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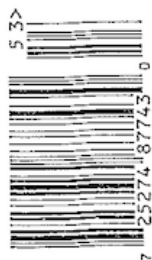
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Chiefs, Kings, Corporatization, and Democracy: A South African Case Study

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THE DEBATE RAGING ON THE topic of democracy and democratization in Africa is as contentious as it is important. Questions of authority versus power, citizens versus subjects, and individual versus communal rights inform a range of positions held on the issue not only by scholars, but also by policymakers, community activists, and the international donor community. The debate is particularly vexed with regard to the appropriate role of traditional leaders—chiefs and kings—in a democratizing Africa. While a complete review of the current state of the debate is beyond the scope of this article, an attempt is made here to ground this important question by considering the lived experiences and perspectives of a community that is governed simultaneously by a tribal authority and a western-style liberal democratic state.¹

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The community, the Royal Bafokeng Nation, is located in South Africa's North West Province. Home to approximately 300,000 people, the Bafokeng Nation is one of many traditionally governed communities in South Africa.² More than a decade into its transition from apartheid to democracy, South Africa faces many of the same questions, contradictions, and conundrums regarding political legitimacy as the rest of Africa. Hopefully, through examination of the Bafokeng case, this article will highlight some of the tensions that inhere in the existence of overlapping forms of governance in Africa today. It also hopes to show that these tensions are not merely political in nature, but are also social, cultural, and economic. As such, their resolution may not be a straightforward choice of system A over system B, but may take an altogether different shape.

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DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA

The term "democracy" encodes a wide range of assumptions, expectations, and ideologies, whether from the perspective of those living under its structures, those struggling against non-democratic regimes, or those working to implement (impose?) democratic institutions from the outside. Although Marina Ottaway does not include South Africa among the post-conflict countries she discusses with reference to the "democratic reconstruction model," she might well have,³ and the country's democratic transition would stack up well against many of her other African examples.⁴ In terms of engineering new structures, reforming old ones, and developing non-state institutions to help solidify democratic transitions (civil society, independent media, etc.), South Africa is a remarkable success story. With regard to indigenous institutions, she considers the possibility of "abandon[ing] the social engineering approach, ... and try[ing] to understand what political systems are being recreated by the people involved," as a last resort, as it implies an abandonment of democratic goals, including universal human rights.⁵

126 According to Mahmood Mamdani's now classic analysis, on the other hand, South Africa's transition to democracy is incomplete as long as part of the population continues to live as "subjects" under tribal authorities rather than as full citizens of the state.⁶ Many agree that democratization in South Africa is impeded by traditional leaders who continue to retain a significant amount of authority in specified local communities and wield it "despotically."⁷ These concessions, according to one author, pose a "danger that . . . could seriously upset the bid to achieve authentic and durable democratization."⁸

These authors all oppose tribal or traditional authorities to modern, democratic institutions with regard to rights, participation, and accountability. Peter Skalnik offers a very different analysis of indigenous forms of governance, one that may provide a better point of departure for considering the Bafokeng case. Skalnik surveys a wide range of organizational structures across the globe that fit into his generic model of "chiefdom," but with specific reference to Africa, he concludes that:

"Future political arrangements in Africa will have to introduce truly dual mechanism [sic] of governance in which the executive politics of elected representatives is balanced by the authority of the hereditary principles of chieftaincy."⁹

This is not only a pragmatic statement by Skalnik, but also an ethnographically informed assessment of how the "logics" of chiefdoms can complement, rather than

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compete with, the "logics" of the modern state. In Skalnik's view of best practices (as opposed to last resorts), chiefdoms serve to represent and advocate the interests of local people within the broader democratic structures:

"Chieftaincy will be simultaneously an independent actor standing above the executive power and a special part of the legislative and legal establishment. Chiefdom politics is to play its crucial role in the democratization process in Africa."¹⁰

As indigenous institutions and "emic" categories (seen from the tribal perspective rather than that of an observer) gain more attention in both scholarly and policy circles,¹¹ political structures such as chiefdoms will come under increased scrutiny. The African Development Forum, hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, made "Governance for a Progressing Africa" its central theme in 2004. For the first time at a UN conference, traditional governance shared a platform with state-sponsored corruption, economic development, human rights, HIV/AIDS, and women and youth.¹² Surely the time has come to view political pluralism in Africa not in terms of binary oppositions, but rather in terms of complex and locally-situated realities. Towards that end, this article approaches political authority and governance in South Africa from an anthropological point of view. It is therefore not only the *de jure* structures, laws, and labels of political power, but rather the everyday experience of these structures that this article wishes to document.

After providing some background on the Royal Bafokeng Nation, it will outline the governance structures currently in place there. These structures are based on a code of customary law that seems, to many, to be out of step with multiparty electoral politics and Western-derived forms of political sanction and accountability. To the extent that people in such a community tend to "vote with their feet" in recognizing certain institutions over others, it becomes harder to dismiss such forms of governance outright as unaccountable, unequal, and undemocratic.

THE ROYAL BAFOKENG NATION

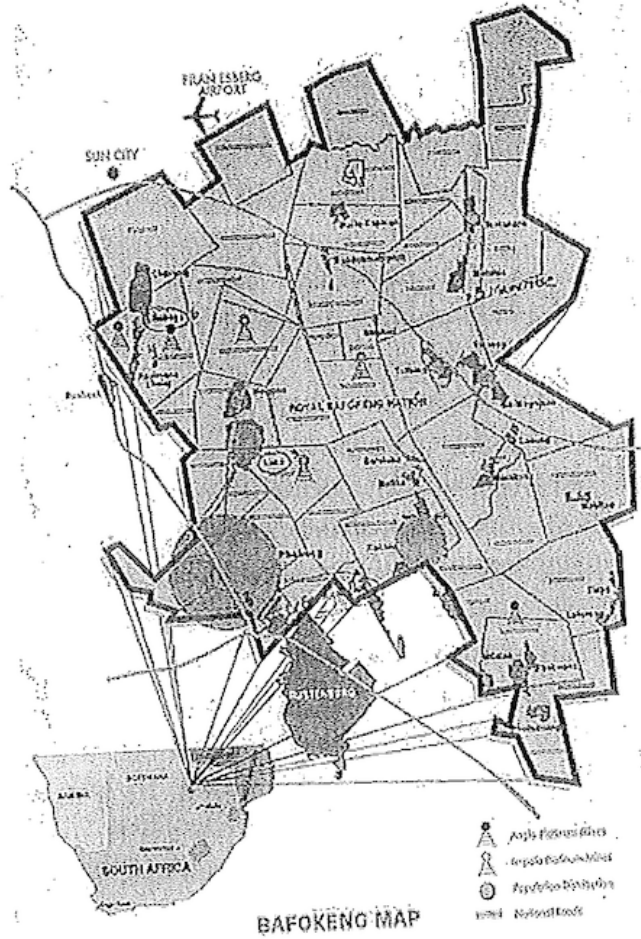
"Royal Bafokeng Nation" is the name given to a group of 29 villages located in South Africa's North West Province (see map). Part of the Rustenburg Municipality and the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality, the Royal Bafokeng Nation falls under the South African state's legal and political jurisdiction. Nevertheless, it is governed via a code of customary law administered by hereditary leaders, men who inherit their positions from their fathers. The Bafokeng people are Setswana speakers descended from

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agro-pastoralists who have lived in this region of South Africa for several centuries.¹³ In this almost entirely rural community, the Bafokeng are mostly poor, undereducated, and unemployed. The rate of unemployment is at least as high as the national average

of over 30 percent. The rate of HIV infection is estimated at 30 percent. In these respects, the Royal Bafokeng Nation is very similar to the more than 800 rural communities in South Africa that also operate under some form of traditional authority.

The Royal Bafokeng Nation is also unique in a number of ways. Through the foresight of the Bafokeng leaders during South Africa's colonial period in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Bafokeng community owns most of its land by title—2,000 square kilometers, approximately the size of the state of



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Rhode Island.¹⁴ This has meant that Bafokeng land could not be easily alienated by Afrikaner farmers in the late nineteenth century, by the British colonial government in the early twentieth century, by the apartheid and Bantustan regimes in the late twentieth century, or by the mining companies that began operating in the region after platinum was discovered there in the 1920s. As a result, the Royal Bafokeng Nation now controls both surface and underground rights to the second largest platinum reserve in the world.

The Bafokeng community and its leaders, in response to the various challenges that the South African state has made to their authority, are corporatizing. Rather than attempting to replicate state structures or functions at the local level, the Bafokeng are

engaged in long-term strategic planning on how to use their mineral resources to ensure not only economic sustainability, but also the preservation of their identity as a community: their “corporate ethnicity.” Using platinum royalties to finance entities such as the Royal Bafokeng Economic Board, Royal Bafokeng Resources, and Royal Bafokeng Finance, *Kgosi* (King) Leruo and his management team envision the Bafokeng Nation as a company (or more accurately, a conglomerate), with ordinary Bafokeng as shareholders. An example of Skalnik’s savvy, cosmopolitan, and educated chiefs, *Kgosi* Leruo is fully engaged in a process of “outwitting the state...the capacity of neo-traditional chiefdoms to outsmart the modern imported post-colonial state.”¹⁵

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Although most Bafokeng do not work in the platinum mines,¹⁶ they receive communal dividends in the form of royalties the mining companies pay to the Royal Bafokeng Nation. These mining contracts with the world’s largest platinum mining companies—Impala Platinum and Anglo-American Platinum—netted the Nation approximately \$65 million in 2004. This money is paid into a trust managed by the Treasury Department of the Royal Bafokeng Administration. These funds are managed by professional accountants, but decisions about budgeting and expenditures are authorized by the traditional legislature (see more on this below). In a typical fiscal year, the platinum royalties, along with other income generated on behalf of the community through investments, pay for a wide range of services and infrastructure projects, including roads, electrification, clean water, and waste removal. Structures such as the massive Bafokeng Civic Centre, the Bafokeng Plaza (shopping center), and the state-of-the-art Royal Bafokeng Sports Palace—all located in Phokeng, the administrative capital of the Nation—visually distinguish the Royal Bafokeng Nation from most other rural communities.

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BAFOKENG GOVERNANCE

The present Bafokeng system represents a variation on Tswana forms of governance dating back to the precolonial era.¹⁷ Within the Nation, each ward is headed by a *kgosana* (headman, lit. “little chief,” pl. *dikgosana*), a position inherited from the former *kgosana*.

The *kgosana* oversees the day-to-day business of the ward, including land allocation, birth and death certification, and any proceeding that requires an official state-

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ment of membership in the Bafokeng community. He is assisted in his work by a *bannakgotla* (council of ward men). The kgosana regularly presides over a meeting of adult members of the ward, resolving disputes and debating matters of local concern.

Although most Bafokeng do not work in the platinum mines, they receive communal "dividends" in the form of royalties the mining companies pay to the Royal Bafokeng Nation.

The dikgosana represent their constituencies in the Nation's Supreme Council along with one or two Bafokeng Councilors, officials (male or female) elected by each ward to five-year terms. The council consists of 72 dikgosana and 50 councilors who meet six times a year as the main legislative body of the Royal

Bafokeng Nation to legislate budgets, projects, initiatives, programs, and policies affecting the Nation. Presiding over the Supreme Council is the kgosi, the hereditary leader of the entire Bafokeng community. The present kgosi is Leruo Tshekedi Molotlegi, the 35th recorded King of the Bafokeng, an architect in his late thirties.

Twice a year, the kgosi, dikgosana, and councilors invite the entire Bafokeng community to a town hall style meeting called *kgotha-kgotho*. At this general meeting of the Nation, new initiatives are announced, information campaigns are launched, and community members address questions directly to Kgosi, the Queen Mother, and other senior members of the administration. This forum—the assembled Nation—is often referred to as the highest decision-making body in the community: major decisions cannot be finalized without the consent of this body.

Having sketched out Bafokeng governance in abstract terms, let me now consider these various tiers and forums of policymaking and authority from the perspective of ordinary villagers. These data are drawn from research conducted in seven Bafokeng villages in 2003, involving approximately 70 respondents.

HEADMEN / DIKGOSANA

In the eyes of Bafokeng villagers, the position of kgosana is one of the most important positions in the community and represents the highest form of authority at the village level. As leader of the community, the kgosana serves as the principal link between the kgosi and the village or section. Dikgosana are perceived to be in direct contact with the kgosi and able to influence his decisions. Villagers know that they can call upon their kgosana for many types of needs, including authorization of requests for a plot of land, enrollment in the national pension scheme, application for a university scholarship, or settlement of a dispute.

That being said, tension does exist between this traditional respect for the kgosana and the dissatisfaction that arises when a particular kgosana does not satisfy in his duties. There are cases in which villagers have been unhappy with the performance of a particular kgosana, complaining that the dikgosana tend to be old, infirm, and not well educated. Complaints are often justified with the statement that a kgosana is not the rightful heir to the position.

In cases where dissatisfaction persists towards dikgosana, the Bafokeng traditional governance system does demonstrate mechanisms of political accountability. Traditionally, the absolute authority granted a kgosana by virtue of his birthright leaves few avenues of recourse if he is not doing his job well, and since dikgosana are "born, not made," according to the popular aphorism, there are few methods of sanctioning or replacing a kgosana. The rules surrounding the succession of a kgosana, however, help illuminate the extent to which there is some flexibility in how hereditary rule is actually practiced.¹⁸ Temporary or interim dikgosana are occasionally appointed by Kgosi; these dikgosana are thus "made, not born."

In the village of Mafenya, for example, Kgosi Leruo's senior uncle, also Chair of the Executive Council of Dikgosana, is serving as kgosana in just such an appointed capacity. The people of Mafenya afford him the same respect and authority they would a "born" kgosana. It therefore seems that a kgosana's authority comes not only from his bloodline, but also from the quality of his leadership. Many in Mafenya, in fact, hope that their appointed kgosana will remain permanently in the village or, at the very least, that a committee of Mafenya residents can help select their next kgosana. This represents some form of accountability.

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BAFOKENG COUNCILORS

In 1996, the Royal Bafokeng Nation modified its traditional governance to make the polity more inclusive. The position of Bafokeng Councilor was instituted (over the objections of the African National Congress) to increase the participation of women in local governance and to provide for elected village representation. There is, however, a widespread perception among villagers that elected Bafokeng councilors "have no job description." They view this as a principle reason that the councilors become involved in illicit deals over land and other forms of corruption. "The councilors are irresponsible and they practice favoritism," noted one respondent.

Despite this electoral feature of the Bafokeng governance structure, most Bafokeng still see these posts in a relational and hierarchical way. Many respondents understand the councilor's job in relation to the kgosana's, referring to councilors variously as "vice kgosana" or as a substitute for the kgosana. The prevalent assumption is that the coun-

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cilor is subordinate to the kgosana, without a clear-cut chain of command as the following comment shows:

"The job of the councilor is to mediate between the village and Kgosi about problems of infrastructure, for example, a need for paved roads. This is because Kgosi is like the chairperson of all the councilors. The councilors must serve as negotiators in order to get the problems of villagers solved within Kgosi's budget. The kgosana must back the councilor up on these problems, attesting to their existence."¹⁹

There are different ideas, therefore, about the extent to which councilors can act on their own authority versus the extent to which they are bound to "agree with the kgosana." Though democratically elected, varying degrees of trust are given to the councilors' actual degree of authority. A consequence of this real and perceived disparity in power between councilors and dikgosana is that many people do not see any point in bringing their problems to anyone but their kgosana.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT: MUNICIPAL COUNCILORS

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Within the Bafokeng Nation, little regard is given to municipal authorities,²⁰ a major reason being that many essential services are provided by the Bafokeng Administration. Municipal councilors are locally elected officials of the South African national government who represent wards within the Bafokeng community. Councilors representing the Bafokeng area make up most of the 35 wards that fall under the Rustenburg Municipality. These municipal councilors do not seem to play a significant role in most of the 29 Bafokeng villages. People seem either unaware of this office altogether, or they confuse it with the local Bafokeng Councilors.

Some argue that this indifference is due to the people's attachment to traditional leaders, that people mainly reserve their respect for the authority of hereditary leaders. This explanation implies that people can only express allegiance to one institution or individual at a time, and it not only simplifies people's pluralistic, often eclectic political beliefs and allegiances, but also overlooks the very real disparity in material resources between the Bafokeng authorities and the municipal authorities. Social security grants, such as pensions and grants to children living in poverty, are an important source of income for many Bafokeng families. These grants come from the state and are administered by the Province. Similarly, schools and clinics are staffed and run by the Provincial departments of education and health. Beyond that, it is the Bafokeng authorities who deliver water, electricity, and waste removal. Ambulance and fire ser-

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vices are provided by the Bafokeng community. Roads, street lighting, and community halls are built with Bafokeng money. While it is therefore inaccurate to say that people only pay allegiance to the Bafokeng authorities because they are the principal source of funds, services, and more, it is the case that the municipal councilors play a very minor role in the daily lives of most Bafokeng villagers when compared with the dikgosana and Bafokeng Councilors.

BAFOKENG CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Although traditionally hierarchical, Bafokeng governance is characterized by a critical interaction between the populace and even the highest echelons of authority. As a centralized form of governance, the highest levels of authority in the Royal Bafokeng Nation are vested with a great degree of power and respect, which reach almost mythic proportions in the eyes of the Bafokeng people. Whether this perception of power and prestige corresponds to an accurate understanding of the different roles, rules, and functions that formally distinguish these entities is another matter. For example, when people talk about "Phokeng," "the RBA," "*Legato*" (the residence and offices of the kgosi), "Kgosi," or "the royal family," they mean roughly the same thing: the apex of power in the Bafokeng community.

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This confusion over who does what in the top echelons of power should not be dismissed as either a failed public relations strategy or as sheer ignorance on the part of the population. Rather, it should be taken as an important reflection of power relations in the community. In the eyes of Bafokeng and non-Bafokeng alike, Kgosi Leruo is the physical embodiment of the Bafokeng community. He is vested with a great deal of natural authority: that is to say, it is only partly conferred on him by his actions, and largely conferred on him simply by birth-right. Despite the traditional respect and allegiance afforded to Kgosi, there is nevertheless ambivalence among the people regarding the nature of Kgosi's relationship to his people: is he a modern executive who runs Bafokeng, Inc. from an air-conditioned office, communicating only through annual reports and his subordinates, or is he a "traditional" chief who hears local cases at the lekgotla and maintains a physical presence among all who wish to consult him? One man asserted that anyone who has a problem can take it to the kgosi. Another stated that people can only see Kgosi Leruo when they have problems worthy of the

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king.

The traditional respect and allegiance afforded to Kgosi does not mean that people do not openly question the equity of the distribution of resources throughout the community. There are various perceptions about who profits most directly from the mineral royalties paid to the Bafokeng, and some respondents suspected that a good share goes to the royal family directly: "The shopping complex is a project that is

One of the most powerful accountability measures in the Bafokeng community is the day-to-day, face-to-face interaction that characterizes relations between local authorities and their constituents.

supposed to be for the whole community, but it contributes nothing. The only people who benefit from it are the royal family because they run it and profit from it." Others speculate that the Bafokeng bursary scheme that offers loans for higher edu-

cation is really only accessible to those who have good connections among "the royals."²¹ Although there is no evidence to suggest that these suspicions have any foundation, the point here is that ordinary people balance a culturally ingrained form of respect for their leaders with a vociferous debate about equity, fairness, and transparency.

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DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It bears repeating that due to their unique circumstances, including landownership, mineral wealth, and a history of strong leadership, the Royal Bafokeng Nation is not necessarily representative of all traditionally governed communities in South Africa. The capacity of the Bafokeng Administration to provide services, infrastructure, and university scholarships is certainly one of the reasons that village-level Bafokeng authorities eclipse their municipal counterparts as far as recognition and effectiveness are concerned. But material benefits do not explain the extent to which Bafokeng villagers display such strong affective attachment to their hereditary leaders. Returning to the matter of rights, participation, and accountability—the very aspects of democracy that many analysts find missing in traditional forms of governance—the description of Bafokeng governance above should provide an alternative perspective. There is a very clear sense among villagers that they have the right to be heard at their local *lekgotla*—as well as the semi-annual *kgotha-kgothe*—on issues affecting the community. They also have the right to be assisted by their *kgosana* in administrative and policy matters. For members of the Bafokeng community, numerous communal rights are also implicit, including the right to land, the right to consensual decision making, and the

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right to maintain certain traditions, whether in the area of governance, family law, or cultural expression.

The interviews conducted for this study suggest that most Bafokeng are actively involved in their governance structures. They attend meetings at the village and community level. They lobby their headmen, councilors, and the kgosi to solve problems and initiate needed programs and services. In short, these are not passive "subjects" who sit on the receiving end of policies meted out by "despotic" rulers.

Finally, with regard to accountability, it is true that hereditary leaders cannot be voted out of office. In the Bafokeng community, policies and programs are debated at the kgotha-kgothe, checks and balances exist in the relations between councilors and headmen in the Supreme Council, and money matters are tracked within the central Bafokeng administrative entities through advisory committees, an internal auditing department, and external consultants, including lawyers and accountants. One of the most powerful accountability measures in the Bafokeng community is the day-to-day, face-to-face interaction that characterizes relations between local authorities and their constituents. Hereditary leaders are well known to their neighbors, and their actions and decisions are constantly scrutinized, debated, and assessed.

Equality and accountability in the Bafokeng villages is frequently understood and represented by ordinary Bafokeng using an ideology of communal best interests rather than that of individual preferences. Individual rights, though carefully spelled out in the South African Constitution and Bill of Rights, do not necessarily form the basis for people's assessments of their experience of authority in the Bafokeng Nation. Thus it is not the right to vote, but the ideal of village consensus that shapes people's views of the headman and his lekgotla. It is not the individual's right to see Kgosi, but some degree of faith in his ability to keep the community's interests at heart that informs their evaluation of him. These criteria and broad political objectives may represent a poor fit with the aims of democratization, but they retain a great deal of meaning and significance for ordinary Bafokeng.

If the success of political reform is measured in part by the extent to which systems of governance reflect the will of the people, then traditional forms of governance in South Africa cannot be easily dismissed. Forms and structures of governance such as those in the Royal Bafokeng Nation may be unlike democracy, but to brand them "undemocratic" symbolically erases the possibility of political pluralism at the level of local leadership. Skalnik's notion of chiefdoms as complementary structures to democratic states seems apt here, "The viable agenda for chieftaincy is not involvement in party politics, but monitoring and supervising legislative and executive processes from the people's vantage point, as it is the common people whom chiefs are representing."²²

Liberal democratic structures and traditional forms of governance in Africa cer-

tainly exist in tension with one another. The ongoing contestations over rights, authenticity, legitimacy, and "progress" will continue to play out in a wide range of ways across the continent in the coming years. As was stated at the outset, however, this tension does not only exist in the realm of local governance. As the Bafokeng case illustrates, it also manifests in economic issues (ownership of resources), culture (heritage and authenticity), and social issues (communal identity). The Bafokeng leadership has, however, actively preserved traditional forms of governance in a modern legal framework by resourcefully melding corporatization with traditional governance. In doing so, the Bafokeng force a reconsideration of the debate over democratization in Africa and of the role of chiefs and kings in the process. No longer an either/or proposition—modern or traditional, democratic or despotic—the question is rather how, and through what means, "traditional communities" will respond to the changing political, legal, economic, and social circumstances they are in. As the Bafokeng case shows, the alternatives available to such communities are limited only by the will, imagination, and resourcefulness of their members.²³ ❊

NOTES

1. Data for this study was collected under the auspices of a Group Research Project grant sponsored by the Dean of the College, Brown University, in 2003. Student researchers included Alexis Arief, Ameya Balsekar, Caroline Novogrod, Elizabeth Roach, and Meredith Sadin. The field research manager was Holiness Thebyane.

2. The South African Constitution recognizes the "institution, status, and role of traditional leadership" in Chapter Twelve. The actual scope of traditional leaders' authority is spelled out in greater detail in the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act (Act No. 41, 2003).

3. The protracted armed struggle waged against the apartheid regime, the regional conflicts exacerbated by the interventions of the South African Defense Forces, and the abrupt and unceremonious demobilization of soldiers from the ANC's armed wing (Umkhonto we Sizwe) all set the stage for a socially and politically divided society in which democratization would be an enormous challenge. I am grateful to Bongani Mbiza for suggesting that the transition must be viewed in this context.

¹ 4. Marina Ottaway, *Democracy Challenged: The Rise of Semi-Authoritarianism* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003).

5. Ottaway, 2003, p. 321

6. Mahmood Mandani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Cape Town: David Phillip Publishers, 1996).

7. J. Ntsebeza. "Rural Governance and Citizenship in post-1994 South Africa: Democracy Compromised?" in *State of the Nation: South Africa 2004-2005*. Daniel, John, Southall, Roger & Jessica Lutchman (eds). Cape Town: HSRC Press and University of Michigan Press. p. 58-85

8. Hein Marais, *South Africa: Limits to Change: The Political Economy of Transition*. 2nd ed. (London: Zed Books, 2001), 305.

9. Skalnik, 2004, p. 87

10. Ibid.

11. See, for example, Mironko, Chales and Peter Uvin, "Western and Local Approaches to Justice in Rwanda," in *Governance After War: Rethinking Democratization and Peacebuilding: A Special Issue of Global Governance* 9 no. 2 (April-June 2003).

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12. The two African traditional leaders invited to represent issues of traditional governance at the conference were Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, King of the Asante Kingdom of Ghana, and Kgosi Leruo Molotlegi, King of the Royal Bafokeng Nation in South Africa. More information can be found at <http://www.uneca.org/adff/>.

13. Manson, Andrew and Bernard Mbenga, "'The Richest Tribe in Africa': Platinum-Mining and the Bafokeng in South Africa's North West Province, 1965-1999," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29.1 (2003): 29-47.

14. For more on the history of Bafokeng land acquisition, see Bernard Mbenga and Andrew Manson, *A History of the Bafokeng of Rustenburg District*, South Africa, and *The Context Over Platinum Royalties* (unpublished manuscript, 1999); J.S. Bergh, "We Must Never Forget Where We Come From: The Bafokeng and Their Land," *History in Africa* (forthcoming); and S. E. Cook, "Caught in the Act: Implications of Land Reform in South Africa" (paper presented at the African Studies Association meetings, November 2004).

15. Skalnik 2004:79. See also Peter Skalnik (ed) *Outwitting the State* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989).

16. Historically, Bafokeng and other ethnic Tswanas were thought unfit or unwilling to undertake the heavy work of deep shaft mining. See P.L. Breutz, *The Tribes of Rustenburg and Pilanesburg District* (Pretoria: The Government Printer, 1953). Today, Bafokeng claim that it is difficult to obtain jobs in the mines because of corruption, poor information about vacancies, and other reasons. See S. Compion, *Parallel Paths to the Future: Schooling Versus Networking Amongst Bafokeng Girls* (honors thesis, University of Pretoria, 2004).

17. Isaac Schapera, *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938); Isaac Schapera, *Government and Politics in Tribal Societies* (London: Watts, 1956).

18. J.L. Comaroff, "Rules and Rulers: Political Processes in a Tswana Chiefdom," *Man* (1978): 1-20.

19. Unless otherwise noted, excerpts such as this are taken from interview logs and are thus not necessarily direct quotations from the respondent in his/her own words.

20. According to the mayor of Rustenburg, Thabo Mabe, all councilors currently representing the Bafokeng area are ANC members.

21. Compion, *Parallel Paths*, 37.

22. Skalnik 2004, 87.

23. See also J.L. and J. Comaroff "ETHNICITY, INC: On the Commodification, Consumption, and Incorporation of Cultural Identity in the Neoliberal Age." Unpublished ms.