdraw from the South African dominated economy while *Section 4* examines the economic and political impact of the reforms.

7.1. Labour Control and Conflicts with the Traditional set-up

The colonial regimes had always maintained that the natural resources in the "reserves" were not commercially viable.⁵ This opinion was not shared by some of the party leaders. But, such a situation suited the Chiefs and the Europeans, until the conservative parties came to power, when the opposition parties started to argue that the government was neglecting to exploit the natural resources and so create more employment. In Botswana, for example, the BPP went further, to suggest that this neglect was deliberate *sabotage* by the Minister of Commerce and Industry, who protected his monopoly by refusing to grant licences to new enterprises:

... it is a well known fact that the Hon. Minister is an interested party in business... because Messers J. Haskins & Sons are agents of the same tractors, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry would sit and frustrate this licence.⁶

The discovery of rich mineral deposits in Botswana, the prospect of diamonds in Lesotho and the unrest at the unequal distribution of Swaziland's rich mineral and agricultural resources increased the tempo of the opposition for the creation of more employment. The new regimes were, however, aware of the fact that uncontrolled employment would also create conflicts with their main external ally, the Republic of South Africa on the one hand and, their internal allies – the chiefs and the local Europeans – on the other. The new regimes were, therefore, careful to restrict employment growth by legislation and other policies, for fear of upsetting political

balances at home and in the Republic. When Botswana's first mine opened, BaSothos were recruited instead of local BaTswanas. This policy was very unpopular with the opposition parties and among the electorate, including some members of the ruling party. The management of the companies defended the policy by pointing out that the BaSotho were more experienced in shaft-sinking.

In an effort to appease the internal and external factions, the BDP government introduced the *Trade Union Bill* and the *Trade Dispute Bill* which were aimed at controlling employment. The former gave the Minister of Labour power to control the unions and their leadership, by demanding official registration of all unions, and the latter was aimed at restricting strikes. Both laws were described by the government as "protection of both the employer and the employee".⁷ Although both laws were designed to ensure that employers' profits would not be disrupted through strikes, the presence of the opposition parties did not eliminate the government's fears. One government back-bencher stated:

I must voice my fears. . . I have my fear of trade unions when trade unionism is not properly controlled. . . The Minister must have full control and authority to control any leader of a trade union. The other fear I have is about farmers(read: European farmers). . . . If we bring the farming community into trade unionism we should do the country considerable harm. . .⁸

In Lesotho, the BNP government used conventional party politics to control labour and employment. In the new projects created by the LNDP through Dr. Rupert, the BNP government insisted that only card-bearing party members were to be employed. The Republic's labour recruiting organisations followed suit. The government went to the extent of flouting Civil Service Commission: the leader of the BNP pointed out that he had "given orders to the effect that in the civil service and in the private sector, supporters of the BCP and MFP should not be given employment. Only the supporters of the National Party should be employed, because this is their Government".⁹

In Swaziland, the control of labour was achieved by an unusual step: the Imbokodvo and its allies, the employers, decided to create a trade union. Ignoring the existing trade unions, which supported the NNLC, the employers entered an agreement with the SNC for the settling of disputes. Under this deal, the Ngwenyama, through the SNC, appointed his own representative, the *Ndabazabantu*, at each place of work (or compound); the *Ndabazabantu* was paid by the employer. Any meetings of the workers had to be approved by the *Ndabazabantu*, and his arbitration in disputes was binding on all parties in the conflict. Another method of restricting trade unions that was also supported by the government was the setting up of *Work Councils*. Under this scheme, the management selected four representatives,

while an equal number was elected "democratically" by the workers. The chairman, with the casting vote, was, however, appointed by the management.

Government restriction of trade unions in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland was intended to attract light industries from the Republic, and so, ostensibly, improve local employment, while actually strengthening economic dependence on South Africa and securing the availability of migrant labourers. The governments' collaboration with the employers was an attempt to appease the landless and the unemployed as well as to save the embarrassment of the opposition's attacks. The absence of trade unionism was proudly advertised by the national development corporations to attract South Africa investments as already pointed out in Chapter 5. It was not by coincidence that the same type of propaganda was used by the Republic, which itself restricted trade unionism in its attempt to attract investments from Western Europe, United States of America and Japan.

But, even such modest job-creating schemes roused negative reactions from some of the ultra-conservative chiefs. And, yet, the implementation of government policies largely depended on the active support of the rural areas where such elements were strongly entrenched;¹⁰ it was from these same chiefs that the ruling parties derived their political mandates. While such reactions underlined the connection between land and chieftainship, they also frustrated the principal aims of the policies. The governments needed the undivided support of the Chiefs: one BDP Member of Parliament bitterly complained, "the Chiefs in the country do not agree to force people to work".¹¹ At the same time, the opposition parties severely attacked labour restrictions.

The reaction of the ultra-conservative chiefs and the continuous attacks by the opposition had two effects in Botswana and Lesotho. The first one was to challenge the very foundation of the alliance between the government and the chiefs outside the government. In Botswana, for example, the government challenged the chiefs by saying that "we know that you are born Chiefs . . . but the people you are ruling have representatives in Parliament". The Chiefs retorted that "you cannot separate the Chief from the tribe. . . (A) Chief is a representative of people . . . and has a mandate from his people."¹² In Lesotho, the attacks on the BNP leadership resulted in defections from the BNP to other parties. The second effect was a counter-attack at the power-base of opposition parties. In both countries, the opposition was not only represented in Parliament but also at district level. In Botswana, District Councils dominated by the opposition were neutralised by the appointment of BDP members. The government justified this by declaring: "Councils are part of an organ of the Government in power." In Lesotho, the BNP

government did away with the Councils altogether.” The unchallenged position and authority of chiefs in the two countries is well illustrated by the fact that certain Ministers and Members of Parliament could not even address meetings in areas where Chiefs decided to ban them.¹⁴

In Swaziland, the conflict between the government and the ultra-conservatives was minimised by their appointment through the SNC as “overseers” and “watchdogs” in government ministries. Most of these advisers were drawn from the rural areas. Formal conflict with opposition parties was avoided because they were excluded from parliament and because Swaziland lacked a district administration system, of the type in Botswana and Lesotho, where the opposition could have been influential. Outside official political forums, however, the opposition concentrated its activities in the European “enclaves” despite the presence of the *Ndabazabantu*. The fact that these areas were so isolated from the conservative rural Swazi strongholds was also an advantage for the opposition. Furthermore, foreign migrant labourers, employed in these areas, shared the grievances and aspirations of the party.

The post-colonial regimes, thus, made considerable concessions to appease their internal and external allies in order to implement the policy-programmes. We will now turn to the external and internal responses of the above concessions.

7.2. Economic Problems of the Labour Reserves

Despite expectations arising from South African support for the post-colonial regimes of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, there were no large-scale economic investments forthcoming from the Republic. There had been expectations about South African aid. The Prime Minister of the Republic, for example, was quoted as saying that:

We in South Africa are as keen as any other country in Europe or America to see the nations of Africa prosper. Infact we are more keen than they are, because the African States are our neighbours. Prosperity in Africa is going to mean a decrease in jealousy over the prosperity of South Africa.¹⁵

According to the Republic of South Africa’s own aid survey, only Malawi received a significant amount of aid. This turned out to be mainly for a non-productive project, namely, the moving of a capital from Zomba to Lilongwe.

In *Botswana*, between 1967 and 1970, the “aid” listed by the survey was as follows:

A gift of twelve Africander stud bulls,
experts to help eradicate tsetse-fly and,
South African volunteers."

In *Lesotho*, the survey listed the following:

50,000 bags of maize and sorghum,
1,000 bags of fertilisers,
police experts, and
agricultural demonstration."

In *Swaziland*, the survey listed:

Two police dogs,
Monthly visits of South African doctors, and
experts in local government.

Apart from the marginal character of this aid, the Republic of South Africa was at most trying to secure her own domestic interests. In the case of Lesotho, the bags of maize donated by the Republic were intended to secure the election of Chief Leabua Jonathan in a by-election when he had lost his seat to the opposition. As we pointed out in chapter 6, the maize was distributed in the constituency where he was to stand for election. In Swaziland, the police dogs were intended to strengthen the security against "infiltrators" into South Africa. In the words of the survey, the aid to these countries was largely aimed at promoting the internal security of the Republic of South Africa:

There is the fact that stagnating or even falling incomes per head in neighbouring countries inevitably create a climate conducive to social unrest and to external policies aimed at diverting internal pressures towards the Republic. Support for terrorists and other forces is a case in point."

Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland developed large foreign trade and budget deficits.¹⁹ Between 1965 and 1969, the relative size of the latter was as follows:

Table 1. Relative size of budget deficits

Year	Botswana	Lesotho	Swaziland
1965/66	46	61	48
1966/67	47	58	27
1967/78	63	51	32
1968/69	53	49	43

Source: For Botswana, see Herman, 1974, pp. 89-116.

For Lesotho, see Leistner 1966, p. 47.

For Swaziland, see *Annual Bulletin of Statistics*, 1968, pp. 49-51.

During the same period, development expenditure in all the three countries was financed from foreign aid – thus, making them dependent on the priorities of the donor countries in respect of development projects. At the same time, almost half of the budget was spent on salaries of the higher civil servants and expatriates.

These inflated government salary structures reinforced the uneven distribution which had already been established as a consequence of colonial penetration. Consequently, the post-colonial regimes were unable to put the revenue generated by the existing economic activities to productive use. This was particularly evident in the case of Botswana and Swaziland.

In *Botswana*, the eight chiefdoms were kept financially separate prior to 1968. Revenue from mineral rights, fees for licences and other similar incomes were paid directly to the tribal treasuries. The activities of local European economic interests led to an outflow of savings as most of the companies were directly connected with those of Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa. Most of them were merely subsidiaries whose owners lived in the neighbouring countries. Partly because of lack of financial control by the local regime, very little was collected in the form of taxes. Moreover, the owners had little interest in investing their profits in the country.

In *Lesotho*, the economic conflicts were a consequence of the BNP's "hopes" that the Republic of South Africa would supply the capital needs of the economy. Internally, it was a consequence of the interaction between the foreign and local European economic activities on the one hand and, the chiefs on the other.²⁰

Immediately after independence, many overtures were made by the BNP government to the Republic of South Africa to invest in Lesotho. Among the largest projects which required the support of the Republic was the hydro-electric scheme which was expected to sell water and electricity to South Africa. The project was expected to cost about R27.94 million over a period of five years. Lesotho was expected to derive some benefits in the form of employment, taxes on income, and customs revenue.²¹ The government of Lesotho offered incentives in the form of "tax holidays" for a period of six years for all industries that were to be established in the country. Confronted with attacks from the opponents of this policy, the government explained that:

Our land-locked country is entertaining great difficulties in attracting manufacturers from outside unless we put, as we have done, well considered incentives to attract as many people as possible.²²

But, despite such generous offers, the Republic of South Africa blocked the hydro-electric project by refusing to buy the electricity and water.

Negotiations broke down.” Lesotho’s hopes were dashed by this refusal and by the fact that the Republic failed to supply the expected capital needed by Lesotho.

Opposition to the tax incentives were not without foundation. Experience from the other two countries had shown that the activities of foreign companies only increased the export of profits with little re-investments within the countries. The opponents pointed out that they would have been prepared to support measures that encouraged local Basotho to establish industries.¹⁴

Internally, the interaction between the local chiefs who controlled some of the local resources of the country and the traders also contributed to the decline of revenue. As we pointed out in chapter 5, both cattle and crops were mostly sold in the trading posts which were outposts of the Republic of South Africa. Most of the chiefs used these posts. The trading activities of the chiefs also involved diamonds.” These, as we pointed out in chapter 5, were frequently smuggled into the Republic and thus, reducing government revenue.

In *Swaziland*, the complicated system of the division between European controlled *freehold land* on the one hand and the *Swazi nation land* on the other, contributed widely to the uneven distribution of resources. Profits made in the former areas were not invested in the latter which were far more backward. They were either exported to the Republic of South Africa or, to a lesser extent, reinvested in the European areas. The private entrepreneurs on the freehold land also owned business properties, such as, public buildings in the urban areas and company towns. The government of Swaziland whose ministries occupied most of these buildings paid rent to the private European owners. Most of the companies, moreover, paid very little in the form of taxes. In 1966/67, for example, the private companies made a profit of nearly 13 million Rands but only paid 2 1/2 million Rands in taxes – roughly 20 per cent.¹⁶ During the same year, rent and royalties paid to the government amounted only to R410,000. Owners of freehold land embarked on land speculation – thus, inflating the value of land and property. A half-acre land which in 1950 cost R400 rose in 1968 to R2,000. It was almost impossible, even for the relatively well-off Swazis to buy land and property in the freehold land.¹⁷

In the Swazi nation reserve areas, direct economic participation was restricted to chiefs through the limited holdings of the King “on behalf of the Swazi nation” in the foreign companies. This participation was restrained to a low level. There was no Swazi majority holding in any of the foreign managed companies. Partly from the return on these holdings, chiefs were paid salaries by the Swazi National Council. The King emphasised that their

salaries were conditional on the way they exercised control over their subjects.²⁸

Thus, external dependence was reinforced by internal economic structures. The interaction contributed to the low level of government revenues. Dependence on external aid imposed severe restrictions on the priorities of development projects. The overall picture is one of economic stagnation, chronic unemployment and poverty. This is the background to the attempt to introduce major economic reforms in the post-independence period.

Which were the political forces seeking to reform the system? We have hitherto, in this study, maintained that both the chiefs and the local European interests were benefiting from the structure of the labour reserve economy. The structure was, in fact, sustained by the interaction of these two forces. Why should these groups wish to introduce reforms that were both aimed at changing the *status quo* and reducing dependence on the Republic of South Africa? We must, therefore, examine the role of a third force that was instrumental in the reforms.

Although politics and the economy were dominated by the interaction of the chiefs and the foreign and local Europeans, a new African elite emerged in both the policy-making bodies and the bureaucracy. During the pre-independence period, this stratum lacked both political and economic power. Good education was their strongest asset. Their professions ranged from teachers, civil servants, tribal administrators, lawyers, doctors to small-scale businessmen. Some of them had strong links with the opposition parties. In Botswana, for example, some of the members of the new elite who were later incorporated in the policy-making body, including, at least one minister, were either former members of the opposition parties or clear sympathisers. The majority of senior bureaucrats were drawn from the opposition. In Swaziland, about a third of the ministers, a similar number of the Permanent Secretaries and the Secretary General of the ruling party were former members of the opposition parties. In Lesotho, a number of the higher civil servants also joined the opposition parties. The new "class" had one interest in common, namely, the claim for a fair share in the economic benefits of independence which had hitherto been monopolised by the chiefs and their European allies. Because of the new positions they occupied, they were able to influence both political and economic policies of the countries. They were willing to offer their services to the new regimes in spite of their political and ideological differences with the current rulers. A major reason was, of course, the scarcity of advanced job opportunities in the labour reserve economies. The positions they now occupied were rewarded with high salaries. Much of these were invested in cattle and land. Their

present strategic economic position can be understood by the fact that before independence, they were hanging around in the urban areas while practicing their professions. Today, they are hardly seen in the evenings and over the weekends in the urban areas. They all withdraw to their land and to the cattle-posts to look after their newly acquired wealth.

The role of the new elite was, thus, to change the political and economic system to their own advantage by sharing both the political and economic role of the chiefs on the one hand and that of the foreign and local Europeans on the other.

7.3. The Political and Economic Reforms

In chapter 5, we discussed one major reform which was aimed at increasing the share of revenue negotiated by the three countries with the Republic of South Africa, namely, the 1969 Customs Union Agreement. Although the share of the revenues increased, the increase was not large enough to finance development projects. The contribution made by the increased share of revenues to the three countries only slightly reduced the gap of the budget deficits. It was not until the financial year 1971/72 that Botswana and Swaziland managed to balance their budget deficits. Lesotho followed two years later, that is, 1973/74. Development projects continued to be dependent on foreign aid. And yet, during most of the period, that is, until 1973, a large share of imports was dominated by food and luxury items. Botswana's mineral development required machinery and other capital equipment and she was, thus, able to increase her share of customs union revenues. But this was reduced already by 1975 when the mining projects were completed. In 1973, the share of Botswana's customs union revenue in total revenue was 50 per cent. In 1975/76, it had dropped to 24 per cent.

The level of revenue from the customs union was subject to fluctuations and could not be depended upon as a permanent source of income. It was, thus, considered necessary to make internal political and economic changes in order to establish a stable base for generating revenue. In official circles, the changes were said to be aimed at reducing dependence on the Republic of South Africa on the one hand and, to achieve a fair distribution of resources and income within the countries – particularly between the rural and urban areas on the other.

Botswana

In Botswana, there were three major reforms more directly related to land relations. These were: *The Tribal Land Act*, *The Chieftainship Act* and *The National*

Policy on Grazing in Tribal Land. The first one was introduced in 1968 and came into operation in 1970. In the government's view, the Tribal Land Act was intended to achieve the maximum use of land resources. But in practice, the groups of people who were to derive benefits from the reform were not the poor peasants as the 1968/73 National Development Plan clearly indicated:

In the townships and large villages it is essential to grant a form of title which offers complete security and enables land to be regarded as a fully negotiable asset. . . . On tribal agricultural land, *progressive farmers* must be encouraged to develop *their holdings** by offering more clearly defined security than that available under customary law."

* italics by the author

According to the Tribal Land Act, land distribution functions which had hitherto been exercised by tribal chiefs alone were transferred to *Land Boards* under the ministry of lands. In other words, just as land had been vested in the chief on behalf of the tribe, it was now vested in the Land Boards. They were composed as follows:

1. The tribal chief – ex officio.
2. One member appointed by the chief.
3. Two elected members and.
4. Two members appointed by the minister of lands.

The land Boards distributed land under two laws: *Customary* and *Common Laws*. Under the customary law, the practice was not different from the previous land tenure system of distribution except that it was the Land Boards and not the chiefs who distributed the land to tribal members for housing, boreholes, cultivation and grazing. Under the common law, however, land was also distributed to non-tribal members as well – mostly for *commercial* purposes. A certificate of grant was issued. Furthermore, if the government required land which was in the areas of the Tribal Land Boards, the minister for lands had authority to request the Land Boards to surrender such land to the state.³⁰

The Tribal Land Act provoked a series of protests from the chiefs – particularly those outside the government. The minister for Local Government and Lands tried to convince the chiefs that the reform was intended to protect the poor as well as the rich including the chiefs themselves. Speaking in the House of Chiefs, Chief Bathoen – one of the strongest spokesmen for chieftainship – who was not included in the government criticised the government by pointing out that the BDP government was run by land owners. According to him, the new reform made it possible for wealthy Africans and Europeans to buy land in areas which had hitherto been protected by tribal law:

We know that farms are owned by rich men and those individuals who have no money to buy lands will only get work at the mine (Republic of South Africa) or be hired by those who have farms (freehold areas)."

The Tribal Land Act was the first major political confrontation between the chiefs within and outside the government after independence. A year earlier, the chiefs had peacefully surrendered their mineral rights to the state with fairly little friction with the government under the *Mines and Mineral Act of 1967*. The Tribal Land Act did not imply any reduction in the land holdings of the chiefs but it threatened their influence over the population – particularly vis-a vis the new elite class. The latter was now armed with a legal machinery through which they could easily challenge the chiefs, and claim large tracts of land for themselves. The majority of the peasant population, however, was indifferent to the new reform.

Ironically, the opposition parties, which during the pre-independence period, had attacked the traditional land tenure system, supported the chiefs' protests in the parliament. This was, undoubtedly, an attempt to make political capital of the issue which they themselves could have adopted had they been elected to power. They attacked the government for having misused the tribal chiefs for electoral purposes. It could be pointed out, however, that had they presented their alternative on the issue of land distribution, it would have embittered the chiefs even more. They had advocated a reduction in the holdings of the chiefs while at the same time threatening the interests of the Europeans. It was partly for this reason that the chiefs outside the government were not impressed by the opposition's support.

The Tribal Land Act did not cover the areas owned by the Europeans in the so-called "Blocks". Consequently, it did not cause any friction between the BDP government and the European population. In fact the European representatives in the parliament supported the reform. One of their representatives, Mr. Sim, speaking in support of the reform, pointed out that similar measures had been adopted elsewhere in Africa. He cited the examples of Kenya, Malawi and Zambia.

He concluded:

"... no modern and progressive agricultural policy will work or be successful in the Tribal areas until an entirely new system is introduced. ... Individual farmers in the reserve must be able to convert from customary form of tenure to a form (of) individual title."

Despite the protests of the chiefs outside the government, the bill was passed in parliament with a large majority. In the House of Chiefs, the chiefs themselves, having realised that their role was limited to "consultation", reluctantly approved the bill. More important, however, was the fact that

most of them thought that if they voted otherwise, they might lose their salaries. The Minister for Local Government and Lands had continuously reminded them that the days of personal rule were gone and that they were government employees.

After the approval of the Tribal Land Act, there were already signs of rebellion by a number of the chiefs outside the government. Some of them defied cooperation with the government in transmitting information through the tribal councils to their subjects. Others were reluctant to cooperate with the District Councils which were the arms of the central government. In facing the indifference and apathy of the majority of the population over the Tribal Land Act, the BDP government was concerned over its own political control over the population as this had hitherto been exercised through the tribal chiefs." During the opening of parliament in December 1968, the President, Sir Seretse Khama, blamed the chiefs for this lack of cooperation which, he said, was responsible for lack of progress in achieving improvements in the rural areas. He further pointed out that the chiefs had, instead, engaged themselves in active politics and that this was "of concern" to his government."

In an effort to check the powers of the chiefs and thereby seek more direct control over the population, the government introduced the *Chieftainship Bill* in 1970 which was an amendment to the *Chieftainship Law No. 29 of 1965*. In general terms, the 1965 law had sought to remove all the legislative functions of the chiefs and transfer them to the new parliament. Some of the functions were transferred to the District Councils. However, the chiefs had retained their powers of land distribution. There were also a number of clauses which dealt with, among other things, the relationship between the chiefs and their deputies, appointments, salaries and the making of tribal regulations. Most of these changes were resented by the chiefs and they themselves suggested certain amendments which were accepted by the government."

The 1970 Chieftainship Bill was, in fact, a more stringent version of the 1965 law. It contained all the rejected clauses of the 1965 law covering appointments and dismissals by a minister instead of a tribal council. It also included suspension of a chief for a period of two years instead of six months as in the 1965 law. Chiefs were also subordinated to the District Commissioners. Their judicial functions were reduced to minor cases.

The government's determination to subjugate the chiefs was evident from the way the bill was presented to the House of Chiefs. The constitution of Botswana required that all bills which sought to alter the designation, recognition or removal of chiefs, including matters relating to tribal organisation, African customary law, courts and other related matters were

to be referred to the House of Chiefs.³⁶ Only after a period of thirty days had elapsed could the bill be discussed and passed in the parliament. The practice of the government, however, had been to consult the chiefs prior to the presentation of the bill – a practice which aimed at avoiding confrontation and winning their support in advance. When the 1970 Cheftainship Bill was presented to the House of Chiefs, however, a majority of the members were taken by surprise. They protested in vain. The government reminded them that they were not only government employees but also that the government's intention was to pass the bill regardless whether the chiefs liked it or not. The mood of the majority of the chiefs was partly summarised by Mr. Sekgoma in the debate when he said in resignation that there was nothing that could be done except to discuss the bill – otherwise some of the chiefs would find themselves in a deportation camp in Ghanzi.³⁷ The bill was thus passed in both Houses.

The last, but not the least, of the reforms in Botswana discussed here was the policy adopted by the BDP government on grazing in tribal lands which came into operation in 1977. It was introduced in 1975 as a *Government Paper No. 2 of 1975*. The fact that this reform was introduced at a much later stage instead of being introduced simultaneously with the Tribal Land Act was due to two unrelated factors which will be analysed in more details in Section 4 of this chapter. The first of these factors was a fear of reaction from the already uncooperative chiefs. In an address in Uppsala at the Dag Hammarskjöld Centre on November 11, 1970, the President of Botswana, Sir Seretse Khama hinted at the necessity for such a reform while at the same time expressing fear of opposition from the traditional elements:

... we cannot permit the traditional methods to continue because under the pressure of an *expanding human and animal population*, they are ruining the *land and pasture* which represents the only livelihood for most of our people. . . . We are moving gradually towards a compromise which will permit *communal grazing control*. . . . But to identify the broad objective is one thing; to make real and measurable progress towards the ideal, often in the *teeth of opposition from traditional authorities** is another.³⁸

*italics by the author

In 1974, there was a general election in Botswana, and it would have been politically unwise in the face of imaginable or real threat of opposition from the chiefs, who still exerted great influence over the population, to introduce the reform at an earlier stage. The second factor was related to the problem of financing the reform. As we pointed out above, nearly all the development projects in the country were financed from outside sources and were thus subject to the priorities of the donor countries. The government had to convince a donor about the particular feasibility of this one.

When the Tribal Land Act was enforced, grazing remained communal, that is, every tribal member was entitled to graze in the allocated tribal grazing areas. But, as we shall see below, the new policy on grazing was, in fact, prompted by the repercussions of the Tribal Land Act, which caused a sudden rush to obtain cattle and land for boreholes by most of the better off farmers.

The new policy of grazing in tribal land proposed a division of the areas into three groups. In the first group, individuals or groups of individuals with a minimum number of cattle were to be given exclusive rights. The purpose of privatisation in these areas was to promote "ranching" type of farming which also included exclusive boreholes. The areas were to be leased for a period of fifty years subject to renewal through payment of rents to the local authorities. In the second group, a continuation of the traditional system through communal grazing was to be practiced and, finally, in the third group, the government was to set aside certain areas for future purposes, such as, wildlife, mining or cultivation.

Allocation of the areas was to be administered by the Land Boards. It should be noted that the declared purpose of the new grazing policy was that land should be managed in the *best interest of the people*." In the above quotation dealing with the Tribal Land Act, the government, however, emphasised that *progressive farmers* were to be encouraged to develop their land holdings. As will be seen in Section 4 of this chapter, the rural majority, that is, those who were totally dependent on land had little cattle and were, therefore, unable to benefit from the new grazing policy.

There are direct connections between the reforms. The *Tribal Land Act* was necessitated by the shortage of land which was a consequence of colonial penetration interacting with traditional institutions. It would have been difficult to implement without controlling the chiefs outside the government and, hence, it was necessary to limit their influence through the *Chieftainship Act*. Members of the new elite who had earlier been prevented from acquiring land were now able to obtain it through the Land Boards directly. They were also able to buy more cattle which further reduced the available land for grazing. As the amount of cattle increased, it also became necessary to introduce the *grazing policy* which gave commercial owners advantages at the expense of communal grazing rights. In short, the three reforms all served the interests of the new elite.

Lesotho

In Lesotho, two major reforms dealt with land relations as defined in this study: the *Chieftainship Act* and the *Pioneer Industry Bill*. In addition to these

two, a commission of enquiry, the *Thornson Commission* was appointed by the government to enquire into allegations of abuse in land allocation. Land in Lesotho continued to be distributed by the chiefs. In the *First Five-Year Development Plan*, the land tenure system was attacked for being "responsible for a number of major obstacles to the modernisation of agricultural production".⁴⁰ As will be seen below, this view was a consequence of outside pressure being exerted on the Lesotho Government to change her land tenure system to fit the Swazi pattern which made it possible for foreign interests to acquire large land tracts. The chiefs, however, resisted. In fact, five years later the *Second Five Year Development Plan* emphasised:

The land tenure system in Lesotho has often been attacked as unsuitable for economic development. However, the system has demonstrated considerable flexibility. It has also prevented the development of a landlord class and the ownership of large tracts of land by expatriates, as is the case in some African countries."

This position was due to a combination of factors which will be dealt with in this section. The most important of these was the poverty of the country which persuaded most of the chiefs to maintain their links with the BNP government and thus, continue their land allocation functions in one form or another. This was achieved partly through the *Chieftainship Act* which strengthened some of the chiefs within the government and their supporters while at the same time weakening those outside the government and their supporters. This important factor has been overlooked in a recent study on Lesotho which points out that the lower chiefs who have reemerged after independence do not derive their power from the functions of land distribution.⁴¹ In a peasant agricultural society like that of Lesotho where the shortage of land is so extreme, the distribution and ownership of land has important political implications and it is the chiefs who "have more land than others".⁴²

The purpose of the *Chieftainship Act* in Lesotho was similar to that of Botswana, that is, to discipline and control the chiefs and, thereby, exercise direct political influence over the population. Among the restrictions imposed on the chiefs were a right by the Minister for Chieftainship Affairs to withhold their salaries if, in his opinion, they were not properly carrying out their duties. Secondly, a chief could be banished from his area. Thirdly, his movements within the country were required to be sanctioned beforehand by the Minister. Finally, his associates were to be only those sanctioned by the Minister to be "desirable".⁴³

As pointed out in chapter 6, Lesotho had a bicameral parliamentary system composed of the Parliament and the Senate. The Senate was dominated by the chiefs. But, unlike in Botswana where the functions of the House of Chiefs were only consultative, the Lesotho Senate could reject a bill.

In the normal circumstances, a bill which encroached on their own positions, including their own freedom, could hardly have been expected to be approved by them. Furthermore, the BNP government had a very slender majority in the parliament itself.

Several reasons have been suggested why the Senate approved the bill – all of which lead to the same conclusion. One of the reasons was that the BNP government had already managed to cut the link between the King and the chiefs and had, thereby, managed to reduce the control of the former over the latter.⁴ Secondly, it has been suggested that the chiefs had already been divided as demonstrated by their frequent “crossing of the floors” of both the parliament and the senate.⁵ Thirdly, it has also been alleged that the BNP leadership bribed most of the chiefs by buying them such items as cars, blankets, tyres, food and others. In a poverty-stricken country such as Lesotho, those who control resources can coerce loyalty. BNP was the ruling party, in spite of its slender majority, and controlled government resources. Most of the chiefs realised this and supported the bill even if that meant “sounding their own death-knell”.⁶ It was only those who did not share the fruits of independence who were likely to continue agitating. Thus, despite strong objections by some of the chiefs, the bill was approved in both Houses.

The Pioneer Industry Bill was an attempt to attack some of the obstacles raised by the land tenure system. It was specifically aimed at attracting industries and capital investment from the Republic of South Africa where most of the attacks on the land tenure system originated. The South African government argued that Swaziland’s “development” was a consequence of a suitable land tenure system capable of attracting foreign capital. The Lesotho Economic Planning Council which was dominated by expatriates maintained that the fact that one cannot buy land, or lease it for 99 years as in the Republic or Botswana and Swaziland, was a major cause of Lesotho’s underdevelopment.⁷ In 1966, after Lesotho had achieved independence, Leistner, a South African economist and specialist on Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland wrote that foreign investors were discouraged from investing in Lesotho because of the “inability to secure freehold land”.⁸ The Pioneer Industry Bill was a consequence of these and other criticisms levelled at the land tenure system.

There were two major concessions in the bill. One was to grant new industries a tax holiday for a period of six years and thereafter, the companies were required to pay nominal taxes with deductions for buildings for accommodation and education of employees. The second major concession which is more relevant to our study was that of granting leases of land for a period of 99 years. The granting of leases by itself was not an innovation. It had existed since 1963.⁹ The only difference was the lease

period between the 1963 act and the Pioneer Industry Bill. In the former, the period was for 50 years subject to cancellation by the Paramount Chief at his pleasure. It was, perhaps, due to this fact that since leases had been granted before the opponents of the Pioneer Industry Bill did not attack the clause dealing with the leasing of land. Rather, they concentrated their attacks on the "tax holidays" and foreign investments in general." Another reason why the bill was not attacked was that the leases were concentrated in a relatively small area. What was, however, new in the bill was the exercise of control and, particularly, the body responsible for granting and renewing the leases. In the 1963 act, this power was vested in the King on behalf of the nation while in the new bill, it was vested in the newly created government body, the *Pioneer Industry Board*. This was later transferred to the *Lesotho National Development Corporation*.

The Pioneer Industry Bill, seen in isolation, may seem to change little in actual land relations. Its significance, however, comes from its role in the power conflict between the King and the BNP government on the one hand and the chiefs within and outside the government on the other, as a consequence of the *Chieftainship Act*. Before the BNP came to power, the party had endorsed the executive role of the King in a future government in contrast to the stand taken by the BCP which had endorsed only the ceremonial monarchy role of the King. But when the BNP came to power, the party reversed its stand. Infact, the *Chieftainship Act* fulfilled the same role as in Botswana, namely, to transfer the powers exercised by the King to the BNP's controlled LNDC. Furthermore, the fact that it was also mostly the chiefs who were loyal to the BNP who continued their powers of land distribution unhindered also clearly demonstrates the conflict between the government and the King on the one hand and the chiefs within and outside the government on the other.

The connection between the Chieftainship Act and the Pioneer Industry bill does not, thus, differ from their counterparts in Botswana (The Tribal Land Act and the Chieftainship Act). It is of-course true that the Pioneer Industry Act was a response to outside pressure. What is important, however, is the fact that both the Tribal Land Act of Botswana and the Pioneer Industry Act of Lesotho served the interests of the new elite rather than the interests of the common people they were supposedly intended for. As will be seen in the next section, the Pioneer Industry Act failed to create the industries and thus the employment it had been expected to create. On the other hand, the new elite and the chiefs benefited from the limited activities of the LNDC.

The *Thornson Commission* was appointed to investigate allegations that some of the chiefs were abusing their power to allocate land. Ironically, it

was the BNP government which had a majority of chiefs in the senate and parliament which took the initiative in appointing the commission. A substantial number of the members of the commission were also chiefs – thus, making it almost impossible for it to become an impartial commission.

When the matter was raised in the senate in 1968, members of the opposition who were not chiefs complained that the country had experienced land shortages not only because there was actual shortage in relation to the population but, more important, because the chiefs themselves had been responsible for acquiring more land than they actually needed. They proposed that in order to alleviate the situation, it was necessary to legislate to prevent chiefs from making profits out of the “surplus” land:

We can go round the whole country and we will find that chiefs have many lands which they cannot afford to attend to and the end is to lease them out to people. Instead of allocating the surplus lands to those who have none they lease them out to these people.”

Outside this proposal, there was no suggestion to deprive chiefs of their rights to allocate land to the people. The issue of the relationship between the chiefs and the political parties was very sensitive because of the latter’s dependence on the former for political support, particularly in the senate where they became automatically members.

In the parliament, too, the debate was almost a dialogue between the chiefs and the opposition without suggesting that land allocation should be taken away from the chiefs. The government side defended the appointment of the commission by pointing out that land shortage was an unavoidable situation in the country, although it was only a few individual chiefs who had actually misused their powers of allocating lands. Infact, the few individuals the government meant were the chiefs supporting the opposition parties. The opposition, however, argued that it was hypocritical of the government to appoint the commission particularly when, as it was known, the government itself was composed of chiefs:

This commission was appointed by these chiefs who are today cabinet ministers, who want to know how chiefs are allocating lands. These chiefs know perfectly well that they are the very offenders in this respect. It is just as good as jackals appointing a Commission of Enquiry to find out how sheep should be killed. The same method can be used by cats on mice and hawks on chickens.”

The matter was, thus, only debated on a partisan level in the parliament without changing the land tenure system. This was mainly due to the resistance of the chiefs themselves who were important to all the political parties for their support. On the other hand, the commission’s findings pointed out that there was no evidence to support the view that chiefs were

misusing their powers in land allocation although there were isolated cases which could not be generalised.

Swaziland

In Swaziland, there was only one major reform dealing with land relations, namely, the *Land Speculation Control Bill* which was passed in 1971 and came into force in 1972. Unlike the Botswana Tribal Land Act which sought to deprive the chiefs of their functions of land allocation, the Land Speculation Control Bill was aimed at restricting the land in the European freehold areas. It was a normal practice for most of the Europeans to divide and sub-divide land and re-sell it to other European speculators in order to make quick profits. This was mostly practiced by absentee landlords who were estimated to be nearly half of the owners of freehold areas in the country.

The main content of the bill was that land in Swaziland could not be sold or transferred to non-citizens without the prior consent of the *Land Control Board*. Any sale or transfer would only be considered on its merits by the board if, in its opinion, such sale or transfer was in line with the general development of the country *as a whole*.

When the bill was brought to the parliament, it had first been discussed by the cabinet in the absence of its only European member, the Minister of Finance, who was away abroad. Most of the Swazi members of parliament and the senate, however, had been briefed except, perhaps, some of their European colleagues. It, therefore, took the latter by surprise. The debate, thus, became a confrontation, for the first time in the history of the two Houses, between the two racial groups. Some of the European members, remembering their old grand alliance with the King, went so far as petitioning the King that the bill be scrapped. The King did not respond to the petition and the Swazi members reminded their European colleagues that the petitioners were, in fact, the "speculators".⁴

Most of the European members were, however, aware of the fact that there was very little they could do to stop the bill in the face of a large Swazi majority in the two Houses. They, nevertheless, resorted to blackmail by pointing out that if the bill was allowed to go through, many investors would be scared away from the country and that it would also be difficult, in the future, "to borrow the money that could be borrowed before."⁵

The Swazis were not, however, shaken by such economic blackmail. Most of them pointed out that the bill itself had actually been introduced rather late and that the "people are complaining that they want their land back."⁶ On the threats of investments, they pointed out that "speculation" and "investments" had nothing to do with each other as far as the bill in its form

was concerned. In fact, they pointed out, "nothing in this bill will affect legitimate investments. All of us in Swaziland want foreign investors who will contribute to the development of the country. Section II of the bill contains a firm assurance to all foreign investors that their land requirements shall be respected. . ."⁵⁷

In supporting the bill, the Prime Minister, Prince Makhosini, attacked the Minister of Finance for deviating from the principles of "collective responsibility" of the cabinet when the latter, speaking on behalf of the European community attempted to introduce certain amendments which were intended to safeguard the interests of the Europeans. Prince Makhosini pointed out that "no responsible government will continue to allow its entire land . . . swallowed by foreigners and its nationals exploited by speculators."⁵⁸ He warned that if the situation was allowed to continue, it would result into "dangerous anti-foreign attitude among the indigenous people". This, in effect, would create an "increasing dissatisfaction of the Swazi people (which) may call for drastic action."⁵⁹

Concern over the bill was not limited within Swaziland. There were reports that the Minister for Finance had hurried from his trip in the United States of America specifically to come and prevent the bill and that some interested parties in the Republic of South Africa had even provided him with quick transport from the Republic to get to Swaziland.⁶⁰ Although these allegations were emphatically denied by the minister, the Republic of South Africa's mass media took up the issue by threatening that investments would dry up. *The Financial Mail*, for example, wrote:

Faced with one of the highest population growth rates in Africa, Swaziland badly needs economic development. Without it, this apparently peaceful country could fall into disorder. Yet the Swazi Government seems almost wilfully intent on *driving away the foreign investment** that is vital for economic growth. Its first measure to shake White confidence was the Land Speculation Control Act.⁶¹

* italics by the author

Despite the internal and external European protests, the bill passed and became an act. The bill in Swaziland was introduced through direct pressure of the new elite who, in spite of their high salaries, were blocked by the highly inflated land prices as a consequence of the speculations by the Europeans. Most of the chiefs, on the other hand, had little land to distribute to the people in order to maintain their influence. It was, partly, for this reason that, they too, supported the bill. Thus, in the case of Swaziland, unlike in Botswana and, to a less extent, in Lesotho, there was no conflict between the interests of the new elite and the chiefs. Both were determined to have a larger share of the land resources now controlled by the Europeans although

for different reasons. The interests of the new elite were largely commercial while those of the chiefs were largely political. It will be recalled that the King of Swaziland had emphasised that the chiefs would only receive their salaries on condition that they effectively controlled their subjects. But such control was conditional on the amount of land available for distribution.

In all the three countries, the regimes claimed that the reforms were in the interest of the people they represented. Most of the people lived in poverty-stricken rural areas where unemployment was high. The reforms were introduced at the expense of principal political allies of the regimes. In the next section, we will examine the political and economic impact of the reforms. We will try to examine the extent to which the reforms affected the political alliances on the one hand and the economic consequences on the other. First, we will turn to the political impact of the reforms.

7.4. The Political and Economic Impact of the Reforms

Botswana

It was pointed out in chapter 6 that in Botswana, the holding of public meetings in the rural areas required prior permission of the local chief. However, it was not the permission by itself that was crucial for the success of a meeting. More important was the influence of the chief himself in taking an active part in the meeting itself. The dependence on the chief was a political dilemma to the opposition parties who, in most cases, even failed to get the permission. However, it was more embarrassing to the governing party which claimed to represent not only the people but also the chiefs themselves. When there were meetings which were, in the opinion of the chiefs, unpopular, some chiefs were not only reluctant to allow them to be called but also, in some cases, attempted sabotage by frightening the people not to attend.

The government was aware of this dilemma. In 1967, a bill was introduced in parliament aimed at alleviating this dilemma and, also partly to limit the penetration of the opposition parties into the rural areas. More significantly, however, it was also timed for the introduction of the Tribal Land Act and the 1969 general elections. In explaining the main purpose of the bill, The Public (Amendment) Bill (1967), the Minister for Local Government and Lands told the parliament that:

"... it is inappropriate that Ministers should have to seek permission to hold a meeting. . It is proposed therefore that Ministers and Assistant Ministers should be exempted from the provisions of this Act. . ."⁴¹

The passing of the bill did not, however, dispel the dependence of the government on the traditional chiefs. Its own credibility and effectiveness was judged by its relationship with the traditional rulers.

The introduction of the Tribal Land Act, however, terminated the historically close relationship the government had hitherto enjoyed with the chiefs. Although it was only an insignificant number of the chiefs who openly defied the government, their general mood was displayed by "evidence of a sense of helplessness".⁶ The fact that they were now civil servants through the salaries they received from the government also contributed to concealing their general attitude towards the government. In addition to this, most of them had less education and it was most of these who were more dependent on the salaries of the government. Nevertheless, their attitude, in some way or another, was revealed through the way they exercised their influence over their subjects.

The first chief who openly defied the BDP government was Chief Bathoen. He resigned his position as a chief and joined the Botswana National Front (BNF) of which he became the president. The BNP had been activated by Dr. Kenneth Koma who had received his education in South Africa, the United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. He claimed to be a socialist. When Chief Bathoen joined the party, however, the structure of the party became an alliance of traditionalists and urban workers and elites. Another chief who defied the government was Chief Linchwe of the Kgatla tribe. He did not, however, join any party. Instead, he operated through the opposition BPP. These two chiefs were the most educated members of the House of Chiefs where they dominated in the debate proceedings of the House. Moreover, Bathoen had the advantage of wide experience from the former African Advisory Council and the Joint Advisory Council where he was one of the pioneers.

The reforms in Botswana were introduced between a period of two general elections – the 1969 and the 1974 elections. Interest was concentrated on the 1969 election: it was the first time that a chief who had resigned from both the ruling party and his chieftainship was to stand for an election. More important, also, was the fact that the constituency he was contesting was held by the number two man in the BDP and the government, namely, the Secretary General of the BDP and the Vice-President of the government, Dr. Masire. Another interest was focused on the area controlled by Chief Linchwe – the Monchudi constituency which was contested by a BPP candidate supported by Chief Linchwe as opposed to the official candidate of the ruling party.

Before the election was due to take place, the ruling BDP government attempted to weaken the expansion of the opposition parties in two ways.

First, the elections were changed to be held in October – six months earlier than the official date according to the mandate of the government. The government expected that by holding the elections earlier, the opposition parties would have limited time to prepare for them. Secondly, the government attempted to limit the number of eligible voters to eliminate those who were to register for the first time. It only recognised those who had registered by June 30, that is, four months before the elections and ten months before the mandate of the government. This was also intended to weaken the opposition parties and, in particular, the BNF which had just started to recruit new voters who were loyal to Chief Bathoen.

More relevant to our study, however, was the tremendous influence exerted by the chiefs on the overall outcome of the election in the country as a whole in making people abstain from voting. The percentage of those who participated was drastically reduced. From one election to another, that is, between 1965 and 1974, the percentages were reduced by nearly half. We have included the 1965 election for comparison since it was the only election which was actively supported by *all* the chiefs in the country. In spite of the restrictions imposed by the ruling party aimed at weakening them in the 1969 general elections, both Kanye and Mochudi constituencies – the home areas of chiefs Bathoen and Linchwe, respectively, were lost to the opposition parties.

Table 2 voter turnout in Botswana general elections: 1965–1974.

Year	total registered voters	total votes cast	percentage
1965	187,758	140,789	75.0
1969	140,428	76,858	54.7
1974	205,050	64,011	31.2

Source: For the 1969 election, see *Statistical Abstracts*, 1971, tables 67 and 68.

For the 1974, see *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 7, 1975, pp. 73–81.

The 1974 general election was fought by the BDP in an intense political campaign in the rural areas. A principal campaign issue was the *Accelerated Rural Development Program (ARDP)*. All the ministers, assistant ministers, senior officials and district commissioners travelled throughout the country explaining to the voters about the ARDP. The programme was a two-year crash programme which was financed through a special grant of nearly R20 million. Among the items promised for the rural areas were, roads, water, schools, teachers' houses and improved social services.

The number of voters, however, continued to fall. The electorate was highly influenced by the apathy of their chiefs in their "sense of helplessness". The high turnout in the 1965 general election must, undoubtedly, be attributed to the active support and participation of *all* the chiefs in the country who at that point had high expectations with regard to the traditionally oriented BDP. Commenting on the outcome of the 1969 general election, the President, Sir, Seretse Khama told Parliament:

... this House was returned by only just over half of the country's registered voters. At certain meetings during the election campaign, there were sustained attempts by unruly elements to deny speakers a hearing. Not surprisingly this was loudest and most obviously premeditated and organised at Kanye."

As pointed out in chapter 6, this was precisely the same electoral tactic as used by most of the pro-BDP chiefs in other areas. The BPP opposition candidates had not been allowed to address meetings in the Serowe constituency where the BDP leader was not only the candidate but also the chief of the area. In short, Kanye, the home base of Chief Bathoen, and Serowe, the home base of President Khama, only confirmed that "the great majority of people still pledge their loyalty to the chief..."⁶⁵ A further illustration of this was in the Mochudi constituency between the 1969 and 1974 general elections. In the 1969 election, Chief Linchwe who, together with Chief Bathoen strongly opposed the reforms in the House of Chiefs, backed the BPP opposition candidate who successfully won. Linchwe was later offered a post as an Ambassador to the United States – an offer described by the opposition as constituting either "deportation" or sheer "political banishment". He returned as a strong BDP supporter just before the 1974 general election. He was able to swing his subjects so that the seat was, in the 1974 election, won by the BDP candidate."

Finally, the strong link between the chiefs and their subjects was illustrated by a lower turnout in the local government elections to fill the seats of the local councils. The bitterness between local councillors who were representatives of the central government and the chiefs was an outcome of the Tribal Land Act and the Chieftainship Act – the latter making the chiefs subordinate to the District Commissioners. Local leaders – such as councillors may have been closer to the electorate than the national leaders – such as members of parliament. In the 1974 local government election, the turnout for the whole country was only 30.3 per cent."⁶⁶ The indifference of the peasantry to the parliamentarians is also illustrated by a study of political culture conducted by the University of Botswana during the 1974 general elections. About two-thirds of the electorate could not identify their own members of parliament in spite of the fact that most of the members of parliament had served the electorate in the parliament for ten years."

Thus, the political impact of the reforms in Botswana, while ostensibly claiming to solve the impact of underdevelopment and, in particular, the calamities of the poor majority only created political polarisation between the section of chieftainship in the government and the section outside it. In spite of the efforts of the BDP to check the powers of the latter, the fact that land was still the major connecting link between the chiefs and the majority of the population failed to limit their influence. More important, however, was the fact that the political polarisation also created apathy among the chiefs in general which contributed largely to the serious reduction in government support from the population. Thus, chiefs who openly opposed the reforms were able to carry with them the population they controlled.

Lesotho

Basotho politics were not as severely restricted by the chiefs as in the case of Botswana. The opposition parties were able to address meetings in remote rural areas. In addition to this, the chiefs themselves were also highly involved in politics. Nevertheless, the BNP government attempted to restrict the penetration of the opposition by attempting to sever the links between the King who supported the opposition and the chiefs. The link between the two had, in principle, been the cornerstone of Basotho traditional politics.⁶⁹

The post-reforms elections in Lesotho were held in 1970. The BNP elaborated its record of achievements through the Pioneer Industry Act by enumerating the few light industries that had been created through the activities of the LNDC, the airport, the road between the capital and the north, the Holiday Inn Hotel and the resumed rail link between the capital and the Republic.⁷⁰ In addition to these points, the BNP government promised 6,000 more jobs by the announcement of a R30 million investment programme. Most of the enumerated achievements had been concentrated in the constituency of the BNP leader and it would appear that the party was not fully convinced of its victory. Like in Botswana where the ruling BDP had attempted to weaken and prevent the penetration of its opponents, the BNP, through its South African Electoral Officer, also attempted to halt the opposition in some constituencies by changes in the delimitation of constituent areas. Most of the re-delimited areas had been the strongholds of the BNP in the 1965 election but had swung to the opposition on the eve of the 1970 elections.

The opposition parties concentrated on the failure of the reforms. The jobs that had been promised in the 1965 elections did not materialise. Neither did the Republic of South Africa make any considerable investments as had been promised by the BNP leadership. Most important, however, was

the neglect of the rest of the country in contrast to the constituency of the BNP leader where the limited activities of the LNDC were concentrated.

The results of the 1970 general elections were never made public. But according to some sources, the BNP was clearly defeated and, it would seem from these sources that the electoral turnout was by far much higher than in the 1965 general election which brought the BNP government into power. According to these sources, the percentage turnout was 81.9 as against 62.4 in 1965.”

According to McCartney, the failure of the BNP to win the elections in 1970 was, internally due to economic problems while externally, it was due to the party’s strong ties with the Republic of South Africa – which was resented. These two, however, were interrelated with the uneven land distribution (shortage) and the failure of the Pioneer Industry Act to create employment to absorb the landless. The establishment of the LNDC and its subsequent taking over of the diamond fields through the same Act was also resented by many who depended on the income of the diamond diggers. The diggers had been driven away from Letse-la-Terae to a small area.” Not all of them were, however, allowed to continue their digging operations. These problems aggravated those of an already poverty-stricken peasant agricultural labour reserve economy. This explains, in part, the electoral gains of the opposition BCP in the neglected mountain areas which had, hitherto, been BNP’s strongholds despite the delimitations of the areas. It also explains the reversal of gains for the BNP in the areas where the activities of the LNDC were concentrated as these areas had been the strongholds of the BCP.

The BNP, however, refused to accept defeat. On January 30, 1970, prior to the announcement of all the election results over the radio, the Prime Minister, Chief Leabua Jonathan, announced that he had suspended the constitution by declaring a state of emergency. He charged that the opposition had, during the election, engaged in “threats of violence” and intimidation.” This was rather surprising. Those who had followed the election maintained that the election had been conducted peacefully and quietly without incidents being reported. Some of the newspapers from the Republic of South Africa also confirmed this. Many believed that the coup had been instigated from outside or, at least, supported by outside forces, notably the Republic of South Africa.

In a matter of days, the South African *Sunday Tribune* wrote that the King of Lesotho had threatened the electorate that if they voted for the BNP, they would lose their land. This, the paper wrote, accounted for the “swing of 60 percent” against the BNP.” The Prime Minister of South Africa, in commenting after the coup, said:

We are carrying on as though nothing has happened. . It had been shown time and again that Mokhetle was a Peking communist.⁷⁵

The support by South Africa for the BNP was not new. What was new was her active support in the coup itself. Before we turn to the post-coup events, it will be necessary, here, to summarise the overall impact of the failure of the reforms in Lesotho and its relation to the outcome of the 1970 general election leading to the coup.

We have already pointed out that the Pioneer Industry Act, as distinct from its 1963 predecessor, deprived the King of the power to grant leases. Similarly, the Chieftainship Law was an attempt by the BNP government to cut the links between the king and the chiefs while at the same time checking the powers of the latter in an effort to control the population directly. Furthermore, we pointed out that the activities of the LNDC were limited and concentrated in one area which was supposed to have swung from the BCP to the BNP.

If McCartney's conclusions are correct that the failure of the BNP government to win the 1970 general elections was, internally, due to economic failure which, in practice also means the failure of the LNDC created through the Pioneer Industry Act, then we may also conclude that the polarisation of the chiefs between the mountain areas and the lowlands between the BNP and BCP was caused by the failure of the reforms. In the neglected mountain areas where the activities of the LNDC did not penetrate, there was apathy or direct rebellion among the chiefs. Most of them joined the King in his campaign against the BNP. Unemployment was higher than in the areas where the LNDC activities were concentrated.

Among the accusations the BNP levelled against the King at the time of the coup were:

1. That the King had violated the constitution.
2. That he had held meetings with several chiefs and instructed them to advise their followers to vote for the opposition BCP.
3. That his brother had been instructed to advise his followers to vote for the BCP.⁷⁶

On the eve of the election, the BNP also pointed out that the failure of "progress" and "development" (LNDC) was due to the fact that the King had "associated himself" with the opposition and that they, together, were responsible for impeding "progress and industry of any kind which the Government intends to set up that you may get employment in your own country."⁷⁷

There is, thus, a direct connection between the failure of the reforms in Lesotho and the outcome of the 1970 general election. The impact of the failure of the reforms may also be understood in the context of the post-coup

events.

During the first year after the coup, there was hardening of attitude of the BNP towards its rival, the BCP. This attitude was strengthened by the continued "hope" of the BNP that South Africa would rescue Lesotho economically by carrying out the development projects planned under the Pioneer Industry Act. The British Government suspended all aid to Lesotho. Within the country, the BNP government arrested their political opponents, banned their newspapers and imposed a curfew. Some of the churches which did not support the BNP were also affected. The King of Lesotho, after being restricted in his palace, was forced into exile to Holland. South African military personnel took responsibility for supervising the state of emergency and South African troops were stationed on the borders.

There was, however, no financial aid forthcoming from the Republic of South Africa. In the meantime, the country not only suffered from the financial crisis as a result of the suspension of the British aid, but was also hit by drought – leaving many Basotho without food. Just as much as the outcome of the 1970 general election was influenced by a combination of factors – such as, unemployment, lack of land and poverty, the post-coup events were also influenced by these same factors.⁷⁹

Between February and May, 1970, the BNP leadership, because of the financial crisis, was compelled to initiate talks with the leaders of the opposition parties aiming at the formation of a "coalition" or "national" government. The terms put forward by the BNP and the resulting exchanges with the opposition did not produce any substantial results. Some sources regarded the BNP initiatives as no more than tactical gesture to convince the outside world and, in particular, the British Government, that "the country was returning to normal" in an effort to have the restoration of the suspended aid.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, the room for negotiation for the opposition was far more limited as they were negotiating while still in detention. But the announcement by Chief Leabua Jonathan that his country was faced with a catastrophic drought immediately brought quick reaction from the British Government. Britain was probably embarrassed by outside criticism that if she did not respond immediately to the crisis, it would be equal to inviting the Republic of South Africa as was done in the by-election which brought Chief Jonathan into the parliament in 1965.⁸¹

The response of the British Government was followed by that of the United States which promised to send food valued at 5 million dollars. From then onwards, the BNP government was not only recognised but was also, through the aid, given legitimacy within the country. It was able to set the terms for the negotiations with the leaders of the opposition to its own advantage.

Most of the detainees were released towards the middle of 1972 and the King also returned from his exile on BNP's terms. A *Government Order No. 13 of 1973* was issued under which a new parliament was formed. Members of parliament were "nominated" by the King but, "acting on the advice of the Prime Minister".¹ The cabinet ministers were those "who immediately before the coming into operation of this Order hold office as Prime Minister or other minister or Minister of State shall, as from the coming into operation of this Order, hold the like offices as they had been appointed thereto...".² Thus, all the leaders of the opposition were completely excluded from the ministerial list. As the list of the "nominated" members of parliament turned out, it was dominated by the BNP members – including those who were supposed to have lost the election.³ Some members of the opposition refused to accept the "nominations" – but others accepted as there were no alternative advanced jobs in the country. The food "aid", in the meantime, continued to boost the image of the BNP government.

Swaziland

The reform of the *Land Speculation Control Bill* did not result in a direct confrontation with neither the opposition nor with the chiefs as in the case of Botswana and, to a limited extent, of Lesotho. It was in fact, supported by a large number of the chiefs. Instead, it resulted in a direct confrontation within the ruling Imbokodvo movement itself – between the Swazi and European interests. The opposition parties which had attacked the unfair distribution of land were restricted in two ways. First, they were not represented in the parliament and, second, their activities outside the parliament were limited only to the urban areas where most of the landless and unemployed lived. But the grievances of inequality of land distribution were also shared by the majority of the Swazis, including the majority of the chiefs in the Swazi National Council.⁴

The mounting pressure from the opposition, the workers and the unemployed urban population, however, was beginning to threaten the Swazi rulers. On the other hand, the new elite was also impatient to raise its share of the "economic fruits" of independence. They were not satisfied to remain permanently in the policy-making bodies and the bureaucracy without also sharing the economic benefits now accruing to the traditional rulers and their European allies. Although their positions rewarded them with high salaries, these were not enough to allow them to establish themselves on equal footing in the European enclaves.

With these mounting pressures from within and outside the Imbokodvo movement, the country was approaching a general election. The *Land Speculation Control Bill* was, in fact, introduced in December 1971 to

prepare for the general election to be held in May, 1972. The publicity given within and outside the country appeared to those who did not expect the Swazi rulers to betray their European allies at such a crucial moment as a "right step forward"⁵ – except in the Republic of South Africa itself. The government of Swaziland had hoped that the introduction of the bill would reduce the mounting pressure from the opposition parties and their allies and thereby enhance credibility to the government. This was, however, a miscalculation. The opposition dismissed the bill as yet another means of strengthening the position of the Swazi rulers and their allies and, in particular, that of the new elite. According to them, the bill was intended to be a continuation of the exploitation of the workers through the entry of yet another class of exploiters, the new elite. All that the bill aimed at, they claimed, was to provide a means whereby the new elite could buy land and property.⁶

The agitation of the opposition party, in some ways, paid off due to two factors. The first was that they succeeded in splitting the ruling party. When the names of the candidates of the ruling party were announced, no European candidate appeared and a number of influential Swazi candidates were also dropped including, at least, one important minister.⁷ Second, the concentration of the opposition in the European areas which were dominated by dissatisfied workers – most of whom had no land, increased support for the opposition. Among the ruling party's candidates in one of these areas was the King's own son and an influential minister, Prince Mfanasibili. The test of strength of the ruling party, with the reform of the Land Speculation Control Bill was, therefore, concentrated in these areas. The percentage turnout in the 1972 general election for the whole country considerably dropped from nearly 80 in 1967 to only 70.

As the results turned out, the opposition, for the first time in the history of Swazi politics managed to capture three seats with a comfortable majority in the Mphumalanga constituency – thereby defeating Prince Mfanasibili. The split in the ruling party became more evident when the King exercised his powers of nomination to fill the seats of the parliament. In the 1967 general elections, he had nominated four Europeans. They were reduced to three in 1972. The leader of the European community and Minister of Finance in the retiring government who had strongly opposed the Land Speculation Control Bill was also dropped out. He was replaced by a former member of the United Swaziland Association, Mr. R.P. Stephens.

The entry of the opposition into the parliament was, however, more important. Most of their policies had hitherto been restricted to small audiences lacking a convenient platform. The only privately-owned newspaper in the country, *The Times of Swaziland* ignored the party. No single

member of the opposition was allowed to speak on the government-controlled radio. The new platform which the opposition got became an embarrassment to the ruling party. The Imbokodvo government attempted to disqualify one or two members of the opposition by accusing them of being South African citizens.⁸⁸ In the parliament itself, the opposition not only continued to attack the government on the land issue alone, but also the exploitation of the country by foreign interests.

These attacks continued for most of the parliament session until April 12, 1972, that is, just over a year after the elections, when the King announced that he had suspended the constitution and declared a state of emergency. All political parties were banned and the opposition members were arrested.⁸⁹ In explaining his action, the King said that the "western parliamentary system" was not suitable for Swaziland. This had also been claimed by the Prime Minister, Prince Makhosini, on the eve of the election, as criticism was mounting from the opposition. In a statement to the press, Prince Makhosini threatened that the "inherited" constitution was not suitable for the country and that it was the intention of the government to amend it.⁹⁰

The parliament was replaced by the old traditional system through which the country was ruled by the Swazi National Council. The ministers became "advisors" to the King and his council. In reality, however, power was concentrated to the King himself. Thus, the Swazi coup was unique in African history by the fact that a majority ruling party decided to dissolve itself. It was undertaken partly in defence of foreign interests. It was partly for this reason that there were speculations that the South African government had played a significant role in the coup, just as much as she had been involved in the establishment of the ruling Imbokodvo party. An opposition of only three members against thirty was too insignificant to change the game.

The speculation about the involvement of the Republic became more evident after the independence of Mozambique. Before this, the Makhosini government had cooperated with both the South African and Portuguese governments against the Mozambique Liberation Front (*FRELIMO*). It should be pointed out that the Swazi government was partly dependent on Mozambique for her imports and exports through the rail link between the two countries which was her only outlet to the sea apart from that in the Republic of South Africa. There were rumours that some of the ministers and higher civil servants had cooperated with the Portuguese in capturing some *Frelimo* freedom fighters who were later handed to the Portuguese. The South African government gave a crash training programme to the Swazi armed force which was created overnight to protect the foreign interests.

Prince Makhosini was replaced by a colonel of the armed forces as Prime Minister.

Thus, in Swaziland, the land Speculation Control Bill created a political split within the ruling party on the one hand and increased the political support of the opposition party on the other. The majority of the chiefs and the new elite supported the reform – but, for different reasons. The chiefs' motives were political while those of the new elite were commercial. These divergent interests were attacked by the opposition which was directed against the landowners in general and, the system of land distribution, in particular. A constituency was lost by the ruling party to the opposition who now carried their agitation to the parliamentary platform. Subsequently, the government was forced to retreat into self-imposed coup in order to protect foreign interests supported by the South African government. We now turn to the economic impact of the reforms in the three countries.

Botswana

In Botswana, when the Tribal Land Boards were established, the bulk of the rural population continued seeking land from the tribal chiefs. But members of the new elite could use the Land Boards directly to obtain land. Most of the members of the new elite invested their income in more cattle. The government had indicated that it was due to introduce a new law which was to allow cattle owners to obtain loans from banks by using cattle as a form of security. It was partly in expectation of this forthcoming law that most of the members of the new elite increased their share of cattle. Between 1968 and 1976, the cattle population in the country increased by 70 per cent and most of this increase came at the time of the enforcement of the new bank law in 1975. The annual increases between 1968 and 1976 were as in table 3 below:

Table 3. Annual cattle increase in Botswana: 1968–1976

Year	Number in thousands	Cummulative percentage
1968	1,688	—
1969	1,945	15
1970	2,017	19
1971	2,092	24
1972	2,177	29
1973	2,117	25
1974	2,316	32
1975	2,564	52
1976	2,855	69

Source: Politics and Society in Botswana, UBS Readings, Gaborone, 1976, p. 274.

This increase in cattle did not, however, accrue to the rural population. In 1970, for example, the government estimated that 100,000 rural households – or about 21 per cent of the rural population – had no cattle whatsoever.” In 1974, the position of the rural population who was reported to have no cattle was nearly 50 percent, as shown in appendix 1 of the distribution of cattle in Botswana. The share of the new elite in the increase is illustrated by cattle ownership among the members of parliament and district councillors. Among the former, 83 percent had over 25 heads while 77 percent had over 50 heads; among the latter, the respective percentages were 57 and 37. In addition to their cattle ownership, most of them had agricultural land holdings of 20 acres or more.” Another important group which contributed to the concentration of cattle was the European settlers. In 1970, for example, there were only 290 families who owned 14.5 percent of the total cattle population in the country. By 1971, they had increased their share to 19.3 percent.”

There is no agreement on the number of cattle required to sustain a household in Botswana. Some estimates put the minimum at between 10 and 15. Others have estimated as much as between 20 and 50. The difficulty of estimating the minimum number of cattle to sustain a household arises from the assumption that part of the income of the household is also derived from agricultural crops. But this assumption is meaningless in the case of Botswana because it is precisely those who have more cattle who also control arable land for crop production as emphasised in the Development Plan and also from the above illustration of the correlation between cattle ownership and land ownership among the members of parliament and district councillors. Even if we accept the conservative estimate of between 20 and 50, it would mean, according to the cattle distribution in appendix 1, that about 80 percent of the rural households were below the minimum subsistence level. Moreover, according to the *Rural Income Distribution Survey*, only 10 percent had 42 percent of the total rural income while the majority of 90 percent had only a little over half of the total income.” The same survey concludes that Botswana is among the nations in the world with the most unequal rural-urban income differences.”

The cattle increase resulted in further land shortage. As more and more of the new elite increased their share of cattle, both grazing and arable land became scarce. Some of the areas which had hitherto been exclusively used for crops were intruded upon by cattle grazing. Furthermore, land shortage was reinforced by increased demand for boreholes. The Land Boards themselves were understaffed with inexperienced personnel. Most of them hardly visited the areas under application because of the long distances and lack of transport – although the law required that the areas were subject to

inspection by the Land Boards. A fee to cover transport costs was imposed – but only the new elite had resources to meet these costs. Thus, the imposition of the transport fee further imposed limitations on the rural population since the Land Boards were established at the district headquarters while the areas under application were long distances away.

The policy on grazing in tribal land was introduced to counteract the rush for grazing land created by the sudden increase in the cattle population. The government commissioned a study on the best use of land in the country which resulted in a *Report on Rural Development*. The report criticised the Land Boards for their ineffectiveness. In some areas, for example, the Boards were overloaded with applications. The report recommended some form of commercial farming. It proposed that individual farmers or syndicates with a minimum of 200 heads of cattle be granted exclusive grazing rights and that their grazing areas be fenced. The implication of this recommendation was that only a few families would be able to qualify for the exclusive rights while at the same time the poorer who had less than the required minimum would be pushed out of their areas. Furthermore, the acquisition of boreholes would further push away the peasants. At the time of the survey undertaken for the report, the Bamangwato area alone had 50 applications for boreholes. The report remarked:

If 40 of these were successfully drilled and each commanded 20–25 square miles, this would amount to apportionment to applicants at a rate of approximately 7,000–9,00 square miles in a year or no less than 14–17 percent of Bamangwato tribal territory . . . all available land would very rapidly be taken away."

The government accepted most of the recommendations of the report. The minimum of 200 heads of cattle was even raised to 400. In view of the fact that only 361 households had, according to the appendix 1, this minimum, it would be difficult to conceive of the reform itself as serving the interests of the majority of the population. Nor was the reform meant to be a measure "to manage the land in the *best interests of the people and their descendants*". The Rural Income Distribution Survey expressed the same pessimism when it commented that:

. . . it is going to be difficult to spread the benefits of the new policy. A small number of rural households such as approximately 22 non-freehold who own more than 400 herd, will be able to take over one of the new farms exclusively on their own account. They can single-handedly meet the requirement for the ideal minimum of cattle (not less than 400) to make an 8 km by 8 km fenced farm a viable proposition."

The policy on grazing in tribal land is too recent to allow us to distinguish any further detailed economic implications apart from the threatened land reduction mentioned above. But, it would appear that the reform may have

some implications with regard to employment in the country as a whole. According to the 1974 *Employment Survey*, there were about 49,000 people in wage employment. Out of these, 5,000 were said to be in agriculture.¹⁰⁰ It would appear, however, that the figure for agricultural employment is an underestimate if we were to include herdboys who were said to be paid in kind – that is, those who were mostly employed by the new elite. The policy on the grazing in tribal land proposed fencing of the cattle posts which, in practice, would reduce the number of herdboys. The population growth was estimated to be at 3 percent per annum.¹⁰¹ In the period between 1968 and 1974, only less than half of the total increased labour force was able to find employment within the country. During the same period, the number of migrant labour to the Republic of South Africa increased by 43 percent.¹⁰² In absolute numbers, those who depended on the Republic of South Africa for employment were more than those employed within the country. The gradual disappearance of herdboys as a consequence of the policy on the grazing in tribal land along with the annual increase of the labour force increased the dependence on South Africa for employment. In other words, it would appear that the reform itself is a mechanism for generating an increase of migrant labour.

Thus, the economic impact of the Tribal Land Act and the policy on the grazing in tribal land in Botswana increased the economic gap between the rural and urban populations.

Lesotho

In Lesotho, the economic implication of the Pioneer Industry Act was self-defeating for the policies of the BNP government. The fact that the Act itself was externally-oriented, emphasising the strengthening of links within the customs union area despite the fact that the economic union itself served the development of South African economy contributed to the self-defeating effects. Practically no trade existed with the other members of the union except with the Republic of South Africa.¹⁰³ In other words, continued dependence on the Republic was seen as the only convenient way of solving internal and external conflicts of Lesotho's economy. Such dependence, however, enhanced both.

The Lesotho government had expected to create between 10,000 and 15,000 jobs during the plan period of 1970 and 1975. Some of these jobs were expected to be created through the activities of the LNDC as a result of the Pioneer Industry Act. We have already pointed out above that the ambitious project of the hydro-electric scheme had been dropped as a result of the Republic's refusal to buy the water and electricity from Lesotho. Thus, the

jobs expected from this project also disappeared. The Lesotho government claimed that 6,000 jobs had been created during the plan period. According to a recent study, however, the activities of the LNDC only yielded 700 jobs and not 2,000 as claimed by the LNDC itself.¹⁰⁴

In addition to the failure of the LNDC to create employment, pressure on land increased unabatedly. By 1975, despite the fact that about 95 percent of the population were said to be living in the rural areas, only 21,000 – or 5 percent of the rural population – were said to be engaged in agricultural activities as wage earners. In 1970, 94,826 farm households equivalent to half of the total households owned less than 4 acres of arable land in the country. During the same period, a minority of 16,187 households or about 8 percent of the total households owned 26 percent of the total arable land varying between 9 and 15 acres or more.¹⁰⁵ Commenting on this pressure on land, the Second Five Year Development Plan wrote:

The pressure on arable land is understandably very heavy and so intense that in 1970 some fourteen percent of the rural households did not have farmland to cultivate.¹⁰⁶

In spite of these differences in land distribution, the same Second Five Year Development Plan maintained that the “distribution of income in Lesotho is remarkably *egalitarian*” (*italics by the author*).¹⁰⁷ A study by Winai-Ström also claims that the “structure of wealth distribution has become more equal than before.”¹⁰⁸ The official version of the Lesotho government is said to be based on the distribution of “productive” assets and the contribution of migrant labour incomes.¹⁰⁹ According to the government, the distribution of income was as in table 4 below:

Table 4. Income distribution in Lesotho

Population group	Percentage of total income
Lowest 5 percent	3
Lowest 20 percent	15
Lowest 50 percent	30
Highest 40 percent	52
Highest 20 percent	33
Highest 5 percent	16

Source: Lesotho: *Second Five Year Development Plan*, 1975, p. 2.

Winai-Ström claims that the above table is an underestimate of income distribution in Lesotho. Her proposition is more general and is not

supported by facts. We may, therefore, concentrate on the government's claim of egalitarianism. We are assuming that by "productive assets" of the country, the development plan means agricultural production which includes crops and livestock production. These, in fact, have dominated Lesotho's exports during the entire history of the country particularly wool, mohair and cattle which alone make up about 70 percent of the total exports.¹¹⁰ In addition to their importance in export value, agriculture, in general, contributed almost half of the gross domestic product.

But, like in the case of Botswana, livestock was not owned by the majority of the people in Lesotho. It appears that the official statistics of livestock ownership overestimate the actual distribution. According to the Census of Agriculture of 1970 – the latest one available at the time of writing, those who had no land whatsoever owned only 3.5 percent of the cattle. If we include those who owned 4 acres and less, the percentage was only 36.¹¹¹ But, according to Spray, the 1970 Agricultural Census Report also revealed that about 50 percent of the households in Lesotho reported that they actually had no stock of their own.¹¹² The explanation of this difference of interpretation between the official version of the government and the actual distribution of livestock lies in the fact that "there is a particular problem with stock owning to the system (mafisa) of effectively loaning beasts to other people – a household may not own any animals, but still have the use of several."¹¹³

Thus, as in the case of Botswana, there was correlation between cattle and land ownership in Lesotho with uneven distribution between the rural and urban populations. It would, thus be naive to conclude that wealth and income distribution in Lesotho was "egalitarian" as claimed in the Second Five Year Development Plan when the major resources – land and cattle were so unevenly distributed as the above analysis shows. But, the effects of the failure of the reforms in Lesotho were not only confined to the uneven distribution of land and cattle. Dependence on the Republic of South Africa for both employment and imports also increased.

Between 1968 and 1975, there was an increase of more than 23 percent of migrant labour force to the Republic.¹¹⁴ In absolute figures, this represented an increase from 150,712 in 1968 to 174,000 in 1975. During the period between 1971 and 1974, on the other hand, the percentage of food and luxury imports into Lesotho from the Republic was at an average of 75 percent. By 1974, trade deficit had increased by 580 percent from the 1972 level.¹¹⁵

The sources of these high import figures were to be found in a combination of two factors: the increased consumption rate of the high income groups and the failure to produce enough food within the country.

This latter factor was a consequence of the underutilisation of much of the land under the control of chiefs.

In addition to the trade deficit and the increased volume of food and luxury imports, the government was unable to generate income that would reduce dependence on foreign aid. The "tax holidays" granted through the Pioneer Industry Act adversely affected the revenue of the state. The few industries established were almost meaningless to the general development of the country as, for example, the casino at the Holiday Inn. The adverse effects of the "tax holidays" were acknowledged by the government when it pointed out that:

taxation has to be an important instrument in government's policy toward growth and equitable distribution thereof. . . during the Second Plan period the existing tax system will be reviewed. . . tax concessions provided to several new ventures in the past will gradually end."

Thus, in Lesotho, the reforms which were externally oriented not only increased the degree of dependence on the Republic of South Africa but also increased the gap of wealth and income distribution. It was only the few members of the middle class and the upper class who benefited through their higher salaries and increased rate of consumption from the reforms.

Swaziland

In Swaziland, the economic impact of the *Land Speculation Control Act* had the same adverse impact in the Swazi areas as in the European enclaves. As we pointed out, the bill was, in principle, intended to reduce the gap between the two. In practice, however, it served the interests of the new elite who had been restricted from sharing the benefits of economic growth with European interests. Although internally oriented, it did not seek to destroy the dual structure of the economy. Rather, it sought to increase the share of the Swazi middle class in the larger cake owned by the foreign bourgeoisie. The bill did not seek to destroy the external dependence as emphasised by the Prime Minister's speech.¹⁷ Rather, it sought to maintain a "marriage of convenience" between the foreign capital and the interests of the Swazi middle class.

It was a combination of the above factors that the Land Speculation Control Act contributed to the economic growth of the foreign and settler European interests in general while at the same time, those of the Swazi middle class were only limited to a token growth. This type of growth contributed to the unequal distribution of wealth and income on the one hand and economic and employment dependence on the Republic of South Africa on the other.

The limited benefits that accrued to the Swazi middle class took various forms. Some of the larger foreign companies took the initiative in offering the Swazi National Council part of their land areas for development in "partnership". The Swazi National Council was provided with the necessary equipment and management personnel. Other companies increased their donations to the Swazi Nation in the form of "shares". Individual higher civil servants, some cabinet ministers and the King's personal advisors were invited and encouraged to buy properties in the urban areas. Others were offered "directorships" in the companies. In some cases, companies were virtually left to be run by local middle class Swazis while the European owners retreated to live in the Republic of South Africa.¹¹⁸

Like in the case of Botswana and Lesotho, there was an increase of economic inequality not only between the Swazi areas and the European enclaves but also within the Swazi areas themselves. About 27 percent of the Swazi households had less than 1 hectare of arable land. As a group, they controlled an equivalent of 5 percent of the total arable land.¹¹⁹ The domination of the European interests in the country can be seen in this context from the fact that the total Swazi arable land in the whole country was even less than the total area of commercial forests owned by the foreign and settler Europeans.

There was a recorded increase in overall production. But this was limited to the European enclaves. The value of exports almost doubled from R61.7 million in 1972 to R119.6 million in 1974. Nearly all this originated in the European enclaves where production was almost 90 percent of the total.¹²⁰ During the same period, the Swazi share of production increased only by 2 percent. In the European areas, the areas of forests increased by 11.1 percent while the areas of crops increased by 11.5 percent.¹²¹ The level of imports from South Africa and labour migration to South Africa increased by 66.6 percent and 32.6 percent respectively. It is of interest to note that with regard to the latter increase, the Labour Department attacked the working conditions in the European enclaves as had been emphasised by the opposition party as being responsible for the increase of labour migration to the Republic of South Africa. In its Annual Report of 1976, the Labour Department concluded that:

If the working conditions in the Republic of South Africa continue to improve, as it is envisaged, the number of recruits to the mines will continue, as it has shown, to grow from year to year.¹²²

Thus, in Swaziland, the economic impact of the Land Speculation Control Act did not reduce the European domination of the economy. The little increase that accrued to the Swazi middle class only served to increase the

gap of income distribution between the rural and urban areas. Most of the Swazis had less arable land. Furthermore, the conditions of working in the European enclaves deteriorated and thereby increased the flow of migrant labour to the Republic of South Africa.

Conclusion

The post-colonial regimes in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland did not question their role as labour reserves for the South African economy. Instead, they embarked on ambitious programmes for the development of their economies. But such programmes also challenged the basic structure of the region as a whole. In particular, the creation of employment threatened the flow of migrant labour to South Africa on the one hand, and the political stability of the labour reserves on the other hand.

In order to solve these basic conflicts, the post-colonial regimes attempted to restrict trade unions in the labour reserves as a means of attracting South African investment and capital on the one hand, and to appease the ultra-conservative elements within the labour reserves on the other. These measures failed. South Africa did not respond with investment and capital. On the other hand, the ultra-conservative elements challenged the post-colonial regimes which derived their mandates from them.

A new "class" of African elite had emerged in the three countries which was in political and economic conflict with both the conservative rulers and their European allies. This new elite wanted to share the political and economic benefits which had hitherto been monopolised by the chiefs and their European allies. As the economies of the labour reserves continued to deteriorate at the expense of the rural areas while at the same time the European enclaves continued to expand their economic activities, the new elite intervened by influencing major political and economic reforms which were aimed at withdrawing from South African economic and political domination. In all the three countries, the reforms were ostensibly claimed to be in the interest of the majority of the population and, in particular, they were claimed to be aimed at reducing the wide economic gap between the rural and urban population.

In *Botswana*, these major political and economic reforms were: the *Tribal Land Act*, the *Chieftainship Law* and the *policy on the grazing in tribal land areas*. The first deprived the chiefs of their functions of land distribution which was now controlled directly by the *Land Boards*. In order to implement it, it was necessary to control the powers of the chiefs through the *Chieftainship Law*

which subordinated the chiefs to the organs of the central government. The policy of the grazing on tribal land areas was introduced to counteract the rush for land created by the consequences of the Tribal Land Act and the Chieftainship Law which served the interests of the new elite class.

In *Lesotho*, the major political and economic reforms were: the *Pioneer Industry Act*, the *Chieftainship Act* and the *Thornson Commission*. The first was intended to attract foreign investment and capital and was a consequence of South African pressure against the land tenure system in Lesotho. The Chieftainship Act was a political precaution to control the powers of the chiefs in order to exercise direct political control over the population – while the Thornson Commission was intended to investigate into allegations of the misuse of the powers of the chiefs in land allocations.

In *Swaziland*, there was only one major reform – the *Land Speculation Control Act* which was instigated by the new elite in an attempt to share the economic benefits under the control of the Europeans.

In all three countries, the reforms raised political and economic conflicts. In *Botswana*, the historical alliance between the chiefs and the BDP terminated. Some of the chiefs who openly opposed the reforms broke away from the ruling party. They were able to carry with them the population under their control into the opposition. The reforms themselves increased the economic gap between the rural and urban population. It was only the new elite that increased its share of the economic benefits at the expense of the peasantry.

In *Lesotho*, the ambitious Pioneer Industry Act did not raise the expected investment and capital from South Africa capable of creating the promised employment. The activities of the LNDC which was created through the Act were only concentrated in a relatively small area. The chiefs in the neglected areas joined the King who had been deprived of his control over land at the expense of the LNDC in a campaign against the ruling BNP government. The neglected areas which had hitherto been the strongholds of the BNP fell to the opposition. The BNP government was defeated at the polls but refused to accept defeat by imposing a coup with the help of the South African government. Dependence on South Africa for both imports and employment increased. It was only the new elite and some chiefs who benefited from the limited economic impact of the reforms through higher salaries and the accumulation of cattle and land.

In *Swaziland*, although the Land Speculation Control Act did not create conflict between the Swazi rulers and the new elite, it created political conflict between the Swazi rulers and the opposition party on the one hand and, a political split within the Imbokodvo's European allies on the other. The opposition was, for the first time in the history of the country, able

to win three seats in the parliament. Economically, the Land Speculation Control Act – far from reducing the domination of the Europeans, only served to increase such domination. The economic benefits of the Swazi rulers and the new elite were kept at a low minimum.

Thus, in all three countries, the reforms which were carried out at the expense of principal political allies created political conflicts which reduced government support. Furthermore, it was the new elite which largely benefited from the reforms at the expense of the peasantry.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. Botswana: *National Development Plan, 1970–1975*, see introduction.
2. Lesotho: *First Five Year Development Plan, 1970*, pp. 23 and 24.
3. Swaziland: *Post-Independence Development Plan, 1969*, p. 15.
4. Stephen replaced Lovell as Minister of Finance when the latter was forced to step down after voting against his cabinet on the controversial *Land Speculation Control Bill*, see section 3 for a discussion of this bill.
5. Reserves here refer to the African areas as opposed to the European-controlled areas.
6. Botswana: *Hansard* 29, 1969, pp. 165 and 166.
7. Botswana: *Hansard* 27, 1969, p. 67.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
9. Cited in Khaketla, 1971, p. 184.
10. Botswana: *National Development Plan, 1970–1975*, see foreword.
11. Botswana: *Hansard* 29, 1969, p. 253.
12. Botswana: *House of Chiefs, Official Report*, March 1970, pp. 18 and 19.
13. MaCartney, 1970, p. 138.
14. Botswana: *Hansard* 24, 1968, p. 95.
15. Cited in Leistner, G.M., *South Africa's Development Aid to African States*, African Institute of South Africa, Pretoria, 1970, p. 1.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 11–18.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
19. These deficits were a permanent feature of the budgets of the three countries.
20. Leys, R., *Lesotho: Non-Development of the Political Economy of the Labour Reserve*.
21. Lesotho: *First Five Year Development Plan, 1970*, p. 142.
22. Lesotho: *Hansard*, February 4 – March 27, 1969, p. 52.
23. Lesotho: *Second Five Year Development Plan, 1975*, p. 141.
24. Lesotho: *Hansard*, February 4 – March 27, 1969, p. 53.
25. Lesotho: *Hansard* (senate), February 16, 1968, p. 15.
26. Swaziland: *Annual Statistical Bulletin, 1971*, p. 60 and for the year 1968, p. 53.
27. Leistner and Smit, 1969, p. 202.
28. *The Times of Swaziland*, March 31, 1972.
29. Botswana: *National Development Plan, 1968*, p. 10.
30. Botswana: *Government Gazette* No. 6, 1968.
31. Botswana: *The House of Chiefs, Official Report*, July 1968, pp. 23–24.
32. Botswana: *Hansard* 26, December 1968, p. 92.
33. The 1969 general election returned the BDP government with a reduced majority, see Section 4 of this chapter.
34. Botswana: *Hansard* 26, 1968, pp. 7–8.

35. Proctor, J.H., 'The House of Chiefs and the Political Development of Botswana', *Politics and Society in Botswana*, UBS Readings, Vol. Two, Gaborone, 1976, pp. 170 and 173.
36. *The Constitution of Botswana*, Section 89, para. 2, p. 58.
37. Ghanzi was one of the notorious places for banishment, see the *House of Chiefs, Official Report*, March 1970, p. 23.
38. Khama, Sir Seretse, 'Botswana: Developing Democracy in Southern Africa', *Politics and Society in Botswana*, 1976, p. 471.
39. Botswana: *Government Paper No. 2 of 1975*.
40. Lesotho: *First Five Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 9.
41. Lesotho: *Second Five Year Development Plan*, 1975, p. 3.
42. Winai-Ström, 1978, p. 42.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
44. Khaketla, 1971, p. 181.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 181.
46. McCartney, 1970, p. 133.
47. Khaketla, 1971, p. 181.
48. Leistner, 1966, pp. 22-23.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
50. See Chapter 1.
51. Lesotho: *Hansard*, February 4 - March 27, 1969, p. 51.
52. Lesotho: *Hansard*, (senate), February 16, 1968, p. 16.
53. Lesotho: *Hansard*, First Meeting, Third Sessions, 1969.
54. Swaziland: *Official Report, House of Assembly*, Third Meeting, Fourth Session, 1971, pp. 117-118.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 126. There was no scheduled flight between Johannesburg in South Africa and Matsapa in Swaziland on the day he arrived in South Africa from his trip in the United States.
61. *The Financial Mail* (Johannesburg), August 27, 1973.
62. Botswana: *Hansard* 22, 1967, p. 19.
63. Proctor, 1976, p. 172.
64. Kanye was the home and constituency of Chief Bathoen.
65. Tordoff, W., 'Local Administration in Botswana', *Politics and Society in Botswana*, 1976, p. 199.
66. A detailed analysis of the election results is found in *Botswana Notes and Records*, 1975.
67. Parson, J., 'A Note on the 1974 General Election in Botswana and the UBS Election Study', *Politics and Society in Botswana*, 1976, p. 234.
68. Parson, J., 'Aspects of Political Culture in Botswana', *Politics and Society in Botswana*, 1976, p. 390.
69. Khaketla, 1971, p. 144.
70. This account has been taken from McCartney, 1973.
71. No official figures for the 1970 general election were released. The percentage turnout is taken from McCartney, 1973, p. 492.
72. McCartney, 1973, p. 489.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
74. *The Sunday Tribune*, Durban, February 1, 1970.
75. *The Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, February 7, 1970.
76. Khaketla, 1971, pp. 233-234.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
78. *The Friend*, Blomfontein, June 15, 1970.
79. Khaketla, 1971, p. 316.

80. Author's personal interview with a BCP official.
81. Lesotho: *Government Order No 13 of 1973*, Part 2, para. 5 (a), (b) and (c).
82. *Ibid.*, Part 3, para. 29.
83. Lesotho: *Government Notice No. 35 of 1973*.
84. Authors' personal interview with the Secretary of the Swazi National Council.
85. A number of government officials in Botswana and Lesotho welcomed the Swazi reform.
86. Author's personal interview with an official of the NNLC.
87. *The Times of Swaziland*, Mbabane, March 31, 1972.
88. Author's own observation in Swaziland.
89. The leader of the opposition was released but has since been subsequently re-arrested on several occasions.
90. *The Times of Swaziland*, Mbabane, March 31, 1972.
91. Botswana: *National Development Plan*, 1970, p. 6.
92. Holm, J., 'Basic Trends in Botswana Rural Development', *Politics and Society in Botswana*, 1976, p. 457.
93. Botswana: *Freehold Farm Survey*: 1971, p. 11.
94. Chambers, R, and Feldman, D. *Report on Rural Development*, Gaborone 1973, p. 49.
95. Botswana: *Rural Income Distribution Survey*: 1974/75, p. 84.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
97. Chambers and Feldman, 1973, pp. 115-116.
98. *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.
99. Botswana: *Rural Income Distribution Survey*: 1974/75, p. 112.
100. Botswana: *Employment Survey*, 1974, p. 5.
101. Botswana: *National Development Plan*, 1970, p. 13.
102. The percentage has been calculated from the 1968 figure of 42,000 to the 1974 figure of 60,000. See the 1970 *National Development Plan*, p. 12 and Norrlöf, C. *Botswana, Länderanalys*, SIDA, December 1975, p. 15.
103. Kowet, 1973, p. 253.
104. Winai-Ström, 1978, p. 127.
105. Lesotho: *Census of Agriculture Report*, 1970, p. 37.
106. Lesotho: *Second Five Year Development Plan*, 1975, p. 2.
107. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
108. Winai-Ström, 1978, p. 147.
109. Lesotho: *Second Five Year Development Plan*, 1975, p. 3.
110. Winai-Ström, 1978, p. 28.
111. Lesotho: *Census of Agriculture Report*, 1970, p. 88.
112. Spray, P. *A Tentative Economic History of Lesotho From 1830* (mimeo), p. 13.
113. *Ibid.*, See under footnote 112.
114. The percentage was calculated by comparing the 1968 figures plus the official estimates, see the *First Five Year Development Plan*, 1970, p. 251 and the *Second Five Year Development Plan*, 1975, p. 14.
115. Lesotho: *Second Five Year Development Plan*, 1975, p. 261.
116. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.
117. Note 57 above.
118. Author's confidential interview.
119. Swaziland: *Annual Statistical Bulletin*, 1976, p. 30.
120. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
121. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
122. Swaziland: *Annual Report of Labour*, 1976, p. 6.

Appendix to Chapter 7

Cattle districts in Botswana

No. of cattle owned by Household	Number of households	Accumulated percentage of the total rural households
0	40,454	45
1	1,209	45.4
2	2,217	48.9
3-4	5,120	54.6
5-7	4,874	60.0
8-10	4,921	65.5
11-15	5,541	71.6
16-20	7,458	79.9
21-25	3,480	83.8
26-30	3,082	87.2
31-35	1,990	89.5
36-40	873	90.4
41-45	1,446	92.0
46-50	448	92.5
51-60	2,080	94.8
61-70	724	95.7
71-80	702	96.4
81-100	758	97.2
101-125	696	98.1
126-150	414	98.5
151-175	113	98.6
176-200	188	98.9
201-250	372	99.3
251-300	116	99.4
301-400	181	99.6
401-500	136	99.7
501-750	142	99.9
751-1,000	46	99.98
1001-1,500	15	99.98
1501+	22	100.0

Source: The 1974 Rural Income Distribution Survey, p. 111.

Chapter 8. Summary And Conclusion

In this study, we have attempted to show the relationship between access to land and labour migration in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. We have emphasised the external and internal economic and political forces which interact to maintain these countries as labour reserves for South African industries. As a point of departure, we have argued that the control over scarce land resources in these three countries was and continues to be a major basis for the exercise of political power, by ensuring the control of the "surplus" labour of the land based economies.

Our study has shown that by the turn of the nineteenth century, Botswana had lost most of its southern parts to South Africa, the eastern part was demarcated first for the Cecil Rhodes' British South African Company and later as free hold land for the Europeans. Another part of the territory, the Tati area, was lost through the concession granted by the Matebele chief, Lobengula. In Lesotho, the military aggression of the Boers resulted in the loss of almost two-thirds of the total area of the territory to South Africa. In Swaziland, military aggression was replaced by bribery in the midst of British, Boer, and Zulu military confrontation where the Swazi became pawns. Placed in such a situation, nearly two-thirds of their territory was lost to the Boers and the British through concessions.

As a consequence of this process of military and political penetration land became an extremely scarce resource. This interacted with colonial domination and destroyed the traditional structures. The chiefs, who had hitherto derived their political power partly from the support of their subjects, gradually became more and more dependent on the colonial government. Relations with the subjects became increasingly repressive as they were coupled to severe restrictions in land allocations. Traditional institutions were manipulated to increase the economic and political power of Europeans and chiefs alike at the expense of the subjects.

The shortage of land and the restrictions applied in its allocation in the congested areas of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland resulted in the exodus of large numbers of the inhabitants of these countries to South Africa. By the beginning of the twentieth century, labour migration was reinforced by the imposition of colonial taxes. It was also regulated by the interaction of internal and external economic and political forces operating within the countries on the one hand and in South Africa on the other. The interaction of these forces was directed by the expansion of international capital in the region as a whole.

This expansion became the basis of formal economic integration between South Africa and Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, through the creation of the customs union and joint financial institutions. This economic integration functioned as an instrument of maintaining the three countries as labour reserves for the South African economy and for the exploitation of their human and natural resources for the benefit of the latter.

Economic integration strengthened internal and external political relationships between the traditional elements and the Europeans of the modern sector within Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland on the one hand and South Africa on the other. By the time modern anti-colonial movements were emerging, there was already a strong conservative alliance composed of the traditional elements and the Europeans who opposed independence. The modern political parties which were the major forces for independence were thus opposed on three major fronts, namely, in the rural strongholds of the traditional elements, in the modern sector of the Europeans and by South Africa. Since land and labour migration was regulated by the interaction of these three fronts, the conservative alliance emerged with political victory at independence.

Political independence thus emerged in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland alongside an extreme economic dependence on the Republic of South Africa. The underdevelopment of the three countries also emerged alongside the economic expansion of the European enclaves within their territories and of the Republic of South Africa. Labour migration both to these internal enclaves and to South Africa increased. Attempts have been made to reduce extreme inequalities by introducing land reforms officially aiming at reducing dependence on the Republic and at decreasing the wide internal gap in income and resources distribution. But since the conservative economic and political forces were so strongly entrenched, the reforms served, in fact, to increase both dependence and the gap of income and resources distribution. This failure was also partly due to the emergence of a new elite which became an important interest group. At the same time, labour migration to the Republic of South Africa increased.

Although our study has concentrated on the relationship between land and labour migration, it also has some theoretical implications relevant to the general problems of development and underdevelopment. In concluding, I will, therefore, examine some of the theories of labour migration and their implications for the general problems of development and underdevelopment in the context of the present study. But before doing so, it will be necessary to comment on the concepts of *development* and *underdevelopment* as used here.

In the introductory chapter of this study, we emphasised that the

combination of racial and territorial separation served to maximise the *underdevelopment* impact of colonialism in the region. *Underdevelopment* is a difficult concept to define with precision. As we pointed out in the introductory chapter, however, it is used here *not to indicate the state of a society prior to the modernising impact, but rather the outcome of colonial penetration*. As already emphasised in chapter 4, we have avoided including an economic history of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland prior to the penetration of the colonialists due to lack of reliable data on the distribution of resources. Nevertheless, our analysis clearly shows concrete tendencies of underdevelopment as a direct consequence of colonial penetration through the appropriation of the major resource – *land*. As we have shown in chapter 4, the combination of taxes and mass poverty as a result of land alienation created mass exodus of human resources as migrant labourers to South Africa. This colonial exploitation of human and natural resources was not for the benefit of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Development as used in this study implies a *process for change set in motion* to counteract underdevelopment, that is, to ensure that human and natural resources are developed in the interest of the peoples themselves. It would be unfair to suggest that development as a process for change has not taken place at all in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Some efforts at least have been made. But the obstacles are formidable. The reforms outlined in chapter 7 were undoubtedly measures intended to counteract underdevelopment. As emphasised in the introductory chapter, modern reformist moves in Botswana have kept down the level of political repression. The fact that the opposition parties in Botswana do participate in the political process despite the limitations may be seen as a step towards increasing popular influence on the the utilisation of resources especially, in view of the political repression in the other two countries.

The process of development faces many hurdles. Rudebeck points out that “the main barriers to development are found, internally, in social structure, institutions, and attitudes and, internationally, in the structure of the capitalist dominated, international political and economic system.”¹ As was shown in chapter 7, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland attempted to break only some of these barriers. In the case of Botswana, the government sought to reform certain internal institutions related to land and chieftaincy. In Lesotho, the problem of chieftainship was even more complex. The government saw the international capitalist structure as the only hope for the country’s development. In Swaziland, the racial contradictions were the main obstacles. The government did not touch the internal barriers related to the land problem. At the same time, it continued to hope for miracles from international capitalist firms which were supposed to save the country

from the miseries of underdevelopment. Common for all three countries was that the process of change was said to be pursued "in the economic and welfare interests" of the masses. Our study, however, has shown the existence of strong vested interest groups in all the three countries. This was also partly responsible for the emergence of "conflicts of interests" and that the political "mobilising capacity" of the regimes became extremely reduced due to the contradictions between "the beautiful goals" of the reforms and "the harsh socio-economic realities experienced by the people".¹ In Botswana, as we have shown in chapter 7, political participation of the masses has been reduced at every subsequent general election. A survey conducted by the University of Botswana, along with the last election, on government performance revealed that 56.4 percent of the electorate felt that the government had either done very little or nothing since independence. In the words of the author of the survey:

What is clear is that the benefits of development in the past ten years have not touched the standard of living of many people . . . or if the benefits have objectively existed, they have not been perceived by many people.²

In the case of Lesotho and Swaziland, the conflicts of interests created by the existence of strong interest groups resulted, as we have shown in the downfall of the governments. In both countries, the downfall of the regimes came after the opposition parties had mobilised the people against the policies and after reforms had failed to materialise – thus exposing the contradictions between the goals and the realities.

The massive migration of labour to the Republic and to the European enclaves within Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland is in this study seen as the prime expression of the underdevelopment of the three countries. It is, therefore, warranted to examine briefly how labour migration has been discussed in economic development theory.

The most celebrated theory of labour migration was the *theory of economic development with unlimited supplies of labour* proposed by Lewis. According to him, "if unlimited supplies of labour are available at a constant real wage and if any part of profits is reinvested in productive capacity, profits will grow continuously relatively to the national income, and capital formation will also grow relatively to the national income."³ Lewis emphasises that since the wage in the capitalist sector of the economy will be above that of the subsistence sector, the wage will function to pull labour from the subsistence sector to the capitalist sector of the economy – even in conditions of land shortage without damaging the subsistence sector. Since profits in the capitalist sector will be reinvested and thus increase the productive capacity of the capitalist sector, more employment will be created until, finally, the surplus labour in the subsistence sector of the economy will disappear.

The South African economist, Leistner, also saw the importance of the capitalist wage as an important pull factor of labour migration from Lesotho. According to him, the increase of labour migration from Lesotho from 1931 onwards was due to drought and "the effects of the Great Depression."

Despite the existence of capitalist development in the Republic of South Africa for nearly a century, however, neither the surplus labour within the Republic itself nor that existing in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland has been wiped out. Both Leistner and Lewis fail to analyse the interaction of the economic and political forces operating both within the capitalist and subsistence sectors as we have shown in this study. To say that Lesotho's underdevelopment in spite of its integration into the capitalist market of the Republic of South Africa is due to its being "politically a separate entity" as Leistner emphasises is also to overlook the underdevelopment of the Republic of South African Bantu homelands as well as the reserves and ghettos within "white" South Africa.⁶

As we have emphasised in chapter 4, labour migration from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to South Africa was not a consequence of the development of capitalism in South Africa alone. Rather, it was an outcome of a combination of political and military domination reinforced by colonialism. Migration started when South Africa was as underdeveloped as Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. It was the penetration of the colonialist forces into the traditional structures which developed the basis for labour migration. Moreover, the increase of labour migration after 1931 was not limited to Lesotho alone: nor was it exclusively due to drought and the Great Depression as claimed by Leistner. In Botswana, the increase was as much as 118.9 percent between 1930 and 1935.⁷ In Swaziland, it was almost 60 percent. Apart from the disastrous effects of colonial surplus appropriation through the imposition of taxes and the restriction of land allocations as emphasised in this study, a considerable number of people were indirectly forced to be recruited during the war years to go and work in South African mines as another method of the colonial appropriations – precisely to meet what Leistner himself calls "support of the allied war effort". This "support" demanded the increase in output of gold. It meant an increase in labour input. The people of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland had only two choices: either to face recruitment in the imperialist foreign war as soldiers or work on the South African mines.

Neither these nor recent increases of labour migration from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to South Africa can be explained exclusively by the wage rates in the capitalist sector of the South African economy. In fact, in the South African context, the increase of foreign migrant labour force developed simultaneously with internal political and economic repression.

It is significant in this context that the Republic never releases statistics of internal black African unemployment.⁸

The contribution of migrant's earnings to the households and the general development in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland is very limited, as noted, for example, in a recent survey in Botswana.⁹ Even in the case of Lesotho which had the largest contingent of migrant labour force and, thus, received the largest share of the deferred payments, the total income was of little significance as far as development of the country was concerned. A recent study has shown that in spite of the Lesotho government's intervention to have the income of migrant labour deposited inside the country's own bank, the contradictions of the economics of integration forced the Lesotho government to deposit the money outside in South African banks.¹⁰ Gunnar Myrdal has correctly pointed out that:

the movements of labour, capital, goods and services do not by themselves counteract the natural tendency to regional inequality. By themselves, migration, capital movements and trade are rather the *media* through which the cumulative process evolves—*upwards in the lucky regions and downwards in the unlucky ones.*¹¹

* italics by the author

Thus, the underdevelopment of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland must be seen in the context of the economic and political interaction of the region as a whole which was established by a deliberate destruction of the land-based economies of the three countries and their replacement by the labour reserve economy. The penetration of capitalist development in South Africa ensured and maintained the economic and political forces which strengthened the internal and external relationship that also continue to uphold Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland as labour reserves of the Republic of South Africa.

It is beyond the scope of this study to suggest or contemplate any concrete policies for the economic and political development of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Nevertheless, the general conclusions based on the foregoing analysis clearly indicate that the contradictions between the "politico-ideological ambitions and the concrete realities" that exist in the three countries perpetuate certain class formations that are both economically and politically isolated from the masses of the poor people.¹² Here, we have in mind the increasing economic role of the new elite which appears to be emerging as a kind of political class. It would appear that this political class uses its present power base to increase and protect its interests through interaction with the higher hierarchy of the powers controlling the region as a whole. The history of "interdependence" of chiefs and colonial government seems to repeat itself in this new interaction between the elite class and this higher hierarchy, now occasionally also at the expense of the

chiefs outside the government. In a largely peasant society where livelihood derives from land, the political and economic protection of the new elite class is likely to have important consequences.

In the absence of any concrete goals aiming at consciously initiated development for the benefit of the masses, the land and cattle resources of the three countries will be further appropriated by the minority elite from the majority who have either very little or none at all. The planned development that has so far been attempted in the three countries has taken the capitalist route aiming at upholding the interests of the elite class. If the present trends continue, the land situation in the three countries may well follow that of Kenya, where, after the departure of the colonialists, land was grabbed by a small elite at the expense of the masses. The main difference between Kenya and the three countries of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland is, of course, the fact that in the former, the development of other industries – both local and foreign were not politically restricted in the same fundamental way.

We have pointed out that the new elite class has a shaky local power base. In view of the present economic structure of the three countries and the continued political and social interaction between the chiefs and the masses, it is unlikely that the elite class will be able to establish a firm power base of its own in the foreseeable future. The chiefs have retained considerable influence on land allocation and the massive accumulation by the new elite class in recent years may bring the chiefs closer to the masses who find it increasingly difficult to obtain land. As we have pointed out, despite the creation of new institutions, such as the land boards in Botswana and Swaziland, many continue to turn to the chiefs rather than to the new institutions for land. This may possibly be a sign of reaction against the higher political hierarchy and the new elite. At present, the political base of the new elite class is largely derived from the local and foreign European interests which dominate the economies of these three countries. In recent years, a few of the new elite have even managed to move into the freehold land areas hitherto dominated by Europeans with the support of the latter.

A growing number of young school-leavers are now trying to seek employment in the modern sector. These young school-leavers have no possibilities of obtaining land on their own since they are not heads of households. But the possibilities of employment in the modern sector are also limited; so they may increasingly turn out to be, in the words of the Annual Report of Labour in Swaziland, “a social burden and *threat*”* to the *status quo*.¹³ Furthermore, the prospects of depending on labour migration to

* italics by the author

the Republic of South Africa may deteriorate. Tensions between the Republic of South Africa and the three countries are likely to increase, as contradictions in the Republic itself become more acute. A combination of these factors may drastically undermine the present power position of the new elite and its internal and external sources of support. Experience has shown that the elite, once entrenched in their economic positions, will not surrender their interests of their own free will. It would also be an illusion to expect the Republic of South Africa to surrender her interests in favour of the development of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Notes to Chapter 8

1. Rudebeck, L., 1970, pp. 31–32.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
3. Parsons, J., 'Aspects of Political Culture in Botswana', *Politics And Society In Botswana*, 1976, p. 394.
4. Agarwala & Singh (eds.), *The Economics of Underdevelopment*, 1958, p. 418.
5. Leistner, 1966, p. 2.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.
7. Schapera, 1947, p. 32.
8. Selwyn, P., *The Dual Economy Transcending National Frontiers* (Mimeo), p. 7.
9. Botswana: *Statistical Newsletter No. 4*, July 1975, p. 5.
10. Winai-Ström, 1978, pp. 151, 127 and 128.
11. Myrdal, G., *Economic Theory and Underdevelopment Regions*, 1957, p. 27.
12. Rudebeck, 1970, p. 53.
13. Swaziland: *Annual Report, Department of Labour*, 1976, p. 5.

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Abbreviations

AAC	African Advisory Council
ANC	African National Congress
ARDP	Accelerated Rural Development Program
BAC	Basutoland African Congress
BCP	Basutoland Congress Party
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BEDU	Botswana Enterprises Development Unit
BFP	Basutoland Freedom Party
BIP	Botswana Independence Party
BLP	Basutoland Labour Party
BLS	Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland
BMC	Botswana Meat Commission
BNF	Botswana National Front
BNP	Basutoland National Party
BPP	Botswana People's Party
CDC	Colonial Development Corporation (now called Commonwealth Development Corporation)
CM	Convention Movement
CPL	Communist Party of Lesotho
EAC	European Advisory Council
ECCO	Export and Canning Company
EEC	European Economic Community
FP	Federal Party
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front)
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
JAC	Joint Advisory Council
LNDC	Lesotho National Development Corporation
MFP	Marema Freedom Party
MNC	Mbandzeni National Convention
MNP	Mbandzeni National Party
NNLC	Ngwane National Liberation Congress
NRC	Native Recruiting Corporation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAC	Pan African Congress
PMU	Police Mobile Unit

RST	Roan Select Trust
SDP	Swaziland Democratic Party
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SNC	Swazi National Council
SPP	Swaziland Progressive Party
UBS	University of Botswana and Swaziland
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USA	United Swaziland Association
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association