

Rogerson, Christian M.<sup>1</sup> – Sixaba, Zinzi<sup>2</sup>

# Rural Tourism in South Africa's Apartheid Bantustans: An Historical View<sup>3</sup>

## ABSTRACT

Arguably, tourism studies can benefit from a stronger engagement with historical research. The aim is to contribute further to a limited historical tradition in international tourism geography scholarship. Past tourism in South Africa has attracted some attention from geographers who have demonstrated the relevance of historical research. The paper investigates the emergence of the Ciskei Bantustan (one of ten established under apartheid) as a rural tourism destination in the context of apartheid planning. In terms of the history of Bantustan economic development, the early focus was on industrial development with minimal attention devoted to tourism. A tourism economy did, however, emerge in these areas and given mounting policy attention, particularly from the 1970s and continuing into the post-1981 'independence' period for Ciskei. The character of tourism development which occurred in 'independent' Ciskei (1981–1994) is analysed with particular attention to the growth of casino tourism which was surrounded by controversies about corruption in this rural destination.

*Keywords: tourism geography, historical tourism, rural tourism, apartheid, Bantustans, South Africa*

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<sup>1</sup> Research Professor, School of Tourism & Hospitality, University of Johannesburg, Bunting Road Campus, Auckland Park, 2006, South Africa. Email: [chrismr@uj.ac.za](mailto:chrismr@uj.ac.za). ORCID 0000-0003-1306-8867

<sup>2</sup> Research Assistant, PhD, School of Tourism & Hospitality, University of Johannesburg, Bunting Road Campus, Auckland Park, 2006, South Africa. Email: [zinzi.sixaba@gmail.com](mailto:zinzi.sixaba@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

Tourism studies is an inter-disciplinary domain with contributions from several different disciplines including geography. Although studies concerning the geography of tourism appeared during the 1970s and 1980s it is generally agreed that the sub-discipline of tourism geography was established only in the 1990s. In a recent contribution Butowski (2023, p. 303) writes of the ‘young’ sub-discipline of tourism geography. Considerable advances in tourism geographical scholarship are recorded in the overview presented by Müller (2019). Several definitions have been put forward to delineate the scope of the sub-discipline of tourism geography (Müller, 2019). One of the most recent is that it is a field of human geography “that addresses the spatial distribution of tourism and its relationship with geographical settings, most notably landscape, place and territory” (Paiva, 2023, p. 424). Arguably, an appreciation of the past can strengthen our understanding of such issues in present-day tourism (Walton, 2005; Rogerson, 2020, 2021). However, existing research by geographers of tourism’s past is little developed within the extant international scholarship of tourism geography. This uncharted terrain is deserving of greater academic scrutiny. Following the observation of Saarinen et al. (2017, p. 311), literature in tourism geography can be enriched by “the extended application of historical perspectives”. Indeed, from the geographical perspective Wieckowski and Saarinen (2019, p. 370) maintain that “tourist destinations can be seen as spatial units generated historically”. This reinforces the opinion voiced by the leading tourist historian John Walton (2005, p. 3) that it is “important that tourism studies should begin to pay serious attention to the relevance of historical research and writing to its concerns”. Arguably, the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the imperative to learn lessons from the past and underlines a need for advancing historically-based tourism research (Rogerson & Baum, 2020; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2022a).

South Africa is the setting for this study in historical tourism geography. Over the past two decades the tourism sector has been one of the most vibrant research foci in geographical writings on South Africa (C.M. Rogerson & Visser, 2004; Visser, 2016; J.M. Rogerson & Visser, 2020; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2024). The most recent review undertaken by Rogerson and Visser (2020) pointed to the consolidation of several well-established themes in literature about the country’s tourism geography such as urban tourism, responsible tourism and sustainability. Among newer trends in the directions of South African tourism geographies is the appearance of research concerning the historical dimensions surrounding tourism in South Africa. This emergent historical ‘tradition’ in South African geographical scholarship mirrors the view expressed by Van Sant et al. (2020, p. 168) that geography “is always a product of history”. In geographical scholarship on tourism, South Africa provides several examples of works which demonstrate the relevance and value of historical research (Drummond, 2024; Rogerson, 2024; van der Merwe, 2024). In terms of investigations with a rural dimension, published works include historical research on the evolution of rural tourism (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021), heritage and battlefield tourism (van der Merwe, 2019a, 2019b, 2024), the role of pioneer Black South African entrepreneurs in the accommodation sector (Sixaba & Rogerson, 2019), and of rural tourism development in the spaces of former Bantustans (Rogerson, 2022; Sixaba & Rogerson, 2023).

The aim in this article is to reinforce this 'historical turn' in South African tourism geography scholarship. The focus is on the rural Ciskei, one of ten Bantustans that were established under apartheid. The paper unfolds through three further sections of discussion. The next section is a literature review which traces the establishment of the Bantustans or Homelands under the apartheid period and including the 'independence' of Ciskei in 1981. It is shown that in terms of Bantustan economic development, a major focus was on industrial development with minimal attention devoted to tourism. A short discussion on methods and sources is given before turning to the results section which investigates the distinctive character of tourism development in the Ciskei Bantustan. It is demonstrated that a tourism economy emerged in the Bantustan areas and was given growing policy attention, particularly from the 1970s and continuing into the 'independence' period for Ciskei. The character of tourism development which occurred is investigated with particular attention to the distinctive growth of casino tourism.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The evolution and development of the Bantustans is an integral component of planning for apartheid which followed the electoral victory in 1948 of the National Party (Southall, 1983). The word 'bantustan' is a conjuring up of the fractured states of Central Asia and "was adopted by the anti-apartheid movement as an alternative to 'homeland' which was seen to legitimize apartheid policies that tried to fuel ethno-nationalism among African populations" (Phillips, 2017, p. 2). A key element in the National Party's (NP) apartheid policy was to divide the black and white people of South Africa spatially and give 'autonomous' authority to create African 'ethnic' areas, known as the 'homelands' (Lemon, 1976, 1987). As stressed by Pickles and Woods (1992) the Bantustans were artificial creations by the apartheid state. The implementation of the policy for developing the 'Bantu Homelands' – the preferred terminology of the South African state – became one of the centre-pieces of apartheid planning (United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, 1970). Within its third year in office the apartheid government passed the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act, which was described as a national legislative process of co-opting 'traditional culture' into a self-governance system for Africans, which placed chieftainship tribal authority at the core of rural administration (Wotshela, 2018). This was one of the defining elements of apartheid policy producing a racial-spatial separation between the majority (black) African and minority white populations of South Africa (Lemon, 1976).

Laurence (1976) considers that the concept of the 'independent homeland' was the brainchild of the Minister of Native Affairs, Hendrik Verwoerd who subsequently became South Africa's Prime Minister. As the Minister of Native Affairs, Verwoerd was the advocate of the Bantu Authorities Act. This legislation confirmed that in South Africa the areas that were set aside for the Homelands (designated for blacks) only constituted 13 percent of land; the remaining 87 percent was for whites. The ethnic homelands were cast as a decolonisation project as these territories would be guided towards 'independence' by the white South African government (Phillips, 2017). Within the ideology of apartheid, the ten ethnic homelands were to be led to bogus political independence (Drummond et



African Institute of Race Relations, 1969). Southall (1983, p.34) terms it as the implementation of a policy of 'divide and rule' which was used by the white apartheid government to militate against the unity of African people.

The homeland system began with the establishment of 'self-governing' territories which subsequently were to be guided to an 'independent' status (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2023). By 'self-governing' it was meant that the homelands were granted limited powers whereas an 'independent status' granted these territories with sovereign rights on certain issues that were previously controlled by the apartheid government (Southall, 1983). The 1959 Self-Governing Act directed at the application of the tribal authority system transitioned Ciskei into the status of a 'Bantu homeland' (Wotshela, 2018). It has been argued the Ciskei and other homelands were central features of social engineering as they were made geopolitical ethnic entities in pursuit of apartheid political goals (Lemon, 1987). In a classic example of 'divide and rule' the African population was fragmented into a series of linguistically defined groups which subsequently were constituted as 'national units'. Each 'national unit' was assigned what was regarded by the apartheid government as their 'traditional territory'. One exception was for the Xhosa-speaking population which was further divided by what government considered was 'historical grounds' along the Kei river thus leading to the creation of two Xhosa-speaking Homelands, namely Transkei and Ciskei (Wildman, 2005).

The Ciskei achieved 'self-governing' status in 1972 and acceded to 'independence' in 1981 (Ciskei Development Information 1984). The 'independence' of the Bantustans was universally rejected by the international community in the 1970s and 1980s (Aerni-Flessner & Twala, 2021). As documented by Charton (1980) this part of South Africa was one of the most impoverished regions of the country. Ciskei territory was mainly rural but included areas around the towns of King William's Town, Keiskammahoek, Middledrift, and Peddie. Its political leader Lennox L. Sebe, directed the Ciskei National Independence Party (Peires, 1992). Sebe was described as having an admiration for projects of high standards for his own personal gain which made him a target for foreign fraudsters as well as opening rich opportunities for corruption (Peires, 1992). The Ciskei's National Assembly was comprised of 69 members of which 42 were traditional chiefs, 22 were elected members and five were nominated by the President of Ciskei (Ciskei Development Information, 1984). As had occurred with the earlier imposition of sham independence in 1976 for the Transkei Bantustan, the people of Ciskei resisted and rejected the 'independent' status imposed upon Ciskei through mass demonstrations (Peires, 1992). As with all of the other Bantustans, among the priority challenges for the Ciskei administration was the promotion of economic development (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2023).

Before 1948 the economies of the 'Native reserves' were almost exclusively reliant on agriculture. In terms of addressing issues of economic development the establishment of the Bantu Self-Government Act of 1951 was coupled with the launch of the Tomlinson Commission, which reported its findings in 1955 (Union of South Africa, 1955). The Tomlinson Report set the master plan for the development of these areas. The commission was tasked with "devising a 'comprehensive scheme for the rehabilitation of the Native Areas with a view to developing within them a social structure in keeping with the culture of the Native and based upon effective socio-economic planning" (Hobart Houghton, 1957, p. 14). In the words of Hirsch (1984, p. 10) the Commission was mandated to "explore

how the economies of the Reserves could develop in accordance with the National Party's desire to stem the flow of impoverished Africans to the towns". The 1950s decade witnessed the catastrophic decline of the economies of the Reserves, including falls in agricultural productivity, relegating these areas to cheap labour reserves (Phillips, 2017). The Tomlinson Commission argued that the major development challenge was the lack of non-agricultural wage opportunities and estimated that 50 000 employment opportunities would have to be created each year for the following 25 years to absorb surplus labour.

The stimulation of secondary industry was favoured as the potential basis for new job creation and of inhibiting the growth of an urban African proletariat as well as prolonging South Africa's cheap labour economy (Sparks, 2020). The Tomlinson report stated that "a programme of industrial development will, therefore, occupy a central position in the general programme of development for the Bantu areas" (Union of South Africa, 1955, p. 131). The strategy of industrial decentralization was supported by the provision of investment incentives to encourage industrialists to invest in (or in border areas of) Bantustans to create employment opportunities for their populations (Hirsch, 1984). An institutional structure for promoting development opportunities in the Homelands was established. The Bantu Investment Corporation (BIC) of South Africa was founded on the basis of the Bantu Investment Corporation Act of 1959 (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1969). This represented the first attempt to provide direct support to black-owned businesses albeit the support provided by BIC was geographically confined to the homelands (Hart, 1971). The main objective of the corporation included "the provision of capital, technical and other assistance, the furnishing of expert and specialized advice, information and guidance, and the promotion of self-help in the economic sphere" (Hart, 1971, p. 98). In 1966 an important step was the launch of a separate development agency, the Xhosa Development Corporation (XDC), which was dedicated to addressing the economic development challenges of the Transkei and Ciskei territories. The XDC itself subsequently split into two separate development corporations each representing the different Homelands. The Transkei Development Corporation and Ciskei National Development Corporation provided incentives to attract investors and stimulate economic growth respectively in Transkei and Ciskei (Wotshela, 2018).

The programme of Bantustan industrialization was geographically clustered around a set of selected 'growth points'. It enjoyed, however, only minimal success across South Africa despite the offer of lavish investment incentives to both local and foreign investors (Tomlinson & Addleson, 1987). In Ciskei the limited progress of this state programme concentrated around Dimbaza is documented by Hirsch (1984, 1986). It is argued that the industrial decentralization programme as a whole was costly and ineffectual in relation to the enormous challenges for job creation. Accordingly, with the national government's industrial decentralization policy failing to achieve desired developmental goals, tourism emerged as one alternative sectoral focus for promoting Bantustan economic development (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2023) and not least in our case study of Ciskei.



## METHODS

An historical approach was applied in this study with the mining of a range of archival sources. The practice of archival research has been acknowledged as a key research method in geography as scholars excavate historical influences on contemporary places (Craggs, 2016; Wideman, 2023). The study builds upon an array of original archival sources and historical records. Primary sources included in this study are: (1) the archives of the *Daily Dispatch* newspaper which is published in East London, (2) the historical material of the South African Institute of Race Relations (accessed at the National Library depot in Cape Town), (3) policy documents sourced at the National Library depot in Cape Town; Jagger Library at the University of Cape Town and the Cory Library at Rhodes University, Makhanda, and, (4) scattered archival material from local collections held at the Eastern Cape Provincial Archives in King William's Town (KWT). The time period covered by this research is from 1948 to 1994. It is archival 'data' which is the base for the results of this study.

## RESULTS

Given the lack of interest of the newly elected (1948) National Party government in tourism development, Rogerson (2022) points out it was unsurprising that tourism was not considered in the socio-economic planning report undertaken by the Tomlinson Commission. Only small pockets of tourism growth emerged in Bantustan spaces during the early apartheid years. It is made clear by Drummond et al. (2022) that policy development surrounding tourism promotion in the Homelands began to occur only from the 1960s. Following the 1963 grant of 'self-government' to Transkei there was recognition in South African parliamentary debates of the potential for developing tourism in the Bantustans to glimpse 'Africa in the raw' (Rogerson, 2022). This potential required addressing the urgent need for improvement of the quality of local hotels in the rural Bantustan areas in line with grading standards which had been introduced in 1964–65 for all South African hotels (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2022b).

It was during the early 1970s when the failures of apartheid industrial decentralisation programmes in the Bantustans were becoming clear that signs emerged of government interest in promoting tourism in the Homelands (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2023). For example, in 1974 debates taking place in South Africa's House of Assembly it was stressed as follows: "It is of the greatest importance that the homelands be made aware of tourism" (*House of Assembly Debates*, 23 October 1974, Col. 6210). Arguably, the political concession of 'independence' to certain Homelands, including Transkei (1976) and Ciskei (1981) was a turning point for tourism development in these areas (Drummond et al., 2022). Critically, it recast the function of these areas within the South African economy and allowed them to bypass the regime's conservative social policies, most notably around casino gambling (Haines & Tomaselli, 1992).

## Ciskei 'independence' and post-1981 tourism planning

Dlamini (2020) stresses that whilst the conferment of 'independence' on four Bantustans was a cynical ploy designed to ensure white rule in the rest of South Africa the altered status of 'independence' for Ciskei in 1981 did introduce a new environment for economic development. This included a new institutional structure for changing the patterns of inherited tourism development as well as charting different directions and opportunities for tourism development. Before 'independence' there was little awareness of the Ciskei region as a potential tourism destination in Southern Africa despite the existence of a number of tourism assets.

The Ciskei enjoys one of the most spectacular coastlines in Southern Africa and the 65km coastline is among its main attractions. In addition, Ciskei was reputed also for its mountain ranges, forestry, wildlife, and culture. Tourism assets included game parks, a vulture colony, various heritage sites and coastal resorts such as Hamburg. In 1982 it was reported that the idea of tourism was relatively new to Ciskei and at that time the tourism industry in Ciskei was untapped. The Ciskei government acknowledged that tourism was an unexploited industry not yet reaching its full potential (Ciskei Peoples Development Bank, 1987). The tourism ministry of the Ciskei was known as the Department of Tourism and Aviation and at the time described as a newcomer to the tourism scene. The main aim of this department was to promote Ciskei in regional and international markets and to improve the position of Ciskei as a travel destination (KWT unsorted box 1).

The Ciskei Promotion of Tourism Act was passed in 1983. One of its outcomes was to establish the Ciskei Tourist Board to develop and promote the Ciskei by growing its tourist activities and improving accommodation facilities. The Promotion of Tourism Act of 1983 stated that the board had several guiding objectives, namely, to promote tourism, to develop the Ciskei tourism industry by encouraging people to visit the Ciskei, foster the development of travel activities (such as guided tours, improve hiking trails), stimulate the upgrading of the quality standards of accommodation establishments, ensure the maintenance of high standards, to upgrade catering services in restaurants, protect the local historical and cultural heritage, and manage all government museums. Other tourism development institutions included the Ciskei National Tourist Office (CINTO) and the Ciskei Tourist and Holiday Trust (Ciskei Development Information, 1984). CINTO operated as an executive arm of the Ciskei Tourist Board which co-ordinated all tourism affairs concerning Ciskei. The Ciskei Tourist and Holiday Trust had the specific assignment of developing local holiday resorts. The Wildlife Resources and Parks division of Ciskei's Agricultural Corporation was mandated to planning Ciskei's game parks and reserves on a profitmaking basis working with other agencies and government departments. Another critical institution for assisting funding towards tourism development was the Ciskei Peoples Development Bank (CPDB).

A 1984 government report pinpointed the main tourism objectives, key policies and strategies (Republic of Ciskei and Development Bank of Southern Africa, 1984). These included, *inter alia*, the promoting of Ciskei to its maximum level; earning foreign exchange through tourism; creating jobs for Ciskei citizens; developing the market of handcraft products; and, the marketing of Ciskei internationally through trade shows. Important policy interventions involved, *inter alia*, to improve the



quality and services of facilities at holiday resorts to attract international tourism; encourage private sector development of holiday resorts; marketing the area's tourism potential and for international markets to highlight local Xhosa history and culture. In order to achieve these objectives several strategies were required. This demanded, for example, tourist organisations within government to be integrated into a one tourist post-1981 corporation and equipped with sufficient personnel in order to execute tasks; generate a public campaign that would successfully promote the tourist attractions in the Ciskei; encourage more tours to include Ciskei coastal roads (particularly tours from Durban to Cape Town and from Johannesburg to East London); restore and preserve historical sites; support local handicrafts businesses; nurture cultural events (such as song and dance); establish a Xhosa museum; and, enhance training for local hotel staff (Republic of Ciskei and Development Bank of Southern Africa, 1984).

Policy actions involved the distribution of information brochures, employment of consultants to investigate the development opportunities for investors at the Ciskei coast and its resorts, develop trout rivers and dams, and investigate the construction of a cultural centre (Republic of Ciskei and Development Bank of Southern Africa, 1984). A further policy step was the drafting of a national tourism policy (*Daily Dispatch*, 1 December, 1984). With the establishment of a national tourist board, the Ciskei government envisaged that the tourism industry would become the country's primary source of revenue (*Daily Dispatch*, 1 September 1984). One of the challenges faced by the Ciskei Tourist Board was to increase awareness of both local and international travel agents of the potential opportunities that Ciskei tourism could offer. The Ciskei's Minister of Tourism approved the implementation of promotional campaigns by the Ciskei Tourist Board (CTB) (KWT Unsorted box 2). The CTB now was the lead implementation agency for tourism development (KWT Unsorted box 2). The CTB was tasked also with the evaluation of the quality of tourism products and offerings in Ciskei. The activities of CTB were guided by four main principles, *viz.*, the marketing and promotion of Ciskei's tourist industry, locating and developing untapped tourist resources; implementing training and educational programmes in the field of tourism; and, introducing a grading system for hotels.

Overall, in Ciskei government policy there was a realisation that if the tourism sector was well-planned, managed and funded it could be a key sector in improving the quality of life for the people of Ciskei by creating jobs, particularly in rural areas. It was stated that the President of Ciskei and his executive recognised the potential that tourism had to offer Ciskei albeit it was conceded that tourism was new and the majority of the local population unaware of its potential (KWT Unsorted box 2). It was realised that tourism was a labour-intensive industry and could create urgently needed job opportunities (*Daily Dispatch*, 17 July 1987). The 'independent' Ciskei government sought to lever tourism as a cultural focus and position Ciskei as a diverse and non-racial country in light of apartheid and with South Africa being perceived as a racially divided country by the rest of the world at the time. In addition, Ciskei tourism was seen as having a significant role to play in building cooperation and goodwill in Southern Africa (Ciskei Peoples Development Bank, 1987). It was acknowledged, however, that tourism development in Ciskei could not be carried out separately rather it required co-operation with tourism authorities of (apartheid) South Africa.

## Progress of Tourism Development During the ‘Independence’ Period 1981–1994

Notwithstanding the leisure assets of Ciskei and the new institutional structures created to support leisure tourism the first major tourism developments to occur in the ‘independence’ period related to the new opportunities for establishing casino tourism. As argued by Drummond et al. (2022) accompanying the progression of planning for ‘grand apartheid’ and the concession of sham ‘independence’ to Bantustans opportunities for South African tourism capital were opened up for initiating casinos and resorts. The ‘independence’ of Ciskei in 1981 re-defined the function of the territory within the South African economy allowing it to circumvent the regime’s social policies concerning gambling which was prohibited in so-termed ‘white’ South Africa. The growth of casino tourism in the independent Homelands is viewed by Briedenhann and Wickens (2004) as an early form of rural tourism in these areas. Tourism developers and homeland governments used the ‘independent’ status of homelands to side-step the strict regulations in (white) South Africa and establish resort complexes allied to a network of large casinos. The casino rights for development in the ‘independent’ Homelands were divided in terms of an agreement between the two main competing hotel enterprises, the Holiday Inn and Southern Sun. The rights to casino development in Ciskei were awarded to the Southern Sun group of hotels (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2022c). In terms of a corporate restructuring in 1983 the casino rights of Southern Sun subsequently transferred to Sun International, the enterprise under the control of the hotel magnate Sol Kerzner. This agreement was to be a landmark for tourism development in Ciskei as the Sun Hotel group opened up four casinos in Ciskei during its brief independence period.

The construction of the first casino-resort, the Amatola Sun Hotel and Casino, was described as a major starting point in the establishment of the tourism industry in the Ciskei. The Amatola was a joint undertaking between Sun International and the Ciskei People’s Development Bank. The Amatola was built just after the Ciskei had accepted ‘independence’ and located at Bisho, the ‘capital’ of Ciskei. The construction of the hotel caused tense public engagements as there was controversy and secrecy as to the identity of the group which was involved in building the hotel. The controversy raised questions about the covert dealings between the Ciskei government and Sun International, particularly President Lennox Sebe’s relations with Sol Kerzner, for allowing casino projects in the Ciskei. Widespread allegations of corruption and bribery existed as had occurred with casino project development in other Homelands (Philipps, 2017). The head of Sun International Sol Kerzner was reported in 1984 to be seeking to invest in the Ciskei and evaluating several potential sites on the coast of Ciskei (*Daily Dispatch*, 28 September, 1984). Prior to this proposal, the Ciskei government expressed interest in constructing a casino hotel at the coastal small town of Hamburg. It was reported that Kerzner advised President Lennox Sebe to withdraw the Hamburg project as Sun International had exclusive casino rights in Ciskei. The Ciskei government would be in breach of contract if it continued with the Hamburg project, as the contract agreement said that Sun International was given exclusive rights during the Amatola Sun project (*Daily Dispatch*, 1 October, 1984). Thereafter the Ciskei government granted Sun International the opportunity to construct the casino and hotel project which was the Fish River Sun Hotel and Casino which formally was launched in 1989, becoming the fourth Sun International resort in Ciskei (*Daily Dispatch*, 25 May 1989). Sun International believed

that the hotel and casino with its golf course would attract tourists to Ciskei. The location of the hotel would play a role in attracting visitors as it was the first attraction that tourists encountered coming from Port Elizabeth therefore positioning the hotel as the gateway to the Garden Route (*Daily Dispatch*, 25 May, 1989), one of South Africa's leading coastal tourism regions (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020c).

Despite controversy surrounding its development the Amatola hotel resort was proclaimed to make a significant contribution to the local economy, employing 130 Ciskei citizens with a staff training programme developed by the hotel for local Ciskeians (*Daily Dispatch*, 16 December 1987). The popularity of the Amatola hotel, however, negatively impacted the trade of other accommodation establishments particularly in King William's Town (*Kei Mercury*, 8 July 1982). Beyond the casino developments further initiatives were made by the Ciskei government and its agencies to advance leisure and other forms of tourism in the area. The government continued efforts to attract business tourism events (*Daily Dispatch*, 1 October, 1988). The Minister of Tourism predicted an increase in tourists in the Ciskei by 1989 as the ministry planned to implement new projects and new objectives were set in 1988 (*Daily Dispatch*, 13 September, 1988). The objectives comprised new marketing strategies, better use of Ciskei's assets by enhanced research to establish tourist packages and products and encouraging local authorities to participate in tourism infrastructure support (*Daily Dispatch*, 13 September, 1988). As Ciskei was largely rural, a specific aim of government was to develop the rural spaces for tourism in order to enhance living standards of rural people (*Daily Dispatch*, 17 July 1987).

The Ciskei government anticipated an accelerated growth in tourism development, particularly through the development of its tourism infrastructure. An action committee was formed to fast-track this process (*Daily Dispatch*, 7 September, 1988). The Department of Tourism and Aviation established a publicity office, which started operations in October 1988 (*Daily Dispatch*, 22 October, 1988). Training programmes were regarded as a critical basis for upgrading Ciskei's hotel industry (*Daily Dispatch*, 20 July, 1989). In 1988 an inspection unit was initiated to monitor the standards of licensed hotels and restaurants. This was done through a grading system of hotels with certain set standards that hotels had to meet in order to be graded (*Daily Dispatch*, 20 July, 1989). In a policy speech by the President of Ciskei, it was stated that much effort would be given to developing the coast and three game reserves. With the goal of developing coastal areas, funding was provisionally committed for infrastructure improvements at various 'tourist nodes' to catalyse private sector investment (*Daily Dispatch*, 20 July, 1989). Alongside coastal development further opportunities were identified for local heritage assets (*Daily Dispatch*, 20 July 1989).

For the study period no official data is available to monitor tourism demand and supply flows in Ciskei. Nevertheless, as indexed by developments taking place in the accommodation services sector, during the 'independence' period some growth was evidenced of Ciskei as a rural tourism destination. In 1984 Ciskei had a total of only 12 hotels, caravan parks, lodges and holiday farms (Ciskei Development Information, 1984). The accommodation service economy was boosted by the opening of the Sun International resorts. In addition, the Mpekweni Marine Resort situated on the coast of Ciskei, near the national road between East London and Port Elizabeth was constructed by the CPDB in 1985 and was the first new Ciskei coastal development (*Daily Dispatch*, 22 November, 1985 and 6 June, 1987). This resort was marketed as a family-oriented and outdoor sports resort with

conference rooms (*Daily Dispatch*, 3 December, 1985). The resort was viewed as contributing to the local economy in terms of job creation as the largest local employer at the time (*Daily Dispatch*, 6 June, 1987). Nevertheless, when this hotel was under construction questions were raised concerning the resort's impact on the environment (*Daily Dispatch*, 7 September, 1984). The resort was located on dunes that were unstable and close to the beach. The resort was exposed to coastal storms, flooding during high tide, and sand blowing into the resort pools and chalets which resulted in high costs of maintenance (*Daily Dispatch*, 7 September, 1984). In addition, the reputation of this resort was tarnished by corruption allegations. Indeed, the issue of corruption was widespread in tourism developments occurring in the Ciskei as well as other 'independent' Bantustans. The details and extent of this corruption are provided by Streek and Wicksteed (1981), Beinart (2012) and Phillips (2017).

In the closing years of apartheid and of the 'independence' era for Ciskei, the local tourism economy was impacted negatively by a military coup in 1990 which overthrew the Ciskei President Lennox Sebe. The historian Peires (1992) writes of 'the implosion' that occurred of Ciskei in the early 1990s. The political upheavals in Ciskei created perceptions of security concerns and tourists were fearful of travelling to the Ciskei (*Daily Dispatch*, 23 December, 1992). The chapter of Ciskei 'independence' was closed finally with the 1994 democratic elections and the transition that followed. This resulted in the former Bantustans being re-integrated as part of South Africa's nine new provinces. The territory of the Ciskei became absorbed as part of the province of Eastern Cape, the poorest of all the country's provinces.

## CONCLUSIONS

Historical geography is largely absent from tourism scholarship. This paper represents a contribution to the little developed historical literature within tourism geography. In South Africa the apartheid period from 1948 to 1991 produced geographies – including historical tourism geographies – which were based on an ideology of racial separation (Lemon, 1976). For the objectives of 'grand apartheid' the establishment of the Bantustans and transitioning them from 'self-governing' status to 'independence' was a centrepiece of state planning. One of the four territories that acceded to 'independence' was Ciskei. Although Ciskei's bogus political 'independence' went unrecognised by the international community it created a changed institutional environment for local tourism investment and development. Using an historical approach and archival documentary sources it is evident that during the apartheid period this mainly rural area of South Africa became a target for tourism capital seeking to open casino-resorts. In addition, efforts were made by the Ciskei authorities to open up other leisure tourism products within this rural tourism destination.

In the post-1994 period following democratic change and the end of apartheid the position of the Ciskei within the South African economy once more shifted markedly with the territory's incorporation into the Eastern Cape, one of nine new provinces that were established. Greatest significance attached to new legislation enacted to allow the 'urbanisation' of casino gambling and

the open of gambling facilities in South Africa's major cities, including Johannesburg, Durban or Port Elizabeth. This legislative change at a stroke removed the competitive advantage of the spaces of the former Bantustans – including Ciskei – for casino tourism. Tourism prospects in these rural spaces were negatively impacted as the investment focus of large tourism capital pivoted towards the major cities. An historical view of the record of tourism development in the rural Bantustans is an essential basis for understanding the challenges of development in these now marginal areas of South Africa's tourism space economy.

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