

The militarisation of the Platfontein San (!Xun and Khwe): The initial years 1966–1974

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Abstract

The resettlement of 372 San (Bushmen) soldiers with dependents from 31/201 and 203 Battalions in Namibia to Schmidtsdrift in the Northern Cape during March 1990 was the last chapter in the process of militarisation of the !Xun and Khwe communities. However, there is a popular perception that the South African Defence Force (SADF) was primarily responsible for the militarisation of this particular San community, with the founding of 31 Battalion during 1974. This ignores the fact that the !Xun and Khwe originated in Angola, where they were actively involved with the Portuguese security forces. With one exception, only superficial mention is made in the literature about the role of the San soldiers in Angola before independence in November 1975. This article shows that the militarisation of the San actually started in 1966, when members of the !Xun were recruited by the Portuguese Security Police (PIDE) and successfully used against the Angolan liberation movements MPLA, FNLA and UNITA. The lifestyle of the San before the PIDE era is discussed, as is the period in which they were raised to a superior status as *flecha* fighters. This period of military prowess ended with the independence of Angola and resulted in the !Xun and Khwe seeking refuge with the SADF. These geo-political events led to the founding of 31 Battalion, situated in the Western Caprivi, where former *flecha* soldiers were retrained and incorporated into SADF structures. In closing, brief mention is made of the resettlement of the !Xun and Khwe to Schmidtsdrift in South Africa.

Keywords: !Xun, Khwe, San, Platfontein, Border War, Namibia, Angola, Portuguese, Caprivi, South African Defence Force (SADF), 31 Battalion.

Introduction

“The San of Platfontein” is the collective name for the !Xun² and Khwe³ Bushman communities⁴ currently residing in a settlement on the farm Platfontein, approximately 10 kilometres north-west of Kimberley. The community of about 5 500, now living a precarious life in the Northern Cape, is the remainder of 31 Battalion, which was disbanded on 7 March 1993 with the final laying up of the unit colours. The unit colours and other military

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² !Xun: Angola !Khu (Kung), also referred to as "Vasekela" and part of larger "Bushman
² !Xun: Angola !Khu (Kung), also referred to as "Vasekela" and part of larger "Bushman proper" (!Khu-San) group.

³ Khwe: Also referred to as Khoe, Kwe or "Mbarakwengo" and part of Nama-speaking groups, from West Caprivi and Kavango districts, also extreme south-eastern Angola.

⁴ The terms “Bushman”, originally “*Bosjesman*” (Dutch for “the man from the bush”, capturing the idea of elusiveness) and “San”, which derived from the KhoeKhoegowab term *Sa*, meaning “to gather”, are both used in documents and literature to refer to the !Xun and Khwe collectively. For the purposes of this article the term “San” will suffice.

memorabilia of the battalion form part of an exhibition at the McGregor Museum at Wildebeestkuil and depict the history of these two communities over the last 50 years.

The relocation of 372 !Xun and Khwe soldiers and their dependants, a total of 3 919 people, during March 1990 from Omega in the Western Caprivi (the Zambezi region of Namibia) and Mangetti Dune in Bushmanland, Namibia, to Schmidtsdrift in the Republic of South Africa at an estimated cost of R3 165 500, was the last chapter in the militarisation of the Platfontein San – a process during which they were subjected to several forms of militarisation over a period of about 16 years.⁵ These soldiers were part of 31/201 Battalion at Omega and 203 Battalion in Bushmanland which served actively in counter-insurgency operations (coinops) during the border war. This war between the South African Defence Force (SADF), in alliance with the South-West Africa Territory Force (SWATF), and the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), the active military wing of SWAPO,⁶ stretched over a long period, from 1966 to 1989. It mainly took place in the vicinity of the border between Namibia and Angola. About half of the San soldiers of both battalions, together with their dependants, chose voluntarily to remain in Namibia after intense negotiations between the San, the South African government and delegations of the designated SWAPO government, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)⁷ and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), who all tried to convince the San not to relocate to South Africa.⁸

The exodus by the San of Platfontein from Namibia to South Africa was their second major move. The !Xun and Khwe originated in the south-east of Angola and then fled to the Kavango and Caprivi regions of Namibia during 1974–1975, where they were initially merged as Project Alpha (later known as 31 Battalion) under the leadership of Cmdt. Delville Linford.⁹

Although existing sources refer incidentally to the previous military involvement of the San in Portuguese-controlled Angola, the popular perception is that the SADF started the process of the militarisation¹⁰ of the !Xun and Khwe in 1974.¹¹ Cann makes a valuable contribution in

⁵ South African National Defence Force (SANDF) Documentation Centre 31 Battalion Archives Group C Army / D Ops / 509 / 1, Report Op Mattress Relocation of the Bushmen at Schmidtsdrift, 27 March 1990, p. 3.

⁶ The South West African People's Organisation, established in 1959 and main organiser of resistance against occupation by South Africa. L Scholtz, *The SADF in the Border War 1966–1989* (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2013) p. 3.

⁷ The OAU was the predecessor of the African Union, which was established on 26 May 2001.

⁸ The author and his colleague from Omega, Cmdt. Callie Sanders, personally led a San deputation to Mr Sam Nujoma in Windhoek on 7 February 1990, where the President-Elect gave them the assurance that the San were welcome in Namibia and that they would enjoy the same rights as the other groups. S van Wyk, Commanding Officer's Diary (unpublished, 7 February 1990) p. 4.

⁹ D Linford (founder of 31 Battalion), *My Bushmen Experience*, unpublished manuscript in the author's possession.

¹⁰ Khwe: Also referred to as Khoe, Kwe or "Mbarakwengo" and part of Nama-speaking groups, from West Caprivi and Kavango districts, also extreme south-eastern Angola.

his study *The Flechas*, in which he describes how the Angolan San were involved in the Portuguese anti-revolutionary warfare, but it is written mainly from a Portuguese perspective and does not fully establish the relations between the San of 31 Battalion and what happened in Angola.¹² This article will show that the militarisation of the San of Platfontein started as early as 1966, when elements of the !Xun, at that stage residing in the Cuando Cubango province in the vicinity of Serpa Pinto (Menongue) in Angola, were recruited by PIDE¹³ (the Portuguese International Police for Defence of the State) and utilised with great success in counter-insurgency against the Angolan freedom movements, the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA.¹⁴ The article initially focuses on the !Xun and Khwe prior to the PIDE era. This context is important in understanding the San's willingness to co-operate in the process of their militarisation at a later stage. This is followed by an indication of how the San were militarised during the PIDE era, involving their "loss of innocence", their compelled flight from Angola after the country became independent in 1975, and the incorporation of the San by the SADF as Project Alpha. The continuation and extension of the process of militarisation in South-West Africa/Namibia is illustrated briefly and the article ends with a discussion of the relocation of the San in South Africa.

Life before boots, steel and Salazar¹⁵

In the 1960s Angola was a thinly-populated country, with a total population of a little under 5 million, consisting of 95,3% black, 3,6% white and 1,1% *mestiço* or coloured people.¹⁶ According to a census conducted under difficult conditions during warfare in 1970, the population density was 4,53 people per square kilometre. This figure, however, does not reflect the uneven distribution of people in Angola, as only 16% of the population inhabited about 52% of the country, which is geographically sprawling and difficult terrain.¹⁷ This massive stretch of country, referred to by Henrique Galvão as "the lands at the end of the earth", is situated in the south-east of Angola and includes the provinces of Moxico and Cuando Cubango.¹⁸ In sharp contrast, the rest of the population inhabited the central plateau and the provinces of Huíla, Huambo, Malanje and Bié and the coastal provinces of Luanda, Benguela, Moçamedes and urban centres.

¹¹ S du Preez, *Avontuur in Angola* (Van Schaik, Pretoria, 1989); R Lee & S Hurlich, *From Foragers to Fighters. SA's militarisation of the Namibian San* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982); I Uys, *Bushman Soldiers, Their Alpha and Omega* (Fortress Publications, Germiston, 1993); RJ Gordon and SS Douglas, *The Bushman Myth* (Westview Press, Oxford, 2000); D Robbins, *On The Bridge of Goodbye* (Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 2007); *Soldier of Fortune*, SADF's Bushman Battalion, March 1984.

¹² JP Cann, *The Flechas – Insurgent Hunting in Eastern Angola, 1965–1974* (Helion & Co., England, 2013).

¹³ WS van der Waals, *Portugal's War in Angola* (Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2011), p. ix. *Policia Internacional de Defesa do Estado* or International Police for the Defence of the State.

¹⁴ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, Senior Inspector of PIDE, 28 November 2014.

¹⁵ Dr António de Oliveira Salazar was Portugal's Prime Minister from 1932–1968.

¹⁶ Van der Waals, p. 28.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁸ AJ Venter, *Portugal's Guerrilla Wars in Africa* (Helion & Company, England, 2013), p. 354.

Concealed in these statistics is the size of the San population, on which there is apparently no general consensus. The San of Angola were, according to Prof. Phillip Tobias, the third-biggest remaining San grouping in 1960 and only the numbers in Botswana and Namibia were greater.¹⁹ On the basis of research done in this regard by Prof. Antonio de Almeida in the 1950s, Tobias calculated the Angolan San to number 4 000 people.²⁰ But a study undertaken by the Director of Military Intelligence in 1965 set the numbers of the San at 7 000,²¹ whereas Cann calculated that the San in eastern Angola numbered 4 700 in 1966.²² Despite the differences of opinion, the numbers of the San were minuscule in the larger context of their being only 0,1% of the total Angolan population and about 10% of all San in Southern Africa by the mid-1960s.

De Almeida refers to “yellow and black Bushmen” in his lectures of 1959, which dealt with the Bushmen and other non-bantu peoples of Angola. The yellow San consisted of Kwankhala and Sekela, who called themselves !Xun, while the black San were referred to as Zama or Kwengo, but they called themselves Khwe or Kweri.²³ These names are given in accordance with Robert Gordon’s “Nama-speaking groups”, which include the Khwe and “Bushmen proper”, of whom the Angolan !Khu (Kung) form part.²⁴ According to De Almeida, the !Xun lived mainly in the provinces of Bié, Huíla and Cuando Cubango, whilst the Khwe lived in the south-eastern Cuando Cubango province, adjacent to the Mbukushu in the Kavango. The !Xun and to a lesser degree the Khwe led a nomadic life of hunting and gathering before the Angolans started their freedom struggle in 1961. They had few possessions and lived in camps of 20 to 25 people, usually representing the nucleus of the family. When there was sufficient food in the area, the family built huts from branches, grass and leaves as shelter against the elements. Necessities such as implements, bows and arrows and clothing, though scanty, were manufactured from natural materials in the environment. The men typically wore only loin-cloths made from animal skin, various types of wrist-band, tobacco-pouches, knives, bows and arrows. San women, on the other hand, preferred ornaments and jewellery, complementing their small leather aprons and the fur backpacks in which the babies were carried.²⁵

De Almeida observes that the San presented “a clear case of semi-starvation, or food pathology”, which becomes evident when their eating habits and lifestyle are studied. In an interview I conducted with Mario Mahongo and other former !Xun members of 31 Battalion, they confirmed that they lived in the vicinity of the villages Serpa Pinto (Menongue), Cuito Cuanavale, Mavinga, Luengué, Cuchi and Neriquinha; they lived off the land from things

¹⁹ A. de Almeida, *Bushmen and other Non-Bantu Peoples of Angola* (University of the Witwatersrand Press, Johannesburg, 1965). Preface by Phillip V Tobias.

²⁰ Prof. Antonio de Almeida was the leader of the Anthropobiological Study of Angola and gave a series of lectures in 1959 at the Institute for the Study of Man in Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand.

²¹ SANDF Documentation Centre, HSI/AMI Archives Group 3, Container 371, Evaluation Study, p. 3.

²² Cann, p. 29.

²³ De Almeida, pp. 1, 14.

²⁴ Gordon & Douglas, p. 7.

²⁵ De Almeida, p. 7.

such as wild oranges, seasonal fruit, roots and honey and they also hunted.²⁶ This corresponds with research by De Almeida, who mentions, among other things, a very juicy and nutritious fruit, resembling oranges, known as *maboques* (*Strychnos spinosa*). The San also prepared porridge from a kind of flour, called *massango*, in clay pans made by black women. Meat in almost any form was an important part of their diet and its availability depended on the hunting skills of the San. Matoka Mattheus said that his father taught him as a young man how to hunt and to set traps. “Do not trot behind a buck; only follow its spoor cautiously until it becomes tired. Then stalk the buck and shoot it with a poison-tipped arrow and follow the spoor until the animal becomes weakened, when you will have the opportunity to kill it”.²⁷ What happens after that indicates both the San’s frugality and their generosity. The animal is immediately skinned, the meat chopped up and shared amongst the family. Nothing goes to waste – not even the intestines! This feast of meat is accompanied by dance and music and lasts until late at night.²⁸

Kamamma Makua, a Khwe who currently resides at Platfontein and is originally from a place called Katjata in the far south-east of Angola, was one of the original San leaders of 31 Battalion. Other Khwe lived in the regions of the villages of Neriquinha, Luiana and Mucusso; they also led a nomadic lifestyle like that of the !Xun and spoke a language with typical “clicks”. The !Xun and Khwe differed in personal appearance, as the Khwe showed more of the features of the neighbouring Mbukushu black people. The Khwe relied more on subsistence farming than the !Xun did, illustrated by Kamamma Makua when he explained how as a young man in the 1950s he joined his father in farming with maize, *mahango*, pumpkins and cattle.²⁹ Makua also worked in various mines around the Witwatersrand region over a period of three years. This is an indication of the freedom of movement and mobility possible in the 1950s between Angola, Zambia, South-West Africa/Namibia’s Caprivi Strip and Botswana and the region where the Khwe lived. Makua was recruited at Sepupa in Botswana, about 120 kilometres south of the Angolan border, by the recruitment organisation of the mines and transported from Shakawe to the mines by aeroplane.³⁰

The existence of the !Xun and Khwe in Angola, however, was far from the easy-going and free romanticised life of hunters and gatherers as depicted in Sir Laurens van der Post’s *The Lost World of the Kalahari*. Especially at the start of the 20th century, great pressure was placed on their traditional way of life and, according to De Almeida, a process of “Bantuisation” was taking place. The vocabulary of the black languages was used more, clothing made from animal skins was replaced by Western dress including shoes and peaked caps, and the San started building their own huts and became involved in farming with chickens and goats. Mario Mahongo put it frankly: “Before 1940 we had no tamed animals except our dogs, until we met with the black people.”³¹ He also mentioned that many !Xun were used as slaves by the black groups and that others worked for white Portuguese farmers on coffee plantations in the north of Angola. Óscar Cardoso, associated with PIDE during

²⁶ Interview with Rev. Mario Mahongo, 02 February 2015.

²⁷ Interview by Col. D Linford with Sgt. Matoka Mattheus, 28 March 2000.

²⁸ The author’s personal observations as Commanding Officer of 203 Battalion.

²⁹ Interview with Sgt. Kamamma Makua, 16 March 2015.

³⁰ L Van der Post, *The Lost World of the Kalahari* (Hogarth Press, London, 1958) p. 122.

³¹ Interview with Rev. Mario Mahongo, 28 November 2014.

the 1960s, confirms that the San were used as slaves by black people and that some of them were also used as trackers by Portuguese professional hunters.³² Up to 1960 the San received no formal schooling, after which, according to Mario Mahongo, they began to attend Portuguese schools in towns such as Cuito Cuanavale, Serpa Pinto (Menongue) and Mavinga. These sentiments were echoed by 60-year-olds Kavanda Beneditu and Pinto Kongo, when they explained that the San were taught by black Portuguese-speaking teachers, only after the liberation struggle had started. It was also clear from an interview with Katombera Mutama, an elderly !Xun from Cuito, that the San were becoming economically active in the 1950s, which resulted in greater freedom of movement and exposure to other cultures. He mentioned “working with fish” at the harbour of Benguela, at the age of 17, while some of his friends went to work on coffee plantations near the capital city Luanda.³³

De Almeida regards the San as “an intelligent, bright people, perhaps even more so than the neighbouring Bantu, they learn quickly”, but he adds nevertheless that they are always hungry and appear untidy, are despised by the blacks and estranged from the Portuguese, live a precarious life and are always looking for a place in the sun.³⁴ He refers specifically to the San’s social dependence on the black people for whom they had to hunt and perform tasks. Furthermore, the San were not allowed to leave their residential areas without the consent of the black people in charge. This view was also shared by the Bantu Affairs Commissioner of Rundu in a letter to the General Officer Commanding Joint Combat Forces in Pretoria. He refers, amongst other things, to the San along the Kavango River and their dependence on the black people for whom they looked after livestock, cultivated land and gathered “veldkos” in exchange for tobacco and clothes. He states in the letter that it is unlikely that the San would escape from this enslavement by the black people, because the latter regarded the San as an inferior race. He believed this to apply to the !Xun and Khwe as well.³⁵ This state of affairs and the effect it had on the San would have an important influence on their future.

From bow and arrow to Flechas³⁶

The militarisation of the !Xun and Khwe must be viewed against the background of the escalating conflict situation in Angola since 1930. By 1961 it had extended to a full-scale liberation war that would last for 13 years. Although the war formed part of the larger process of decolonisation in Africa after the World War II, its specific character and duration were precipitated and determined by trends in Portugal, specifically regarding its colonial policies. Dr António Salazar, Portugal’s Prime Minister, reigned with a firm grip over continental Portugal (*metrópole*) and its colonies (*ultramar*). Angola, once considered the jewel of the Portuguese colonial empire, had become a “festering pit of socio-economic and political

³² Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

³³ Interview with Rfn. Kavanda Beneditu, Rfn. Pinto Kongo and Rfn. Katombera Mutama, 17 March 2015.

³⁴ De Almeida, p. 11.

³⁵ SANDF Documentation Centre Fraser Collection Archives Group; Letter of Mr DJ Maree to Lt. Genl. CA (Pop) Fraser, 20 December 1968.

³⁶ *Flechas* : Portuguese for “arrows” and name given to indigenous troops, initially Bushmen from south-eastern Angola.

grievances” by 1961 because of Salazar’s strict policies.³⁷ According to Cann, the Angolan freedom movements that began to challenge the colonial reign started in the 1930s when Salazar’s New State (*Estado Novo*) policy was implemented and any form of political dissent was suppressed.³⁸ This revolutionary climate consequently prompted the development of three Angolan freedom movements, two of which ultimately played a crucial role in the struggle to become independent. The MPLA (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*) was started in 1956 by mainly radical, urban intellectuals in Luanda. Their rural support base was found mainly amongst the Mbundu and Chokwe people in the eastern parts of Angola. The movement was mainly conducted by *mestiços* and *assimilados*³⁹ like Agostinho Neto, in later years the leader, who adhered to Marxist ideas and looked for ways to implement them in an African context.⁴⁰ The second movement, the UPA (*União das Populações de Angola*), was formed by Barros Nekaka in the mid-1950s and consisted mainly of the rural Bakongo tribe of northern Angola, adjacent to the Belgian Congo and the French Congo. The leadership of this movement was transferred to Holden Roberto in 1958, who in 1962 agreed to include other groupings and renamed the movement FNLA (*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*).⁴¹ A third movement arose from the UPA/FNLA when a frustrated Jonas Savimbi, who was at that time Roberto’s “Minister of Foreign Affairs”, formally broke with UPA/FNLA and formed UNITA (*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*) in 1964. UNITA relied predominantly on Ovimbundu support in central Angola.⁴²

PIDE, the security police, played a major part in suppressing any form of subversion and arrested several leaders of the MPLA during 1960, including Agostinho Neto, after which the arrested leaders served long-term prison sentences. On 4 February 1961 the spark in the proverbial tinder-box was the attacks on a police station and the military detention barracks in Luanda, amongst other sites, in an unsuccessful mission to release these MPLA prisoners. In the process 40 rebels were killed, wounded or captured. This day is regarded by the MPLA as the start of its “National Revolution”.⁴³ Van der Waals divides the revolutionary war in Angola broadly into three phases, with the uprisings of 1961 marking the beginning, followed by a limited revolutionary struggle from 1962 to 1966 and then the extended war from 1967 which ended with the military *coup d’état* in Portugal on 25 April 1974⁴⁴. The events of 1961 compelled the Portuguese government to send military reinforcements to Angola, which augmented the troop strength there from 6 500 to 33 477 within six months, with a further gradual escalation from 40 000 in 1962 to 60 000 in 1967. These numbers were supplemented by a limited number of PIDE members, 10 000 police in uniform and an

³⁷ Van der Waals, p. 47.

³⁸ Cann, p. 5.

³⁹ “Assimilado” status was awarded to an Angolan who was not of Portuguese origin and who was 18 years old, could speak Portuguese fluently, earned an acceptable salary and was in possession of a birth certificate, as well as two references confirming loyalty to Portugal.

⁴⁰ Cann, p. 6.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴² Cann, p. 8.

⁴³ Van der Waals, p. 77.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 75.

estimated 8 000 members of the black militia.⁴⁵ By 1973 the total army strength stood at 60 500, of which 37 500 came from Portugal and 23 000 from Angola.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the military realised that specially trained elite forces were needed as the revolutionary struggle progressed and so formed the Centre of Instruction for Special Operations in Portugal. Eight months later the initial three companies of the battalion, about 480 men, were deployed to Angola. As the phases of the war became more intense, it became evident that additional specially trained troops were needed urgently to neutralise the rebels, and Col. José Bettencourt Rodrigues received orders to establish the training of commandos about 140 kilometres north-east of Luanda. In September 1964 the first company of commandos (*grupos de comandos*) began operations from Belo Horizonte in the north of Angola.⁴⁷

Gaining local intelligence is of cardinal importance in any military operation to neutralise or defeat the enemy. In the case of a counter-revolutionary strategy, where the enemy has infiltrated the local population, it was even more difficult to form a clear overall picture of the situation. Prior to the conflict in Angola this local intelligence was gained and interpreted by the army as well as the local and national police forces, but it was fragmented and poorly coordinated. In March 1961, however, a “Service of Centralisation and Coordination of Intelligence” (SCCI) was created that coordinated the activities of all intelligence-gathering agents, including PIDE.⁴⁸ PIDE was succeeded in 1969 by the DGS (*Direcção Geral de Segurança*); their functions remained primarily the same, but the DGS had less authority. PIDE used to attract the best talent and was seen as being on the same professional level as the British MI6, American FBI and South Africa’s Bureau of State Security (BOSS), with which it had links.⁴⁹ From 1967 the PIDE and the Portuguese security forces faced bigger challenges, as the MPLA posed a new threat from the east and the south-east.⁵⁰ The *aldeamento*⁵¹ programme for the concentration of the local population into controlled settlements was intensified, command and control structures were improved, and socio-economic reforms were actively applied.⁵² Mario Mahongo confirmed this and revealed how “the government legislated and forced them to live closer to each other” and also “gave them bags of seeds of various beans, maize and *mahangu* to plant”.⁵³

Óscar Cardoso was transferred to Angola in 1966 as Senior Inspector of the PIDE and after he had visited all police stations to ascertain the revolutionary situation, he was placed in command of the PIDE station at Serpa Pinto (Menongue) in the Cuando Cubango province. Earlier in 1965, while on a visit to Angola, he had met Manuel Pontes, an administrator in Cuando Cubango, who had a profound understanding of the terrain and people of south-

⁴⁵ Cann, p. 16.

⁴⁶ Van der Waals, p. 212.

⁴⁷ Cann, p. 17.

⁴⁸ Cann, p. 26.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁵⁰ FJ du T Spies, *Operasie Savannah, Angola, 1975–1976* (Perskor, Pretoria, 1989) p. 19.

⁵¹ *Aldeamento*: The concentration by the Angolan Portuguese authorities of the rural local population into controlled settlements.

⁵² Van der Waals, p. 159.

⁵³ Interview with Rev. Mario Mahongo, 2 February 2015.

eastern Angola. Pontes had lived most of his life in the bush and dedicated his professional career to the upliftment of the San (*Bosquímanos*). He was respected and adored by the San to such an extent that they called him “Tata K’hum” (father of the Khum)⁵⁴ and he could use this confidence in him to introduce Cardoso to the San. Cardoso realised the potential of using the San in the hunt against “terrorists” and he shared this view with the Director of PIDE in Luanda, Dr São José Lopes.⁵⁵ It was one of Cardoso’s colleagues, Jorge Malheiro, who suggested the term *flecha* (poison-tipped arrow) as a name for the San soldiers during a special PIDE meeting in Luanda. The recruitment of the San was authorised and so Cardoso’s initial Bushman unit was established, consisting of eight men. At first the San were only used as trackers and were armed only with their bows and poisonous arrows, and were therefore not to be engaged in fighting the enemy, unless in self-defence and when it was clear that they would prevail. In this way hostile encampments and arms caches were identified, which were then attacked and neutralised by the formal military forces. A further huge benefit was that the San could operate for long periods without logistical support, and that suited Cardoso’s concept of the *flechas* perfectly, namely “to oppose the insurgents with a force of men who were comfortable with the wild and could live off the land”.⁵⁶ This *modus operandi* was confirmed by Lt. Genl. Pop Fraser in his reference to the PIDE Bushmen who were sent to clear the area between Coutada Mucusso and Bambangando in the south-east of Angola from insurgents: “They will be let loose, as it were, from Mucusso on foot and they will live off the land until they have accomplished their mission.”⁵⁷

Earlier attempts to involve the San in counter-insurgency operations were not successful because they distrusted all strangers. Cardoso, however, used his friendship with Manuel Pontes and the respect that the San had for Pontes to gain their trust. In addition he used a more cynical kind of motivation, namely the animosity that the San felt for the black people, the result of years of prosecution and enslavement: “I used hate motivation with success; not against black people in general, but only against ruthless terrorists”.⁵⁸ Later, however, reports by South African liaison officers in Angola showed that the *flechas* did not understand this distinction made by Cardoso, or they chose not to understand, and indiscriminately killed any black person suspected of being involved in terrorist activities.⁵⁹ The benefits for the San of joining the *flechas* were freedom, a homeland and being treated with human dignity. “Besides these principles, everybody likes money and material possessions”, according to Cardoso.⁶⁰ The San volunteered to join the PIDE, but could also leave voluntarily. There were hardly ever desertions from the *flechas* and when the soldiers became too old, they would request retirement and were never refused. Mario Mahongo and Kamamma Makua confirmed that

⁵⁴ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁵⁵ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁵⁶ Cann, p. 30.

⁵⁷ SANDF Documentation Centre Fraser Collection Archives Group, Letter of Lt. Genl. CA Fraser to Genl. RC Hiemstra (CSADF), 19 February 1969.

⁵⁸ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁵⁹ SANDF Documentation Centre Fraser Collection Archives Group, Report on visit to Angola by the General Officer Commanding Joint Combat Forces, 23 July 1968, p. 2; Brutalities and Excesses by PIDE.

⁶⁰ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

they were told they would be independent after joining PIDE and that they would not be enslaved by the black people any more.⁶¹ During a later interview and discussion, Mahongo was however particularly cautious about the voluntary nature of San joining the *flechas* and explained that it often was a case of choosing the lesser of two evils.⁶²

Formal military training of the *flechas* started in the middle of 1967 at “The Practical School of Flechas” in Valombo (Balombe). Training focused primarily on handling weaponry, including the G-3 Portuguese assault rifle and the AK-47, and developing shooting proficiency.⁶³ Cardoso emphasised that he never attempted to turn the San into soldiers or police officers as there were, according to him, already enough of those in Angola. The San *flechas* were guerrilla fighters in an area which they knew well and where they could “read and feel” the terrain; they were also much better than the black freedom fighters, who had to operate on foreign terrain and were used to the luxury of towns and cities. “The *flechas* had a very good silent argument, the poisoned arrow, which paralysed the nervous system of the quarry, leaving it conscious. These virtues kept the terrorists in permanent stress and fear, mainly during the night. They could not sleep nor make a fire, because there was always a poisoned arrow looking for them.”⁶⁴ Therefore Cardoso deemed Cuando Cubango not a “healthy” place for freedom fighters⁶⁵ – a credible assertion, taking into consideration that by 1968 about 600 *flechas* were operating in the province, 100 stationed at the PIDE headquarters in Serpa Pinto (Menongue) and 50 *flechas* each at the PIDE stations, namely Caiundu, Cuangar, Calai, Dirico, Mucusso, Rivungu, Mavinga and Cuito Cuanavale.⁶⁶

New status for the San Flechas

Mario Mahongo was part of the August 1969 intake of *flechas*. According to him, the training took three to four months and, in spite of Cardoso’s declared intent not to turn the San into conventional soldiers, it comprised more than just training in weaponry and shooting. They were issued with uniforms and took part in regimental training, including learning to drill and salute, and were accorded military honours.⁶⁷ The *flechas* also received training in map reading, navigation and radio procedures, because proper communications are of cardinal importance in counter-insurgency operations. Cann claims that the exposure of the San *flechas* to the ways and habits of the Portuguese soldiers created a compelling desire to be like the Portuguese troops and to dress like them. This led to the wearing of uniforms, boots and even sunglasses around the base and during off-duty periods, but on combat missions shoes and sunglasses were never worn.⁶⁸ The recruitment of a San *flecha* inevitably included accommodation and supplies, such as food, for his family. To the *flechas* the

⁶¹ Interviews with Rev. Mario Mahongo and Sgt. Kamamma Makua, 16 March 2015.

⁶² Interview with Rev. Mario Mahongo, 19 June 2015.

⁶³ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Interview with Rev. Mario Mahongo, Rfn. Beneditu, Rfn. Kongo and Rfn. Mutama, 17 March 2015.

⁶⁸ Cann, p. 33.

wellbeing of their families was very important and, according to Cardoso, this affected their performance during missions. They were therefore allowed to live apart in their own enclaves with their families and in addition received small allowances for their families. The training and upliftment of the community extended beyond the merely military, for a primary school was established in Missombo, while adult education in agriculture, hygiene, motor mechanics and joinery was offered.⁶⁹ Even San boys of 12 years and older were exposed to the militarisation process when they were employed as base guards. Cann states that Portugal had dignified the San people and protected their families, and that the *flechas* in return gave their unqualified loyalty to Portugal, as symbolised by the Portuguese flags that they flew in front of their enclaves.⁷⁰ The San were acknowledged at formal passing-out ceremonies after completion of their training. At their ceremonial induction as *flechas*, each candidate was presented with a distinctive camouflage beret, a Portuguese flag and a weapon taken from the enemy.⁷¹

The increase in insurgency by mainly the MPLA in the Cuando Cubango province in the late 1960s resulted in the Portuguese increasing their military presence and consequently recruiting more *flechas*; the result was a *flecha* force consisting of 31 groups and approximately 1 665 members by December 1971.⁷² This shift of hostilities closer to the Angolan border with South-West Africa also caused the South African government concern, and more specifically the SADF, as it could create a fertile environment for SWAPO infiltration to the Caprivi and Kavango. This led to a Senior Liaison Officer (Senlo), Cmdt. Ben de Wet Roos, being stationed in Serpa Pinto during August 1968, “in an effort to have at least some influence upon operations in south-eastern Angola”.⁷³ There was liaison between the local Portuguese governor, the military officer in command and PIDE, and hence military intelligence was exchanged mutually and requests were conveyed for aerial support from South Africa to the Portuguese forces. In doing that, the SADF gained a better knowledge of *flechas*’ missions and they could start working closer with Inspector Óscar Cardoso.

The *flechas* were a small but extremely formidable force which was successfully utilised by the PIDE/DGS in operations that ranged in purpose from mere gathering of intelligence along with reconnaissance patrols, to capturing insurgents and informants to be interrogated, to pathfinding or scouting for bigger and more conventional types of military unit. Strategically the role of the *flechas* was to disrupt the long logistics lines of communication and supplies of the enemy, especially because the MPLA had to infiltrate the regions traditionally inhabited by the San. Typically the *flechas* would locate and destroy the supplies stored in caches by the enemy, or they would simply remove them for their own use. The *flechas* were engaged in many lethal contacts with the insurgents and could operate extremely well, as revealed in a situation report by Senlo to the GOC JCF on 22 January 1969, which mentions that “militia led by Bushmen killed 41 UNITA members. Despite deplorable slaughter, this was a

⁶⁹ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁷⁰ Cann, p. 35.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 35.

⁷² Ibid., p. 38.

⁷³ SANDF Documentation Centre Fraser Collection Archives Group; Report on visit to Angola by GOC JCF 15–20 July 1968, p. 7.

successful operation and the Bushmen claim nobody escaped.”⁷⁴ Another typical example of *flecha* bravery was Operation *Chirva* (Goat) in August 1971, when 50 *flechas* were encircled by a force of about 200 MPLA insurgents; after intense fire from mortars and bazookas by the *flechas*, the MPLA insurgents withdrew.⁷⁵ San *flechas* also contributed to stopping SWAPO insurgents moving through Cuando Cubango to South-West Africa.⁷⁶ According to Cardoso, the *flechas* operating in collaboration with the South African Police (SAP), South African Air Force (SAAF) and Portuguese troops stationed on Neriquinha “cleared” the islands in the Cuando river of SWAPO and UNITA insurgents.⁷⁷

The continuous *flecha* operations from 1966 to 1974 were especially effective in the Cuando Cubango province, where the constant pressure they exerted on the enemy frustrated and defeated the insurgents’ ability to penetrate the Angolan heartland. Efforts to utilise San *flechas* in the provinces of Moxico, Lunda and Bié were less successful, as they were not at home in that environment. Consequently the recruiting and training of local militia and turned former insurgents began.⁷⁸ The San *flecha* doctrine was applied with great success. With the appointment of the new Director of the PIDE/DGS, Dr Aníbal São José Lopes, *flechas* were introduced in Mozambique under the leadership of Maj. Alvaro Manuel Alves Cardoso during 1973. Inspector Óscar Cardoso regarded Maj. Alves Cardoso as an excellent commando officer, who in 1972 had initiated a more conventional method of training the non-San local people which differed from Óscar Cardoso’s guerrilla approach.⁷⁹ The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in Angola, Genl. Costa Gomes, had the highest admiration for the *flechas*. This admiration was based on the fact that at a certain stage during the war they accounted for 60% of all enemies killed in action and that by April 1974 there was little, if any, insurgency activity in the south-east of Angola.⁸⁰

The South African GOC JCF, Lt. Genl. Pop Fraser, describes the military esteem and higher status that the *flechas* acquired through this in the Angolan colonial community as follows: “The Bushmen who have always been hereditary slaves of the Bantu, have now been raised to a status superior to the Bantu by being organised into fighting patrols by PIDE.”⁸¹ This new status of the San *flechas* and their dependants, however, lasted only for about eight years, until events beyond their control changed it. The military *coup d’état* in Portugal on 25 April 1974 initiated a process which led to the granting of independence to Angola on 11 November 1975 and the withdrawal of Portuguese military forces and civilians on a large scale. These events were bad news for the San *flechas*, who had supported the Portuguese

⁷⁴ SANDF Documentation Centre Senlo Archives Group, Secret Signal Report of Senlo to GOC JCF, 22 January 1969.

⁷⁵ Cann, p. 52.

⁷⁶ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁷⁷ According to Cardoso, four armed San *flechas* could fit into the back seat of an SAAF Alouette helicopter, compared to three white soldiers.

⁷⁸ Cann, p. 46.

⁷⁹ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁸⁰ Cann, p. 57.

⁸¹ SANDF Documentation Centre Fraser Collection Archives Group, A Review of the Campaign in East and South East Angola 1968 to end January 1970, p. 10.

forces. This was confirmed by a very sinister message written in a UNITA propaganda pamphlet that had been confiscated: “Collaborators with the white Portuguese people go and bury yourselves. The Black should not be a traitor to his country!”⁸²

Flee or fight

Spring announced the arrival of the Revolution of Carnations (Carnation Revolution)⁸³ in Portugal, but also, in spite of the liberation from colonial rule, heralded the autumn and winter seasons in Angola. A period of transition followed between April 1974 and November 1975, marked by uncertainty, a political power struggle and rejoicing but also fear for the future. Inevitably the authorities in South Africa also observed the events in the neighbouring countries closely, as was revealed in an assessment by the Director of Military Intelligence in May 1974 in which the potential political, economic and military consequences of the Portuguese *coup d'état* were spelled out.⁸⁴ The white people of Angola in particular were uncertain about the future, because Angolan independence was coupled with an inclination towards racial polarisation. The release of political prisoners and the cease-fire with the freedom fighters increased the tension and the potential for chaos. Portuguese troops were not eager to continue with the armed struggle and maintained only partial control over certain key installations, radio and media.⁸⁵ In August 1974 the “Red Admiral”, Rosa Coutinho, was appointed in Luanda and launched stern actions against disloyal white resistance to change; under his leadership the white factor in Angolan politics was neutralised. At the same time the three liberation movements were persuaded to participate in an interim government, which led to the signing of the Alvor Agreement between Portugal, the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA on 15 January 1975. The Alvor Agreement acknowledged these three liberation movements as the only legitimate representatives of the Angolan people.⁸⁶ Although this agreement officially marked the end of the war between Portugal and the revolutionary movements, Van der Waals describes it as a “recipe for chaos given the open enmity between the three nationalist groups and the weakness of a colonial power that had already abdicated”.⁸⁷ It soon became apparent that any Angolan who had been a loyal Portuguese soldier, particularly former members of the elite forces and the *flechas*, could face revenge actions from the new authorities.

Although the number of San *flechas* who remained in Angola after the cessation of hostilities in 1974 is not clear, Cann estimates that there were only about 1 700 *flechas* in the east and south-east of Angola and a further 456 in the north of Angola.⁸⁸ These numbers agree with

⁸² SANDF Documentation Centre Senlo Archives Group, UNITA propaganda material, “Letter found at the site of an ambush south of Luanda, 4 February 1969.”

⁸³ So called because carnations were handed out and were placed in the barrels of the rifles of marching soldiers during the bloodless military *coup d'état* of 25 April 1974.

⁸⁴ SANDF Documentation Centre Diverse Archives Group 2, Container 88, Effects of the Portuguese Coup on the Military Threat to South Africa, 22 May 1974.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁸⁶ Van der Waals, p. 273.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 274.

⁸⁸ Cann, p. 36.

Óscar Cardoso's estimation of a total of about 2 000 *flechas*.⁸⁹ Assuming that the San *flechas* were mainly utilised in their traditional habitat, as explained above, the total number of !Xun and Khwe *flechas* can be calculated at a conservative 1 000. Mario Mahongo says that PIDE informed the *flechas* of any trouble and that their background of gathering intelligence also helped to avoid conflict situations. They were, however, very concerned about a propaganda message by the liberation movements which indicated that "the battle against the big Lion (Portuguese colonial rulers) first had to be won before they would extinguish the small Lion (San *flechas*), that was only tolerated for the time being."⁹⁰ Cardoso was convinced, though, that the San were clever enough to go back to the bush, or to look for safety in South-West Africa, to avoid being caught. Some of the *flechas*, for instance Mario Mahongo, chose to join the FNLA, although for only a short while.⁹¹ On 13 March 1975 the South African Vice-Consul in Luanda requested the SADF, on behalf of the Governor of Luso, to relocate 300 *flechas* with their families to South Africa. This emphasises the distressing position in which the *flechas* found themselves. The Vice-Consul declared "that the future of the *flechas* after independence became gloomy and that the Portuguese, who had a moral responsibility towards these people, could think of no other solution." He also stressed the "military competence of the *flechas* under command of the ex-DGS".⁹² By August 1975 Angola fell into a spiral of disorder, as became clear from a secret letter written by the South African Military Attaché in Lisbon. He quotes an Angolan from Serpa Pinto (Menongue): "30 000 Blacks have been killed during the past year. There is absolutely no order whatsoever in Angola. Nobody works, food is very scarce and most shops are closed. Robbery is a way of life for most people. The ex-*flechas* are fleeing the country – mostly to South-West Africa."⁹³ Col. Jan Breytenbach probably best describes the *flecha* circumstances in southern Angola during the attainment of independence: "hundreds of *flechas* – former black or Bushmen Portuguese soldiers – were drifting aimlessly across the countryside trying to find a home with one of the three movements. Most of them ended up in Chipenda's FNLA."⁹⁴

Project Alpha

At that stage the SADF was fully aware of the refugee situation developing between Angola and South-West Africa, as well as of the dilemma which the San *flechas* faced. On top of that, the withdrawal of the Portuguese forces left a gap that would be filled by Angolan liberation movements that favoured SWAPO. Especially in the early 1970s this posed a real threat to the Caprivi and Kavango regions of South-West Africa/Namibia and thus countermeasures had to be taken. It was from these circumstances that Project Alpha originated.

⁸⁹ Interview with Óscar Cardoso, 28 November 2014.

⁹⁰ Interview with Rev. Mario Mahongo, 28 February 2015.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² SANDF Documentation Centre HSI Archives Group, Letter of Vice-consul to Chief of Staff Intelligence, SK/201/1, 13 March 1975.

⁹³ SANDF Documentation Centre HSI Archives Group, Letter of Military Attaché in Lisbon to the Chief of Staff Intelligence, 5 August 1975.

⁹⁴ J Breytenbach, *Forged in Battle* (Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2014) p. 12.

Cmdt. Delville Linford was the last Senlo of the SADF in Serpa Pinto (Menongue) (from April 1973 to July 1974) and during this time he learnt a lot about the role of the San *flechas* under control of the local DGS. Shortly after his return to Pretoria, he was summoned by Brig. Constand Viljoen and given the task of “build[ing] a base in the West Caprivi to accommodate the refugee *flechas*, to recruit and train them, in order to use them to safeguard the South-West Africa border against SWAPO.”⁹⁵ Linford and six national servicemen together with 39 black soldiers started to build the base, later known as Camp Alpha, in the West Caprivi in September 1974, and on 2 November 1974 the first *flechas* under the leadership of Kamamma Makua arrived. This group consisted of !Xun and Khwe, and was accompanied by the Portuguese leaders Perreira, Costa Dias and Padua. Mario Mahongo’s group of about 80 !Xun arrived on 7 July 1975 at Alpha and later two more groups followed: one under the leadership of Matoka Matheus during November 1975, and the last group of Tango Naka on 17 February 1976.⁹⁶ Because Camp Alpha became too small to accommodate the growing numbers, the building of the well-known Omega base began and it was formally opened in September 1977 by the Chief of the SADF.⁹⁷ From October 1975 to January 1976 Battle Group Alpha took part with great success in Operation Savannah, after which it had a name change and continued to operate as 31 Battalion against SWAPO in south-east Angola and Zambia.

Omega to Schmitsdrift

31 Battalion, later known as 201 Battalion, started small and grew into a formidable combat unit consisting of four infantry rifle companies⁹⁸ and a reconnaissance wing. The unit participated in most big operations and continuously in smaller border control operations over the length and breadth of the border with Angola. Some of the expeditions even took the San soldiers back into Angolan territory. During the 1980s Omega developed into an autonomous settlement and community, with a primary school, clinic, church and supermarket. An adult education centre was gradually established and San women were trained in home industries and needlework. The !Xun and Khwe lived apart from each other and were also divided into separate rifle companies. Law and order were maintained according to a typical military command structure, although provision was made for a “Bushman Council”, consisting of self-appointed leaders of the San. The council met regularly with the unit commander and mentors, and tried to solve social problems and conflicts in a more traditional manner.

203 Battalion was established in Bushmanland, Namibia, in 1978 under leadership of Cmdt. Pinkie Coetzee and consisted of a nucleus of !Xun soldiers initially from Omega, as well as San who lived in Bushmanland.⁹⁹ This unit had three infantry rifle companies that mainly

⁹⁵ Interview with Genl. CL Viljoen on 11 April 2015; D. Linford, unpublished manuscript, p. 5.

⁹⁶ Uys, p. 20.

⁹⁷ According to Col. (Ret.) Daan Slabbert, who served as a junior officer from 1975 at Camp Alpha, the unit consisted of 450 San soldiers by March 1976. Interview in Kimberley on 18 March 2015.

⁹⁸ A rifle company typically consisted of three to five platoons of 35 men each and a headquarters element.

⁹⁹ Uys, p. 81.

guarded the SWAPO infiltration routes from Angola across Ovambo to the Kavango. When the San soldiers were not deployed operationally, they lived in scattered settlements with limited military infrastructure. The conditions in Bushmanland offered more freedom of movement and a more traditional lifestyle, which suited them better than conditions in Omega. Provision was also made for a “Bushman Council” to assist the unit commander with conflict management and the solving of social problems.¹⁰⁰

During 1989 the San of 201 and 203 Battalions faced a crossroads in their lives again with the implementation of the United Nations Resolution 435, which required the demobilisation of all SADF and SWATF units. Namibia would subsequently become independent on 21 March 1990. Everything possible was done to accommodate the San soldiers with their dependants in an independent Namibia, but the option to relocate to South Africa was always kept open.¹⁰¹ After an intense negotiation process, 372 of the !Xun and Khwe soldiers, with their dependants, chose to relocate in South Africa, a process that was completed on 17 March 1990.

At Schmidtsdrift a new era began under very difficult circumstances for 31 Battalion and about 4 000 San people. The nature of the task at hand was twofold, namely the establishment of an infantry battalion, which would include the retraining of the San soldiers, as well as the establishment of the community with the accompanying social issues and problems. A temporary tent town was laid out and all infrastructure had to be established anew in the harsh Northern Cape climate and arid environment. An integrated development programme was followed which included adult education, courses in literacy, training in basic medical care, economic and social development, as well as formal education up to secondary school level. Surveys to construct permanent houses and supply proper infrastructure were conducted, but the project was abandoned when it came to light that a land claim had been made by the original inhabitants of Schmidtsdrift as part of the local resistance to the resettlement. Furthermore, the Cabinet’s decision during July 1992 that 31 Battalion had to disband and integrate with the rest of the SADF caused projects to be suspended and introduced a period of major uncertainty for an already traumatised San community.¹⁰² The new environment in which the San found themselves, seen against the background of continuous uncertainty, led to higher tensions within the community and contributed to a feeling of despair. Consequently it became more difficult for the community to deal with domestic conflicts in a traditional manner and, with the final disbandment of the battalion on 7 March 1993, they also lost the military structure to which they had become accustomed over 20 years.

Conclusion

The militarisation of the Platfontein San was not primarily the result of their incorporation into the SADF in the middle 1970s. As indicated, the process had already started in 1966 in Angola, when they were deployed in the Portuguese Angolan military forces. The San’s initially low-profile involvement, with limited prospects, developed into a significant and

¹⁰⁰ Van Wyk, p. 10.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Van Wyk, p. 34.

important factor in the Angolan military forces' battle against the liberation movements, because of their unique skills and their knowledge of the natural habitat in which they were utilised. These developments brought them an unprecedented "higher status" in the Angolan colonial community and that prompted the San's own motivation for their voluntary acceptance of becoming militarised. In this process their existence was dignified by the value that other people accorded them. This rise in stature, however, did not last long and it came at a high price, as it was later estimated that fully 25% of the San in Angola were killed in the seven-month period after the revolution in April 1974.¹⁰³

For a short while the Platfontein San could escape from their precarious position in the Angolan community through their militarisation, but by 1975 the fraught geopolitical developments in the Portuguese colonial empire had caught up with them. They had few alternative options and their best chance of survival lay in their continued militarisation. This time they were in a foreign land as part of the SADF – which followed the Portuguese model in accommodating the !Xun and Khwe in Project Alpha and later 31 Battalion. The militarisation of the San gained further momentum for about 16 years in Omega and to a lesser degree in Bushmanland, after which militarisation made way for a drastic process of urbanisation,¹⁰⁴ with the relocation of approximately 50% of the !Xun and Khwe San to Schmidtsdrift and eventually to the farm Platfontein, near Kimberley.

Although the !Xun and Khwe communities benefitted from their militarisation, they paid a heavy toll after their relocation to South Africa and the final disbandment of 31 Battalion, because of the subsequent increased potential for conflict between the two groups and their loss of traditional mechanisms to defuse such conflict.

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¹⁰³ Cann, p. 61.

¹⁰⁴ The term "urbanisation" is used here to indicate the social and cultural leap from living in the remote rural regions in Namibia to living close to towns and the city of Kimberley, with accompanying social and socio-economic consequences.

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