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SOWING THE SEEDS OF POLITICAL MOBILISATION IN BANTUSTANS: RESISTANCE TO THE CESSION OF THE KANGWANE BANTUSTAN TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

Abstract

This article on the proposed 1982 land deal between the Kingdom of Swaziland and the South African Government to cede the KaNgwane Bantustan and Ingwavuma to Swaziland, focuses upon the geopolitics of southern Africa and the trajectory of the struggle for national liberation in South Africa, particularly on the role of the African Nationalist Congress (ANC) in Bantustan politics. By focusing specifically on the geopolitics of the liberation struggle in southern Africa, this article adds new dimensions to the work of Shireen Ally, Hugh Macmillan and other scholars, whose research on the proposed cession of the KaNgwane Bantustan focuses primarily on ethnic nationalism and ethno-nationalistic politics.

Keywords: Swaziland; South African Government; African National Congress (ANC); KaNgwane Bantustan; Enos Mabuza; apartheid.

Seutelwoorde: Swaziland; Suid-Afrikaanse regering; African National Congress (ANC); KaNgwane-tuisland; Enos Mabuza; apartheid.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article on the proposed 1982 land deal between the Kingdom of Swaziland and the South African Government to cede the KaNgwane Bantustan¹ and Ingwavuma to Swaziland, focuses upon the geopolitics of southern Africa and the trajectory of the struggle for national liberation in South Africa, particularly the role of the African Nationalist Congress (ANC) in Bantustan politics. By focusing specifically on the geopolitics of the liberation struggle in

1 Note that the name KaNgwane refers to the Kingdom of Swaziland. That is what the area is called in Swaziland. The use of the name KaNgwane in this article will be preceded/ followed by the word “Homeland” or “Bantustan” to designate the area in, what was then, the Eastern Transvaal and to make the distinction between KaNgwane (Swaziland) and the now defunct KaNgwane Bantustan/Homeland.

southern Africa, this article adds new dimensions to the work of Shireen Ally, Hugh Macmillan and other scholars, whose research on the proposed cession of the KaNgwane Bantustan focuses primarily on ethnic nationalism and ethno-nationalistic politics.²

In agreement with Marepo Lesetja, this article supports the view that Nganani Enos John Mabuza, the chief minister of the now defunct KaNgwane Bantustan, who challenged the land deal in his official capacity, foiled the South African Government in its, “quest to find a ‘respectable’ black person who was willing to be used in the implementation of separate development policies”.³ In contrast to other Bantustan leaders, such as Kaizer Matanzima, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Lennox Sebe and Lucas Mangope, among others, Mabuza stated that he wanted to use his position as a platform from which to obstruct apartheid policies and oppose the apartheid regime. The co-option of Buthelezi by the South African Government is the subject of study in a book by Mzala, entitled *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief with the double agenda* (1988) and the various forms of collaboration or accommodation with the apartheid regime by Bantustan leaders, such as Lucas Mangope, are discussed in the journal article, “Bophuthatswana and the North West Province: From Pan-Tswanaism to mineral-based ethnic assertiveness”, written by Andrew Manson and Bernard Mbenga.⁴ Furthermore, political mobilisation and transformation of the Bantustans during the late 1980s and early 1990s are analysed by Sekibakiba Lekgoathi, Lungisile Ntsebeza and Chitja Twala in the book entitled, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, Volume 6, published by the South African Democracy Education Trust.⁵

Unlike contemporaries, such as Buthelezi, Matanzima, Sebe and Mangope, Mabuza was prepared to form an alliance with the banned ANC which also

2 See H Macmillan, “A nation divided? The Swazi in Swaziland and the Transvaal, 1856-1986”. In: L Vail (ed.), *The creation of tribalism in Southern Africa* (London: James Currey, 1989), chapter 10; S Ally, “If you are hungry, and a man promises you meaties, will you not follow him?”: South African Swazi ethnic nationalism, 1931-1986”, *South African Historical Journal* 63(3), September 2011, pp. 414-430.

3 Ndlovu Private Collection (NPC). M Lesetja, “The KaNgwane Homeland: Pretoria’s friend or fiend?”.

4 JM (Mzala) Nxumalo, *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief with a double agenda* (London: Zed Books, 1988); A Manson and B Mbenga, “Bophuthatswana and the North-West Province: From Pan-Tswanaism to mineral-based ethnic assertiveness”, *South African Historical Journal* 64(1), March 2012.

5 See the following chapters in South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 6 [1990-1994], Part 1* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2013): L Ntsebeza, “The re-incorporation of Transkei into South Africa, 1987-1994: Turning against the master?”, chapter 9; S Lekgoathi, “Political transformation in the Bantustans of Lebowa and KwaNdebele, 1990-1994”, chapter 10; C Twala, “Survival politics by the Qwaqwa Homeland Government: Resistance and collaboration, 1990-1994”, chapter 12; A Manson and B Mbenga, “Bophuthatswana and the transition into the North-West Province: The 1990s”, chapter 11.

challenged the proposed land deal between South Africa and the Kingdom of Swaziland. The position taken by Mabuza and the KaNgwane Government is a prime example of African nationalist resistance to apartheid and, to some extent, to traditional chieftaincy's co-option into apartheid/colonialist power structures.⁶ The history of this resistance has received relatively little attention from historians. By using the archives of the KaNgwane Bantustan, the article shows that there was also a strong democratic component in Mabuza's progressive political discourse which underscored his fight against grand apartheid policies. The article also makes use of oral history interviews conducted with, among others, Thabo Mbeki and Mathews Phosa as primary evidence to strengthen the focus on the geopolitics of the liberation struggle in southern Africa. These testimonies help to explain the exploitation of the limited, yet valuable political spaces which allowed the banned liberation movement to operate within the Bantustans. The ANC's political mobilisation in the Bantustans has thus far received scant attention from historians, notwithstanding the fact that, during the early 1970s, the Lebowa and KwaZulu Bantustans opened spaces for political mobilisation. This article will address this gap in South African historiography and the failure to acknowledge that progressive leaders, such as Mabuza, operating within the confines of the KaNgwane Bantustan, were able to offer sustained resistance to the apartheid regime, whilst involved in alliance politics with the liberation movement.

Ally and Macmillan have conducted impressive studies on traditional chieftaincy's co-option in apartheid/colonialist power structures in order to fight against the ANC's broader African nationalism.⁷ The unrepentantly chauvinistic Swazi ethnic nationalism in South Africa, deferential to incorporation under King Sobhuza and Swaziland during the 1970s and 1980s, challenged the fact that the Royal House of Swaziland helped to establish the ANC in 1912. Together with the founders of the ANC, led by Pixley ka Isaka Seme, the Swaziland Royal House, led by Queen Regent Labotsibeni, voted on 8 January 1912 to strive to bury the demon of tribalism/ethnicity in southern Africa. In this regard, the founders of the ANC cherished the ideal of the unification of the peoples of southern Africa, rather than their separation, emphasising the common bonds that united them to avoid grave harm carried out in the name of ethnicity and separate development.

But during the 1970s and through Swazi ethnic mobilisation in South Africa, Chief Mkolishi Dlamini led the struggle for the incorporation of the KaNgwane Bantustan into Swaziland. Macmillan notes that Chief Dlamini, together with a minority of the officially recognised Swazi chiefs, campaigned for an ethnically "pure" KaNgwane Bantustan and protested at the continued presence in the territory of the "Shangaan" and other minority groups. It was in 1978 that

6 NPC. Lesetja.

7 For more information see Ally; Macmillan.

Chief Dlamini and ten other chiefs formally petitioned King Sobhuza to begin negotiations on their behalf for their incorporation into Swaziland.⁸ In opposition, Mabuza pursued statesmanlike civil politics; tactics that recognised ethnicity, but refused to allow it space to organise politically. According to Ally, Mabuza declared, “ethnicity is just an accident in history [...] I do not believe in the rigid application of ethnicity”. As the founder of the Inyandza National Movement, Mabuza reworked ethnicity to accommodate it within a broader African nationalism, one sympathetic to the ANC, which used the KaNgwane homeland to ultimately undermine the Bantustan system. He was respectful to chiefs, but did not consider chiefly authority a necessary basis for politics. Ally further notes that, in contrast, Chief Mkolishi Dlamini presented a mirror image of Mabuza, for he had always envisioned a homeland based on chiefly politics, founding an opposition party, *Inyatsi ya Mswati*, that resuscitated ethnic nationalism as part of homeland politics.⁹ *Inyatsi ya Mswati*, as claimed by Chief Dlamini, “sought to unite all Swazi’s [...] to be able to press the South African government for a fair deal in so far as the allocation of land for Swazi’s was concerned”.¹⁰

2. CALLS FOR INCORPORATION OF KANGWANE BANTUSTAN INTO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

The Pretorius and the Alleyne Commissions of 1886 and 1879 respectively, laid down boundaries between the old South African Republic (ZAR) and Kingdom of Swaziland, regardless of the fact that the Swazis had no intention of surrendering any territory to the ZAR. The Swazis participated in these exercises in accordance with their laws and customs whereby the king’s representatives indicated to newcomers or migrants the boundaries within which they were permitted to build their homesteads, plough the fields, graze their stock and hunt wildlife. These boundaries were ratified by Britain in terms of the Pretoria Convention of 1881 and the London Convention of 1884. This led to the untenable situation that more Swazis lived outside of Swaziland, than within it. Furthermore, the land partition of 1907 and its subsequent implementation meant that vast numbers of Swazis found themselves alienated from the land and were hence forced to seek wage-labour on the Witwatersrand mines and on white-owned farms.¹¹ Eventually, all Swazis living outside the borders of Swaziland came under the authority of the Union of South Africa (1910) and later the Republic of South Africa (1961). In keeping with the Bantu Authorities Act 68 of

8 Macmillan, p. 311.

9 Ally, p. 425; S. Ally, “Peaceful memories: Remembering/forgetting political violence in KaNgwane, South Africa”, *Africa* 81(3), 2011, pp. 351-372.

10 Macmillan, p. 311.

11 JSM Matsebula, *A history of Swaziland* (Cape Town: Longman, 1988), chapter 9; Macmillan.

1951, the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act 46 of 1959 and the National States Constitution Act 21 of 1971, the South African based Swazis were covertly and overtly removed from the Transvaal and artificially assembled in, what was ludicrously designated, as their “own” territory. With the establishment of the Swazi Territorial Authority on 23 April 1976 and the KaNgwane Legislative Assembly in October 1977, the South African Swazis were officially recognised as an autonomous political unit with their own land and central authority, and completely independent from Swazis who were citizens of the Kingdom of Swaziland. Thus their “homeland” of KaNgwane, in official apartheid jargon, was formally established by the apartheid regime.¹²

By 1970, the KaNgwane Bantustan/Homeland consisted of 14 “tribal authorities”. The Nkomati Regional Authority was established in the late 1950s, while the Nsikazi-Legogote Regional Authority was established in 1962. With the settlement of eight chiefs and their subjects within the Bantustan during 1974 and 1975, the way was paved for the establishment of the Mlondozi and Mswati Regional Authorities in 1975. In April 1976, the Swazi Territorial Authority was established. It was in charge of KaNgwane Bantustan and consisted of 28 members. Chief JM Dlamini, who was then regarded by the officials of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development as the most senior Swazi chief in South Africa, was elected as the Chief Executive Officer. Enos John Mabuza was elected as one of the deputy executive officers and, hence, a member of the Executive Council. When KaNgwane was geared to be granted legislative assembly status in April 1977, a dispute arose between the Executive Committee and the Swazi Territorial Authority on the one hand, and Piet Koornhof, the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, on the other. This dispute was compounded by the political ineptitude of Chief Mkolishi Dlamini and the uncompromising stand taken by Koornhof. The Territorial Authority finally resolved that, if it had to negotiate the question of trust farms from a position of strength, it had to expedite the granting of legislative assembly status. When Mkolishi Dlamini, as the Chief Executive Officer, refused to implement the resolution of the Territorial Authority, he was removed from office by a motion of no confidence on 23 June 1977, and Enos Mabuza was elected to succeed him.¹³

But the recalcitrant Chief Dlamini refused to accept the decision taken by members of the Territorial Authority and no sooner had the KaNgwane Legislative Assembly been established in October 1977, than he challenged his dismissal in the Transvaal Supreme Court. In the ensuing judgement, which was delivered on 10 November 1977, Justice Van der Walt found that proper

12 EJ Mabuza, “KaNgwane: The road ahead”. Address given at the Instituut vir Politieke en Afrikastudies, Potchefstroom University, 1983; MS Ginindza, “KaNgwane: A life in and beyond”, *South African Historical Journal* 64(1), March 2012, p. 144.

13 *Ibid.*

procedures had not been followed when Chief Dlamini was ousted. The judge declared the Territorial Authority's resolution null and void and reinstated Chief Dlamini as the Chief Executive Officer. It was, however, apparent that a political leader who did not enjoy popular support amongst his people and in the legislative assembly, could not survive; leadership by means of a court order was doomed to fail. On 14 December 1977, Chief Dlamini's Executive Council resolved to request the State President to dissolve the existing legislative assembly and to constitute a new one that would then elect a new leader.¹⁴ On 31 January 1978, the South African Government issued a *Government Gazette* which proclaimed the dissolution of the legislative assembly with effect from 31 January 1978.¹⁵ When the second (new) KaNgwane Legislative Assembly convened on 23 March 1978, Dlamini and Mabuza stood for election to the office of the Chief Executive Councillor and Mabuza was re-elected with an overwhelming majority. On Mabuza, Marepo Lesetja elaborates, "this is the man who ran the administration of KaNgwane homeland from the prefabs in Louieville because his 'obduracy' in the eyes of Pretoria qualified him for an annual budget of R250 million so he decided to spend it on building clinics and schools, as well as other important infrastructure. His argument had always been there were enough buildings in Cape Town and Pretoria for the running of the future government of South Africa".¹⁶

When the KaNgwane Territorial Authority approached the then Minister of Cooperation and Development, P Koornhof, in April 1981 and asked that the KaNgwane Homeland be promoted to Phase 2 of its constitutional development, Koornhof turned down the request. On 12 June 1981 the Minister announced that the apartheid regime's cabinet was not prepared to grant the KaNgwane Homeland the status of a self-governing territory, similar to that granted to the Transkei and Bophuthatswana. Koornhof went on to proclaim that the Territorial Authority had to negotiate with King Sobhuza II for the cession of the KaNgwane Bantustan to the Kingdom of Swaziland.

After the 1976 Soweto uprisings, an era marked by thousands of African students going into exile to join the ANC's military wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK), the South African Government was facing mounting political pressure and in the early 1980s it entered into a land deal with the sovereign government of Swaziland. This was done to curtail the pressure from the ANC which was using the Eastern Transvaal (including the KaNgwane Bantustan) and Northern Zululand (including the KwaZulu Bantustan) to infiltrate MK military cadres into the country. The strengthening of the Eastern Transvaal and Northern Zululand ANC underground machinery and networks was made possible by the political changes in Mozambique and Angola after gaining independence from Portugal

14 Mabuza.

15 Republic of South Africa, *Government Gazette* 151(5872), 31 January 1978.

16 NPC. Lesetja.

in the early 1970s. As an example, Mbeki and other members of the ANC, after being relocated from Botswana, were now able to pass through Mozambique, which became an independent country in 1974, and were able to work on behalf of the ANC from the Kingdom of Swaziland. By 1980 the situation on South Africa's eastern border with Swaziland and Mozambique was causing serious concern to the SADF authorities. Moreover, many of the youth who went into exile after the 1976 Soweto uprisings were now receiving their military training in Angola. Even more significant was the improvement in Swaziland's relations with the ANC. In the late 1970s, after a visit by OR Tambo, the President of the ANC, the liberation movement was able to establish an official presence in Swaziland and its offices were run by Stanley Mabizela.¹⁷

Because Portugal had lost its grip on its two former colonies in southern Africa, setting up amenable ties with southern African frontline states became a priority when Botha assumed political power in 1978. The hawkish Botha adopted, as an official policy, what he called a "total strategy". This led to the restructuring of South Africa's regional policy in very important ways. Furthermore, the need for a refurbished strategy focused on the African continent was underlined by the 1975 debacle of the military invasion of Angola which the apartheid regime undertook after receiving specific assurances of United States' support from Henry Kissinger. Under Botha's direction, first as Minister of Defence and later as President of the Republic of South Africa, the SADF was reorganised. Botha's role was:

- To transform the SADF into a highly mobile conventional force capable of swift deployment against any neighbouring state;
- To raise its military capacity as an anti-insurgency force;
- To re-define the government's strategic doctrine to include surrogate forces such as União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), Mozambican National resistance (MNR), etc. and the use of mercenaries, as tactical arms of the SADF.¹⁸

17 HS Simelane, N Dlamini and J Sithole, "Swaziland's contribution to South Africa's liberation struggle for independence: Charting the maze and straddling contradictions". In: SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 5, African Solidarity, Part 2* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2014), chapter 15.

18 SACP Position Paper, "Imperialism, apartheid and destabilisation in Southern Africa", *The African Communist* 115, Fourth Quarter, 1988; KW Grundy, *The rise of the South African Security Establishment: An essay on the changing locus of state power* (Johannesburg: SAILA, 1983), pp. 28-33; R Pfister, *Apartheid South Africa and African states* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2005); S Nolutshungu, *South Africa in Africa: A study of ideology and foreign policy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975); D Geldenhuys and D Venter, "Regional co-operation in Southern Africa: A constellation of states?", *South African Institute of International Affairs Bulletin*, December 1979; J Butler, "South Africa's role in Southern Africa: A historical essay". In: TM Callaghy, *South Africa in*

Botha's militaristic ideas were first given definite form in 1977, while he was in John Vorster's Cabinet, when he tabled a White Paper on Defence. It was in this refurbished rendition of Pretoria's national security doctrine that the concept of "total onslaught" and "total strategy" were first employed. "Total onslaught" was one of Botha's policy formulations, specifically invented to give credibility to what was fundamentally a strategy to ensure the survival of racism and apartheid. It posited that the southern tip of Africa was targeted by the forces of Marxism, orchestrated from Moscow, a move that had already made significant gains in the shape of socialist oriented Mozambique and Angola.¹⁹ In apartheid jargon, to resist this "communist" and Soviet Union's onslaught meant that other countries of the region should mobilise all their human and material resources in a coordinated "total strategy"; at the core of this strategy would be apartheid South Africa, which was, in economic and military terms the dominant country in the region.

Thus, the apartheid regime's total strategy had two prongs; one coercive, the other persuasive. In international relations and geopolitics there can, of course, be no sharp demarcation separating these two strategies. Coercion easily spills over into persuasion and *vice versa*. The coercive element was crudely evident when the SADF invaded Lesotho. On the morning of 9 December 1982, more than 100 SADF soldiers attacked 12 residential houses in Maseru. According to the South African Government, the targets were those involved in planning and controlling, "ANC terrorist activities against South Africa, Transkei and Ciskei". More than 42 people were killed, 12 of them were Basotho, and the majority were women and children. According to General Lekhanya, the Head of the Lesotho Defence Force, the precision of the attacks on houses where ANC activists were being accommodated, shows that the SADF had access to accurate information and must have been led by guides who knew exactly where the political refugees were living, "a clear sign that we had been infiltrated". Besides loss of life, a great deal of property was destroyed in these and other raids, many houses were flattened and there was no compensation paid, despite the fact that the United Nations (UN) had passed a resolution that Lesotho had to be compensated for the 1982 raid.²⁰ The persuasive element of Botha's "total strategy" was highlighted by the proposed 1982 land deal between apartheid South Africa and Swaziland, whose leaders were conscious of the military might

Southern Africa: The intensifying vortex of violence (New York: Praeger, 1983); CJ Botha, "The constellation of states: Peace-in-pieces", *South African Yearbook of International Law* 7, 1981, pp. 105-113.

19 See, for example, M Holness, "Angola: The struggle continues". In: P Johnson and D Martin, *Destructive engagement: Southern Africa at war* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1986), chapter 3. See also, RS Jaster, *The defence of white power: South African foreign policy under pressure* (London: MacMillan, 1988).

20 TH Mothibe and M Mushonga, "Lesotho and the struggle for liberation in South Africa". In: SADET, *Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 5, African Solidarity, Part 1* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2013), p. 497.

of the SADF, particularly after the cross border attacks into Lesotho and Matola in Mozambique.

The Swazi land deal was negotiated under the vague idea of a “constellation of states”, which became the ultimate objective of South Africa’s regional strategy. Neighbouring states were expected to be “part of a regional alliance” in which South Africa would play a pivotal role. The notion of seeking closer cooperation with independent Africa was elaborated further on 22 November 1979 by Botha at a conference between government and big business at the Carlton Centre in Johannesburg. The Prime Minister announced that, in a common search for “peace and prosperity”, the government sought to formalise the *ad hoc* arrangements made previously with the regional states. This could be accomplished, he explained, in what he called a “constellation of African states (CONSAS)”.

As conceived by Botha, CONSAS would pass through three phases. The first would entail the emergence of a core group, bringing together South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, the “independent” Bantustans and, possibly, Malawi. A second phase would draw in the other regional states, but Mozambique and Angola would be excluded because they were run by “Marxist” governments controlled by the Soviet Union. The last stage envisaged the incorporation of states as far afield as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC, then Zaire). CONSAS had two objectives, with the politico-military one the more pressing. It would be essentially an alliance of supposedly anti-Marxist states designed to re-create the protective shield that the apartheid regime had enjoyed before the fall of the Portuguese colonies in 1975. To realise this, various forms of support were accorded to boost Bishop Muzorewa’s chances in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), which the apartheid regime hoped would make the project more attractive to other African states. The second objective was an economic one to bind the participating states together – the “reward” was to deepen their respective economic links with the South African economy. Hence, CONSAS would be the persuasive aspect of regional policy.²¹

The commando raid against the houses of South African refugees in Maseru in December 1982 was followed by increased diplomatic and military pressure against this tiny kingdom throughout 1983. This, coupled with the manipulation of Lesotho’s economic dependence on South Africa, eventually forced Lesotho to evacuate some 100 refugees. The second phase of the destabilisation campaign continued unabated and reached its climax with a massive invasion of Angola in December 1983. By the end of January 1984, it was announced that both Angola and Mozambique would enter into negotiations with the apartheid regime. The talks with Angola were hosted by Zambia and a ceasefire emerged which led to South African disengagement in Angola and the withdrawal of the SADF from that

21 University of Fort Hare (hereafter UFH). ANC Archives, Lusaka Mission, “Apartheid destabilisation: Pretoria’s strategy in Southern Africa”, pp. 3-4.

country. Discussions between Mozambique and South Africa culminated with the signing of the Nkomati Accord on 16 March 1984.²²

The South African Government's persuasive strategy was also geared towards wooing the Swazi monarch, King Sobhuza II, through the land deal, enticing him to consider the possibility of regaining territory lost to the Transvaal Republic during the nineteenth century. The reunification of the Swazi people was King Sobhuza's major goal during his reign. After turning a deaf ear for decades, suddenly in the early 1980s, the South African authorities indicated their willingness to consider border adjustments. Specifically, they indicated an interest in discussing the transfer of two parcels of territory to the Kingdom of Swaziland – the entire KaNgwane Bantustan and the Ingwavuma area which formed part of the KwaZulu Bantustan. This latter strip of land would make it possible for Swaziland to realise another longstanding objective: that of gaining direct access to the seas and the wider world via the Indian Ocean. But, there was a condition – the offer was contingent upon Swaziland reversing its position of allowing the ANC to operate within its territory. A security pact with apartheid South Africa and an intensified crackdown on the ANC was the price to be paid. In February 1982, the two governments concluded, what was then a secret security arrangement.²³ Four months later, the South African Cabinet decided on 8 June 1982 that:

- i. A final written agreement be entered into as soon as possible between the Republic of South Africa and Swaziland whereby the Nsikazi, Nkomazi, Mswati and Ingwavuma area, as already agreed upon in principle between the Republic of South Africa and Swaziland, be included in the latter and that the borders of the areas concerned, as decided upon in principle, be later duly surveyed and defined by the Republic of South Africa, subject to Parliamentary approval;
- ii. The possibility of an agreement regarding the Nsikazi area which would not deviate from the map that was attached to the Cabinet Memorandum to be discussed with the Swazi King;
- iii. The KaNgwane Legislative Assembly be dissolved and that the administration of the area in the interim be taken over by the Republic of South Africa;

22 On the Nkomati Accord, see University of Cape Town, Manuscripts and Archives Centre. Jack Simons Collection, K Asmal, "Legal analysis of Nkomati Agreement for the ANC's NEC", 24 April 1984; Johnson and Martin.

23 J Daniel, "Swaziland in the context of South African destabilisation". In: J Daniel and MF Stephen (eds), *Historical perspectives on the political economy of Swaziland* (Kwaluseni: Social Science Research Unit, University of Swaziland, 1986), p. 189. See also, HS Simelane, N Dlamini and J Sithole, "Swaziland's contribution to South Africa's struggle for independence: Charting the maze and straddling contradictions".

- iv. Legislation be introduced as soon as possible for the border adjustments with, *inter alia*, the stipulation that the legislation is to come into operation on a date to be determined by the State President; and
- v. The Minister of Co-operation and Development would inform the Chief Executive Councillor, Mr Mabuza, of the decision taken.²⁴

3. RESISTANCE BY THE KANGWANE BANTUSTAN LEADERSHIP AND THE MASSES

Incessant pressure mounted against the incorporation of the KaNgwane Bantustan into the Kingdom of Swaziland. The more the apartheid regime urged the Swazi homeland authorities to comply, the more resistance emanated from the KaNgwane Bantustan leadership, supported by its legislative assembly. The *impasse* ended with an arbitrary and unilateral dissolution of the Legislative Assembly on 18 June 1982. The South African Government issued a statement in a *Government Gazette* which proclaimed the cession of the KaNgwane Bantustan to the sovereign Kingdom of Swaziland. In Proclamation R.108/1982, the government confirmed that it planned to: (i) repeal sections of the Homeland Act directly linked to the establishment of the KaNgwane Homeland; (ii) dissolve the KaNgwane Legislative Assembly; and (iii) strip thousands of people of their South African citizenship and cede their land to Swaziland – without consulting them. This was done in order to ratify the proposed land deal between the South African and Kingdom of Swaziland Governments. The proclamation further declared that assets and liabilities of the KaNgwane Bantustan would be controlled by the Minister of Cooperation and Development, Piet Koornhof.²⁵

This move was also paralleled by another similar development. For political expediency, and in terms of Proclamation R.109/82, Ingwavuma, a large area controlled by the KwaZulu Bantustan in Northern Zululand, was also included as part of the land deal between South Africa and Swaziland – it too was to be incorporated into Swaziland.²⁶ Furthermore, in its attempt to legalise these land deals and alter existing colonial boundaries, the South African Government set up the Rumpff Commission of Enquiry.

In the first sitting of the Commission the aim was to determine how best the “free-will of the people of the affected territory” could be determined. The KaNgwane Bantustan Government’s submissions were underpinned by the argument that the Rumpff Commission should first consider the legality of the resolutions and decisions of the KaNgwane Legislative Assembly which,

24 KaNgwane Government (hereafter KNG), Department of Justice Documents (hereafter DJ), File 5/4//6/1, Volume 1, 1 January 1980 to 31 December 1985.

25 Republic of South Africa, *Government Gazette* 2041(8269), 18 June 1982.

26 Republic of South Africa, *Government Gazette* 2042(8269), 18 June 1982.

although constituted on the basis of apartheid government and customary law, was representative of a democratic body which, particularly on this matter, represented the free will of the people of KaNgwane. The alternative submission by the KaNgwane Bantustan Government was that, should the commission *not* be satisfied that the legislative assembly expressed the free will of the people accurately, a referendum of KaNgwane Bantustan residents and South African Swazis be conducted to determine their attitude to the cession to the Kingdom of Swaziland.²⁷

Both Enos Mabuza and Mangosuthu Buthelezi, as leaders of the KaNgwane and KwaZulu Bantustans, challenged the South African Government by using the Supreme Courts of the Transvaal Province and Natal Province respectively.²⁸ The affected communities in both the Eastern Transvaal and Northern Zululand also resisted and challenged these undemocratic political manoeuvres by the South African Government.²⁹ To be specific, and in support of their government, KaNgwane Bantustan's public servants expressed that:

- i. They categorically condemned and rejected Proclamation R.108/1982 issued and published in the *Government Gazette* of 18 June 1982. They were of the view that this proclamation had no force and effect and, therefore, was not binding on them.
- ii. They refused to accept that all, or any of the matters that fell under the limits of the KaNgwane Legislative Assembly, should fall under the Department of Cooperation and Development.
- iii. They refused to relinquish their South African citizenship and wished to make it clear that they were not South Africans by accident of history and refused to be made foreigners in their land of birth.
- iv. They rejected and condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the attempts by the South African Government to take their land away and hand it over to Swaziland, a sovereign country, for political expediency.
- v. Finally, they resolved that even if the Republic of South Africa succeeded in forcing them to lose their South African citizenship, Swaziland would never rule them.³⁰

But, there existed a group of chiefs and traditional leaders based in the KaNgwane Bantustan who supported the 1982 land deal between the South

27 KNG, DJ, File 5/4//6/1.

28 KNG, DJ, File 5/4//6/1, Supreme Court of South Africa, Transvaal Provincial Division, Case No: 9990/82, Government of KaNgwane *versus* Government of the Republic of South Africa.

29 KNG, DJ, File 5/4//6/1, Two-page leaflet: "Adjustment of border between Swaziland and the Republic of South Africa".

30 KNG, DJ, File 5/4//6/1, Resolution of the KaNgwane Public Service Association.

African and the Kingdom of Swaziland Governments. Like their opponents in the KaNgwane Bantustan Government, they used the courts to fight their battles. The pro-unification chiefs also went to Mbabane, Swaziland, to hold talks with the Kingdom's Minister of Foreign Affairs about the planned incorporation. The chiefs informed a press conference that they had gone to Swaziland because they had been summoned to do so by King Sobhuza II, and they wanted to confirm their support in reuniting the Swazi nation in southern Africa. In the months of June and July 1983, concerted attempts were made to challenge the status of the (third) KaNgwane Legislative Assembly which was led by Mabuza. Some of the pro-unification chiefs submitted an urgent application to the South African Supreme Court to have the recently elected KaNgwane Legislative Assembly declared null and void.³¹

David Lukhele, one of the pro-unification leaders during the early 1980s, asserted that Mabuza had stirred up a political scandal by attempting to restrict membership of the new legislative assembly to his supporters. In 1968, Lukhele was appointed Chief Organiser of the South African based Swazi National Council by Chief Mkolishi Dlamini. Though Lukhele entered Swazi "ethno-politics" in coalition with Dlamini, the two had their differences. Ally emphasises the point that Lukhele's chief was Nyamayenja Nkosi who represented a stronghold for a Republic of Swazi identity and a homeland in South Africa independent of the sovereign Kingdom of Swaziland. Chief Mkolishi Dlamini was the founder of the Swazi National Council that was deferential to King Sobhuza.³² It is worth pointing out that, during the early 1970s, Lukhele was opposed to a Swazi identity in South Africa subservient to King Sobhuza. But he changed his position in the 1980s and supported the KaNgwane Bantustan unification with the Kingdom of Swaziland.

But, despite these presumed differences during the 1970s, following on from the Tomlison Commission, Lukhele and Dlamini shared a common cause in organising Swazis in the urban areas, on white farms and in black spots, for a Bantustan that would restore chiefly authority disrupted by land dispossession – a primary concern for Chief Dlamini who suffered the shame of land dispossession masterminded by the apartheid regime.³³ In his fight against Mabuza's KaNgwane Legislative Assembly, Lukhele claimed that 12 KaNgwane pro-unification chiefs who resigned from the previous KaNgwane Legislative Assembly, which expired on 1 June 1983, had done so because they strongly disagreed with Mabuza's policies. Despite their resignation, Lukhele proclaimed, these 12 chiefs remained *ex-officio* members because of their status as traditional leaders and were therefore eligible for nomination as

31 KNG, DJ, File 5/4//6/1, Supreme Court of South Africa, Transvaal Provincial Division, Case: 11464/83, Johannes Mkolishi Dlamini *versus* Enos John Mabuza.

32 Ally, "South African Swazi ethnic nationalism", p. 422.

33 *Ibid.*

members in the new assembly. However, according to Lukhele, Mabuza had deliberately instructed magistrates in the KaNgwane Bantustan not to officially notify those who supported unification with Swaziland, a friendly neighbour and sovereign state. As a leading member of the pro-unification group, Lukhele emphasised, “in view of Mr Mabuza’s illegal and unconstitutional behaviour in denying people their legal rights, the Legislative Assembly which is now in office is unconstitutional and should be declared null and void”. Furthermore, Lukhele questioned how Mabuza could “aspire to become a leader” when he was clearly not prepared to accommodate anyone who opposed his views.³⁴ Lukhele’s support of the “land deal” eventually got him killed. Ally elaborated the following about the changing political fortunes of Lukhele, “On a cold winter’s day in June 1986, David Lukhele was gunned down mercilessly in his home [in Mamelodi] by members of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*’s elite ‘elimination unit’. He was assassinated for his fervent defence of the apartheid government’s 1982 plan to cede KaNgwane (and Ingwavuma) to Swaziland, and for mobilising – against the ANC’s broader African nationalism – an unrepentantly chauvinistic Swazi ethnic nationalism deferential to incorporation under King Sobhuza and Swaziland. Yet the same Lukhele had, in 1973, come under [apartheid] government surveillance for mobilising landless chiefs in the Transvaal *against* a South African Swazi identity subservient to Sobhuza and Swaziland.”³⁵

Unlike Lukhele’s and Dlamini’s pro-unification group, Mabuza did not rely solely on the South African legal system or the Swaziland Government for support. He spearheaded the anti-incorporation attempt through his political party, the Inyandza National Movement. At a prayer meeting held on 23 May 1982, Mabuza informed thousands of supporters that for the past five months, those who led the resistance against incorporation had addressed more than twenty meetings and it was clear the groundswell anti-incorporation demands were strong and were escalating. The masses were eager to hear whether the KaNgwane Bantustan leadership was still firm and steadfast on the position of opposing any form of political independence, such as had been adopted by Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana. Mabuza avowed that, “We are not [only] intent on fighting for our own political survival. Ours is a national struggle for the right of an oppressed people to decide and determine their political future. We have decided to hold, attend and address a prayer meeting here at Elukwatini because we have a duty to lead and guide our people to the political future which we believe, will be in their interest. Indeed, we are here today because the battle lines of the fight that we are engaged in have not been drawn along tribal, regional and ethnic affiliation. It is a national struggle for the right of a people and their children, to self-determination.”³⁶

34 “KaNgwane Chiefs go to SA Supreme Court”, *Rand Daily Mail*, 16 July 1983.

35 Ally, p. 414.

36 KNG, DJ, File 5/4/6/1, Volume 1, E Mabuza, “The South African born Swazis have the right to decide and determine their political future”, 23 May 1982.

Mabhuza Simeon Ginindza explains that these weekly prayer meetings were important, because they also served as rallies where the leadership of the Inyandza National Movement intensified the call for the unbanning of the ANC and other liberation movements.³⁷ Addressing the crowd at the 23 May prayer meeting, Enos Mabuza underlined that the people were not participating in the Bantustan system because they supported the apartheid regime's policy. Instead, he said, "our confinement to reserves which are today referred to as homelands has literally reduced the African people to veritable bondsmen". Mabuza further explained to the crowd that they were part of the Bantustan system because they had neither choice nor an alternative. The apartheid regime's homeland/Bantustan system was a far cry from universal franchise and democracy because all the decisions were made in Cape Town by a parliament that was not elected by the majority of African people. As the leader of KaNgwane Bantustan, he put it to the South African Government that South African-born Swazis should not be used as sacrificial lambs when the apartheid regime paid its political debt to the Kingdom of Swaziland. He went on to say, "our rights as South Africans should not be whittled away just because we happen to be of Swazi extract". According to Mabuza, if ethnic consolidation was the new dimension of the apartheid regime's "constellation of states" foreign policy, then the regime should first consolidate Bophuthatswana Bantustan with Botswana; Gazankulu Bantustan with Mozambique; Venda Bantustan with Zimbabwe; and Qwaqwa Bantustan with Lesotho.³⁸

Conscious of their obligations towards the oppressed African majority in South Africa, the southern African states of Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Lesotho did not press claims of annexation of the relevant sections of the South African population. In this regard Mabuza was aware that, since 1912, the banned ANC had fought against all attempts by successive white minority South African regimes to annex Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland; attempts partly based on the argument that the countries (or High Commission Territories) constituted extension of population groups living in South Africa. Mabuza considered it regrettable that the Kingdom of Swaziland, at this late hour, had set herself apart from the rest of the southern Africa region by breaking with the tradition to press claims of annexation by electing to separate the Swazi speaking people of South Africa from the rest of the African population of South Africa. This heinous deed could be achieved by joining hands with the apartheid regime in carrying out a racist policy which aimed to transform South Africa into a white man's country by declaring the African people aliens in the country of their birth. The implication was that the right to independence and self-determination was going to be determined by the government of South Africa. These issues, as championed by Mabuza, are also elaborated in the Freedom Charter which states:

37 Ginindza, p. 145.

38 KNG, DJ, File 5/4/6/1, Volume 1, Mabuza, "The South African born Swazis", 23 May 1982.

- Our people have been robbed of their birth right to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;
- The people of the protectorates - Basutoland, Bechuanaland (Botswana), Swaziland - shall be free to decide for themselves their own future; the right of all peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be on the basis of close cooperation.³⁹

The political leadership of KaNgwane viewed the South African government's proposed land deal with the Kingdom of Swaziland against two-fold objectives of grand apartheid policy. The first was about the politics of demography, that is, to excise indigenous Africans from their territory and thus reduce their number from the official population of South Africa. The indigenous Africans who were supposedly citizens of "independent states", or Bantustans, automatically became statutory foreigners in the land of their birth – with no further claim to political and socio-economic rights in South Africa. With the independence of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei, over six million South Africans became statutory foreigners in South Africa. They were thus deportable aliens, although they resided in the common geographical area known as South Africa. Should KaNgwane opt for independence, or agree to be incorporated into the Kingdom of Swaziland, 800 000 to one million South African Swazis would become statutory foreigners in South Africa and would be liable to be expatriated to the unified Swaziland by a stroke of a pen. The defiant Mabuza emphasised, "We cannot afford to be party to the balkanisation of South Africa and to the creation of an 'independent' Swazi homeland which will be no different from Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei; under the guise of unification, reunification, incorporation or amalgamation. We have for generations, joined hands with our fellow Africans to work for the breaking down of the pillars of discrimination and indeed these pillars are breaking. If Portuguese and Polish immigrants who have fled from FRELIMO and communist regimes, can be entitled to full South African citizenship and to exercise a right to vote in South Africa within a period of five years; why are the African people, to whom South Africa belongs as the land of their birth, denied this universal democratic right?"⁴⁰

It is worth noting that Mabuza's discourse on emancipation, democracy and social justice in South Africa is predicated on the precepts of the Freedom Charter which he was familiar with. He postulates that South Africa belongs to all who live in it (including European immigrants) and hence the oppressed African majority cannot be denied universal democratic rights, in the land of their birth. As the Freedom Charter emphasises, "our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

39 See *Freedom Charter*, <www.anc.org.za/docs/history>.

40 KNG, DJ, File 5/4/6/1, Volume 1, Mabuza, "The South African born Swazis", 23 May 1982.

that only a democratic state based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birth right without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief".⁴¹

The Chief Minister of KaNgwane further observed that the second objective of the South African Government's policy was not only to deny Africans access to the wealth and prosperity of the country, but to get rid of economically "superfluous" Africans and dump them out of sight, in resettlement camps and shanty towns situated in remote Bantustans. Once the South African Government and Swaziland had succeeded in effecting the incorporation of the KaNgwane Bantustan, almost a million Swazis would lose their rights as South African citizens and the right to reside on and own land anywhere in South Africa. They would lose the rights to own businesses; the right to strive for social, human and political rights and to access the wealth of the land of their birth. The disposed citizens would become strangers, visitors and migrant labourers in South Africa. They would become mere deportable aliens and dispensable others. Mabuza was conscious of the bigger picture, the fact that Bantustans, which were intended to be independent homelands of Africans, comprised less than 13% of the land area of South Africa. This land was largely infertile and overcrowded. Through the 1913 Group Areas Act, white South Africans reserved for themselves over 85% of the land, allowing a small area to be reserved for Indians and Coloureds. Hence, to Mabuza, the issue was not only confined to the KaNgwane Bantustan, even if the African people, in a moment of aberration, accepted Bantustans, how could they possibly be expected to connive at such a horrid injustice to themselves? The fertile land of, what was then, Swaziland, was annexed by the colonisers. In terms of geo-economics, why should African people accept incorporation into Swaziland which lost most of its fertile land to South Africa?

Enos Mabuza believed that if the apartheid regime wanted them to renounce their South African citizenship and join Swaziland, the choice should emanate from the affected citizens. There was no better way of resolving this matter than holding an official referendum. Besides, white South Africans had held their own referendum when the Republic of South Africa was established in 1961. He believed that the political position of the ruling National Party should not be rammed down the throats of the Swazi citizens of South Africa. After all, Mabuza concluded, "we are the ones who will either enjoy the sweet taste or endure the bitter taste of life in a unified Swaziland [...] those of us who see no merit in becoming citizens of the Kingdom of Swaziland, will never surrender our rights as citizens of South Africa. We shall defend our rights inch by inch and mile by mile, if necessary. WE SHALL NEVER SURRENDER!"⁴²

In the face of the mounting political mobilisation of the masses and a united front represented by iNyandza, in alliance with the ANC, the South African

41 See *Freedom Charter*.

42 *Ibid.*

Government decided not to pursue the proposed cession of KaNgwane to Swaziland. It also disbanded the Rumpff Commission. Furthermore, Justice Rumpff, the chairman of the Commission, concluded that the overwhelming majority of South African Swazi's were opposed to incorporation and it would be absurd to impose 800 000 KaNgwane citizens on the 500 000 citizens of the Kingdom of Swaziland; surely the majority will not rule. Koornhof, the Minister of Cooperation and Development belaboured the point, "The South African Government has been informed by the Chairman of the KaNgwane Commission and the Ingwavuma Commission that it will not be possible to determine the freely expressed will of the inhabitants of the areas concerned under the present circumstances without the possibility of intimidation of some sort or another having a decisive influence on the result. Following consultations with all the interested parties, including the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland, the South African Government has concluded that the Leaders of Swaziland, KwaZulu and KaNgwane should deliberate amongst themselves. The South African Government would be willing to consider sympathetically proposals made jointly and unanimously. Consequently, it has been decided with the concurrence of the Chairman to dissolve the two Commissions."⁴³

In response, Mabuza declared, "On behalf of my government I express our relief at the central government's decision not to pursue the proposed incorporation of KaNgwane into Swaziland. I wish also to express our admiration for the former Chairman of the KaNgwane Commission, the Honourable Justice Rumpff for the open and polite manner in which he conducted the Commission. We concur with the conclusions he reached that the overwhelming majority of South Africa's Swazis and residents of KaNgwane are opposed to incorporation with Swaziland [...] It demonstrates that the central government has been obliged to desist from altering the traditional South African boundaries, and refrain from depriving Swazi and [Ingwavuma] Zulu South Africans of their rights of citizenship."⁴⁴

Marepo Lesetja asserted that the land adjustments, contemplated by the South African Government in consultation with the Swaziland Government, were mere subterfuge to put the ANC at bay in Swaziland and Mozambique and to restrain Mabuza for his support of the ANC. According to Lesetja, it was already too late to confine the ANC to these two countries, because it was already deeply ensconced in the KaNgwane homeland. The ANC played a major role behind the scenes, in tandem with the leadership of the KaNgwane homeland against the incorporation.⁴⁵

43 KNG, DJ, File 5/4/6/1, Volume 1, "Statement by the Hon. PGJ Koornhof, DMS, MP, Minister of Cooperation and Development", s.a.

44 KNG, DJ, File 5/4/6/1, Volume 1, "Statement of the Hon. EJ Mabuza, MLA, Chief Executive Councillor of KaNgwane", s.a.

45 NPC. Lesetja.

4. POLITICAL ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE ANC AND INYANDZA: THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HISTORY IN UNDERSTANDING OUR NEGLECTED AND FRACTURED PAST

The use of oral history testimonies or “voices” in the study of the liberation struggle in South Africa has its strengths and weaknesses. One agrees with Jeremy Seekings who is of the view that the challenge for scholars is to integrate different voices or testimonies into an overall picture, whilst recognising that voices are incomplete; that some potential voices are likely to remain silent; and that making sense of oral history testimonies requires going beyond them.⁴⁶ The experiences of those who were interviewed through the SADET Oral History Project (SOHP) and other initiatives form the tapestry of our country’s neglected liberation history. These issues were noted by the author when he took the decision to allow those interviewed to speak for themselves. Readers will learn more from the oral history testimonies, voices and views of veterans of the liberation struggle, than from books however skilfully written. This corresponds to Ally’s use of memories to, “expose the localized significations, literally embodied in KaNgwane’s chief minister Enos J Mabuza, that demarcate politics as civility and order against disorder and revolt”.⁴⁷

The proposed South Africa-Swaziland land deal was a massive threat to the meaning of citizenship in South Africa and this greatly enhanced resistance and political organisation in the Eastern Transvaal, a point underscored by Nakedi Matthews Phosa, representing the ANC underground, when he explained the positive working relationship between himself and Mabuza and the importance of a strong alliance between the banned ANC and the Inyandza National Movement in terms of political mobilisation. Prior to the land deal and incorporation issue, the masses in the KwaNgwane Bantustan were in a relative lull and were acquiescent. However, once they were informed about the grave implications of the land deal through effective planning and political mobilisation by the ANC and iNyandza, the people took an interest in day-to-day politics and put up tenacious resistance to the threat posed by incorporation into the Kingdom of Swaziland. Inyandza National Movement, the ruling party of the then KaNgwane Bantustan Government, was founded in October 1978 at Lochiel, a village with no more than a filling station a few kilometres from Oshoek Border Post in the then Eastern Transvaal. As Mabhuza Simeon Ginindza avowed, Inyandza was formed in order to, “politicise and mobilise the masses of our people in furtherance of the aims and objectives of the liberation movement: on

46 J Seekings, “Whose voices? Politics and methodology in the study of political organisation and protest in the final phase of the ‘Struggle’ in South Africa”, *South African Historical Journal* 62(1), 2010, pp. 7-28.

47 Ally, “Peaceful memories: Remembering/forgetting”.

the one hand, through its relationship with the ANC in exile; and on the other, through its socio-economic development programme, through which it sought to uplift the standard of living of the citizens of that homeland".⁴⁸

This united front between the ANC and Inyandza was confirmed by the fact that underground leaders of the banned ANC were allowed to operate freely and above ground in KaNgwane, Phosa was one of these leaders. When he addressed the annual Youth Congress of the Inyandza National Movement at Mlumati Technical Institute on 10 September 1983, he quoted the *Freedom Charter* and reminded the youth that South Africa belonged to all who live in it and urged his audience to be vigilant because black people had been dispossessed of their land by the apartheid regime. To add insult to injury, as shown in the recent debacle, the apartheid regime, according to Phosa, was intensifying its struggle to strip black people of their South African citizenship. This tendency was also showcased by granting bogus "independence" to the Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana. He urged the Inyandza youth to vigorously oppose incorporation into Swaziland and to dedicate themselves towards the struggle for the return of the land to its rightful owners, the oppressed African majority in South Africa. The Inyandza youth congress provided an alternative platform for leaders such as Phosa, because the ANC Youth League was banned and could not convene conferences inside the borders of South Africa.⁴⁹ Furthermore, in his address Phosa belaboured the point, "You have assigned me to address you on the monstrous South African policy of apartheid and on the implications of this grotesque policy. The anvil of the evil tapestry of apartheid is a scourge to us as Black people and South Africa has been unceremoniously ejected from many international organisations merely because the pith and marrow of her government is apartheid. Our country and her people are being starved of international arts and culture, sports [...] the WCC has declared apartheid a heresy [...] the tidal wave of internal and international rejection of the policy of apartheid is reaching a run-away crescendo".⁵⁰ The youthful crowd reacted positively to Phosa's engaging speech.

The alliance politics between Inyandza and the ANC were based on the struggle for a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. The roots of this alliance can be traced back to the strategies and tactics of the banned ANC – and particularly to how these influenced political mobilisation inside South Africa. Contrary to popular theories about the liberation struggle in South Africa, the ANC did not wait to send delegates to Vietnam in 1978 and produce the *Green Book* in 1979 in order to think broadly about political

48 Ginindza, p. 145.

49 KNG, DJ, File 5/4/6/1, Volume 1, NM Phosa, "South African Government's policy of apartheid and its implication", 10 September 1983.

50 KNG, DJ, File 5/4/6/1, Volume 1, Phosa, "South African Government's policy of apartheid". See also in the same file, NM Phosa, "I can't see the reason why", Message to the students at Mashadza Secondary School, s.a.

mobilisation inside the country. Political mobilisation took place before the 1978 visit to the liberated Vietnam.⁵¹ The ANC first sent Thabo Mbeki to Botswana in 1973 where he settled and built up a political network which pursued active mobilisation with ANC cadres in exile and also with the liberation movements' cadres based inside South Africa. Then, in 1975, he moved and settled in Swaziland after the independence of Mozambique and Angola in 1974. Mbeki and other members of the ANC were able to pass through Mozambique into Swaziland. Furthermore, there were opportunities for the ANC to consolidate its relationship with South African Student Organisation (SASO) which was headquartered in Durban. The leader of the SASO delegation was Taole Mokoena, who was a student at the University of Natal Medical School. As a matter of fact, the Natal-based SASO leadership went to Swaziland in 1975 to meet Mbeki where they held direct discussions without the necessity of having an intermediary, such as the Botswana-based Harry Nengwekhulu.

Among the burning issues that were discussed by both sides were political mobilisation and strategies and tactics towards the apartheid regime's homelands or Bantustans. For the ANC, the issue was about conducting political work and political mobilisation in these areas. According to Mbeki, the ANC's approach was that it was of course opposed to the Bantustan system, but that, unwittingly, the apartheid regime had created some legal space for political mobilisation. With this in mind, the ANC underground established contact with above-ground and legal political parties formed in the various Bantustans. For example, a Democratic Party was formed in the Transkei and there were amenable political activists in both Lebowa and Gazankulu. Similarly, in KaNgwane, Enos Mabuza formed the Inyandza National Movement. During the early 1970s, there was also an open discussion between Buthelezi and Tambo about the formation of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in the then province of Natal. This was confirmed during interviews conducted with both Mbeki and Buthelezi during 2015 and 2014.⁵²

The fallout between the ANC and the IFP arose after the London meeting in 1979, after Susan Vos, a journalist for the *Sunday Times*, who also had links with the IFP, published a piece about the London meeting. Its content was not a true reflection of the discussions, but was designed to split the ANC between the so-called "moderates" and the "radicals" or "nationalists", with the Gang/Group of 8 issues lurking in the background.⁵³

51 For information on the visit to Vietnam and the *Green Book*, see <www.anc.org.za/docs/history/>.

52 SADET Oral History Project (hereafter SOHP). Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu, Interview with Thabo Mbeki, Johannesburg, 15 December 2015, See also, SOHP. SM Ndlovu and M Strydom, Interview with Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Cape Town, July 2014. An excerpt of this interview is published in SM Ndlovu and M Strydom (eds), *The Thabo Mbeki I know* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2016), pp. 114-119.

53 Ndlovu and Strydom, pp. 269-287.

According to Mbeki, the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC argued that it was a good strategy to make use of the available legal political space to its advantage – and in the process implement its policies on popular mobilisation of the masses who resided in the various Bantustans.⁵⁴ But, of course Mokoena and his colleagues in SASO did not understand this approach. They found it vexing and asked Mbeki why the ANC was collaborating with the Bantustan leaders who, according to them, were “sell-outs” and collaborators. They spent a great deal of time discussing and arguing about this pressing matter and when Mokoena was arrested by the security police and tried on his return to South Africa, he gave detailed evidence on the ANC’s views with regard to political mobilisation inside the Bantustans. Mbeki was of the view that this was acceptable in the sense that Mokoena presented a succinct and correct interpretation of the ANC position. The court records were subsequently made available to the public via the various national newspapers and the ANC leaders based at the Lusaka headquarters felt that it was a positive move to access the court record, produce it as a pamphlet and distribute this legally inside South Africa, because it was now a public record.⁵⁵ The fact that Mokoena’s court evidence had already been published in various newspapers was welcomed by the banned ANC because it provided opportunities for political mobilisation and also promoted internal propaganda – informing and making the views and policies of the proscribed liberation movement available to the masses at large – including those based in various Bantustans of the Republic of South Africa.⁵⁶

Phosa is another leader of the ANC who confirms Mbeki’s viewpoints about ANC strategies linked to political mobilisation in various Bantustans. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Phosa was an underground operative of the ANC based in Eastern Transvaal. During an interview with Lesetja, he confirmed that the ANC was involved in protracted political mobilisation in the KaNgwane Bantustan. He personally had political discussions with Mabuza and convinced him to work in alliance with the ANC underground in the Eastern Transvaal whose tentacles had spread to both Swaziland and Mozambique. Phosa emphasised the following points about changing political alignments and mobilisation, “There were a lot of organisations [that were] formed but the turning point as far as mobilisation [...] was the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983, and we began to realign the Charterists and members of the Black Consciousness Movement. The Freedom Charter was resurfacing like fumes from the ashes and becoming the main agenda, and it was positioning itself in a way which was a threat for Black Consciousness. As a result, Black Consciousness lost some of its best cadres to the ANC and we immediately needed to find a political structure. We couldn’t be a formless organisation. We

54 SOHP. SM Ndlovu, Interview with Thabo Mbeki, Johannesburg, 15 December 2015.

55 *Ibid.*

56 *Ibid.*

couldn't be ANC, because it was banned. The new organisation became the UDF, built from the branches linked to the grassroots, from the street politics into what it became until it was launched. We were part of that."⁵⁷

About his relocation to the Eastern Transvaal and contact with the KaNgwane Bantustan Chief Minister, Phosa asserted, "I arrived in the Eastern Transvaal during that time. I had to stop serving articles in Johannesburg. I was now based in Nelspruit. I had already established contacts with the liberation movement [ANC] in Swaziland [and] Maputo and we were working with [the] ANC underground at that time [...] we deliberately continued to influence the KaNgwane Bantustan and Enos Mabuza became an important person to contact and to talk with about ANC politics, and form alliances with. I personally spoke to Enos Mabuza and said: 'We need you to support the ANC, sir. This is what it is.' And we began to integrate him in our ANC underground contacts with Jacob Zuma, Joe Slovo, Chris Hani and others in Maputo, including Archie Abrahams, Vusi Twala and also all those guys in Swaziland [such as] Ricky Nkondo, Gebhuza [Siphiwe Nyanda], Ibrahim Ibrahim – all those guys, we worked with them. They were either in Swaziland or in Maputo."⁵⁸

As a result of the unfolding security situation in both the Northern Natal and Eastern Transvaal border areas, the apartheid regime devised the incorporation scheme. As a counter-strategy formulated by the ANC, the alliance with Enos Mabuza's Inyandza National Movement was consolidated so that the liberation movement could enhance the political mobilisation of the masses in KaNgwane. Phosa explained, "We became a network here in the Eastern Transvaal and as God would have it we had a land deal question where Swaziland and the apartheid regime tried to transfer the land in KaNgwane and in Ingwavuma. [This] became a driving force and mobilising factor like no other factor because everybody said we are not going to allow our land to be transferred and become citizens of Swaziland. The ANC underground moved in very fast with pamphlets, propaganda and in the process provided political education to the masses on everything; on the Lusaka Manifesto; on the need to keep the borders intact until a new, non-racial government took power in South Africa. This was also the OAU's policy. I mean, the incorporation matter provided us [with] political space to mobilise the masses and continue our struggle against land dispossession. It was a battle cry against apartheid around the land issue in this area."⁵⁹

By providing political education about the Lusaka Manifesto, while the political mobilisation against the cession of KaNgwane to Swaziland was ongoing, the ANC was able to conscientise the masses about the importance of African solidarity and the role of the OAU in the geopolitics of the world. In April 1969, the OAU summit of the Heads of States and Governments in East

57 SOHP. Marepo Lesetja, Interview with Mathews Phosa, Nelspruit, 30 January 2004.

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Ibid.*

and Central Africa adopted the Lusaka Manifesto. It proclaimed the preference of African countries for negotiated, non-violent and peaceful solutions to the problems of white minority rule and virulent racism on the subcontinent. This course of action was subject to apartheid South Africa meeting certain conditions – including that the colonial boundaries should be left intact until a non-racial, democratically elected government took political power in South Africa. Although the ANC felt short-changed by the Lusaka Manifesto, it was keenly aware that overt criticism of the entire document would demonstrate a lack of political acumen on its part. In short, the OAU proposed that the South African question should be resolved by holding dialogue with the apartheid regime.⁶⁰ Swaziland was a member of the OAU, which was also committed to overthrow the apartheid regime. Moreover, the OAU eschewed border readjustments as a cardinal percept, just as it opposed any action that furthered the aims of apartheid policies. Swaziland's participation in the KaNgwane land deal ran counter to both principles. This was also a new fight for the ANC.

On 15 July 1982, the Executive Committee of the ANC sent a memorandum to the government of Swaziland. It challenged the land deal between South Africa and Swaziland and reminded the present leaders of the Swaziland Government that the royal house of Swaziland, representing the Swazi people, had helped to found the ANC in 1912. When the founding fathers of the ANC, including the distinguished Swazi royal house, voted on 8 January 1912 to, “bury the demon of tribalism”, they cherished the ideal, not of the separation, but of their unification, emphasising the common African bonds which unite people against grave harm done by ethnic division fostered through divide-and-rule policies of the apartheid regime – and the possibility of fratricidal strife among the African people. The ANC called both the government of Swaziland and its people, “to recall the heritage of unity and African brotherhood which Queen Regent Labotsibeni left us and, as before, to reaffirm, practically, their loyalty to this heritage”.⁶¹ This was important because, “Since its foundation nearly 20 years ago, the Organisation of African Unity, of which Swaziland is a member, has stood firm on the position that in the interests of peace and unity, the colonial boundaries delimiting the states of Africa should not be redrawn except by free and mutual consent between the countries and peoples involved. Experience has shown that where this principle is violated, inter-African conflict and disunity inevitably follow. Already this agreement has generated intense animosities between Swazi and Swazi, and between Swazi and Zulu, involving millions of African people.”⁶²

60 On the Lusaka Manifesto, see SM Ndlovu, “The geopolitics of apartheid South Africa in the African continent: 1948–1994”. In: SADET, *Road to democracy in South Africa, Volume 5, African solidarity, Part 1* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2013), chapter 1.

61 “Racist regime land deal”, *Sechaba*, September 1982, p. 4.

62 *Ibid.*

Both the ANC and Inyandza National Movement informed the masses that the incorporation of the KaNgwane Bantustan into Swaziland corresponded with the apartheid regime's foreign policy strategy in Africa dubbed the "constellation of southern African states". Gloating about its diplomatic strategy, the apartheid regime appeared to be making a breakthrough on the diplomatic front, particularly in southern Africa. The main objective was to establish normal relations between apartheid South Africa and the rest of the African continent. Hence, the proposed cession of the Bantustan of KaNgwane and Ingwavuma to the Kingdom of Swaziland was part of a decades-old diplomatic strategy.⁶³ The incorporation issue was also about regional politics, because the ANC used Inyandza National Movement as a vehicle to mobilise resistance against the South African Government's foreign policy. As the leader of the anti-incorporation resistance, Enos Mabuza had to travel around the world and solicit support. As stated by Phosa, the proposed land deal, "helped us to mould [the] Inyandza National Movement into a second UDF in the country. And we knew [that] we had all people of KaNgwane Bantustan supporting the position taken by Enos Mabuza. He was the leader, the daily leader of the people. We consciously supported him as ANC underground cadres. When we went to London and [elsewhere] overseas accompanying Mabuza [...] we briefed Oliver Tambo, Thabo Mbeki and other leaders of the ANC about the land deal between the apartheid regime and Swazi government. We were trying to cover the tracks for Mabuza so that he didn't have to go and meet us in Swaziland and Mozambique for it was going to be obvious to the apartheid regime. When Mabuza went to visit abroad in order to stem the tide against incorporation and explain his side of the story [...] we accompanied him to far places in Europe."⁶⁴

Phosa also accentuated the salient point that, "those [overseas trips accompanied by Mabuza] were all ANC engagements, all of them, funded by the ANC. Mabuza was received by the ANC, housed by the ANC, briefed by the ANC, diplomatically instructed by the ANC, so that on his return home he would [...] do political work on behalf of the ANC but under the banner of the KaNgwane Bantustan. This is what [...] we used to call the Sparrow Operation. There are reports under the guise of the Sparrow Operation [...] Sparrow became KaNgwane Homeland operation [...] other operations were organised around the Orange Orchard operation. Ronnie Kasrils will tell you about Orange Orchard. That went beyond the borders of KaNgwane when we were creating underground structures inside South Africa, forming the first elements of operations in all of Mpumalanga, Eastern Transvaal at the time, sending MK

63 SM Ndlovu, "The ANC and the world". In: SADET, *Road to democracy in South Africa, Volume 1* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010), pp. 562–566; Ndlovu, "The geopolitics of apartheid".

64 SOHP. Marepo Lesetja, Interview with Mathews Phosa, Nelspruit, 30 January 2004.

cadres into the country, from Maputo, via Maputo, via Swaziland, sending military forces inside here at that time when I was already in exile.”⁶⁵

In an article published in the *South African Historical Journal* in March 2012, Ginindza corroborated Phosa’s oral history testimony about the ANC and Inyandza alliance politics. He highlighted the case of Tembuyise Simon Mndawe, one of the youth in the civil service of the KaNgwane Government who decided to leave the Bantustan to be trained as a cadre of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC. Later, Mndawe returned to South Africa, “to [undertake] underground operations and was arrested by the security police of the apartheid government [...] and was killed in detention [...] the only firm of black attorneys in Nelspruit at the time, Mathews Phosa and Phineas Mojapelo, was informed about the death of comrade Mndawo in detention, and they immediately informed the KaNgwane administration. The Inyandza National Movement organised his funeral under heavy presence of the apartheid security agencies [...] following this the Inyandza’s leadership used to secretly meet with the ANC in Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and London to discuss the politics of developing liberation struggles and to take orders.”⁶⁶

5. CONCLUSION

The successful political mobilisation of the KaNgwane citizens by both the Inyandza National Movement and the ANC was the main driving force behind the failure of the proposed land deal between South Africa and the Kingdom of Swaziland. Justice Rumpff concluded that the overwhelming majority of South African Swazi’s were opposed to incorporation with Swaziland, and that it would be “absurd” to impose 800 000 KaNgwane citizens upon the 500 000 citizens of Swaziland. The political alliance between Inyandza and the ANC, particularly the role of Enos Mabuza, revises and re-interprets the long-held negative views about Bantustan leaders – that they were all traitors, sell-outs and lackeys of the apartheid regime. One can argue that Mabuza did not fit this profile and stereotype, particularly because oral history testimonies confirm that the ANC promoted the formation of a united front with willing political organisations such as Inyandza and leaders such as Mabuza operating in the Bantustans. The historical record has ample evidence of collaboration or accommodation with apartheid power by Bantustan leaders such as Buthelezi and Mangope. The resistance, for a fairly short time, of Mabuza and his Bantustan Government does not make all that counter-evidence magically disappear, but it does give historians pause for thought, and allows us to modify views/stereotypes of Bantustans to see their complexity/messiness, especially in taking full account of political (and I might add, other forms of) resistance.

65 *Ibid.*

66 Ginindza, p. 147. On this issue, see also Lesejta, “The KaNgwane Homeland”.

Socio-economic conditions in KaNgwane (unlike in Natal-Zululand), show how large-scale relocation into residential villages and 'betterment' projects from the 1950s, influenced a trend to stronger "economic farming units". But then land dispossession in the 1970s, plus failure of commercial cash cropping, bred resentment and because state farms failed to deliver, resentment turned against chiefs such as Mkolishi Dlamini. Perhaps this helps explain the materialist basis for Mabuza's popularity as the chief minister of the KaNgwane Bantustan.⁶⁷

As allies, both the ANC and Inyandza understood the apartheid regime's motives in seeking to alter the boundaries of South Africa and to expatriate almost a million South Africans of African descent in order to (i) further the policy of transforming South Africa into a white man's haven by depriving the African population of their South African citizenship; (ii) to impose upon the government of Swaziland the obligation to ensure that the population of approximately one million South Africans did not participate in the struggle for national liberation in South Africa; (iii) to alleviate the problem of African unemployment, which had assumed crisis proportions, by denying a million South Africans the right to employment in South Africa, since they would become foreigners in their own country; and (iv) to integrate Swaziland within the South African economy, in pursuance of the policy of the apartheid regime of forming a neo-colonial "constellation of southern African states".

Successful parallel negotiations with Mozambique in terms of signing the Nkomati Accord meant that South Africa had to abandon the land deal with the Kingdom of Swaziland. However, the apartheid regime's aggressive policy of using coercive force through destabilisation had borne fruit. In March 1984, President Machel of the Republic of Mozambique, bludgeoned into signing the Nkomati Accord, added his signature to the agreement in the small border town of Nkomati. At the official signing ceremony Botha pointedly referred to his vision of a veritable constellation of states in southern Africa. As a result, the ANC had to close its offices and relocate from Mozambique.

67 A Vaughan and A McIntosh, "State and capital in the regeneration of a South African peasantry", *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 27(3), 1993, pp. 439-461.