HISTORY AND IMPACT OF APARTHEID ON BAKWENA BA MARE A PHOGOLE

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1. Introduction

For a very long time the history of South Africa has been written as if blacks never existed before the advent of a white man on this part of the world. Even then, whenever their existence was acknowledged, the impression was always created that they occupied the southern tip of the African continent from the north at exactly the same time as the white man coming from the south. Philip Mayer has rightly lamented the dearth of historical information about ordinary black communities in South Africa until very recently. According to him, relatively little attention has been paid to the ideas and the views of ordinary black South Africans in the context of their material conditions and subjective experience at different periods in history. Data about the ideas of the powerful and the motives behind these are generally more accessible than are comparable data for the powerless, and this is so especially in South Africa. As if to concur with Mayer, Marc Swartz also decries the general tendency to study only those who wield and implement power either nationally or locally, without considering the actions or non-actions of the public.

It is very easy to be impartial when one writes the history of a people for the sake of it. But when one does so because such history will be used to justify a particular position, one needs to exercise great caution if he is to discover the truth without being led astray by passion and prejudice, but instead guided by the quest to tell the story in the Rankian spirit of wie es eigentlich gewesen (As it actually happened).

Throughout the period since 1913, the Department of Native Affairs and its increasingly euphemistic successors—Department of Bantu Affairs, Department of Co-operation and Development—had been uprooting and removing African communities from the lands they had occupied for centuries. However, some communities were forcibly removed from their land not by any formal legislation but by a simple practice of making conditions of life unbearable. This was a force removal of a special kind that, though not enforced by the

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government, it indirectly achieved the same objective as other removals throughout the country. During apartheid, some communities left the lands they had resided on because of pressure being brought to bear on them as members of an ethnic community in a Bantustan designated for another ethnic group. Thus, whether the decision to leave came as a result of the implementation of a particular legislation or not is immaterial, the results were the same. Such was the plight of Black South Africans from the segregation period to its successor in the middle of the century, the apartheid period.

2. Background history of Bakwena

The Bakwena-ba-Mare a Phogole are Tswana people of South Africa. Like all non-literate peoples, the exact origins of the Batswana tribe are still shrouded in mystery. Before the advent of democracy in 1994, South African Tswana people were designated citizens of Bophuthatswana homeland. However, according to the historical record, the original Tswana societies arose in about the 13th century in the Witwatersrand region. All Tswana ruling lineages are traced to one of the three founding ancestors, Morolong, Masilo and Mokgatla. Morolong is said to have lived in the western Witwatersrand area around the 13th - 14th centuries, Masilo lived in the northern Witwatersrand area around the 14th - 15th centuries, while Mokgatla lived in the north-eastern Witwatersrand area around the 15th - 16th centuries.

Around the end of the 15th century Masilo’s lineage split into two and from this split arose the Hurutse and the Kwenà chiefdoms. It is important to note that this was the period before the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape in the middle of the seventeenth century (1652) and therefore before white settlement in “South Africa”. This was also centuries before the establishment of the Union of South Africa (1910). The principal Tswana clans are the following:

- Bakgatla ba Kgafela
- Bakwena (The crocodile people)
- Balete
- Bangwato
- Bangwaketse
- Batlhaping (The fish people)
- Batlokwva (The wild-cat people)
- Bahunitshe
- Batlharo and
- Barolong

Attached herewith is a Map of Ruins and Tswana Historical Areas, clearly reflecting Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole between the following areas, Johannesburg, Vereeniging, Potchefstroom, Krugersdorp and Heidelberg. (Dr Phatlane pls check where to insert this new map. I note 3 hereunder also talk about historical areas.

Around the 18th century, two new Tswana chiefdoms were founded after breaking away from the Kwena, namely the Ngwaketse and the Ngwato. It is for this reason that a renowned Anthropologist, M.J. Van Warmelo maintains that the Kwena, Ngwaketse and the Ngwato are offshoots from a single parent tribe. Over the centuries, the baTswana have tended to proliferate into several autonomous entities, giving rise to such clans as Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole (of the Bafokeng clan), another offshoot from the original great Kwena tribe as well as the Bakwena Ba Mogopa etc. The latter group had bought two farms in the Western Transvaal in 1913 and 1931. The Minister of Native Affairs held the land in trust for Bakwena Ba Mogopa which he recognised as a separate

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2 For an elaboration of this part of Tswana history and other perspectives, see H.O. Monnig. The end (Histoire de Van Schalk, 1959), p.11.
tribal entity subordinate to chief More at Bethanie. Notwithstanding the
foregoing arrangement however, in early 1969 a newspaper article carried a
story of their pending removal to Swartlaagte in order to give room for
diamond prospectors on the land they had occupied for over thirty years. 8 This
was indeed the sorry tail of apartheid as experienced by indigenous
communities throughout the country. The removal began in earnest in 1980 and
quite often such removals were implemented without negotiating with the
affected communities, because they were deemed to be in accordance with
"general Government policy". This is more relevant in this regard because in
spite of how long African communities might have occupied the land, as soon
as the land they occupied had mineral or any mining prospects, such
communities were very hastily removed without making a comparable land
available for them. Hence, the areas they were given in exchange were dubbed,
the "dumping grounds" by the opposition politicians and other extra-
parliamentary critics of government policies.

It is interesting to note that apart from this group, historically, the first
inhabitants to settle in present day Bopedi were also the Kwenya. According to
Monnig, at the time of their migration from the north, they had Kgaga as a
totem (the scaly ant-eater). However, for a variety of reasons which cannot be
explored here, upon reaching the Olifants River, the group split into three sub-
sections. The main section under chief Mashabela crossed the Olifants River
into what is currently known as Bopedi. According to tradition, as they crossed
the river they saw a crocodile (Kwenya) as a result of which they did not only
take Kwenya as their tribal name but they also accepted it as their new totem to
confuse their rivals. 9 Of the two remaining Kwenya groups, one went westwards
to form the Kgaga of Mphalele next to present day Lebowakgomo. It is for this
reason that every Mphalele calls him/herself, Makgaga o mashwewa bosheko le
mogwane (A white scaly ant-eater day and night). The third and the most junior
section under chief Kgoboko who had since accepted phuthi (duker) as their
totem eventually also crossed the Olifants River and recognised the supremacy
of the senior Kwenya. It is this group that is today known as the Roka (Hence,

8 Abel, R.I., Politics by Other Means: Law in the Struggle Against Apartheid, 1930-1994 (New York: Routledge, 1995), p 896,
Mokwena mo da lehlaka mo 'roka' metse 'a pula). Be that as it may, this group of baKwena in Bopedi should not be confused with, though not totally unrelated to the Tswana group that had branched off from the legendary Masilo around the 15th century.

3 Areas historically occupied by baPhogole

Closely analysed, there is evidence that most of the families that constitute Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole clan occupied an area known as Kolosi or the contemporary Foschville (Losberg). All indications are that over time, Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole occupied an area extending to the western side of the Crocodile River in the present Krugersdorp, the Mooi River near the present Booms and stretching down until the Vaal River in the south. The area which demarcated the northern border of their land was marked by a line that connects Booms, Krugersdorp and Boksburg. The eastern border itself was marked by Boksburg up until the Vaal River in the south.
Figure 1: Areas occupied by Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole.
The last remainders of the BA-KHUDU are the clans Letering and Nelzanger under the BARONET of CHIEF HOUDTSTROOM and among the BA-DLOMUKA-BA-OMUKENKWEBE. These last remants were mixed with European settlers and in the defence against Boers and the TURKOM-BA-OMUKENKWEBE invaders which are reported to have been more powerful. The last remants were scattered in three parts: North-West and North-eastwards. 

Under Chief MO LOT LEG I and a former chief of Klerksdorp (i.e. Kruisbeek or their lands) and were scattered in the north of Tswaani and further south at TSANA-TSANA (Krugersdorp, G.F.S.). In the history of the BA-DLOMUKA-BA-OMUKENKWEBE we also find the old TSANA custom of dividing the people into four sections as this is known from ancient African kingdoms. 

Under Chief XV MGATA we find the four sections or later royal clans: 

**BA-NKHUDU** (Barons of the People), the ruling family: 

- a) Malefetse, b) Moditwe, c) Kgale.

The head-councillors, citizens, sub-clans: 

- a) Nguqane, b) Pedi, c) Madisi.

The royal hunters, sub-clans: 

- a) Nkunke, b) Malefane, c) Motumane.

The royal herdsmen, sub-clans: 

- a) Nkunke, b) Kgale, c) Mogane.

The last remants were the bar (lingstebi) collectors under Chief BARONET. They lived first at GCRHA, near POORSTROOM. Even some number had to pay tax, but their Chief's relative, TBG, refused which led to a war in which TBG was killed.

In 1602, the leading remants of the tribe settled at KLINGOLO, called TSHHLA, the eastern portion of which was bought in 1914. In 1900, there were a population of 450 of whom one quarter were BARONETs who lived very densely on the farm. The people wanted to revive their old tribe. In 1922 the 450 original Barons of land declined to move to GHRA, where the Barons were concentrated with 1245 ha, and 2302 ha of Tswana land was added to the tribal area. A 'Barons of GHRA Tribal Authority' was established in 1967 in which the tribal set-up was observed and a chief was elected with XXI THALIENHLE NGELANE, born 1924, elected on 19.10.1961 but deceased on 31.05.1965. XXI TSHHLA NGELANE, born 1934, became chief in 1968. 

The future history of this particular clan remains unknown, except for the names of the members: MABA, MABA, MABA, MABA.
In section XXXIII, and XCV we can derive that there are the following KAENA TRIBES in Sopontsiwana and Potongo:

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<td>37-32</td>
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Some of the tribes mentioned are descendants of the KAEKA tribes. The history of the Paramount Chiefs of Lesotho and other original tribal sections are described by D.F. Erlerberger in his "History of the Basuto" (1915). The small but larger KAEKA sections lived in the Makana area before the MOCONG immigrated to Tshabone.
4. The Mzilikazi interlude

The existence of a number of Tswana chiefdoms was a disadvantage in some ways because it made them more vulnerable to attacks by external forces. For instance, like all Sotho tribes of the Transvaal at the time, the Bakwena became victims of the ravages of Mzilikazi's march to the north during the Difaqane. Since the chain reaction of attack, counter-attack, devastation and dispersal that constituted the difaqane had its origins in Dingiswayo's time in the early 1920s, its impact on the Bakwena could not have been before that date as officialdom would want to have us believe. For instance, it was only in 1817 that the first major clash of the difaqane took place between the Ndwandwe under Zwede Matiwane's Ngwane. The Ngwane were defeated and split into two. One group fled to the north and founded the Swazi Kingdom under Sobhuza while the other group fled to the foothills of the Drakensberg. In the meantime, the Ndebele under Mzilikazi were in the process of breaking away from Shaka and migrating across the Drakensberg. After incurring Shaka's wrath, in 1827 Mzilikazi led a band of refugees across the Drakensberg into the eastern Transvaal to the extent that by 1833 his impis had reached the Vaal River where they established their base from which they raided the Kwenka and other Tswana communities, thus forcing them to flee westwards. In 1837, Mzilikazi's impis abandoned their Vaal River base and moved to the Magalisberg Mountains, just next to the Kgala and the Kwenka and further attacking these clans before Mzilikazi migrated north of the Limpopo River eventually establishing a permanent base in Rhodesia, present day Zimbabwe (Bulawayo).

Against this background, it cannot be denied that the Difaqane had a devastating impact on the Tswana in general and on the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole in particular. However, the view that this entire group of Batswana were scattered all over the place including the North-West, up to the Madikwe region by the Mzilikazi wars is devoid of any truth, particularly if it seeks to suggest that the

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13 Research Report compiled by Molebudzulu Lucky (Regional Land Claims Commission Gauteng and North West Provinces, 17 February 2006, p.6) This document claims, very erroneously, that the undisturbed rights of the Batswana on their lands were interrupted by Mzilikazi's invasion in the late 1820s. In this way, the document actually dates Mzilikazi and the events of the Difaqane some two hundred years before their actual time.

Bakwena as a tribe thereby ceased to stay around the southern part of Johannesburg. There is a wealth of historical evidence to illustrate the point that in spite of Mzikazi's interruption of their lives the majority of Bakwena still continued to stay in the Witwatersrand region until the Union government's adoption of the Natives Land Act of 1913 and beyond. Further proof, are historical graves of Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole within the borders of the tribal land going as far back as 1835, 1923, 1935. To-date, there is no record of anyone including the authorities challenging their rights to bury their loved ones at the said grave sites.

For the sake of convenience, I have deliberately included photographs of members of the Clan at the above mentioned grave site as proof of the foregoing assertion.
Admittedly, the so-called Ndebele wars had brought about great devastation to the Batswana. They suffered heavily than other tribes in the hands of Mzilikazi, largely because of their numerous chiefdoms which rendered them more vulnerable to attacks by external forces than others and again because no dynamic and powerful leader ever emerged to weld them together into a single more formidable polity. The foregoing notwithstanding however, the historical record also shows that in spite of Mzilikazi, by the mid-nineteenth century, the Kwena were the most powerful and more prominent of all the Tswana chiefdoms.¹⁰
5. Tsorogwane/Misgund as known to baPhogole

In the course of time, the Bakwena clan split into several sub-clans, namely:

- Bakwena ba Mare A Phogole
- Bakwena ba Ga Molopyane
- Bakwena Ba Mogopa
- Bakwena Boo Modimosana Ba Ga Mrnatau
- Bakwena Ba Morare (Madikwe)

From the historical background sketched above, there can be no doubt that the area around the southern part of Johannesburg is the original land of the Batswana people of South Africa. Hence, most of the Tswana people today justifiably trace their origin from the Johannesburg region. The Bakwena-ba-Mare a Phogole themselves had settled on the southern part of the Witwatersrand on the banks of Klip Rivier, under the traditional leadership of Mogagabe. During the period of their long stay in this area, they knew Klip Rivier as noka ya Tite. As a result, for some people the entire Misgund/Tsorogwane area was also known as Tite, named after the river. Tsorogwane covers the area from Kibler Park to Vereeniging and from Naledi to Kliprivier Station. What is not in question is the fact that the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole trace their uninterrupted settlement at Tsorogwane back to the 14th century, because of their early history and that of the rest of the Tswana people of this country are but one history. According to oral tradition, their ancestors enjoyed communal rights to the land and exercised all the indigenous rights that go with this. These include, though not limited to, residential rights, enjoying their cultural and traditional benefits in land, for example, they conducted rituals and other ceremonies, paid spiritual homage to their ancestors, buried their dead in numerous graveyards, (even though some graveyards have

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16 EAC 5/1719 1952.1/5/160448 at Houdtman, 36-36 Mogagabe St, Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole 1316
17 Madikwe, South Africa 6/2, 16 September 2009
been destroyed, quite a number of graveyards are still there and continue to be used by the clan in their times of need), they cultivated the land as well as used it for livestock grazing purposes. Historically, such unlimited communal rights to the land among indigenous communities were passed on to the direct descendants of one generation to another. When the first white men came to settle around Tsorogwane, they found the Bakwena on the land and since they had occupied the land long before the colonial government's formal administration, it is understandable that they had no title deed to the land. In fact, registered ownership of land was unknown to most indigenous communities who believed in indigenous law of ownership. If the recent constitutional court judgement is by Dikgang Moseneke is anything to go by, registered ownership of land does not necessarily enjoy primacy over indigenous title.19

Legend has it that when Mzilikazi raided the Bakwena in the first half of the 19th century, they captured one Mogagabe and upon their arrival in Rhodesia (modern day Zimbabwe), they could not pronounce the name Mogagabe and thus his name was misspelt for Mugabe.20 According to Keegan, the Ngakane family was particularly more prominent among the maPhogole division largely because of the stature of Saul Tshaoli Ngakane, popularly known to the Boers at the time as Wildebeest.21 His popularity stemmed mainly from his personal relationship with President Paul Kruger in the second half of the 19th century. According to tradition, the contemporary Saulsberg Mountain, on the southern edge of the Witwatersrand region was named after Saul Ngakane.22 Though it is not clear how the land known as Tsorogwane came into white hands, what is known is that from the 1840s and 1850s one portion of it came under the ownership of a certain Bezuidenhout family, another under the Meyer family while the third portion came under the ownership of the Marais family. Quite clearly therefore, there is no denying that Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole lost their indigenous ownership of Tsorogwane even prior to 1915 and they were henceforth compelled to become labour tenants of the new owner. However,

20 Moseneke, D.C.J, Constitutional Court judgement, 8 June 2007, p.11.
21 Interview with Elijah Ngakane, 13 September 2006.
existing oral evidence suggests that even though they had lost indigenous ownership of the land, Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole continued to exercise the right to occupy the land, to raise crops and graze their livestock.

In the course of time, Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole lived on the farm belonging to Org Marais (As pointed out earlier, it is not clear how these families came to own the farms and from whom they purchased them because the Batswana had resided on the land long before any white settlement in the Transvaal). From the historical record, as reflected in the Deeds Registry, the earliest indication of the formal sale of part of Misgund was on 2nd April 1895 and it was purchased by Johannes Christoffel Janse van Vuuren. Subsequently, on the 21st May 1897 another portion of Tsorogwane (Misgund) was purchased and the deed of sale was transferred in favour of Walter George Compton. For the rest, the earliest available record of sale was in the early 1900s.13

It was from this period that the Batswana increasingly came under pressure to either work as labour tenants of white farmers or leave the land.14 When gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand area in the mid-1880s, in spite of Mzilikazi, Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole were still residing in the vicinity of Vereeniginu and they therefore witnessed the early beginnings of the mineral exploitations in the region. However, before the turn of the century they moved further west into the Potchefstroom district, but in the course of time, they returned to Vereeniginu where they settled on the land owned by the Isaac Lewis and Samuel Marks partnership. How and under what circumstances the latter also came to have ownership of this land is also not clear. However, what is clear is that throughout their stay on the land which was obviously sold under their feet, the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole were reduced to no more than labour tenants of the white farmers whose occupational interest in the land had become subject to the overriding sway of the registered owner. In this way, the collective indigenous ownership title to the land had succumbed to settler dispossession and subsequent land laws on ownership and occupation of land by black people.

13 URR 694/925, Purchase of certain portion marked nos 13 & 14 (1894). See also URR, Minutes nos 822-1201 (675) Misgund sold in terms of Section 11 (1) of the Land settlement Act No 12 of 1912 as amended. Only certain portion of the farm Misgund No 58 measuring 23 morgen 83.3 square roods

14 URR 694/925, Purchase of certain portion marked nos 13 & 14 (1894). See also URR, Minutes nos 822-1201 (675) Misgund sold in terms of Section 11 (1) of the Land settlement Act No 12 of 1912 as amended. Only certain portion of the farm Misgund No 58 measuring 23 morgen 83.3 square roods
Though mindful of the fact that there are still some scholars, albeit a small minority, who are not entirely convinced of the credibility of unwritten source material for historical reconstruction, I have no doubt that such sources, particularly oral evidence, is extremely valuable, used either with or in the absence of written documents. Hence, it is often said that contemporary historians have an advantage of gaining access to the recent memory of participants. Of course people who are biased towards document-based accounts of the past would always prefer written sources as capable of providing valid historical knowledge. Be that as it may however, it should be noted that although written sources of African history date back thousands of years, literacy was not yet widespread in many parts of the country, particularly among indigenous communities.

Admittedly, oral testimony, just like other sources of evidence, provides problems of verification because “human memory is given to error, misconception, elision, distortion, elaboration and downright fabrication.” Yet in this it suffers from the same problems as much that survives in written form from the past. Luckily however, oral evidence can in a variety of ways be tested against known facts or against information already available in old newspapers or in archives. Thus notwithstanding its shortcomings, oral evidence does fill a significant gap in the literature by providing information that could otherwise not have been available through recourse to the written record alone.

In an exclusive interview with a 98 year old former resident of Tsorogwane, Martha Motsele, born Ngakane, Tsorogwane as they knew it comprised of (but was not limited to) the farm Misgund 322 which consists of 68 portions, the farm Misgund 325 IQ which consists of 2 Portions and the farm Rietlei 101 IR which consists of over 80 portions all currently registered under different private individuals including the Municipality of Johannesburg. Apart from Kliprivierberg Nature Reserve which has a marked Tswana Village, has amongst other, graves of Motibe's with old tombstones dated 1956, now part of the protected JHB City Parks protected areas, business centres and a Luxury Security Golf Estate, this is the area on which the present upmarket suburb of Kibler Park had been erected. For the maPhogole, the place is known by its historical name of Motshedalafung. To date, the community is still aggrieved.
about the manner in which their graves were dealt with in the process of establishing this suburb. Up to this day, it is still a mystery what happened to the human remains of their loved ones after the construction company had destroyed their graveyard to give way for Kibler Park. All attempts to solicit the assistance of the political powers that be on this matter resulted in ever-diminishing success.

Martha Moshele's oral evidence is also corroborated by Mme Anna Mochane Raditlhalo a former resident of Motlhatlafung which is presently known as Kibler Park. She was born on the 14 August 1931, and grew in a farm owned by her father. She claims that while at Motlhatlafung, they used to plough the fields and kept a herd of cattle. In an exclusive interview with the author on the history of Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole, she claims that in 1960 she and her family were forcefully removed by the officials of the then Peri-Urban to their current residence in Diepkloof house number 7517, Zone 3. Interestingly, her evidence is not contradicted by other informants that I have also had the privilege to interview on this project.

For instance, Mme Johanna Kali Raditlhalo states that she was born in 1947 on a farm known as Kgotlong, and that her parents (Amos and Johanna Raditlhalo) worked for Chille Lombard, and that they had a house on the farm, and attended a school at All Saints College. She also claims that there was also a church which was built by her own mother's grandfather Matthews.

Johanna Raditlhalo, claims that one night officials of the Peri-Urban came with police vans, dogs and ordered them forcefully to leave the farm and trucks were immediately made available to move the family to Meadowlands, thus leaving behind their cattle and the graves of their ancestors on the farm.

These testimonies of Mme Johanna and Kali Raditlhalo were further corroborated by that of Mme Dineo Pauline Setshedi who was also born in 1947 at Tsorogane, the area that was also called Misgund, and that she also attended the same school. Mme Johanna Raditlhalo

In his evidence as well, Mr Jona Moses Moleme, who now stays in Moleme, Soweto but was born in the (Misgund) on 31 May 1931 states as follows...
emphatically, “I am a nephew of the clan of Baphogole - Bakwena - Ba - Mare - A - Phogole by birth. I lived in Tite (Misgund) from birth until 1952 when we were removed due to force removals by the Peri - Urban Government authorities. My memory of the areas occupied by Baphogole, Bakwena Ba - Mare - A - Phogole spread over the following modern areas:

1. Toko (New called Zacharia Park)

2. Madimatle (Now called Elansfontein)

3. Tite (Misgund, Jackson Drift & Van Wyk’sRus)

4. Thabana ya Mantate (Part of Misgund)

5. The area west of and including Golden Highway westwards to the area now called Lenasia. The core area of the clan of Baphogole has subsequently being sub-divided into numerous areas now known as Southgate, Comptonville, Naturena and Misgund”.

It is further interesting to note that up to this day, a special grave site dating back to 1890’s has been reserved for Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole in (Misgund). This is in a way, a tacit acknowledgement by the authorities of the historical claim to the land that the clan has. According to Moses Molenga, even when the current freeway( M1 )from JHB to Bloemfontein was planned, construction work could not begin until the views of BaPhogole were canvassed. A special task team was set up by BaPhogole to appeal to the government in Pretoria to ensure that the contractor did not temper with or even exhume the remains of their loved ones in Misgund. As could be expected, the appeal was successful and the Freeway was constructed in a manner that it did not lead to the destruction of the cemetery.

Sharing the same sentiments with the rest of the people I interviewed for this project was Mogapi Gabriel Mogagabe. Gabriel Mogagabe was born at Toko, presently known as Zacharia Park, on 4 February 1952. He also has this to say about his experiences at Tite until they were forcibly removed to Soweto. “I am a son of Mogagabe family and member of the clan of Bakwena - Ba - Mare - A - Phogole. Around the age of 10 years I was taken by my grand father who
resided at Bosrandtjie, part of Tite in the west. We were forcefully removed by the peri-Urban authorities. I am not sure which year was it. My grandfather tried to educate me about the history of Baphogole and the areas they occupied until the time of forced removal. These are some of the areas I remember:

1. Motlhatlhafung (Kibler Park)
2. Saulsberg Mountain Range (Thaba Ya Batswana)
3. Tite
4. Thabana Ya Mantate
5. Thaba Ya Manong
6. Madimatle
7. Pompi

A special place for the clan was cemetery which had been used then for burial till today. This cemetery was saved from total demolition by the apartheid Government. A special appeals committee representing the clan when negotiating with government from time to time consisted of the following members:

1. Steven Sefutswelo Mogagabe
2. Herman Maselwane
3. Zacharia Mokhethi

Also sharing with me his experiences of the time is Mr. Elijah Khosane Ngakane, who now stays in Diepkloof, Soweto. In his evidence on this project, Mr. Elijah Ngakane who was born on 22 September 1939 had this to say: ‘‘Although my childhood days were largely in Vlammasthal, Pretoria, where I was brought up by my uncle after my mother’s death, I was brought to Tite by my father on several occasions when I was a teenager. The cemetery was the place which my father told me never to forget. My father told me never to forget Tite in the guise of seeking help, and later on overpowered the clan of Baphogole and subjected them to servitude took their livestock and almost left them with nothing. He said the actual area occupied by Baphogole stretched..."
from around Randfontein eastwards covering the reef up to around Heidelberg. Southwards Baphalogole were spread up to the vast area now known as the Vaal Triangle. Fortunately the day has dawned when the domination of whites is over, and from our black government our expectations are that there will be full restoration of our land to our clan, Bakwena – Ba – Mare – A – Phogole. All our graves within the borders of our ancestral land will serve as a constant reminder of our history for future generations of Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole⁷⁶.

Another upmarket suburb called Zacharia Park erected exactly where the former Toko was, is also part of the land originally known as Tsorogwane. Thaba ya Manong (The Eagles Mountain) at Walkerville just next to the golf course, was known as being amongst the most sacred areas at Tsorogwane. This is the mountain known today as Witberg or Thabatshweni. According to Martha Motshalele, no one would dare point a finger at Thaba ya Manong. Out of respect for the sacred nature of the place, either a leg or a tongue would rather be used to point at it rather than a finger as is common practice. It is also believed that no one who ever dared climbed this mountain came back⁷⁷. Closely analysed, there is a striking, yet unusual resemblance between the historical sacredness of this mountain among the maPhogole community and the Medimolle Mountain in Nylstroom. According to tradition, no one who ever ascended the Medimolle Mountain has returned. Hence, Medimo a le (God has eaten). This piece of history is only relevant here in so far as it demonstrates, the extent to which the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole have since time immemorial interacted and built their traditions and customs over Tsorogwane.

Earlier on we referred to Saulsbury as the mountain named after Saul Tshaoli Ngakane and very close to it, there is a hillock popularly known to maPhogole as Thabana ya Moutate towards the end of the Kaizer Chiefs village of Natronana. For the maPhogole, rain-making powers were not the exclusive preserve of queen Modjadji of the Ga-Modjadji fame. Saul Tshaoli Ngakane also possessed these divine powers. For instance, during long periods of absence of rain, he would go up Thabana ya Moutate and pray to his God and his gods to shower the community with rain. It is interesting to note that, on all occasions that he ever resolved to do so, rain would not fail him. This is another demonstration of the sacredness of the place and it further explains why

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1. Interview with Martha Motshalele, 13 September 1969.
Tsorogwane is still so close to the hearts of the maphogole clan. Speaking with passion on this subject, Martha recalls another landmark, an Oasis-like place called Madimatte at Elansfontein. According to her, during the drought seasons, Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole never went without water because Madimatte always had plenty supply of clean water for household use as well as for their livestock. I was informed on good authority that no matter how dry it could be in the surrounding areas of Tsorogwane, the community would always rely on Madimatte to provide them with the necessary water.

Their long stay at Tsorogwane further explains the presence up to this day of a mountain by the name of Thaba ya Batswana (Mountain of the Tswana people). When and by whom the mountain was so named is still shrouded in mystery, save only to show that the Batswana are indigenous to the area. Legaga in Mampaku (Mampaku Cave) is also one of the landmarks that the maphogole have a history with. This is where they used to hide for Mzilikazi’s impis in the first half of the 19th century. Another area that maphogole still cherish the ideal of returning to today is Kgotlong, part of which is known today as Naturena, the present Kaizer Chiefs Village owned by Kaizer Motaung. Also close to Naturena is Comptonville which encompasses the present Johannesburg Prison. It is interesting to note that most of the places have retained the names by which they were known by the indigenous communities in general and maphogole in particular. For example, Martha Motshilele still remembers Eikenhof next to Maphogo‘estad, as their former Post Office. Daniel Radithlalo relates their interaction with such other places as Van Wyksruis where baPhogole had a Skiet facility and a Cattle Dip to prevent cattle and other livestock diseases. According to him, this area forms a significant part of old Toko. Tsorogwane also includes such areas as Bonsrukie (Olifantsvlei) as well as Bronkhorsfontein which encompasses areas such as Elandsfontein, Walkerville, Eikenhof, Jacksonsdriift and De Deur.

As is customary with Africans elsewhere, as I enquired about the culture and traditions of the Bakwena people and who she really is in relation to the rest of the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole clan, Martha, the granddaughter of Saul

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17 Interview with Martha Motshilele, 13 September 2009.
Tshaoli Ngakane (Wildebees), who in spite of her age still clearly remembers the history of the clan, in response rendered the following praise poem:

Ke Phogole Phogole duma
Pheleu e boka bothata
Ke lefakumeetse ngwana phata holele
Ke motho a' ho Muntate lekonatlale
Ke lefakumeetse la mafilo a Phogole

Ke motho a' bo Kgerepu ke ngorogoro
Ke moihanka dikgomo farasela
Ke isonaile le motse ka nthengwe
Ke ishaha Tshinkuda ya Mosadi le ya Monna
Balo ba ha tlhogodithata

Rona re Bakwena hana ba phateakabo holele
Ke motho a'bo Lefitswana le Makgapa
Ke motho a'bo Nthahane
Ke motho a'bo Phufana kgaetsedi a Mokgotswana
Ke motho a'bo ishega e ntse septka ke kopena

Ke motho a'bo Minagottiakgotlane
O kgotla Pela e motse legageng
E e Pela ya e leka huma ba molile
Concurring with Martha about this praise poem was Elijah Ngakane who also recited this using almost the same words, which illustrates the accuracy of the old woman’s rendition and thus of the accuracy of her statements about her life and times at Tsorogwane as penned in this brief overview.

Another Praise Poem

Ke ngwana wa ping le pinyana
Ba Rra rona Mogola Ba ne Ba lese mo ditlhorong le di marathia a mabo
Ba hogoha ke dina le baliho,
Motho yo a me a pata bana maina kwa eisho, go a nse go nana maina
Ke gwana wa nishi ka rohega mokokotha,
Motho yo, ke Mokwena wa Marc A Phogole

6. The turn of the tide against baPhogole

Against the foregoing background, it is understandable why Africans have a saying that in Africa, when an old person dies, the whole library disappears. Though largely undocumented, Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole have a rich history at Tsorogwane which has been told and retold from generation to generation, indicating a heavy reliance on the memory of their elders. The old woman who still remembers very vividly the life on this land of her ancestors during her youthful years is still very angry at the racist treatment they received.
in the hands of the white farmers. To begin with, the maPhogole kept large herds of cattle and many families survived just off livestock. In the course of time however, they were forced to reduce the numbers of their cattle and other livestock such as goats and sheep as they could not keep equal numbers of livestock as the white farmers. It was argued that this was not good for the land. Those who would have none of this treatment left the area for other regions where they could still keep their livestock, yet others still remained at Tsorogwane. Closely analysed, it cannot be denied that though not yet backed by formal legislation, this was no doubt a form of land dispossession by a powerful grouping over a less powerful one.

It is interesting to note that part of the farm on which Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole resided at the time was used during the South African War (Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902) by the British as an African refugee camp. Of course traditional historians have generally highlight the horrendous suffering of the Boers in the British concentration camps during the South African War, which often implied that Africans did not participate in and thus did not feel the impact of the war. This was a mistake revisionist historians have since corrected. After the war, as other inhabitants of the camp were repatriated to their old homes with rations to help them survive the harsh post-war conditions, the maPhogole remained and tried to rebuild their lives on the farm as sharecropping tenants of the Vereeniging Estates Company. However, changes in the practice of agriculture on white farms, such as an increase in the process of mechanisation, improved the efficiency of their ploughing. For example, around 1907 and 1908, just prior to the adoption of the South Africa Act of 1909, the Vereeniging Estates Company imported steam traction engines from England which improved production and thus made it counter-productive for white farmers to house large numbers of tenants on farms. As a result, many of the farm labourers were rendered redundant by changed economic circumstances. It was in the aftermaths of these developments and a combination of other complex reasons that the maPhogole were left with no option but to move off in search of alternative land. They then settled at Vlakplaas to the west of Vereeniging, owned by Fanie Cronje.

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23 Interview with Motshe Motshela, 18 September 2009.
24 Keegan, Facing the Storm, p.71.
On the 31 May 1910 the Union of South Africa was established through the unification of the former Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State as well as the two British colonies of Natal and the Cape. An all white government was therefore in full swing and very soon began to enact discriminatory legislation that would impact directly on the freedoms of all the African people in the country. As could be expected, the Bakwena would not be spared in the process. From as early as 1908, the state was manifestly beginning to act against the independent African peasantry in the interests of white commercial farmers. For instance, it soon became more profitable for white farmers to use the land for direct production than to enter into sharecropping arrangements with African peasants. Consequently many African tenants and sharecroppers throughout the country soon came under pressure as the Union government intervened in the interests of white commercial farmers. In the Transvaal the Natives Tax Act of 1908 imposed a 2 pounds levy on rent-paying tenants while in other parts of the Transvaal some of these tenants were removed from white farms by direct government action. Such government intervention at the expense of Africans became even more forceful with the adoption of the Natives Land Act of 1913 as a result of which pressure was brought to bear on sharecropping tenancy.

The Natives Land Act laid down the principle of territorial segregation by setting aside the existing African reserves for African occupation and by prohibiting Africans from buying or leasing land outside these reserves. It would be remembered that until the promulgation of this law there was still a possibility that a class of African capitalist farmers might have developed. Then the act severely curtailed such opportunities. This act limited further African access to land because it sought to eliminate African sharecropping in favour of labour tenancy. The 1913 Natives Land Act allocated a mere 7.3 per cent of the total land area of South Africa to the African reserves. In terms of the Native Trust and Land Act, the surface area of the African reserves was increased to 13 per cent while the minority white population occupied the remaining 87%.

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33 ibid, p 139
From the 1920s and 1930s with greater momentum towards the 1950s and 1960s the apartheid government with the support of the South African Agricultural Union, chose to control, limit and eventually eliminate labour tenancy on South African farms. Like most African communities in a similar situation, on 13 May 1913, about 14 baPhogole families left Vlakplaas and purchased the farm Klipgat through the legal assistance of Dr Pixley ka Seme of the ANC fame. It was Seme who actually warned the Bakwena about a bill before parliament at the time whose purpose was to render sharecropping unlawful and prohibit further purchases of white-owned land by black people. As a precautionary measure therefore, part of the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole purchased this land (Klipgat) but without totally forsaking their historical land as they continued to bury their dead at Tsorogwane (Misgimd).

After the discovery of diamonds on the land, and given the attitude of the apartheid government towards black ownership of the country’s minerals, it came as no surprise that during the 1960s, Bakwena received a letter informing them that only white people were allowed to occupy the land. In spite of their resistance, the land they had bought was finally expropriated in terms of Section 13(2) of the Native Trust and Land Act, 18 of 1936 and the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole were forcibly removed to Uitkyk in 1961. This land was eventually sold to Mr Momberg who bought it on 30 June 1976 from the Department of Agricultural Credit and Landownership for R52, 500. Today, the different members of the baPhogole clan are scattered all over the country, the majority of whom are found in various sections of Soweto and its environs. The mailing list of some of them is included in this brief report as Appendix A while the clan’s constitution appears as Appendix B.

7. Conclusion

From the brief overview of the history of Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole, there can be little doubt that baPhogole are offshoots from the Bafokeng tribe. While
the Batswana people in general trace their roots from the southern part of Johannesburg, it is the Bakwena Ba Mare a Phogole whose interaction with the contemporary Msigund can still be proven. The indigenous names of the places, bear testimony to this, namely Tite, Tsorogwane, Thabana ya Mantate, Motshelafhung, Madimante, Legaga la Mampaku, Toka, Thaba ya Manong and so forth are a clear demonstration that maPhogole not only resided on the land over a long period of time but also that they had built their traditions and enjoyed extensive cultural benefits over the land. Their numerous grave sites around Tsorogwane with some graves dating as far back as the second half of the 19th century is an indication of just how long they interacted with the area. Some of their notable gravesites include: "Di Bos" near Eikenhof, Pompies/Swartkopies and Msigund. Of the foregoing gravesites, Misgund is still operational and this section of Bakwena is still using it as their preferred burial site.

I have pointed out earlier that in the process of preparing the ground for the erection of Kibler Park, another gravesite was tempered with when the graves were removed and up to this day, in spite of all efforts and request for information by baPhogole, the whereabouts of the mortal remains of their loved ones are still shrouded in mystery. The area also has old ruins of a church building known as Church of all Saints near Kibler Park. At the time the building served a dual purpose of being a school during the week and a church over the weekend. If one is just a passer-by, in aid of what would he build a church? These are symbols of land ownership that cannot be disregarded. What is even more mysterious is how the land Bakwena had occupied centuries before white settlement in the Transvaal, came to be white-owned. As pointed out above, the earliest indication of the sale of a portion of Misgund (Tsorogwane) was in the last decade of the 19th century. It is not the business of historians to speculate over something that cannot be backed by evidence. However, against the background of what happened to the land baPhogole had purchased at Klipgat as soon as minerals were discovered there, one truly gets some indication of what may have happened to the land baPhogole had known (Tsorogwane) since time immemorial in the aftermaths of the mineral revolution from the middle of the nineteenth century. Though our constitution does not provide for restitution of or equitable redress for property dispossessed.

* Interview with Leselene Madipane Mtsang, Tsorogwane, 13 September 2003.*
prior to 19 June 1913, this should not be allowed to create the impression that only registered ownership of land enjoys primacy over indigenous title. To do that, in the words of Dikgang Moseneke, "would be to elevate ownership notions of the common law to the detriment of indigenous law of ownership for purposes of restitution of land rights".

What cannot stand honest scrutiny is the suggestion that Bakwena Ba Mare A Phogole left Tsorogwane and thereby ceased to live in and around the area as a result of Mzilikazi in the first half of the nineteenth century, thus further suggesting that the land was left empty for white settlement. It is such misrepresentations of the past that have probably prompted the saying, "until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter".

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8.2 Interviews and affidavits

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Molenga Moses, Tsorogwane, 18 September 2009.

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8.3 Internet source