

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POLITICS  
IN SWAZILAND AND THE EASTERN TRANSVAAL IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY

by

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The reign of Mswati II (1838-65) is notable in Swazi history both because it was during this period that the amorphous body of heterogeneous clans gathered together by Sobuza was properly amalgamated into a self-conscious and self-perpetuating nation, and because it was in the course of his reign that the full impact of white penetration into South-East Africa was fully felt in Swaziland and the earliest of a series of decisions were taken which were to govern Swazi responses to white encroachments for the rest of the century. These two processes, the one internal and the other external, were indissolubly linked.

"The European Factor" became an important consideration in Swazi politics with the arrival of the Voortrekkers in Natal in 1836, but it was only with the establishment of the Ohrigstad settlement in the Eastern Transvaal in 1845 that European penetration of South-East Africa exerted any significant and sustained influence either on the processes of internal politics in Swaziland or on the formulation of its external policies. In the event, the establishment of the Ohrigstad settlement in the winter of 1845 coincided with a period of serious internal unrest in Swaziland, with the result that the ultimate impact of white penetration was many times magnified.

When Sobuza had died in 1838 he had left behind him only a very precarious and fragile unity among the heterogeneous groups whom he had ruled. Very soon two distinct types of opposition to the legitimate leadership emerged, ramifying along two entirely different planes of Swazi society. On the one hand, the young king was faced with the competing ambitions of his innumerable elder brothers, several of whom wished to supplant him, while, on the other hand, he found his authority being undermined by the persistent pressure of many of the "Amakazambile" chiefs to dilute, or even to dissolve, the ties that bound them to their Dlamini overlords. (1) Fortunately, the interests of the one group of opponents did not often coincide with those of the other, and the legitimate leadership could usually rely on those who opposed them in one situation to assist it against opposition in another. This, however, was not always so, and when the two types of opposition did coincide and interests coalesced a situation of extreme gravity was created.

Such was the case with the rebellion of Fokoti, which took place probably within a year of Sobuza's death. (2) Fokoti, who was an elder brother of Mswati, launched his challenge from a regional power base in the south of Swaziland. (3) Fortunately for Mswati, his other important brothers saw Fokoti as a greater challenge to their respective positions than the more easily manipulable "herd boy king", and together with genuinely legitimist elements quashed this threat to his succession. (4) The prime consequence of this rebellion was that it highlighted in an unmistakable fashion a number of the more important deficiencies in the administration and political structure of the Dlamini hegemony, with the result that measures were soon taken, spurred on by Mswati's mother, Nandzi, to remedy, or at least minimize, the worst of these. (5) The military system which had reached its apogee in Shaka's Zululand, and which had hitherto been only partially operative in Sobuza's Swaziland, was adopted in a rather more comprehensive manner. Nation wide agreements were formed and provided the framework of military organization, while a far more comprehensive system of royal villages was established, both as rallying points for regiments and also for the purpose of monitoring and supervising local activities. (6)

Such measures were obviously inimical to the vested interests of many of the subordinate chiefs in Swaziland who had enjoyed a fairly large measure of autonomy in Sobuza's time. (7) As a result, widespread discontent ensued, which finally reached its climax after an attack by Mswati on a chief south of the Mkondo. (8) According to Allison, a Wesleyan missionary who was active in Swaziland at this time, the chiefs threatened to regard any further attack on one of their number as done to themselves as a group, and to act accordingly. (9) This caused great consternation among the King's advisers, who made immediate concessions and thus averted the crisis which Allison felt to be imminent.

Superimposed on this picture of "chiefly" opposition to centralizing policies can also be detected the growing conflict within the royal house which no doubt, in itself, played a significant role in inducing the local chiefs to be so forthright in their opposition to Mswati's actions. All the evidence that we possess for this period suggests that, even at this stage, Mswati was very far from being master of his own house. He had been formally installed as King in 1839 as a consequence of Fokoti's rebellion (10), but as he was still young and immature the handling of affairs seems to have continued to remain in the hands of his former regents. Thus, when Allison visited Mswati in 1844, he could not speak officially with him as Mswati was as yet uncircumcised and therefore unfit to conduct public affairs. (11) Similarly, the whole tenor of Allison's account of the events of this period suggests that Tandile, Malambule, Somquba and Malunge, rather than Mswati, were the figures in control of events. (12) Indeed, even in July 1846, after the departure from the royal council of the powerful Malambule, and some time after Mswati's circumcision, Somquba, Mswati's eldest brother, was still designated in a treaty of cession between the Swazi and the Ohrigstad Boers as "ruling in place of the King", while Mswati merely figured as "captain". (13)

None the less, Mswati's circumcision, which took place some time in 1845, does undoubtedly mark the beginning of Mswati's assumption of the full powers of kingship, and it is from this date that relations between him and his brother Malambule, hitherto one of his principal regents, began to deteriorate dramatically. Accounts differ as to the precise sequence of the events leading up to the final confrontation. The traditional version of them is that hostilities started after Mswati uncovered a plot of Malambule's to kill him during a hunt. (14) Other sources relate that they arose out of Malambule's refusal to surrender cattle to Mswati. (15) But in either case the significance is much the same, viz. that Malambule was beginning to find the increase in the young king's authority intolerable.

In the early stages of the period of open confrontation between Malambule and Mswati, Malambule pre-empted much of the ground for diplomatic manoeuvre available to Mswati. He not only acquired the backing of Mpande, the Zulu king, but he even managed to manoeuvre the missionary Allison into supporting his cause. (16) All this, in view of the disaffection of the subordinate chiefs which had shortly preceded these events, constituted a situation of extreme peril for Mswati and his followers, for now there existed the very real possibility that Malambule, at the head of a victorious Zulu army, would be installed in Swaziland in Mswati's place.

But Malambule did overlook one new power which had only just made its appearance in this area, and which had not as yet made any appreciable impact on the politics of the region. This was the settlement of the Ohrigstad Boers which was established to the north of Swaziland in August 1845. For Mswati, the appearance of this new power was an unlooked for piece of good fortune, and almost straight away attempts were made by the royal party to obtain its support and co-operation. Initially, their success was limited. At that time the Swazi could offer the Ohrigstad community authorities (then effectively under the control of the Kommandant General, A. H. Potgieter) nothing to compensate them for becoming embroiled in local disputes. Although the Swazi had some claim to the land on which the Ohrigstad community had settled, and were probably prepared to come to some mutually satisfactory agreement involving this, Potgieter, the Kommandant General, had already concluded an agreement with Sekwati, the Pedi chief who had apparently ceded the land to Potgieter in return for protection against attacks by the Swazi. (17) To obtain its cession from the Swazi was therefore superfluous, and would merely nullify the agreement with Sekwati for the dubious benefit of protecting the Swazi against the Zulu.

Equally important was the fact that the Sekwati agreement was one of the principal strengths of Potgieter's position as leader of the Ohrigstad community (18) at a time when this was being increasingly challenged by his opponents within that community. (19) The quarrel between Potgieter and his opponents was, in essence, the same one that had divided the Voortrekker communities, at least from the time of the Natal settlement, if not before. Basically, it was

between the proponents of two opposing systems of government, the one group of which demanded a government in which all authority was lodged in a civilian and democratically elected Volksraad, and the other which wished to institute the autocratic and personalized government of individual military leaders. (20) It was the latter form of government which Potgieter and his supporters wished to maintain in Ohrigstad, and which the gradually developing Volksraad or Natal party was seeking to dismember. One of the principal obstacles preventing the Volksraad party from achieving this objective was the Sekwati treaty, for, by the terms of this, the land occupied by the Ohrigstad settlement was ceded to Potgieter in his personal capacity. As a result, in much the same way as his Swazi counterpart to the south, Potgieter could buttress and protect his personal supremacy by reference to his ownership of the land.

The earliest Swazi overtures to the Ohrigstad community were therefore a source of considerable embarrassment to Potgieter, for they gave grounds for questioning the validity of the Sekwati agreement, and supplied his opponents with a particularly convenient means of undermining his authority. He therefore suppressed the news of the Swazi envoys (21) and they returned to Swaziland empty-handed. None the less, Swazi efforts in this direction were not entirely fruitless for, by the end of 1845, the assistance of four Boer freebooters, originally from the Ohrigstad community, had been obtained. (22) The impact of this action on Mswati's opponents was immediate and out of all proportion to their real significance. For both Malambule and Mpande the enrolment of these men in Mswati's forces seemed to mark the dawning in their consciousness of the potential importance of the Ohrigstad community in the impending conflict. Immediately, messages were sent by Mpande, both to the British authorities in Natal and to the Ohrigstad Boers. To the British he protested about the Boer intrusion and requested that they send some men to counteract the advantage thus gained by the Swazi (23), while he urged the Boers to transfer their settlement from the insalubrious area of Ohrigstad to the more healthy climes of Swaziland and to expel the Swazi at the same time. (24) But the recipients of both these messages were equally suspicious of Mpande's intentions and ignored his requests. (25)

The employment of these Boer mercenaries may well have conferred a further hidden benefit on the royal party in Swaziland, for there is a strong likelihood that these men also supplied the Swazi with intelligence about the deep-seated antagonisms that existed within the Ohrigstad community. Potgieter's later denunciation of their activities indicates that they were adherents of the party that opposed him in Ohrigstad (26), and this in itself constitutes fairly strong grounds for assuming that Mswati learnt of the existence of the Volksraad Party in Ohrigstad. In any case, Mswati would probably have soon learnt of these divisions from other sources, for the differences between Potgieter and the Volksraad were becoming increasingly embittered and more public. (27)

The differences between Potgieter and his opponents which arose at the beginning of the settlement gradually mounted in intensity as the Volksraad party became strengthened (in the first

half of 1846) by an influx of new settlers from Natal. For obvious reasons, one of the most contentious issues of all was the question of the title deeds of the settlement. The Volksraad party wished the treaty to be renegotiated in the name of the community as a whole and that a payment of some sort be made to Sekwati in return for the land. (28) Potgieter was, not unnaturally, opposed to any such action, but by May 1846 the Volksraad Party was strong enough to go ahead regardless of Potgieter's opposition, and commissioned David Buijs, a man of mixed descent, to enter into negotiations with Sekwati. Buijs's mission, however, proved abortive. Sekwati wished to have no hand in the dispute and replied that, as he had once given the land to Potgieter, he could not sell it again. (29)

The Volksraad party recovered sufficiently quickly from this rebuff to suggest that even before the departure of Buijs they had planned, in the event of Sekwati proving unco-operative, to redirect their efforts towards Swaziland. How they obtained their information about the Swazi claim to Sekwati's land, and their willingness to cede it, cannot now be ascertained but, given the community's ignorance of even the most rudimentary facts about the politics of this area only four months earlier (30), it seems quite feasible that they derived this information from intelligence deliberately transmitted to them by the Swazi king. At any rate, immediately after the failure of the mission to Sekwati the Volksraad party directed a petition to the Volksraad complaining, amongst other things, of Potgieter's handling of the question of the community's title to the land and accusing him of suppressing information about the Swazi claim to the territory. (31)

This first official mention of the Swazi claim to the land marked an important departure in the policy of the Volksraad party, and also coincided with important new developments in Swaziland. By June Malambule, having secured the support of Mpande, was ready to take active steps in his campaign to usurp Mswati's power. While Mpande called up half his army for use in Swaziland (32), Malambule moved his headquarters to the vicinity of Allison's mission station at Mahamba in southern Swaziland. (33) With the conflict now imminent it seems likely that the Swazi authorities redoubled their efforts to obtain Boer protection, and with the new receptivity on the part of the Volksraad party an agreement was finally reached on 27th July 1846, which ceded to the Boers all the territory bounded by the Oliphants River in the north and the Crocodile and Elandspruit Rivers in the south. (34)

The agreement between the Swazi and the Ohrigstad Boers came not a moment too soon. Only six weeks later, in accordance with a plan previously arranged with Mpande, Malambule left his chiefdom, which was centred near the Pongola poort, and moved off parallel to the Pongola to Allison's mission station. (35) Here he engaged one of Mswati's armies in battle, but was repulsed and fled southwards before the pursuing forces into the territory of Langalibalele and Magonondo. (36) This supplied Mpande with an excuse, for which he had long been waiting, to attack Swaziland and to secure control of some of its more strategic areas. After

driving Mswati's force out of the land of his (Mpande's) tributaries, Mpande launched a full scale invasion into Swaziland early in 1847.(37) The Zulu forces advanced in several independent divisions until they reached the Crocodile River. Here they found that many Swazi and the majority of Swazi cattle had taken refuge with the Boers, which thus prevented them from achieving a final victory. (38) For some months thereafter a total stalemate existed, for while the Volksraad party could protect the Swazi while they remained close to their settlements north of the Crocodile River, they could not supply active support to expel the Zulu in Swaziland proper, being at this time virtually on the point of open hostilities with Potgieter's party. (39) It was not until July 1847 that the Zulu army finally retired from Swaziland (40), probably as a result of pressure from the Volksraad party which had by this stage temporarily patched up its differences with Potgieter. (5)

While the influx of settlers from Natal and the conclusion of the treaty of July signalled the beginning of the gradual eclipse of Potgieter's party in Ohrigstad, it was some time before this became sufficiently pronounced to induce him to march away from Ohrigstad for good, to form a new settlement to the north. In the meantime, he tried to re-establish his former authority. A good deal of attention has been devoted elsewhere to illustrating his efforts to do this by his manipulation of white interests. (42) None, however, has been paid to his attempts to manipulate African interests. Only the vaguest reports are to be found in the official records of the Transvaal to document his attempts to enlist the support of the African chiefdoms to the north and west of Ohrigstad in this venture. (43) As regards his negotiations with the Swazi, there is, however, a slightly better record. Potgieter had every reason for making a special effort with the Swazi. The Volksraad party in Ohrigstad remained his most irreconcilable enemy in the Transvaal, and much of the authority of their position depended on the Swazi agreement of July 1846. It was therefore clearly in his interests to attempt to sabotage this agreement and cast doubt on its authenticity, and this he apparently attempted to do in the latter part of 1847 or the beginning of 1848, when he tried to induce the Swazi leaders to repudiate their agreement with the Volksraad. (44)

For a number of reasons it is very difficult to gauge the exact measure of his success. The evidence of this attempt ever having been made comes from a transcript of an interview between representatives of the Volksraad and envoys from Somquba (probably) in June 1848 (45), and if the Swazi did make any agreement with Potgieter it is unlikely that they would have revealed it here. Probably the most satisfactory interpretation of the events referred to in this document is that the Swazi had been keeping their options open with both parties until the situation clarified itself, leading Potgieter on to think that they did not recognize the cession as valid, and later rejecting any such idea when meeting with the Volksraad representatives.

One further possible explanation of the ambiguities of the interview of June 1848 is the factionalism which was beginning to

develop once more in the internal politics of Swaziland. At the centre of this was Mswati's eldest brother, Somquba. Although there is no absolutely clinching evidence, it seems likely that Somquba was the leading figure in securing the cession of July 1846. In the reign of his father, Sobuza, he had led at least one major expedition into the eastern Transvaal (against Phiring, the mountain fortress of the Pedi chief, Sekwati) (46), and shortly after Sobuza's death he was installed in the military village of Eludlambedwini (see map) and placed in charge of a large area of the eastern Transvaal. (47) His special responsibilities in this area therefore made him an obvious figure to use in the treaty negotiations, from the point of view of both the Volksraad and Swazi authorities. The fact that his was the principal name appended to the treaty, and that he was designated therein as "ruling in place of the King" lends further weight to this. (48)

The designation "ruling in place of the King" indeed indicates rather more than Somquba's premier role in securing the 1846 agreement, for it also shows that within a very short time of Malambule's rebellion he had succeeded in arrogating to himself the full range of powers previously exercised by Malambule, and it seems very probable that it was only his special relationship with the Boers and the influence he derived from it in this time of crisis that enabled him to achieve such a dominant position.

In the less perilous days following the withdrawal of the Zulu army, Somquba found his leading role in Swazi affairs less assured. It soon became apparent that at least some Swazi were loath to accept the finality of the 1845 cession, and before long a party seems to have grown up there which questioned its entire validity. (49) Whether the opposition here expressed was to the cession or to its chief architect, Somquba, is a moot point. Certainly, any opponent of Somquba would have opposed the cession, and this suggests the possibility that Mswati, at least privately, may have encouraged the party that was opposed to it. There were, in any case, other factors which might have fostered a belief in the possible success of a repudiation of the agreement. (50) Potgieter's attempt to undermine it from the Boer side would obviously have had this effect, as would the visible weakening of the Boer community at Ohrigstad. There the terrifyingly high death toll of its humid and fever-ridden valleys was both depleting the ranks of the settlers already there and discouraging others from filling up the gaps in their ranks. (51)

Any thoughts entertained by Mswati's party of repudiating the agreement vanished with the departure of Potgieter and his disgruntled followers from Ohrigstad towards the middle of 1848. Now any such repudiation could only drive the Boers into Somquba's camp, and the only sensible course of action for those loyal to Mswati was to reaffirm the legality of the cession and to try to detach the Boers from Somquba's interests. Somquba, for his part, seems to have been encouraged to act even more independently, and relations between the two took a rapid turn for the worse. (52) The traditional version of these events makes clear how seriously Somquba was challenging Mswati's authority at this time. Much earlier, when Somquba had been installed at the

Eludlambedwini village in the eastern Transvaal, he had been given charge of Ludlambedlu cattle. (53) This was an important charge, for the Ludlambedlu cattle had considerable ritual and symbolic importance for the Swazi, occupying a central role in the annual incwala or first fruits ceremony. (54) This incwala ceremony was, and still is, the most important event in the traditional Swazi calendar. The participation of the nation in rites gives physical and symbolic expression of the unity of the nation, as represented by the King, while its central purpose is the strengthening and renewal of the nation as embodied in the King. (55) Because of the central importance of this ceremony any slight to its ritual pre-eminence, e.g. the failure of a subordinate chief to send proper representatives to attend it, or the dancing by a subordinate chief of his own incwala dance, constituted prima facie evidence of treasonable intent. (56) Thus, when Somquba refused at about this time to relinquish the Ludlambedlu cattle (57), he must have done so in full knowledge of the enormity of his act, aware that this constituted a direct challenge to Mswati's authority.

The final stages of the dispute can be charted from contemporary records. By August 1848 Somquba evidently already feared an attack from his brother, for in this month he was the source of a rumour among the Ohrigstaders that a force of Mswati's, which was in the field, was on its way to attack Field Kornet de Beer. (58) Evidently Somquba either feared an attack on himself by this force, and hoped that a mobilization of the Boer forces would deter it, or, alternatively, he may simply have been trying to foster suspicion and ill-feeling between Mswati and the Boers, in the expectation of such an attack in the near future. In September Somquba was once again the source of a report that Mswati had sent to Manicusa (otherwise known as Soshangane) to suggest that the two Kings undertake a joint attack on the Boers (59), and by December relations between Mswati and Somquba had deteriorated to such an extent that each was sending messengers to the Landdrost at Krugersdorp to protest against the misdemeanours of the other. (60) It must have been at about this time that Mswati finally sent an army to attack Somquba. (61) Somquba, however, managed to repulse this at a battle in the region of the Komati River, and fled to the protection of the Ohrigstad Boers, under whom he was to shelter safely for the next four years. (62)

The protection extended by the Ohrigstad Boers to Somquba could not have come entirely as a surprise to Mswati and his advisers, for Somquba's special relationship with them and his proximity to their settlement had made this a potential hazard ever since the first doubts came to be felt about his loyalty. For some time before the final rupture between the two brothers there were indications that Mswati and his advisers had concluded that they could not rely on even the neutrality, still less the support, of the Boers in any future conflict with Somquba. Thus, towards the end of 1849 or the beginning of 1850, the Swazi sent messengers to Natal with a view both to securing an alternative means of restraining Zulu attacks and in the hope that the British might exert influence to prevent the Boers openly supporting Somquba against Mswati. (63) At approximately the same time overtures seem also to have been made to Manicusa, though whether these were directly connected with the Somquba dispute is less

certain. (64)

But until these diplomatic initiatives showed some signs of success Mswati was still interested in preventing relations with the Boers from lapsing into open hostility. Apart from Somquba's defection, which alone lost Mswati 500 fighting men (65), at least one other major chief rebelled against Mswati in the intermediate period. This was Mgazi, head of the Maseko chiefdom. The Maseko had been one of the principal chiefdoms in central Swaziland prior to the entry of Sobuza's amaNgwane (66), and although they had subordinated themselves to Sobuza they had, like so many other "amaKazambile" chiefdoms, retained a large measure of local autonomy. Mswati's measures of centralization had, however, steadily encroached upon this, and one of these measures rankled particularly. This was the "gift" by Mswati of one of his sisters to be Mgazi's bride, for this automatically compelled the Maseko to install her as the chief wife of Mgazi, and thus as the mother of his prospective heir. (67) It was none the less only the removal of Mswati's capital from the Mdimba to Hoho that revealed the extent of the Maseko's discontent, for now, in the wake of the Zulu invasion, and with Mswati's authority far more distant than before, they felt in a position to reassert themselves, and supplanted Lambobota (albeit in a very sub rosa fashion) with a wife from the Ndzimandze lineage, which traditionally had provided the chief wives of the Maseko. Mgazi's defiance did not last long. Mswati immediately despatched a force to destroy him, and any chance of success that he might have had against it was destroyed when a portion of his people sided with the attacking Swazi force. He was therefore compelled to flee to the Transvaal with a remnant of his people. (68)

Internal disturbances on this scale inevitably attracted the attention of the Zulu King, Mpande, and it seems that it was the expectation of this, together with uncertainty as to the ability or desire of the British to restrain him, which led Mswati to maintain at least a vestigial relationship with the Boers. (69) The Zulu raid that Mswati feared finally materialized at the end of 1849 (70), only three months after Mgazi's flight, and at almost exactly the same time as Somquba's rebellion. Fortunately, in consequence of some internal wrangling about the despatch of this army, its numbers were not as large as they might have been (71), and only one of Mswati's main towns was destroyed. None the less, puny or not, the raid was a clear warning of what Mswati might expect in the winters ahead if he could not find some means of inducing the Zulus to desist.

The presence of Somquba effectively precluded any long-term co-operation with the Ohrigstad Republic, for Mswati was more or less bound to attempt before long to dispose of this threat to his future safety. The Natal authorities for their part were almost entirely ineffectual. When Mswati sent messages to them asking them to intervene to prevent any further Zulu raids, all they could recommend was that Mswati try and seek some accommodation with Mpande, even if it meant going to the lengths of becoming tributary to him. (72)

Ultimately, this was what Mswati was compelled to do (73), and for a time after this the balance of power of south-eastern Africa was revolutionized. For the Boers, the alliance which they had so feared in the very earliest days of the Ohrigstad settlement suddenly materialized, and its effects were almost immediately disastrous for them. In August 1850 a commission which set out through Swazi territory to supervise the making of a road was virtually harried out of Swaziland by Mswati (74), while a year later the Boer Republic found itself suddenly engulfed by a Zulu army attacking the Pedi chief, Sekwati. (75) Moreover, a Swazi attack was clearly to be expected soon on Somquba, whom the Boers were, in theory, committed to protect. Before this could happen, however, the prejudices of a generation reasserted themselves: a new dispute arose between Mpande and Mswati, and Mpande's armies once again invaded Swaziland. (76)

The Zulu invasion of 1852 marks something of a watershed in Swazi history. Because of internal Zulu divisions this was to be the last major Zulu raid experienced by the Swazi. As a result, Mswati was able in 1855 finally to dispose of Somquba, and the remainder of his reign was free from either domestic challenge or external threat. Henceforth, he was in a position to concentrate his energies on expanding his influence both at home and abroad. Internally, he consolidated the Dlamini hegemony by eliminating even the most remote threads of Dlamini supremacy. Externally, he expanded his influence to the north, east and west, both by conquest and by pushing forward military villages into land earlier ceded to the Boers. Swaziland was not, of course, to remain free from internal disputes in the reigns of his successors, and these undoubtedly made a considerable impact on external relations. But by the end of Mswati's reign Swaziland was a far more cohesive political unit than it had been at the time of Mswati's accession, and the disputes which followed did not have the same debilitating effect as those of earlier years. The external position, moreover, lacked the fluidity which had characterized the early years of white settlement, and this compounded the movement towards greater internal cohesion in Swaziland. Now rival factions in Swaziland were compelled to seek their alliances among the opposing groups of white concessionaires within Swaziland, and this caused a real change in the character of Swazi external policy. Henceforth, it gradually became less and less a means whereby one Swazi faction could subordinate another and more and more an expression of which Swazi faction had already attained supremacy over the others. In short, what we are observing here is the gradual curtailment of the process of fission which had characterized the early years of both Boer and Swazi communities, and the emergence in each of a more distinctively national foreign policy.

Notes

- (1) "Amakazambile" is a Swazi term meaning "Those found ahead" and is used to describe the chiefdoms of central and northern Swaziland which Sobuza conquered and absorbed after he had been driven north by Zwide. The Dlamini are the royal clan and dominant lineage in Swaziland.
- (2) N.A. Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis), p. 1167.
- (3) A number of the subordinate chiefdoms that supported Fokoti can still be identified, e.g. the Ndlela Nkosi chiefdom (P. Seme, "Petition of the Swazi Tribes of the Eastern Transvaal", p. 5); the adherents of Mfipha and Ndlapu Dlamini, both sons of Sobuza (de S. Honey, "History of Swaziland" (MSS)); interview with Prince Makhosini Dlamini 10.8.70 and of Shemane Nxumalo (interview with various Nxumalo informants 18.5.70).
- (4) N.A. Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis), p. 1167; de S. Honey, "History ...", p. 25; H. Kuper, "The Development of a Primitive Nation", Bantu Studies, Vol. IV, 1941, p. 344. Their use of the term "herd boy king" to describe Mswati comes from P. Seme, "Petition ...", p. 5.
- (5) de S. Honey, "History ...", p. 29; H. Kuper, "... Primitive Nation", p. 344.
- (6) Ibid.
- (7) This point will be dealt with a little more fully in the introduction to my thesis.
- (8) N.A. Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis), pp. 1158, 1160.
- (9) Ibid., pp. 1163-4.
- (10) H. Kuper, "The Development of a Primitive Nation", p. 344.
- (11) Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society Archives (W.M.M.S.), S. Africa, XII Bechuanaland 1838-57: Report by J. Allison, 15.8.44, p. 10.
- (12) Ibid., pp. 10-11; N.A. Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis), pp. 1158-64.
- (13) H. S. Pretorius ed. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke 1829-49, pp. 233-4.
- (14) de S. Honey, "History ...", p. 32.
- (15) N.A. Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis), p. 1167; The Natal Witness, 24.5.50; letter of Allison to the editor dated 21.5.50.
- (16) N.A. Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis), p. 1164.
- (17) G. S. Preller, Voortrekkeremense, Vol. IV, p. 9. "Herinneringe van S. W. Burger Sar"

- (18) This is evident from a petition of Potgieter's opponents which attacks the treaty very strongly - H. S. Pretorius and D. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke, pp. 225-8, Memorie aan Volksraad, 8.6.1846.
- (19) See, e.g., F. A. F. Wichman, "Die Wordingsgeskiedenis van die Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek", 1838-60, Archives Year Book for S.A. History 1941, Vol. 2, pp. 52-58.
- (20) See D. W. Kruger, "Die Weg na die See", Archives Year Book for S.A. History, 1838, Vol. 1, pp. 96-97.
- (21) H. S. Pretorius and D. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke, p. 227, Memorie aan Volksraad, 8.6.1846.
- (22) N.A. Exec. Co. Archives, p. 9. Annexure 1 of Meeting 2, Statement by Mpande's messengers 11.2.1846.
- (23) Ibid.
- (24) S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 27, Volksraad Notules, 20.1.1846, 1st Resolution.
- (25) As in notes 21 and 24.
- (26) C.O. 179/3 Encl. in Encl. in No. 87, cutting from The Patriot, 23.4.1847.
- (27) An indication of how public the dispute was comes from the fact that within the year the two parties were on the brink of armed combat (see W. D. Kruger, "Die Weg na die See", p. 100). With such people as the Buijs family conversant with all these intrigues, it is scarcely conceivable that the Swazi remained unaware of them. For Buijs, see below, also note 43.
- (28) H. S. Pretorius and D. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke, pp. 225-8, Memorie aan Volksraad, 8.6.1846.
- (29) S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1. Volksraadnotules Ohrigstad, 15.5.1846.
- (30) Thus at the beginning of 1846 Mpande's suggestion that they remove their settlement to Swaziland had been regarded as a plot concocted jointly by the Swazi and the Zulu. S.A.A.R., Transvaal No. 1, pp. 42-43. Sitting of Commissie Raad 27.1.1846, Article 1.
- (31) H. S. Pretorius and D. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke, pp. 225-8. Memorie aan Volksraad, 8.6.1846.
- (32) N.A. Exec. Co. Archives, Vol. 1, p. 62, Annexure 2 of meeting 6; Moodie to Secretary to the Government 20.7.1846.
- (33) Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis).
- (34) H. S. Pretorius and D. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke, pp. 233-4.

- (35) Garden Papers, File IV (Swazis), pp. 166-8; Exec. Co. Archives, Vol. 1, p. 69, Annex 2 of meeting 6.
- (36) These 2 chiefs lived in the region of the headwaters of the Pongola River. Their status appears to have been rather equivocal, and Allison speaks of them variously as "professing a nominal allegiance to Panda and Mosuasi" (W.M.M. J.S.Afr. XII, Bechuanaland 1838-57, Report of Allison 15.8.44) and as paying "an undefined sort of deference to Panda" (N.A. Garden Papers, File IV [Swazi], p. 1170).
- (37) N.A. S.N.A. Vol. 1/6/1, "Statements by Native Messengers", No. 17. Statement of Swazi messengers, 27.1.47.
- (38) Ibid., 1/6/2 No. 12, Message of Panda to Lieutenant Gov. 13.8.47; P.P. 1847-8, "Correspondence relative to the settlement of Natal".
- (39) Encl. in encl. in No. 75. Statement of Zulu messengers, 8.6.47.
- (40) As in note 38.
- (41) D. W. Kruger, "Die Weg na die See", p. 100. Evidence of the Volksraad policy finally compelling Mpande's forces to leave Swaziland is in N.A. S.N.A. Vol. 1/6/1, "Statements ...", No. 12. Message of Panda to Lieut. Gov. 13.8.47.
- (42) See, e.g., D. W. Kruger, "Die Weg na die See", Archives Year Book ... 1938, Vol. 1; F. A. F. Wichman, "Woordingsgeskiedenis..." Archives Year Book 1941, Vol. 2.
- (43) From there it does seem though that at the very beginning of 1848 Potgieter had enlisted the support of a number of local chiefs, including Sekwati and Zebedela, and was apparently trying to use this to intimidate the Volksraad party. H. S. Pretorius & D. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke, pp. 295-6, memo. of interview signed by J. de Clercq 18.1.1846, pp. 308-9, decln. by Doris Buijs 4.2.1848.
- (44) Ibid., pp. 320-1. Statement of 6 men of "Saptobas" (probably) early June 1848.
- (45) Ibid.
- (46) J. A. Winter, "The History of Sekwati", S.A. Journal of Science, 1912, p. 331. D. R. Hunt, "An Account of the BaPedi", Bantu Studies, Vol. V, 1931, p. 288. P.A. S.N.A. No. N.118/79, G. Schotz to Clarke, 31.3.79, "Fragments of History of the Natives in the Lydenburg District".
- (47) A. C. Myburgh, Die Stamme van die Distrik Carolina, p. 86.
- (48) H. S. Pretorius and D. W. Kruger, Voortrekker Argiefstukke, pp. 233-4.

- (49) *Ibid.*, pp. 320-1. Statement by 6 men of "Saptobas" (probably) early June 1848.
- (50) It is worth making the point here that any Swazi repudiation of the treaty would almost certainly not have been done by a dramatic proclamation to the Volksraad party, but by altogether more insidious and equivocal methods: their dealings with Potgieter are an example of this; simply refusing in practice to recognize Boer jurisdiction in certain areas would have been another.
- (51) T. S. Van Rooyen, "Die Verhouding tussen die Boere, Engelse, en Naturelle in die Geskiedenis van die Oos-Transvaal tot 1882", Archives Year Book of S.A. History 1951, Vol. 1, pp. 6-7.
- (52) One problem in connection with departure of Potgieter and his followers from Ohrigstad is to decide when its finality became apparent to Mswati and Somquba. Potgieter had made expeditions to the north before this, and the exodus of his followers on this occasion took some time before it was complete. It does, however, seem safe to assume that by the middle of 1849, when the first signs of discord between Somquba and Mswati appear in the Ohrigstad records, the full implications of Potgieter's move were grasped by both sides.
- (53) A. C. Myburgh, Die Stamme van die Distrik Carolina, p. 86.
- (54) H. Kuper (nee Beemer), "A Ritual of Kingship among the Swazi", Africa, XIV, 1944, p. 230, note 3; H. Kuper, "An African Aristocracy", pp. 203-4, 214, 220-1, 222.
- (55) *Ibid.*, pp. 223-5. An important part of the ceremony was also a sort of historical pageant enacting how this unity came to be achieved: A. G. Marwick, The Swazi, p. 191.
- (56) This is testified to by a large number of different interviews undertaken by me in Swaziland between March and August 1970, and confirmation for this view can also be obtained from A. C. Myburgh, Die Stamme van die distrik Carolina, p. 89, and H. Kuper, "A Ritual ...", p. 230, note 3, & p. 239.
- (57) A. C. Myburgh, Die Stamme ... Carolina, p. 88.
- (58) S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 285, W. F. Versveld to Volksraad, 17.9.49.
- (59) S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 103, meeting of 19.9.45, Art. 18.
- (60) S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 289, W. Verveld to Volksraad, 27.12.49.
- (61) This happened probably towards the end of 1850. This is deducible from a message sent by Mswati to the L.-G. of Natal, of 11.9.52 (N.A. Sir T. Shepstone Collection Case 22).
- (62) A. C. Myburgh, "Die Stamme ... Carolina", pp. 88-9; P. A. Soutter Collection, Packet 6, No. 2, p. 285, Resolutions of Krygsraad 5.11.53.

- (63) P.A. S.N.1A No. N.105/79, Report by G. Roth.
- (64) S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 103, meeting of 19.9.49, Art. 18.
- (65) N.A. Sir T. Shepstone Collection Case 22 (Swazi Documents bound together), Statement by Mapitshane and others, 11.9.52; Garden Papers File IV (Swazis), pp. 1176-7, Statement by Kwahla and others, 7.8.51.
- (66) A. T. Bryant, Olden Times in Zululand and Natal, p. 311; P. A. Forbes Collection, Vol. 37, No. 4 (c), History of Swaziland (incomplete Mss.).
- (67) This reference and the information that follows is derived largely from an interview with Maloba Maseko on 24.3.70; confirmation of various parts of the account was given by Mandanda Mtetwa on 13.3.70.
- (68) The dating of this incident depends entirely on the identification of "Omcaas", who fled from Swaziland to the Transvaal in September 1849 (see S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 103, meeting 19.9.49, Art. 18) with Mgazi. It seems almost certain that he is one and the same, for tradition relates that Mgazi fled to the Transvaal, while "Omcaas" would scarcely have been worthy of mention in the official records if he were not a subordinate chief of Mswati's. Mgazi, moreover, is not a particularly common name in Swaziland.
- (69) Thus as late as August 1850 Mswati still sent a child as a gift to Jb. de Clercq, the Landdrost of Lydenburg - S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 143, meeting 24.5.50, Art. 11.
- (70) N.A. Sir T. Shepstone Coll. Case 22 (Swazi documents bound together), Statement by Mapitshane and others, 11.9.52. It seems likely that it is also this same event that is referred to in S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 1, p. 289, W. F. Versveld to Volksraad, 27.12.1849.
- (71) N.A. S.N.A. Vol. 1/1/2 No. 107, W. Cowie to S.N.A., 24.9.1849.
- (72) Sir T. Shepstone Coll. Case 22 (Swazi documents bound together), Statement by Mapitshane and others, 28.9.52.
- (73) Ibid.
- (74) S.A.A.R. Transvaal No. 2, pp. 224-5, P. C. Minaar and 22 others to Volksraad, 18.8.1851.
- (75) N.A. S.N.A. Vol. 1/7/1, p. 65, Statement by Gebula & Gambushe, Messengers from Mpande, 14.10.51.
- (76) P.P. 1852-3, "Further Correspondence relating to the Settlement of Natal", p. 73, Encl. in No. 21, message from Panda 27.5.52; N.A. Sir T. Shepstone Coll. Case 2 (Swazi documents bound together), Statement by Mapitshane and others, 11.9.52.