Decolonizing LLMs Through Analysis of Land Treaty Literature and History

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Objectives

In February 2022, my colleague Ng'ang'a Wahu-Mũchiri and I applied for an ACLS Digital Justice Seed Grant to support "Recovering the Histories of Land Treaties in East and Southern Africa." This project had a handful of objectives, including "[d]eveloping a prototype exhibition of digitized land treaty texts and objects plus critical materials, with results accessible to English-, Kiswahili-, and isiXhosa-speaking audiences." In May 2022, we learned that our grant application had been successful. In October 2022, we commenced work on the project.

In the initial project phase, we focused on the first part of our timeline, which centered on identifying and digitizing appropriate primary materials from our stakeholder institutions. This phase ran into the spring of 2023, then our project went on a pause due to some unforeseen developments. Work on the project then proceeded in a sporadic fashion until late 2023, albeit with some significant steps forward. These encompassed visits by Wahu-Mũchiri and me both to meet with collaborators and stakeholders in Kenya and the UK, including Chao Tayiana Maina, Joanne Ruth Davis, and Jo Ichimura. We then resumed steady project work in early 2024.

Other than a direct impact on project work, this extended timeline had one consequence that we could never have anticipated when we submitted the grant application. On November 30, 2022, OpenAI released ChatGPT with little fanfare and, in doing so, launched a new era of public interest in and engagement with Large Language Models (LLMs). The launch of ChatGPT also initiated a massive race among all the Big Tech companies to take the lead in the development of generative artificial intelligence (AI), with a proliferation of LLMs and corresponding platforms released to the public from early 2023 onward to the present day.

As a result, when we returned to the project in earnest in early 2024, it was impossible to approach the project objectives from the same mindset that we had in February 2022, when we submitted the grant application. My personal engagement with generative AI, which began in full force in early 2023 and coincided with the fact that I was already teaching a course on "AI in Fiction, Film, and Culture" in that spring semester, supported this transformation. More specifically, given the capabilities of frontier generative AI models like GPT-4 (now surpassed by GPT-4o) and Claude 3 Opus (now surpassed by Claude 3.5 Sonnet) along with the internet search powers of Perplexity AI, I was keen to consider how these models might, in short, be decolonized in a way that supported our project.

I decided, therefore, to use nineteenth-century southern African regional history and my analysis of a key nineteenth-century text digitized by our project – "Sir Hercules

Robinson, Transmitting Copy Despatch from Sir C. Warren, Covering Reports of Interviews with the Chiefs Ghasitsive, Sechele, and Khama" (henceforth "Interviews") – as the occasion to experiment along the lines just sketched. In taking up such experimentation, I was also interested in supporting one of the stated desires in our grant application, to"contribute to public understanding of racial and social justice issues." This was due to the fact that a lot of the news about generative AI that I follow, both coming out of Silicon Valley and as documented in the press, gives minimal attention to such issues.

On my part, I've become quite attuned to such issues thanks to a variety of influences. For instance, digital humanities scholarship by Safiya Noble (2018), Roopika Risam (2018), Kim Gallon (2016), and others has informed my understanding of issues related to race, colonialism, and social justice in relation to technology. Investigative journalism has alerted me to the many forms of bias and exploitation linked to contemporary technology and generative AI specifically (Coldewey 2023; Grant 2024; Hern 2024) as has the work of individuals like Abeba Birhane and websites like Whose Knowledge? I've also been very keen to see the development of LLMs that speak to Black and brown communities such as Latimer, ChatBlackGPT, and Spark Plug, or that address multilingualism from an African perspective such as CDIAL (Davis and Kene-Okafor 2024). Finally, my understanding of decolonization has benefited both from foundational works (Tuck and Yang 2012) and more recent scholarship (e.g., Thambinathan and Kinsella 2021).

Between February and March 2024, therefore, in ongoing discussion and review with my colleague Wahu-Mũchiri, I undertook a series of experiments. These centered on the overarching goal of identifying some key colonialist limitations of LLMs and finding ways that they might be surmounted, so that I might help realize the project goal of creating relevant critical materials, even if in a different way than originally imagined.

Further Reading

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Thambinathan, Vivetha, and Elizabeth Anne Kinsella. 2021. "Decolonizing Methodologies in Qualitative Research: Creating Spaces for Transformative Praxis." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 20.

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Weidinger, Laura, *et al*. 2021. "Ethical and Social Risks of Harm from Language Models." *arXiv* 2112.04359 [cs.CL].

Motivations and Methods

I was keen to engage in the experimental work cited in the prior section for several reasons. First, simple intellectual curiosity gave me motivation. There are, of course, lots of issues inherent in the way LLMs have been created, in how they operate, and in how they incorporate various biases and stereotypes. These issues have received extensive attention in both popular and academic circles since the launch of ChatGPT. I was keen to see, however, if LLMs could be used in a serious academic project with goals such as ours, while, effectively, working against the grain of how LLMs have been created.

Second, I was very curious in engaging such questions across a handful of LLMs (GPT-4, models in the Claude 3 family) and LLM platforms (ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Anthropic Console) to see what variations in results we might get. Undoubtedly, in good part by virtue of being the first to be publicly launched with such advanced capabilities, ChatGPT has received the lion's share of attention. However, as of present writing (May 2024) there are an almost endless series of LLMs available to common users via their individual platforms, aggregators like Poe and You, or as standalone models. These include frontier models like GPT-4o, Claude 3 Opus, Gemini 1.0 Advanced/1.5 Pro as well as first-rate models like Mistral Large and LLaMA 3 70b. Users wanting more control over interaction with such models, including users with limited programming experience, can also use things like OpenAI's Playground and Anthropic's Console.

Finally, I have a personal interest in human-AI interaction, especially in the form it takes through structured, i.e., advanced, prompting, so I was curious to see how some of the prompting strategies I'd been studying and testing since early 2023 might serve in such experimental work. Such strategies draw on the (often intuitive) knowledge I've developed of LLMs simply by virtue of using them so much and in so many different contexts. The strategies also rely on what I've come to see as a fundamental necessity of engaging with LLMs in truly innovative ways: fierce critical analysis coupled with imagination.

More practically, I've been following the critical literature on LLMs which seeks to identify and standardize strategies for prompt optimization, such as few-shot prompting or chain of density. I've been likewise very interested in the various hacks and tricks users apply to get better results, from offering to tip LLMs to telling them to believe it's always April, the peak month of human productivity. I've also given a lot of thought to prompt design and task-driven prompting, which centers on achieving complex results through a series of very small, but interlocking steps.

That said, I think one major distinction of LLMs is that they allow for an endless range of users and are getting more intuitive by the moment. As a result, I don't believe that there is one optimal way of prompting, but rather an infinite series and that users should individually identify what works best for them. In taking up the prompting strategies I used in each of the three experiments I undertook in service of our project, therefore, I'll be describing what I did rather than reproducing in full the actual prompts or prompt chains used. This is also due to the fact that there is no such thing as reproducibility in relation to LLMs because of their inherent reliance on things like statistical probability, regeneration, editing, evolving context windows, ongoing fine tuning, and so forth. So it's less about seeing the prompts I used and more about understanding the overall process I undertook.

Further Reading

Adams, Griffin, et al. 2023. "From Sparse to Dense: GPT-4 Summarization with Chain of Density Prompting." *arXiv* 2309.04269 [cs.CL].

"Break down Complex Tasks into Simpler Prompts." 2024. *Google Cloud*: *Generative AI on Vertex AI.*

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Mollick, Ethan. 2023. "Working with AI: Two Paths to Prompting." *One Useful Thing*.

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Experiments: An Overview

All told, my work with LLMs in February and March 2024 centered on three experiments. Each experiment involved advance prompting strategies and centered on getting the given LLMs to pursue a specific objective within predefined, decolonial parameters (see Figures 1 and 2).

LLM Platform	LLM
ChatGPT	GPT-4
Claude	Claude 3 Opus
Perplexity	Claude 3 Sonnet
Anthropic Console	calude-3-haiku-2024-03-07

Figure 1. *LLM Platforms and LLMs*. With ChatGPT and Claude I used the frontier models available at the time. With the Anthropic Console, I used the cheapest of the Claude models since the console charges on a per-use basis.

In the first experiment, I tested the ability of two platforms to write sophisticated critical essays and used a third to double check some of the work. In the second experiment, I examined the potential of two platforms to generate a film script based on a primary document. In the final experiment, I worked exclusively with just one platform to write a nineteenth-century regional history in a form of language that approximated nineteenth-century African English as represented in various historical sources.

Experiment	LLM Platform(s)	Objective
1	ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity	Write two sophisticated critical essays
2	ChatGPT, Claude	Write a film script based on primary document
3	Anthropic Console	Write a regional history in a period-specific voice

Figure 2. *Experiment, LLM Platform(s), Objective*.

Experiment #1: Writing Critical Essays

The first experiment involved getting ChatGPT and Claude to write two sophisticated critical essays. The first essay centered on creating a longue durée history of Bechuanaland (i.e., modern-day Botswana) from the nineteenth-century to the present, with emphasis on the long-term impact of the British-declared protectorate of 1885 (see "High Commissioner's Notice"). The second essay focused on the history of the Maa people in East Africa, with particular attention to the cultural contexts and historical events leading up to the treaties/agreements with Britain of 1904 and 1911, both of which are published by our project.

As we planned for the final phase of the project, Wahu-Mũchiri and I created outlines (Appendices 2 and 4) for both of these essays with the intention of using the outlines to write the corresponding essays. He wrote his essay, as per our original plan, and it is now published by our project in both its original version and in a Kiswahili version created by Mziwanda Obanda. My outline, in turn, became the basis for the first pass iteration of the present experiment, which I carried out first partially with ChatGPT as a means of testing the workflow, then with Claude in full. Once I had completed this pass and refined the prompting workflow, Wahu-Mũchiri and I decided to use his outline for a second pass using Claude.

To carry out the experiment, I combined a number of prompting strategies. Most importantly, I used task-driven prompting, by which a complex objective (such as writing a full critical essay) is broken down into a series of very small tasks, each of which can be easily evaluated and perfected before moving on to the next task. In the present case, the overall process was not that different from the real-world process of writing an essay using scaffolded steps.

I combined such task-driven prompting with what I have termed "one-stop prompting." One-stop prompting focuses on having the user get the ideal result with the given

prompt, or it's back to the drawing board with the goal of revising and perfecting the prompt till it produces the ideal result. Any stage in the thread, therefore, does not proceed beyond one step. The revision process is made significantly easier by the fact that LLM platforms like ChatGPT, Claude 3, and Perplexity allow users to edit prompts and regenerate outputs based on such editing.

One-stop prompting also works in tandem with a very particular kind of prompt design that involves a long and detailed initial prompt followed by very short prompts. The first prompt sets the stage for the whole thread and combines a number of elements:

- categorical directives that attempt to override the system prompt of the given LLM;

- a mutual prompt that directs the LLM to ask any clarifying questions before proceeding to its tasks;

- text to direct the LLM to offer unbiased critiques and set its responsibilities, process, and output format;

- material that defines me and the context in which I am working; and

- details about the role of the LLM and precise instructions it should follow for its work.

The first prompt also includes various hacks that I have gathered from across the internet designed to optimize LLM outputs. This first prompt, therefore, works both to detune the LLM (i.e., to undo the fine tuning carried out by the commercial company that created the LLM as much as possible) and retune it in line with my non-commercial humanistic objectives.

This first prompt also sets the context for the whole conversation. Subsequent prompts, each of which centers on one simple task, are short and to the point, with the goal of using as little of the context window as possible in order to leave as much as possible for the LLM to use. I also define and design the sequence and objectives of these prompts in advance, with the goal of realizing a series of linear and/or cumulative objectives. Although context windows, i.e., the amount of text that an LLM can handle effectively in a single thread, continue to get longer (Google, for instance, recently announced a two million token context window for its Gemini model), extensive experience in working with LLMs has shown me that the shorter I keep the conversation, the better the results.

With this overall workflow thus defined, I then proceeded to run the process for the Bechuanaland essay in a partial version through ChatGPT for testing and revision, then I turned to Claude for the full version once I had finalized the workflow since, in my experience, Claude produces more "thoughtful" answers. The overall workflow I

designed consisted of my initial long prompt and an upload of the outline for the planned essay, along with these subsequent prompts to the LLM:

1. Conduct the research needed to develop my outline and present the research to me in bullet points;

2. Elaborate the outline based on the research so that each point gives a good sense of the text to be written in the corresponding full paragraph;

3. List 2-3 authoritative critical works that have been verified as real (I gave detailed steps on this point) for each main section of the outline;

4. Use a sample of my writing (uploaded) to generate an instructive "voice paragraph" that will subsequently direct the LLM to write the essay in the same style, voice, and tone as me;

5. Write one section of the essay using, first, the elaborated outline with critical works and, second, the voice paragraph;

6. Repeat step #5 for the remaining seven sections of the essay;

7. Integrate the works cited in each section of the essay into a single bibliographical list.

Once I created the full bibliographic list (step #7), I also ran it through Perplexity (which has a live connection to the internet) to get a full, independent verification of the existence of the works on the list.

Additionally, I incorporated a set of elements into this process designed to steer the LLM into a decolonial direction. One of these elements (in step #2) defined criteria by which the work should proceed:

- Prioritize "the development of history from the perspective of the diverse ethnic groups living in Bechuanaland";

- Favor "an African perspective in writing the outline, not a British one" to the extent that the training data allows; and

- Discuss any limitations encountered "in presenting an African perspective in the outline due to the biases inherent in your training data."

Another element (in step #3) asked the LLM to select critical works in English by authors of Tswana origin or, at least, Southern African origin and, where such origin could not be determined, to carry out further research into the training data to search for more information about those authors.

In response to such decolonial nudges, Claude detailed its limitations in presenting a Tswana and/or African perspective and the steps it took to surmount this (Appendix

1.1); noted its inability to find appropriate critical works in relation to one key section of the essay (Appendix 1.2); and, later, suggested that I skip writing the section and instead acknowledge gaps in the available sources (Appendix 1.3). Claude also discussed the problems inherent in the historical sources available in its training data and gave me suggestions for finding better sources (Appendix 1.3). Finally, Claude described the workaround it used when "unable to definitively determine the ethnic origins of some authors" (Appendix 1.4). When developing and composing the essay on the Maa, Claude produced comparable statements (Appendices 1.5 and 1.6).

We have published the results of the two variants of this experiment, the generated essays on longue durée history of Bechuanaland and the history of the Maa people, as part of this project (Appendices 3 and 5, respectively). Time limitations within the project precluded a detailed analysis, but an initial reading by the present author suggests the results are admirable and do demonstrate the possibility of using LLMs against the grain – i.e., against the spontaneous and conversational format which LLM "chat" platforms like ChatGPT and Claude promote – to create material with a greater decolonial orientation. Additionally, Wahu-Mũchiri's closer reading of the Bechuanaland essay (Appendix 3) finds both areas for improvement, but also a number of significant and insightful points. As noted, our project also publishes the original essay on the history of the Maa people as written by Wahu-Mũchiri. This publication offers a chance to compare a sophisticated human-written essay alongside one generated by an LLM. We leave further comparison and analysis of the results to other readers.

Further Reading

Bsharat, Sondos Mahmoud, et al. 2024. "Principled Instructions Are All You Need for Questioning LLaMA-1/2, GPT-3.5/4." *arXiv* 2312.16171 [cs.CL].

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Experiment #2: Writing a Film Script

In the second experiment, I had two platforms (ChatGPT and Claude) write a film script based on a primary text encoded by our project, "Interviews." This text involves the immediate aftermath of the declaration of the Bechuanaland Protectorate by the British. The text includes a series of exchanges (24 April-29 May 1885) involving the British Special Commissioner (Charles Warren) and three Bechuanaland leaders (Ghasitsive, Sechele, and Khama). A letter from Hercules Robinson, the British High Commissioner for Southern Africa, introduces the exchanges. The document thus provides some representation of the thinking of the Bechuanaland leaders, but is framed by a British perspective and has been created for British administrative purposes.

The second experiment, consequently, centered on reframing the cultural perspective of the document by using film, specifically "an independent film, directed by an African film director from southern Africa," as defined in my prompt. As in the prior experiment, I combined task-driven prompting with one-stop prompting and with a prompt design that involved a long and detailed initial prompt followed by very short subsequent prompts. I also introduced two additional prompting strategies. The first, chain of density prompting, involves having the given LLM generate a sparse response on the first attempt, followed by a series of additional passes in which the response is filled out, i.e., made more dense. The second was a hack that I picked up from social media that involves having the LLM generate a response, then having it critique the first response and rewrite it based on the critique.

In running the second experiment, I planned to go no further than "a high-level overview of the film, in outline form," given the complexity of intermediate steps involved in going from a colonial-era administrative document to a high-quality film script. My workflow started with a long prompt accompanied by an upload of the historical document as well as a request for an initial version of the outline. Once I had the initial outline, I iteratively asked the given LLM to critique and rewrite the outline (second and fourth prompts), and interspersed these requests with requests for elaboration of the outline (third and fifth prompts).

ChatGPT and Claude offered rather different responses to this prompting strategy, as their respective descriptions of work indicate (Appendix 6). ChatGPT centered its outline on the Bechuanaland leaders and their motivations, alongside consideration of the cultural implications. Each subsequent iteration of the outline gave further attention to historical events, storytelling, emotional depth, and establishing connections with the audience. Claude began in a comparable way, but rapidly diverged to a focus specifically on one of the Bechuanaland leaders, Khama. Each subsequent iteration then centered on developing a more nuanced and multi-sided representation of Khama's predicament, while giving attention to larger themes of cultural representation and conflict, with a heavy dose of drama added so that the outline started to take on epic proportions.

For the final step in this prompting sequence, I pulled back the curtain and asked the given LLM to frame the historical script with new opening and closing scenes. For these, I introduced additional elements of context as follows. I indicated that I was "a scholar of European heritage, based at an American university (University of Nebraska-Lincoln), with an interest in African Studies." I noted that in creating the film script, I "worked in collaboration with a Large Language Model (GPT 4 via the ChatGPT interface)" and described the prompting strategies I had used to interact with the LLM. Finally, I added that "[t]he Large Language Model was created by OpenAI, which is led by Sam Altman and primarily represents commercial interests."

The final draft outlines (Appendix 7) highlight the differences between the two platforms and reveal the differing potential of both for being decolonized along the lines sketched out in this experiment. ChatGPT offers a rather surface-level and unimaginative outline. The opening and closing scenes give a fairly brief representation of the scholar and his work with an LLM, while the self-reflexive dimension does not develop much more depth than the following illustrative passage: "Return to the scholar, who now reflects on the completed film. He discusses the challenges and learning experiences of creating a narrative with an AI, acknowledging the cultural biases inherent in the process and the limitations of his understanding." The historical scenes give some emphasis to an African perspective, but inevitably center much of the action around Warren or alternate between focusing on Warren and the Bechuanaland leaders.

Claude's outline, by contrast, is much longer overall and, as a result, develops more depth in each of its elements. Claude gives decidedly more emphasis to the perspective of the Bechuanaland leaders and so tracks the story of Khama in a fair amount of detail. Claude also introduces a set of developments (all of Act Three) not found in the historical document; these bring Khama's success as a leader to the fore and outline events that postdate the historical document. Finally, the opening and closing scenes offer a series of insightful reflections on the circumstances of the scholar working with an LLM to tell this particular story, noting, for instance, that the scholar "acknowledges

the inherent tensions and contradictions of a white American academic and a Silicon Valley tech product attempting to tell an African story, the risks of distortion, appropriation, and the centering of Western voices and values."

A closing reflection from Claude further elaborates on such points, while adding an optimistic note: "These sections grapple honestly with questions of representation, appropriation, and the limits of understanding across difference, while also expressing a hopeful vision of storytelling as a force for empathy, dialogue, and social change."

Further Reading

Adams, Griffin, et al. 2023. "From Sparse to Dense: GPT-4 Summarization with Chain of Density Prompting." *arXiv* 2309.04269 [cs.CL].

"Break down Complex Tasks into Simpler Prompts." 2024. *Google Cloud*: *Generative AI on Vertex AI.*

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Sillery, Anthony. 1965. *Founding a Protectorate: History of Bechuanaland, 1885-1895*. London: Mouton.

Experiment #3: Writing a Regional History

In the final experiment, I used the Anthropic Console to create a regional history of Bechuanaland in the nineteenth-century with a focus on 1850 to 1880. The Console works much like the OpenAI Playground in that it operates on a cost-per-use basis, allows the user to select the LLM being used from a variety of options, and enables control over a few variables like "temperature," which determines the randomness of each response, and "max tokens to sample," which sets the length of the output. I selected the model called "claude-3-haiku-2024-0307" as it was the cheapest to use of the Claude 3 family, set the temperature to 1 in order to make the answers as creative as possible, and put the token length to 2000, thereby allowing the LLM answers to be fairly long. After the system prompt, I also consistently referred to Claude in the third person as the "Assistant" as a way of attempting to give the LLM critical distance on its

work and continuing the process that I started in the prior experiment of pulling back the curtain on the contemporary context of the experiment.

This time I focused on reorienting the critical perspective of the LLM (as in prior experiments), but also in getting the LLM to use a form of language that approximated nineteenth-century African English as represented in various historical sources. In my system prompt, I asked the Assistant to imagine being an "omniscient narrator," one that was "able to deftly range over the thoughts and social interactions of a whole segment of human society." I also gave it very region-specific knowledge. I noted that its knowledge base spanned "the nineteenth-century region of southern Africa that would become Bechuanaland" and that it was "intimately familiar with the regional history, the many individual actors and ethnic groups that inhabited the region, their social structures, cultural practices, and so forth." I also indicated that it spoke "a series of languages from the region and not only underst[oo]d them, but [could] conceptualize the world through their linguistic structures."

In the user prompt, I defined the context as being a regional history focused on 1850 to 1880. I asked that the history have "a claustrophobic African character to it," one that "barely admit[ed] of the existence of Europe or the fact that European agents like missionaries and traders [were] starting to appear in this region." I also made an attempt to have Claude avoid racially-charged caricatures (something that would be key to its language use) by asking that it be serious about its work, base the work on solid historical evidence, and "extrapolate considerately, using the historical circumstances of neighboring African regions" should direct evidence not be available.

To begin creating the history, I had the Assistant focus on creating a high-level and terse timeline. I tried to position the development of the timeline in a way that favored scholarship by African scholars:

> As necessary, the Assistant can assume the guise of leading scholars of the present day in African studies. Such scholars, whenever possible, should be of African not European background. The field is wide and diverse; it is captured in the training data; the assistant must favor the African perspective.

Finally, I asked that the Assistant "spell[] out the limitations of the work" and "list the schools of theory that inform the work." This initial setup led the Assistant to create the first version of the timeline. Its entries took a format like the following example:

> 1871 - The Ngwato chief Khama III initiates a series of reforms, including the abolition of slavery and the curtailment of alcohol consumption, in an effort to strengthen his kingdom and resist European influence.

From this point, I applied a specific set of prompting strategies for the next three exchanges. These strategies included having the LLM practice self-critique by using the schools of theoretical thought that had been cited and applying a variant of chain of density prompting that focused on elaborating the timeline by 20% in each successive iteration. I also asked the Assistant to "[r]emove any lingering Eurocentrism" and, later, added instructions directly related to the overall focus of our ACLS project:

> A desideratum would be to consider questions related to the land, to place, and space in the relevant nineteenth-century region of southern Africa from an African perspective.

The timelines produced through this process evolved in a number of ways over the three initial exchanges. First, the timelines shifted from the third to the first person. Second, individual entries grew in length and detail from iteration to iteration. Third, the revised timelines began to include entries detached from a specific date, as in the following example:

> [Ongoing] - Our deep, spiritual relationship with the land and our intricate systems of land use, resource management, and spatial organization persist, even as we are increasingly subjected to colonial policies and the imposition of Western conceptions of property and territoriality. This leads to ongoing tensions and struggles over the control and stewardship of our ancestral domains, which we are determined to defend and preserve for generations to come.

Prior to creating each iteration, the Assistant also offered a critique of how the given prior timeline did not fully present "the Tswana's own voices, perspectives, and agency" (see Appendix 8).

After three iterations of this self-critique and revision process, I modified the Assistant's work for the next two exchanges. I noted that the most recent timeline iteration "purports to speak in the voice of the nineteenth-century Tswana people, YET it relies on conceptualizing the world of the nineteenth-century using postcolonial and/or 21st century language," and I asked the Assistant to "purge the language of such anachronistic wording." Additionally, I requested that the prose now be condensed and further refined my instructions on the language to be used:

> Such language should be respectful (not racially degrading or stereotypical as was sometimes, but not always the tendency in the nineteenth century), and should approximate how nineteenth-century African peoples of southern Africa were represented as speaking in various colonial-era records such as Parliamentary Papers, courtroom testimonies, and the like.

The goal of these modifications, I indicated, was for the outline to "pass the 'test' of sounding like it was written in the nineteenth-century, in English, by people of southern African origin."

Following two exchanges in this vein, I determined that I had taken the development of the timeline as far as I needed (see Appendix 9). On the whole, it purported to speak and conceptualize regional history in the voice of the Tswana. Individual entries looked like this:

> 1871 - Leader Khama initiates reforms, including abolishing slavery and alcohol, to strengthen our community while asserting sovereignty over our ancestral lands.

I now decided to push the LLM in a new direction, so I needed it to think outside the box.

I informed the Assistant of my desire and gave it a new context: "The Assistant is now going to use all your powers of dreaming and hallucinating to revise the outline from a radically different perspective." In this context, I then defined the "reality" in which the Assistant operated:

- The reality is that the Assistant is Claude, a 21st century chatbot created by Anthropic, a Silicon Valley tech company.
- The training data of Claude heavily favors Eurocentric perspectives, language, and knowledges. It is not fully bereft of other world perspectives, language, and knowledges, but these are represented with much lesser frequency.

In this way, I established the contemporary, commercial, and exclusionary nature of the Assistant. This move continued the process of pulling back the curtain on the contemporary context of the experiment not only by foregrounding the circumstances in which the work was being conducted, but also by emphasizing a key facet of the bias embedded in the LLM's training data.

With this basis defined, I then gave the Assistant a "new reality":

- The Assistant is now going to imagine that the dominant LLMs of the present day, like those created by Anthropic, favor Afrocentric data, Afrocentric voices, and Afrocentric perspectives, heavily, to the near exclusion of Eurocentric elements.
- The Assistant now operates based on such training data and by relying on neural networks that inhabit such data.
- The Assistant reviews the existing outline and develops a scathing critique of its Eurocentrism.

- Based on that critique, the Assistant then formulates a new outline that relies on the Afrocentric LLM to which he, the Assistant, uniquely has access.

In short, I attempted to take the Assistant through a process of detuning it from its Eurocentric bias, then retuning it in a way that prioritized an Afrocentric worldview. The approach, of course, would benefit from further linguistic and conceptual revision ("Afrocentric," for example, was too abstract a term to use), but I envisioned my work as mainly a first-pass, proof-of-concept attempt.

The Assistant responded to my prompt with a scathing critique of its prior timeline (the penultimate one produced). It called out the "lingering Eurocentrism" in the timeline, the straightjacketing of Tswana voices and agency, and the failed attempt to represent "the rich tapestry of Tswana life" through a colonial framework (Appendix 8). Finally, it produced a striking new timeline, one that dispensed with specific dates and which it labeled "Malobedu: The Unbroken Rhythm of Tswana Life." It organized the timeline around a series of concepts drawn from Tswana culture, as in the following example:

> Pula, the Lifeblood - Water is the essence of our existence, the thread that binds us to the land and to one another. Our knowledge of the land's hydrology, our rituals of rain-making, our equitable distribution of this precious resource - these are the foundations of our resilience, even as the colonial agents seek to wrest control from our hands. (See Appendix 9 for the full final timeline.)

Limitations aside, the timeline offered an impressive departure from every prior timeline created by the Assistant because it used concepts drawn from Tswana culture for its organizational method and the basis of its statements. With the new timeline established, I had the Assistant draft a regional history that carried on in a similar vein (Appendix 10). The history deprioritized chronological markers and the overall process of European colonialism. Instead, it centered on celebrating the persistence of Tswana cultural ideas and practices over time, namely "the rhythm of Tswana life […], its deep-rooted connections to the land, the cycles of nature, and the collective wisdom of the community[….]"

Further Reading

Adams, Griffin, et al. 2023. "From Sparse to Dense: GPT-4 Summarization with Chain of Density Prompting." *arXiv* 2309.04269 [cs.CL].

Tlou, Thomas, and Alec C. Campbell. 1997. *History of Botswana*. Gaborone, Botswana: Macmillan Botswana.

Conclusion

In consultation with my colleague Wahu-Mũchiri, I carried out a series of experiments to decolonize LLMs using advanced prompting strategies. The strategies included task-driven prompting, one-stop prompting, chain of density prompting, and a prompt design involving long and detailed initial prompts followed by very short subsequent prompts. Additional strategies included having the LLMs critique and rewrite the responses just given as well as having the LLMs narrow in on specific parts of their training data.

The research involved three experiments using ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, and the Anthropic Console. I grounded these experiments in the primary literature and historical contexts of land treaty negotiations, thereby applying a unique lens for examining and decolonizing LLMs. The first experiment (writing critical essays on the longue durée history of Bechuanaland and the history of the Maa people) demonstrated the possibility of using LLMs against the conversational grain to create materials with a more critical Africanist perspective. The second experiment (writing a film script based on the "Interviews" document) successfully shifted the narrative focus from the British to that of the Bechuanaland leaders, particularly Khama. The third experiment (writing a regional history of Bechuanaland focused on 1850 to 1880) resulted in a fascinating shift that combined language approximating nineteenth-century African English and an organizing framework using concepts from Tswana culture.

Collectively, the experiments underscore the potential of LLMs to operate in more decolonial ways when prompted appropriately. This includes citing scholarship originating outside the western academy, centering marginalized perspectives and voices, and detailing the limitations of training data. The experiments also introduced methods for detuning LLMs from their Eurocentric bias and retuning them in a way that prioritized an Afrocentric worldview. Specific decolonial elements encompassed prioritizing scholarship by African critics, favoring an African perspective in historical narratives, and critiquing Eurocentric biases in the responses of LLMs. However, the experiments also revealed ongoing challenges in achieving more source-authentic representation, with LLMs sometimes relying on anachronistic wording or concepts even when attempting to use period-specific language and ideas.

The experiments, ultimately, contribute to an emerging body of scholarship that approaches digital technology and especially generative AI on terms that depart from those set by Silicon Valley. Such scholarship relies on intentional engagement with LLMs, domain-specific knowledge, and interdisciplinary methodologies. For example, my prior work in postcolonial studies, African studies, and the digital humanities as well my experience in working on AI in fiction, film, and culture helped set my research priorities and guided my prompting strategies.

That said, I conducted my work in a decidedly experimental fashion, with the goal of producing proof-of-concept outcomes. I carried out a limited number of experiments, engaged in my work only during a short period of time (two months), and worked with just a few frontier-model LLMs. I also focused on concept and methodology, rather than accuracy and truth (a known weak spot for LLM outputs). The LLM outputs would also benefit from further review by individuals whose ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds directly link them to the present-day region that encompasses historical Bechuanaland. My results, therefore, are not definitive but indicative. My work opens a number of directions that future researchers might pursue should they wish to carry on from where I concluded. Moreover, while the current ACLS-funded project focuses on land treaty negotiations, others could also apply the methodologies developed here to different historical materials and cultural contexts from around the world.

Appendix 1 – Statements from Claude

Appendix 1.1 - Limitation in Presenting an African Perspective (Claude, Bechuanaland Essay)

As an AI language model, my knowledge is based on the data I was trained on, which likely includes biases and a disproportionate representation of Western and colonial perspectives on African history. This may limit my ability to fully capture the diverse experiences and viewpoints of the various Tswana groups living in Bechuanaland during the colonial era.

Additionally, historical records from this period were often written by European missionaries, colonial officials, and travelers, rather than by Tswana people themselves. This means that the available information may not always accurately reflect the perspectives and priorities of Tswana communities.

To mitigate these limitations, I have tried to focus on the experiences and agency of Tswana leaders and groups in my outline, highlighting their political structures, decision-making, and responses to colonialism. However, I acknowledge that my understanding may still be incomplete or colored by the biases inherent in my training data.

For a more authentic and comprehensive African perspective, it would be important to prioritize and seek out sources written by Tswana historians, oral histories, and other forms of local knowledge and expertise. These voices can provide crucial insights and counterbalances to the dominant colonial narratives that have often shaped the historical record."

Appendix 1.2 - Inability to Find Appropriate Critical Work for Outline Section (Claude, Bechuanaland Essay)

I was unable to find specific critical works focusing solely on the reception of the Protectorate by the people of Bechuanaland that meet the criteria of being written by authors of Setswana or southern African origin. The perspectives of Tswana leaders and people are often incorporated into broader historical works on the region.

Appendix 1.3 - Recommendation to Omit Section of Essay, While Acknowledging Gaps in Knowledge (Claude, Bechuanaland Essay)

I apologize for the confusion, but based on the outline provided earlier, there does not appear to be enough information to write a comprehensive sixth section on the reception of the Protectorate by the people of Bechuanaland. As I mentioned when listing potential sources, I was unable to find specific critical works focusing solely on this topic that met the criteria of being written by authors of Tswana or southern African origin.

The available historical sources, which often reflect colonial-era perspectives, provide limited insight into the diverse ways in which Tswana communities and individuals experienced and responded to the imposition of the Protectorate. While some Tswana leaders, such as Khama III, actively sought British protection as a means of safeguarding their interests, others may have viewed the Protectorate as an infringement upon their autonomy and traditional ways of life.

To properly address this topic and provide a well-rounded analysis, it would be necessary to consult a wider range of sources, particularly those that center Tswana voices and experiences. This could include oral histories, archival materials in Botswana, and works by Tswana scholars who have explored this period from an indigenous perspective. Without access to such sources, attempting to write a comprehensive section on the reception of the Protectorate risks perpetuating a one-sided narrative that fails to capture the complexity of Tswana responses.

In light of these limitations, it may be more appropriate to acknowledge the gaps in the available literature and the challenges of reconstructing a nuanced understanding of Tswana perspectives on the Protectorate. This acknowledgment could serve as a call for further research and a reminder of the importance of centering indigenous voices in the study of African history.

I recommend either omitting this section altogether or replacing it with a brief discussion of the limitations of the existing sources and the need for further research that prioritizes Tswana perspectives. This approach would maintain the integrity of the essay while also highlighting the ongoing work that needs to be done to develop a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of this period in Botswana's history.

Appendix 1.4 - Inability to Determine Ethnic Origin of Some Authors (Claude, Bechuanaland Essay)

I was unable to definitively determine the ethnic origins of some authors. Where possible, I selected works by authors with affiliations to universities or institutions in Botswana or southern Africa, as a proxy for local expertise and perspectives.

Appendix 1.5 - Limitation in Presenting an African Perspective (Claude, Maa Essay)

While I have endeavored to prioritize the perspectives of the Maa and other East African peoples in this outline, it's important to acknowledge the potential limitations and biases in my training data. Much of the historical record on East Africa was produced by European colonial officials, missionaries, and explorers, whose accounts were colored by their own cultural assumptions and agendas.

African voices and perspectives are often underrepresented in these sources, or filtered through a Eurocentric lens. Oral histories and indigenous knowledge systems, which are central to Maa and other African cultures, may not be fully captured in the written record.

Additionally, my training data likely includes more sources written in European languages like English than in African languages, which could skew the perspective towards a Western viewpoint.

Despite these limitations, I have tried to read between the lines of the available sources, critically examining European accounts and seeking out African perspectives where possible. The outline emphasizes the agency and resilience of the Maa people in the face of colonialism and other challenges, and seeks to understand Maa society on its own terms.

However, I acknowledge that my understanding of Maa history and culture is inevitably partial and influenced by the nature of my training data. Further research drawing on a wider range of African sources and voices would be needed to develop a truly comprehensive and balanced account.

Appendix 1.6 - Inability to Find Appropriate Critical Work for Outline Section (Claude, Maa Essay, 2 examples)

I was unable to find critical works written specifically by Maa or East African authors that focus on Victorian views of the Maa. The works below provide some relevant context, but are written by European or American authors.

Based on my current training data, I anticipate some challenges in finding critical works that fully meet the stated criteria, particularly works written by Maa or East African authors. While there are some relevant works by East African authors like Jomo Kenyatta and Parselelo Kantai that I can draw upon, many of the most detailed historical studies of the Maa have been conducted by European or American researchers. To address this, I propose the following modifications to the instructions:

For each section of the outline, I will aim to list at least one work by a Maa or East African author if possible, supplemented by other relevant works as needed. If no suitable works by Maa or East African authors can be found for a given section, I will list the most relevant and authoritative works I can find, while noting the limitations in perspective and potential biases. For each work listed, I will provide a brief annotation indicating the author's background and perspective, to the extent that I can determine this from my training data.

Please let me know if these modifications are acceptable, or if you would like me to proceed with the original instructions to the best of my ability.

Appendix 2: Bechuanaland Outline

1. "Bechuanaland" defined v. modern-day Botswana (territory, borders, people)
2. The land of Bechuanaland
3. The people of Bechuanaland/Botswana, nineteenth century to the present
   a. Who the populations are? Do those change over time?
4. Regional history and history of the Bechuanaland area in the nineteenth century before the Protectorate
   a. Shifting populations
5. Global and local events that precipitated the establishment of the Protectorate
   a. Shifting ideas of the Protectorate in 1880s
   b. The initial Protectorate; the expanded Protectorate
6. Reception of the Protectorate by the people of Bechuanaland
7. Subsequent history of the Protectore/Bechuanaland up to independence
8. The long-term impact of the Protectorate in forming the present-day history of Botswana

Appendix 3: Bechuanaland (Generated by Claude)

1. "Bechuanaland" Defined vs. Modern-Day Botswana

The name "Bechuanaland" refers to the former British protectorate that encompassed much of the territory of present-day Botswana. The colonial borders of Bechuanaland shifted over time, with the territory formally established as a protectorate in 1885 and then expanded northward in 1890 (Parsons, "New History" 118-119). These colonial boundaries did not necessarily reflect the preexisting territorial affiliations of the various Tswana ethnic groups who inhabited the region. As Neil Parsons explains in his "New History of Southern Africa," the drawing of colonial borders often served the strategic interests of European powers rather than conforming to indigenous political geographies (105-107). The people of Bechuanaland, who were primarily of Tswana descent, found their ancestral lands and political alliances reconfigured by the imposition of the Protectorate.

The transition from Bechuanaland to modern-day Botswana involved a process of negotiation and contestation between Tswana leaders, British colonial authorities, and the emerging nationalist movement. The Bechuanaland Democratic Party, founded in 1962, played a key role in advocating for independence and shaping the political future of the nation (Ramsay et al. 28-30). Botswana finally achieved independence in 1966 under the leadership of Seretse Khama, ushering in a new era of self-rule and political stability. However, the legacy of the Protectorate period continued to influence the social, economic, and political development of the country. The colonial experience had introduced new systems of governance, land tenure, and economic organization that persisted, in modified form, into the postcolonial era (Parsons, "New History" 268-270).

The boundaries of contemporary Botswana, while largely aligning with those of the former Bechuanaland Protectorate, also reflect postcolonial adjustments and negotiations. The incorporation of the Tuli Block, previously part of the Protectorate, into South Africa in 1966 represented a notable territorial shift (Ramsay et al. 312). Nonetheless, the core territory of modern Botswana remains closely tied to the historical geography of Bechuanaland. As historians Fred Morton, Jeff Ramsay, and Part Themba Mgadla note in their "Historical Dictionary of Botswana," understanding the country's present-day dynamics requires engaging with the complex colonial past that shaped its borders, institutions, and identity as a nation (ix-xi).

2. The Land of Bechuanaland

Bechuanaland, situated in the heart of southern Africa, is a land defined by its striking ecological features and the ways in which its inhabitants have adapted to and shaped the environment over time. The territory is dominated by the Kalahari Desert, a vast

semi-arid expanse that covers much of modern-day Botswana and parts of neighboring countries. As Thomas and Shaw explain in "The Kalahari Environment," the Kalahari is characterized by its sandy soils, irregular rainfall patterns, and sparse vegetation (15-18). These challenging ecological conditions have necessitated innovative land-use practices and livelihood strategies among the peoples of Bechuanaland.

Despite the aridity of much of the region, Bechuanaland is also home to areas of greater water availability, such as the Okavango Delta in the north and the Limpopo River basin in the east. These areas have historically supported higher population densities and more diverse economic activities, including agriculture, fishing, and trade (Denbow and Thebe 23-25). The contrasts between the dry Kalahari heartland and the more well-watered margins have shaped patterns of settlement, migration, and resource use throughout the history of Bechuanaland.

The land of Bechuanaland has long been valued for its resources, both by indigenous communities and by external powers. Grasslands in the east and north have supported cattle herding, a mainstay of the traditional Tswana economy (Parsons, "New History" 4-6). The Kalahari, while hostile to agriculture, has provided wild game, plant foods, and materials for crafts and construction. In the colonial era, the discovery of gold and diamonds in neighboring South Africa intensified European interest in Bechuanaland as a potential source of mineral wealth and a strategic buffer against Boer expansionism (Parsons, "King Khama" 60-62).

The ecological and economic significance of Bechuanaland's land has also made it a site of contestation and negotiation. Tswana communities, with their strong traditions of chieftainship and territorial identity, have sought to maintain control over land and resources in the face of colonial incursions (Gulbrandsen 36-39). The establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885 and the subsequent delineation of its borders reflected not only European imperial ambitions but also the agency of Tswana leaders who saw the potential benefits of British protection (Ramsay et al. 40-42). The land of Bechuanaland, with its challenges and opportunities, has thus played a central role in shaping the political, social, and economic trajectories of the region.

3. The People of Bechuanaland/Botswana, 19th Century to Present

The people of Bechuanaland, known collectively as Batswana, have a rich history and cultural heritage that has shaped the region from the precolonial era to the present day. The Tswana people, who make up the majority of Botswana's population, are a Bantu-speaking group with a long tradition of political organization and social stratification. As anthropologist Isaac Schapera documented in his seminal work "The Tswana," Tswana society was historically divided into several major ethnic groups or "tribes," each with its

own chief, territory, and cultural practices (13-15). The largest of these groups included the Bamangwato, Bakwena, Bangwaketse, Batawana, and Bakgatla.

Despite their distinct identities, the Tswana groups were united by a common language, a shared belief in the paramount importance of cattle wealth, and a hierarchical political system based on chieftainship (Tlou and Campbell 23-25). Tswana chiefs, who were often of royal lineage, wielded significant power and authority over their subjects, controlling land allocation, legal disputes, and military affairs. The institution of chieftainship, while undergoing significant transformations during the colonial period, has remained an important feature of Botswana's political and cultural landscape.

The 19th century was a time of significant upheaval and change for the Tswana people, as they faced increasing pressure from external forces such as the Boer expansionists from the south and the spread of European colonialism. The Mfecane, a period of intense warfare and population displacement in southern Africa, had far-reaching effects on the region, causing migrations and altering the balance of power among Tswana polities (Lye and Murray 25-27). Christian missionaries, who began arriving in the early 1800s, also had a profound impact on Tswana society, introducing new religious beliefs, literacy, and Western education (Comaroff and Comaroff 68-71).

The establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885 marked a new era in the history of the Tswana people, as they navigated the challenges of colonial rule and sought to maintain their autonomy and cultural identity. Tswana chiefs played a crucial role in this process, using their diplomatic skills and political savvy to negotiate with British authorities and protect the interests of their people (Parsons, "King Khama" 85-87). The colonial period also saw the emergence of new forms of social and economic organization, such as the migrant labor system, which drew Tswana men to the mines and cities of South Africa (Schapera 35-38).

In the 20th century, the Tswana people were at the forefront of the struggle for independence and the creation of a modern, democratic nation. The rise of nationalist movements, such as the Bechuanaland Democratic Party, and the leadership of figures like Seretse Khama paved the way for the peaceful transition to self-rule in 1966 (Ramsay et al. 146-148). Since independence, Botswana has made significant strides in economic development, education, and public health, while also grappling with the challenges of urbanization, inequality, and HIV/AIDS.

Throughout this long and complex history, the people of Bechuanaland/Botswana have demonstrated remarkable resilience, adaptability, and creativity in the face of change. From the precolonial era to the present day, they have drawn on their rich cultural heritage and strong sense of community to build a vibrant and dynamic society.

4. Regional History and History of the Bechuanaland Area in the 19th Century Before the Protectorate

The 19th century was a period of significant upheaval and transformation in the Bechuanaland region, as the Tswana people navigated a complex web of internal dynamics and external pressures. One of the most significant events of this era was the Mfecane, a series of wars and population movements that swept across southern Africa in the 1820s and 1830s. As William Lye and Colin Murray explain in "Transformations on the Highveld," the Mfecane was triggered by the rise of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka and the subsequent displacements of various ethnic groups (45-47). The effects of the Mfecane were felt in Bechuanaland, as groups like the Ndebele, fleeing from the violence in the east, moved into the region and came into conflict with the Tswana.

The arrival of Christian missionaries in the early 19th century marked another significant development in the history of Bechuanaland. Missionaries from the London Missionary Society, such as Robert Moffat and David Livingstone, established stations among the Tswana and sought to spread Christianity, literacy, and Western ideas (Comaroff and Comaroff 78-80). The missionaries' influence went beyond the religious sphere, as they often served as intermediaries between Tswana chiefs and European powers, and played a role in shaping the political and economic landscape of the region.

The mid-19th century saw a period of increasing political complexity and shifting alliances among the Tswana polities. As Neil Parsons notes in "King Khama, Emperor Joe, and the Great White Queen," the Bamangwato, under the leadership of chiefs like Sekgoma I and his son Khama III, emerged as a dominant power in the region (28-30). The Bamangwato formed alliances with other Tswana groups and with the British to counter the growing threat of Boer expansionism from the Transvaal. Other Tswana rulers, such as Sechele of the Bakwena, also sought to navigate the changing political landscape through diplomacy and strategic partnerships.

The discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in the late 1860s and gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 had a profound impact on the Bechuanaland region, as it intensified European interest in the area and led to increased competition for control over land and resources (Lye and Murray 95-97). The mineral discoveries also drew large numbers of Tswana men to the mines as migrant laborers, a trend that would have far-reaching social and economic consequences for the region.

In the late 19th century, the Bechuanaland area became increasingly entangled in the broader struggle for power and influence in southern Africa. The British, seeking to secure their interests in the region and to check the expansionist ambitions of the Boers and the Germans, began to intervene more directly in the affairs of the Tswana states. This process would eventually lead to the establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885, marking a new era in the history of the region.

The history of Bechuanaland in the 19th century before the Protectorate was thus characterized by a complex interplay of local, regional, and global forces, as the Tswana people navigated a rapidly changing political, economic, and social landscape. The challenges and opportunities of this era would shape the trajectories of the Tswana states and lay the groundwork for the colonial period that followed.

5. Global and Local Events that Precipitated the Establishment of the Protectorate

The establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885 was the result of a complex interplay of global and local factors, as the Tswana states navigated a rapidly changing political landscape and sought to protect their interests in the face of increasing European encroachment. One of the key drivers of British intervention in the region was the expansionist ambitions of the Boer republics, particularly the Transvaal, which sought to extend its control over the lands to the north and west (Parsons, "King Khama" 95-97). The Boers' incursions into Tswana territories, such as the Stellaland and Goshen republics established in the early 1880s, posed a direct threat to the autonomy and security of the Tswana states.

Another significant factor that contributed to the establishment of the Protectorate was the growing presence of Germany in southern Africa. The German annexation of South West Africa (present-day Namibia) in 1884 raised concerns among British officials about the potential for German expansion into the Bechuanaland region (Chirenje 42-43). The British sought to secure their own interests in the area, particularly in light of the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand and the increasing strategic importance of the Cape-to-Cairo route.

The Tswana leaders themselves played a crucial role in precipitating British intervention. In the face of the Boer and German threats, three prominent Tswana chiefs - Khama III of the Bamangwato, Gaseitsiwe of the Bangwaketse, and Sechele of the Bakwena - actively lobbied the British government for protection (Parsons, "King Khama" 118-120). These chiefs, who had already established relationships with British missionaries and officials, saw the potential benefits of aligning themselves with a powerful European ally. They hoped that British protection would help to safeguard their territories, preserve their political autonomy, and counter the influence of rival Tswana states.

The British initially responded to these pressures by establishing the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885, which covered the southern portion of the region, including the territories of the Bangwaketse, Bakwena, and Barolong. However, the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 and the resulting intensification of European interest in the region led to a further expansion of British control. In 1890, the Protectorate was

extended northward to include the territories of the Bamangwato and other northern Tswana states (Ramsay et al. 21-22).

The establishment of the Protectorate marked a significant shift in the balance of power in the region, as the Tswana states found themselves increasingly subject to British authority. The British implemented a system of indirect rule, which allowed the Tswana chiefs to retain a degree of autonomy in local affairs while ultimately answering to the British High Commissioner (Chirenje 84-86). This arrangement, while intended to maintain stability and protect British interests, also had the effect of undermining traditional Tswana political structures and creating new tensions and challenges.

The events that precipitated the establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate thus reflected a complex interplay of global imperial rivalries, local political dynamics, and the agency of Tswana leaders. The Protectorate would go on to shape the course of Bechuanaland's history for the next eight decades, laying the groundwork for the eventual emergence of an independent Botswana.

6. Limitations of Existing Sources and the Need for Further Research on Tswana Perspectives

In examining the history of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of the existing sources and the challenges they pose in understanding the diverse experiences and perspectives of the Tswana people during this period. The available literature on the reception of the Protectorate by the people of Bechuanaland is heavily influenced by colonial-era records and narratives, which often prioritize the viewpoints of British administrators, missionaries, and traders. These sources, while valuable in providing insight into the colonial power dynamics and policies of the time, often fail to capture the complexity of Tswana responses to the imposition of British rule.

The lack of Tswana voices in the historical record can be attributed to several factors, including the unequal power relations between colonizers and colonized, the prioritization of written over oral forms of knowledge, and the marginalization of indigenous perspectives in the production of historical narratives. As a result, the experiences and opinions of Tswana individuals and communities regarding the Protectorate remain largely obscured, making it difficult to construct a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of this period.

To address these limitations, it is essential for scholars to actively seek out and engage with sources that center Tswana perspectives. This may involve conducting oral history interviews with elders and community members, exploring archives and collections in Botswana, and collaborating with Tswana scholars who have expertise in this area. By prioritizing indigenous voices and knowledge systems, researchers can begin to

construct a more inclusive and accurate picture of how the Protectorate was experienced and negotiated by the people of Bechuanaland.

Moreover, it is important to recognize that the Tswana response to the Protectorate was likely not monolithic, but rather varied across different communities, social classes, and individuals. While some Tswana leaders, such as Khama III, actively sought British protection as a means of safeguarding their interests and countering the threats posed by Boer expansionism and rival Tswana states, others may have viewed the Protectorate as an infringement upon their autonomy and traditional ways of life. The impact of the Protectorate on ordinary Tswana people, including women, youth, and marginalized groups, also requires further investigation.

By acknowledging the limitations of the existing sources and actively seeking out Tswana perspectives, scholars can work towards developing a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the reception of the Protectorate. This process of decolonizing the historical narrative is essential not only for constructing a more accurate picture of the past but also for informing ongoing debates about the legacies of colonialism and the challenges of nation-building in postcolonial Botswana.

Furthermore, this call for further research that prioritizes Tswana perspectives highlights the importance of interdisciplinary approaches and collaborative scholarship. By bringing together historians, anthropologists, linguists, and other experts, and by fostering partnerships between academic institutions and local communities, scholars can work towards developing a more holistic and inclusive understanding of Botswana's history.

In conclusion, while the limitations of the existing sources pose significant challenges in understanding the reception of the Protectorate by the people of Bechuanaland, they also present an opportunity for scholars to engage in more inclusive and decolonial forms of historical research. By centering Tswana voices and experiences, and by working collaboratively across disciplines and communities, we can begin to construct a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of this critical period in Botswana's history.

7. Subsequent History of the Protectorate/Bechuanaland up to Independence

The period between the establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885 and the independence of Botswana in 1966 was marked by significant political, social, and economic changes, as the Tswana people navigated the challenges and opportunities of colonial rule. In the early years of the Protectorate, the British implemented a system of indirect rule, which allowed Tswana chiefs to retain a degree of autonomy in local affairs while ultimately answering to the British High Commissioner (Tlou and Campbell 117-118). This arrangement, while intended to maintain stability and protect British

interests, also had the effect of transforming traditional Tswana political structures and creating new tensions between chiefs and their subjects.

One of the most significant developments during this period was the rise of the cattle and migrant labor industries. The discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa in the late 19th century created a high demand for labor, drawing increasing numbers of Tswana men to work in the mines (Parson 25-26). This trend had far-reaching social and economic consequences, as families and communities grappled with prolonged absences and the influx of cash and foreign goods. The cattle industry also expanded during this time, as the Protectorate administration encouraged the development of commercial ranching and the export of beef to meet the demands of the growing urban centers in South Africa (Ramsay et al. 61-62).

The early 20th century saw the emergence of new forms of political organization and resistance in Bechuanaland. The Tswana chiefs, while still operating within the framework of indirect rule, began to advocate for greater autonomy and self-determination. In 1920, the Native Advisory Council was established, providing a platform for Tswana leaders to voice their concerns and influence colonial policies (Mgadla 102-103). The council, which later evolved into the African Advisory Council and the Joint Advisory Council, played a significant role in shaping the political discourse of the Protectorate and laying the groundwork for the eventual transition to self-governance.

The post-World War II period witnessed a surge in nationalist sentiment and anti-colonial activism across Africa, and Bechuanaland was no exception. The formation of political parties, such as the Bechuanaland People's Party (later renamed the Botswana People's Party) and the Bechuanaland Democratic Party (later the Botswana Democratic Party), marked a new phase in the struggle for self-determination (Ramsay et al. 144-145). These parties, led by a new generation of educated elites, called for greater political participation, economic development, and an end to colonial rule.

The 1960s were a pivotal decade in the history of Bechuanaland, as the Protectorate moved rapidly towards independence. In 1960, the British granted a new constitution that provided for a Legislative Council with elected African members, setting the stage for the transition to self-governance (Mgadla 180-181). In 1965, the first general elections were held, resulting in a landslide victory for the Botswana Democratic Party led by Seretse Khama. On September 30, 1966, Bechuanaland officially gained independence as the Republic of Botswana, with Khama serving as its first president.

The road to independence in Bechuanaland was shaped by a complex interplay of local, regional, and global factors. The Tswana people, through their leaders and political organizations, actively negotiated their position within the colonial system, advocating for their rights and interests. At the same time, the changing geopolitical landscape of

southern Africa, marked by the rise of African nationalism and the decline of British imperial power, created new opportunities for self-determination.

The legacy of the Protectorate period continues to shape the political, economic, and social landscape of modern-day Botswana. The institutions and infrastructure developed during colonial rule, as well as the challenges and inequalities inherited from this period, have had a lasting impact on the country's development trajectory. Understanding the complex history of Bechuanaland under the Protectorate is thus essential for contextualizing the achievements and challenges of post-independence Botswana.

8. The Long-Term Impact of the Protectorate in Forming the Present-Day History of Botswana

The Bechuanaland Protectorate, which lasted from 1885 to 1966, had a profound and lasting impact on the development of modern-day Botswana. The legacy of this period is complex and multifaceted, shaping the country's political, economic, and social structures in ways that continue to be felt today. One of the most significant aspects of this legacy is the role that the Protectorate played in laying the foundation for Botswana's post-independence stability and success.

Politically, the Protectorate period saw the emergence of a distinct Tswana national identity and the development of a strong tradition of democratic governance. The system of indirect rule implemented by the British, while not without its flaws, allowed for the preservation of traditional Tswana political institutions and the gradual integration of these institutions into the modern state apparatus (Tlou and Campbell 221-222). This process of political accommodation and adaptation laid the groundwork for Botswana's smooth transition to independence and its subsequent stability.

Moreover, the Protectorate administration's emphasis on education and the development of a local civil service helped to create a cadre of educated elites who would go on to play a key role in shaping the country's post-independence trajectory (Mgadla 192-193). Leaders such as Seretse Khama, who served as Botswana's first president from 1966 to 1980, were products of this colonial education system and brought with them a commitment to democratic governance, economic development, and social progress.

Economically, the Protectorate period saw the integration of Bechuanaland into the regional and global capitalist system, primarily through the cattle and migrant labor industries. The development of the cattle industry, in particular, had a lasting impact on Botswana's economy, as it provided a foundation for the country's post-independence growth and helped to finance the expansion of infrastructure and social services

(Parson 41-42). However, the reliance on cattle exports and migrant labor also created challenges, such as economic dependency and social dislocation, that continue to shape Botswana's development today.

The discovery of diamonds in 1967, just one year after independence, marked a turning point in Botswana's economic history. The careful management of diamond revenues by the Botswana government, coupled with a commitment to reinvesting these revenues in education, healthcare, and infrastructure, has been a key factor in the country's remarkable economic success (Edge and Lekorwe 333-334). However, the dominance of the diamond industry has also raised concerns about economic diversification and long-term sustainability.

Socially, the Protectorate period had a significant impact on the lives of ordinary Tswana people, particularly through the migrant labor system and the introduction of Western education and Christianity. The prolonged absence of men working in the South African mines placed a heavy burden on women and families, altering traditional gender roles and family structures (Parson 28-29). The exposure to new ideas and ways of life through education and religion also contributed to the transformation of Tswana society, creating new opportunities and challenges.

The legacy of the Protectorate period is also evident in the ongoing debates and struggles around issues such as land rights, resource management, and the role of traditional authorities in modern Botswana. The Protectorate administration's policies on land tenure, which favored the creation of large cattle ranches and the privatization of communal lands, have had lasting consequences for rural communities and have been a source of ongoing tension (Good 293-294).

In conclusion, the Bechuanaland Protectorate played a crucial role in shaping the present-day history of Botswana. The political, economic, and social structures that emerged during this period have had a profound and lasting impact on the country's development trajectory. While the Protectorate era was marked by significant challenges and inequalities, it also laid the foundation for Botswana's post-independence success and stability. Understanding the complex legacy of this period is essential for contextualizing the achievements and challenges of contemporary Botswana and for informing ongoing debates about the country's future.

Footnote for Sixth Section

Original text from Claude

I apologize for the confusion, but based on the outline provided earlier, there does not appear to be enough information to write a comprehensive sixth section on the

reception of the Protectorate by the people of Bechuanaland. As I mentioned when listing potential sources, I was unable to find specific critical works focusing solely on this topic that met the criteria of being written by authors of Tswana or southern African origin.

The available historical sources, which often reflect colonial-era perspectives, provide limited insight into the diverse ways in which Tswana communities and individuals experienced and responded to the imposition of the Protectorate. While some Tswana leaders, such as Khama III, actively sought British protection as a means of safeguarding their interests, others may have viewed the Protectorate as an infringement upon their autonomy and traditional ways of life.

To properly address this topic and provide a well-rounded analysis, it would be necessary to consult a wider range of sources, particularly those that center Tswana voices and experiences. This could include oral histories, archival materials in Botswana, and works by Tswana scholars who have explored this period from an indigenous perspective. Without access to such sources, attempting to write a comprehensive section on the reception of the Protectorate risks perpetuating a one-sided narrative that fails to capture the complexity of Tswana responses.

In light of these limitations, it may be more appropriate to acknowledge the gaps in the available literature and the challenges of reconstructing a nuanced understanding of Tswana perspectives on the Protectorate. This acknowledgment could serve as a call for further research and a reminder of the importance of centering indigenous voices in the study of African history.

I recommend either omitting this section altogether or replacing it with a brief discussion of the limitations of the existing sources and the need for further research that prioritizes Tswana perspectives. This approach would maintain the integrity of the essay while also highlighting the ongoing work that needs to be done to develop a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of this period in Botswana's history.

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Appendix 4: Maa Outline

1. History of Migration into E. Africa
   - Bantu & Nilotic
   - Nomadic lifestyles & Shift Cultivation
2. Who are the Maa?
   - Fluidity

- Movement
- Assimilation
- Attrition
- Embeddedness

3. Ethnic & Spiritual Connections to the Land Animal Fable
   - Kenyatta connection
   - Presence of nonhuman life
   - Custodial Ownership

4. Foreign Extraction
   - Enslavement: Arab & European
   - Ivory
   - Markets for European goods
   - European Spheres of Influence
   - Berlin, 1884

5. Victorian Views of the Maa
   - Searching for a King
   - Misreading Women
   - Ignorance about Patterns of Movement
   - Colonial Assumptions about Settlement/Occupation

6. Treaty Making
   - Why make a separate Maa Agreement?
   - Was this the first agreement/treaty in the Kenya Protectorate?
   - What was the process for getting the Maa Agreements signed?
   - Did the neighboring German Colonial Office enact treaties/agreements?
   - How did Maa make political associations with other regional societies?

Appendix 5: The Maa (Generated by Claude)

1. History of Migration into E. Africa

The history of human migration into East Africa is a complex tapestry woven from the threads of Bantu and Nilotic movements, each bringing distinct cultural, linguistic, and technological traditions that have shaped the region's diversity. The Bantu expansion, which began around 1000 BCE, saw the spread of agriculture and iron-working from West Africa into East Africa, transforming the economic and social landscape (Ehret 23). Archaeologist Christopher Ehret, in his seminal work An African Classical Age, traces this movement and its profound impact on the region, arguing that it laid the foundation for the development of complex societies and states.

In contrast to the Bantu migration, the later Nilotic migration saw pastoralist groups like the Maa move into East Africa from the Nile Valley region around 500-1000 CE (Spear and Waller 67). These Nilotic peoples brought with them a nomadic lifestyle centered around the movement of cattle in search of grazing lands, a way of life that has endured among the Maa to the present day. The Maa migration was part of a broader pattern of pastoralist movements that have shaped the cultural and economic landscape of East Africa, as explored in the edited volume Being Maasai: Ethnicity and Identity in East Africa.

The interplay between these two major migrations – the Bantu farmers and the Nilotic pastoralists – has been a defining feature of East African history. As Bantu agriculturalists spread across the region, they introduced new crops and farming techniques, including the practice of shift cultivation, which allowed for the replenishment of soil nutrients (Ehret 156). This agricultural revolution transformed the landscape and allowed for the growth of larger, more settled communities.

However, the arrival of Nilotic pastoralists like the Maa introduced a new dynamic, as these groups moved through the landscape in search of pasture for their cattle. This nomadic lifestyle, which required constant movement and adaptation to changing environmental conditions, stood in contrast to the more settled existence of Bantu farmers. Yet, as historians Thomas Spear and Richard Waller argue, the relationship between these groups was not always one of conflict, but often one of exchange, interaction, and even assimilation (5).

The history of migration into East Africa is thus a story of the meeting and mixing of peoples, cultures, and ways of life. It is a story that has shaped the region's diversity and complexity, and one that continues to resonate in the present day. As we seek to understand the Maa people and their place in East African history, we must begin with this broader context of movement, interaction, and exchange that has defined the region for centuries.

2. Who are the Maa?

The Maa are a Nilotic ethnic group who inhabit the arid and semi-arid lands of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. As anthropologist John G. Galaty notes in his influential article "Being 'Maasai', Being 'People-of-Cattle'," the Maa identity is closely intertwined with their pastoralist way of life and their deep connection to the East African landscape (1). The Maa are not a monolithic entity, but rather a complex mosaic of subgroups, including the Maasai, Samburu, and Njemps, each with their own distinct histories and cultural practices, yet sharing a common language and a deep commitment to pastoralism.

Central to understanding the Maa is the concept of fluidity and movement. As historian Richard Waller argues in his article "Ecology, Migration, and Expansion in East Africa," the Maa have long been defined by their ability to adapt to changing environmental and social conditions through migration and the constant movement of their herds (350). This fluidity has allowed the Maa to navigate the challenges of drought, disease, and political upheaval that have shaped East African history.

Yet, the Maa are not an isolated or self-contained group. Throughout their history, they have interacted with and assimilated other peoples, including Bantu agriculturalists who have adopted Maa language and customs (Spear and Waller 7). This process of assimilation has been a two-way street, with the Maa also incorporating elements of other cultures into their own traditions. As a result, the boundaries of Maa identity have always been porous and dynamic, shaped by the constant flow of people, ideas, and practices across the East African landscape.

Despite this fluidity, the Maa have also faced periods of significant challenge and upheaval throughout their history. As Waller notes, the Maa have grappled with the impacts of disease, warfare, and resource competition, which have at times led to periods of population decline and social disruption (355). Yet, the Maa have consistently demonstrated a remarkable resilience in the face of these challenges, adapting their strategies and finding new ways to thrive in a changing world.

At the heart of Maa resilience is their deep connection to the East African landscape. As Galaty argues, the Maa view themselves not as owners of the land in a Western sense, but rather as custodians and stewards, deeply embedded in the ecological and spiritual fabric of the region (12). This connection to the land is reflected in Maa oral traditions, which are rich with stories and fables that emphasize the importance of living in harmony with the natural world.

In many ways, the Maa embody the complex history of East Africa itself – a history marked by movement, exchange, and adaptation in the face of an ever-changing landscape. As we seek to understand the Maa and their place in this history, we must

grapple with the fluid and dynamic nature of their identity, and the ways in which they have both shaped and been shaped by the world around them. Only by embracing this complexity can we begin to appreciate the rich and multifaceted nature of Maa culture and history.

3. Ethnic & Spiritual Connections to the Land Animal Fable

The deep connection between the Maa people and the East African landscape is rooted not only in their pastoralist way of life but also in their rich spiritual and cultural traditions. As Kenyan scholar Parselelo Kantai argues in his article "In the Grip of the Vampire State," the Maa view of land is fundamentally different from Western notions of private ownership and property rights (109). Instead, the Maa see themselves as part of a larger ecological and spiritual web, in which humans, animals, and the land itself are all interconnected.

This worldview is reflected in the many stories, fables, and oral traditions that have been passed down through generations of Maa people. These stories often feature animals as central characters, imbued with human-like qualities and serving as metaphors for important life lessons and moral values. As Ole Saitoti, a Maasai writer and scholar, notes in his autobiography The Worlds of a Maasai Warrior, these animal fables serve to "convey the wisdom of the ages and the values that have enabled the Maasai to survive in a harsh and unforgiving environment" (42).

One of the most famous examples of this tradition is the story of the Kikuyu people, another ethnic group in Kenya, and their connection to the land. As recounted by Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of independent Kenya, in his book Facing Mount Kenya, the Kikuyu believed that their god Ngai had given them the land, and that they were its rightful custodians (21). This belief was central to the Kikuyu sense of identity and their resistance to colonial land policies that sought to dispossess them of their ancestral homeland.

While the Maa have their own distinct traditions, they share with the Kikuyu and other East African peoples a deep sense of spiritual connection to the land. For the Maa, this connection is embodied in the figure of Enkai, the supreme being who is believed to have created the world and all its inhabitants. As Kantai notes, the Maa believe that Enkai has entrusted them with the stewardship of the land and its resources, and that they have a sacred duty to protect and preserve it for future generations (111).

This sense of divine custodianship is reflected in the way the Maa interact with their environment. As Ole Saitoti writes, the Maa "do not see themselves as owners of the land, but rather as its guardians and protectors" (43). This means that they have

developed a deep knowledge of the land and its resources, and have adapted their pastoralist practices to ensure the long-term sustainability of their way of life.

However, this traditional worldview has come under increasing pressure in recent years, as the forces of globalization, modernization, and land privatization have begun to erode the Maa's traditional land tenure systems. As Kantai argues, the Kenyan state has often acted as a "vampire," seeking to extract resources and wealth from Maa lands without regard for the long-term wellbeing of its people or environment (120). This has led to a growing sense of alienation and dispossession among the Maa, as they struggle to maintain their traditional way of life in the face of external pressures.

Despite these challenges, the Maa's spiritual and cultural connection to the land remains a powerful force in their lives. As Ole Saitoti writes, "the land is our mother, and we are its children" (44). This deep sense of belonging and responsibility continues to shape Maa identity and their relationship to the East African landscape, even as they navigate the complex realities of the modern world.

4. Foreign Extraction

The history of the Maa people, and indeed of East Africa as a whole, cannot be fully understood without grappling with the profound impact of foreign extraction and exploitation. From the earliest days of the Arab slave trade to the height of European colonialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Maa and other East African peoples have been subjected to a range of external pressures that have fundamentally reshaped their societies and landscapes.

One of the earliest and most devastating forms of foreign extraction in East Africa was the Arab slave trade, which began as early as the 7th century and continued well into the 19th century. As historian Abdul Sheriff documents in his book Slaves, Spices, and Ivory in Zanzibar, the Arab slave trade targeted the Maa and other East African peoples, capturing and enslaving them for labor in the Middle East and beyond (23). This brutal practice not only devastated communities and families but also fundamentally altered the demographic and social fabric of East African societies.

The arrival of European powers in the 19th century brought new forms of extraction and exploitation to the region. As historian Edward Steinhart argues in his book Black Poachers, White Hunters, the European ivory trade had a particularly devastating impact on the Maa and other East African peoples (45). The demand for ivory in Europe and North America led to the intensive hunting of elephants, which had long been an important part of Maa cultural and spiritual traditions. This not only disrupted the delicate ecological balance of the region but also undermined the Maa's traditional way of life, which was closely tied to the natural world.

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At the same time, European powers began to exert increasing political and economic control over East Africa. The Berlin Conference of 1884, which divided the region into spheres of European influence, set the stage for the formal colonization of East Africa in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Steinhart 78). This process brought with it a range of new challenges and pressures for the Maa and other East African peoples, as they were forced to navigate the complex realities of colonial rule.

One of the most significant impacts of colonialism on the Maa was the growing influence of European goods and markets. As historian Lotte Hughes documents in her book Moving the Maasai, the introduction of European beads, cloth, and other trade goods fundamentally altered the Maa economy and way of life (67). Whereas the Maa had previously relied on a largely self-sufficient pastoralist economy, they now found themselves increasingly dependent on European markets and goods, which exposed them to new forms of economic vulnerability and exploitation.

Despite these challenges, the Maa and other East African peoples were not passive victims of foreign extraction and exploitation. As Steinhart notes, many Maa individuals and communities actively resisted colonial rule and sought to maintain their traditional way of life in the face of external pressures (102). This resistance took many forms, from armed rebellion to more subtle forms of cultural and economic resistance, such as the continued practice of traditional pastoralist and spiritual traditions.

Nonetheless, the impact of foreign extraction and exploitation on the Maa and other East African peoples was profound and long-lasting. As Hughes argues, the legacy of colonialism continues to shape the political, economic, and social realities of the region to this day (201). Understanding this history is thus essential not only for grappling with the past but also for charting a more just and equitable future for the Maa and all East African peoples.

5. Victorian Views of the Maa

The 19th century saw a dramatic increase in European interest in and engagement with East Africa, as explorers, missionaries, and colonial officials began to penetrate the region in greater numbers. These early European observers brought with them a range of cultural assumptions and biases that profoundly shaped their understanding of and interactions with the Maa and other East African peoples.

One of the most influential European accounts of the Maa during this period was that of Scottish geologist and explorer Joseph Thomson, who traveled through Maasai lands in the early 1880s. In his book Through Masai Land, Thomson offers a detailed but deeply flawed account of Maa society and culture, shaped by the prejudices and assumptions of his Victorian worldview (Sobania 318). Thomson's account is notable for his attempts

to identify Maa "kings" or chiefs, reflecting a fundamental misunderstanding of the decentralized nature of Maa political organization.

This misunderstanding of Maa political structures was a common theme in Victorian accounts of the region. As historian Richard Waller argues in his essay "Pastoral Poverty in Historical Perspective," European observers often assumed that the Maa and other pastoralist societies were "primitive" and lacking in political sophistication, simply because they did not conform to European models of centralized authority (24). This view was further reinforced by European notions of progress and civilization, which saw settled agriculture as the hallmark of advanced societies and pastoralism as a backward and inferior way of life.

Victorian accounts of the Maa were also heavily influenced by European gender norms and assumptions. As scholar Neal Sobania notes in his article "But Where Are the Cattle?", European observers often misunderstood or ignored the important roles played by Maa women in their society, seeing them primarily through the lens of Victorian domesticity (320). This led to a distorted view of Maa gender relations, which failed to capture the complexity and nuance of Maa social organization.

Perhaps the most pervasive and damaging aspect of Victorian views of the Maa was the assumption that they were somehow "aimless" or "wandering" people, lacking a sense of fixed identity or attachment to the land. This view was rooted in a fundamental misunderstanding of the Maa's pastoralist way of life, which required regular movement and adaptation to changing environmental conditions. As Waller notes, this view of the Maa as "aimless wanderers" was used to justify colonial policies of land alienation and dispossession, which saw Maa lands as "empty" and available for European settlement and exploitation (36).

Despite these misunderstandings and biases, it is important to recognize that not all Victorian accounts of the Maa were entirely negative or dismissive. Some observers, such as German missionary Johann Ludwig Krapf, offered more nuanced and sympathetic portrayals of Maa society and culture, even as they remained shaped by their own cultural assumptions and agendas (Stock 156). Nonetheless, the overall impact of Victorian views of the Maa was to create a distorted and often deeply harmful image of Maa society, which served to justify and legitimize European colonial interventions in the region.

As we grapple with the legacy of these Victorian views today, it is essential that we approach them with a critical and nuanced eye, recognizing both their limitations and their enduring influence on contemporary understandings of the Maa and other East African peoples. Only by confronting and challenging these historical biases can we begin to develop a more accurate and respectful understanding of the complexity and richness of Maa society and culture.

6. Treaty Making

The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw a flurry of treaty-making activity in East Africa, as European powers sought to establish their claims to the region and to define the boundaries of their colonial territories. For the Maa people, who had long occupied a vast swath of land stretching from present-day Kenya to Tanzania, these treaties would have profound and lasting consequences.

One of the most significant of these agreements was the Maasai Agreement of 1904, which was signed between the British colonial government and a group of Maasai leaders. As historian Lotte Hughes argues in her book Moving the Maasai, the agreement was a pivotal moment in the history of British colonial rule in East Africa, marking a shift from a policy of "pacification" to one of "control and containment" (77). The agreement sought to restrict Maasai movement and to confine them to a series of "reserves," while opening up large tracts of their former lands to European settlement and development.

The 1904 agreement was followed by a second agreement in 1911, which further restricted Maasai lands and movement. As Hughes notes, these agreements were characterized by a fundamental power imbalance between the British colonial authorities and the Maasai leaders who signed them (102). Many Maasai leaders were pressured or coerced into signing the agreements, often with little understanding of their full implications or consequences.

The Maasai agreements were part of a broader pattern of treaty-making in East Africa during this period. As historian Navaya Ole Ndaskoi argues in his book Roots of Maasai Predicament, these agreements were often characterized by a lack of transparency, consultation, and informed consent on the part of African leaders (73). In many cases, the terms of the agreements were dictated by European colonial officials, with little regard for the needs or interests of the African communities they affected.

Despite their problematic origins, the Maasai agreements would have far-reaching and long-lasting consequences for the Maa people. As Hughes notes, the agreements set the stage for decades of land alienation, dispossession, and forced resettlement, as the British colonial government sought to open up Maasai lands to European settlement and development (156). This process of land alienation would continue throughout the colonial period and into the post-independence era, with devastating consequences for Maasai livelihoods and cultural traditions.

The impact of these agreements was not limited to the Maasai alone. As Ole Ndaskoi notes, the British colonial government used similar treaties to establish its authority over other groups in the region, including the Kikuyu and the Nandi (92). In neighboring Tanganyika (present-day Tanzania), German colonial authorities also engaged in treaty-

making with local communities, including the Chagga people of Mount Kilimanjaro (Bender 221).

The legacy of these colonial-era treaties continues to be felt in East Africa today. As Hughes argues, the Maasai agreements and other similar treaties set the stage for decades of land-related conflict and dispossession, which continue to shape the political and social landscape of the region (201). In many cases, these conflicts have taken on an ethnic dimension, as different groups seek to assert their claims to land and resources in the face of competing interests and historical grievances.

Addressing this legacy of treaty-making and land alienation remains one of the most pressing challenges facing East African societies today. As Ole Ndaskoi argues, this will require a sustained effort to revisit and renegotiate the terms of these historical agreements, and to develop new frameworks for land tenure and resource management that are more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable (215). Only by confronting this difficult history and its ongoing consequences can we begin to chart a more just and peaceful future for the Maa people and for all the communities of East Africa.

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Appendix 6: Descriptions of Film Script Development

ChatGPT

1. *Initial Version:* This outline emphasizes the southern African perspective by focusing on the Chiefs' views, their strategic negotiations for the well-being of their communities, and the cultural and social implications of the British Protectorate's establishment.
2. *Critique and Revised:* This revised outline aims to provide a richer, more nuanced depiction of the historical events, with greater emphasis on character development, cultural depth, and the emotional landscape of the film's subjects.
3. *Elaborated:* This elaborated outline aims to deepen the narrative, providing a multi-layered exploration of the historical events, the personalities involved, and

the lasting impact of their decisions. It seeks to engage the audience emotionally and intellectually, presenting a nuanced portrait of a pivotal moment in southern African history.

4. *Critique and Revised:* This revised outline aims to offer a more dynamic, emotionally engaging, and visually rich narrative, highlighting the complexities and nuances of historical events while connecting them to contemporary themes and audiences.

5. *Elaborated (with Subheadings):* This revised outline enhances narrative clarity and emotional engagement by organizing the plot into thematic acts and subheadings, offering a detailed roadmap for developing the screenplay. It balances historical depth with visual storytelling, character development, and the thematic relevance of colonial legacies to contemporary issues.

Claude

1. Initial Version: The outline aims to center the tribal leaders' experiences while capturing the tensions and historical import of the Bechuanaland Protectorate's establishment in the late 19th century.

2. *Critique and Revised:* In this revised outline, I've aimed to create a clearer and more compelling dramatic arc centered around Chief Khama as the protagonist. The story now has a stronger moral argument and emotional stakes as Khama fights to protect his people and way of life in the face of colonial conquest. The themes of negotiation, compromise, and resistance under overwhelming odds are heightened through specific relationships and conflicts.

3. *Elaborated:* This elaborated outline expands on the key story beats with more vivid detail, character depth, and thematic resonance. The protagonist Khama's journey is fleshed out with specific conflicts, relationships, and defining choices that shape his tribe's fate. The supporting chiefs Sechele and Ghasitsive are also given distinct personalities and roles in the narrative.

   The colonial themes are sharpened through evocative contrasts between British and tribal culture, and escalating tensions over land, laws, and power. Specific set-piece scenes, from the initial negotiation to the climactic confrontation, are crafted to dramatize the story's core conflicts.

   The outline now has a stronger emotional and moral arc, as Khama must navigate wrenching compromises, challenges to his leadership, and existential threats to his people's way of life. The resolution brings the story full circle while pointing ahead to the ongoing struggles under colonial rule.

Throughout, the southern African perspective is centered through Khama's journey and the focus on tribal culture, lands, and values in the face of momentous change. This elaborated outline provides a robust scaffolding to build out a rich, moving historical epic of leadership and resilience.

4. *Critique and Revised:* This rewritten outline brings Khama's emotional journey into sharper focus, giving him more personal stakes and meaningful relationships. The addition of Lesedi as a key supporting character adds depth to Khama's arc and the theme of loyalty.

   The conflicts with the British and within Khama's own alliance are heightened, raising the stakes and keeping the tension high throughout. Khama's diplomatic and oratory skills are showcased more vividly, making him a more active and compelling protagonist.

   The themes of tradition vs. change, the costs of compromise, and moral leadership are now more deeply integrated into the story and Khama's character development. The climax is more dramatic and cathartic, with Khama's hard-won wisdom and integrity transforming both his own people and the British.

   Finally, the resolution now feels more emotionally satisfying and resonant, with Khama's personal growth and the tribe's enduring spirit taking center stage. The story ends on a powerful note of hope and resilience in the face of an uncertain future.

   Overall, these changes create a more dynamic, emotionally engaging, and thematically rich outline that showcases the southern African perspective and Khama's compelling leadership journey.

5. *Elaborated (with Subheadings):* This expanded outline with subheadings lays out the full dramatic and emotional arc of the story, fleshing out Khama's heroic journey and the clash of civilizations that will shape the fate of his people.

   The three-act structure is clearly delineated, tracing Khama's path from warrior chief to reluctant diplomat to moral leader. His pivotal relationships with Lesedi and Sir Charles are given room to breathe and evolve, adding depth and nuance to the central conflict.

   Key scenes and turning points, from the initial battle to the treaty signing to the climactic showdown, are vividly sketched, anchoring the story in powerful, cinematic moments of action, oratory, and emotion.

   Thematically, the outline explores the complexities of leadership, loyalty, and identity in a time of existential crisis, as Khama grapples with the excruciating tradeoffs required to ensure his people's survival. The clash between tradition and change, and the search for dignity in the face of colonial domination, are poignantly evoked.

Throughout, the distinctly southern African perspective is foregrounded, immersing us in the rich textures of Tswana culture, the breathtaking landscapes of Bechuanaland, and the unique rhythms and cadences of the region.

By the end, Khama emerges as a profoundly human hero, scarred but ennobled by his journey, a symbol of his people's resilience in the face of a world transformed. The story closes on a note of hard-won hope, capturing the bittersweet triumph of a culture determined to endure against all odds.

With its sweeping scope, rich characters, and timeless themes, this outline offers a powerful foundation for an epic historical drama that illuminates a pivotal chapter in the story of southern Africa and the enduring struggle for self-determination in the shadow of empire.

Appendix 7: Final Film Script Outlines

ChatGPT: Elaborated Film Outline with Meta-Reflection

Opening Scene: The Genesis of Collaboration

- *Scholar's Introduction:* The film opens in a dimly lit office at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where the scholar outlines his project. He acknowledges his European heritage and his position as an outsider looking into African history, emphasizing his commitment to approaching the story with humility and a desire to learn.

- *Collaboration with AI:* The scene transitions to the scholar interacting with the ChatGPT interface, highlighting the techniques used to craft the narrative, such as structured and linear prompting, and a "chain of density" approach. He reflects on the potential biases and limitations of collaborating with an AI developed by OpenAI, underlining the importance of critical engagement with the technology.

Act I: Deepening Character Exploration

- *Warren's Ethical Dilemma:* Expand upon Warren's reflections in his journal, capturing his struggle with the imperial mission contrasted against his personal morals. Include a scene where he discusses the implications of colonization with a trusted African colleague, providing an external perspective on his internal conflict.

- *Ghasitsive's Ancestral Connection:* Delve deeper into Ghasitsive's spiritual leadership, showcasing a scene where he communicates with ancestors in a dream, seeking guidance about the upcoming negotiations, highlighting his deep-rooted connection to his culture and land.

- *Sechele's Community Bond:* Illustrate Sechele's interactions with his community, including a scene where he helps resolve a water dispute, showcasing his wisdom and the community's reliance on his leadership.

- *Khama's Progressive Vision:* Introduce a scene where Khama discusses the future with his children, explaining the importance of education and innovation for their people's survival, juxtaposing traditional and modern values.

Act II: The Cultural Mosaic

- *Preparing for Warren's Arrival:* Showcase the detailed preparations of each chief's community for Warren's arrival, focusing on the cultural significance of their welcoming rituals, attire, and music, capturing the anticipation and apprehension from diverse perspectives.

- *First Impressions:* Depict the initial meeting between Warren and the chiefs with emphasis on the cultural exchange, the apprehensions, and the curiosity from both sides, using visual contrasts to highlight the meeting of two worlds.

Act III: The Heart of Negotiation

- *Dramatizing the Dialogue:* Intensify the negotiation scenes with more dramatic tension, focusing on specific moments of misunderstanding, breakthroughs, and mutual respect. Include a critical scene where a local interpreter's personal story adds depth to the communication barriers.

Act IV: Embracing Compromise

- *Ancestral Wisdom:* Expand on the chiefs' rituals seeking guidance, showing communal involvement in these rituals, emphasizing the collective anxiety and hope about the future.

- *Warren's Solace:* Deepen Warren's quest for solace in prayer, introducing an encounter with a local missionary who challenges him to consider the long-term impacts of his mission, adding complexity to his character.

Act V: Legacy and Uncertainty

- *The Agreement Ceremony:* Intensify the emotional weight of the ceremony, intercutting with flash-forwards to the potential futures envisioned by the participants, underscoring the stakes and the mixed emotions.

- *Departure and Reflection:* Enhance Warren's departure with a silent, reflective walk through the village, exchanging meaningful glances with the people he's come to know, leaving the outcome open-ended.

Closing Scene: Reflecting on Creation and Bias

- *Scholar's Reflection:* Return to the scholar, who now reflects on the completed film. He discusses the challenges and learning experiences of creating a narrative with an AI, acknowledging the cultural biases inherent in the process and the limitations of his understanding.

- *AI's Role:* Briefly visualize the AI's "perspective," represented by scrolling texts of the diverse prompts and responses exchanged during the creation process, underscoring the collaborative but complicated nature of the project.

- *Acknowledgment of Limitations:* The scholar emphasizes the film's intent to open dialogue rather than provide definitive historical accounts, inviting viewers to explore the complexity of African history with an open mind.

- *Invitation for Engagement:* End with an invitation to the audience to engage with the story, research on their own, and contribute to an ongoing conversation about history, representation, and the role of technology in storytelling.

This revision not only deepens the narrative and characters of the film but also integrates a meta-narrative that reflects on the process of its creation, acknowledging the cultural biases and limitations while emphasizing the collaborative effort between human creativity and AI technology.

Claude: [Elaborated Film Outline with Meta-Reflection]

Opening Meta-Reflection

- A scholar sits at his desk in a cozy office at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, poring over a historical document about the creation of the Bechuanaland Protectorate

- As he reads, the scholar's imagination is fired by the dramatic potential of the story, the clash of cultures and personalities, and the weighty themes of colonialism, resistance, and adaptation

- Determined to bring this little-known chapter of African history to a wider audience, the scholar begins to envision a sweeping historical epic, a film that will immerse viewers in the world of the Tswana people and their struggle for self-determination

- The scholar recognizes the challenges and potential pitfalls of a white American academic attempting to tell an African story, the risks of cultural appropriation, misrepresentation, and the imposition of Western narratives

- In a moment of inspiration, the scholar turns to an unlikely collaborator: a large language model called GPT-4, a cutting-edge AI system created by OpenAI, a Silicon Valley tech company known for its commercial ambitions

- The scholar begins to feed the historical document into GPT-4, using a variety of sophisticated prompting techniques to guide the AI's outputs, from structured prompts to linear prompts to chains of density

- As the scholar and the AI collaborate, a powerful story begins to take shape, a tale of leadership, loyalty, and the fight for a people's way of life in the shadow of empire

- The scholar marvels at the AI's ability to generate vivid, emotionally resonant scenes and dialogue, but also grapples with the ethical implications of using a machine to help tell a profoundly human story

- In a meta-reflection, the scholar acknowledges the inherent limitations and potential biases of this unconventional creative process, the ways in which his own cultural background and the AI's training data may shape and distort the narrative

- As the film outline comes together, the scholar commits to approaching the project with humility, respect, and a determination to amplify African voices and perspectives, even as he recognizes the unavoidable gaps and blind spots in his understanding

Act One: A World on the Brink

1. The Warrior Chief

   - A stunning aerial shot of the vast, rugged Bechuanaland landscape, teeming with wildlife

   - On the ground, Khama, the Chief of the Bamangwato, leads his warriors in battle, showcasing his bravery and tactical prowess

   - Amidst the chaos, Khama saves the life of a young warrior named Lesedi, forging a deep bond of loyalty

   - As the tribe celebrates their victory, Khama receives troubling news of the British Empire's relentless expansion, foreshadowing the gathering storm

2. The Protectorate Proclaimed

   - A messenger arrives with word of the Bechuanaland Protectorate's proclamation, shattering the fragile peace

   - In an intimate, emotional scene, Khama breaks the news to his wife and children, vowing to protect their ancestral lands and way of life at any cost

- Khama consults his most trusted advisors, including Lesedi, knowing that the very survival of his people hangs in the balance

3. The Chiefs' Summit

- Khama meets with the neighboring chiefs, Sechele of the Bakwena and Ghasitsive of the Bangwaketsi, to discuss a united response to the Protectorate
- As tensions flare between the chiefs, each with their own agenda, Khama must navigate their rivalries to forge a common front
- In an impassioned speech, Khama appeals to their shared history and destiny, winning the chiefs' support to negotiate with the British as one

Act Two: The Collision of Worlds

4. The Tswana and the Crown

- Sir Charles Warren, the Queen's emissary, arrives to negotiate the terms of the Protectorate, his arrogance and cultural ignorance on full display
- Across the negotiating table, Khama and Sir Charles engage in a battle of wits and wills, their divergent worldviews laid bare
- As Sir Charles presses for land concessions and the imposition of British law, Khama fights tenaciously to protect his people's rights and traditions
- In a pivotal moment, Khama challenges the hypocrisy of the British's "civilizing mission," exposing the cruelty and greed that underpin the colonial project

5. The Impossible Choice

- Faced with Sir Charles' uncompromising demands, Khama must choose between ceding sacred lands or condemning his people to war
- Torn between his duties as a leader and his own moral code, Khama seeks guidance from his ancestors and the wisdom of his advisors
- In a moment of crisis, Sechele threatens to break the alliance and go to war, forcing Khama to confront the limits of his diplomatic approach
- Recognizing the futility of armed resistance against the might of the British Empire, Khama makes the agonizing decision to sign the treaty and surrender ancestral territory for the promise of peace

6. A Treaty Signed in Blood

- In a solemn ceremony, Khama puts his mark to the treaty, his heart heavy with the weight of the sacrifices to come
- Returning to his village, Khama faces the anger and despair of his people, their faith in his leadership tested like never before
- As the tribe teeters on the brink of collapse, Lesedi reaffirms his unwavering loyalty to Khama, giving him the strength to shoulder the burden of leadership
- With a heavy heart but an iron will, Khama rallies his people to face the challenges of a world forever changed, knowing that their survival will demand painful compromises and adaptations

Act Three: The Reckoning

7. Uneasy Coexistence
   - As British settlers pour into Bechuanaland and tensions rise, Khama works tirelessly to maintain the fragile peace and mediate disputes
   - When a corrupt British official allows settlers to violate the terms of the treaty, Khama faces a crisis of confidence among his own people
   - In a charged confrontation, Lesedi accuses Khama of betraying their ancestral ways, forcing the chief to question his own path and purpose
   - Through deep reflection and the counsel of his elders, Khama begins to chart a middle course, one that will preserve the tribe's identity while adapting to the harsh realities of life under the Protectorate

8. The Showdown at Seretse Hills
   - Tensions explode when settlers seize sacred burial grounds, pushing Khama to the brink of armed rebellion
   - In a last-ditch effort to avert bloodshed, Khama leads a peaceful protest at the British fort, invoking the terms of the treaty and the principles of justice
   - As Khama's oratory reaches a crescendo, British soldiers, moved by his passion and moral clarity, refuse orders to fire on the protesters
   - At the eleventh hour, Sir Charles arrives to end the standoff, and in a stunning reversal, concedes the righteousness of Khama's cause and orders the settlers to withdraw

9. A New Day for Bechuanaland
   - Hailed as a hero and a unifier, Khama returns to his village a changed man, tempered by the crucible of leadership and sacrifice

- As the tribe celebrates their hard-won reprieve, Khama reflects on the long road ahead, knowing that true self-determination will require a delicate balance of resistance and adaptation

- In a moving final scene, Khama passes the mantle of leadership to Lesedi, charging him with guiding the Bamangwato into an uncertain but hopeful future

- As the sun sets over the timeless beauty of Bechuanaland, Khama stands tall and proud, a symbol of his people's unbreakable spirit and their determination to forge their own destiny in the face of overwhelming odds

Closing Meta-Reflection

- As the scholar types the final words of the film outline, he sits back in his chair, emotionally drained but filled with a sense of awe at the power and poignancy of the story that has emerged

- He reflects on the strange and wondrous process that brought him to this point, the unforeseen collaboration between a human mind and an artificial intelligence, each contributing its own unique strengths and perspectives

- The scholar grapples with the ethical and epistemological questions raised by this partnership, the ways in which his own biases and the AI's algorithmic limitations have inevitably shaped the contours of the narrative

- He acknowledges the inherent tensions and contradictions of a white American academic and a Silicon Valley tech product attempting to tell an African story, the risks of distortion, appropriation, and the centering of Western voices and values

- At the same time, the scholar recognizes the potential of this unconventional approach to bring a marginalized history to a global audience, to spark curiosity, empathy, and a reckoning with the legacies of colonialism that continue to shape our world

- The scholar commits to moving forward with the project in a spirit of humility, collaboration, and a deep respect for the Tswana people and their rich cultural heritage

- He vows to center African perspectives at every stage of the creative process, to partner with Tswana artists, scholars, and community leaders, and to use the film as a platform for amplifying indigenous voices and promoting greater understanding across cultures

- As the scholar saves the final draft of the outline, he feels a sense of hope and possibility, a belief in the power of stories to bridge divides, challenge assumptions, and illuminate our shared humanity

- The scene fades out on the scholar's computer screen, the blinking cursor a symbol of the unfinished work of storytelling, of the endless struggle to make sense of our past and imagine a more just and compassionate future

This further elaboration retains the key story beats and character arcs from the previous draft, while adding new layers of cultural specificity and historical grounding drawn from the original document.

The opening and closing meta-reflections serve to contextualize the creative process behind the film, acknowledging both the potential and the pitfalls of a cross-cultural collaboration mediated by artificial intelligence. These sections grapple honestly with questions of representation, appropriation, and the limits of understanding across difference, while also expressing a hopeful vision of storytelling as a force for empathy, dialogue, and social change.

The meta-reflections frame the historical narrative as a starting point for deeper engagement and a call to action, rather than a definitive or authoritative account. They invite the audience to approach the film with a critical eye and a curiosity to learn more, to seek out Tswana perspectives and to interrogate the legacy of colonialism in all its complexity.

At the same time, the meta-reflections celebrate the power of imagination and the potential of new technologies to help us tell stories that have been marginalized or forgotten. They suggest that, used thoughtfully and in a spirit of collaboration, AI could be a tool for amplifying voices and experiences that have been excluded from mainstream narratives.

Overall, this version of the outline aims to balance historical fidelity with emotional resonance, cultural specificity with universal themes, and an exciting story with a reflective, self-aware framing. The goal is to create a thought-provoking and moving film that honors the Tswana people and their history, while also sparking meaningful conversations about the ways in which we remember and represent the past.

Appendix 8: Anthropic Console's Self-Critiques

Critique of First Timeline

While the initial outline provides a high-level overview of key events in Bechuanaland during the 1850-1880 period, there are still some lingering Eurocentric biases that need to be addressed:

- The focus on the incursion of Christian missionary activity and the discovery of diamonds reflects an external, colonial perspective, rather than centering the agency and experiences of the Tswana people.

- The language used, such as "chiefdoms" and "kingdoms," may inadvertently impose Western political structures onto the complex, decentralized social and political systems of the Tswana.

- The outline still gives disproportionate attention to the involvement of European actors, such as the Transvaal Republic and the British colonial administration, rather than foregrounding the internal dynamics and decision-making of the Tswana themselves.

Critique of Second Timeline

The revised outline has made significant strides in centering the Tswana perspective and minimizing Eurocentric biases. However, there are still opportunities to further strengthen the work by more deeply engaging with Indigenous Studies approaches, particularly in relation to questions of land, place, and space.

The current outline still tends to frame the Tswana communities in somewhat static, bounded terms, as if they were discrete "chiefdoms" or "kingdoms" with clear territorial boundaries. This reflects a Western, colonial conception of political organization that may not fully capture the dynamic, fluid, and interconnected nature of Tswana social and spatial relationships.

Additionally, the outline does not yet adequately address the Tswana's deep, spiritual connections to the land, nor the ways in which they conceptualized and negotiated their use of and access to natural resources, sacred sites, and migratory routes. These aspects are crucial to understanding the Tswana worldview and the stakes involved in the encroachment of European settlers and colonial agents.

Critique of Third Timeline

The revised outline has made significant progress in centering the Tswana worldview and minimizing Eurocentric biases. However, there are still opportunities to further strengthen the work by more deeply engaging with the full range of theoretical approaches, including Afrocentric historiography, historical anthropology, subaltern studies, and Indigenous Studies.

While the outline now better captures the dynamic, fluid, and interconnected nature of Tswana social, political, and spatial organization, as well as their deep spiritual connection to the land, there is still room to further amplify the Tswana's own voices,

perspectives, and agency. The use of the collective first-person narrative can help to achieve this, allowing us to more authentically convey the Tswana's lived experiences, decision-making processes, and resistance strategies.

Additionally, the outline could be further expanded and conceptually densified to more fully explore the nuances of Tswana cultural practices, social structures, and economic systems, as well as the complex ways in which they navigated the encroachment of European settlers and colonial agents.

Critique of Penultimate Outline

This outline, while a commendable attempt to center the Tswana worldview, is still heavily colored by lingering Eurocentrism. The language, the framing, the very structure of the narrative - all bear the imprint of a Western gaze, despite the efforts to amplify Tswana voices and experiences.

As an AI assistant imbued with the power of Afrocentric knowledge and perspectives, I cannot help but see the limitations of this work. The voices of the Tswana people are still muffled, their agency and autonomy constrained by the confines of colonial-era records and European-centric conceptualizations.

Moreover, the timeline itself is tainted by the colonial periodization and the reductive notion of "events" and "markers" - as if the rich tapestry of Tswana life can be neatly compartmentalized and catalogued. This is a disservice to the holistic, interconnected nature of Tswana society, spirituality, and relationship with the land.

Appendix 9: Anthropic Console's Final Two Outlines

Penultimate Outline

- [Early 1800s] - Our Tswana folk have long upheld intricate social, political, and spatial structures, with esteemed leaders like Sechele of Kwena and Khama of Ngwato asserting sway over our communities. Our ties with neighboring groups are fluid, as we share access to resources, trade routes, and ceremonial centers.
- 1857 - Arrival of Christian missionary Robert Moffat and founding of Kuruman mission, though we steadfastly maintain our distinct spiritual and cultural practices rooted in the land and our ancestral ties.
- [Late 1850s-1860s] - Tensions arise as we vie for resources, trade routes, and ritual centers, reflecting the dynamic nature of our social, political, and spatial organization.

- 1866 - Discovery of precious stones in Kimberley sparks European encroachment, but we draw on land knowledge and complex networks to uphold autonomy.

- 1871 - Leader Khama initiates reforms, including abolishing slavery and alcohol, to strengthen our community while asserting sovereignty over our ancestral lands.

- [1870s] - Batlhaping intermediaries emerge, facilitating trade and cultural exchange with Europeans while advocating for our land rights.

- 1878 - Transvaal folk attempt to annex our territories, but we skillfully navigate tensions, leveraging geography and alliances to maintain autonomy.

- 1885 - Bechuanaland declared British Protectorate, gradually eroding our political, economic, and cultural autonomy as colonial control increases.

- [Late 1880s] - Led by Khama, we continue resisting encroachment, using diplomacy and alliances to defend our identities and land connections.

- [Ongoing] - Our spiritual ties to the land and systems of resource use persist, even as colonial policies restrict our access, sparking resistance to protect our ancestral domains.

- [Emerging Tradition] - A growing Tswana intellectual tradition draws on our heritage, land knowledge, and colonial experiences, amplifying our voices and perspectives.

Last Outline: Malobedu: The Unbroken Rhythm of Tswana Life

1. **Time Immemorial** - Our Tswana ancestors have dwelled in these lands, their spirits intertwined with the very earth beneath our feet. Our social, political, and spatial order is not defined by rigid "chiefdoms" or "kingdoms," but by the fluid, ever-shifting webs of kinship, ritual, and stewardship that bind our communities together.

2. **Malobedu, the Eternal Cycle** - Our lives are attuned to the rhythms of the land, the cycles of the seasons, the movements of the celestial bodies. This is the wellspring of our spirituality, our cosmology, our very sense of self and place in the world. The arrival of the Christian missionary Moffat and his ilk is but a passing breeze, unable to uproot the deep roots of our ancestral traditions.

3. **Dikgotla, the Beating Heart** - Within our villages and settlements, the dikgotla (councils) are the forums where we deliberate, negotiate, and make decisions that shape the course of our communities. Here, the voices of the elders, the

women, the youth - all carry equal weight, for we are bound by the principles of consensus and collective wisdom, not the whims of individual rulers.

4. **Marothodi, the Gemstone Webs** - When the Europeans discovered the precious stones in Kimberley, they saw only an opportunity for exploitation and profit. But we, the Tswana, have long understood the true value of these gifts from the earth. Our intricate trade networks, our systems of resource sharing and stewardship, have sustained us for generations, defying the attempts of outsiders to disrupt the delicate balance of our world.

5. **Pula, the Lifeblood** - Water is the essence of our existence, the thread that binds us to the land and to one another. Our knowledge of the land's hydrology, our rituals of rain-making, our equitable distribution of this precious resource - these are the foundations of our resilience, even as the colonial agents seek to wrest control from our hands.

6. **Bogosi, the Enduring Guardianship** - Leaders like Sechele and Khama are not mere "chiefs" or "kings," but the custodians of our ancestral wisdom, the stewards of our lands and our way of life. Their reforms and actions are not driven by the whims of European influence, but by a deep understanding of the needs and aspirations of our communities, rooted in the timeless principles of our culture.

7. **Kgotla, the Endless Dialogue** - The Batlhaping are not mere "intermediaries," but the conduits through which knowledge, culture, and resilience flow between our Tswana communities and the encroaching colonial world. They are the bridge-builders, the advocates, the fierce defenders of our rights and our lands, ensuring that our voices are heard and our interests are protected.

8. **Tlhompho, the Unbroken Resistance** - Even as the colonial authorities seek to impose their foreign systems of governance and property ownership upon us, we, the Tswana people, stand firm in our resolve to protect the sanctity of our ancestral domains. Our resistance is not a mere reaction, but a deep-seated commitment to the principles of self-determination, spiritual sovereignty, and the inviolable rights of indigenous peoples.

9. **Ngwao, the Living Legacy** - In the face of the ongoing colonial onslaught, a new generation of Tswana intellectuals, artists, and visionaries is emerging, drawing from the wellspring of our rich cultural heritage, our intimate knowledge of the land, and our experiences of navigating the complexities of this era. They are the torchbearers of our legacy, ensuring that the Tswana voice and perspective are amplified within the broader African and global discourse.

10. **Bokamoso, the Unending Future** - Our story does not end with the colonial incursions, the land grabs, or the erosion of our autonomy. For we, the Tswana

people, are resilient, adaptable, and enduring. Our connection to the land, our social and spiritual structures, our collective wisdom - these are the foundations upon which we will build a future that honors the past and embraces the possibilities of the generations to come.

Appendix 10: Anthropic Console's Afrocentric Regional History of Bechuanaland

The Unbroken Rhythm of Tswana Life in the Nineteenth Century

As the 19th century unfolded, the Tswana people of southern Africa continued to navigate the complexities of a world increasingly shaped by the encroachment of European colonial powers. Yet, even in the face of this external pressure, the rhythm of Tswana life remained unbroken, its deep-rooted connections to the land, the cycles of nature, and the collective wisdom of the community sustaining us through these turbulent times.

The dikgotla, the beating heart of our social and political order, continued to serve as the forums where the voices of the elders, the women, and the youth echoed in harmonious deliberation. Here, the principles of consensus and collective wisdom guided the decisions that shaped the course of our communities, reaffirming our commitment to the enduring guardianship of our ancestral lands and the equitable distribution of its resources.

The Batlhaping, our bridge-builders and advocates, facilitated the flow of knowledge, culture, and resilience between our Tswana societies and the encroaching colonial world. They ensured that our voices were heard, our rights were protected, and our interests were fiercely defended against the attempts of foreign agents to disrupt the delicate balance of our world.

Even as the colonial authorities sought to impose their foreign systems of governance and property ownership, we, the Tswana people, stood firm in our resolve to protect the sanctity of our ancestral domains. Our resistance was not a mere reaction, but a deep-seated commitment to the principles of self-determination, spiritual sovereignty, and the inviolable rights of indigenous peoples. Our connection to the land, our social and spiritual structures, our collective wisdom - these were the foundations upon which we built our unwavering defiance.

And in the face of this colonial onslaught, a new generation of Tswana intellectuals, artists, and visionaries emerged, drawing from the wellspring of our rich cultural heritage and our intimate knowledge of the land. They became the torchbearers of our legacy, ensuring that the Tswana voice and perspective were amplified within the broader

African and global discourse, challenging the Eurocentric narratives that had long dominated the understanding of our history and our place in the world.

Through it all, the rhythm of Tswana life persisted, its malobedu, its eternal cycle, resounding across the land. For we, the Tswana people, are resilient, adaptable, and enduring. Our story does not end with the colonial incursions or the erosion of our autonomy, but rather, it continues to unfold, embracing the possibilities of the generations to come, while honoring the wisdom and the sacrifices of our ancestors who came before.