

IDEOLOGY, ORAL TRADITIONS AND THE STRUGGLE  
FOR POWER IN THE EARLY ZULU KINGDOM

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A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts,  
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg,  
for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Carolyn Hamilton  
30th day of July, 1985.

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the struggle for power in the Zulu kingdom during the reign of Shaka. It traces both the territorial growth of the kingdom and transformations within Zulu society. Its primary aim is to overcome two significant limitations of earlier studies: their focus on achievement and conquest history; and their assertion that the military system introduced by Shaka saw the extensive appointment of commoners to important offices and positions of authority. Both of these notions owe much to the nature of the available evidence, being largely oral traditions, understood to be the history of the society's rulers. Through the development of methods of analysis of oral traditions which take cognizance of their fundamentally ideological character, this study focuses on social stratification in the Zulu kingdom: on the emergence of a closed and privileged ruling elite and on the creation of a subordinate group of super-exploited tributaries, denied the rights and benefits of full Zulu citizenship. This perspective reveals the struggles surrounding the establishment of Zulu dominance and illuminates the history of resistance to Zulu overrule.

Emerging social stratification is considered in the wider context of the transition from small-scale chiefdoms to much larger polities of two types; active trading states like that of Mthethwa, and essentially defensive states like that of Qwabe. The Zulu kingdom is considered to have emerged initially as a defensive polity and to have subsequently transformed itself into a hierarchised and aggressively expanding state. This change is examined both in terms of the states' internal reorganization and external expansion. The former saw the extensive restructuring of the ruling clan, the enormous expansion of, and the extension of royal control over, the Zulu amabutho, notably through the establishment

of a vast pool of female labour under direct royal control in the izigodlo. The latter occurred in two phases: the first phase of territorial expansion saw the close integration of new subjects, while the second phase was characterized by a failure on the part of the Zulu rulers fully to assimilate new subjects. This situation was underpinned by the extensive coercive power at the disposal of the ruling group, and by the development of a new ideology of state. The amantungwa, Nguni and amalala identities were key features of the new ideology, and were developed at this time as ethnic identities distinguishing privileged from unprivileged in Zulu society and legitimating the position of each. They were not simply imposed on the society by the new rulers, but emerged out of the struggles for power in which the Zulu engaged. As ethnic identities, they were closely linked to and subtly affected the corpus of traditions of origins of all the groups concerned.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>K.C.</u>	Killie Campbell Africana Library
<u>Sw.A.</u>	Swaziland National Archives
<u>J.S.A.</u>	James Stuart Archive
<u>S.A.L.</u>	South African Library

GLOSSARY OF ZULU AND SWAZI TERMS USED IN THE TEXT<sup>1</sup>

Bemdabuko (Swazi): lit. those who dzabuka'd. Cf. uku-Dabuka; a term used to refer to those clans who claimed to have originated together with the Swazi royal clan.

ukuBonga: to declaim praises.

imBongi (izimBongi): praise-singer, a specialist declaimer of praises.

isiBongo (iziBongo): a. clan-name; b. (plural only) praises, praise-names.

ukuButha: lit. to gather; to form young men or women into age-grades or other individually distinct units.

iButho (amaButho): age-group or other similar unit, so-called 'regiment'.

isiCoco (iziCoco): heading.

ukuDabuka (Swazi - kuDzabuka): lit. to get torn or rent; to be brought into existence.

ukuDabula: lit. to rend, cleave or split; to bring into existence.

inDuna (izinDuna): a civil or military official appointed to a position of authority or command.

ukwEthula: lit. to take off and put down; to present the first-born daughter of a marriage to the patron who supplied the lobola cattle for the marriage.

isiGodlo (iziGodlo): a king's (or important chief's) private enclosure at the upper end of an establishment, containing the huts of his household; b. women resident in the king's enclosure. Cf. umNdlunkulu.

inGodosi (izinGodosi): betrothed girl for whom lobola has been paid.

ukuHlobonga: to practice external sexual intercourse.

ukuHlonipha: to show respect through the practice of formal avoidances in action or in speech.

iJadu: a dancing competition, the object of which was to encourage social intercourse between young men and women of different areas.

inKatha: lit. a grass ring or coil; symbol of the unity of the Zulu nation.

iKhanda (amaKhanda): establishment erected and occupied by the amabutho, containing in addition an isigodlo.

emaKhandzambili (Swazi): lit. those found ahead; a term used to refer to those clans found in Swaziland by the immigrant Swazi royal clan.

ukuKhonza: to give one's allegiance to, or to subject oneself to a king or a chief, to pay formal respects to.

ubuKhosi: kingship, 'majesty'.

umKhosi: the annual 'fir' ceremony held at the chief establishment of a king or chief in the December - January period, a festival at which the king was ritually strengthened, the ancestral spirits praised and the allegiance of the people renewed.



ukuKleza: to milk a cow straight into the mouth, as done for a period by cadets of the amabutho.

iKosikazi (amaKhosikazi): principal wife of a king or chief or a man of position; title applied by courtesy to any wife of a man of such position.

ukuLobola: to formalize a marriage by the conveyance of property (usually cattle) from the man's family to the father or guardian of the woman.

iLobola (sing. only): cattle or goods handed over in a marriage transaction by the man's family to the father or guardian of the woman.

isiLulu (iziLulu): a large, rounded basket made of plaited grass used for storing grain.

iNceku (iziNceku): attendant in a king's or a chief's household responsible for the performance of certain domestic duties, and for private services for the king or chief.

iNdlunkulu (iziNdlunkulu): a. hut of a king's or a chief's principal wife; b. group of huts attached to it; c. the family attached to those huts.

umNdlunkulu (sing. only): section of the girls resident in the king's private enclosure within an establishment. Cf. isiGodlo.

iNsizwa (iziNsizwa): youth approaching manhood, young man who has not yet put on the headdress.

umNtwana (abaNtwana): lit. child; member of the royal family.

iNyanga (iziNyanga): diviner, herbalist, doctor.

ukuQhumbuza: to bore large holes in the ear-lobes.

ukuSisa: to place livestock in the care of a dependant who then has certain rights of usufruct.

ukuTekela (variant: ukuTekeza): to speak in the Swazi, 'Lala' or Bhaca fashion in which 'tsh' is substituted for the Zulu 'th', and 't' or 'dz' for 'z'.

ukuThela: lit. to pour into; to add people to an ibutho.

ukuThunga: lit. to s have a heading sewn on.

- 1 The definitions contained in this glossary are based on those provided in Webb and Wright's glossary to The James Stuart Archive, modified and augmented with reference to Bryant's Zulu-English Dictionary, as well as to the ensuing analysis of certain of the institutions listed.

PREFACE

This study began as an analysis of power and authority in the Zulu kingdom under Shaka, broadly located within a tradition of scholarship focused on the Zulu achievement. The issues which it sought to address concerned the fundamental refashionings of relations of power which occurred in early nineteenth century Zululand and which underlay the powerful position of the Zulu king. The questions initially addressed included those of who had access to resources, who held what offices under what conditions, how Zulu rule was implemented and enforced on a daily basis, and how control was exerted over the remote areas of the enormous kingdom.

The parameters of the topic were largely determined by the apparent availability of evidence. Mostly in the form of oral traditions - conventionally understood to be the history of a society's rulers - the evidence seemed to restrict the study to analysis of the holding of power and authority. Closer investigation of the oral data however showed the available traditions to be not simply chronicles of domination, but rather to be riddled with contradictions. The processes of identifying and analysing these contradictions gave rise to two crucial perceptions which significantly altered the emphasis of the study. The first perception was that the oral traditions contained signs of the processes underlying the achievement of Zulu domination. Traditions overtly concerned to describe the Zulu achievement contained features not consistent with their purported subject.

It became clear that, almost in spite of themselves, oral traditions retained clear signs of the struggles which underlay the growth of Zulu power and the development of a hegemonic view of history itself. The capacity of oral traditions to yield up data about

the conquered, as well as the conquerors, allowed the focus of the thesis to shift from the Zulu achievement towards the activities at this time of all the historic peoples of the Phongola-Mzimkhulu region. The second perception, an extension of the first, was that the nature, history and the role of oral traditions in northern Nguni-speaking societies themselves demanded investigation.

Thus, the emphasis of the study shifted onto the processes and struggles underlying the emergence of Zulu hegemony, and was extended methodologically to an examination of the role and the manipulation of history, and of oral traditions in particular, in Zulu society, both in the reign of Shaka, and subsequently. These two perceptions transferred the focus of this study squarely onto the role of ideology in the emergence of the Zulu state.

These perceptions, and indeed, an altered view of the very nature of precolonial historical research and its methods, were not achieved without difficulty. Acknowledgements and thanks are due to a large number of people who have guided and assisted me, in particular to Philip Bonner, who supervised this thesis, and who has doggedly sought to teach me to write clearly. My interest in precolonial studies was captured and shaped by John Wright who has been an invaluable critic of many of the arguments that follow and has permitted me to draw freely on his extensive knowledge of Zulu history. The completion of this thesis owes much to his intellectual companionship and his unfailing support. Thanks are also due to Harriet Gavshon for introducing me to Marxist literary criticism and for engaging in a lively exchange on the subject.

My fieldwork was made possible by the assistance and persistence of a number of people in Swaziland, in particular the late Mtwananenkosi Makhungu, who both promoted my research and gave me warm encouragement; Henry 'Hlahlamehlo' Dlamini who gave me the benefit of his extensive knowledge of Swazi affairs and his charming companionship on extended field trips; the staff and students of the Franson Christian High School at Mhlosheni who housed me for some months and who took a lively interest in the research; Maureen and Ralph Irwin whose warmth and hospitality are unforgettable; John Masson who smoothed away all my logistic difficulties and research problems; and finally all the informants who gave of their time and knowledge to contribute to the research.

I am also indebted to the Killie Campbell Africana Library for permitting me access to their archival collections, and to Professor T. Cope of the University of Natal, the Essery family of Riet Valley, and Jenny Marrot for their assistance in the location of new sources. The financial assistance of the Human Sciences Research Council and the University of the Witwatersrand Senior Bursary Fund are gratefully acknowledged.

Finally, I owe much to the support and companionship of my friends and fellow students, especially Jill, Leslie and Rena.

## INTRODUCTION

The rise of the Zulu state in the early nineteenth century under its most famous king, Shaka, is probably the best known event in the precolonial history of southern Africa. As such, it has become the focus of more general debates surrounding the writing and interpretation of the history of the precolonial era in this area.

Precolonial history was largely ignored by the early settler historians. Insofar as they considered it at all, they did so in terms of theories of migrations and the populating of Africa. The precolonial societies encountered by the first settlers were dismissed as being 'barbarous', 'backward' and 'warlike'.<sup>1</sup> Early missionary amateur historians were similarly influenced by the Darwinian and diffusionist trends of late Victorian scholarship. In many instances, having resided in African societies and having become intimately acquainted with their way of life however, the missionaries tended to focus their writings squarely on the African societies, evoking the notion of the 'noble savage'.<sup>2</sup>

With the growth of the myth that Bantu-speakers crossed the Limpopo at the same time as the first Dutch landed at the Cape - an essential aspect of the justification of apartheid in South Africa - precolonial history gained a degree of attention sufficient to ensure that officially curtailed limits were placed on the period of precolonial inhabitation of southern Africa.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1950s precolonial history began to play a further role in underwriting white rule. It was increasingly invoked to justify the 'retribalization' of surplus Africans in urban areas, and in the creation of nine, supposedly historically immutable ethnic identities - each ultimately to become an independent 'homeland' (or two).<sup>4</sup> Within these ethnic divisions, the precolonial history of southern Africa was initially left to the early ethnographers like van Warmelo, Schapera, Stayt, Breutz, Myburgh and the Kriges.<sup>5</sup> However, working with essentially structural-functional frameworks, and in many instances, themselves on the state payroll, these scholars failed to break free of the ideological constraints of the ethnic categories imposed on them.<sup>6</sup> Their brief references to the precolonial past of the 'tribes' which were their focus, were flawed by the implicit assumption that rural African societies of the early twentieth century differed little from rural societies a century earlier.

The 1960s saw attempts to move beyond this systematized and normative picture of precolonial societies, as scholars like Gluckman and Omer-Cooper identified phenomena in the precolonial past such as the rise of states and the growth of interstate conflict, and sought to account for them.<sup>7</sup> The 1970s saw the more Africanist focus of these scholars develop into two new directions at the popularly political and academic levels. The first of these, emerging together with the political growth of the black consciousness movement, presented a highly idealised, if inconsistent view of prewhite life in southern Africa. Notions of communal ownership, social equality and/or social mobility, responsive and responsible chiefship, liberally sprinkled with images of power and glory, were the characteristics of precolonial history typically invoked by the idea of a black renaissance.<sup>8</sup> Variations

on these themes have survived into the 1980s to become embedded in the ideological appropriation of the pre-colonial past by groups as politically diverse as the African National Congress and Inkatha.<sup>9</sup>

The other development of the 1970s was the infusion of early Africanist academic writings with more materialist concerns. This provided historians with crucial new tools for the conceptualization of precolonial societies. The phenomenon of 'state formation', and most notably the emergence of the Zulu state has been the chief subject of this approach. The last two decades have thus seen considerable debate over explanations of the rise of the Zulu state, with contributions from both outside and within a Marxist paradigm.

Amidst the controversy there is consensus that while the reign of Shaka saw the emergence of a sophisticated state in south-east Africa, this state was preceded by a number of powerful polities whose evolution and growth had roots in the events and trends of the later eighteenth century. One of the earliest attempts to account for state formation was Gluckman's thesis that the later eighteenth century saw a situation of population build-up in south-east Africa, creating social tensions and conflict over available resources - resolved by the imposition of central controls.<sup>10</sup> The population pressure hypothesis gained a further dimension from the ecological insights provided by the pioneering work of Webb and Daniel on the settlement preferences of northern Nguni - speakers.<sup>11</sup> Webb and Daniel noted that the capitals of the most important early states all occupied sites from which a particular combination of ecological zones could be easily exploited. These similarities of environment, they argued, suggested that mounting population pressure led to increased conflict



over particularly scarce combinations of resources, heightened by drought and famine around the turn of the century.

Building on the population-ecology hypothesis, Guy subsequently developed an explanation of state formation in terms of an ecological crisis precipitated by demographic pressure.<sup>12</sup> Guy argued that a particular combination of environmental resources was essential for the precolonial economy of Zululand. Over and above access to adequate water resources and soils for crop cultivation, the utilisation of a variety of veld types was crucial to successful animal husbandry. Guy noted that grazing in Zululand depended on the availability of two grass types, sourveld and sweetveld: the former being palatable and nutritious in the growing season only, and the latter providing good grazing all year round. Access to both types was, Guy argued, a fundamental need for precolonial pastoralism. The existence of these combinations in uniquely favourable circumstances in a relatively large number of areas in Zululand, led to rapid increases in population. However, because of an inherent fragility in the grassland regime - in particular its vulnerability to the depredations of intensive human activity - this led to a crisis, considerably exacerbated once the population density made migration to new areas difficult. The probable outcome of this ecological disequilibrium, Guy suggested, would have been 'increasing violence between social groups living in an area as they struggled for access to diminishing resources'.<sup>13</sup>

It was this struggle which Guy saw as allowing centralized leaders to emerge with control over larger areas in which they sought to rationalize access to resources and to implement more effective controls over the environment. The extension of chiefly power in this

way was effected by means of the amabutho - the formation of units of young men to fight and labour on the chief's behalf.

The notion of an ecological crisis is supported by the dendroclimatological evidence derived from Hall's analysis of single tree sample from the Howick area. His study suggests that the late eighteenth century saw a trend towards increased precipitation followed by a sharp decline in rainfall in the early nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> However, both the dendroclimatological evidence and the thesis of ecological crisis propounded by Guy are, in a number of key respects, open to doubt. Firstly, there is some doubt as to the scientific basis of the tree sample used and to its representivity of the sub-region.<sup>15</sup> Secondly, the dendroclimatological data also indicate that the precipitation pattern of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was part of a recurrent fifty year cycle, although possibly being an instance of particularly good rain followed by especially severe drought. Recent archaeological research has extended the period in which the farming settlement of south-east Africa is known to have prevailed at least twice as far back as was previously supposed, to an antiquity of some sixteen hundred years.<sup>16</sup> This raises the question of why an ecological crisis precipitating state formation did not come to a head far sooner than the late eighteenth century. Thirdly, on the basis of wider archaeological evidence, Hall has suggested that Acock's reconstruction of precolonial veld-types, on which Guy's arguments draw heavily, demands considerable modification. In the lowland areas, Hall argues, there was sufficient grazing for both the summer and the winter months. It was only in the upland areas that an ecological instability might have prevailed. While the notion of an ecological crisis, especially in the uplands, may yet prove to be a crucial

factor in the history of south-east Africa, the archaeological evidence suggests that it alone was not the motor behind state formation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

One explanation of state formation advanced that does account for the emergence of states in the second half of the eighteenth century has reference to the external force of mercantile capital. A connection between ivory trading at Delagoa Bay and the emergence of the states to the south of the port was initially proposed by Smith, and subsequently developed by Slater and Hedges.<sup>17</sup>

The rigid schema of social epochs which characterizes Slater's analysis is both generalized and distorting of the historical reality of south-east African history, but the unambiguously materialist framework which he employs suggests away in which participation in the expanding Delagoa Bay trade could have prompted chiefs to increase the production of trade goods (ivory) through the extension of their controls over the labour power of their subjects. Slater's focus on labour suggests that rather than a situation of population pressure, a growing labour shortage, heightened by the depredations of the Madiathule famine, was more likely to have been a feature of this period. Indeed, the amabutho system, and the associated restrictions on marriage can be as easily read in terms of a labour shortage problem as one of population pressure, by making rationalized, centralized labour available to chiefs for longer periods, and by eliminating labour power decreases as a result of pregnancy and infant care.<sup>18</sup>

Hedge's study of trade and politics in south-east Africa followed soon after that of Slater, periodising

the fluctuations and shifts in the Delagoa Bay trade more closely. Hedges argued that after 1750, the demand for ivory at Delagoa Bay rose, and that this markedly stimulated competition for its supply, and for the monopolisation of trade routes. By c.1800, the trade in ivory had been superseded by a demand for cattle at Delagoa Bay. While hunting was a production process which demanded a degree of centralized labour, the shift from a commodity of little local value like ivory, to cattle, a commodity of enormous local value, Hedges argues, sparked off intense competition, an escalation of cattle raiding activities and the vastly increased centralization and militarization of aggregates of labour power. It was these circumstances which, he suggests, gave rise to the amabutho.<sup>19</sup>

Slater conceptualizes change in response to the Delagoa Bay trade in terms of a transition from a feudal mode of production to absolutism.<sup>20</sup> Slater's feudal mode of production is inappropriately applied to the pre-state societies of south-east Africa where productive relations differed markedly from those of feudal Europe in terms of land tenure, the labour process and the nature of surplus extraction. Although Slater defines a social epoch as being distinguished from its predecessors by the emergence of a new kind of social and political order, the transition from a feudal to an absolutist state, is, as described by Slater, a mutation rather than a transformation. Moreover, the notion of an absolutist state developing out of the feudal state seems an inadequate way of conceptualizing the enormous changes identified in the social and political relations of the period. While the Shakan state and the absolutist states of Europe may have shared certain features such as centralized armies, the historic forces bringing about the two systems were very different. The emergence

of the absolutist states of Europe was essentially a form of readjustment rather than a form of social revolution. In the European context, absolutist states are understood to have come about as a result of the partial surrender to monarchies, of the political and economic sovereignty of the feudal aristocracies. This shift is considered to be a consequence of pressure exerted on the aristocracies by a peasant revival, and/or by the emergence of a flourishing bourgeoisie.<sup>21</sup> Neither of these features was present in the precolonial states of south-east Africa. Likewise, the post-c.1750 period was marked, not by the struggle for power between aristocracy and monarchy, which characterized the emergence of absolutism in Europe, but rather, by the coalescence of a new and increasingly powerful aristocracy united behind the monarch, and sharply distinguished from the remainder of society.

Hedges, in conceptualizing the emergence of state societies, also fails to come to grips with the nature and extent of the changes involved. He sees in the state period the maintenance of an earlier lineage mode of production, characterized by the continued location of agricultural production in the homestead, but complemented and extended by centralized political structures such as the amabutho. The Zulu state is thus seen as developing out of and as extending a lineage mode of production.<sup>22</sup>

In contrast, Bonner has more recently argued that the effect of the Delagoa Bay trade was to cause a transition to an entirely different social formation, finally crystallized by the crisis of the Madiathule famine.<sup>23</sup> Bonner argued that the effects of the trade were uneven, as some lineages around the king gained the means to control other lineages, and to usurp the economic controls hitherto wielded by the society's elders. What

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emerged, Bonner suggests, was a 'new tributary mode of production, replete with a new division of labour, the interruption of the homestead heads' control over reproduction and production,<sup>24</sup> and a new aristocratic class closely allied to the monarchy. Implicit in Bonner's model is the crucial recognition that the apparent continuity of ideological forms across this period masked real changes in the social order.

Bonner's model of change seems to be supported by the available archaeological evidence. Hall has noted the absence of trade goods at the single pre-Shakan 'royal' settlement as yet excavated, that of the Buthelezi capital of eLangeni.<sup>25</sup> This, he argues, suggests that the Buthelezi, a small peripheral chiefdom, was unable to break into the mercantile trade, and lends support to the suggestion that the struggle for the control of the Delagoa Bay trade was of crucial importance in the emergence of state societies. Evidence that the effect of the trade was to cause a transition from lineage-based societies to tributary states, he argues further, is provided by the signs that decentralized settlement patterns were superseded by greater concentrations of people and wealth for the centralized utilization of the best lands.

The strength of Bonner's model of a transition to a new tributary society lies in two key areas. It accords far greater significance to the changes of this period than do either Slater or Hedges' models. At the same time, it takes cognizance of the signs of the previous order sedimented in the new society - the basis of the continuity posited by Hedges, and more implicitly, also present in Slater's work - but reconceptualizes its continued existence in terms of ideology. For Bonner this period saw

the emergence of new principles of structuring social organisation; new methods of surplus appropriation; a new division of labour; a new aristocratic class (composed of regional and military leaders and the close family of the dominant lineage); a new dynamic of production, centered on the production of surplus for the luxury consumption of this group, and new content in old ideological shells.<sup>25</sup> (my emphasis)

The continuity of the ideology of kinship in the new tributary mode of production was there to mask the new relations of production, to legitimate new social divisions, and to entrench the new social order. Although not developed by Bonner, this perspective allows for an examination of the social and political cohesion of the new states which moves beyond explanations of state formation predicated on the development of mechanisms of coercion alone.

This study takes as its starting point, the thesis attested to by both documentary and archaeological data that state societies emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in response to the penetration of mercantile capital in south-east Africa. It accepts, as a working hypothesis, the notion developed by Hedges and supported in Bonner's model, that the pre-state societies of south-east Africa were essentially lineage-based. However, it attempts to take further and to restrict their usage of the term. Hammond-Tooke has recently criticised the application of the concept of the lineage mode of production in a south-east African context on two grounds. Noting that the concept was originally applied to social formations that have been classified by anthropologists as segmentary societies in which political integration derives from the political relations of territory-owning descent groups whose relationships are calibrated on a genealogy and can thus be fairly precisely stated, Hammond-Tooke argues that functional descent groups were absent in the south-east African context. It is his contention



that the 'on the ground' reality of social relationships saw the widespread dispersal of clans and that territorial and political units were not coterminous with descent groups. He further points out that 'there were no clan genealogies on which to structure 'hierarchies' of segments'.<sup>26</sup>

Hammond-Tooke's claim that lineage-based societies were absent in south-east Africa is well-demonstrated for the period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, his claim that no such thing as a society comprised of genealogically related hierarchies of lineages has ever existed in southern Africa, is not borne out by his arguments, based as they are entirely on twentieth-century fieldwork of Reader (1966), Preston-Whyte (1984), Cook (1930), Davies (1927), Hunter (1936), E. Krige (1937, 1983), Webster (1960s), A. Kuper (1975), Stayt (1931) and Kuckertz (1984).<sup>27</sup> The intervening two hundred years, between the period for which the model of lineage-based societies is proposed, and that for which Hammond-Tooke has demonstrated the existence of only residual lineage identities without corporate structures, was a period of enormous change away from lineage-based polities. The atomized social units identified by the twentieth century anthropologists are a result of the supersession of lineage societies by the great states, and the effects of subsequent social engineering and population dislocation by British administrators, and still later, by the apartheid government. Given the scale and extent of these changes a method of illuminating precolonial societies by extrapolation backwards from twentieth century data is not adequate. This crucial reservation must negate much of Hammond-Tooke's attack on what he considers to be Hedges' wilful misuse of evidence to prove that in precolonial times, hunting took place on a lineage basis.

Hammond-Tooke correctly points out that Hedges' two sources on this point both state that hunting was organized by political officers. However, both references are to twentieth century sources: they no more disprove Hedges' model than they prove it. Hammond-Tooke's criticism is irrelevant and Hedges' notion reverts to being a largely theoretical proposition.<sup>28</sup>

Holding to the orthodoxy that religious institutions are the features of society most resistant to change, Hammond-Tooke has similarly argued that twentieth-century evidence revealing the existence of limited effective cult groups reflects a former state of affairs, and supports the assumption of limited descent groupings in the past.<sup>29</sup> The attribution of continuity to religious institutions is an anthropological commonplace but, in the northern Nguni-speaking case at least, religious institutions have never been demonstrated to have remained unchanged over time.

Ultimately, Hammond-Tooke himself acknowledges that neither of these arguments proves that early southern-African societies were not based on hierarchies of lineages. He notes, 'All that can be said is that there is no clear evidence for this: on the contrary, the evidence seems to point equally to a bilateral or or cognatic previous system as much as it does to a segmentary lineage system'.<sup>30</sup> In support of this contention, Hammond-Tooke again looks to data from twentieth century comparative studies.

The historical reconstruction of the pre-state societies of the early eighteenth century is complicated by a paucity of relevant data and an almost exclusive reliance on oral sources. The nature of the evidence is such that the 'on the ground reality' of social

relations remains elusive. Although there is no historical evidence to support Hammond-Tooke's suggestions, a valuable contribution to precolonial studies lies in the questions arising out of present-day studies which he has forced historians to ask about precolonial societies. Although the surviving oral traditions indicate strongly that the cognitive basis of early social relations was framed in terms of claimed genealogical connections, Hammond-Tooke's work is a reminder that, in all probability, other social relations and forms of social cohesion - such as marriage alliances and socialization through circumcision schools - prevailed, the record of which no longer exists.<sup>31</sup>

The designation of the pre-state societies of south-east Africa as lineage-based is not meant to suggest that the society was necessarily composed of corporate lineage structures. It merely recognizes the pervasive importance of kinship and the centrality of ideas of common descent i.e. not so much as the social reality 'on the ground' but as an important ideological 'cement' of the society.

Constrained by the lack of evidence on other forms of social relationship, the phenomenon which historians of early precolonial societies can fruitfully investigate is this dominance of kinship ideology and its emphasis in the oral traditions. Pointers also exist which suggest that agnatic kinship constituted a dominant social principle more widely, and that local polities in the early eighteenth century were very different from the states of the late eighteenth century.

Signs of this are to be found in evidence from early shipwreck accounts in which there are no indications of

the existence of centralized capitals, or any other institutions of state.<sup>32</sup> Although it was claimed in one account dating from the 1680s that all barter proceeded with the king's consent, shipwreck parties found local inhabitants eager to engage in trade, and experienced no interventions by chiefs or kings guarding monopolies.<sup>33</sup> The survivors of the Stavenisse shipwreck in 1686 noted that cattle taken in war were not redistributed by the king, but were 'divided' amongst the king and the 'great men', while metal booty was kept by the heroes who obtained it.<sup>34</sup> They commented that there was little distinction between the king and the common people beyond the wearing of a distinctive pelt.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, the basis of chiefly power was identified to lie in two areas, the settlement of disputes and in ritual seniority.<sup>36</sup> It was commented that

the oldest man governs the rest, for all that live together are of kin, and they submit to his government.<sup>37</sup>

The kin basis of society also receives some confirmation from the difficulty experienced by early traders in obtaining slaves because of the strength of the social bonds between all members of the society.<sup>38</sup>

The existence of lineage-based societies in pre-state south-east African is further suggested by the surviving oral record. This occurs in two forms: the first is data which appear to refer directly to the pre-state period; the second is the residue of the previous social order discernible in the state societies discussed in the oral record.

Oral data which purport to refer to pre- and early state societies are to be found in the traditions of origin of the first states, i.e. those whose initial aggregation dates back to the period c.1750.<sup>39</sup> The oral record of only two of these early states, that of

the Mthethwa and Qwabe, survives in a sufficiently coherent form to permit detailed analysis.

The initial expansion and earliest social cohesion of both the Mthethwa and Qwabe polities is cast in the oral traditions in terms of kinship ties. The lineages of both chiefdoms of this period claimed a common ancestry and genealogically demonstrable connections. Close examination of the traditions of origin of these lineages reveals a pattern of contradictions in the data suggestive of the invention of the claims of genealogical connection, and their superimposition on other historical data. This suggests that in the earliest phases of both Mthethwa and Qwabe expansion, social cohesion was secured through the creation of links of agnatic kinship.<sup>40</sup>

Elsewhere, John Wright and I have argued that precisely such a process would have characterized pre-state lineage-based societies.<sup>41</sup> In a polity of that period, certain lineage groupings would have dominated in certain areas. Outsiders moving into the region probably sought to forge political links with the inhabitants in a variety of ways: by entering into patron-client relationships (possibly in the form of cattle loans (*sisa*)); through participation in local circumcision lodges; and by taking part in the collective labours of the community, such as hunting and fighting.

In these activities a loose idiom of kinship was likely to be employed, manifested in the calling of patrons 'father' and others of the community by similar family titles. Outsiders would have been concerned to assimilate with the community as closely as possible and the kinship idiom which governed their daily activities would have been reinforced through the creation and maintenance of genealogical links, fictive if necessary,

with the dominant lineage grouping. Wright and I contended that notions of kinship operated in polities of this nature to bring about the political incorporation of constituent lineages into a 'family'. We argued that there would have been an on-going process whereby differences of dialect and custom between lineages in the same polity tended to become blurred and eventually disappear. Politically, linguistically and culturally, these polities would have tended towards, although probably never have realized, homogeneity.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the development of new institutions of domination, notably the amabutho, facilitated the emergence of a form of centralized authority and gave to chiefs a new coercive capacity. As the ability of centralized chiefs to coerce subjects increased, and as their capacity to monopolise the benefits of the trade was extended, there was less and less incentive for the incorporation of subjects into the body politic through the idiom of kinship which imposed obligations on rulers as well as ruled. Concomitantly, there was more and more incentive to use power to exclude them from the central decision-making process.<sup>42</sup>

Mthethwa traditions which refer to this period of the dynamic expansion of trading states are sharply distinguished from traditions about the earlier period. Amongst the Mthethwa, the groups incorporated in this later phase did not claim genealogical connections with the Mthethwa ruling lineage. This suggests that at that time, as a result of changing circumstances the Mthethwa were sufficiently powerful to enter into relations of tribute exaction, backing their demands with force.<sup>43</sup> Mthethwa traditions concerned with this period differ markedly from traditions which refer to

Qwabe expansion at much the same time. The emergence of the Qwabe polity, in response to a spiral of conflict in the sub-region rather than in response to the trade itself, saw a similar expansion of the Qwabe military capacity but without comparable processes of social stratification. Thus, the disjuncture which characterizes the Mthethwa traditions is not found to the same extent in the traditions of the Qwabe - rather Qwabe growth saw the continuation of close assimilation with subject lineages, the consolidation of a core group and the expulsion of other groups. The Qwabe polity did not undergo the same structural transformations as the Mthethwa state, and the signs of the achievement of social cohesion by means of an ideology of kinship in Qwabe oral traditions thus continue to be marked in the later period.

Although the data in the Mthethwa and Qwabe traditions of origin point to the existence of pre-state lineage-based societies and affirm the notion of a major transition, the bulk of the traditions were recorded c.1900, some 150 years after the event. The question which must now be addressed concerns the effect on the traditions of the intervening years between the period which they purport to describe and the time of their transcription. The contradictions in many traditions of origin suggest that they were largely manufactured claims. A question of considerable complexity is that of establishing with some certainty when they were invented.

The unpacking of over a century's effects on even a single oral tradition, is a highly detailed and complex exercise which, with recent advances in the methods of oral tradition analysis, is only now becoming feasible. This review looks forward to seeing such an exercise carried out on a systematic basis, by pointing to the

broad effects of the period c.1750-1900, on the origin traditions of the Mthethwa and Qwabe.

Working backwards from the time when their traditions of origin were first recorded, it should be noted that the period between 1830 and 1900 saw the advance and decline of certain lineages in response to changing local circumstances. As an individual lineage gained in political preeminence it may have emphasised its connections with the ruling lineage, in some cases claiming for itself a greater antiquity or seniority. Likewise, a lineage which experienced chiefly disfavour may have found itself, through a variety of means, being increasingly distanced from the ruling lineage, in genealogical terms. Such flux would undoubtedly have been a constant feature of the political scene. By way of contrast, events which would have had a more or less even effect across an entire chiefdom, causing patterned shifts or alterations in the status claims of lineages, would have been of the nature of major social upheavals and would have been rare. The major event of significance for the Mthethwa chiefdom in the post-Shakan nineteenth century was the breaking of Mthethwa ties with the Zulu royal house and the participation of the Mthethwa in the Zulu civil war on the side of Zibhebhu.<sup>44</sup> The effects of this on Mthethwa oral traditions were probably limited to traditions concerning Mthethwa - Zulu relations, and the traditions of the Mthethwa ruling lineage, for the latter owed its position to the promotion and support of the Zulu kings. Traditions concerned with the relationship between the Mthethwa ruling lineage and the other lineages of the chiefdom were unlikely to have been affected by a changing relationship with the Zulu. Indeed, there appear to be no indications of any other major events which might have been of significance to the latter, for this period was one of stability for



the Mthethwa under the long rule of Mlandela and subsequently, his son, Sokwetshata. The post-Shakan period had rather different effects on the oral traditions of the Qwabe, for the Qwabe chiefdom disintegrated after the death of Shaka and its scattered lineages were subject to few uniform influences.<sup>45</sup> Thus, although for different reasons, the traditions of the Mthethwa and the Qwabe were unlikely to have experienced large-scale, common manipulation after the reign of Shaka.

Under Shaka, it will be argued in this thesis, traditions of origin of subordinate chiefdoms, and of their ruling lineages in particular, underwent major restructuring vis-a-vis Zulu oral traditions. However, there are no indications of anything in this period which was likely to have precipitated a major adulteration of the traditions of origin of the subordinate Mthethwa and Qwabe lineages vis-a-vis their respective ruling lineages. Although Shaka ousted both Mondise, Dingiswayo's successor, and killed Phakathwayo, the Qwabe chief, the new chiefs whom he recognised in their places were members of the Mthethwa and Qwabe ruling houses, albeit of junior branches. In that sense, their incorporation under the Zulu saw little internal intervention in the chiefdoms.<sup>46</sup>

The only period in the history of the traditions concerning the early growth of Mthethwa and Qwabe which was likely to have seen tampering occur on a systematic basis seems to be that of the heyday of the emergence of trading states—in the Mthethwa case, the latter half of the reign of Jobe into the reign of Dingiswayo. It could be argued that this period of an all-time high in the Delagoa Bay trade might have seen the manipulation of traditions of origin as a means of limiting the benefits of the trade to a small group, and of legitimating this monopoly. In all probability, this

did occur to a certain extent, but the questions which must be posed are: what were the criteria determining which groups were to be able to claim genealogical connections with the ruling lineage and which were to be denied this opportunity; and secondly, why was the unity of the privileged echelon of each society framed in terms of agnatic kinship?

The evidence of the Mthethwa case indicates that the majority of the groups which claimed genealogical connections with the ruling lineage were incorporated before those who did not claim to be kin. Indeed, the manufacture of such claims could not have been affected overnight, but would have had to have occurred over a lengthy period. It can be inferred from this that, in the early states, access to the privileged sector of society was initially determined by historical connections with the ruling lineage, although subsequently over time, outsider groups would have been admitted on a similar basis. In other words, while some of the claims of a genealogical connection with the ruling lineage may have been invented in the state period, it was the prior existence of such claims amongst the lineages of the original nucleus of the chiefdom which gave to the ruling echelons in state societies subsequently, a form of cohesion cast in terms of agnatic kinship. The polities which experienced minimal changes in the later eighteenth century such as the Qwabe accorded a far greater importance to kinship connections than those polities, like Mthethwa, which underwent more extensive transformations. From this it can be inferred that kinship and genealogical mapping was considerably more significant in the pre-state period.

While evidence which appears to refer to the pre-state period is rare, evidence on the states of south-east

Africa, and the Zulu state in particular, is comparatively rich. It is, moreover, in many ways suggestive of the kind of societies which preceded the rise of states. Signs of pre-state societies can be found in rituals of state, and sedimented in the traditions of origin of the new states. This is not to suggest that religious institutions and ideas about society are more resistant to change than other features of society and that they tend to reflect former states of affairs. Rather, both play a key role in the entrenchment and legitimation of new ideas and new social orders, but their strength in this respect is derived from their appearance of continuity with the past. Close examination of the rituals and traditions reveals a residue of previous societies. In particular, the form of ancestor worship, and the concept of the hereditary kingship which prevailed in state societies strongly suggests that the principle of agnatic descent has a long history in the south-east Africa. However, in the various forms in which they were preserved, these residues of the past were subjected to processes of selection and restructuring. The identification of these interventions of the state period is a necessary preliminary to using these data to illuminate pre-state societies.

The case for the existence of precolonial lineage-based societies thus waits on the divestment of oral evidence of some of its subsequent ideological overlays. It is to this necessarily prior task of illuminating the effects of the state period on traditions of origin and the emergence of state ideologies which this thesis addresses itself. To sum up then, the phrase 'lineage-based' is employed with a limited meaning and in preference to the term 'lineage mode of production' more commonly used by Hedges and Bonner. The original observational derivants of the latter

analytical category were the twentieth century lineage societies of West Africa which differ markedly from precolonial and precapitalist lineage societies.<sup>47</sup> As the theory of precolonial modes of production is as yet in its infancy, and remains hotly debated, it would likewise be premature to engage in the rechristening of the precolonial social epochs, and indeed, such an exercise is beyond the scope of this thesis.

In this study, the term lineage is used to refer to all the descendants of a common ancestor in the male line, amongst whom very exact connections were traceable. Clan is used to refer to a group of lineages which did not marry, and who claimed descent from a common ancestor who could be very remote. Where clans split taking new clan names (izibongo) for themselves, and intermarried with one another, their common ancestry and continued, but altered, relationship is acknowledged in their designation as 'collateral clans'. Membership of lineages and clans is therefore understood to depend on birth (or in some cases, the invention of claims of common descent). Neither of these units was necessarily coterminous with a specific territorial unit, either in the pre-state period, or subsequently. Splintering, clan fission and geographical spread, as well as the incidence of individual and small groups of refugees, were likely to have been features of all precolonial societies, and would have seen non-kin constantly settling alongside one another. In lineage-based societies however, as was suggested earlier, political incorporation of outsiders would have, over time, entailed the creation of claims of common descent with the hosts. In such societies, territorial units would have manifested a tendency towards genealogical homogeneity - something which probably never achieved the condition of being fully realised. In state societies, for a

number or historically specific reasons to be illuminated in this study, social cohesion took another form, and territorial units remained to a larger extent genealogically heterogenous.

The term chiefdom is used to refer to a political unit occupying a defined territorial area, under an independent, or semi-independent chief. In terms of the propositions advanced above, pre-state chiefdoms would have tended towards a greater degree of genealogical homogeneity than the chiefdoms and ultimately, the states, of the later period - the Zulu state coming ultimately to contain within itself an enormous range of genealogically heterogenous clans.

Some explanation of the use of the term Zulu in this study is therefore also necessary. In the phrases 'Zulu chiefdom', and later 'Zulu kingdom' and 'Zulu state', it refers to the genealogically heterogenous groups of lineages which recognised the rule of Senzangakhona, and later Shaka. In the pre-Shakan 'Zulu chiefdom', the lineages comprising the chiefdom were fewer, and less heterogenous than those which comprised the later state. The geographical limits of the 'Zulu chiefdom' and the 'Zulu kingdom' were constantly shifting in the period considered in this study. Thus the term Zululand is used simply as a geographical designation for the area between the Phongola and the Thukela rivers, while that of Natal is used to refer to the area between the Thukela and the Mzimkhulu river.

'Zulu' is also used in this study to refer to those lineages which claimed to be directly connected to the line of Zulu kings, and who laid claim to the clan-name (isibongo) of 'Zulu'. In this sense, the term usually occurs in the forms 'Zulu clan', 'Zulu ruling

lineage', 'Zulu royal house', and even 'collateral Zulu clan', although the latter usually assumed another isibongo. These distinctions should indicate that the use of the term Zulu in no way endorses the idea of a Zulu ethnic identity. Rather, the thrust of this study is to challenge notions of its historic immutability and legitimacy. This will be attempted through close examination of the emergence of the Zulu kingdom, and an analysis of the means by which it achieved social cohesion, and in particular the construction of a state ideology.

The neglect, by scholars, of the role of ideology in securing the social cohesion of state societies like that of the Zulu, has had ramifications on the methods of analysis which they have brought to bear on their sources, and in particular, on oral evidence. Although cognizance has been taken of issues such as bias and memory fallibility in the use of oral traditions, there has been no recognition of the effects of the role of oral traditions in precolonial Zulu society on the content of the traditions.

Chapter one attempts to redress this imbalance by indicating how, in non-literate, precapitalist societies where ancestor worship figured prominently, history, and data on origins in particular, were key areas where ideological restructuring occurred; and how oral testimony was the primary means whereby new ideas about society were circulated and became entrenched. The central proposition of the first chapter is that while traditions may contain some direct information on precolonial ideologies, the bulk of the historical evidence on past ideologies is to be obtained through the deconstruction of the ideological artefact, the oral tradition itself. It will be argued that the oral tradition can provide information not only, as has been generally assumed, on the ideological intervention of the powerholders of a historic society, but

also on the signs of the struggle in which they engaged, and on the resistance and opposition of subaltern cultures. Oral traditions, like ideology itself, it will be argued, were not pliant tools in the hands of society's rulers.

Utilizing the methods for the analysis of oral traditions outlined in the first chapter, the next chapter goes on to look at the precursor polity out of which the Zulu state emerged, that of the Mthethwa. The growth of Mthethwa in response to the expansion of the Delagoa Bay trade is traced, focusing on the structural transformations underlying the transition from a lineage- to a tributary-based society. It will be suggested however, that, for a number of reasons, the Mthethwa paramountcy under Dingiswayo failed to develop its coercive power sufficiently to counter the growing militarisation of its neighbours, and further, that it failed to underwrite coercion with adequate ideological forms of social cohesion and control, leading ultimately to its defeat by the Ndwandwe.

Following Zwide's triumph over Dingiswayo, and the rout of the Mthethwa army, the Zulu found themselves in a critical situation in terms of manpower and resource needs. Fear of attack by the Qwabe as well, led them to attack the latter, despite their apparently far greater strength. Chapter three examines Zulu-Qwabe relations in detail, focusing on the processes of and struggles surrounding the incorporation of this group. Close examination of Qwabe traditions of origin reveal signs of their systematic adulteration. In particular, it will be argued that the tradition that the progenitor figure Malandela was the father of Zulu and Qwabe, was a product of the Shakan era and of the difficulties experienced by the Zulu in the effective incorporation of the Qwabe.

With the collapse of Mthethwa support for Shaka, internal opposition to his rule increased, creating an imperative for the reorganization of the Zulu chiefdom from within. Chapter four examines the restructuring of the Zulu clan undertaken by Shaka, in particular, the creation of collateral sub-clans and the effects of intermarriage amongst them facilitating the concentration of wealth at the apex of Zulu society.

Chapter five looks at the first phase of Zulu expansion and the emergence of the early defensive state. It further examines the evolution of these components of the early kingdom into a closed and privileged elite group centered around the Zulu and collateral clans.

In this chapter it is suggested that the claims of these groups to be fellow amantungwa and to have a common origin were manufactured during the reign of Shaka to serve as the basis of their unity and to legitimate their privileged position. It is further argued that the particular form assumed by the hegemonic ideology which was emerging at this time was shaped as much by the resistance encountered to Zulu rule as by the interests of the new rulers.

Chapter six examines the expansion of the Zulu military capacity to levels unprecedented in south-east Africa. It will be argued that the Zulu achievement in this regard was initially shaped by the threat posed to much of Zululand by the Ndwandwe kingdom, under Zwibe. Zwibe's capture of Dingiswayo, and the rout of the Mthethwa c.1817, created a need for the extremely rapid expansion and reorganisation of the remaining army under Shaka. The chapter focuses on the panoply of ideological mechanisms utilized to bring about rapid acquiescence of a diverse group of clans to Zulu hegemony, and acceptance of a new social order. It



will be argued that the intensive training of the amabutho at ritually specific establishments (amakhanda) served to focus their loyalties on the person of the king. Investigation of the enormous differences of status between amabutho will mark an important reconsideration of the notion of the age-basis of the amabutho system, and it will be further argued that the amabutho system served to locate men within a new social hierarchy, and to entrench divisions between privileged and unprivileged in the society.

Chapter seven looks at the emergence of a specifically female state institution in association with the amabutho, fulfilling similar socialization functions, and with a similar capacity for drawing on the labour power of the homestead. It will be argued that these izigodlo were, in addition, responsible for agricultural production at the amakhanda and that the royal monopoly exerted over agricultural production at the amakhanda through a range of prohibitions and restrictions surrounding the izigodlo, provided an important means of control over the men of the amabutho.

This focus on life at the amakhanda indicates the way in which the coercive apparatus of the Zulu state was developed and refined over time, and highlights the role of the amakhanda as the nexus of a process of resocialisation and a forum for the introduction of new ideas about society.

The final chapter examines the extension of Zulu rule over chiefdoms on its periphery and the use of ethnicity to exclude this sector of society from the full benefits of Zulu citizenship whilst subjecting them to processes of intense exploitation.

Social stratification in the early Zulu kingdom has been suggested in the work of previous scholars, but oral traditions, generally conceptualized as presenting a homogeneous picture of society from the view of its rulers, have never been used to illuminate social differentiation. According to oral traditions a vital and dynamic role in the development of precolonial ideological complexes, and reconceptualizing them in terms of a non-reductionist understanding of ideology however, yields evidence of the struggles of the dominant and the dominated. Examined in depth in the third, fifth and final chapters, it represents the beginning of a fundamental shift in emphasis away from ruling class history in the precolonial period.

#### Sources

Precolonial studies of non-literate societies also present an exciting challenge to modern historians because of the relative absence of conventional sources, particularly the paucity of eye-witness accounts. Consequently, precolonial studies are characterized by a search for alternative, often unusual kinds of evidence, and the development of new methods for their animation and utilization in the reconstruction of the precolonial past. This study is based on seven major sources - a mixture of oral testimonies and other forms of oral evidence, early travellers' accounts, and early secondary accounts - some of these hitherto untapped.

The major collections of archival material on the history of precolonial Zululand-Natal are housed in the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban. The most important of these for this study, has been the extensive James Stuart Collection. Stuart (1868-1942), a fluent Zulu linguist, worked for the greater part of his life in Zululand and Swaziland in the colonial administration. In that period, he strove to record as much as he

could of the history, language, oral literature, social customs and mythology of the people amongst whom he was working. He deliberately sought out well-informed persons and interviewed them. The near-verbatim transcripts of his discussions, along with the details of his informants, circumstances and dates of the interviews, make up the core of this collection. A selection of the historical data in the collection are in the process of being published in an edited and annotated form. To date, three volumes of the projected six volume James Stuart Archive series have appeared, containing the testimonies of almost a hundred informants.<sup>48</sup> Extensive use has been made of both the printed archive and the unpublished collection in this study, and throughout, these data has been refracted through the twin prisms of the contemporary circumstances of each informant, as far as they are known, and the contemporary circumstances, interests and motivations of Stuart himself. Although elusive, the latter have been illuminated in a variety of ways: by means of the questions which Stuart selected to address to his informants, through a comparison of his interviews with the work of other scholars known to have interviewed the same informants, and by his own writings. In the 1920s, Stuart produced a series of five Zulu readers which represent his own synthesised account of the data which he marshalled over the years. Invaluable for the reconstruction of his persona in the testimonies, his writings also represent important reference works in their own right.<sup>49</sup>

Another important source, used systematically for the first time in this study, is the Zulu Essay Competition Collection, also housed in the Killie Campbell Library.

This collection comprises the prizewinning essays of two competitions organised in 1942 and 1950, by Killie Campbell, in conjunction with the then Native Education Department. The entrants were African teachers in Zululand and Natal schools. In most cases, the essays are about the history of the entrant's own isibongo and in many instances, the writers have indicated exactly who their informants were. In terms of historical content, the essays are of mixed value. At best, they contain information of astonishing historical depth and surprizing detail. Their typically local emphasis constitutes an important counterweight to the more general character of the data collected by Stuart. The essays with the least historical data and the greatest incoherence are not without worth, for they provide an important measure of the degeneration of oral traditions and, in some instances, the patterns characteristic of poorly preserved data are themselves important indicators of historical processes.

A third collection consulted at the Killie Campbell Library is that of the papers of Guy Vivian Essery (1875-1958), who, like Stuart, was a fluent Zulu linguist and for a long time a resident magistrate in Zululand. He was also an amateur historian, who collected historical data from well-informed persons whom he encountered in the course of his work. These data occurs in two forms in his papers. There are a number of testimonies taken down by Essery which appear to be verbatim transcripts, to which are appended details of the deponents, and the date, place and circumstances of the making of the statement. Valuable historical data are also to be found in Essery's own writings. In some cases, his informants are acknowledged; in other instances where they are not and where the data concerned are known not to have been available at that time in secondary sources, it

can be deduced that Essery obtained it first hand from local informants. The Essery papers which include some of his correspondence, are fascinating for the light which they shed on the interaction between early scholars of the Zulu, and their trade in information, and in particular, on A.T. Bryant's methods of asking strategically placed individuals, like Essery, to collect specific information on his behalf. It was only by accident and the good offices of friends in the Mhlali district where I conducted a period of fieldwork, that I discovered that a selection of Essery's papers have remained in the possession of his descendants on the Natal North Coast family farm. They kindly permitted me access to their collection also filling in much of his background, most importantly, discussing his interest in history and his methods of data collection.

In 1870, the Rev. H. Callaway, a missionary at Springvale in Natal, published The Religious System of the AmaZulu.<sup>50</sup> The book contains the testimonies of over thirty informants from both Zululand and Natal recorded in the 1850s. Most of the testimonies were recorded verbatim in the original Zulu, as dictation lessons by the new missionary, trying to improve his Zulu. The few testimonies which Callaway was obliged to commit to memory and to transcribe later, are clearly distinguished in the text from the others. The Zulu testimonies are accompanied by Callaway's own translations into English, and are characterised by a great sensitivity to nuances in meaning. A typical example of this is Callaway's translation of the word phrase 'ekuqaleni'. He followed missionary convention in translating this as 'in the beginning', but he carefully noted that this was not really accurate.

There is the same obscurity in the Zulu use of this phrase as in our own. We must understand it here as meaning, in the beginning of the present order of things, and not from all eternity,<sup>51</sup>

the latter being the conventional missionary interpretation. In most instances, moreover, Callaway noted down

the circumstances under which the interviews were conducted, the names and social standing of his informants, and the form in which questions were put to them. In a letter to a friend in England, composed at the time when he was collected testimonies, Callaway commented on his method,

I have many hundred pages of Kafir M.S.S. written at dictation at the mouth of different Kaffirs. They are tales, myths, customs etc ... I go over this carefully, write it out clearly, call the Kaffir who has told me the tale, or another, and get him to explain everything I cannot fully understand; the explanations are also written and appended to the paper. This is pure Kaffir, not adulterated by foreign idioms...<sup>52</sup>

Despite the rare rigour of Callaway's recording techniques and the book's status as the earliest collection of such primary material yet extant, Callaway's interviews have never been used in a systematic way as historical evidence. The chief reason for this would seem to lie in the persistence in the mind of early European commentators within Zulu society, and amongst twentieth century students of the precolonial Zulu, of a division between religion and history, and their characterisation as myth and fact respectively. Likewise, Callaway's collection of nursery tales dating from the same period, which display a similar rigour in their transcription, have never been used as historical sources.<sup>53</sup>

Extensive use has also been made of oral traditions recorded in 1983. These were collected in southern Swaziland and northern Zululand from groups which had either been part of the Zulu kingdom earlier in time, or who had close contact with the kingdom, or who claimed origins in common with groups in Zululand. This region was the object of intensive fieldwork because of the concentration in the area of traditions of greater stability and chronological depth than anywhere else in south-east Africa - a point first noted by Bonner in the early 1970s.<sup>54</sup> As some of the groups interviewed left Zululand before the reign of Shaka, others late in his reign, and still others some time after his death, this set of interviews constitutes a crucial means of periodising changes in oral traditions and in the location of influences dating specifically to the Shakan period.

Extensive use has also been made of the diaries of two of the earliest traders in Zululand and Natal, Henry Francis Fynn and Nathaniel Isaacs.<sup>55</sup> These works are essential for the periodisation of events during the reign of Shaka, and are, moreover, the only absolute contemporary sources available. However, the major written texts on which this study draws are the works of A.T. Bryant.<sup>56</sup> Bryant (1865-1953) was for a long time associated with the Mariahill Mission Station in Natal, and was later based at a mission near Eshowe. It was during this period that Bryant collected the bulk of the data for a number of books on Zulu history, society and language.

Although the scholarship, and the archaeological research in particular, of the last two decades has suggested that Bryant's work is probably flawed in a number of vital respects, his writings remain highly influential, indeed, indispensable for scholars. There are two reasons for this. The first of these lies in the sheer

volume of the work - its comprehensiveness, and its wealth of detail. As Shula Marks has noted, Bryant's writings represent 'almost fifty years of work gathering the oral traditions through the length and breadth of Natal from old and knowledgeable African informants who no longer exist'.<sup>57</sup> As such, Bryant's 'archive' is second only to that of Stuart. However, Bryant's writings are characterized by a plethora of disconcerting literary flourishes, with speculations and theories indiscriminately interwoven with historical data, and his sources are largely unnamed. As such the deficiencies of Bryant's works as historical sources are the exact antithesis of the virtues of the Stuart interviews. A major thrust of this study will lie in the unpacking of some of Bryant's theories, notably those concerning the origins of the inhabitants of Zululand-Natal, and the identification of patterns of evidence distorting his work. However, ascription of greater validity to direct testimonies like those of the Stuart collection should not be taken too far. The great advantage in Bryant's writings which is absent in the Stuart collection, is precisely that which has been the most deplored, the overt presence of the scholar. This permits the easier deduction of his methods and estimation of the extent of his interventions in his texts. In a sense, the strengths and weaknesses of Stuart and Bryant's works are the inverse of each other, and the two sources lend themselves to a complementary usage. It is this articulation which constitutes the methodological spine of the discussion in the following chapters.



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CHAPTER ONEIDEOLOGY AND ORAL TRADITIONS: METHODS FOR THE ANALYSIS  
OF ORAL HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

A key focus of this study is the social differentiation and concomitant ideological transformations which characterized the emergence of the precolonial states of south-east Africa. It will be argued in the following chapters that origin traditions were of particular importance in the emergence of an ideology of state - a perspective which pushes the temporal limits of this thesis back in time, into the period broadly designated as the later Iron Age. Much of the evidence on which it draws is therefore data which purports to refer to the very remote precolonial past.

To date, this remote period has been largely the preserve of archaeological research. The historical yield of the data recovered by the archaeologists occurs primarily in the form of ecological information and evidence on settlement patterns.<sup>1</sup> While material data of this sort can be used to support or refute claims made about the origins of certain groups, historical evidence of past ideologies survives in words alone. However, contemporary written accounts are only available for the last four years of the period covered by this study. As a result, this thesis draws heavily on oral history, although other sources of data - linguistic, ethnographical, archaeological and ecological - are used throughout, both to illuminate the traditions from within, and to corroborate the historical evidence derived from them.

The rubric 'oral history' refers to a variety of methodologies, and the use of many different kinds of sources. The most important characteristic common to all oral historical evidence is its transmission by word of mouth - spoken, recited or sung. In their attempts to come to grips with the specificity of evidence that is spoken rather than written, and to systematise the various forms in which oral historical evidence occurs, methodologists of oral history have spawned a cumbersome and imprecise terminology for their discipline. Its unwieldiness arises from a dichotomy which exists between the concerns and associated methodologies of the 'Africanist' historians and the new social historians; the former concerned to illuminate the remote precolonial past of Africa through the utilization of oral traditions, and the latter using oral sources primarily for the history of the recent past, often within living memory.

At the most simple level, this dichotomy has led to the development of a relatively rigid distinction between 'oral tradition' - tacitly recognized as the preserve of the Africanists, and adhering to Vansina's early criterion as being the product of a 'chain of transmission' over a number of generations<sup>2</sup> - and what is termed 'oral history' by the social historians from Essex University<sup>3</sup> or 'oral testimony' (David Henige's designation for all non-traditional oral evidence)<sup>4</sup> - referring primarily to personal reminiscences and life histories, the meat of so much contemporary social history.

It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that the terminological distinction between 'oral tradition' and 'oral history'/'oral testimony' in fact reflects an implicit criticism by users of the latter type of evidence that there is little material of historical value in the

'oral traditions' of Africa, particularly for the distant past given the biases and distortions to which 'oral traditions' have been shown to be subject.<sup>5</sup> Certainly, the terrain on which the divide between 'oral tradition' and 'oral history' is located is explicitly that of methodology. Historians within the two 'genres' centered on the universities of Wisconsin and Essex, not only attend separate conferences, but have each developed their own, virtually exclusive, journals of the method of oral historical studies.<sup>6</sup> Information on the technology of oral recordings is possibly the only acknowledged area of common interest. Even that seems to be of limited value, for the technological needs and difficulties of the oral historian in a remote, rural corner of Africa are often very different from those of the urban social historian.

While both journals reflect an active discourse in oral historical studies, the existence of methodological distinctions between them remain largely unqueried and undebated. These distinctions are understood to be located primarily in the differences in time depth for which each 'school' seeks oral evidence as an historical source, an issue which includes the problems of the effect of a 'chain of transmission'. It is clear from the methodological discussion in both journals that oral accounts which have been relayed across a number of generations demand special analytical skills and methods different from those needed for the utilisation of more contemporary, eye-witness accounts. Nonetheless, cognizance must surely be taken of the real and very great dangers that lie in the continued separation in this way, and the development in isolation from one another, of independent modes of analysis of two parts of a single process, that of the oral transmission of history.

The semantic imprecision of the distinctions between 'oral traditions' and 'oral history'/'oral testimonies' is also disturbing. A more useful distinction can be made between the sources (oral traditions and oral testimonies) and the products of the activities of historians (oral history). Indeed, in their own right oral traditions and oral testimonies may be oral history, especially where the informants concerned consider themselves to be actively engaged in the processes of the production of historical knowledge.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover, there lies in the drawing of too fine a distinction between oral traditions and oral testimonies, a danger of losing sight of the way in which these forms of oral historical evidence are both ways of relaying historical information. Oral traditions are communicated through time by means of an ongoing process of testimony and constantly mesh with the personal experiences of the informants. Similarly, testimonies, as the first-hand experience of informants, often draw on traditional historical perceptions, and, in turn, themselves enter a chain of transmission ultimately to evolve into the body of historical information transmitted as 'tradition'. Indeed, this process characterizes the flow of historical information in literate societies as much as in non-literate ones, although in the former, the problems of memory fall away. The historian who records a testimony verbatim, either in writing or on a tape recorder, merely intervenes in this process. Ultimately, when she or he comes to use the testimony, the historian is injected into the same process of transforming the 'testimony' into 'tradition' through its synthesis with other data, although perhaps by means of entirely different methods and in terms of other objectives. At many levels, testimony, tradition and history are interlocked notions.<sup>8</sup>

There is also an essentially unacknowledged sense to the distinction between 'tradition' and 'testimony' as concerned with the difference between 'public' and 'personal' (or 'popular') history. 'Public' history refers to formally presented versions of history, frequently emanating from 'professional' historians within the society. 'Personal' history, as represented in people's own memories and their attempts to make sense of the past, is characteristically individual. The validity of this distinction can be questioned in the same terms as that between 'tradition' and 'testimony'. The personal will always impinge on the individual who deals in the domain of 'public' history, in terms of his/her memory, logic or political allegiance, and vice-versa. It seems doubtful that these two spheres could ever be considered to be sufficiently separate so as to warrant what are rapidly evolving into distinct disciplines. Paul Irwin has observed with reference to his case study of the oral history of Liptako, that the two domains are in practice inseparable.

Liptako's wise old men ... respond consciously to traditions, testing them against the wisdom of their different experiences and the dictates of their various interests, accepting some of what they hear and rejecting some, gradually building up their ideas about the past.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, he notes that even where living informants have not imposed their own views on a tradition, it is likely that in the long chain of transmission lying behind their stories there are those who did just that.<sup>10</sup>

Behind these distinctions between 'tradition' and 'testimony', 'public' and 'personal' history, lies an implicit assumption that in oral form, 'tradition', or 'public' history, reflects the ideology of ruling groups, serving to legitimate their claims to power, rights and dues. Social history using 'oral testimony'/personal reminiscences on the other hand, is considered

either to be free of ideological considerations, or else to be reflective of the culture and ideology of subordinate groups.<sup>11</sup>

The relationship between ideology and traditions has been addressed in a recent publication edited by Hobsbawm and Ranger, The Invention of Tradition. The central premise underlying the five essays of this book is that traditions play a key role in the construction of the ideologies of nationalism, imperialism and radicalism. The great value of these essays lies in their perception of a responsive relationship between traditions and current ideologies.

The term 'invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.<sup>12</sup>

However, though it is acknowledged that traditions draw on the past selectively, the very notion of 'invented' tradition suggests an arbitrary act at a particular point in time, to suit or satisfy particular political or material objectives and as a form of social engineering. This view of traditions seems to draw on an implicitly class-reductionist conception of ideology itself, and on an understanding of ideology as simply imposed from above.

Suggestions of a more satisfactory conceptualization of the relationship between ideology and oral history come from the recent work of the Popular Memory Group at the Center for Cultural Studies, in Birmingham. Whilst continuing to work with the 'public' (dominant memory) and private (popular memory) dichotomy, they affirm the importance of history as an arena of struggle. They define 'popular memory' as a 'dimension of political

practice', an active force in shaping prevailing political consciousness and a site of political struggle.<sup>13</sup> The relationship between 'popular memory' and ideology however, is not investigated by the group. One approach which allows one to take this perspective further is a closer examination of ideology.

Ideology is a notoriously elusive and equivocal concept, and a term widely used with diverse significances. For precapitalist societies most work on ideology and culture draws on the anthropological structural-functional body of theory that, ironically, shares common themes with earlier reductionist and functionalist Marxism.<sup>14</sup> Critiques of these approaches and some of the most exciting new theories of ideology have recently come from non-functionalist Marxism, applied to capitalist societies. Although precapitalist societies are different in a number of crucial ways, these theories provide insights which allow one to go beyond the restricted confines of structural-functionalism. It is to a brief examination of some of these theories that this chapter now turns, before proceeding to see how they can be used to illuminate an understanding of the ideologies of precapitalist societies and their relationship to oral traditions.

In the theory of ideology, reductionism is a problem closely linked to that of economism. The (reductionist) view of ideology as a set of theories and cognitions which express the interests of a particular class derives from Lenin, and the experience of the Russian Revolution.<sup>15</sup> This view asserts the necessary class-belonging of all the elements of an ideology, and ultimately, that all social classes have their own paradigmatic ideologies.

Similar notions implicitly inform orthodox Marxist anthropological notions of ideology and the analysis of oral traditions. Writing on the ideology of the



precapitalist Inca, the French Marxist anthropologist Godelier noted that in the new conquest society, insofar as former relations of production continued to survive and to give form to new relations of production, so too did ideological forms serve both as material and as a schema of representation for the new social relations, i.e. the old ideological forms were able to represent new relations.<sup>16</sup> However, they could only do this, in Godelier's view, by making them appear as something else, something analogous to the former mode of production, an extension of it. This had two effects inevitably characterising the whole ideology of domination - the concealment or the disappearance of the oppressive nature of the new mode of production and the justification of this oppression in the eyes of both the dominated and the dominant. Essentially, Godelier's argument is both economicist and reductionist. While it highlights the key role of the past and of history in the creation of precapitalist ideologies, oral traditions are implicitly considered to be the products or artefacts of ruling group ideologies, and are understood to be imposed on society in the form of a 'false consciousness' functioning to mask the reality of power relations and oppression in the society. This view suggests that no direct or alternative cognitions of the real conditions of life are possible, that the experience of life is a perpetual illusion, and the distortion of reality is at the whim of the ruling class.

The recent ideas of Althusser on the semi-autonomy of politics, aesthetics, ideology and the judiciary have significantly modified this notion of a mechanical reflection, but his thesis that the central mechanism of ideology is the interpellation of individuals as subjects, does not allow for the coexistence of a dominant ideology and any other world view or culture.<sup>17</sup> The problem of reductionism remains. Althusser argues

that the subordinate groups in a society can only formulate their grievances in the language and the logic of the dominant class. The problem with this formulation is that it loses sight of the struggle in which the proponents of a dominant ideology have to engage. E.P. Thompson's suggestion of an eternal friction between the lived experience of the people and imposed consciousness seems more useful.<sup>18</sup>

The term 'culture' also has a long history and a wide range of meanings, but it has increasingly come to refer to the idea of 'the lived experience' of the people and the values which they hold, and as such exists in opposition to the notion of imposed consciousness. As Gramsci has noted, culture in contrast to ideology, is frequently deeply contradictory and heterogeneous in character. Its spontaneity is often chaotic although it demonstrates the capacity to gain in coherence through opposition to other interests. It is a conception of the world, which like ideology, must be understood to be linked to and shaped by 'objective circumstances' of existence, not in the sense of an objective base - the material forces of production controlling the form culture will assume - but rather in the sense of those material forces which limit the range of human responses possible, or exert a pressure on the people who share these conditions to respond to them in a particular way. Practical human activity, Gramsci notes, cannot be separated from human consciousness.<sup>19</sup>

Gramsci's ideas seem to be particularly useful for reaching an understanding of the relationship between ideology and culture, and the process of struggle in which they often seem to engage. Gramsci introduces the notion of hegemony which he uses to capture the actual processes in which the relationship between the

world of ideas of the dominant and dominated vary and agree.<sup>20</sup> He focuses on the transformation and rearticulation of existing ideological elements into new and prevalent or hegemonic ideologies. Ideology is then

... the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position and struggle.<sup>21</sup>

For Gramsci, this process is not simply the replacement of one class ideology by another. A common world view comes to be shared by the dominant group, and allied subordinate groups and as such, it is the organic expression of the whole bloc. This process is not one of building a brand new ideological system, but rather, it is a process of criticism of existing ideological complexes, and a process of transformation and rearrangement in which the new ideology is built up in course of political and economic struggles.

The ideological elements involved are drawn from a variety of sources and different interest groups, but the unity stems from an articulating principle, and that is always provided by the hegemonic group. Commenting on Gramsci's writings, Chantal Mouffe notes that this articulating principle is never very precisely defined by Gramsci, but that it seems to involve a system of values, the realization of which depends on the central role played by the hegemonic class at the level of relations of production.<sup>22</sup>

It is through this perpetual process of articulation and rearticulation that ideological elements acquire a class character which is not intrinsic to them, rather than through a process of confrontation between two already elaborated world views. In its drive to assert hegemony therefore, any ruling class has to represent more than simply its own narrow corporate interests, and it has to find ways moreover of universalizing the latter. What results then, Gramsci suggests,

is a form of consent that is active and direct, the product of real interchange between rulers and ruled.

Laclau is another theorist of ideology who rejects the class ascription of ideological elements. For Laclau, any conceptualisation of ideology must be situated firmly in the nexus of class struggle, and he asserts

A class is hegemonic not so much to the extent that it is able to impose a uniform conception of the world on the rest of society, but to the extent that it can articulate different versions of the world in such a way that their potential antagonism is neutralized.<sup>23</sup> (my emphasis)

The theories of Laclau and Gramsci offer an understanding of ideology which is not merely anti-reductionist, but which accounts for resistance and its manifestations at the level of ideology/culture, and which takes cognizance of the processes involved. Their ideas, developed in the twentieth century, pertain to capitalist society, and in some cases, are programmes of action as much as analytical tools. As such, they cannot be imported wholesale for the analysis of precapitalist ideologies. In appropriate contexts however, they can be used to provide insights in the same way that the Marxist study of precapitalist societies generally has had to deduce its method and theory of precapitalist social formations from Marx's theory of capitalism and class struggle - to extract the general from the science of historical materialism.

The precolonial Zulu state is a not inappropriate place to embark on this exercise for the practice and struggles of the process of Zulu state formation lend themselves to an analysis that draws on concepts of class struggle. The emergence of the centralised Zulu state was characterised by a marked intensification of relations of exploitation, facilitated notably by the development of the amabutho (the so called 'regimental') system. The amabutho constituted

a new coercive apparatus in the hands of the rulers, and were the means whereby the labour power and reproduction of the society came under the control of an emergent aristocracy, at the expense of the former dominance of lineage heads and elders. The division between those who laboured and those who did not was thus sharpened, and crystallized into a new and fixed alignment removed from the earlier dominant characteristic of an evolution from labouring junior to power-wielding elder. The growing importance of raiding as the chief productive activity saw a concentration of the means of production in the hands of the rulers, and the increased extraction of surplus labour from the kingdom's homesteads in the service of the state. Increasingly, under Shaka, society in Zululand-Natal came to be characterized by a principal contradiction between two groups, rulers and ruled. Sub-categories of various sorts existed within them, but the fundamental groups developed economic relations to each other and to outsiders, buttressed by associated political and ideological forms.<sup>24</sup>

One major distinction which can be made between the ideologies of capitalist societies, and those of pre-capitalist societies like that of the Zulu, concerns the role of history and the significance of the past. In precolonial Zulu society, where a form of ancestor-worship prevailed, history acquired especially powerful ideological connotations. References to the previous order of things evoked not merely the sanction of past experience, but that of the ancestors who had power to affect the present. Consequently, appeals to history and apparent continuity with the past in such a society constituted ideological elements of much greater power and effect than they did in twentieth-century, capitalist societies.

Likewise, in precolonial, precapitalist societies like

that of the Zulu, the means whereby ideologies became entrenched in the society - the precolonial equivalent of Althusser's 'Ideological State Apparatus', and Gramsci's hegemonic apparatus which constitutes the 'ideological structure' of the dominant group<sup>25</sup> - were considerably more limited than in twentieth-century, capitalist societies with their schools, radios, televisions, cinemas and a myriad of other forms of media. In Zulu society, the transmission of new ideas was largely by word of mouth. These two differences between capitalist and precapitalist societies highlight the absolutely central role of oral history in the ideology of a society such as that of the Zulu.

The issue to which this criticism turns is the development of a methodology for the analysis of oral traditions which moves beyond a reductionist conceptualization of ideology, and the view of oral traditions as the pliant tools in the hands of a society's rulers. In this endeavour, further insights can be gleaned from the work of twentieth-century analysts of the relationship between ideology and written texts, notably from the method and practice of Marxist literary criticism.

In response to recent advances in the theory of ideology, Macherey, and more recently Jameson, have suggested a new approach to the analysis of texts.<sup>26</sup> The essence of their approach is to allow a degree of autonomy to the text. The text is considered to exist independently of the author because it has the capacity to say things that the author did not intend it to. Silences in a text - for example, the failure to mention something that might be expected - can be as revealing as a statement itself. In particular their approach suggests that while texts have the appearance of representing a complete and seamless ideology, in spite of themselves

they contain evidence of contradictions which arise because an ideology is never an accomplished fact, but is '... the terrain on which men move, ... and struggle'.

For Macherey, contradiction is the very condition of the narrative. He suggests that a 'deconstructive reading', in Marxist terms, is what is needed to lay bare the 'faultlines' in the text, and ultimately, to reveal ideological struggles. By this he means an analysis of the process of the construction of the text out of the discourses which prevailed at the time of writing.

The aim is to locate the point of contradiction within the text, the point at which it transgresses the limits within which it is constructed, breaks free of the constraints of its own realist form.<sup>27</sup>

Jameson suggests a method for achieving this. He posits that the fault lines of the text should be read in terms of three 'horizons'. These three horizons, he argues, are distinct moments in the interpretation of the text. The first horizon is that of political history, where the individual work must be grasped as a symbolic act and as an imaginary resolution to a real contradiction. At this level, he suggests that the structural approach of Lévi-Strauss to the illumination of text would be useful.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the approach is not new in the analysis of oral tradition. Vansina has commented recently on the value and the dangers of this in the interpretation of oral traditions.

Basically, structuralism is a fine tool for literary criticism provided that one accepts that it deals with resonances as a given reader can read into a text beyond the intentions of an author.<sup>29</sup>

The qualification of this activity that Vansina stresses, is that the researcher (or the critic) must seek exegesis using the hermeneutical skills current in the society concerned,

The fieldworker must learn distinctions between reality and symbol. He must learn the rules of context that close off further deduction or deny equivalences etc. so as to unveil the underlying tensions of the text.<sup>30</sup>

For Jameson however, interpretation cannot stop at demonstrating that a text offers a symbolic resolution to a situation which is contradictory in the society concerned. Every text needs to be interpreted in terms of a second horizon, that of the struggle between classes. Jameson argues that the imaginary resolution of texts' contradictions revealed in the first horizon reflects the hegemonic ideology of the society. However, when examined in terms of the second horizon, the determinants of the particular form taken by the hegemonic ideology - the 'symbolic act' (which constituted the imaginary resolution) - are revealed. Jameson, following Mikhail Bakhtin, suggests class discourse is 'dialogical'. The value and character of symbolic action are not imposed by the dominant class, but are modified and enlarged by a dialogue between classes. It is Jameson's contention that this perspective on the dialogical

... allows us to reread or rewrite the hegemonic forms themselves; they can also be grasped as a process of reappropriation and neutralization, the co-optation and class formation, the cultural universalization of forms which originally expressed the situation of 'popular', subordinate or dominated groups.<sup>31</sup>

Jameson describes the third horizon in terms of which all texts must also be read as the 'cultural revolution', the moment 'in which the coexistence of various modes of production becomes visibly antagonistic, their contradictions moving to the very center of political, social and historical life'.<sup>32</sup> The text of this third horizon is what Jameson terms the ideology of form, where form must be apprehended as content. Notable in this horizon



is the identification in texts of sedimentation from previous modes of production. Jameson's conception of the third horizon is not as fully developed as the other two, but is probably best understood through the example of sexual and patriarchal exploitation which he uses,

... it becomes clear that sexism and the patriarchal are to be grasped as the sedimentation and virulent survival of forms of alienation specific to the oldest mode of production of human history, with its division of labour between men and women, and its division of power between youth and elder. The analysis of the ideology of form, properly completed, should reveal the formal persistence of such archaic structures of alienation - and the sign systems specific to them - beneath the overlay of all the more recent and historically original types of alienation ...<sup>33</sup>

Jameson's proposal is that the act of interpretation must come to grips with the dialectic in terms of all three horizons. He offers a method of analysis whereby the ideological seamlessness of any text can be demonstrated to be fiction.

The ideas of the Marxist literary critics are thus *profoundly anti-reductionist*. No text, in these terms can ever exist as the voice of a single interest. The great value of their method is the restoration of the notion of contradiction to the Marxist analysis of literature, and to Marxist interpretation.

The object of the critic then, is to seek not the unity of the work, but the multiplicity and diversity of its meanings, its incompleteness, the omissions which it displays but cannot describe and above all its contradictions.<sup>34</sup>

Many historians working in a Marxist paradigm have not applied a similarly dialectical approach to their analysis of historical texts. They have remained bound to a conservative methodology of evidence corroboration, seeking, lawyer-like, internal coherence in their texts as a sign of their validity as historical sources. It may be that the historian using oral texts, or texts

that were once oral, can take this bold step more easily. Paul Thompson commented in this regard, although from a different perspective, that there was a ... stronger tendency for written material to be ordered and composed, whether around chronology or theories with a more literary choice of words, and a conscious and complete syntax. The oral form, with its hesitations, back-tracks and parentheses, just because it was less coherent allowed much more room for the expression of doubt and contradiction.<sup>35</sup>

Oral traditions are by definition unfixed (at least until recorded). They are usually in daily currency in a society. Consequently, lived experience constantly confronts the hegemonic ideology represented in the traditions. Where antagonistic interests are represented in the traditions, a dialogue is set up, to which the traditions, precisely because they are not fixed texts, can respond immediately. For ideological discourse in a precapitalist, precolonial context, oral traditions are, in a heightened sense, not merely the vehicle of a hegemonic ideology, but the very site of the expression of the dialogue and the conflict in which it engages, and of the friction between lived experience and imposed consciousness - not in E.P. Thompson's essentially ahistorical sense of a perpetual, eternal tension, but in a process of change over time. In non-literate societies, traditions are the arena in which different sets of ideas about the world confront one another, square up, and take cognizance of one another. Feierman, in his study of Shamba oral traditions, noted something of this process in perceiving that subtle elaborations in traditions constantly take place in response to the arguments of the opposition.<sup>36</sup>

The proposition advanced here is that the oral traditions of any group develop in dialectical response to the oral traditions of other groups, and are moulded by the latter as much as they mould themselves. They cannot be viewed

as passive and reflective of a particular set of interests. Like ideology itself, they cannot be reduced to expressions of ruling group interests. Traditions are active, and in certain senses, autonomous, mediating among the interests of several groups, sometimes compelling the ruling group to bend to the needs of the ruled. Traditions are bound to manifest a degree of evenhandedness sufficient to allow social conformity; they must validate themselves ethically in the eyes of several interest groups, and not just the rulers.

The particular capacity of oral traditions to embody contradictions within their texts, and their heightened ability, by virtue of their character as unfixed texts, to engage in a dialogue with other ideas around them, suggests that the insights of the Marxist literary critics can be usefully drawn on in their analysis. The fundamental direction to be derived from their work is the restoration of the contradiction to the centre of any such analysis. Where earlier approaches to the analysis of oral traditions have found historical evidence in the occurrence of the same 'facts' across a number of sources, and have preferred sources that demonstrate an internal consistency, the thrust of this approach is the location of 'fault-lines' and their exploration. Earlier studies have focused on problems of memory and their effect on oral traditions, and while the perspective developed here recognizes that the very process of remembering is creative, selective and involves structuring, its thrust is to argue that these processes were themselves shaped by what Jameson has termed the 'political unconscious', and the priority of their response to contradictions in oral texts.<sup>37</sup>

The methods by which the 'fault-lines' of oral texts are to be located and analysed will, in this study, be guided by Jameson's perceptions contained in his notion

of the three horizons of interpretation. His model seems especially appropriate for adaptation to the analysis of oral traditions because of its clear focus on the dialogue of discourses - an important, but neglected aspect of oral texts. The capacity of his model to take cognizance of the sedimentation in texts of previous modes of production contributes an important new perspective for the analysis of oral traditions pertinent to a society in transition, such as that of the Zulu. This is especially the case where, as in this study, the focus is on the changing ideological content of traditions - where new content can be expected to occur in what Bonner has termed the 'old ideological shells'<sup>38</sup> of a previous society or mode of production. Adaptation of Jameson's model for the analysis of oral texts also seems appropriate because it is developed in terms of an understanding of literature as 'a weaker form of myth or a late stage of ritual'<sup>39</sup>, where all are equally informed by the authority of political interpretation.

It will be argued in the following chapters that with the extension and entrenchment of Zulu rule across Zululand-Natal, and the crystallization of a division between privileged and unprivileged in Zulu society, a hegemonic ideology legitimating Zulu rule and the distinctions of status emerged. It will be further argued that this ideology was not simply invented and imposed on Zulu society by its rulers, but that it derived from ideological elements which had previously enjoyed a currency, the selection of which was determined in the course of the struggles which underlay the emergence of the Zulu kingdom. The 'articulating principle' of the new ideology was provided by the hegemonic group and the central role which it played in the relations of production, but its form was shaped by the necessity of articulating a number of different

world views, and the neutralization of their political antagonisms.

These processes were the most visible in the ideologically powerful domain of history, and in particular, in the realm of traditions of origin. The reasons for this emphasis lay in the limitations placed on the range of ideological change that was possible in such a society. Insofar as former relations of production continued to survive and lend form to new relations of production in a transitional society such as that of the Zulu, old ideological forms tended to serve both as 'material and scheme of representation for new social relations'.<sup>40</sup> As Thompson has noted at the level of language, 'to say new things you have to squeeze new meanings out of old words'.<sup>41</sup> The survival of old forms created a sense of continuity with the past, and functioned in that way to legitimate the new social order. This would have been especially significant in a society such as that of the Zulu, where, as we have already noted, ancestors were understood to be able to influence the present. As long as an 'ancestor cult' was maintained as the basis of chiefly or kingly power in Zululand-Natal, notions of common descent as important to social cohesion could be modified, but not jettisoned. In terms of these constraints on the emergence of a hegemonic ideology in the Zulu kingdom, traditions of origin, which formed the basis of claims of common descent, were the prime terrain of ideological struggle.

The bulk of the traditions of origin reviewed in the coming chapters were recorded c.1900, although some were recorded both earlier and later, and can be used to give a sense of the changes which traditions of origin were undergoing at various times. In c.1900, the traditions of origin collected in Zululand-Natal

would have differed from those which prevailed during the reign of Shaka.<sup>42</sup> Many of the factors which affected traditions of origin in the intervening eighty years varied according to the different historical experiences of different groups in that period, and some of the threads of these specific influences will be drawn out in the ensuing chapters. These preliminary explorations of the influence of events of the nineteenth century on the data collected by Stuart will establish a basic framework, and serve as a necessary prior step to a task which is beyond the scope of this thesis, that of the systematic exposition and close regional differentiation of the nineteenth century background to Zulu oral traditions by way of magisterial records and like sources.

Features of the preliminary framework which warrant immediate mention include the major ideological changes experienced in the region during the reign of Shaka, the effect of civil conflict in the second half of the century on prevailing notions of history, and that of the imposition of British rule, in Natal in 1838, and in Zululand in 1879. With British rule, the inhabitants of Natal and Zululand came under pressure to respond to the administration's notions of chiefship and land rights. Wright argues that the ability to demonstrate genealogical seniority and historical primacy of land occupation appealed to the colonial administrators, and lent itself to mobilisation against aggressive settler colonialism.<sup>43</sup> The withdrawal of Zulu rule from Natal in the 1830s, and the collapse of the Zulu royal house in the 1880s also had an effect on the historical claims of the various groupings in Zululand-Natal, notably the revival of traditions effaced by the emergence of Zulu hegemony. These factors, in varying degrees affected the oral traditions of most of the inhabitants of Zululand, Natal. Although not always explicit, the analysis of tradition of origin patterns

in the following chapters at every turn, takes cognizance of the likely effects of these events and the possible associated distortions.

Current political events also affected forms of oral historical evidence other than traditions of origin - such as clan-names and praises - demanding that their analysis be subject to similar qualifications. Little used as a source of historical evidence by present-day scholars, izithakazelo (sing. isithakazelo; siSwati, tinanatelo, sing. sinantelo) were recognized in Zulu society as being a rich form of historical data.

Each and every clan, besides the actual 'clan-name' (isiBongo) (e.g. aba-kwaZulu, the-Zulu-clan; aba-s-elangeni, the-elangeni-clan-which was usually the name of the clan's founder, or of his kraal), possessed also an izithakazelo, or a name whereby to address members of the clan, perhaps originally the name of the founder's father, or the name of some other celebrated clan personality (e.g. Ndabazita, for the Zulu clan; Mhlongo for the elangeni clan). In polite conversation, a clansman was accordingly addressed not by the clan's isiBongo, but by its isithakazelo ...<sup>44</sup>

Izithakazelo seem to have lent themselves to manipulation in the services of ideological purposes, notably creating bonds between certain groups and introducing distance between others. The way in which they functioned in Zulu society was similar to the role of clan praises in Shona society where

'the definition of the group is achieved not through the statement of who rules but through the claim to a common ancestor'.<sup>45</sup>

Bryant compiled two extensive lists of izithakazelo, the most comprehensive of which is that appended to his Oiden Times in Zululand and Natal. He gives between one and three izithakazelo for each isibongo (clan-name) mostly consisting of a single name each. These izithakazelo recorded by Bryant were nowhere near as extensive as the tinanatelo which are yet extant in

Swaziland, some of which comprise many lines and often merge with the praises of individuals. Thus for the isibongo Khumalo, Bryant gives the izithakazelo 'Ndabazitha', 'Ndaba', and 'Ntungwa', and for the isibongo Nxumalo, 'Mkatshwa'.<sup>46</sup> Swazi informants today give much longer tinanatelo for each isibongo; 'Kuhlase', 'Mntungwa', and 'Lukambule' for Khumalo; and 'Ndwandwe', 'Mkatshwa', 'wena waseGudu inkomo', 'wena kaZide', 'waLanga', and 'wena wanakaKokele bantu bahlatshwa emkhabeni banje ngezinkomo', for Nxumalo. Khumalo informants, like many other informants interviewed on the subject of tinanatelo in Swaziland, were unable to explain any of their tinanatelo, whilst the Nxumalo informants could locate some aspects of theirs; such as 'Magudu', their place of origin, or Khokele who was a renowned Nxumalo hero, famous for stabbing people in the stomach. This last tinanatelo was drawn from the praise poem of Khokele, and in this way the tinanatelo were linked to the ancestors of the group, and in some ways must have echoed the function of individual praises in the society.<sup>47</sup>

The ostensible function of izithakazelo seems to have been preservation of the memory of a clan's wider genealogical connections. People claim genealogical connections and tend to observe marriage prohibitions with groups who share the same izithakazelo, even where the circumstances of their connection are not (or no longer) known. It is widely asserted that a group 'must' be related to whomsoever their izithakazelo (or tinanatelo) conjoin with. Unlike clan-names (isibongo), izithakazelo are not fixed for all time. Numerous izithakazelo are not even the names of ancestors. Rather, the characteristic obscurity of meaning of most izithakazelo predisposed them to manipulations of meaning, additions and subtractions, and facilitated the creation of fictive kin relationship.<sup>48</sup> Izithakazelo



had no ritual role which might have served as an imperative for their accurate preservation. These features suggest that izithakazelo, possibly even more than traditions of origin, were open to manipulation, both in the reign of Shaka and subsequently. As historical evidence, izithakazelo should enormously illuminate the processes by which social cohesion in the Zulu kingdom was obtained. However, they require critical analysis and their literal veracity should be understood to be subject to considerable reservation.

The hermeneutic applied to this kind of source should again take the dialectic as its starting point. The location of antinomies and anomalies involves the collation of all the available izithakazelo, the establishment of inconsistencies within that body of data, and the testing of that information against other sources, such as the relevant group traditions of genesis.

Conversely, certain kinds of evidence do exist which date from the Shakan period, which, like traditions of origin, can be described as being perceived by the society concerned as being formally historical, and therefore as being likely areas for ideological interventions, but, which for specific reasons, were unlikely to have changed much in the post-Shakan period. One such source of evidence is the praise poem (isibongo, pl. izibongo). Acknowledgement of the historical content of izibongo is to be found in comparative data and in the circumstances of the use of izibongo by the Zulu. In a recent study conducted by Landeg White in Malawi and Mozambique, informants indicated that the historical content of a praise-poem was its most important feature.<sup>49</sup> Amongst the Tswana, Schapera also found that the preferred praise-poems were those said to be 'full of history'.<sup>50</sup> It can likewise be

inferred from the common recitation by Stuart's informants of praise poems (about important historical figures) in the midst of historical narratives - to lend added dimensions and validity to their testimonies - that these sentiments were shared by the inhabitants of Zululand-Natal.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, the recitation of praise poems at the graves of ancestors to encourage their intervention in the world of the present would seem to prove conclusively that praise poems were perceived of as being profoundly historical in nature.<sup>52</sup>

The ideological role of the izibongo is suggested by the tight control over the activity of praising exerted by kings and chiefs. The position of royal imbongi (praise singer) was a jealously guarded and highly valued appointment, carrying with it immense status. Shaka's most renowned izimbongi were Maqolwana kaMkatini, and Nomxamama kaSoshaya of the Bisini people, an especial favourite of the king.<sup>53</sup> Nomxamama was stationed at Shaka's later capital of Dukuza, but there were royal izimbongi at every 'military' establishment (ikhanda).<sup>54</sup> The izimbongi were required to recite the praises of the king and his ancestors on all public occasions so as continually to reaffirm the legitimacy of the ruling house.

Praise poems are the record of power, a catalogue of success. On behalf of those who maintain and manipulate and occasionally usurp authority, they lay claim to legitimacy. They are not, in the last resort, important as a form of entertainment, an opportunity for performance; they are the annals of the ruling group.<sup>55</sup>

However, they were not only the annals of societies' rulers. Although the izimbongi were primarily concerned to praise the king or chief, they were also charged with representing the grievances of the king's subjects. The izimbongi were uniquely able to criticise the prevailing order and to do so with impunity.<sup>56</sup> Cope describes the imbongi as

... the intermediary between the chief and his subjects, for when he presents the chief to his people in the recitation, he is also representing the opinion of the people to the chief. Thus the praise poem contains criticism as well as praise.<sup>57</sup>

Likewise Nyeribazi, in his study of the historical background to the izibongo of the Zulu 'military' age, has suggested that praise-poems 'may provide the final solution as to what the people of the time thought of the king'.<sup>58</sup>

The izibongo, as a poetry form, constitute concentrated and rich historical texts. They bear complex witness to the societies from which they emerge and exhibit a double ideological aspect. They were at once a form of history in which the world view of the rulers was expressed, and a vehicle for the expression of social disaffection. They were, at the same time, the chronicles of individual lives, of both rulers and commoners, for praises were not confined to the scions of chiefly houses. Every man accumulated praises across his lifetime. They 'gave a man his personality'.<sup>59</sup> On a day to day basis, these individual praises were an aspect of a much larger apparatus for the socialization of individuals and the development of particular attitudes and values in society. Mazize Kunene prefers to translate izibongo as 'poems of excellence' because their purpose was that of 'elevating highest, desirable qualities in society ... they project an ethical system beyond the circumstances of the individual'.<sup>60</sup> During the Shakan period, they were concerned with the projection of a suitably military ethos. Mtshapi, one of Stuart's informants observed,

Izibongo in the case of the amaqawe (heroes) were ... to inspire and infuse the army with wrath. This was their object.<sup>61</sup>

and the ethnographer Krige observed

When a warrior giya's (dances) the spectators shout out his praises, and in a military life like that of the Zulus, where praises had to be

won by brave deeds in battle, these praises led to great emulation. They were an encouragement, not only to the man who had won them, but to others who had not yet distinguished themselves. In view of all this publicity, the position of a coward, who would have had no-one to praise him, if he dared to give, must have been invidious.<sup>62</sup>

Lestrade described the praise poem as

a type of composition intermediate between the pure, mainly narrative epic, and the pure, mainly apostrophic ode, being a combination of exclamatory narrative and laudatory apostrophizing.<sup>63</sup>

Clearly, izibongo can be of use to the historian in a number of ways.

While the izibongo were of a formally historical nature, and were undoubtedly mobilized ideologically, their mutability over time has been an issue of some debate. Jeff Opland has recently contended that the praise poem is, above all else, essentially performance art<sup>64</sup>, and indeed, there can be no doubt that the written text of a praise-poem can never express the excitement and other facets of live delivery. According to Samuelson, izibongo were so-called because they were bellowed out, for ukubonga also means to roar like a lion or a bull.<sup>65</sup> Conventionally, delivery was rapid, accompanied by frenzied and energetic movement, whilst the normal downdrift intonation of speech was abandoned during recitation, giving a sense of great import and occasion. Mandlakazi, one of Stuart's informants, described the performance of Shaka's imbongi thus,

Magolwana used to recite praises to such an extent that he would go down on his hands and knees, and lose his voice. He was once given a pair of large horns which were fixed to either side of his head as if they were on the head of a cow or ox. An imbongi would recite and recite, then stop a little, move on further, then go on praising, then stop, then go on again.<sup>66</sup>

Opland's contention is that the emphasis in praise poetry on performance falls squarely on the creativity of the

imbongi at the time of the performance. Drawing on a contemporary case study, Opland argues that the Xhosa praise poem was a eulogy characterised by a freedom to diverge during performance. Opland noted that the poet used a number of formulae and set phrases as aids to extempore composition. For Opland, this suggests that the traditional role of the imbongi was as an incitor, a moulder of public opinion, and that izibongo were and are only relevant to the present, the time of the rendition.<sup>67</sup> However, Opland's thesis is open to question from a number of directions.

Landeg White has staunchly defended praise poems as a source of historical evidence for the periods which are their essential subjects. White deduces from what is known of Stuart's recording techniques that his informants were likely to have been memorizers of poems, rather than composers. The izibongo recorded by Stuart, he argues, would have been affected less by the exigencies of the present, and more by problems of memory fallibility on the part of the informants, very few of whom claimed the skills of an imbongi. Moreover, White notes, in the izibongo, the set formulae of the poems seem to be less those of form, and more those of content. He suggests that set content formulae were used and reused as mnemotechnical devices, enabling historical content to echo on and on into the present.<sup>68</sup> In fact, Opland's own work, as well as that of White, indicates that izibongo actually change very little over time. It seems probable that the absolutely crucial role of praises in most rituals would have served to ensure that the praises were conserved in their original form as far as possible. The anachronisms and archaisms characteristic of the izibongo survived even once their meaning became obscured, while the poetic form of the praises - their rhythm, alliteration, assonance and parallelisms - would also have facilitated their memory

over time. The izimbongi were, in fact, renowned for their powers of memory. One informant commented,

I, Mándhlakazi, once asked a son of Magolwana how it was that the Zulu izimbongi were able to remember the praises of kings to so extraordinary a degree, how it was that they managed to dispose themselves to receive and retain so much, what drugs they ate which opened up the chest or heart to the reception of so much...<sup>69</sup>

The importance for all ritual, of the ancestors, not only of the chiefly houses, but those of every man, created an imperative throughout society for the preservation of praises as accurately as possible, and indeed, the durability over time of praises is remarked on in the praise poem of Dingane,

Vezi Kof' Abantu, Kusal' Izibongo  
Izona Zosala Zibadalula  
Izona Zosal' Zibalilel' Emanxiweni.  
(The people of Vezi will die, praises will remain,  
They will remain exposing them,  
They will remain mourning for them in the  
deserted kraals.)<sup>70</sup>

Although the poems can be said to contain a strong historic core, they were also adulterated by later overlays. White demonstrates this with reference to the praises of Ndaba and those of his descendant, Shaka. He notes that they shared certain praises in an adapted form, and suggests that the particular form and content of Ndaba's praises derived from the reign of Shaka and were projected backwards in an effort to create a respectable genealogy for Shaka.<sup>71</sup> The reverse of course, may equally well have been the case, with similar implications for the question of adulteration.

White's thesis posits a strong connection between power and the praise poem, where izibongo were the poetry of patronage in a society with a strong military inflection. Praise poems from the post-Shakan period, R. Kunene has noted, were considerably lower key.<sup>72</sup> The survival of the dominant military aspect in the Shakan izibongo

yet extant indicates in yet another way, how, in the final analysis, the praise poem nonetheless preserved for the present, aspects of the past. As such, izibongo constitute a further source of evidence on ideology, and on that of the Shakan period in particular, while also operating as a kind of 'control' against which ideological manipulations in other more malleable forms of historical evidence can be measured.

The third source of oral historical evidence with which this chapter is concerned is the so-called 'tradition of creation', conventionally understood to be 'religious'.<sup>73</sup> Vansina has argued that traditions of this order tend to retain elements of earlier ages because of their concern with the ultimate values of the society, the readjustment of which is usually a slow process.<sup>74</sup> Conceptualizing the 'tradition of creation' in these terms can be criticised on two grounds. It will be argued that its characterization as 'religious' is misplaced, and secondly, that in periods of enormous social change, traditions concerned with social values, were key areas in which and by means of which new social values were expressed, although with a significance very different from that of traditions of origin.

The religious character of the 'tradition of creation' owes its origin to early missionary representation of the tradition's leading actor 'Unkulunkulu' as 'The Creator', and his equation with the Christian god.<sup>75</sup> In northern Nguni-speaking society however, many variant forms of the tradition exist, and a number of 'Unkulunkulu' figures are held to exist at the same time. Moreover, in some versions, the title 'Unkulunkulu' is transposed with the name 'Umdabuko'.<sup>76</sup> This noun derives from the verb ukudabuka, meaning 'to break away', with the connotation of origination.<sup>77</sup> Where umdabuko occurs in the form of a common noun, it means 'original

source, custom'. Callaway whose translations were considerably less glib than those of other missionaries, observed that the verb dabuka and its derivatives embodied a very particular sense of a process whereby small social groups broke off or separated from larger social groups.<sup>78</sup> Although 'Unkulunkulu' was associated with the origin of the people,

Unkulunkulu wa vela emhlangeni ... Kwa dabuka abantu, ba datshulwa Unkulunkulu. (Unkulunkulu sprang from a bed of reeds ..... Men broke off, being broken off by Unkulunkulu)<sup>79</sup>,

it is clear that there was nothing of religious significance attached to this figure. He was neither worshipped nor sacrificed to in the way that the amadhlozi, the spirits of the ancestors, were.<sup>80</sup> Callaway concluded that

It appears, therefore, that in the native mind there is scarcely any notion of a Deity if any at all, wrapt up in their sayings about a heavenly chief. When it is applied to God, it is simply the result of teaching. Among themselves he is not regarded as the Creator, nor as the Preserver of men; but as a power, it may be nothing more than an earthly chief, still celebrated by name ...<sup>81</sup>

The figure of 'Umdabuko', alias 'Unkulunkulu', was bedecked rather with historical connotations.

There were a number of points at which 'traditions of creation' overlapped with traditions of origin. The origins of specific groups were discussed as instances of 'dabuka', while the image of the reed (uhlango) from which it was claimed in the 'traditions of creation' that all people sprang, was also used to account for the origins of individual groups. Unkulunkulu-ness itself was another concept appropriated in group traditions, and applied to individual ancestor figures. 'Unkulunkulu' of the Zulu clan was identified as Jama, and that of the Khuze people as Dlamini.<sup>82</sup>



Dabuka, the myth of 'Unkulunkulu' and the metaphor of the reed were also of cosmogonical significance, not for the purposes of cosmogony alone, but also because of the centrality of notions of common descent in these societies. Callaway's misnamed 'traditions of creation' existed as cultural documents concerned with the characteristic features, the ideological fabric and the values of the society, which were, in the final analysis, prescribed by loose notions of common descent. Insofar as these features were accounted for, reiterated and validated in the 'traditions of creation', the latter were both historical and ideological, but in a sense that was ultimately different from that of group traditions and their brand of more immediate and material utility discussed extensively earlier. The different utility of the so-called 'traditions of creation' demands for their explication the use of a different method of analysis. The direction that this will take is affected by an awareness of their mythical component.

To assert at length, as has been done here, the historical character of 'traditions of creation' is to emphasise their historical aspect as against the religious, but not to deny their mythological character. Indeed, myth is not without a strong component of history. However, the conventional historical approach to the utilization of myths as historical sources has been to isolate in the myth the minute germs of history and to seek their corroboration from other historical sources. An alternative approach to the explication of myth is the essentially ahistoric method of the structuralists, represented most notably in the work of Lévi-Strauss.<sup>83</sup> Historians of precolonial Africa have, on the whole, been reluctant to employ the methods of the structuralists. These methods have been criticised on a number of counts, notably for the absolute freedom of choice exercised by the analyst in finding and setting

up oppositions between symbols within a text, or even across texts. The significance of this is that it is not necessary for anyone in the society to think the same way as the analyst. Moreover, the underlying assumption is that a foreigner would know best because of his or her access to comparative material. The method has also been criticised for its unscientific basis as proceeding by analogical reasoning only, aiming to convince, rather than to prove.<sup>84</sup>

The structural analysis of myth has however been recently rescued with certain reservations and modifications in Steven Feierman's exciting examination of Shambaa traditions, and in particular, in his handling of the myth of Mbégha, the founding ancestor of the Shambaa.<sup>85</sup> Feierman's approach is to locate his analysis firmly within the parameters of Shambaa culture, proceeding from the assumption that traditions are themselves 'elements in "living culture"'.<sup>86</sup>

A full reading of a simple tradition may require a broad understanding of (local) cosmology and social organisation.<sup>87</sup>

Using these methods, Feierman discovered in the Mbegha myth

... a rich statement of the way in which the Shambaa describe the values of their society, and the fundamental lasting characteristics of Shambaa political life. By describing the broad characteristics of society in the myth of the founding hero, the Shambaa are saying that society as it is known, took its shape in the days of the founding of the kingdom.<sup>88</sup>

The mythico-tradition of 'Unkulunkulu' is by no means as textured a text as the myth of Mbegha, and in many of the versions recorded by Callaway, it has been seriously flawed through missionary intervention in the establishment of a convention of translation, and by the influence of the Christian conception of the creation in the testimonies of mission-educated informants.

Nonetheless, the story of the origin of the people in this form was clearly a fundamental cultural document, concerned with the central dynamic of socio-political life in Zululand-Natal, and with the role of origins in the establishment of group identities in the context of perpetual assertion of the governing principle of social cohesion in terms of a kinship relation defined by common descent.

The implications of this for the utilisation of these traditions by the historian are indicated by what Vansina in his comments on traditions of genesis has called the 'floating gap' in dynastic history.<sup>89</sup> Usually found in chiefly lists between 'creation' and the first chiefs identified by name, this gap seems to distinguish traditions which function as a site of the dialectic in the sense posited in the first section of this chapter (i.e. in group traditions of a formal historical character) from those, like the myth of Unkulunkulu which as an uncontested cultural document, did not function as such a site. This is to argue for the tradition of 'Unkulunkulu' the opposite of that argued by Feierman about the myth of Mbegha. Feierman notes that the materials for the critical analysis of the myth are

... to be found in those separate traditions which have not become part of the collectively accepted picture of Mbegha.<sup>90</sup>

either in the traditions of outsider groups, or in private traditions within the kingdom. While Feierman's method of effecting this is not systematically developed, his proposal contains an echo of the methods delineated in considerable detail in the first section of this chapter for the analysis of contested traditions. This method is however not applicable to the analysis of the so-called 'tradition of creation', for that which is asserted in this cultural document was not contended in any form. In the broadest sense, it constituted the

framework of the prevailing ideological discourse, the final limits of both resistance and domination. In these 'traditions of creation' was located the ultimate continuity of a 'kinship' principle. They were cultural charters which used the medium of the past to legitimate the new political order.

The method that has been adopted here for the analysis of the story of 'Unkulunkulu' is to consider all the known variations of the tradition, but not to seek historical evidence in the common denominators, since there is no reason to suggest that historical truth lies in the most frequently reiterated version rather than in one of the variants. Rather, the approach is to account for the differences between the versions with reference to missionary interventions. Where, in the ensuing chapters, 'traditions of creation' are used as historical sources, the method of their analysis will be, following Feierman, structural, but with the same reservation that all the steps in the process of the structural analysis of myth must be demonstrated to be emic to the culture concerned. In particular, the meanings proposed for metaphors should be shown to have local currency, and maximum use must be made of the hermeneutical skills current within the society concerned. The structural approach then is used simply as a heuristic device. The method of analysis will depart from that of Feierman in seeing this type of tradition as not affected in form or content by other traditions.

The last type of oral texts used in this study are those which do not purport to be about history. Here the questions that must be addressed are: what kinds of historical sources do they constitute; and what is the relationship between these texts and ideology?

Such texts occur in three forms: non-fictional but acknowledgedly legendary tales, proverbs, and avowedly fictional tales. Nursery tales, legends and proverbs are often characterized by archaisms which are not understood by the users. 'Ring-a-ring a roses, a pocket full of posies, atisha, atisha, we all fall down' is often recited to children, although its relevance to the Great Plague, - the rusty spots which signalled the onset of disease, and the posies which were necessary to ward off the stench of the corpses - is largely unknown.<sup>91</sup> Likewise, if we consider the proverb, 'Might as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb', it is so long since anyone was hung for sheep stealing, it's usage seems to have generated an impetus of its own in the present. Nyembezi, in the preface to his collection of Zulu proverbs, observed this to be a typical characteristic of Zulu proverbs,

Many a time, I have approached an old Zulu, and asked for an explanation of the origin of certain proverbs. The answer generally is, 'My child, that is the way that we speak, and that is the way that we have always spoken. When we were born, people spoke thus.'<sup>92</sup>

an echo of the inability of many izimbongi to explain the praises which they recited.

The process over time whereby the original meaning of a proverb was lost, is aggravated by the tendency within proverbs towards the achievement of a rhythmical form. This takes the form of vowel elision, and sometimes the discarding of whole words which affected the content of the proverb adversely, but assisted in memory of the whole.<sup>93</sup>

Proverbs and folk tales amongst the Zulu were closely related literary forms, the one often giving rise to the other.<sup>94</sup> Many proverbs and folktales however, had their origin in historical events. Take, for example, the proverb 'Amabon' abonen' ashiwo nguGcuqwe',

(the seers have seen each other, said Gcugcwa). The aphorism is commonly used by a person in a tight situation, and suggests that those who have an advantage over the person concerned, will, one day, find themselves in a similar plight. In the testimony of one of Stuart's informants, we find an anecdote which indicates the historical origin of the proverb,

Gcugcwa caused trouble in Tshaka's country (in Zululand), others caused trouble in our country (i.e. carried on their evil practices.) Gcugcwa ka Nqabeni ... stole Tshaka's cattle. He was chief of the Woziyana people. Gcugcwa was caught near the Tukela where he usually thieved. He was taken to Tshaka. Tshaka said, 'We see you, Gcugcwa.' Gcugcwa replied, 'We see each other, Nkosi. You see me now; they will see you tomorrow.' He said this because he knew his death was imminent. Gcugcwa was then tied across the gate and Tshaka directed that all the cattle - those from whom he had been so fond of stealing - were driven over him and trampled him to death.<sup>95</sup>

Another interesting example is provided by the proverb 'Ukwenza umcathu kaBovungane' (to make the slow march of Bovungane). The origins of this aphorism were elucidated by Bryant,

Shaka was already on the Zulu throne and Bofungane (sic) presided over the Ngongomas. Now this Bofungane was a bit of a dandy in his way, particularly fastidious about dirty feet. There were no shoe shops in Bantuland so this punctilious prince was compelled to walk to his bath down at the brook in bare feet, but on his return rush matting was spread along his path lest his dainty feet be soiled. His children too were trained to equal fastidiousness, especially the girls lest they stumble and fall whilst bearing gourds of beer or water on their heads, so much so that their gingerly picking of their way became a by word in the land. Umcathu ka Bofungane.<sup>96</sup>

Proverbs as evidence are valuable to the historian, not only insofar as they corroborate traditions, but also because of the spontaneous quality of proverbs as against other forms of oral historical evidence. Proverbs were never imposed on society, nor were they perceived as a site of the struggles of conflicting

interests.

It is important for us to realise that an expression must be accepted by the people in order to give it the status of a proverb. Such acceptance is not voluntary in that people never go out of their way to popularise an expression voluntarily. They use it because they like it, and because it appeals to them, but the usage is spontaneous. In that way do proverbs arise.

Again, we do not find any people whose special task it is to evolve proverbs.<sup>97</sup>

Nursery tales similarly often contain fragments of historical evidence. The proliferation of cannibal stories with which naughty Zulu children were regaled provide a good illustration of this. Under much 'fee-fi-fo-fumm' ('Eh, ehi endhlini yami tapa namhla nje ku nuka zantungwana. Banta bami, n'enze njani na? Leli pungo li vela pi na?')<sup>98</sup> - literally, 'Fee-fi, my house here today smells suspicious. My children, what have you done? Where does this smell come from?' - there are details to be found about the famine which underlay anthropophagy in Zululand-Natal, about social attitudes to, and the life-style of cannibals.

Much of the historical information which lurks in folk-tales and proverbs is less easily locatable. The story of Mdhlubu and the frog, for example, contains references to two of the least understood elements typical of the traditions of origin of northern-Nguni speakers - the emphasis of the low country against the uplands.<sup>99</sup>

The story of Mdhlubu is long and complex. The first part, typical of a number of founding stories, relates how Mdhlubu, daughter of a king, was for particular reasons, reared in the household of a neighbouring king. When she was old enough to marry, she was told that she was a foundling and thus should marry one of her brothers. This revelation set her off to seek her real parents. In her quest, she was assisted

by a frog, who brought her to the place of her family. Great rejoicing accompanied her return.

Then the story seems suddenly to slip into another gear. It proceeds to describe her marriage to yet another neighbouring monarch, 'Unkosi yasenhla', the king of the highlands. At this juncture in the tale, Mhlabu's father is for the first time addressed as 'Unkosi yasenzansi', king of the lowlands. The ideas of 'upland' and 'lowland' identities figure prominently in traditions of origin, but in a form and in contexts which make their interpretation very difficult. The story of Mhlabu, however, offers an allegoric representation of the relationship between the two identities. One aspect explored by the tale is their distinctiveness. In the legend the upland-lowland relationship appears to be conceptualized in terms of far greater simplicity than occurs in the traditions. Presumably, this is a consequence of the non-'historical', fictive status of the story of Mhlabu, allowing it to remain free of the ideological interventions to which traditions appear to have been subject. It seems that where nursery tales or legends have survived at all, they do so with remarkably few alterations.<sup>100</sup>

Two important and early sources of nursery tales from northern-Nguni speaking societies exist: Bleek's Zulu Legends, collected in 1855-6, and Callaway's collection, published in 1868.<sup>101</sup> However, 'nursery tales' have not been used by historians, probably because of their fictional aspect. Certainly, most of the tales do not claim to be true. Nonetheless, what is understood by a society to be fiction can constitute a source for the history of that society, as Stephen Grey has demonstrated with reference to the role of the novelist Leipoldt 'as archivist'. Grey observes of the fictional



## novel

There is no one-to-one correlation between the page and the history. Social detail within fiction is accumulated towards an end which is different from that of the historian; the latter amasses data in order to reduce it to a pattern, while the novelist elicits detail to authenticate a pre-existing order ... Fiction is not meant to be disguised or veiled fact. 'Fact' in the construct of the artwork is merely a component part of the whole intentionality of the work, the impact and effect of which lies in the speculative, not the literal, realm. Therefore, the concept of community within fiction lies not so much in the cast of characters and settings, but in the range and circumstances of the work itself - every novel is a community in its own terms. Its history from below is the background against which the foreground achieves resonance and assemblance of truthfulness.<sup>102</sup>

When we seek history in the fictional oral text, we need to identify the 'end' or the purpose of the fiction in order that we may illuminate a new kind of historical evidence, of the sort that is generally missing in the formal traditions with their emphasis on political issues. 'Fiction' Grey observes, 'is a crooked mirror which reflects, not the apparent world one experiences in the book, but the real world in which one (the novelist) lives'.<sup>103</sup> Precisely because of this, we can gain from fiction, information, not about historic events and personalities, but a reflection of the world of the stories' creator. This is a vast realm of potential data concerned with the details of home life and family relationships, other social practices, cosmologies and philosophies.

The values expressed in fiction, the structures delineated and the idioms used are all cultural products of history, and as Spear has argued with reference to oral traditions,

these cultural patterns often show greater persistence over time than the actual structures or behaviours they represent. Values generated in the past often assume their own historical reality and outlive the circumstances of their creation.<sup>104</sup>

Fiction as an historical source provides a rare opportunity for precolonial history to acquire, in a limited sense, something of the texture of social history.

Although nursery tales tended to have a fixed text it is necessary to remain alive to possible intervention in the creator's text by a contemporary narrator. The 'nursery' tales and other stories recorded by Callaway and Bleek were traditions heard by their informants from their grandparents. While these were clearly subjected to all the distortions - the frailty of human memory, for example - typical of chains of testimony, they were not subject to the kinds of distortions which affected traditions with formal historical content. They were not constantly being architected into new forms and designs. This is one of the unique strengths of fiction as historical evidence. <sup>105</sup>

The chief difficulty in using oral fiction as an historical source lies in establishing what present-reality the story reflects. It is not the present-time of its documentation since that was not the time of its composition. Likewise, fiction, because of its ahistorical standing in the society, did not lend itself to direct appropriation by the interests which prevailed at the time of documentation, in the way that formally historical traditions typically did. The alterations which would have occurred in an oral work of fiction between the time of its composition, and the time of its documentation by the first researchers, would have been informal, accidental or subconscious. The ideological aspect of fiction would have been less to establish or legitimate 'social cohesion, real or artificial communities ... institutions, status, or relations of authority,' and more the 'inculcation of beliefs, value systems, and conventions of behaviour'. <sup>106</sup> These presumably changed less easily over time than did dynasties or political configurations. Once archaic,

they would presumably have been dropped from the fiction, or retained with a stress on their antiquity and oddity. It would thus seem that for as long as a fiction had relevance in the present, it probably reflected present reality, except in the case of emphasised anachronisms. Thus, Callaway and Bleek's tales, recorded in c.1860, probably reflected social relations behaviour and value systems then current. But for how far back in time can that present-reality be said to hold good?

Here the historian is on shaky ground. However, it is known that Callaway's informants claimed to have heard the tales from their grandparents. This suggests that use of fiction recorded in c.1860 as an historical source for much of the first half of the nineteenth century is justifiable, especially where corroboration from other sources can be established.

By way of example, let us consider the example of story of Sikhulumi, son of Hloko'loko, one of the many founding stories recorded by Callaway.<sup>107</sup> Hloko'loko was a powerful king who refused to allow any of his wives to bring up a son, as he feared that a son might one day depose him. On one occasion however, a son, Sikhulumi, survived and was brought up by his mother's relatives in secret. Eventually, Sikhulumi returned as a young man to his father's people. He was rejected by his father, and he retreated into a wild forest where he became a great man in his own right, with an enormous following. Sikhulumi then went back to his mother's people. At first, they did not recognise him, but when reminded of some of the details of Sikhulumi's boyhood amongst them, his uncle acknowledged that it was indeed Sikhulumi. Sikhulumi then returned again to his father's place, where an attempt was made to kill him, but he proved to be invulnerable. He then

killed the people of his father and took their cattle, departing with his army, his mother and sister.

This tale echoes the many forms in which succession disputes were represented in the historical traditions, (perhaps the best known of which was the accession of Shaka) although the tale was not the same as any one historically identifiable incident. The function of this tale would seem to have been to assert, in principle, the importance of legitimate succession, familiarizing the listeners with the forms in which kinship relations were asserted, and offering a framework for the explanation of events such as irregular successions, which were crucial issues in societies which practiced ancestor worship.

In sources of oral historical evidence which were not perceived by the societies concerned to have historical content, the relationship between ideology and the oral text differed from that which prevailed between ideology and purportedly historical texts. The apparently ahistorical nature of the former made them unlikely sites of direct ideological interventions. They did, however, fulfil an ideological role at the level of socialization. While they did not alter directly in response to political shifts in the way that overtly historical sources did, they were responsive to changes in the social order over an extended period. These differences intersect with distinctions between oral texts which occur in free and fixed form, identifying some sources as likely to have altered more over time than others. Exploration of these differences dictates the use of different modes of analysis in each case. As a review of the range of oral historical sources as well, the methods outlined in this chapter follow Vansina's dictum that it is an essential aspect of the analysts approach to ensure that his or her

methods are appropriate, not just to the particular sources used in a particular study, but to full range of available sources.<sup>108</sup>

1. See, for example, the recent work of Hall, 'The Ecology of the Iron Age', chapters 4-8.
2. J. Vansina, Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology, London, 1965, pp. 19-20. The ranks of the 'Africanists' include J. Miller, editor of The African Past Speaks, Folkstone, 1980, and the other contributors to that volume; S. Feierman, author of The Shambaa Kingdom: A History, Madison, 1974; and P. Irwin, Liptako Speaks: History from Oral Tradition in Africa, Princeton, 1981.
3. P. Thompson, Voice of the Past, Oxford, 1978.
4. D. Henige, Oral Historiography, London, 1982, p. 2; Henige, "The Disease of Writing": Ganda and Nyoro kinglists in a newly literate world', in Miller (ed), The African Past Speaks, pp. 240-61.
5. See, for example, D.R. Wright, 'Can a blind man really know an elephant? Lessons on the limitations of oral traditions from Paul Irwin's Liptako Speaks', History in Africa, 9 (1982), p. 320; also see Irwin's own comments in Liptako Speaks, pp. 30-3; C.C. Wrigley, 'The Story of Rukidi', Africa, 43 (1973), pp. 219-34; T.O. Beidelman, 'Myth, Legend and Oral History: A Kaguru Traditional Text', Anthropos, 65 (1970), pp. 74-97; J. Vansina, 'Comment: Traditions of Genesis', Journal of African History, 15 (1974), p. 320; Miller, 'Listening for the African Past' in Miller (ed), The African Past Speaks, p. 3.
6. History in Africa was started in 1974, and edited by David Henige of the University of Wisconsin. Oral History, the journal of the Oral Historical Society in Essex, started in 1973, is edited jointly

by Paul Thompson and various others. To date, it has carried only a handful of articles on the oral history of Africa.

7. See A. Portelli's discussion of the distinction between oral sources and the use of oral sources in history, in 'The Peculiarities of Oral History' in History Workshop: a journal of socialist historians, 12, Autumn (1981), p. 96.
8. See Miller's observations on the capacity of personal reminiscences to transform into traditions, and his discussion of Vansina's comments on traditions using personalized terms. (Miller, 'Listening', p. 10, and also pp. 21-4.)
9. Irwin, Liptako Speaks, p. 30.
10. Ibid., p. 33.
11. On 'public' and 'personal' history, see Henige 'The Disease of Writing', pp. 240-61. T. Ranger in his discussion, 'Personal Reminiscence and the Experience of the People in East-Central Africa', in Oral History, 6, Spring, 1, (1978) pp. 45-75, offers a stimulating challenge to Vansina's rejection of personal reminiscence, and suggests that informal material on African societies can offer historians a great deal that is of historical value. The distinction between 'public' and 'personal' history is posed in rather a different way in the work of the Popular Memory Group, from the Centre for Cultural Studies at Birmingham University. (See P. Thompson's discussion in his report on the fourteenth History Workshop, (1980) in Oral History, 9, Spring, 1 (1981), pp. 6-8, and the discussion on p. 50 below.)

One work which has attempted to bridge these divisions is Andrew Roberts' article, 'The Use of Oral Sources for African History', Oral History, 4, 1, Spring (1976) pp. 41-55. Also see Thompson's comments, The Voice of the Past, pp. x, 5.

12. E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge, 1983, p. 2.
13. Popular Memory Group from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 'Popular memory: theory, politics method', in Making Histories, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, London, 1982, pp. 205-52.
14. See, for example, T.O. Beidelman, 'Swazi Royal Ritual', Africa, 36 (1966), pp. 373-405; E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande, Oxford, 1937; Evans-Pritchard, 'Divine Kingship of the Shilluk of the Nilotic Sudan', in Essays on Social Anthropology, London, 1962; also see the more recent work of the French Marxist anthropologist, Maurice Godelier, who worked with Bettelheim and Lévi-Strauss in the 1960s, and whose work remains sympathetic to structuralism. (M. Godelier, Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology, Great Britain, 1977.)
15. J. Larrain, The Concept of Ideology, London, 1979, Chapter three.
16. Godelier, Perspectives, chapter two.



17. L. Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in Lenin and Philosophy, London, 1971, pp. 152 - 58. See E. Laclau, Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory, London, 1977, p. 101, FN. 32; E.P. Thompson, The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays, London, 1978, p. 290.
18. Ibid., p. 406.
19. A. Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, London, 1971, pp. 198-99, 530, 538, 547.
20. Ibid., p. 79. Gwyn Williams explains Gramsci's notion of hegemony 'to mean a socio-political situation, in his terminology a "moment", in which the philosophy and practice of a society fuse, or are in an equilibrium; an order in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society in all its institutional and private manifestations, informing with its spirit, all taste, morality, customs, religions and political principles, and all social relations, particularly in their intellectual and moral connotations. (Gramsci's concept of "Egemonia"; Journal of the History of Ideas, 4, (1960), p. 587.) Hegemony is thus used to refer to 'approved' domination. 'It has to do with the way one social group influences other groups, making certain compromises with them in order to gain their consent for its leadership of society as a whole'. (Anne Showstack Sassoon (ed), Approaches to Gramsci, London, 1982, p. 13). Also see Mouffe's discussion of Gramscian hegemony. ('Hegemony and ideology in Gramsci', in C. Mouffe, (ed), Gramsci and Marxist Theory, London, 1979, chapter five.)

21. Ibid., p. 79.
22. Mouffe, 'Hegemony', p. 193.
23. Laclau, Politics and Ideology, p. 161.
24. See C. Hamilton and J. Wright, 'The making of the lala; ethnicity, ideology and class-formation in a precolonial context', paper presented to the History Workshop, 1984, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
25. Althusser, 'Ideology', pp. 155-58; Gramsci, Prison Notebooks, p. 12.
26. P. Macherey, A Theory of Literary Production, trans. G. Wall, London, 1978;  
F. Jameson, The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act, New York, 1981.
27. Macherey, A Theory of Literary Production, p. 94.
28. Jameson, The Political Unconscious, pp. 76-83.
29. J. Vansina, 'Is Elegance Proof? Structuralism and African History', History in Africa, Vol. 10 (1983), p. 314.
30. Ibid.; also see P. Thompson's comments on seeing oral sources as essentially a means of understanding a society and its culture from within. ('The New Oral History in France' in Samuel, Peoples History, p. 76).
31. Jameson, The Political Unconscious, p. 86.
32. Ibid., p. 96.

33. Ibid., pp. 99-100.
34. Ibid., p. 109.
35. P. Thompson, 'Report on the Fourth International Oral History Conference', Oral History, 11, Spring, 1 (1983), p. 20.
36. Feierman, The Shamba, p. 13.
37. Jameson, The Political Unconscious, p. 70; J. Vansina, (ed.), 'Memory and Oral Tradition' in Miller, The African Past Speaks, pp. 262-79. This approach also takes cognizance of the point raised by Elizabeth Tonkin that recall is not a purely individual phenomenon. ('The boundaries of history in oral performance', History in Africa, 9 (1982), pp. 273-84).
38. Bonner, Kings, p. 22.
39. Jameson, The Political Unconscious, p. 70.
40. Godelier, Perspectives, chapter four; also see T. Spear 'Oral Traditions": Whose History?', History in Africa, 8 (1981), pp. 173-74, on 'the lack of alternatives in "traditional" thought'.
41. Thompson, 'Report on the Fourteenth History Workshop', p. 7.
42. The understanding of the dynamics of oral traditions in this study draws on the work of R. Harms, 'Bobangi Oral Traditions: Indicators of Changing Perceptions' in Miller (ed), An African Past Speaks, pp. 178-98.

43. See J. Wright's discussion of the likely effects of these factors on oral traditions, 'Politics, Ideology and the Invention of the Nguni', pp. 24-5.
44. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 209.
45. I. White 'Power and the Praise Poem', paper presented to the Conference on Literature and Society in Southern Africa, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of York, Sept. 1981, p. 26.
46. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 685, 694.
47. Interview with Titus Khumalo, Dabuluhlanga Nxumalo and three others, at Mbilaneni, Swaziland, 17.09.83. The same points are made by J. Peires, The House of Phalo, Johannesburg, 1981, pp. 170-71, although he appears to conflate Xhosa clan praises with individual praises (izibongo).
48. See J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 58, evidence of Mco toyi; also see below, pp. 273-77.
49. White 'Power and the Praise-Poem', p. 16.
50. I. Schapera, Praise Poems of Tswana Chiefs, Oxford, 1965, p. 15, quoted in White, 'Power and the Praise-Poem', p. 17.
51. The interspersal of praise-poems in historical narrative characterizes many of the testimonies of the Stuart Papers (K.C.), the testimonies contained in the 'Bonner interviews' (Sw.A.) and the testimonies collected by Hamilton (Sw.A.) collected in Swaziland. The izibongo discussed in this study are drawn from these assemblages, as well as from T. Cope,

Izibongo: Zulu praise-poems, Oxford, 1968; C.L.S. Nyembezi, Izibongo zamakhosi, Pietermaritzburg, 1958; R.C. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, Durban, 1929, pp. 258-88.

52. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 525; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 58, notebook 17, evidence of Mtshapi and Ndube; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 108, evidence of Mgidhlana; Rev. W. Wanger, The Collector, Vol. 4, Marianhill, n.d., see section on amadhlozi in particular.
53. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 595, 667; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 24, evidence of Tununu; E. Krige, The Social System of the Zulus, Pietermaritzburg, 1936, p. 236; Kunene, Emperor Shaka, pp. xxi, xxxii, 246; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 31, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 87, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 106, evidence of Mgidhlana.
54. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 253.
55. White, 'Power and the Praise Poem', p. 48.
56. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 486; also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 30, evidence of Baleni; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 667; Peires, House of Phalo, p. 171. for the occurrence of criticism in Xhosa izibongo.
57. Cape, Izibongo, p. 28. In their respective izibongo, Senzangakhona was criticised for his obstinacy, while Cetshwayo was warned not to provoke the white men of Natal. Shaka was criticised for badly organized campaigns and for indiscriminate killings.

58. C. Nyembezi, 'Historical Background to the Izibongo of the Zulu military age', African Studies, 7 (1948), p. 174.
59. Stuart, uKulumentule, pp. 93-101.
60. Kunene, Emperor Shaka, p. xxix.
61. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 58, notebook 17, evidence of Mtshapi.
62. Krige, Social System, p. 272, FN. 1. Also see J.S.A. Vol. 3, p. 198, evidence of Mkebeni.
63. G. Lestrade, 'Traditional Literature' in I. Schapera, (ed), Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa, Cape Town, 1946, p. 295.
64. J. Opland, 'The Installation of the Chancellor: a Study in Transitional Oral Poetry', paper presented to the Conference on Literature and Society in Southern Africa, University of York, September, 1981; Opland 'Imbongi Nezibongo: the Xhosa Tribal Poet and the Contemporary Poetic Tradition', 1975, quoted in White, 'Power and the Praise Poem', p. 3.
65. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 253.
66. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 177, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
67. Opland, 'The Installation'.
68. White, 'Power and the Praise Poem'; also see P. Thompson's comments on the reliability over time of certain forms of oral evidence such as official poetry, indicated by the survival of archaisms. ('Oral evidence in African History: A note

- on some common problems', Oral History, 2, no. 1, Spring (1974), pp. 65-7.
69. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 176-77, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
  70. Nyembezi, 'Historical Background', p. 174; also see Feferman's comments, The Shamba, pp. 12-13; Cope, Izibongo, p. 33.
  71. White, 'Power and the Praise Poem', pp. 18-19.
  72. R. Kunene, 'An Analytical Survey of Zulu Poetry, both traditional and Modern', unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Natal, 1962, quoted in Cope, Izibongo, p. 50.
  73. See Callaway, Religious System, section one.
  74. Vansina, 'Comment', p. 320.
  75. See the debate amongst Callaway (first section, The Religious System), Bishop J. Colenso (Ten Weeks in Natal, London, 1855) and the Rev. W. Wanger ('The Zulu Notion of God according to the traditional Zulu God-names', Anthropos, 18, 19, 20, 21 (1923-26)). Also see Benham's discussion of Callaway's objections to Colenso's translation of 'God', and the extracts from Callaway's diary pertinent to the subject. (Henry Callaway, pp. x, 55, 101; also p. 52, and Callaway's letter to Mr. Hanbury, 21 July, 1855); J. Colenso, Zulu-English Dictionary, Pietermaritzburg, 1861, p. 34; J.L. Döhne, Zulu-Kafir Dictionary, Cape Town, 1857, p. 178.
  76. Callaway, Religious System, p. 50, FN.95.
  77. Eryant, Dictionary, p. 88; Döhne, Dictionary, p. 56; Colenso, Dictionary, p. 80.

78. Callaway, Religious System, pp. 1-2, FN. 3.
79. Ibid., pp. 33-4.
80. Ibid., p. 7.
81. Ibid., p. 124.
82. Ibid., pp. 47-8, 85, 90, 98-9.
83. C. Lévi-Strauss, Myth and Meaning, London, 1978; An Introduction to a Science of Mythology: The Raw and the Cooked, Vol. 1, London, 1970; also see Miller, 'Listening', p. 20.
84. For an illuminating discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the structuralist method for African history, see Vansina, 'Is elegance proof?' pp. 307-348.
85. Feierman, The Shambaas, pp. 4, 65-71.
86. Ibid., p. 9.
87. Ibid., p. 4.
88. Ibid., p. 9.
89. Vansina, 'Comment', p. 319.



90. Feierman, The Shambaa, p. 71.
91. The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes, (eds.) Iona and Peter Opie, Oxford, 1966, pp. 364-65.
92. C. Nyembezi, Zulu Proverbs, Johannesburg, 1954, preface.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid., pp. 4-5; also see F. Mayr, 'Zulu Proverbs', Anthropos, 7 (1912), pp. 957-63; C. Doke, 'Bantu Wisdom Lore', African Studies, vi (1947), pp. 101-14.
95. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Melapi.
96. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 490.
97. Nyembezi, Zulu Proverbs, introduction. Also see D. Malcolm and J. Stuart, Zulu Proverbs, Pietermaritzburg, 1949, p. 6, on the importance of the popular acceptance of proverbs. The perspective developed here on the use of proverbs as historical evidence is informed by Willis' work on Fipa proverbs, in There was a Certain Man. The Spoken Art of the Fipa, Oxford, 1978, pp. 92-4. Although not open to manipulation to suit political purposes, proverbs were ideological insofar as they contributed towards the socialisation process; for example, the adage 'Ihlonipha lapha ngayi kugana khona' (She respects where she will not marry) means that a girl can never tell where she will marry. The proverb advises a girl to respect all her elders, and all men. Should such a girl prove recalcitrant, she would be enjoined 'AkuQhalaqhala lahlu' isidwaba' (no stubborn girl had the better of the skin skirt) - the isidwaba was the skin skirt put on by married women, and it

was generally believed that once she had done that, a woman would lose her arrogance. (Nyembezi, Proverbs, pp. 11, 19). Proverbs of this sort were part of a whole range of ideological devices through which the subordination of women was ensured.

98. Callaway, Nursery Tales, p. 49.
99. This version of the tale of Mhlabu and the frog comes from Callaway, Nursery Tales, pp. 237-53.
100. Also see the legend of 'ULangalashla NoLanga-tasenzansi', in Callaway, Nursery Tales, pp. 89-95, which similarly stresses the differences between these two identities.
101. W.H.J. Bieek, Zulu Legends, (ed), J.A. Engelbrecht, Pretoria, 1952.
102. S. Grey, 'Leipoldt's Valley Community: the Novelist as Archivist', paper presented to History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, 1984, p. 5..
103. Ibid., p. 10.
104. Spear, 'Oral Traditions', p. 171.
105. See Thompson's comments on the reliability of testimonies that are not conceived of as 'history' in 'Oral Evidence', p. 65.
106. Hobsbawm and Ranger, The Invention of Tradition, introduction, p. 9.
107. Callaway, Nursery Tales, pp. 41-7.
108. Vansina, 'Is elegance proof', pp. 307-48.

CHAPTER TWOTHE EVOLUTION AND COLLAPSE OF MTHETHWA POWER: SOCIAL  
TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE MFOLOZI - MHLATHUZE REGION  
c.1750 - 1818

The pre-Shaka Mthethwa polity serves as an appropriate introduction to the emergence of the Zulu kingdom for two reasons. The ready availability of sources on Mthethwa compared to the other pre-Shakan states; and the historic involvement of both the Zulu chiefdom and of Shaka personally in Mthethwa affairs prior to the collapse of Mthethwa power. The object of this chapter will be both to account for the transformation of the small-scale, largely genealogically homogenous Mthethwa chiefdom into a powerful tributary polity, and to examine the ultimate failure of the Mthethwa polity, in contrast to that of the Zulu, to weld a cohesive nation out of its component and subject parts.

The development of the polity will be explored through the twin contexts of the material and ideological bases of state formation. In the first context, three issues will be addressed: fluctuations and shifts in the Delagoa Bay trade; ecological constraints within the polity; and the effects of change and conflict immediately beyond the Mthethwa borders. In the second context, the nature and the conditions of the relations of incorporation which prevailed will be examined. It will be suggested that the Mthethwa polity was characterized by its inability to move beyond the limited ideology of kinship which had hitherto prevailed.

Mthethwa domination over non-kin subjects remained that of an essentially external power, based on the co-optation of the ruling lineages of certain of its subjects, the restructuring of others, and ultimately, the coercion of the bulk of the subordinate chiefdoms. In the final section of this chapter, it will be suggested that the differences between the Mthethwa polity and the Zulu kingdom in this respect were a consequence of different contingent historical factors and regional variations.

#### Periodisation

The growth of the Mthethwa polity, and the development of forces of adhesion between the aggregates which came to comprise the polity will, for the purposes of analysis, be considered in terms of three broadly distinct phases associated with the reigns of the Mthethwa kings, Khayi, Jobe and Dingiswayo. This association is not meant to suggest that the particular abilities of each successive king determined the form of Mthethwa expansion in his reign. Neither does it necessarily mean that the king concerned reigned for the entire phase. It is simply a convention of periodisation which reflects that found in the oral traditions.

Vansina explains this association in oral history between phases and trends and the reign of a specific ruler.<sup>1</sup> In his analysis of time periods longer than a year or a season, he suggests that calculations are made according to a calendar of sociological data where 'the whole of the past can be conceived of in terms of social structure'.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, time is measured by, and in relation to, the structural relations obtaining between groups. A calendar of this sort, in oral history, only exists for the most recent historical period. 'A new order' is always associated with the 'last historical period'. In the Mthethwa

case, this last historical period only extends as far as the beginning of Khayi's reign, when the Mthethwa first came to settle in the Mfolozi area, and when Mthethwa history in the oral traditions begins. This suggests that an entirely distinct era is considered to have been inaugurated at that point. The calendar for the ensuing period is divided into periods which represent the stages of development which the members of a society think that their society has experienced. Amongst the Mthethwa three phases are clearly differentiated, and identified in the literature with the three reigns. However, as Vansina indicates, these associations are frequently arbitrary and for the convenience of transmission. The association between a reign and its characteristics is least accurate when one king dies and is replaced, since the oral traditions indicate a sharp disjuncture in the characteristics of the two reigns even where change has been manifestly gradual.

Consequently, the terms 'Khayi's reign' or 'Jobe's reign' could also be read as 'phase one' and 'phase two'; where 'phase' is defined with reference to a time period broadly contemporary with the actual reign, and by being characteristically different from other phases. In the absence of other independent sources of dating, a rough chronology in this form must suffice.

#### Sources

Information on the Mthethwa polity, in contrast to that on other pre-Shakan chiefdoms, is at present most richly available in the written accounts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but relatively scarce in the oral record. This unusual ratio is a consequence of the interest inspired in the early travellers by the figure of Dingiswayo, Shaka's

predecessor, as paramount in south-east Africa.

Henry Francis Fynn was one of the first European travellers in Zululand-Natal, and it was on his writings and statements over the following decades in which a history of Dingiswayo features prominently, that subsequent writers on the Mthethwa drew heavily. Like many of the latter, Fynn was concerned to offer some kind of explanation for the emergence of the large Mthethwa paramountcy, and the even greater Zulu state which followed. Fynn noted that when the young Dingiswayo was a refugee in the Hlubi chiefdom, he supposedly spent a long interval in the company of a European traveller in the area, Dr. Cowan. It was this contact, Fynn suggested, that influenced Dingiswayo, and which underlay his successes.<sup>3</sup>

A similar idea was developed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, who claimed in 1875, that while a refugee, Dingiswayo had wandered as far afield as the Cape Colony, where he was influenced by contact with European civilisation. Shepstone suggested that he imported some of the phenomena which he witnessed there back to Mthethwa, and implied that this constituted the basis of the power which he subsequently accrued as the Mthethwa chief.<sup>4</sup>

The writers of the late nineteenth century, like Stuart and Bryant, tended to idealise Dingiswayo, comparing his reign favourably with the greater despotism of Shaka.<sup>5</sup> As Hedges noted, Dingiswayo and his interpolated attitudes formed the character in Zulu history who most fitted the European ideal of what Zulu and Natal Africans should be like, that is, accepting the basis of European government.<sup>6</sup> The career of Dingiswayo, and his role in state formation in south-east Africa continued to receive attention from later scholars, although the

notion of European influence, and even that of the legitimacy of Dingiswayo's claims to be an Mthethwa, have been queried.<sup>7</sup>

The emphasis on Dingiswayo which characterised early and secondary written sources, is paralleled in the limited oral record of Mthethwa history which has survived. In the oral sources, this emphasis is the product of slightly different impulses, the primary feature of which is the tendency typical of oral literature for all the events of a particular era to be associated with the leadership figure of the time, and for all changes and innovations of the time to be attributed to his (or occasionally, her) doings. In this chapter it will be suggested further that the emphasis on the figure and the reign of Dingiswayo in Mthethwa oral traditions, at the expense of oral traditions which purport to refer to the earlier history of Mthethwa, is also an effect of the particular ideological shape and form assumed by the Mthethwa polity in its heyday. It will be argued that the ideological forms of integration which prevailed under Dingiswayo were limited - at least in contrast to those which subsequently characterized the Zulu state - and the role of history and of traditions of genesis being less important allowed the noteworthy events of the reign of Dingiswayo to dominate Mthethwa oral history.

However, emphasis on the activities of Dingiswayo does not occur uniformly in the traditions recounted by Mthethwa informants. The variations which occur within the oral record are, in some instances, the result of faulty transmission over time, but more often, they reflect the different historical experiences of the raconteurs and the political groupings with which they and their predecessors were aligned. The evidence of

the essayist Lionel Mkhwanazi, recorded in 1950, provides an excellent example of this. Mkhwanazi claimed that his people, one of the earliest groups to be incorporated by the Mthethwa, owed their occupation of the Mpukunyoni area near Lake St. Lucia where they were then still resident, to a grant made by Shaka.<sup>8</sup> In marked contrast, it was claimed by Bryant and by Nhle'ele, one of Stuart's informants, and evidenced by a variety of other supportive details contained the relevant traditions, that Mkhwanazi occupation of the area was of considerably greater antiquity.<sup>9</sup> The discrepancy between the two sources can best be understood through illumination of the rifts which existed between the Mkhwanazi and the Mthethwa in the nineteenth century. These began with a dispute over the area between the Mkhwanazi under Malanda, and a member of the Mthethwa ruling lineage. The period following the death of Dingiswayo saw the Mkhwanazi moving away from their erstwhile suzerains and closer to the ruling Zulu as Malanda married a daughter of Senzangakhona, and his son married a sister of Mpande.<sup>10</sup> The rift between the Mkhwanazi and the Mthethwa culminated in their participation in the Zulu civil war on opposing sides.<sup>11</sup>

Mthethwa incorporation into the Zulu kingdom under Shaka also had a marked impact on the Mthethwa oral record. When Shaka assumed the mantle of Dingiswayo's rule, the Mthethwa chiefdom was reeling under the defeat and losses sustained during their battle encounter with the Ndwandwe. Shaka replaced Dingiswayo's heir with his own appointee, following which action, numbers of Mthethwa departed the Zulu kingdom.<sup>12</sup> The traditions also record the departure from Mthethwa, to Shaka, of many important Mthethwa individuals, from which it can be inferred that an even larger segment of the polity probably transferred direct allegiance to the Zulu.<sup>13</sup> Much of what was left of the Mthethwa chiefdom declined,



eventually falling into the unscrupulous hands of John Dunn.<sup>14</sup> The early fragmentation of much of Mthethwa is probably the cause of the relative paucity of Mthethwa oral tradition.

Transferred Mthethwa allegiances and indeed, the absence of Mthethwa history characterizes the historical knowledge of informants of the Mthethwa izibongo in particular. Testimonies made to Stuart by the informant Ndukwana constitute a typical example. Ndukwana was born late in the reign of Shaka, of an Mthethwa father, and was raised out of Mthethwa country at the royal Zulu establishment of Mphangisweni.<sup>15</sup> Although an excellent informant on the Zulu kingdom, Ndukwana's knowledge of Mthethwa affairs was poor, for as a child, he heard 'only the wars of Shaka being spoken of, although there were men of great age'.<sup>16</sup> The historical knowledge of Mthethwa affairs of another of Stuart's Mthethwa informants, Magidi, was equally lacking. Magidi was the son of Ngomane, a preeminent induna under Dingiswayo, and subsequently an important officer in the Zulu kingdom. Born c.1837 in Zululand, Magidi crossed into Natal in 1843 with Mawa, in flight from the then Zulu king Mpande. Thus, he was raised outside of Zululand, where he eventually became chief of the Dletsheni (his father's people, previously a component part of the Mthethwa paramountcy), in the Lower Tugela Division. Despite his occupancy of this historic office, his testimony suggests that his knowledge of both Mthethwa and Zulu affairs was limited.<sup>17</sup> A similar lack of knowledge also characterized the testimonies of other of Stuart's Mthethwa informants, such as Makewu, chief of the Dube people at Lower Tugela in Natal,<sup>18</sup> and Mpambukelwa kaCangusa of the Mpanza.<sup>19</sup>

Presumably, a version of Mthethwa history would have been best preserved by the Mthethwa ruling lineage itself. Unfortunately, no direct statements made by

members of the Mthethwa chiefly house are known to have survived. However, Bryant's writings, probably the most comprehensive account of Mthethwa history available, seem to have been based on three sources, one of which was the Mthethwa chief at the turn of the century, Sokwetshata kaMlandela, the other two being the early trader Fynn,<sup>20</sup> and G.V. Essery<sup>21</sup> a resident magistrate in early twentieth century Zululand. The extent to which Bryant's survey is based on the evidence of Sokwetshata is difficult to ascertain.<sup>22</sup> It contains data not available in the other two sources, but which might have been gleaned from further sources, particularly regarding the various subordinate chiefdoms which recognized Mthethwa paramountcy. However, it is likely that at least such data as concerned the Mthethwa ruling lineage derived from Sokwetshata, and possibly some of his relatives. However, Sokwetshata was not a direct descendant of Khayi, Jobe or Dingiswayo, but a member of an upstart junior lineage. Only Stuart's account of Mthethwa history, found in uBaxoxelo, is based on information from a descendant of the original ruling house, that of Matshwili, a grandson of Dingiswayo.<sup>23</sup> The original text of Matshwili's testimony seems not to have survived, and, like the data provided by Sokwetshata and recorded by Bryant, Matshwili's history as it appears in uBaxoxelo is probably adulterated by the preconceptions, biases and interests of both informant and recorder. Nonetheless, the text seems to retain much of the voice of Matshwili.

Another valuable source of oral data is the testimony of Nhlekele kaMakana of the Cambini. Under Dingiswayo, his father Makana belonged to the Mthethwa iziCwe ibutho, but after the collapse of the polity, he khonza'd Shaka, and joined a Zulu ibutho at Nobamba. Nhlekele was born c.1850 and became one of Sokwetshata's leading izinduna back in the Mthethwa chiefdom. In

contrast to informants like Ndukwana and Magidi whose fathers likewise joined Shaka, Nhlekele's allegiance and service to the Mthethwa chiefship provided a context for acquiring an extensive knowledge of Mthethwa history, largely framed in the perspective of the new ruling Mthethwa lineage.<sup>24</sup>

The evidence of informants belonging to or associated with the Mthethwa ruling lineage, recorded at the turn of the century was likely to have reflected the complex political reality of the Mthethwa chieftaincy at that time. Sokwetshata's father, Mlandela was himself the son of a brother of Dingiswayo. However, he was not Dingiswayo's rightful heir, and had been appointed to the Mthethwa chieftaincy by Shaka. He married extensively into the Zulu royalty, and Sokwetshata was his son from Nomqoto, a daughter of Senzangakhona.<sup>25</sup> For close on half a century, the fortunes of the Mthethwa chiefly house had been intimately bound up with those of the ruling Zulu. However, with the outbreak of civil war in the early 1880s, the Mthethwa joined the anti-Usuthu faction and fought with Zibhebhu against the Zulu royals, possibly in an attempt to restore something of the lost greatness of the chiefdom.<sup>26</sup> Presumably, this complex set of historic tensions coloured the history recounted by the Mthethwa chiefs and their supporters.

Although the available sources are sparse and subject to the numerous biases outlined, a start can be made on the historical reconstruction of the processes of Mthethwa expansion. It is an endeavour which seeks to take account, as far as is possible, of subsequent distortion, manipulation and deterioration of the evidence. Through the establishment of a framework for the analysis and periodisation of Mthethwa history, it also seeks to identify areas where further, and more detailed research

into the background of informants and the history of the traditions would be valuable.

For such purposes, the three-phase model can be conveniently employed. It will be posited that phase one - the reign of Khayi - saw the Mthethwa ruling lineage gradually expand and assimilate certain of its neighbours. It will be shown that, although of highly disparate origins, over time this group came to consider themselves to be kin, and to be genealogically connected to the Mthethwa ruling lineage. Thus, c1750, an as yet small and genealogically homogenous Mthethwa chiefdom was emerging. The next phase of Mthethwa expansion, in the reign of Jobe, was characterized by the extension of control by this nucleus over other of their neighbours, and the absence of any effort on their part to assimilate the new subject chiefdoms. The third and final phase, under Dingiswayo, saw the culmination of earlier trends in the establishment of an extensive Mthethwa paramountcy, based on systematic tribute exaction (by the nuclear lineages) from conquered, but yet intact component chiefdoms.

Phase one: early Mthethwa expansion and the assimilation of a number of different groups under Khayi.

The Mthethwa ruling lineage, the Nyambose under Khayi, was reputed to have travelled down from the north, into the Mfolozi-Mhlathuze area then inhabited by the Mbokazi. Khayi obtained permission from the Mbokazi to build on their northern flank.<sup>27</sup> At this time, the Mbokazi occupied an area in what was later to become the very heartland of Mthethwa, around the present-day settlement of kwaMbonambi. Bryant's evidence is somewhat confused and contradictory regarding the precise location of the 'northern flank' first settled by Khayi, but a number of factors suggest that it was probably 'in the tract of country adjacent to the Black Mfolozi, on both sides

of it, above its junction with the White.<sup>28</sup> Presumably, the Mbokazi sought to strengthen their northern borders which appear to have been under considerable pressure at this stage. The fact that the Mbokazi 'permitted' Khayi to settle in the area, and that Khayi travelled to the Mbokazi capital to secure this consent, suggests that the Mthethwa khonza'd, i.e. that they gave their allegiance, or subjected themselves to the Mbokazi, the dominant power in the area.<sup>29</sup> The relationship between the Mthethwa and their new overlords was cemented by the marriage of Khayi's heir, Jobe, to an Mbokazi princess, Mabamba kaNzimase.<sup>30</sup>

The area indicated for Mthethwa settlement was uniquely advantageous for the hunting of elephant. It has been described at some length by Hall, in his analysis of the pitfall traps found there.<sup>31</sup> These were located on an isthmus of high land in the confluence of the two Mfolozis, where a natural funnel was formed into which animals could be driven. It was 'a rare combination of natural features ... and traps ... dug to take maximum advantage of the landscape structure'.<sup>32</sup> The line of traps extended between the two rivers and were easily camouflaged. Although Hall concentrates on their significance for the Shakan period, the archaeological evidence suggests that the traps had been used frequently over time, while other sources noted that the Mthethwa were famed for their use of such traps.<sup>33</sup> The shallowness of the traps indicates that they were designed for hippo, buffalo and elephant. Hall further suggests that fencing was used to direct game into the traps and that the game was chased from the far northwest. This sophisticated arrangement indicates hunting on a substantial scale could have been efficiently undertaken by small groups.

It is possible that during the reign of Khayi, the growth of the ivory trade noted by Hedges<sup>34</sup> changed the status of the Mthethwa location from that of precarious buffer area in the northern Ndwandwe border region, to one centered on a prime hunting area which could be effectively utilized by an initially small group. This would explain the subsequent growth of Mthethwa in the later years of Khayi's reign, until under Dingiswayo, they were finally able to assert themselves over their old suzerains, the Mbokazi.<sup>35</sup>

Mthethwa expansion and accretion of influence was gradual. It focused on securing the confluence area and extending into the hunting regions of the surrounding riverine plains, through 'annexation' and the incorporation of land, neighbours and 'immigrants'. The Mkhwanazi, under Cungele, were among the first to khonza Khayi, and were assigned land to settle in the north-east of the confluence area.<sup>36</sup> Given the importance of hunting, it is significant that Cungele's son, Velana, is remembered in the oral traditions as a highly skilled hide-scraper.<sup>37</sup> It can be inferred from the Mkhwanazi case that at this time the Mthethwa began to move from the position of beneficiary to one of patron, since if the Mthethwa had still acknowledged Mbokazi 'overlordship', the Mkhwanazi would have appealed to the Mbokazi for land. The site allocated to the Mkhwanazi was probably the first step taken by the Mthethwa in the process of securing their own trade-routes to the north.<sup>38</sup>

The available oral traditions do not establish with any certainty whether Mthethwa conquest of the Cambini occurred during the reign of Khayi, or early in that of Jobe, but the move effectively secured the southern reaches of the confluence area. The Cambini chief, Maliba, and the ruling lineage were killed off by the

Mthethwa forces.<sup>39</sup> Presumably the Cambini had formerly owed allegiance to the Mbokazi, for the area which they occupied lay directly between the heart of Mbokazi territory and the lands which the Mbokazi had allocated earlier to the Mthethwa.<sup>40</sup>

The confluence area was finally fully secured when the Dletsheni khonza'd the Mthethwa. It seems that this move was precipitated by a growing threat from the Ndwandwe to the north which led to the death of the Dletsheni chief, Nombobo, and suggests that association with the Mthethwa had begun to offer real protection.<sup>41</sup>

The Mkhwanazi, Cambini, Dletsheni, and a fourth group which joined them at this time, the Gengeni, all claimed to be kin relations and to have a common ancestry with the Nyambose. At the same time, and sometimes within the testimony of a single informant, these claims are contradicted by the existence of data pointing to other, disparate origins for these groups, separate from the Nyambose.<sup>42</sup>

The common pattern to these contradictions suggests that they warrant closer examination. All the groups which joined the Mthethwa in the earliest phase of its expansion and whose origins manifest such contradictions were described in the traditions as being small bands of 'refugees'. Bryant commented, in the following vein,

The Mthethwa received additions to their families not by moral and martial force alone. Stress of circumstance more than once compelled fugitive or impoverished parties to seek shelter or settlement with them. Each of these parties, not being members of the Mthethwa family, in the course of a hundred years or so, had already built up in the Mthethwa midst, a new dependent clanlet, usually congregated together under its particular patriarch and in its own allotted location.<sup>43</sup>

Each of these groups and indeed, individual refugees, joined the Mthethwa as dependents of one or another sort.

Dependents in northern Nguni-speaking society were usually attached to the house of one of their patron's wives, and given resources and protection. In exchange, they offered allegiance and labour to their patron, even once ensconced in separate establishments.<sup>44</sup> The emphasis in the client-patron relationship was on assimilation. In virtually every respect, dependents came to be considered fully-fledged members of the clan unit of their patron, to the extent that they were able to eat the amasi (soured milk) of their patron's homestead. The drinking of milk in this society was an index of incorporation. According to Krige, 'To drink milk with the members of another sib is tantamount to pledging blood-brotherhood with that sib'.<sup>45</sup> Dependents continued to take cognizance of their own, different origins only insofar as they still refrained from marrying into the clans of their birth. They retained their own old izibongo ('clan-names'), but adopted new izithakazelo ('address-names') through which everyday identification with their new context was affirmed.<sup>46</sup> The groups which joined the Mthethwa at this time seem to have done so on much the same terms as individual dependents, and their integration was discussed in terms of a similar idiom of kinship. Over time, this relationship was extended, and genealogical links, fictive where necessary, were established with the ruling Mthethwa. The kin relationship thus allowed subordinate groups to make important claims on the ruling lineage. Conversely, the dominant lineage would have encouraged the creation of these links, for the maintenance of its political power lay in the ritual authority which it exercised over related lineages by virtue of its genealogical seniority and proximity to the ancestors. In its earliest phase thus, Mthethwa expansion was characterized



by the close assimilation of the Nyambose with their new subjects.

The expansion of the original Mthethwa chiefdom astride the Mfolozi confluence itself generated the impetus and means for further growth. Exploitation of the confluence area and the concomitant adscititious extension of the chiefdom allowed the Mthethwa access to the game areas on neighbouring plains, where extensive co-operation was essential for successful hunting. Hedges has argued that the role of a ruling lineage in the organization of wider labour processes outside of the village and involving a collectivity of groups considerably enhanced its hegemonic position.<sup>47</sup> The head of the hunt also received a portion of every animal killed. 'Royal game' was, of course, elephant tusks, but also otter, and the skins of many other animals such as leopard.<sup>48</sup>

With the expansion of the ivory trade at Delagoa Bay, the Mthethwa chief was well placed to exploit extended hunting areas and to utilize larger aggregates of labour. Competition with other groups over the valuable ivory trade provided a further incentive for the establishment of large aggregates of social force. It was these developments which precipitated a new phase in the emergence and expansion of the Mthethwa kingdom.

Phase Two: the emergence of the Mthethwa tributary state

The second phase in Mthethwa expansion, associated in the oral traditions with the reign of Jobe, was characterized by greater participation in the Delagoa Bay trade, by a greater degree of militarization, and by more active expansion on the part of the Mthethwa. It was also distinguished from the earlier phase by the failure of the Mthethwa to assimilate with their

latest subjects.

The period 1770-1780 saw the price paid for ivory at the Bay double, and remain at a peak until 1795.<sup>49</sup> Mthethwa monopolization of the Mfolozi confluence had been consolidated by Khayi. Under Jobe, exploitation of its resources, and those of hunting grounds further afield, together with the establishment of a royal monopoly over ivory trading, facilitated the growth and consolidation of the Mthethwa ruling lineage vis-a-vis its subjects. It also provided the ruling lineage with the means to extend and entrench its control over centralized labour units, in the form of the early amabutho, the so-called 'instruments'. The first records of Mthethwa amabutho date to the reign of Jobe. It was claimed that he had two amabutho of differing status, the Nyalazi, the 'black' or junior unit, and the Yengendlovu, the 'whites' or senior unit.<sup>50</sup>

Hedges has described the growth of the amabutho system out of extended hunting groups, and in response to the demands of the ivory trade,<sup>51</sup> while Guy sees it as a response to an ecological crisis in the later eighteenth century, characterized by a scarcity of good grazing and agricultural land.<sup>52</sup> Guy argues that Mthethwa expansion and incorporation of various groups not only contributed the necessary manpower for the amabutho, but also facilitated rationalized access to a greater range of resources. Although the nature of ecological crisis alone is as unsatisfactory an explanation of the emergence of amabutho as it is of state formation, Guy's explanation complements that of Hedges. Together they suggest that the emergence of the amabutho was not merely an indicator of escalating warfare, but that it was a result of a far-reaching process of social re-organization, providing chiefs with the means to extend control of production and reproduction in their domains.<sup>53</sup>

The development of the amabutho system will be examined in greater detail in chapter six, but, it should be noted here that it provided the institutional framework necessary for the increasingly sophisticated co-ordination of the activities of large numbers of men, and could be used to expand the territorial area under a chief's authority, thus extending both the natural resources and the labour at his disposal.<sup>54</sup> It also provided the means for the ruling Mthethwa to extend their control over new subject chiefdoms, and to extract tribute without extending to them the rights and benefits of Mthethwa citizenship.

The Sokhulu appear to be one of the largest chiefdoms to be incorporated on these terms. Under Langa, they khonza'd Khayi, but before they were given land on which to settle, they were required to undertake a military campaign on behalf of the Mthethwa against the Tsonga. They cleared the latter from an area south of the Mfolozi mouth and settled there themselves.<sup>55</sup> The Sokhulu entered into tributary relations with the Mthethwa and supplied them with umoba (sugar cane), and possibly cattle 'so fat they could only move with difficulty'.<sup>56</sup> Jobe gave one of his daughters in marriage to the Sokhulu chief, thus strengthening Mthethwa-Sokhulu relations.<sup>57</sup> The incorporation of yet another group, that of the Dube, seems to have occurred at much the same time, and in terms that closely paralleled the Sokhulu situation. The area occupied by the Dube was renowned for its fertility and for its multiple crops of maize. Tribute in the form of agricultural produce was levied on the Dube.<sup>58</sup> Little is known about a third group the Ncube - who khonza'd Jobe and were given land on the coastal plain near St. Lucia Bay, north of the Mfolozi - beyond the fact that like the Sokhulu and Dube, they were Mthethwa subjects who were not closely assimilated into the polity.<sup>59</sup>

Unlike the groups who khonza'd Khayi some time earlier, these groups did not come to think of themselves as kin of the Mthethwa and they were not drafted into the Mthethwa amabutho. It seems therefore that during the reign of Jobe, the Mthethwa considered themselves to be sufficiently powerful to enter into relations of tribute extraction, and to back their demands with force. Likewise, at this time, the Mthethwa were able to provide effective protection to small refugee groups.

The many weak tribes on the banks of the White Mfolozi had fled to Jobe, chief of the abaTetwa, and begged his protection for he was a man of mercy.<sup>60</sup>

The growing strength and the improved position of the Mthethwa during the reign of Jobe is further illustrated by the story of Godongwana's flight. Jobe had two sons from his Mbokazi wife Mabamba, Dingiswayo (then called Godongwana) and Tana. Jobe, in an attempt to assert greater Mthethwa independence of their erstwhile Mbokazi suzerains proclaimed as his heir, Mawewe, a son by another wife, much to the chagrin of the Mbokazi. Dissatisfaction with this decision percolated through the kingdom, and Jobe was obliged to take action against the rumblings of discontent. In a surprise midnight raid, he moved against the sons of his Mbokazi wife. Tana was killed, but Godongwana, although wounded, escaped to his mother's people, where he was succoured.<sup>61</sup>

Although Jobe was unsuccessful in persuading the Mbokazi to surrender Godongwana to him, he was able to exert sufficient pressure to cause them to ask Godongwana to leave their shelter. Godongwana then moved southwards, amongst the Qwabe. However, once Godongwana moved north of the Mhlathuze again, Jobe gave a convincing demonstration of the strength of his amabutho. The Langeni, amongst whom Godongwana then sought refuge were not eager to oppose the Mthethwa militarily,

although they refused to accede to the Mthethwa request to kill Godongwana. Nonetheless, the Mthethwa army easily gained access to the Langeni homestead which sheltered the fugitive, only to find that he had fled.<sup>62</sup> The story suggests that the Mthethwa amabutho were, by then, a force to be reckoned with.

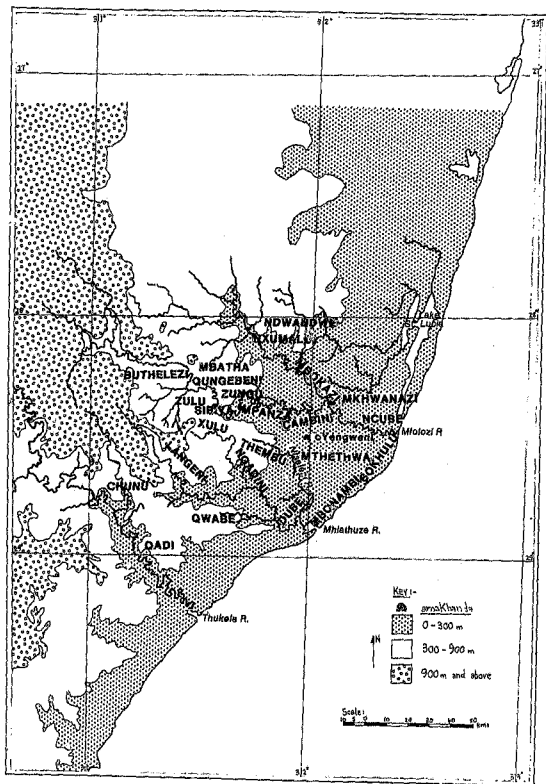
Although the Mthethwa were expanding rapidly, the relevant traditions, such as the account of Godongwana's flight, suggest that a constant tension existed between what the amabutho were required to do, and the forces actually available for deployment. Indeed, under Jobe, it seems that recruitment to the amabutho was limited to men drawn from three sources: men of the original Mthethwa izibongo; men who, as 'refugees' or outcasts from other groups, joined the Mthethwa in their individual capacities, and were conceived of in much the same manner and under similar conditions to those described on page 114; and finally, the men of the 'related' clans.<sup>63</sup> Conversely, both the Sokhulu, the Dube, and possibly the Ncube, who fell into none of these categories, and who retained their own separate and unrelated 'clan' identities, maintained their own separate forces after submitting to the Mthethwa.<sup>64</sup> Their assistance could be called on by the Mthethwa chief, but their forces could be withheld or diverted at critical moments.

A number of features of Jobe's reign, notably the expansion of the Mthethwa polity without the assimilation of new subject groups, competition for resources, the problems of the emerging amabutho system, and the capacity of tributaries to withhold military support, continued into the reign of Dingiswayo, and culminated in a crisis that brought about the collapse of the Mthethwa kingdom.

Phase three: the reign of Dingiswayo and a crisis of expansion

With the death of Jobe, Godongwana returned to his maternal relatives, the Mbokazi, and from a base there, challenged the succession of Mawewe, Jobe's designated heir.<sup>65</sup> His bid was bolstered by military support from three sources; men called up by Mbangambi, the Dube chief, who was connected to the Mbokazi (Godongwana's maternal relatives) and who was induna of two Dube amabutho, the Mpola and the Buda; men of the Mthethwa army whose izinduna defected to Godongwana; and an escort of the Mhlase people, also called the Mphisi (or iziBizini), provided by the Hlubi chief Bhungane, when Godongwana quitted his last refuge amongst the Hlubi.<sup>66</sup> The news of Godongwana's return, and the support which he was marshalling was reported first to Nqola kaKhayi (a member of the Mthethwa royal lineage and Mthethwa representative in Dube country) who in turn relayed the news to Mawewe. An Mthethwa force was sent to deal with the claimant but was betrayed by a faction within its ranks and defeated by Godongwana's own forces.<sup>67</sup> Thus it was that Dingiswayo, 'the one in distress' as he was now known, finally succeeded to the chieftaincy and Mthethwa entered into the third phase of expansion which has been identified.<sup>68</sup>

Dingiswayo was obliged to embark on active campaigning to secure his position. There are considerable discrepancies in the various sources as to the sequence of his campaigns. The order adhered to here is based on two considerations: the highest degree of corollation obtainable from the sources, and the greatest geographic logic, in as much as it seems unlikely that Dingiswayo would have first attacked a group in an area further from the Mthethwa capital before resolving relations with groups in the intervening area, except in extraordinary circumstances.



The Mthethwa paramontcy under Dingiswayo, c.1800.

News of Dingiswayo's early successes caused Mawewe to flee to the Qwabe where his presence posed a continued threat to Dingiswayo.<sup>69</sup> It rendered the legitimacy of his accession questionable, and provided a nucleus of possible opposition for disaffected Mthethwa elements, together with whom the Qwabe could have made common cause. Groups such as the Dube, Mbonambi and Mbokazi, the major and most valuable tributaries of the Mthethwa polity were genealogically linked to the Qwabe and this might have meant a conflict of interest in those areas as long as the Qwabe appeared to offer them a viable alternative to Mthethwa hegemony.<sup>70</sup>

The Mthethwa army had demonstrated its inadequacy when it was pitted against Dingiswayo's own motley band of supporters. Even once the two forces were amalgamated, considerable reorganization was necessary for a campaign against a major power such as the Qwabe could be envisaged. The traditions suggest that this was one of the new chief's primary objectives. In the first instance, the number of amabutho appears to have been substantially increased. The following names have survived in the oral traditions and should be compared with only two associated with Jobe; Mveyeyo, Nyakeni, Cobo, Ningizimu, isifazana, iziCwe and Nhlngane.<sup>71</sup>

However, expansion of the amabutho system should not be seen merely as a response to the Qwabe threat, and later that of the Buthelezi.<sup>72</sup> Increased militarization was also a consequence of the changing nature of the Delagoa Bay trade, from ivory, a product of little local value, to cattle, the extraction of which posed the Mthethwa ruling lineage with a formidable problem.<sup>73</sup> The extension of the amabutho under Dingiswayo marked an important advance in the rise of the Mthethwa state. The new kingdom however displayed many signs of continuity with the past, and failed to transcend certain



crucial weaknesses in the old order. Firstly, while engaging in a programme of massive expansion, the form which this expansion assumed did not ultimately provide the military resources necessary to sustain the state through a period of mounting sub-regional military conflict and climatological crisis. Secondly, it did not achieve the political and ideological coherence developed in Shaka's Zulu state. We will deal with each of these issues in turn.

Through his reorganization of the army, Dingiswayo was able to embark on a course of consolidation and expansion. Three areas of such activity can be distinguished after 1800; the stabilization of the northern reaches of the polity; the coastal campaigns, and expansion inland.

To the north of the Mfolozi, Mthethwa policy was one of consolidation, and not in this period, of expansion to secure trade routes as is commonly supposed.<sup>74</sup> The northern-most border, the Moya river, divided the Mthethwa from the Nxumalo section of the Ndwandwe, with whom relations were strengthened by the gift of Nomatuli kaJobe, a royal bride, to the Nxumalo chief, Malusi kaMatshuku.<sup>75</sup> For the most part, the remainder of the northern border was occupied by groups with close links and long association with the Mthethwa, largely the 'related' lineages, who were incorporated directly into the Mthethwa amabutho.

The coastlands subsequently became the focus of Mthethwa activity. The coastal plain was occupied by the Sokhulu and Dube, who had khonza'd the Mthethwa, and were maintained as tributaries, particularly of agricultural products. Control over these groups seems to have been intensified under Dingiswayo, with the continued enforcement of the earlier patterns of their differential

incorporation, and the appointment of Mthethwa loyalists as local chiefs.<sup>76</sup> The Mbonambi, who inhabited an area just south of the Sokhulu, were obliged to khonza Dingiswayo at this time, and they appear to have paid tribute in the form of maize and spear-heads, two products for which they were famed.<sup>77</sup>

According to Bryant, another of Dingiswayo's early campaigns was conducted further south, against the Ngadi, near the Mfula river and the Qwabe border. The Ngadi were genealogically linked to the Qwabe and refused to acknowledge Mthethwa hegemony. A force was sent against them and much cattle was captured and removed by the Mthethwa. The traditions relate that the life of the Ngadi chief, Madlokovu, was spared through a judicious retreat and then his voluntary act of khonza to Dingiswayo.<sup>78</sup> The Qadi, who occupied territory to the south, almost at the Thukela, were similarly treated. They were decisively beaten and then required to khonza the Mthethwa paramount. Their cattle were also removed to the Mthethwa royal establishments.<sup>79</sup> There are no references in the relevant traditions to men of either the Ngadi or the Qadi being incorporated into the Mthethwa army.<sup>80</sup>

Dingiswayo then turned to the Qwabe proper. The Qwabe chief, Khondlo, was obliged to recognize Mthethwa overrule, and was himself denied the right to many of the features of the ubukhosi - the outward signs of kingship. These included the removal of the Qwabe istgodlo (special establishment of women), the maintenance of which was conventionally a royal prerogative.<sup>81</sup> According to Stuart, Dingiswayo also denied Khondlo a further royal right, that of keeping herds according to the colour of their hides, and of slaughtering meat for the amabutho, the latter a jealously guarded monopoly.<sup>82</sup> A cattle tribute (mostly oxen) was further demanded of

the Qwabe.<sup>83</sup> Mthethwa interests south of the Mhlathuze were henceforward to be represented by Myaka, a member of the Mthethwa a ruling lineage.<sup>84</sup> Formal rights of chieftainship were likewise asserted over Mjezi, another chief of the area whose isigodlo was removed,<sup>85</sup> while an Mthethwa attack on yet another neighbouring chief, Tokozwayo kaMandayiza was specifically to prevent him from conducting the umkhosi, a central royal ritual.<sup>86</sup> Finally, Macingwane of the Chunu was obliged to surrender both isigodlo and cattle.<sup>87</sup>

Mthethwa control over the south was considerably tighter and more direct than is suggested by Hedges.<sup>88</sup> On the death of the Qwabe chief, Khondlo, Dingiswayo asserted the right of suzerain in deciding the succession dispute between Nomo and Phakathwayo in the latter's favour. However, he allocated land to Nomo in the intermediate area between the Mthethwa and Qwabe, exerting the right of a recognized chief. Furthermore, Dingiswayo defended Nomo against the crack Qwabe ibutho, the iziNkondo, who were sent to kill him. This campaign saw the Mthethwa establish control over the important river crossing of the Mhlathuze drifts.<sup>89</sup> This form of control over north-south movement was essential to the maintenance of a trade monopoly, while also providing a means of policing the southern reaches of the kingdom. Smith suggests that it was also a means of tribute exaction.<sup>90</sup> This move undoubtedly augmented Mthethwa control over the region, but nonetheless Mthethwa expansion continued to be marked by the absence of any attempt to appropriate or absorb the amabutho of their new subjects.

Mthethwa operations to the south and in the coastal plain appear to have been designed to establish tributary arrangements involving both agricultural products and cattle. Control seems to have been formal, with the

establishment of a powerful representative of the Mthethwa in the area. In these aspects, the Mthethwa expansion of this period differed from its growth under Jobe. The most likely reason for these differences was the switch from a trade in ivory to one in cattle and the extension of the amabutho system in a period of marked climatological crisis when successful cattle-keeping would have seen increased competition for access to areas of superior grazing.

Control of the coastlands appears to have been a matter of paramount importance for the Mthethwa chief, and ultimately, the centre of the Mthethwa chiefdom was moved from the Mfolozi confluence into the coastal lowland area occupied by their erstwhile suzerains, the Mbokazi. The Mbokazi chief was murdered, and a minor, Guluzana, was placed in power. The Mbokazi in turn, were obliged to occupy the confluence area vacated by the Mthethwa.<sup>91</sup>

The coastal belt, known in this area as the Mozambique plain, is an area of extremely high rainfall, usually over 1040mm, which experiences no dry season, and no frost. The vegetation was presumably a patchwork of forest and scrub-forest, and human-created grasslands, of both sweet and sour veld. The frequency of river valleys ensured easy access to water and to all types of grazing.<sup>92</sup> The strength of Mthethwa interest in this area during the reign of Dingiswayo was linked to the changing imperatives of the trade with Delagoa Bay, and the replacement of ivory with cattle as the chief commodity. With the shift to the coast, the Mthethwa effectively exchanged elephant-country for cattle country. The Mthethwa were thus able to exploit the lowlands directly, in addition to the resources of their lowland tributaries which the Mthethwa rulers sought to husband almost as carefully as their own.

The Ngadi, Qadi and Qwabe to the south of the new Mthethwa heartland are all recorded as having been 'leniently' treated by Dingiswayo. In particular, he did not appropriate all their cattle, but left sufficient for breeding purposes. In this way, a regular supply of cattle tribute was ensured at a time when the demand for cattle at Delagoa Bay was very great.<sup>93</sup>

While the cattle areas in the east and south were clearly the main focus of Mthethwa activities, expansion also took place in the interior. This occurred in three phases. An early period of consolidation (probably preparatory to the Qwabe campaign in the south) was followed by the establishment of tribute relations and extended control over a wider area - a policy aggressively pursued by Dingiswayo. The third phase consisted of the Shakan initiatives in the area, on behalf of the Mthethwa suzerain, which differed markedly from the earlier expansion.

Mthethwa activity in the interior seems to have been primarily a response to a threat posed by the Buthelezi. The Buthelezi had defeated their neighbours, the Zulu under Senzangakhona, and allied themselves to the section of the Bisini who had declined to support Dingiswayo's claim to the Mthethwa chieftaincy.<sup>94</sup> The Buthelezi had also expanded into the Qungebeni territory, thus enlarging their common border with the Mthethwa, and had occupied the strategic Mcakweni heights and Babanango mountain. A sense of their menace is conveyed by Bryant when he speaks of the '... Buthelezis' glaring warningly from over the Mpembeni'.<sup>95</sup>

The Mthethwa attitude on their mutual border was, at first, essentially defensive, as they sought to contain the Buthelezi through strategic expansion of their own.

According to Bryant, the Thembu were the earliest objects of Mthethwa interest in the west.<sup>96</sup> The Thembu occupied an area on the south bank of the Mfolozi, and bordering on the Bisini section allied to the Buthelezi. They were a small group who refused to khonza Dingiswayo. Possibly, they sought to exploit Mthethwa-Buthelezi tensions. Dingiswayo moved swiftly to pre-empt this by attacking the main Thembu establishment, Ntlangwini, and killing their chief.<sup>97</sup> Their neighbours, the Xulu, suffered a similar fate.<sup>98</sup>

The strategic value of the manoeuvres against these two areas of possible opposition is indicated with reference to the geographical configuration of the borders established. The Thembu and the Xulu provided buffer areas against the Buthelezi, while providing Mthethwa with access to the strategic Mthonjaneni heights. Both groups were situated in relative proximity to major Mthethwa establishments which facilitated their government by the Mthethwa. The Xulu, in particular, had been considerably dispersed during the encounter, and the smallness of the chiefdoms concerned probably made Mthethwa rule easier.<sup>99</sup>

Subsequent to the Qwabe campaign, Dingiswayo again turned his attention to the west, probably in response to renewed Buthelezi activity. This time the scope of his reaction was more comprehensive, and an extensive campaign was undertaken. Relations with the Langeni were affirmed and tribute extraction enforced. The Langeni remained under their chief Makedama kaMbhengi.<sup>100</sup> The Mthethwa army then moved against the Mbatha, neighbours of the Buthelezi, who occupied the area around the Ntiazatshe.<sup>101</sup> Conflict was most intense with the Buthelezi themselves, and resulted in the death of Bakuza, the heir. It seems that this defeat and the flight of the chief heralded the

submission of the But. Zezi satellites such as the Zulu, Qungebeni, Sibiya and Dlamini.<sup>102</sup>

It was probably during this phase that Dingiswayo also moved against the Chunu and the Khumalo.<sup>103</sup> They were required to recognise Dingiswayo as their suzerain, and not to take any action without consulting him, but they were permitted to retain izigodlo, and the prerogative of butha'ing.<sup>104</sup> They continued to conduct independent military action, but only after consultation with Dingiswayo. Zulu dignitaries were regularly required to attend 'dances' at the Mthethwa capital, while Senzakhona went 'down to Dingiswayo's to look for a new wife', for whom the Mthethwa were likely to have demanded a not inconsiderable lobola. Matters of state were discussed at these big dances, and the chiefs khonza'd Dingiswayo.<sup>105</sup> Like the lowland chiefs, those in the west were not assimilated by the Mthethwa. The corollary of this was that their men were not incorporated into the Mthethwa army.

It was Dingiswayo's policy to remove recalcitrant chiefs and to replace them with minors or known Mthethwa loyalists from amidst their ranks. The Thembu chief Jama was killed by Dingiswayo and his heir, Ndina, a minor, was forced to khonza Dingiswayo.<sup>106</sup> The neighbouring Xulu chief, Xabashe kaBanda was similarly murdered by Dingiswayo, and a new dynasty under Mapoloba raised up to the chieftaincy.<sup>107</sup> Likewise, the Qungebeni and Dlamini chiefs who resisted Dingiswayo were killed, and their replacements approved and supported by the Mthethwa king.<sup>108</sup>

High office in Mthethwa kingdom was limited to a narrow sector. Dingiswayo appears to have recruited extensively from the ranks of the groups first incorporated into Mthethwa for his corps of commanders and senior adminis-

trators. Ngomane of the Dletsheni became commander-in-chief of the Mthethwa army and an induna of the Nhlangane ibutho.<sup>109</sup> He was placed in charge of a district apparently near kwaNogqogqa, on the turbulent south-western border of the Mthethwa paramountcy, abutting on the small Zulu chiefdom.<sup>110</sup> His command on the periphery of the kingdom and his close involvement with the installation of the new Zulu chief suggests that Mthethwa expansion inland may have occurred under his supervision. Furthermore, it was his task to absorb all refugees from the Mthethwa's inland neighbours, to incorporate them effectively into the amabutho and to conduct diplomatic relations to the west.<sup>111</sup> His attendance was required at the court at oYengweni, Dingiswayo's capital, where he frequently resided.<sup>112</sup> Presumably, this widespread demand made of all the izinduna enabled the Mthethwa chief to retain effective control over his subordinates and minimized the possibility of localised opposition gathering round the izinduna in their areas of command. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that Ngomane was moved to various posts and areas over time, although it should be noted that care was taken to ensure that he did not hold high office amongst his own people, the Dletsheni.<sup>113</sup> Ngomane's position, and that of the Dletsheni, was significantly enhanced by the marriage of Dingiswayo to Gudayi, a sister of Ngomane. Ngomane owed this honour and his high position to the fact that he was a high-ranking member of Dletsheni, a group considered to be related to the Mthethwa ruling lineage. At the same time, as a Dletsheni, rather than a member of the Nyambose, Ngomane could not have easily challenged or threatened the position of the reigning king.<sup>114</sup>

Another of the 'related' groups to supply Dingiswayo's administrative corps was the Gengení. oYengweni, the



Mthethwa capital, was placed under the command of a Gengeni notable, Mzaca kaMnqinya. oYengweni was situated midway between the Ntseleni and the Mfolozi rivers (again, a posting distant from the induna's own home area), and Mzaca was responsible for exercising direct rule over a number of groups in the vicinity of oYengweni who had been forcibly incorporated into the Mthethwa kingdom.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, VeTana kaCungele of the 'related' Mkhwanazi was given charge of the royal establishment, oHeni and was appointed induna of the Ningizmu ibutho,<sup>116</sup> while Mandeku of the Msweli, another 'related' group, was renowned as one of Dingiswayo's most senior izinduna.<sup>117</sup> Thus, the limited data available on Mthethwa izinduna, suggests that the constituency from which they were drawn comprised those clans which claimed to be related to the Mthethwa ruling lineage, excluding members of the ruling lineage itself.

As chief of the Sokhulu, Dingiswayo appointed an acknowledged supporter of the paramountcy, Nqoboko kaLanga. Nqoboko, a son of the previous Sokhulu chief, had been raised at the Mthethwa capital after his mother, a royal Mthethwa woman, fled from the Sokhulu on the death of his father. Nqoboko was thus closely connected to the ruling lineage. As a Sokhulu, however (like Ngomane) he was excluded from the Mthethwa chiefship.<sup>118</sup> Dingiswayo promoted the aspirations of Nqoboko for he was eager to assert greater control over the Sokhulu. Although they had khonza'd Jobe, the Sokhulu had continued to retain a measure of independence, as well as their own military forces.<sup>119</sup> They were, by far, the most powerful element in the north-east. Installation of Nqoboko with Mthethwa military aid meant that the new ruling lineage of the Sokhulu would have been connected to the Mthethwa in a way that the old was not. Furthermore, Nqoboko remained reliant on Mthethwa military

backing. He, like Ngomane, was required to report to oYengweni frequently, to khonza often, and to oversee the extraction of tribute, in particular, sugar-cane and catt[e], from the Sokhulu.<sup>120</sup> On Dingiswayo's behalf, he was required to extend the area of Mthethwa hegemony and to continue the process of consolidation in the north. Using the Sokhulu forces he overran the neighbouring Nzimeleni, killing off their ruling lineage and incorporating them under his command.<sup>121</sup>

In this way, Dingiswayo began to sub-contract out military responsibility at a time when the evidence suggests that the Mthethwa army was experiencing problems. It was said to be considerably smaller than the army of the neighbouring Ndwandwe, and seems to have been heavily overextended.<sup>122</sup> This crisis appears to have created the circumstances underlying Dingiswayo's decision to promote the claims of another of his trusted lieutenants to a local chieftaincy, that of the Zulu.

There are grounds for believing that Dingiswayo had Senzangakhona murdered and that he then provided his fugitive son Shaka, (by then a Mthethwa protégé) with a force with which to stake a claim to the Zulu chieftaincy.<sup>123</sup> As in the case of Nqoboko, who was given military control of the north-east and was assisted to the Sokhulu chieftaincy with Mthethwa amabutho, Shaka was accompanied amongst the Zulu by his own iziCwe unit, as well as the Nhlangani and Nyakeni.<sup>124</sup>

Like Nqoboko, Shaka is recorded as having fled amongst the Mthethwa as a 'refugee', and the stories of his youth are strongly indicative of the extent to which his only allegiance was to the Mthethwa. They incorporate many details of his very real 'adoption' into the Mthethwa. In the words of another of Stuart's

informants, he was given Ngomane as 'his father and advisor'.<sup>125</sup> The nature of the relationship between Ngomane and Shaka is stressed in the traditions, and is obviously a part of the explanation as to why he was entrusted with such a great commission on behalf of the Mthethwa ruling lineage. Shaka had been raised in Ngomane's household and when he returned to the Zulu, 'Dingiswayo gave him Ngomane kaNqomboli, saying "This is your father", and also allowed him a considerable following of people'.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore according to Stuart, Shaka was linked on the maternal side to the Mthethwa ruling lineage.<sup>127</sup>

After Shaka's successful accession, Dingiswayo ensured that the Mthethwa ruling lineage was well represented at the new Zulu court. He sent Gudayi, one of his wives with Shaka, as well as a contingent of Mthethwa agents or 'spies'.<sup>128</sup> It seems that Dingiswayo's strategy was the creation of a subsidiary satellite chiefdom in the west, under Shaka, which would serve as a nucleus for the close assimilation of its neighbours, and their unification into a cohesive unit centered on the Zulu chieftaincy. Presumably, the logic behind this was that it had the effect of incorporating and subordinating large numbers of people, rendering them available for recruitment into local amabutho, to whom, like the Sokhulu, the Mthethwa could sub-contract military responsibilities. The decentralized distribution of the amabutho of the Mthethwa polity and its tributaries meant the Mthethwa heartland was not required to support the bulk of the Mthethwa military reserves thus avoiding intensive exploitation of the heartland region.

However, this strategy was ultimately to contribute materially to the downfall of the Mthethwa state. Dingiswayo's failure to amalgamate and centralize the

amabutho of his tributaries together with those of the Mthethwa nucleus was a corollary of the Mthethwa rulers' growing disinclination to incorporate new subjects fully into the Mthethwa body politic. The concomitant rights and obligations which the establishment of 'kin' relations would have imposed were avoided. Instead, what emerged was a tendency for the Mthethwa chiefdom to assert its paramouncy in the sub-region, to demand a limited recognition thereof, some tribute, and, if necessary, military support. It seems that under Dingiswayo, Mthethwa circumstances were such that the Mthethwa either *did not* need to enforce more stringent conditions of subordination on their tributaries, or lacked the necessary means to do so.

The failure of the Mthethwa to integrate the bulk of their subjects into a cohesive polity had two effects. The first was that the sharp distinctions maintained between the original Mthethwa and later additions to the polity underlay an emerging system of social stratification. The increasing exclusivity of Mthethwa rule was further entrenched by the 'separation off' of a number of sections of the dominant lineage, and their endowment with separate izibongo. This led to the creation of the Nxale, Seme and Msweli 'sub-clans' out of the original Nyambose clan<sup>129</sup>, and possibly the Msondo and Mpanza.<sup>130</sup> The creation of new 'sub-clans' in this way was a royal prerogative, and as a characteristic feature of state-formation, will be discussed at greater length in chapter four. Its effective consequence was that it facilitated intermarriage within the ruling lineage, circumventing thus the social rule of *exogamy*. This meant that resources, in the form of lobola could be made to circulate within an increasingly limited group. This led to even greater disparities in wealth between a small and closed ruling group, and the remainder of the paramouncy. The Mthethwa paramouncy was

neatly divided into the ruling clan (abendlunkulu) and the commoners (abantu kazana)'.<sup>131</sup>

The second effect of the existence of decentralized chiefdom-based amabutho and of the failure of Mthethwa to assimilate with its new subjects, was the concomitant absence of any ideological unity between the Mthethwa and their tributaries, and the constant possibility of independent action on the part of the subordinate chiefdoms. Ultimately this, in form of the Zulu failure to respond to a Mthethwa request for military support, underlay the collapse of Mthethwa power.

Under Shaka, the Zulu army had been reformed and expanded, and carried out a number of local sorties on behalf of the Mthethwa paramount. One of Shaka's earliest campaigns was conducted against the recalcitrant Mbatha, at the same time as Dingiswayo attacked the nearby Ntshalini. The former was a cattle raid which turned into a massacre, earning Shaka a sharp reproof from his suzerain. Mthethwa policy continued to be shaped by the need to secure regular supplies of cattle tribute, and in the Zulu case, it seems that Dingiswayo wished to see the Zulu amabutho extended through the incorporation of men from a wide range of subject chiefdoms.

Subsequently, Shaka successfully attacked his immediate neighbours, the Langeni, the Qungebeni, a section of the Khumalo and the Buthelezi. Their incorporation under local Zulu rule was total. Their men were absorbed into the Zulu amabutho, and numbers of their women were placed in the Zulu izigodlo.<sup>132</sup> In the Langeni case, many 'orphans' were shipped back to Mthethwa, where they were given land and encouraged to settle individually under local Mthethwa chiefs.<sup>133</sup> A major Zulu establishment, eNdlamate, was erected on Langeni lands, while

Zulu officials were appointed to administer the Qungebeni chiefdom.<sup>134</sup> Cattle tribute was exacted from the new conquests and sent on to Dingiswayo, who in turn, liberally rewarded his highly successful 'border-agent', Shaka.<sup>135</sup> Shaka was also occupied with the collection of tribute on Dingiswayo's behalf further afield, from the Qadi and Ngadi,<sup>136</sup> and took his amabutho to fight with Dingiswayo against Matiwane of the Ndwane, a campaign which brought high ransoms and much cattle but which also brought an impending clash with the Ndwandwe one step closer.<sup>137</sup>

The threat to Mthethwa, posed by the looming presence of Zwide and the powerful Ndwandwe army to the north, is crystallized in the story of 'the so-called 'semen plot'. According to a number of sources, Zwide resolved to assure himself of victory over Dingiswayo through magical means, based on the widely-held principle that procurement of intimate personal particles would provide a powerful cantrip against that person. Chiefs were well aware of this danger and ensured that all their body discharges (saliva, nail-parings, hair-clippings etc) were carefully guarded and secretly buried. This was the task of a specially appointed and highly trusted official, the intsila, whose bare back was always handy to collect the chiefs' expectorations, while the izisindabisa concealed royal excretia. The elaborate security involved indicates the seriousness with which this threat was regarded.<sup>138</sup>

Zwide sent two women to Dingiswayo, his own sister Ntombazana and a daughter of Malusi, chief of the Nxumalo. The girls were charged with obtaining the royal semen, the only possibility not taken care of by the various officials. However, Dingiswayo was warned of the danger afterwards by the daughter of Malusi who was also his niece. As a result of this betrayal,

Zwide moved against the Nxumalo now allied to the Mthethwa. This brought Ndwandwe forces right onto Dingiswayo's northern border as did an attack at much the same time on another of Dingiswayo's tributaries, the Khumalo.<sup>139</sup> The Ndwandwe - Mthethwa conflict has been variously explained in terms of population-pressure theses, Guy's model of environmental crisis and competition for resources, and once again, competition over the Delagoa Bay trade. However one accounts for the escalation in conflict, there can be no doubt that increased militarization in one area evoked a ripple effect in neighbouring areas. In the Mthethwa case in particular, expansion of the amabutho in the latter years of Dingiswayo's reign, appears to have been a response to the Ndwandwe threat. However, Mthethwa forces alone were unable to contain the Ndwandwe. Presumably, Dingiswayo had realised this when he sanctioned Shaka's accession to the Zulu chieftaincy, but the astuteness of that move did not save the Mthethwa kingdom. The Mthethwa army was fated to face the Ndwandwe alone, without their second army. It appears that Shaka seized his opportunity to throw off the restraints of Mthethwa hegemony. Dingiswayo was captured and killed alone, and the Mthethwa army retired in disorder.<sup>140</sup>

The ease with which Zulu tardiness in rendezvousing with the Mthethwa army caused the collapse of the paramountcy, demonstrated both the relative military weakness of Mthethwa and the fragility of the polity's bonds of cohesion. Indeed, the Mthethwa polity had not attempted to develop the sophisticated structures and institutions of a tightly-knit state. The development of Mthethwa as a paramount chiefdom with hegemony over a number of separate but tributary chiefdoms was probably shaped by the particular circumstances in which it emerged. As Bonner has argued, 'different mixes of factors affected each of the states ... and led to significant

variations in the structures that emerged'.<sup>141</sup>

One of the factor mixes were those of regional peculiarities. The Mthethwa occupied a fertile coastal plain, where an existence was extracted from the environment with greater ease than was the case further inland. Consequently, resources were less contested, and violence was more curtailed. The expansion and changing content of the Delagoa Bay trade and later the climatological crisis of the early nineteenth century created the circumstances for the development of the Mthethwa amabutho, and for increased surplus extraction by the Mthethwa rulers. These factors also precipitated the emergence of a new tributary society. However, the institutional dimension which increased violence had given to the Ndwandwe, and later the Zulu states, was largely absent amongst the Mthethwa, and the ideological apparatus of kingship was concomitantly less developed.

The following chapters turn to consider the sharper conflicts and the greater intensity of the struggles out of which the Zulu state emerged. They examine the material circumstances of the emergent Zulu state and attempt to account for its greater cohesion and resilience. They focus on the development of a state ideology to underpin social cohesion, and to define and legitimate the position of the new kingdom's rulers. They examine the way in which old notions of kinship were altered and meshed with other ideas in the service not only of social integration, but also that of exclusion - the exclusion of subordinate groups from the rights and privileges enjoyed by the society's rulers.



1. Vansina, Oral Tradition, pp. 100-102.
2. Ibid., p. 100.
3. Fynn, Diary, pp. 7-11; H.Fynn, 'Occurrences Among the Native Races', in J. Bird, The Annals of Natal 1495-1845, Vol. 1, Pietermaritzburg, 1888, pp. 60-71.
4. Sir Theophilus Shepstone, 'Paper on the Zulu-Kafir Race', in Bird, Annals, p. 163.
5. K.C., Stuart Papers, 'Biography of Dingiswayo'; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 100, 101. Also see Fynn in Bird, Annals, p. 64.
6. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 3.
7. See for example, J. Argyle, 'Dingiswayo Discovered: An Interpretation of his Legendary Origins', in Social System and Tradition in Southern Africa, J. Argyle and E. Preston-Whyte, (eds.), Cape Town, 1978, pp. 1-18; Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 183-85.
8. K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, 'Izindaba zomlandu wabakwaMkwanazi kweIakwaMpukunyoni', by Lionel J.D. Mkhwanazi. The informant Mkhwanazi was a Christian based at the Lutheran Theological Seminary near Rorkes Drift. His account of Mkhwanazi affairs and history is very detailed.
9. See above, p. 112; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, p. 16, evidence of Nhlekele.

10. K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Mkhwanazi, p. 6.
11. Guy, Destruction, pp. 200, 205.
12. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 200, evidence of Jantshi and Ndukwana.
13. See below, pp. 390-91; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, p. 8, evidence of Nhlekele.
14. Guy, Destruction, p. 34.
15. J.S.A., Vol. 4, (forthcoming) pp. 277, 285, 292, evidence of Ndukwana. My thanks to John Wright for permitting me access to the manuscript of volume four.
16. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 162, evidence of Ndukwana contained in the testimony of Mkando.
17. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 79-81, evidence of Magidi, and editors' N. 1, p. 81.
18. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 161-63, evidence of Makewu.
19. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 291-93, evidence of Mpambukelwa.
20. See note 3.
21. Compare Bryant's data, Olden Times, p. 127, with that of Essery, in K.C., Essery Papers, Ms. 1473, 'The Murder of Shaka Zulu', p. 13.
22. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 87; J.S.A., Vol. 4 (forthcoming), p. 279, evidence of Ndukwana.
23. Stuart, uBaxoxele, p. 14. The informant Matshwill was born c.1838, and gave his testimony to Stuart in 1903.

24. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, evidence of Nhlekele, pp. 8-19.
25. M. Fuze, The Black People and Whence They Came, transl. by H.C. Lugg, (ed.), A.T. Cope, Pietermaritzburg, 1979, p. 49; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 203; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 259, evidence of Mmemi.
26. Guy, Destruction, p. 205.
27. Bryant, Olden Times p. 84.
28. Ibid., p. 83. In fact Bryant says that the Mthethwa occupied this area before they khonza'd the Mbokazi, but this contradicts all the other evidence available, including that which occurs elsewhere in Olden Times, in particular p. 84; also see K.C., file 41, p. 4, evidence of Ndukwana.
29. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 84, 217. This definition of khonza is that utilized by Webb and Wright in The James Stuart Archive series.
30. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 84; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart.
31. M. Hall, 'Shakan pitfall traps: hunting technique in the Zulu kingdom' in Annals of the Natal Museum, 12, 1 (1977), Pietermaritzburg, pp. 1-12. Also see Bryant, Olden Times, p. 217.
32. Hall, 'Shakan pitfall traps', p. 2.
33. J. Shooter, The Kafirs of Natal and the Zulu Country, London, 1857, p. 40.

34. D. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', chapter 5, and p. 127, in particular.
35. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 84.
36. Ibid. See the situation of the Mkhwanazi given on the enclosed map in Olden Times; K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Mkhwanazi, pp. 1-6.
37. Ibid.; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 113.
38. This thesis was first advanced by A. Smith, 'The Trade of Delagoa Bay', p. 185, but with reference to the reign of Dingiswayo sometime later.
39. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 116.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 79, evidence of Magidi kaNgomane, a Dletsheni informant.
42. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 109, 112, 116, 684; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, pp. 10, 18, evidence of Nhlekele; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 79, evidence of Mag iI.
43. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 108.
44. Krige, Social System, p. 34.  
It is significant in this context that the Cambini were known as the undlunkhulu house of the Mthethwa ruling lineage, where undlunkhulu specifically indicated a relationship of kin, see K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, p. 18, evidence of Nhlekele.

45. Krige, Social System, p. 34.
46. On the flexibility of izithakazele see ibid., pp. 34, 35; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 15; and the discussion in chapter five.
47. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 71-4.
48. Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 682-86.
49. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 131-32.
50. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 99; Stuart, uSaxoxele, p. 24.
51. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 73-4.
52. Guy, The Destruction, chapter I, p. 9 in particular.
53. Guy, 'Ecological factors', p. 14.
54. J. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan Age-Group Formation among the Northern Nguni', Natalia, 8 (Dec. 1978), p. 25.
55. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 109.
56. Ibid; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, p. 12, evidence of Nhltekele.
57. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 109; Fuse, The Black People, p. 19.
58. Ibid; K.C., Stuart Papers, files 61, 62, evidence of Mkehlengana and Socwatsha; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 106.
59. Ibid., pp. 114-15.

60. T. Mofolo, Chaka: A Historical Romance, Oxford, 1931, p. 4. Mofolo was foremost a literary writer, but he also considered himself to be an historian. As a non-Zulu, he was also acutely conscious of the necessity of coming to understand an historical society other than his own. His comments are reproduced here as one historian's conceptualization of the social cohesion of early polities. For a penetrating review of Mofolo as writer and historian see D. Burness, 'Thomas Mofolo's Chaka', in Burness (ed.), Shaka, King of the Zulus in African Literature, pp. 1-23.
61. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 86-7; Fynn, Diary, p. 2; Stuart, uBaxoxe, chapter 3; H. Fynn, 'Occurrences among the Native Races', in Bird, Annals, p. 61; Fuze, The Black People, p. 14; Sir T. Shepstone, 'The Early History of the Zulu-Kafir Race of South-Eastern Africa' in Bird, Annals, p. 161.
62. Fynn, Diary, pp. 2-4.
63. See below p. 113.  
Of group two, Shaka was the most famous example, but also see the example of Nqoboko discussed on p. 131 below.
64. See below, pp. 131-2, 135; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 109.
65. Fynn, Diary, p. 5; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 90.
66. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka' by Stuart; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 80, 89; Fynn, Diary, p. 4; Fuze, The Black People, p. 16. The Bisini appear to have been the people over whom Dingiswayo had been appointed as a sub-chief whilst

a refugee amongst the Hlubi. They occupied an area on the Mthethwa-Hlubi border. A division existed between two groups of Bizini and appears to reflect a division over support for Dingiswayo. The section which did not return to Mthethwa with the new chief is reputed to have khonza'd the Buthelezi. The Bizini section which accompanied Dingiswayo later came to be considered a Mthethwa sub-clone, as did another group of Hlubi 'refugees', the Ngayini. (Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 114, 117; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 176, evidence of Jantshi)

67. Fynn, Diary, p. 6; Stuart, Baxoxele, chapter 3; Fynn, 'Occurrences', p. 62.
68. Fynn, Diary, p. 6; B.W. Vilakazi, uDingiswayo kaJobe, London, 1939, p. 2.
69. Fynn, Diary, p. 7; Fynn, 'Occurrences', p. 62. There is some debate on this point. Bryant (Olden Times, p. 90) maintains that Mawewe fled to the Nxumalo. This was unlikely for two reasons: evident cordiality between Dingiswayo and the Nxumalo chief, Malusi and the marriage of Dingiswayo's sister to Malusi (K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart); the immediacy with which a campaign against the Qwabe was launched by the Mthethwa.
70. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 681-97. The Mbonambi, Mbokazi and Dube all shared the isithakazelo 'Mbuyazi', which proclaimed a connection with the Qwabe; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 62, notebook 61, evidence of Mkehlengana and Socwatsha.
71. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, evidence of Nhlakele, pp. 9, 48; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 48, evidence of Madikane; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 98; Fynn, 'Occurrences' pp. 63-4.

72. See below, p. 127.
73. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 149-52.
74. Ibid., pp. 182, 187.
75. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart.
76. See below, p. 129.
77. Bryant, Oiden Times, pp. 103, 105.
78. Ibid., p. 101.
79. Fynn, Diary, pp. 8, 9, 10; Fynn, 'Occurrences', p. 64; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 269, evidence of Mmemf.
80. The little evidence available on these two groups within the Mthethwa paramountcy indicates that they were sections of clans, and that the numbers of people involved were not large. From this, it can be inferred that they were unlikely to have maintained armies after their subjugation by Dingiswayo. On Qadi and Ngadi dispersal across the Zululand-Natal area see J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 237, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 69, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 268, evidence of Maziyana.
81. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart; Bryant, Oiden Times, p. 100. On the significance of izigodlo see chapter seven.
82. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 41, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 323, 343, evidence of Lunguza.



83. Fynn, Diary, p. 9; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 189.
84. Isaacs, Travels, p. 33.
85. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.
88. See Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 176-77.
89. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 243-45, evidence of Mmemi.
90. Smith, 'The struggle for control of southern Mocambique 1720-1835', p. 184.
91. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 84.
92. See Hedges description, 'Trade and Politics', p. 31; Guy, Destruction, pp. 6, 7; Slater, 'Transitions', p. 41, Hall, 'The Ecology of the Iron Age', chapter 8.
93. Fynn, Diary, pp. 8, 9, 10; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 100.
94. Ibid., pp. 28, 114.
95. Ibid., p. 131.

96. Ibid., pp. 101, 114, and see position of the Thembu on the enclosed map.
97. Ibid., pp. 101-2, 243.
98. Ibid., p. 101, 229.
99. Ibid., p. 102.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid., pp. 55, 102, 129.
103. Ibid., p. 102; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart.
104. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 181-83, evidence of Jantshi.
105. Ibid., p. 181; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 48, evidence of Madikane, where Senzangakhona was reputed to have said that Shaka was 'at Mtetwa, where we are ruled'.
106. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 101; 243.
107. Ibid., pp. 101, 229.
108. Ibid., pp. 102, 129.
109. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka' by Stuart; Fynn, Diary, p. 13.
110. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 65; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 264, evidence of Mayinga. (This was the establishment to which Shaka was sent on his arrival amongst the Mthethwa, under the command of Ngomane).

111. Shaka was, of course, the most famous of these refugees. See also the cases of Silwane and Nomletl (J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 48, evidence of Madikane).
112. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 79, evidence of Magidi.
113. See below, p. 133.
114. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 123.
115. Ibid., pp. 86, 95; K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Historical Records', by C.J. Magwaza, based on the evidence of Muntuwenkosi Mthethwa of the Mbokodwembovu ibutho, pp. 2-3.
116. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 113; Stuart, uBaxoxele, p. 41; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart.
117. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, p. 16, evidence of Nhlekele.
118. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 105.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid., p. 110; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook 4, evidence of Nhlekele.
121. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 110.
122. On the size and composition of the Mthethwa army see the interesting comments of M. Kunene, Emperor Shaka the Great, London, 1979, p. xv. Kunene's work, unfortunately without source annotation, contains a wealth of detail apparently derived from primary sources.

123. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 180-82, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 198-99, evidence of Mkebeni.
124. Ibid.; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 120; K.C., Stuart  
Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka', by Stuart.
125. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 190, evidence of Jantshi.
126. Ibid. p. 182; and see p. 180.
127. K.C., Stuart Papers, 'The Life of Tshaka', by  
Stuart.
128. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 120, 123.
129. Ibid., p. 117.
130. Ibid., p. 114; K.C. Essay Competition, 1950,  
'The Bengus and Jalli', by Rev. T.S.W. Mthembu,  
pp. 9-10. K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, 'The  
Mpanza tribe', by S.P. Mpanza, pp. 3, 6, 7, 8, 10.
131. Kunene, Emperor Shaka, p. xv; also see the distinctions  
drawn by Kunene between Dingiswayo's establishment  
of the Mthethwa paramountcy and the earlier polity  
based on 'membership' of the Mthethwa family.
132. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 133, 136, 225; J.S.A.,  
Vol. 2, p. 61, evidence of Madikane.
133. Ibid.
134. K.C., Essery Papers, M.S. 1473, 'The Murder of Shaka.  
Zulu', p. 13; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 126.

135. Ibid., p. 131, 132-33; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 183, evidence of Jantshi.
136. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 107, evidence of Mahashahasha.
137. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 127.
138. Ibid., pp. 163-64; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 183, evidence of Jantshi.
139. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 172.
140. Fynn, 'Occurrences', p. 65.
141. Bonner, Kings, p. 23.

CHAPTER THREE'THE GREAT REED OF THE MHLATHUZE': AN ANALYSIS OF  
QWABE INCORPORATION INTO THE ZULU STATE AND THE  
INVENTION OF THE MALANDELA TRADITION

This chapter will examine the circumstances of Qwabe incorporation into the Zulu kingdom c.1818, and the relations which prevailed between the Qwabe and the ruling Zulu over the following decade. It will seek to analyse the nature of Zulu hegemony in that period, the form of incorporation experienced by the Qwabe, and the kinds of resistance in which the Qwabe engaged.

For a number of reasons, analysis of Qwabe-Zulu relations in this chapter precedes discussion of groups whose incorporation by the Zulu occurred slightly earlier. Firstly, Qwabe was one of the largest chiefdoms to be subjected to the Zulu; secondly, in cultural, linguistic and historical terms, the Qwabe were, of all the groups with which the Zulu sought to assimilate, the most different from the Zulu. As such, the Qwabe experience was of enormous significance in shaping the emerging Zulu kingdom, in establishing the parameters of prevailing relations of incorporation and the associated ideological discourse. As a result, the Qwabe case provides key insights for the analysis of the Shakan period. Finally, Qwabe traditions provide the clearest examples of how spurious notions of kinship were fabricated to create a common identity with and loyalty to the Zulu ruling elite.

Hitherto, virtually all studies of Zulu state formation have fallen back on a coercive model. This does not

provide an adequate conceptualisation of the aggregative processes which underlay the emergence of the vast and heterogeneous Zulu kingdom. Expansion was effected through a variety of other devices which differed regionally in response to local conditions. The extension of Zulu overrule exploited a range of options from naked repression to genuine cooption either singly or in combinations. It can be demonstrated that the Zulu ruling lineage sought means to legitimate its newly-achieved political dominance. This was attempted through the creation of a new ideological system which served to sanction the reservation of power and privilege for certain groups, and the exclusion of others through appeals to the remote past. The processes involved in the emergence of a new ideological system were not those of invention but rather of transformation and rearrangement, as a new ideology was built up in the course of political and economic struggles, out of existing ideological complexes. It will be argued that the way in which the Zulu ruling elite sought to impose its rule over the Qwabe was meant to be achieved through a process of active and direct consent. Its form was designed to represent more than simply the narrow interests of the Zulu, and to articulate different visions of the world in such a way that their potential antagonisms were neutralised.

This process can be traced through a careful dissection of Qwabe traditions of origin which display patterns of contradictions indicative of subsequent manipulations. The traditions of many groups incorporated by the Zulu bear a similar imprint of intervention and will be discussed at length in later chapters of this thesis. However, Qwabe traditions reveal this process particularly sharply because of the disintegration of the Qwabe chiefdom in the 1830s. As a result

of this, Qwabe traditions which have survived into the twentieth century have done so largely in a 'frozen' form. At the time of their conquest by the Zulu, the Qwabe chiefdom occupied the area between the Mhlathuze and Thukela rivers. Under Shaka, the chiefdom retained its coherence and continued to inhabit the same area. Immediately after the assassination of Shaka in 1828, the Qwabe, led by Nqetho, took flight from the new Zulu king, Dingane. They made their way south in a series of running battles, their numbers ever-diminishing, until they were defeated and scattered by the Mpondo chief, Faku. Finally,

Heedless and forlorn, the small surviving remnant of the Qwabe host scattered like sheep before the devastating wolf. Some accepted mental subjection under their conqueror Faku, some gravitated helplessly back to a more miserable servitude to the Zulu.<sup>1</sup>

The Qwabe chiefdom had vanished, and Qwabe history came to an end in the early 1830s. In fact, the traditions and history of the Qwabe had largely ceased to be of interest or relevance to the Qwabe informants questioned by Stuart. One of them, Mbovu, of the Makhanya section of the Qwabe, was in his seventies when he spoke to Stuart, and he observed,

I no longer belong to the old generation. I am a seed that has dropped to a new state of civilisation. I take but little interest in former affairs.<sup>2</sup>

and he peevishly enquired of his interviewer,

Why do you stir up these old graves? When the tribe is still standing and flourishing, it is something, but now we are broken and scattered.<sup>3</sup>

Mbovu's attitude towards Qwabe history presumably reflects the falling into disuse of Qwabe traditions of origins in the post-Shakan period. It was likely that this affected the reliability of the data and encouraged its faulty transmission. However, although the quality of Qwabe oral traditions probably deteriorated in this period, a corollary of their neglect was minimal manipulation of their content in the post-



Shakan nineteenth century. Consequently, *Qwabe* traditions provide a key reference point in the periodisation of interpolations in the traditions of Zululand as a whole. Hence, for a number of reasons, *Qwabe* traditions have a particular methodological interest, and the methodological approach adopted here is carried through the rest of this thesis.

Qwabe traditions of origin and their contradictions

The traditions of the individual subordinate *Qwabe* lineages and those of the *Qwabe* chiefdom as a whole are characterized by three fundamental contradictions. The first contradiction is located in the claims of the subordinate lineages to be the kinsfolk (of varying degrees of closeness) of the *Qwabe* ruling lineage, and the clear signs that most of the groups concerned actually had other, immigrant origins. The second anomaly lies in, on the one hand, acknowledgement in the traditions of the dominant position of the *Qwabe* ruling house and, on the other hand, the maintenance of traditions which challenged the seniority of the ruling lineage. The third contradiction exists between the claims made in the *Malindela* story that the *Qwabe* and the *Zulu* shared a common origin, and a host of indications from the traditions of the subordinate lineages, and from other sources, that the history of the *Qwabe* lineages was not linked in the remote past to that of the *Zulu*.

It will be suggested that the roots of the first contradiction lay in the specific relations of aggregation and incorporation (by means of an ideology of kinship) which characterized the pre-Shakan *Qwabe* chiefdom. It will be argued that the second antinomy owed its existence to the failure of the *Qwabe* ruling lineage adequately to secure and to underpin its position of dominance vis-a-vis the other *Qwabe*

lineages, and to the subsequent collapse of the ruling lineage after the assassination of Shaka. They allowed residual traditions of resistance not fully obliterated earlier to re-emerge. Finally, it will be posited that the third contradiction arose during the reign of Shaka, when the Zulu sought to assimilate the Qwabe chiefdom, on the ideological basis of manufactured claims of a common origin in the remote past. Explanation of these contradictions demands a closer look at the content and form of the traditions of the subordination lineages, and it is to their analysis that this section now turns.

Two of the subordinate Qwabe lineages which claimed to be related to the ruling lineage were the Ngadi and the Cineka. However, both groups maintained that they were not originally subordinate lineages. According to the traditions, a hunting competition was established to decide on seniority between the Qwabe, Ngadi and the Cineka. The Ngadi withdrew however. As the hunt proceeded a duiker was

first stabbed by the Mcineka people. It went on and was killed by us (Qwabes) with knobsticks. We scooped up clots of blood and smeared them on the anus and the tail of the buck. We turned over the buck, laying it on that side on which the wound was. The Mcinekas came up, looked all over to find their wound, but finding none, decided they must have wounded the animal on the anus. They (Mcinekas) accordingly declared that to be their right for claiming the beast, the killing of which decided the seniority of the tribe.<sup>4</sup>

Bryant explains the trick more fully. The ones who had struck first misidentified their wound and so lost the chieftaincy.<sup>5</sup> Bryant, however, declares the story to be the tale of how the Chilik, not the Cineka, lost the chieftaincy to the Qwabe. In some traditions it was even claimed that it was yet another Qwabe section, the Makhanya, who were ousted in this way.<sup>6</sup>

This story of how the Qwabe became the senior lineage is unusual in that it does not claim seniority in terms of descent, but rather as the result of a trick of dubious legitimacy. The form which the tale takes seems to have the capacity to acknowledge two realities. One would seem to be that the Cineka (or any other lineage concerned) were never genealogically subordinate to the Qwabe; the other a newer reality, was that of Qwabe dominance over the other lineage concerned.

The seniority of the Qwabe ruling lineage was also challenged by a number of other Qwabe lineages who claimed to be the kinsfolk of the Qwabe, such as the Khuzwayo, Makhanya and Ncwana, and who all also claimed origins more ancient than, and separate from, those of the ruling lineage. The Makhanya people claimed to have originated in the north around the Mkhuze, and asserted that 'The Makhanya chiefs jump over royalty ("eqa uselwa")'.<sup>7</sup> The traditions of the Ncwana (alias Yinda) lineage likewise directly challenged Qwabe hegemony. Discussing the status of the Ncwana with Stuart, Mkehlengana, himself an Ncwana informant, quoted the proverb 'You are making yourself out to be a great chief, as great as Dabula ka Ncwana'.<sup>8</sup> Mkehlengana claimed that this saying arose because '... we formerly used to be of importance. My father said Qwabe and Zulu passed by Ncwana and increased in importance',<sup>9</sup> suggesting that the Ncwana were once preeminent, but were superseded by the Zulu. It was further put to Stuart that 'There is reason for thinking Ncwana was once of greater importance than either Qwabe or Zulu.. They may be the parent clan, from which sprang the more notable offshoots.'<sup>10</sup> Stuart's informant, Mkehlengana, was the son of Zulu kaNogandaya, one of Shaka's greatest heroes and it is probable that he was echoing the aspirations of an ambitious father,

but the Ncwana traditions do, nonetheless, reflect a wider pattern of claims asserting precedence over the Qwabe ruling lineage. Mkotana, another Ncwana informant, observed in this vein,

'Mayandeya [Malandela the Zulu and Qwabe progenitor] cannot have been a man of any rank for he would not have had that name which merely means 'a follower', i.e. following others greater than himself.'<sup>11</sup>

Both Mkehlengana and Mkotana suggest moreover, that the Ncwana were an immigrant lineage who, under Ndhlovu, entered Zululand, and joined the Qwabe with whom they amalgamated as close 'kin', becoming known as the 'isizinda'.<sup>12</sup> The word usually refers to the section of a homestead which remains behind once the other sections have split off with their heirs.<sup>13</sup> But the word also carries with it connotations of 'origin', 'essence'.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Dinya, a Qwabe informant of another lineage, asserted that the Ncwana came from the north, from amongst the Mthethwa.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, such claims of origins separate from the ruling lineage typically characterize these Incei traditions.

The origins of the Chili lineage were equally ambiguous. On the one hand, it was claimed that the Chili were a lineage as ancient as the Ngadi and Cineka, themselves lineages which claimed a greater antiquity than that of the ruling lineage;<sup>16</sup> indeed, the Chili isithakazelo of 'Lushaba' suggests that the Chili may have been related to the Bhele people with whom they shared the address-name, and whose origins were entirely separate from the Qwabe.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the Chili were represented as having a connection with the ruling lineage.

These lineages seem to have been the original components which made up the Qwabe polity as it emerged sometime around the reign of Mahlobo. Hedges has argued that the initial impetus to Qwabe expansion came from the exchange of surplus corn for goats, and cattle.<sup>18</sup> This

explanation, with its focus on the careful husbandry of wealth fits ill with the assimilation and incorporation of outsider lineages which characterized the earliest phase of Qwabe expansion, and is, in fact, based on a misreading of Bryant, Hedges' primary source for this section. Bryant records that the cattle which were earned through the exchange of surplus grain were subsequently removed inland to the Mkhumbane valley, with Zulu, when the latter separated off from his brother Qwabe.<sup>19</sup> The story of the origins of the Ngadi and their eating of the izingadi melons which were usually only consumed in times of great dearth, suggests rather, that the phase of primary aggregation may have been a response to circumstances of diminishing resources, such as in a period of drought.<sup>20</sup> This proposition is born out by the pattern and direction of early Qwabe expansion in abandoning marginal areas in favour of some of the most highly productive areas in all Zululand.<sup>21</sup> It is likely, that in this early phase of Qwabe expansion, an initially small and vulnerable Qwabe ruling lineage sought to expand its nuclear strength. A period of intensive assimilation occurred which saw the incorporation of outsider lineages as kin.

Subsequently, the Qwabe ruling lineage seems to have sought to entrench its hegemonic position through intermarriage within itself, permitting considerable restriction of lobola wealth at the apex of Qwabe society. The prevailing rule of exogamy was circumvented by declaring sections of the ruling lineage to be separate groups. Known as ukudabula, this practice gave rise to the Mbhedu, the Gumbi, the Pahla, the Mgobozi and the Masabayi.<sup>22</sup> Qwabe informants indicated a strong appreciation of the beneficial effects which segmentation brought to an expanding lineage. As Mbovu remarked to Stuart, 'A tribe does not increase in my opinion, where there is only one chief. Growth

is brought by offshoots.<sup>23</sup>

The expanding Qwabe chiefdom of the later eighteenth century was composed thus of numerous component lineages, some of which were genuine genealogical sub-sections of other lineages, and others which claimed to be related to the Qwabe ruling lineage but whose traditions of origins indicate that these claims were fabricated.<sup>25</sup> The Qwabe chiefdom therefore differed markedly from two of its contemporaries, the Mthethwa state discussed in chapter one, and the Ngwane state to the north studied by Bonner, both of which contained within them a sector of the population which was unrelated and in every way clearly separate from the ruling group.<sup>26</sup> Like both of these states, the Qwabe polity was at this time expanding steadily and was in the process of becoming increasingly militarized.<sup>27</sup> However, in the Qwabe polity the position of the ruling lineage was less firmly entrenched, and indeed encountered and failed to combat convincingly, ongoing opposition from powerful subordinate lineages. The reign of Khondlo, spanning the turn of the century, for example, saw the inauguration of period of internal political crisis as certain Qwabe notables refused to sanction the chief's choice of heir, ultimately resulting in civil war between the amaGolokoqo and Mthandeni factions.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, when Shaka came to power, the Qwabe polity was still in a state of internal political crisis, through the judicious exploitation of which, the Zulu king was able to win significant internal Qwabe support for his takeover bid.<sup>29</sup>

Competition within the Qwabe polity and these struggles for power led, not to the emergence of a strong ruling group and an increasingly subordinate group as happened among the northern states, but to the flight of certain groups, the expulsion of others and the meditated departure of still others.<sup>30</sup> One thesis which explains

the different relations of incorporation mobilized by the Mthethwa and Ngwane states in the north, to that of the Qwabe in the south, and which accounts for the failure of the Qwabe ruling lineage to secure its hegemonic position, is that which distinguishes between the emergence of states directly involved trading relations, and those arising as a defensive response to the trading politics. The Qwabe chiefdom seems to have been largely excluded from the Delagoa Bay trade. In contrast to the Mthethwa and Ngwane ruling lineages who owed their positions of dominance to their ( ) monopolise trade and its benefits, the Qwabe lineage appears to have gained a more limited form of ascendancy as a result of its capacity to organize the co-operation of a number of lineages in defense against the increasingly militarized and predatory trading states.<sup>31</sup> In such circumstances, the emphasis would have continued to be on the close assimilation of component subject groups and their incorporation as kin, and no imperatives would have existed for the definition of a section thereof as outsiders, or non-kin.

Thus, the traditions of the subordinate Qwabe lineages differ markedly from those of the subordinate Mthethwa and Ngwane lineages by all claiming to be the kin of the ruling lineage. The emphasis on close assimilation accounts for the creation of the claims of kinship even where the groups' origins were manifestly separate. The relative weakness of the Qwabe ruling lineage accounts for the survival of separatist traditions and the challenges which they posed to the position of the ruling house. This situation would have been exacerbated by the post-Shakan fortunes of the Qwabe chiefdom. The claims of the subordinate lineages to a greater seniority would have been revived following the collapse of the Qwabe royal house in the 1830s.

Events of the pre-Shakan and post-Shakan eras thus appear to account for the first two contradictions identified, but, what of the third contradiction, between the evidence contained in the traditions of subordinate lineages and indeed those of the chieftom as a whole, and the key tradition among Qwabe, that the Qwabe descended from Malandela, likewise said to be the progenitor of the Zulu clan?

The claim that the Qwabe and the Zulu peoples sprang from a common ancestor is widespread in the relevant oral traditions, and has become part of the conventional wisdom on Zulu history. That it has gone unquestioned for so long is probably a consequence of its unhesitating reproduction in Bryant's Olden Times in Zululand and Natal, where authority is lent to it by the immense scholarship of the publication. Nonetheless, and in spite of Bryant's own attempts to synthesise the tradition with later historical accounts, certain ambiguities remain which invite investigation.

Bryant relates that Malandela trekked from the 'up-country', over the Mthonjaneni heights, via the Mfula river, and down to the Mhlathuze river where he erected the first-known establishment, oDwini. The story goes on to describe extensive cultivation of the banks of the Mhlathuze by Nozinja, purportedly one of Malandela's wives, and the mother of his two sons, Qwabe and Zulu. Much ujiba (millet) was produced, and with the surplus corn, first goats, and then a herd of cattle were obtained. The cattle were coveted by the elder son, Qwabe. This led to dissension and ultimately to the flight of Nozinja, her younger son Zulu, and an attendant, Mpungose, to the Zungu people, from whom Nozinja and Mpungose had originally come. Bryant recorded that they finally found refuge amongst the Qungebeni people, and settled in the Mkhumbane valley, later to become the heart of the Zulu kingdom. Qwabe and his followers remained in situ, on the Mhlathuze,



from where they too developed into an independent political unit.<sup>32</sup>

Hedges' account of Qwabe incorporation implicitly accepts Bryant's view. He accepts uncritically the assertion that the Qwabe and the Zulu were related peoples, both being the offspring of a common founding ancestor, Malandela. This presumably is understood to be the basis of a shared identity between the Qwabe people and the Zulu monarch, and suggests that this was, in ideological terms, the way in which the incorporation of the Qwabe into the Zulu kingdom was effected, being the basis for the assertion of a common identity between the Zulu king and his new Qwabe subjects. In terms of kinship, the ancestors of the king were thus also the ancestors of the people.<sup>33</sup>

The Malandela tale of a common Qwabe and Zulu origin is not borne out by the notions of genesis contained in the traditions of the individual subordinate Qwabe lineages. Both Bryant and Hedges sought to blend the two types of genesis stories together in a complementary way, sometimes choosing to ignore their contradictions. Bryant, for example, suggested that one of the subordinate Qwabe lineages, the Ngadi, had accompanied Malandela from the uplands, but delayed on the banks of the Mfulu river to eat melons (izingadi), from which occurrence the lineage derived its name.<sup>34</sup> While Bryant's version links the origins of the lineage directly to the tradition of a common origin with the Zulu through Malandela, the testimonies of Qwabe informants keep the two types of genesis story considerably more distinct from each other. The origins of groups such as the Ngadi were usually discussed by informants in an exclusively Qwabe context. Although the lineage claimed to be very ancient, it was never discussed with

reference to the Zulu, or to Malandela.<sup>35</sup> It was generally asserted that all the other Qwabe lineages only came into existence after the death of Malandela and the split between Qwabe and Zulu. If that were so, it would be expected that the subordinate lineages would have traced their origin to Malandela, which they fail to do, and in fact, negative corroboration of this point comes from the failure of other sources of evidence to connect the subordinate Qwabe lineages to the Zulu.

Neither of the Ngadi izithakazelo, Gumede (a common Qwabe address-name) or Ngema (the name of an early Ngadi ancestor of note), were shared by the Zulu.<sup>36</sup> Given the apparent flexibility of izithakazelo, this might have been the result of a later intervention, by either party to suggest genealogical distance, but this seems unlikely given the imperatives which prevailed in the nineteenth century amongst the Qwabe towards stressing the closeness of their connection with the ruling lineage. And indeed, we find elsewhere claims that the Ngadi founding figure was not Malandela, ... the amaNgadi are of Madhlakovu ka Byaba. He is their progenitor. He was their ancestor chief. Myaba is the son of Hlakahlayana.<sup>37</sup>

This informant went on to confess, 'I do not know how the Ngadi connect with Malandela'.<sup>38</sup> In the Ngadi instance, the traditions contain two different notions about origins which were not as easily amalgamated as Bryant hoped, and indeed, the phenomenon of contradictory claims of origin has been shown to extend through virtually all the Qwabe traditions.

Likewise, in the traditions of the individual Qwabe lineages, the Qwabe as a whole were unambiguously designated 'abas'enzansi',<sup>39</sup> and the local clan histories emphasise the lowland origins of the Qwabe people

in a way that rests uneasily wit' claims to a common origin with the Zulu, who were unambiguously 'abas'enhla' (uplanders). Hedges' work on Qwabe oral traditions has obfuscated the significance of these designations and their contradictoriness. Of particular significance in this respect is Hedges' interpretation of the traditions as describing the Qwabe as uplanders (abas'enhla'), and the Cele and Thuli peoples as lowlanders ('abas'enzansi'). This section is referenced to four sources, all of which are the testimonies of one or other of Stuart's informants.<sup>40</sup> None of the references contain either of these word-phrases, although they do discuss Cele and Thuli relations with the Qwabe, Cele genealogical connections with the Mthethwa, and the areas occupied by the Cele and the Thuli. While the latter evidence indicates that the Cele and Thuli inhabited low-lying and coastal regions, it cannot be deduced from that, that these groups were known by the lowlander appellation 'abas'enzansi'. Rather, the traditions indicate that the term 'abas'enzansi' was usually applied to the Qwabe, whom Hedges erroneously designates uplanders. Hedges fails to cite a single instance or testimony where the Qwabe are called 'abas'enhla' as he claims. The confusion about the 'abas'enhla' and 'abas'enzansi' designations in Hedges' account is a consequence of the contradictory character of the evidence on this point, but his approach fails to reflect or to account for the contradictions.

On closer examination there is, in fact, little within the Malandela story which serves to sustain its historicity. The circular route of what was to become the Zulu migratory passage whilst under Malandela, from Babanango down to the Mhlathuze, and then back to the Babanango area, where the Zulu polity was to emerge, seems to be immediately suspect, and suggests that the Qwabe interlude may be little more than a

latter-day interpolation. The whole account is geographically fixed by only one other element, the oDwini establishment, but oDwini was, in fact, the name of a famous latter-day Qwabe royal residence, probably built by the Qwabe chief Khondlo kaMncinci.<sup>41</sup> Had oDwini actually existed in Malandela's time as his chief establishment, it was likely to have been the site of his grave. The ritual significance of such a site would have been enormous, and there would have been a powerful imperative for the preservation of memory of its exact location.<sup>42</sup>

It is a significant omission in the traditions that the grave sites of neither Malandela nor Qwabe are known. It is also surprising that they were never 'rediscovered' by later chiefs since they would have constituted an ideologically powerful resource because of their antiquity. Knowledge of the grave sites of earlier Zulu and Qwabe chiefs, was, in contrast, carefully preserved, right back over ten generations to the names immediately succeeding those of Malandela, Qwabe and Zulu. It seems unlikely that the lack of information about the latter graves was simply a function of evidence deterioration over time, since information on graves from a period only slightly later shows no similar wear, and indeed, was unlikely to, given the ritual importance of grave sites.<sup>43</sup>

A closer scrutiny of the Malandela tale shows that it shares many of the features of traditions of genesis analysed in other parts of Africa. Traditions of genesis have attracted considerable attention and have spawned their own particular methodology. This is a consequence of the complexity of their form, the characteristic proliferation of archaisms which occur, and the frequent collapse of their chronology into a single timeless moments in the past. Moreover,

it has been recognized that into these accounts of the past are constantly compacted the concerns of the present. Although it has thus been argued that traditions must be read as living cultural documents, historians have persisted in seeing in genesis traditions, the history of the remote past as it really happened.

One exception has been the work of Robert Harms on the Robangi.<sup>44</sup> Harms suggests that traditions of origination usually take the form of a personalised metaphor (like the 'Malandela' tradition) for a sociological process. Disparate groups either identify with or are excluded from identification with the mythical founding figure, and in this way, traditions of origination are used to define and redefine changing group or ethnic identities. Thus, oral traditions seem to use the past to express symbolically and to legitimate the ideals of the present social order. The problem for the historian using genesis traditions apparently concerned with the remote past is to establish what 'present social order' is referred to. In the Qwabe case, the disintegration of the chiefdom in the 1830s provides an important marker for this question, and allows the historian to distinguish, at least in some measure, between the use to which the remote past was put by the Shakan regime immediately prior to the Qwabe collapse, and the use to which the same area of the past was being put at the time when the genesis traditions were recorded.

The Malandela myth seems to fall within this category of genesis tradition. A key pointer to this lies in the division in the Qwabe chiefly genealogies between the earliest figures listed and the remainder of the names which mirrors a break in the known grave sites of Qwabe chiefs. Likewise, what Vansina has called the 'floating gap',<sup>45</sup> and Miller the 'hour-glass',<sup>46</sup>

demarcates the traditions of genesis quite clearly from the rest of the body of historical data. A number of versions of the Qwabe chiefly genealogy are available for comparison. As the accompanying table demonstrates, Mbovu and Kambi, two Qwabe informants who, in their testimonies affirmed that the Qwabe and Zulu were connected through the figure of Malandela, did not include the names of 'Malandela' and 'Qwabe' in their genealogies. Even when pressed by Stuart to make the connection, Kambi could not 'trace the line up to the man Qwabe and so connect with the Zulus'.<sup>47</sup> Dinya, another Qwabe informant who did connect the name of Qwabe into the chiefly genealogy expressed reservations, 'I am not quite sure of the father of Mahlobo, but fancy that it must be Qwabe.' (my emphasis)<sup>48</sup>

In the version given by Baleka, the problem of the link between the names of Mahlobo and Qwabe is overcome through the introduction of two other names. Bryant does a similar thing in his (b) version, whilst in the (a) version there is an elision at precisely the same point. It would seem as though the two sets of ancestor names, the pre-Mahlobo names, and those which followed, were of a different order. Similar patterns emerge from consideration of royal Zulu genealogies, notably the same problems with the linkage of the name 'Zulu' with the rest of the names in the Zulu chiefly genealogy as occur in the Qwabe lists with the name Qwabe.<sup>49</sup> The variations which occur around the name of Mageba in the Zulu lists parallel the confusion in the Qwabe genealogies before the name Mahlobo, particularly in the interposition of extra names.<sup>50</sup> These problems and variations are surprising in the case of a ruling lineage, where one would expect there to be a strong imperative for consistency. Indeed, the separation between the two different sets of ancestor names is vividly evidenced by the fact

that whenever the Zulu kings were bonga'd (praised) or ceremonial occasions, only the kings as far back as Mageba were addressed.<sup>51</sup>

The remaining series of contradictions characterizing Qwabe traditions of origin appear to owe their existence to the different responses of various sectors of the Qwabe chiefdom to the imposition of Zulu rule, notably that of Qwabe resistance to Zulu rule, and to Zulu attempts to construct an ideological basis for the incorporation of the Qwabe. Chief amongst these are the anomalies surrounding the Malandela tradition, including the conflicting claims concerning the father of Qwabe. It was sometimes said that Qwabe was the son of Malandela, and at other times that he was the son of Nozidiya or of Tshiyampahla. In addition, Qwabe claims of group identity are confusing. It was variously said that 'the Qwabe are the abeNguni', 'The Qwabe as well as the Zulu are spoken of as amaNtungwa', '... the Qwabe and the Zulu, who are really amaNtungwa, speak of themselves nowadays as abeNguni!', '... the Qwabe and the Zulu are freely spoken of as abeSutu', '... the Zulus came to be spoken of as Abesutu. This appellation was never used in respect to the Qwabes.'<sup>53</sup>

The division between the remote and the more recent ancestors puzzled early commentators who wished to establish clear continuity between the two periods and associated figures. Bryant observed,

To which clan Malandela (the father of Qwabe) and hence Qwabe himself belonged is no longer known. But it is difficult to believe that the ancient tribe has entirely disappeared or the ancient tribal name fallen into absolute oblivion. Inasmuch as the word Gumede is still retained as the isiTakazelo or title of address among the whole group of Qwabe clans, it is possible that that was the appellation of the original tribe, which appellation, upon the splitting up of the family into the Qwabe and the Zulu branches, was appropriated by the higher of Qwabe house [sic]

BRYANT(A) 130	MMEMI 131	KAMBI 132	BALEKA 133	MBOVU 134	DINYA 135	BRYANT(B) 136
LUZUMANE						MAHLOBO
MALANDELA	MALANDELA		MALANDELA		MALANDELA	NTOMBELA
QWABE	QWABE		QWABE		QWABE	LUFENULWENJA
			NOZIDIYA			MALANDELA
			TSHIYAMPAHLA			QWABE
	MAHLOBO	MAHLOBO	MAHLOBO	MAHLOBO	MAHLOBO	SONGEMASE
SIDINANE	SIDINANE	SIDINANE	SIDINANE	SIDINANE	<u>SISHI</u>	MAHLOMO
	KHUZQAYO	KHUZWAYO	KHUZWAYO	KHUZWAYO		SIDINANE
SIMAMANE	SIMAMANE	SIMAMANE	KHANYILE	SIMAMANE		SIMAMANE
LUFUTA	LUFUTA	LUFUTA		LUFUTA		LUFUTA
	MNCINCI	MNCINCI		MNCINCI		MNCINCI
	KONDLO	KONDLO		KONDLO		KONDLO
		PAKATWAYO		<u>GODOLOZI</u>		PAKATWAYO

Where the last name in a genealogy is underlined, the name is not a variation, but the point at which a new line broke off from the chiefly lineage. For example, Godolozzi and Phakethayo were brothers, and the informant Mbovu traced his own descent through Godolozzi.



as its own particular name of address. Or again, the Ntombelas, still existing as a distinct clan may have been that from which both the Qwabes and the Zulus took their rise, since the Zulus as any rate [sic], do actually claim an intimate connection with those people. And yet, strangely among the Qwabes we hear *nothing* of such a connection, just as conversely among the Zulus we hear little if anything of a claim to any use of the title Gumedede.<sup>54</sup>

Similarly, Stuart attempted to link the Qwabe lineages directly and coherently to Malandela.

I [J.S.] suggest that Malandela himself was of the amaNgadi and amaCineka tribes, which were in actual existence as tribes when Qwabe quarreled with them... hence it is probably that Malandela was himself a member of the amaNgadi or amaCineka, especially as the name of his own is always absent or wanting in ordinary conversation.<sup>55</sup>

More recently, c.1940, Essery collated the two genealogies by giving 'Ntombela' (a name usually found only in Zulu king lists) as a Qwabe chief, claiming that both Qwabe and Zulu were sons of Malandela, who he gave, in turn, as the son of 'Lufenuluwanja', another name elsewhere reserved for the Zulu.<sup>56</sup>

If we turn now to look at the tradition of a common Qwabe-Zulu origin in Malandela from the Zulu point of view in the Zulu traditions, we find a similar absence of corroborative data, and a similar pattern of gaps between the tradition of Malandela and later Zulu history as characterise the traditions of the Qwabe people. Clans which claim to be related to the Zulu, or to have originated with the Zulu, do not claim connection with the Qwabe, nor are there elements in their testimonies concerning their genesis which echo anything in the various Qwabe tales. Yet it should be noted at the same time that the connection between the Zulu and the Qwabe was widely acknowledged by Zulu informants.<sup>57</sup>

In summary, the story of a common origin for the Zulu and Qwabe peoples in the person of a common progenitor, Malandela seems unlikely to represent literal historical

truth for a number of reasons. The story of Mandela's travels, and the associated historical details lend no strength or conviction to the tale. Later Qwabe history can only be linked to the genesis tales with difficulty, and with major problems where chiefly genealogies were concerned. Lastly, there is no data from the histories of individual lineages to confirm the tale, and there is much which is implicitly contradictory. If the origins of the tale are thus taken not to represent literal historical events, the question is raised as to what the tradition owes its existence. Clearly, its chief purpose was to suggest that the Qwabe and the Zulu were related. In other versions, it was further claimed that Mandela had a third son, 'Mchunu', from whom sprang the *Chunu people*, another clan claiming genealogical connection with the Zulu.<sup>58</sup> Likewise, it was claimed by the *Khanyile* that they too were descendants of the offspring of Mandela.<sup>59</sup> There seems to be even less substance to these claims than the Qwabe assertions, and no corroboration from a wider set of historical sources.<sup>60</sup>

It does not seem too great a leap to suggest that these claims, lacking in historical resonances as they are, emanated from the time when the Zulu clan first attempted the assimilation of a number of clans and the creation of a single nation under Zulu hegemony. If the proposition that the link between the Qwabe and the Zulu through the person of Mandela was a product of the Shakan era is to be lent substance, it is necessary to account for how and why Qwabe incorporation demanded to be realised in that particular form. To do that, the next section examines closely the form of incorporation experienced by the Qwabe.

Zulu conquest and Qwabe resistance

At the time of Shaka's accession, the Qwabe were, next to the Ndwandwe, the most powerful polity in south-east Africa, and indeed, the traditions depict the Qwabe chief, Phakathwayo, as a particular rival of Shaka.<sup>61</sup> He scorned the numerically inferior Zulu forces, and insulted the person of the Zulu inkosi (king) as

'The little Nguni who wears as a penis-cover the fruit-shell used for snuff-boxes. Where did he get an impi from? Is the impi from up-country like the rain? It is nothing but a little string of beads that doesn't even reach the ears' (meaning that his followers were so few). 'The Nguni, who, when mixing food, held it in his left hand and the spoon in his right and had to to hit the dog with his head'.<sup>62</sup>

The conquest of the Qwabe quickly became an issue of necessity rather than choice for the new Zulu king. Shaka's accession to the chieftaincy was followed by a gruelling encounter with the forces of the mighty Ndwandwe, in which the allied Mthethwa army was left reeling, and the Mthethwa sovereign was captured and killed by Zwide. The second Ndwandwe onslaught in c.1818 saw the Zulu embark on a desperate tactical withdrawal south, towards the forest fortresses of the eOlize and Nkandhla in the Qwabe territory, razing the ground as they went and burying grain where they could.<sup>63</sup> The scorched-earth policy effectively weakened the Ndwandwe army, and together with Zulu trickery in the famous 'Kisi' battle (so-called because the Zulu slipped in amongst the Ndwandwe forces under cover of dark, using 'kisi' as the password to distinguish friend from foe, and slaughtered many Ndwandwe as they lay sleeping), allowed the Zulu to survive the encounter. The victory was by no means decisive, but a respite had been won.

Shaka then appealed to Phakathwayo for protection, 'Ngi pakamisele iKwapa, ngi ngene', ('give me shelter in your armpit'),<sup>64</sup> and requested from him supplies of

grain for the hard-pressed Zulu.<sup>65</sup> Phakathwayo refused to help, and according to some sources, countered with a demand that the Zulu tender tribute to him in the form of cattle and beads.<sup>66</sup>

The traditions suggest that the Qwabe hoped to retain the Zu'u as a buffer between themselves and the Ndwandwe, while Zulu actions seemed to have been shaped by the need to remove themselves from the Ndwandwe border, to augment their small fighting force, to secure for themselves strategic retreats, such as the Nkandhla forest, and, most immediately, to acquire grain, both for consumption, and as seed for the following planting season. The area occupied by the Qwabe was superb for the production of cereals, and multiple cropping was possible in the lowlands and broad river valleys. The upland Zulu area was in contrast poor agricultural land. The crisis in which the Zulu found themselves in the winter of 1818 led them to gamble everything on a single desperate ploy, cleverly conceived, with which they might yet overcome the Qwabe. Shaka's Qwabe intelligence had the appearance of being reliable, for sustained Qwabe civil conflict led to the flight of a number of senior Qwabe dissidents, like Zulu kaNogandaya and Nqetho kaKhondlo to the Zulu court. Disaffected elements within the Qwabe polity were mobilised and put to work in Zulu interests. Shaka gambled that a surprise attack, followed by the rapid submission of prominent Qwabe sympathetic to the Zulu cause, would earn him sufficient opportunity to root out resisters and to entrench his rule.<sup>67</sup>

The Zulu proceeded cautious. . . . Zulu ikhanda of the emBelebele ibutho, which had been razed in the Ndwandwe campaign earlier that year, was reestablished on the Qwabe border, and Qwabe land was gradually encroached upon.<sup>68</sup> Engagement with the Qwabe was

avoided until the Zulu forces had recouped some of their strength after the last Ndwandwe engagement, and Nxumalo aid was enlisted on their behalf.<sup>69</sup> Then a single rapid attack was effected. Some traditions assert that the Zulu stealthily crossed the Mhlathuze by night and caught the Qwabe unawares. Other accounts relate that the Qwabe and the Zulu came together for a dancing competition (ijadu), and that afterwards, under cover of night, the Zulu warriors returned to massacre their hosts, and their sovereign.<sup>70</sup> The Qwabe army was then defeated in a battle at the Hloko-hloko ridge, near present-day Eshowe, where, leaderless and stunned, they tendered their allegiance to the Zulu inkosi, and surrendered up their cattle. Those who would not khonza fled south amongst the Cele or north to join Zwide.<sup>71</sup>

Phakathwayo had no male heirs, and Shaka moved swiftly against his brothers, killing off most of the sons of Khondlo.<sup>72</sup> A tussle over the succession developed between Vukubulwayo and Nqetho. Shaka favoured Nqetho who had, in his individual capacity, khonza'd (tendered allegiance to) the Zulu king prior to the Qwabe campaign. With the installation of Nqetho and other Qwabe loyal to the Zulu cause like Mbokazi, a process began which was to characterize Zulu rule throughout the territory, of intervention in local successions to the Zulu advantage.<sup>73</sup>

After victory, Shaka's policy was to incorporate the Qwabe as closely as possible into the Zulu kingdom. The old Qwabe chiefdom was left intact, but the Qwabe were drawn into all the Zulu institutions - the army, the izigodlo, and the great Zulu establishments like Bulawayo.<sup>74</sup> Qwabe men who were drafted into the Zulu amabutho were not required to cut off their headrings if they were married. Although they thus retained the

senior status of headrings men, they were required to undergo complete resocialization and retraining, the Zulu way, to absorb the military ideology of the Zulu amakhanda, and to participate in rituals stressing the ideological preeminence of the Zulu king.<sup>75</sup> It seems that Shaka wished the yoke of conquest to rest lightly on the Qwabe so as to preempt any resistance. Qwabe cattle taken in battle were returned, and no attempt was made to dismantle the chiefship. Refugees who had fled at the time of the conquest were encouraged to return and to settle in the area of their old lands. Moreover, in special cases, Shaka showed himself willing to make concessions to the Qwabe over the marriage restrictions ere imposed on the amabutho, and even presented ere certain Qwabe loyal to him.<sup>76</sup>

Shaka constantly bolstered the authority of his appointees amongst the Qwabe. Nqetho, the new chief, was especially favoured. He was accorded great public status and allowed many privileges.

Nqetho used to spit in Tshaka's presence ... he said he was Tshaka's equal. He stood with Tshaka at the umjedu dance. Nqetho ka Kondhlo.<sup>77</sup>

But Shaka kept Nqetho close to him. He was obliged to live at the Zulu capital, Dukuza, and to be available at all times for consultations about matters of state. Shaka was not taking the chance that Nqetho might build up a following sufficient to challenge his overlord.<sup>78</sup> Another Qwabe renowned for his loyalty to the Zulu ruler was Mbokazi kaMkhomo, a descendant of the Qwabe chief Khuzwayo and one of Phakathwayo's izinduna (officers) who had supported Shaka, and who was renowned for having challenged the way in which Phakathwayo snubbed Shaka. Mbokazi was generously rewarded for his support.<sup>79</sup>

Perhaps the most famous of the Zulu king's adherents from the ranks of the Qwabe was the hero, Zulu kaNogandaya,

alias Komfiya. It is possible to construct from a number of sources a potted biography of his life, a fascinating glimpse into the fortunes of an individual in the Shakan era. Moreover, the story of Zulu kaNogandaya illustrates the all-important role of individuals loyal to the king in the control and administration of the vast kingdom. The 'heroic' genre of story into which the tales about Zulu kaNogandaya fall are also interesting because of the way in which they expressed the values of the new Zulu society in an old and familiar form, that of a battle tale.

Komfiya son of Nogandaya, of the chiefly house of the Ncwana section,

Thunderclap that struck unexpectedly  
Where there was neither thorn trees nor wattle plants,  
The thunderstorm that overwhelms like Ntuna of Yimamane  
Great hero whose wounds are manifest on both sides  
Like the son of Jobe...<sup>80</sup>

was renowned as the greatest of Shaka's amagawe ( heroes ). His father was head of the Ncwana, and his mother was the daughter of Ndhlebe, of the Ngadi.<sup>81</sup> The young Komfiya was raised on the south side of the Mhlathuze, above the Ngoye, at Mabalulwini.<sup>82</sup> One of three sons, he was not his father's heir. The traditions relate that he left the Qwabe country with a number of others after incurring the wrath of the chief, Phakathwayo. It was claimed that whilst in the company of some young men he had illegally consorted with the women of the isigodlo on a mountain top.<sup>83</sup>

The form of the tradition in referring to the isigodlo, suggests that their crime was in fact political, for violation of the women of an isigodlo was a recurrent motif throughout the traditions, and the izigodlo were key features of a chiefship.<sup>84</sup> The implication of this was that it was the chiefship that was violated. This impression is borne out by the statements of Komfiya's

sons, which, although made much later, indicate that the Ncwana challenged the dominance of the Qwabe ruling lineage.<sup>85</sup>

Komfiya and his associates were obliged by the discovery of their subversion to flee from the Qwabe territory. At this time, the star of the adventuring Shaka was just rising, and a career in a reorganized and highly militarised Zulu army offered opportunities for the advancement of ambitious and courageous individuals. Moreover, the emerging tension between the two powers suggested that the recalcitrant Qwabe would find a ready welcome amongst the Zulu.

The traditions pay great attention to the circumstances of their reception from Shaka, and to the details of their submission. Mandhlakazi relates that when they arrived to khonza at Bulawayo, Komfiya asked the izinduna to report their arrival to the king.

They did so, saying 'Here is Komfiya ka Nogatandaya'. Tshaka said 'Komfiya ka Nogatandaya?', the izinduna replied 'Yes'. Tshaka ordered them to get him some food, which was done. The next day they sent for him and he went up to the isigodlo where he met Tshaka. Tshaka said 'So it is you Komfiya'. Zulu replied, 'Yes Ngasita, it is I'. 'What is it you want?' Zulu answered, 'Ngasita, I have come to konza'. 'You have come to konza?' Zulu said 'Yes Ngasita'. 'Who are the others?' Zulu named them, Situnga and his brother Magutshwa'.<sup>86</sup>

Shaka accepted them, and drawing Komfiya to him, said 'You will be a close friend, for you are of our people; we originated together with you. We are smaNtungwa together with you'.<sup>87</sup>

Initially, Komfiya and the other Qwabe who had khonza'd were sent to reside with some close allies of the Zulu, the Lembe section of the Ntuli people, under Tshoba.<sup>88</sup> Shaka began to use them for reconnaissance in the Qwabe country. The traditions relate how Shaka tested Komfiya



- J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 241, evidence of Mmemi.
63. Accounts of this battle are numerous, see Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 193, 197; Slater, 'Transitions', p. 295; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 17, evidence of Baeni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 103, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 183-86, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 209, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 269, evidence of Maziya; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 270-71, evidence of Mmemi.
64. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 192.
65. Bryan., History, p. 135; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 182, evidence of Jantshi.
66. Fynn, Diary, p. 16; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 177, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
67. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 240, 247, 260, evidence of Mmemi.
68. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 197; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 177, evidence of Mandhlakazi; Bryant, History, p. 135.
69. Bryant, Olden Times p. 197.
70. Ibid., pp. 197-99; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 168, evidence of Makuza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 242, evidence of Mmemi.
71. Bryant, History, pp. 61, 135; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 194, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 209, evidence of Kambi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 178, evidence of Mandhlakazi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 100, evidence of Meseni; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 242, evidence of Mmemi.

The king said to him,

... are you prepared to go among your people, the Qwabe and kill?'. Zulu replied, 'Ndabasita, I am'. Tshaka ordered him to attack and bring back the cattle of Mbamgambi. He went off with Situnga, the two of them. While they were on the way, Zulu said to Situnga, 'I shall stab the people in each house, while you block off the doorway'. Zulu started at the end house. As a person came out he stabbed him, passed on to another house, stabbed another person and passed on. They did this with the whole umuzi. All the people fled from their homes. The two men opened up the cattle enclosure and drove off the cattle. The umuzi where they stabbed the people was a large one. They drove off the cattle and brought them to Tshaka who apportioned some to go to Ntshaseni while keeping the rest himself. It caused great admiration that only two men had captured so many cattle.<sup>89</sup>

Komfiya had demonstrated that he was Shaka's man, and that his loyalties were not divided. In turn, the escapade ensured that Komfiya could never return to the Qwabe fold. It was a measure of his trust in Komfiya that Shaka made him his inceku, a close attendant to the king in the royal household. Komfiya was responsible for smearing the hut floors of the isigodlo with dung. Again, the isigodlo motif is symbolic. Komfiya was being allowed access into the inner cabal of Zulu political life.<sup>90</sup> But Komfiya did not remain cloistered in the isigodlo for long. The Zulu king had more ambitious plans for him.

The occasion of Komfiya's advancement arose on the eve of the Ndwandwe battle of 1818

... the troops were vying with one another in displays of audacity in accordance with custom, Tshaka being present. Tshaka then took a stick and went with it into the council place where all the impi had assembled. He said, 'See now, I thrust this stick into the ground. My praises, when I was with the chief Dingiswayo at Yengweni, were "Heavens that thunder in the open, where there is neither mimosa nor thorn tree; willow tree which overhangs the deep pools". Let there come forward a warrior to pull out this stick. My praises will be given to him as the first

attack in battle.' Komfiya no sooner heard this than he came in through the opening which Tshaka used in going to the isigodlo. He had been smearing the floor in Tshaka's hut, being an inceku. He went and pulled out the stick. Tshaka said, 'I shall now watch and see how my dark friend will conduct himself when it comes to the point to see if he will deserve the praise "The heavens that thunder."<sup>91</sup>

In the battle the next day, at Nomveve, Komfiya, fighting with the umNqumahqa corps, excelled himself. The traditions relate that he slew many of the enemy, and even once he had lost his shield, he continued with the slaughter. He earned Shaka's own praises, and was known henceforward as 'Zulu' ('heavens'). Dinya, one of Stuart's informants who related stories of Zulu kaNogandaya, contended that Zulu must have been encouraged beforehand by Shaka to take the stick.<sup>92</sup>

Undoubtedly it was henceforward Shaka's policy to reinforce Zulu's status. His fame spread, and his personal wealth increased. It became Shaka's habit to offer ten oxen to anyone who would challenge Zulu, but no-one dared, and the cattle would go to Zulu. When Zulu's own acumen or cunning brought him cattle, however illegitimately, Shaka would refuse to intervene, saying 'A stick belongs to the one who cuts it'.<sup>93</sup> Zulu fought bravely in campaigns against the Mbatha, Chunu, Zungu, Ndwandwe and Mfeka, for which he was generously rewarded with cattle and promotion.<sup>94</sup> He was allowed to thunga i.e. to sew on the heading, and to marry, a privilege denied to most of the army. As a mark of especial favour he was given a number of wives by Shaka, and eventually had over eighty spouses scattered across a number of homesteads.<sup>95</sup> His first establishment, Ntshaseni, was built for him by the king. It was situated at Ndondakusuka, in the lowlands near the Thukela, and right in the Qwabe country, and for some while, was the southern outpost of the kingdom. Ntshaseni was placed under the command of one of Zulu's

original companions, himself a warrior of great renown amongst the Qwabe, Situnga kaMkenjiwa, whilst Zulu remained close to the person of the king, first as an inceku and then, when the ikhanda of the Black Hlomendhlini was built near Ntshaseni, he was posted there as the induna-in-charge. When his father died, the rightful heir to the chiefship of the Ncwana lineage, Voti, was ousted, and Zulu was installed in his place. Zulu was Shaka's man in the Qwabe country.<sup>96</sup>

It was claimed in the traditions that

Zulu ate alone, not with the others, as there were none of his rank to eat with.<sup>97</sup>

and indeed, it seems that Zulu occupied a position of immense power. He had the ear of Shaka, and enjoyed his indulgence. On occasion, he was known to have gainsayed the wishes of the monarch, notably where Qwabe interests were concerned. Such concessions were won with little opposition from Shaka, as it appears that the Zulu king was concerned to bolster Zulu's position as far as possible and to allow him to build up *credibility* amongst the Qwabe over whom he had authority. At the same time, Zulu lived in constant fear of having overstepped the invisible limits of Shaka's indulgence. Whenever Zulu heard that an over-wealthy or a recalcitrant homestead was to be 'eaten up', he would strategically retire from the court, or make a bolt for the bush, and would stay under cover until he was sure that he was not under threat.<sup>98</sup>

Stories about Zulu kaNogandaya seem to have been well-known throughout Zululand-Natal. Amagawe (heroes) tales were exceedingly popular and were recounted with relish along with the recitation of the praises of the heroes. The tales of the Shakan era reflected the new ideas about social organisation which the new regime was concerned to put into effect. The tales about Zulu kaNogandaya stress the potential for upward

mobility in Zulu society, through loyalty to the Zulu monarch. They also indicate the strong military inflection of the society. In particular, the tales emphasised the act of khonza which was the basis of the relationship between king and subject. As the Zulu kingdom entered a phase of great expansion, the old ideological framework of unity largely created through the assertion of kinship relations, either real or fictive, was quickly rendered inadequate, and it was in that gap that the khonza relationship developed a new significance.<sup>99</sup> If we return to the words of Shaka at the moment when Zulu kaNogandaya khonza'd, we find a clue as to the new kind of relationship that was to be defined. Shaka claimed that he and Zulu were 'related' because they were both 'Ntungwa', who 'shared a common origin'.<sup>100</sup>

It has been argued above that circumstances in which Shaka found himself in 1818 demanded the close assimilation of the Qwabe, their incorporation into the amabutho and the izigodlo, and their employment in the administration of the kingdom as it expanded thereafter. The Qwabe were to be offered a share in power holding, but it had to be in circumstances which assured that they identified closely with Zulu interests. It was especially important that Qwabe men, serving in the Zulu army, recognized the ideological preeminence of the Zulu inkosi. The invention of a story of common origin through a figure like Mandela was a fairly typical device in such circumstances. Presumably however, relationships of that kind could not be arbitrarily invented and imposed on history as it then existed. It had to fit in with existing conceptions and ideas about the past, particularly given the speed with which Shaka needed to bring about the incorporation of the Qwabe.

Situated as it was, in the very most remote past, the Mandela tale did not conflict with the existing body of history, either of the Zulu or the Qwabe. The Qwabe were originally lowland people, and indeed the structure of the tradition allows that it was in the lowlands that the split between Qwabe and Zulu occurred and the Qwabe lineage per se came into existence. The Zulu were originally uplanders, claiming origin in the Babanango mountains, and indeed, the tale accounts for this, acknowledging that Mandela started out from there, and it goes on to relate that Zulu later returned there. The story, in essence, simply predated other ideas about the past and could be credited without too much difficulty, for it was situated in a realm beyond the reach of historical challenge. But, the story claimed more than a common ancestry and a shared history for the Qwabe and the Zulu, as we shall see.

The story can be further illuminated through a consideration of the Rev. Callaway's excellent set of interviews with informants in Zululand-Natal in the mid-nineteenth century on the subject of what he calls the 'Creator', for which the Zulu word is 'Un'kuluku'.<sup>101</sup> Callaway discovered that the figure of Unkulunkulu, from whom it was believed that all men sprang, was not considered by his informants to be an omnipotent 'Creator' in the Christian sense, nor was he thought to be one of the amadhlozi, the spirits of the ancestors, who were prayed to for intercession in the present on the behalf of their descendants. He was rather, a progenitor. He was also known as 'Umdabuko', the one from whom the others broke off. 'Unkulunkulu', Callaway observed, was not credited with an isibongo.<sup>102</sup> Turning back to the discussion of Mandela, the perplexity of Bryant and Stuart over the fact that they could establish no isibongo for Mandela will be recalled. Likewise, it was noted that the grave of Mandela was not known.

This, it was remarked, was strange, given the ritual significance and power of the grave sites of ancestors. The absence in the historical record of the grave site suggests that perhaps Malandela was not invoked or worshipped in the same way as other Qwabe or Zulu chiefs. It was also noted that Malandela was not bonga'd after the fashion of other chiefs. Moreover, these same reservations applied to the figures Qwabe and Zulu as well.<sup>103</sup>

These points suggest that the character ascribed to Malandela, Qwabe and Zulu was in fact, not that of ancestors, but much closer to that of 'Unkulunkulu' figures. The tradition about Malandela was used to suggest that Malandela was the one from whom a much wider group of people emanated, even groups who, unlike the Qwabe, might not be able to trace a direct link to Malandela. This group seems to be those with whom the Zulu asserted a new, loose form of kinship in a non-specific way, viz., the amantungwa, the ones who, as Shaka said to Zulu, 'share a common origin'.

The amantungwa as we shall see in the following chapters, comprised numerous clans over and above the Zulu and Qwabe and it is with reference to them that the term and its significance can be fully elucidated. Nevertheless, a number of points related to this issue need to be made here, in order to illuminate the position of the Qwabe.

The data on the status of the Qwabe as amantungwa is particularly confusing. It was claimed in the traditions that the Qwabe were amantungwa, elsewhere that they were 'Nguni', and in some instances that they were both. It was claimed that they originated with the 'abeSutu', and elsewhere that that was not the case.<sup>104</sup> The significance of these ambiguities, and

the relationship of the term amantungwa to that of Nguni are the foci of the next section.

With the notable exception of Wright's recent paper analysing the term Nguni,<sup>105</sup> historians of northern Nguni-speaking societies have avoided confronting the data in its fullest complexity. Their reluctance has been determined by its contradictory character, and the triumphalist perspective of these writers on Zulu expansion, which prevents them from perceiving the context of social conflict which produced the contradictions in the data.

In the Qwabe case, a major omission in the existing studies is the persistence of Qwabe resistance to Zulu overrule. Zulu domination is conventionally represented as having been effective from the moment of military conquest. Bryant once again seems to be the source of these assumptions. He asserted that

The overthrow of the large Qwabe clan, involving the death of their king, Pakatwayo, was the most significant of Tshaka's triumphs to date. At one stroke, he had removed excepting Zwide, his most formidable rival from the field, had by the incorporation of Pakatwayo's people into the new nation, increased his own fighting power...<sup>106</sup>

and his conclusions were readily and uncritically taken up by subsequent writers. Even the most recent and politically nuanced studies such as that of David Hedges' suggest that 'The effectiveness of Zulu domination resulted in powerful opposition being expressed only through members of the ruling lineage'.<sup>107</sup> Hedges' generalisation does not hold good for the Qwabe where a weight of evidence indicates rebellion, recalcitrance and ongoing repression throughout the reign of Shaka, culminating in the flight of the Qwabe from Zululand, after Shaka's death.



When the initial effect of their surprise attack on the Qwabe subsided, the Zulu faced strong resistance, sometimes sporadic, but never far below the surface. One form which this resistance took was flight to neighbouring powers, such as the Ndwandwe or the Cele.<sup>108</sup> The traditions indicate that an ongoing tension prevailed within the kingdom between the ruling Zulu and the Qwabe. When Nqatho was installed, the remaining sons of Khondlo were all killed, and for all Shaka's efforts to win the Qwabe over, his rule became harsher and harsher. Zulu kaNogandaya, the great Qwabe hero, himself increasingly came to be seen as a tyrant, and was remembered in the traditions for his cruelty and his forbidding manner,

If called by him, one wondered what one had done wrong that one should be wanted. If sitting in a hut alone, fear would overcome an incomer, even though no words had passed; the very sight of him was enough. And if angry, sitting out in the open, catching flies and flinging them down on the ground one by one, people gazing at a distance would be filled with misgiving.<sup>109</sup>

Shaka was obliged, with increasing frequency, to resort to informers, and Qwabe turncoats to provide him with information about local rebellion. Things seemed to come to a head in 1824 when Qwabe dissidents attempted to assassinate the Zulu king. Their efforts misfired, and Shaka escaped with only a minor wound.<sup>110</sup> Shaka's policy of appeasement was reversed as he ordered the massacre of all Qwabe then resident at his capital, and the elimination across the country of Qwabe known to be hostile to the Zulu regime. It was claimed that the numbers of Qwabe killed at this time filled a whole donga.<sup>111</sup> Many more Qwabe then left Zululand. Henceforward, all Qwabe who were suspected of subversive activities were dealt with in a brutal way. In a renowned incident at the Kabingwe umuzi, the eyes of three dissidents were gouged out.<sup>112</sup> Baleni, one of Stuart's informants commented, 'Tshaka said the

Qwabe people were to be killed because they caused strife'.<sup>113</sup> A measure of the effectiveness of Qwabe resistance is indicated by the fact that the bulk of the Zulu army was garrisoned in the Qwabe country, and that ultimately, it was claimed that one of the reasons that Shaka shifted his capital from Bulawayo near Eshowe in the Qwabe country, down to Dukuza in the south, was that he feared for his life amongst the Qwabe.<sup>114</sup> In his poem 'Emperor Shaka', Kunene gives the following lines to the king

I am moving from the capital of Bulawayo.  
The grounds of Bulawayo have begun to smell of death...  
I want my capital moved from this fearsome place.  
Let it be far away from all the fears of yesterday'.<sup>115</sup>

However, Qwabe response to incorporation into the Zulu kingdom was not uniform. Informants whose families had gone over to the Zulu side in the 1820s readily subscribed to the amantungwa ethnic identity in their testimonies to James Stuart.<sup>116</sup> In the testimonies of informants of lineages whose loyalties were less clear, or who had a history of active resistance to Shaka, the origins of the Qwabe, and their ethnic character were contested. One form which this took was the assertion that the Qwabe were not amantungwa, but Nguni.<sup>117</sup>

Today the term Nguni is more familiar than the seldom heard amantungwa, and is widely used as a collective term for the peoples of south-east Africa, distinguished in language and culture from the Thonga to the north, and the Sotho peoples of the interior. The generic use of the term in this way went unchallenged for much of this century, until questions about its connotation of 'timeless homogeneity' were first raised by Marks and Atmore in 1970.<sup>118</sup> Their comments elicited little response until recently when, using data from the Stuart papers, Hedges resuscitated the issue of the original meaning and usage of 'Nguni'.<sup>119</sup> This was

subsequently taken up more systematically by John Wright, in his paper 'Politics, ideology and the invention of the 'Nguni'', in which he examines the history of the term and the development of its present extended meaning. Wright suggests that its modern meaning is the result of the appropriation and transformation over time of 'a concept that was previously used in a number of different ways for a number of different purposes, within certain of the African societies of south-east Africa'.<sup>120</sup> Wright's historical explanation of the phenomenon is highly nuanced and tightly periodised, and lends a new coherence to the daunting body of evidence on origins, and on generic designations. He skilfully unravels a number of apparent contradictions to distinguish three regionally distinct meanings of the term *Nguni* in the nineteenth century,

South of the Thukela, the term designated primarily the Xhosa peoples. North of the Thukela, in the Zulu kingdom, it designated the dominant Zulu clan and closely related clans, to the exclusion of the great majority of the clans that had been incorporated into the kingdom. Among the Sotho and Thonga, the word designated the people of the Zulu kingdom as a whole.<sup>121</sup>

Wright notes that the claims of these lineages as to their 'Ntungwa' and/or 'Nguni' identities were often conflicting, but omits to give consideration to the claims of the Zulu and their supporters to an 'Ntungwa' identity for the Zulu. This, in my view, leads him astray. He seems to suggest that, in an effort to legitimize the lineage's newly achieved political dominance, the Zulu royal house sought to throw off the perjorative appellation 'intungwa' in favour of a claim to more ancient 'Nguni' origins. Wright considers the contradictions in the traditions recorded around the turn of the century to be a relatively recent consequence of the disarray of the Zulu royal house,

following, the civil wars of the 1880s, such that a negative view of Zulu origins could be reasserted.<sup>122</sup>

Wright's formulation is probably correct for the opprobrious term 'Lubololwenja' (lit. the penis of the dog), the early Zulu isithakazelo, which, it was alleged, Shaka also caused to die out, but which surfaced again as a designation for the Zulu after the death of Cetshwayo.<sup>123</sup> The history and incidence of the term 'ntungwa' however, differed markedly from that of Lubololwenja. 'Intungwa', and the associated features of upland origins, the descent tradition of having 'rolled down in a grain basket', and the 'Sutu' connection claimed by the amentungwa, enjoyed far greater currency, survived with remarkable resilience, and were asserted not only by the subjects of the Zulu, but by Zulu informants, by informants of other lineages closely associated with the Zulu, and by lineages which were known Zulu loyalists.<sup>124</sup> The designation 'intungwa' was not eschewed by Shaka as readily as Wright supposes, for, as we have already noted, it was a pro-Zulu informant who attested that Zulu kaNogandaya was received by Shaka as a fellow intungwa.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, Wright's formulation does not account for the occurrence of conflicting 'Nguni'/'Ntungwa' claims with regard to the Qwabe, as opposed to the Zulu.<sup>126</sup> His argument suggests how and why the Zulu, who were originally 'Ntungwa' may have claimed to be 'Nguni', but it does not explain why the Qwabe, who were probably 'Nguni' or claimed that, also came to claim that they were 'Ntungwa'.

Finally, given that Nguni was a term with connotations of historical primacy, as Wright himself observes, the late nineteenth century, when the data on Nguni and 'Ntungwa' was recorded, would have been a period when 'claims to Nguni descent would have been proliferating'.<sup>127</sup>

of the same verb, their specific usages suggest an important distinction for two types of clan sub-division which can be usefully employed in their analysis in early northern Nguni-speaking societies.

In the context of clan division, dabula is the form reserved in its application to a particular process of clan segmentation, where the division of the clan was caused to happen through the agency of a facilitator, usually the king or chief,

Mvundhlana was the great head of one branch of the Zulu tribe. As time went on and they became rather distantly related to the Zulu house, the Zulu chief dabula'd them seeing they had beautiful girls, upon which Mvundhlana's people became the Biyela.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast, clan fission, where the word dabuka is used, refers to the hiving off of sections of a clan of their own accord, often as the result of tensions or conflicts of interests.<sup>15</sup> Dabuka was usually meant to achieve an independent political existence for the sections concerned, while maintaining a residual genealogical connection between them through the continued use of a common isibongo. The process of dabula, on the other hand, typically involved the creation of additional izibongo, permitting inter-marriage and suggesting genealogical distance, although without necessarily introducing the political, social, and sometimes geographical distance implicit in the dabuka form of clan fission. Dabuka would seem therefore to be a form of clan division characteristic of a disintegrating political unit, while the slightly different process of dabula appears to be associated with the emergence and entrenchment of a distinct and bounded ruling group in the context of an expanding polity.

The dabula'ing of clans is typically recorded in the traditions in the form of accounts of the marriage of a Zulu king to his clanswoman, and the separation of

This was a period of crisis for lineage leaders in which the 'claiming of Nguni descent would possibly have represented one means of attempting to shore up their crumbling power',<sup>128</sup> and one which would have been a natural response to the colonial emphasis on paramountcy of chiefs, and their historical primacy in their areas. If we look closely at the claims to Nguni and 'Ntungwa' origins which Wright quotes, 'The Zulu are not abaNguni, for they did not originally use this term in respect of themselves', 'the ama-Ntungwa (the Zulus, Qwabas and Cunus) have a keen desire to speak of themselves as abaNguni', '... the Qwabas and Zulus who are really amaNtungwa, speak of themselves nowadays as abaNguni',<sup>129</sup> we see that the emphasis of the informants is on the assertion of Nguni-ness in the present-time of the interview, i.e. around c.1900. It seems therefore, that the term Nguni gained in significance in the post-Shakan era. This would have affected the emphasis placed on the term for the early nineteenth century by informants looking back to that period from the early twentieth century. This suggests that the term Nguni may have been less important in the early period than is initially indicated by the traditions, and conversely, that greater significance may have been accorded to the 'Ntungwa' designation than there first appears to be.

The Qwabe case suggests that what we see happening in respect of the Nguni and 'Ntungwa' identities is an attempt, principally through the device of the Malandela tradition, to marry two identities, to unite the very different abasezansi or lowlanders, with the abasenhla, the uplanders, and using the remote past, to join their histories in the person of Malandela, and through him, Shaka. This was necessitated, I would argue, by the degree of Qwabe resistance to an initial attempt on the part of the Zulu, to incorporate the Qwabe as

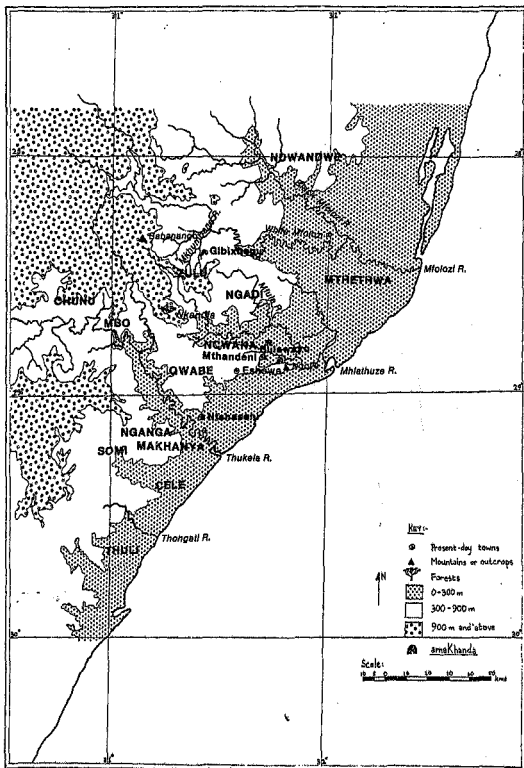
brother 'Ntungwa', in a common ethnic identity. While this idea was readily adopted by supporters of the Zulu amongst the Qwabe, in other quarters, it was rejected, through the counter-assertion of the lowland origins of the Qwabe, and their claim to be Nguni. Shaka's response was to adopt the Nguni identity for himself, in addition to the 'Ntungwa' identity to which he already laid claim, and to posit the union of the two identities, uplanders and lowlanders through the Malandela tradition. While the Zulu shared the 'Ntungwa' identity and the associated features, such as the 'Ndabazitha' isithakazelo, with the Buthelezi, Khumalo and others, it was not the only identity to which it ascribed. In claiming the Nguni appellation for itself, the Zulu developed a historical identity which allowed it alone to link together the many and disparate chiefdoms and lineages which comprised the kingdom.

To sum up, the contradictions in the body of Qwabe oral traditions recorded c.1900 were manifold. Some have been identified as being the effects of the post-Shakan and pre-Shakan periods; others, like the contradictions surrounding the Malandela tradition appear to be the product of the period of early Zulu expansion. The Malandela tradition functioned to link the Zulu and the Qwabe in an ideologically powerful way which slotted in with the emergence of the amantungwa ethnic category, but which allowed for both the greater identification between the Zulu and Qwabe, and for the existence of enormous cultural, linguistic and historical difference between them.

The use to which history is put in the service of ideology does not go unmarked. I have suggested that, for a number of reasons, the 'fault-lines' of such manipulation are especially accessible in the body of Qwabe oral traditions. This chapter has attempted to disentangle the intervention in oral traditions at

the level of ideology, designed to facilitate the integration of a subject group into the Zulu kingdom from both earlier and later interventions, and from the actual remote past of such a polity. The method by which this is revealed is that of focusing squarely on the contradiction - the very 'fault-lines' themselves, in the oral traditions and in other kinds of evidence, seeing them not as the inherent weakness of the evidence, but as the very means by which the historian can move beyond and behind expressions of a hegemonic ideology, and in so doing identify ideological change.





The Qwabe Chiefdom, c.1800

1. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 396. Also on the fate of the Qwabe see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 105, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 209, 210, evidence of Kambi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 70, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 38, evidence of Mbovu; K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, essay by N.B.J. Sabelo, 'The Line of Succession of the Makhanya Chiefdom and events during their Rule', p. 16 ff.; D.H. Reader, Zulu Tribe in Transition, Manchester, 1966, chapter 1; Essery Papers, Riet Valley, letter from G.V. Essery to 'Harry', 14.05.42.
2. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 33-4, (see p. 26 for informant's age), evidence of Mbovu.
3. ibid., p. 38. Also see comments on matters that ought not to be discussed any longer, p. 227, evidence of Mkotana. Two points need to be noted in connection with the evidence of Mbovu. This informant was of the Makhanya lineage, which was one of the few Qwabe lineages to retain its coherence in the post-Shakan period, see Reader, Zulu Tribe, chapter 1. Secondly, Mbovu's remarks were made in the context of a discussion of the effects of colonial rule, shared by all the African peoples of Natal, only aggravated in the Qwabe case by the early fragmentation of the chiefdom. (I am indebted to John Wright for raising this point in an extremely useful discussion).
4. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 238-39, evidence of Mmemi.
5. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 188.

6. K.C., Essay Competition, essay by N.B.J. Sabelo, p. 11.
7. Ibid., pp. 6, 8. This unusual phrase occurs in a number of Qwabe traditions. It was claimed that Shaka 'jumped over' Phakathwayo, and to have caused his death by so doing. It seems therefore to suggest a kind of mystical power. Also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 312, evidence of Lunguza; Van Warmelo, Matiwane, pp. 19, 105, where it was claimed that Shaka acceded to the Zulu chieftaincy by 'jumping over' his father and robbing him of his 'magical' powers. Likewise, van Warmelo notes, if a ferocious animal was jumped over once killed, the jumper acquired the attributes of the animal.
8. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 214, evidence of Mkehlengana.
9. Ibid., p. 210.
10. Ibid., pp. 212-13.
11. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 224, evidence of Mkotana.
12. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 214, evidence of Mkehlengana.
13. Krige, Social System, p. 41.
14. C. Doke, and B. Vilakazi, Zulu-English Dictionary, Johannesburg, 1972. p. 338.
15. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 101, evidence of Dinya.
16. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 188.
17. Ibid., pp. 681-97.

18. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 169.
19. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 19.
20. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 238-39, evidence of Mmemi; also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 196, evidence of Mkebeni; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 224-25, evidence of Mkotana.
21. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 169-76.
22. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 243, 249, 267, evidence of Mmemi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 224, evidence of Mkotana; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 174, evidence of Mandhlakazi; Bryant, History, p. 133; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 188; Fuze, The Black People, p. 14. Also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 239, 240, 248, 251-52, 261, 262, 269, evidence of Mmemi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 151, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 213, evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 25, 26, 35, 36, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 55, evidence of Madikane.
23. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 41, evidence of Mbovu.
24. Ibid., pp. 25, 28, 45; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 6, evidence of Baleka; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 175, evidence of Jantshi. See Callaway's discussion of the reed and of ukudabuka, (Religious System, section one.)
25. Lineages such as the Makhanya, Mvuyeni and Bongela were genealogical sub-sections of the main lineages discussed more fully in the text. (Bryant, History, p. 133; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 187, 188, 685, 688; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 166, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 248, 250, 251-52, 269).

26. Bonner, Kings, pp. 24-37.
27. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 185; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 29, evidence of Mbovu.
28. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 243-45, 257, 266-67, 271, evidence of Mmemi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 26, 29, 30, 36, evidence of Mbovu.
29. See below, pp. 175-78.
30. Bryant, History, pp. 55, 77; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 68, 69, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 300, evidence of Maziwana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 30, 35, 38, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 53, 54, evidence of Mctoyi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 261, evidence of Mmemi; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 187.
31. Conceptualization of the differences between the trading states and the defensive states of south-east Africa owes much to ideas advanced by John Wright, and extensive discussions with him.
32. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 18-21.
33. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 169.
34. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 17.
35. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 224-25, evidence of Dinya, in the testimony of Mkotana.
36. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 681-97.
37. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 224, evidence of Mkotana. Also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 238-39, evidence of Mmemi.

38. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 210, evidence of Kambi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 175, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 212, evidence of Mkehlengana;  
izibongo of Phakathwayo in Cope, Izibongo, p. 142.
39. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 175, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 42, 45, evidence of Mbovu;  
also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 262-63, evidence of Mmemi.
40. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 167-68.
41. It may be of course, that Khondlo revived the name of his ancestor's establishment, but the name 'oDwini' meaning 'a hornet's nest' was of greater pertinence in Khondlo's reign than in Malandela's, given the succession disputes and internal wrangles which characterised the later period. It is equally probable that the very custom of keeping old establishments 'alive' by reusing old names may have given historical weight to the story of Malandela. The repetition of the name 'oDwini' through a number of generations of Qwabe chiefs, including Phakathwayo, served to emphasise the direct link between the Qwabe founder, and Malandela, the primogenitor. (J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 29, 30, 36; evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 244, evidence of Mmemi.)
42. Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 515, 523-25; Krige, Social System, p. 271.
43. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 21-41, 86; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 110, evidence of Mgidhlana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 239, 259, evidence of Mmemi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 30, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 175, evidence of Jantshi.

44. R. Harms, 'Bobangi Oral Traditions: Indicators of Changing Perceptions', in J. Miller (ed.), The African Past Speaks, Folkestone, 1980, pp. 178-98; Miller's introduction The African Past Speaks, 'Listening to the African Past' raises some related issues, see p. 33.
45. Vansina, 'Comment', p. 319.
46. Miller, 'Listening', p. 36.
47. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 209, evidence of Kambi.
48. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 95, evidence of Dfnya.
49. Webb and Wright, A Zulu King Speaks, p. 3, where Cetshwayo fails to link the royal genealogy to the name Zulu; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 32-4, quoting Colenso in Izindatyane Zabantu, 1859, p. 87; L. Grout, Zululand, or Life Among the Zulus of Natal and Zululand, London, 1863, p. 71; Callaway, Religious System, p. 49; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 110, evidence of Mgidhlana.
50. Fuze, The Black People, p. 88; L.H. Samuelson, Zululand, its traditions, legends and customs, Marianhill, 1899, p. 84; J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, Pietermaritzburg, 1903, p. 17; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 32-4, quoting Rev. Wanger, Siteku, Dabulamanzi, Cetshwayo and Dinuzulu.
51. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 169, evidence of Hoyo.
52. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 255, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 4, evidence of Baleka; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 186, 187; Cope, izibongo, p. 146, FN. 4.

53. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 177, evidence of Mandhlakazi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 259, evidence of Mmemi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 281, evidence of Maziyaha;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 85, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 208, evidence of Kambi.
54. Bryant, History, p. 132.
55. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 224, in the testimony of Mkošana.  
 Parentheses in the original.
56. Essery Papers, Riet Valley, 'The Genealogical  
 Tree of Qwabe and Zulu Tribes, Lower Tugela  
 District'.
57. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 25, 29; J.S.A., Vol. 1,  
 pp. 21, 29; evidence of Baleni.
58. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 26, evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 259, 262, evidence of Mmemi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 84, evidence of Magidigidi.
59. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 265, evidence of Mmemi.
60. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 129, evidence of Mint;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 26, evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 259, evidence of Mmemi.  
 Neither Bryant nor Fuze mention this relationship,  
 nor is it born out by the Chunu and Khanyile  
izithakazelo in the list in Olden Times, pp. 681-  
 97.
61. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 201.
62. Fuze, The Black People, pp. 23-4, 54; Cope,  
Izibongo, p. 88; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 191, 196;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 180, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 168, evidence of Makuza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 177, evidence of Mandhlakazi;



The confidence reposed in the descendants of Sojiyisa and the greater power extended to this section by the Zulu king derived from the fundamental tension in their origins. At once representative of the ruling lineage the descendants of Sojiyisa kaNgwabi were also, in ideological terms, not of the royal line. This meant that it would have been difficult for them to usurp the Zulu ubukosi for themselves. Their interests were thus tied to those of the Zulu rulers, and it was likely that they would have been concerned to support and entrench Shaka's rule.

The Qulusi were similarly not an excised section of the Zulu clan, but rather an agglomeration of refugees under Mnkabayi, a sister of Senzangakhona, who came to occupy a special position in relation to the Zulu ruling lineage. According to Guy, the Qulusi were the most important of the royal sections,<sup>51</sup> and represented the power of the Zulu royal house.<sup>52</sup> Like Mapitha, Mnkabayi wielded enormous political power, and as the oldest surviving descendant of Jama could likewise supervise royal rituals at the remote Qulusini outpost. She was especially renowned for her role in the doctoring of amabutho for war.<sup>53</sup> Her rule was strong. She handled local administration, settled judicial issues, and like Mapitha, was empowered to administer the death sentence at her own discretion.<sup>54</sup> The reasons for her appointment to high office were similar to those governing Mapitha's appointment: As the senior surviving member of the ruling lineage she could carry out royal functions and impose royal rule. As a woman however, she was precluded by her gender from usurping the power and position of a monarch. She was, moreover, beyond the age of child bearing. This meant that in a ritual sense she could operate as a man, being free of the menstruation taboos and hlonipha restrictions placed on women. Having never yet married, this also

72. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 210, evidence of Kambi.
73. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 31, evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 249, evidence of Mmemi; and  
pp. 240, 242, 247, evidence of Mmemi and Meseni.
74. Bryant, History, p. 61; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 391;  
K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Sabelo, pp. 6-7;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 100, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A.,  
Vol. 1, p. 194, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2,  
p. 169, evidence of Makuza.
75. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 270, evidence of Mmemi.
76. Ibid.; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 8, 12, evidence of Baleka;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 95, evidence of Dinya.
77. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 31, evidence of Mbovu; also see  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 270, evidence of Mmemi and  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 210, 211, evidence of Kambi.
78. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 116, evidence of Dinya.
79. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 240, 242, 247, evidence of  
Mmemi.
80. Kunene, Emperor Shaka, p. 223.
81. Stuart, uBaxoxele, p. 85; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 212,  
evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 224,  
evidence of Mkotana. Both Mkehlengana and Mkotana  
were sons of Zulu.
82. Stuart, uBaxoxele, pp. 85-6.
83. Ibid., pp. 87-8; also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 225,  
evidence of Mkotana on whose testimonies the uBaxoxele  
discussion of Zulu is based.

84. C. Hamilton, 'The role of the izigodlo in the early nineteenth century Zulu kingdom', paper presented to the graduate seminar, Department of History, University of the Witwatersrand, 1981.
85. Ncwana aspirations are preserved in the proverb 'You are now making yourself out to be a chief as great as Dabula ka Ncwana on the sands of the sea.' (J.S.A. Vol. 3, p. 213, evidence of Mkehlengana, also see p. 212).
86. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 175, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
87. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 214, evidence of Mkehlengana; also see Stuart, uBaxoxele, p. 89, where Shaka seems to address Kofiyana as a relative.
88. Stuart, uBaxoxele, p. 89; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 226, evidence of Mkotana.
89. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 180, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
90. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 102, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 222, evidence of Mkotana.
91. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 103, evidence of Dinya.
92. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 102; evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 180, evidence of Mandhlakazi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 210, evidence of Mkehlengana; Stuart, uBaxoxele, p. 90.
93. Ibid., chapter 14; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 181, evidence of Mandhlakazi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 211, 212, evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 229, evidence of Mkotana.

94. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 210-11, 216, evidence of Mkehlengana.
95. Ibid., pp. 210, 215; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 30, 43, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 225, evidence of Maziyana; Stuart, uBaxoxele, p. 90.
96. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 102, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 179, evidence of Mandhlakazi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 212-13, evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 222, evidence of Mkotana.
97. Ibid., p. 223.
98. Stuart, uBaxoxele, chapter 14; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 182, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
99. Hammond-Tooke has suggested that ukukhonza occurred in relation to the establishment of chiefdoms and 'a fundamental change in ideology in which descent group autonomy gave way to a relationship between family heads and chief'. (Hammond-Tooke, 'Descent Groups', p. 31f). Indeed, it is likely that the inception of the practice of ukukhonza was a corollary of fundamental ideological changes. However, Hammond-Tooke's assertions demand qualification in two areas. Firstly, the available evidence suggests that ukukhonza cannot be described baldly as being a political contract, but that it utilized a vocabulary of kin terms and demanded some assertion of kin connection, albeit over time, and in new and different forms. (See, for example, the stories of the khonza'ing of Zulu kaNogandaya, pp. 177-78, and Sompisi of the Bhele, p. 261). Secondly, Hammond-Tooke sees this change to a relationship between family-heads and chiefs as occurring at the same time as the establishment of chiefdoms.

In northern-Nguni-speaking societies, chiefdoms clearly predated the rise of the larger states. While ukukhonza may have been significant in the pre-state chiefdoms, it probably operated in a slightly different and possibly more significant manner in the larger and more heterogeneous state societies.

100. See note 87 above.
101. Callaway, Religious System, section one.
102. Ibid.
103. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 169, evidence of Hoye.
104. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 177, evidence of Mandhlakazi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 259, evidence of Mmemi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 281, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 85, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 208, evidence of Kambi.
105. Wright, 'Politics'.
106. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 201.
107. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 200.
108. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 209, evidence of Kambi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 242, evidence of Mmemi.
109. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 210, evidence of Mkehlengana.
110. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 194, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 209, evidence of Kambi.

111. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 8, evidence of Baleka;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 93, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 169, evidence of Makuza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 42, 43, evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 80, evidence of Melapi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 100, evidence of Meseni;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 246, evidence of Mmemi.
112. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 7, evidence of Baleka;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 46, evidence of Madhlebe;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 43, evidence of Mbovu.
113. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 16, evidence of Baleni. For other instances of the repression of the Qwabe, see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 7, evidence of Baleka; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 180, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
114. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 80, evidence of Melapi.
115. Kunene, Emperor Shaka, pp. 303-4.
116. See, for example, the testimonies of two sons of Zulu kaNogandaya: J.S.A., Vol. 3, testimonies of Mkehlengana and Mkotana, especially p. 216; and the testimony of Mmemi, a nephew of Mbokazi.
117. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 262-64, evidence of Mmemi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 215, evidence of Mkehlengana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 29, evidence of Baleni;  
Fuze, The Black People, p. 1.
118. S. Marks and A. Atmore, 'The problem of the Nguni: an examination of the ethnic and linguistic situation in South Africa before the Mfecane' in D. Dalby (ed.), Language and History in Africa, New York, 1970, pp. 120-32.

119. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', appendix 1, pp. 253-57.
120. Wright, 'Politics', p. 19.
121. Ibid., p. 5.
122. Ibid., pp. 22-3.
123. Ibid., p. 23.
124. J.S.A., Vol. 3, see the testimonies of Mkehlengana, Mkotana, and Mmemi; also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 104, evidence of Dinya.
125. See above p. 177.
126. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 115-16, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 281, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 259, 262-64, evidence of Mmemi.
127. Wright, 'Politics', p. 25.
128. Ibid., p. 24.
129. Ibid., p. 23.
130. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 186.
131. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 250, evidence of Mmemi.
132. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 208, evidence of Kambi.
133. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 4, evidence of Baleka.
134. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 25, evidence of Mbovu.
135. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 95, evidence of Dinya.
136. Bryant, History, p. 132.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

#### RESTRUCTURING WITHIN THE ZULU CLAN: THE CREATION OF THE COLLATERAL CLANS AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF ROYAL POWER AND RESOURCES

The faction centered around Shaka, which found itself in power following the death of Senzangakhona and the subsequent collapse of Mthethwa, faced considerable opposition from within the Zulu kingdom, notably from amongst powerful members of the Zulu royal house. One of the ways in which the position of the Shakan party was secured against this opposition was through the murder and banishment of Shaka's half-brothers. Another way was through the restructuring of the Zulu clan. This took the form of the dabula, or excision, from the royal house of certain of its sections.

The dabula of portions of the original Zulu clan had the effect of placing important members of the royal house at one remove from the kingship through the creation of new clan affiliations. This both reduced the threat to Shaka posed by his powerful royal relatives and had the effect of delineating within the original Zulu a sector which was at once royal and yet not royal. Members of the dabula'd clans derived authority from the circumstances of their royal-linked births, but, as excised members of the Zulu clan no longer even addressed with the Zulu isibongo, would have been hard-pressed to usurp the Zulu kingship for themselves. At this time, further sections of the Zulu clan were similarly delineated, although by different means which allowed them to retain their identity as members of the Zulu clan proper, but which also placed them at a distance from the Zulu kingship. Such forms of restructuring the Zulu clan will also be reviewed in



this chapter. It will be suggested that the distanced sections of the royal clan provided an important source for recruitment to the administrative corps of the new kingdom, as officials from these sections were imbued with a degree of royal authority and yet would have found it difficult to usurp power for themselves. The restructuring of the Zulu clan by such means not only secured the Zulu monarchy from powerful royal opposition, but also facilitated intermarriage within what was originally the Zulu clan, circumventing the prevailing social rule of exogamy through the creation of new clan identities. Intermarriage had the effect of concentrating wealth and status at the apex of Zulu society.

These arguments run counter to much of the prevailing scholarship on the internal social structure of the Zulu kingdom, notably that of Omer-Cooper and Mael,<sup>1</sup> which suggests that the chief power-holders in the new kingdom were largely commoners who had no hereditary claim to office. They argue that appointment to office depended on ability and that commoner office-holders were disqualified by their humble origins from seizing the kingship from its royal incumbent. Mael argues further that the Zulu state was characterised by enormous social mobility, noting that a 'lack of status, clan or social, placed no bar on promotion if a man was successful in war'.<sup>2</sup>

Marriages of kin: dabula and exogamy in the Zulu kingdom

Ethnographers of the northern Nguni-speaking societies, subscribe to the view that marriage in such societies is essentially a matter of groups and therefore of inheritance, and that succession, and indeed marriage practices, are prime indicators of property relationships.<sup>3</sup> They have further argued that the effect of

exogamous marriage practices was the constant redistribution of power and wealth and great social mobility, and northern Nguni-speakers have been firmly categorized as being exogamous. Thus, Krige writes

There is no cross-cousin marriage among the Zulus, though their system of relationships is very similar to that of the Basotho and other tribes who practice this form of marriage; no marriage with blood relations of any kind is allowed. A person may not marry anyone having the same isibongo as his own (i.e. belonging to the same sib) nor anyone bearing the same isibongo as his mother.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly emphasising the importance of exogamy, Bryant suggested further that, as a result of Christianisation, urbanisation and the dispersal of many clans, the exogamy rule which he and other scholars observed in the twentieth century was probably a diluted version of what prevailed previously.<sup>5</sup>

The categorization of Nguni-speaking societies as exogamous, as well as extensively polygamous, has led anthropologists, following Lévi-Strauss, to develop a notion of Nguni-speaking societies as composed of a complex network of strategic alliances based on marriages between disparate groups.<sup>6</sup> Conventionally, this situation was contrasted with that of Sotho marriage customs and their effect on Sotho social organization. It was claimed that amongst the latter, endogamy had the effect of perpetuating particular alliances over time and of facilitating the emergence of political elites. Writing on the Tswana, Schapera noted that the ruling lineage tended to disperse itself geographically across its territory so as to maintain control over a wide area. The effect of this dispersal was to allow the local member of the ruling lineage to become the focus of a personal following of his own and to create a potential for the development of an alternative locus of political power. This tendency, Schapera suggested, was counteracted by agnatic marriage practices - the renewing of ties

between agnatic groups which showed signs of becoming politically distinct.<sup>7</sup>

The analysis in chapters two and three of intermarriage within the ruling Mthethwa and Qwabe clans suggests that the ethnographers' simple dichotomy between the exogamous 'Nguni' and the endogamous Sotho needs to be reassessed. Likewise requiring revision are the associated notions of consequent social mobility and the constant redistribution of power and wealth in Nguni-speaking societies. Conventional notions of clan subdivision also need to be reconsidered. Hitherto, clan subdivision has been understood to be a secessionist process, symptomatic of the disintegration of chiefdoms, polities or clans, and has been little investigated.<sup>8</sup> However, the tendency which has been noted towards intermarriage within ruling clans by means of the creation of collateral sub-clans in the typically exogamous, expanding polities of south-east Africa demands the development of a new perspective on clan segmentation and on the creation of new clan izibongo - a perspective which examines these phenomena in the context of social and political aggregation rather than disintegration.

In the Nguni-speaking societies of south-east Africa, the process whereby one clan split into two or more clans was commonly referred to as dabuka/dabula. Dabula is the transitive form of the verb dabuka, having the literal meaning of 'to be torn or rent', and is used frequently in a figurative sense to mean 'to spring to life'. By extension, it came to be translated by the early lexicographers like Döhne, Bryant and Colenso as 'originate', particularly where it occurred in the form 'sidabukile eluhlangeni' ('we had our origin amongst the reeds').<sup>9</sup> The transitive form, dabula, is the more active form of the verb, and implies the existence of a facilitator of the action - someone to cause a thing

to tear, or to cause it to come into being. This distinction in the usage and in the implications of dabuka/dabula made by northern Nguni-speakers is apparent in the following extract from a conversation, recorded by the Rev. Wanger, between a Zulu mother and her curious child,

'No, my child, the uhlanga (reed) from which umVelingqangi (one of the Zulu God-names) made man come into existence of their own, (wadabula) was no more a mialia-uhlanga than a tribe is, from which a new tribe (is separated and thus) comes into an existence of its own (dabuka)'.<sup>10</sup>

Wanger was involved in the great theological debate of the late nineteenth century about the correspondence between the Zulu and Christian notions of deities, and in particular, the origin of mankind. Finding the most appropriate Zulu translation of 'creation' was a major associated concern of his, and underlay the extreme semantic care taken over the reproduction of the text quoted above, and in the emphasis on dabuka and dabula.<sup>11</sup>

The Rev. Callaway was similarly preoccupied, and while his conclusions about dabuka/dabula were at odds with those of Wanger, the extracts with which he was concerned bear out the ideas advanced here. It was said to Callaway that

Unkulunkulu a s'aziwa. Yena muntu wokukqala;  
wa dabuka ekukqaleni. ... Si zwa ukuba ku tiwa.  
Unkulunkulu wa dabula iziwe ohlangeni.<sup>12</sup>  
(my emphases)

which Callaway translated as

Unkulunkulu is no longer known. It was he who was the first man; he broke off in the beginning ... We hear it said, that Unkulunkulu broke off the nations from Uthlanga.<sup>13</sup>

Both textual examples indicate a difference in the processes implied in the employment of the terms of dabuka and dabula, the latter requiring the agency of a second party, in this case, 'Unkulunkulu'. While the difference between dabuka and dabula is finally a point of Zulu grammar, the two being but different forms

her family from the Zulu clan through the creation of a new clan - replete with a new clan name - with which intermarriage by the Zulu was then possible. In a number of texts, however, Bryant denies that the exogamy rule in Zulu society could ever be flouted in any way. In a list of marriages expressly prohibited among the Zulu, he noted that marriage was forbidden with any related clans, even where they might possess different izibongo. The example which he quoted was the possibility of marriage between the Qwabe and Zulu. Bryant claimed that such marriages were prohibited because of their common ancestry in Malandela. He further observed that marriage was prohibited between collateral clans, quoting as an illustration, the impossibility of marriage between the Zulu and a clan which had broken off from the Zulu, such as the Biyele. Bryant's bald assertions seem to have misled numerous subsequent scholars and his claims exist in direct contradiction of evidence on royal intermarriage which he himself advances elsewhere.<sup>16</sup>

James Stuart stands alone in his recognition of both the high incidence of the creation of sub-clans through dabula amongst the Zulu, and concomitant preferential intermarriage amongst the dabula'd clans. 'It so happens', he writes, 'that the Zulu tribe is remarkable among other tribes for the frequency with which new clans were formed, (especially during the last century) which amounts to saying that it resorted to endogamy in a manner somewhat more precipitate than was the custom in other tribes or what was the custom prior to Tshaka's day'.<sup>17</sup> The following section examines this phenomenon in greater detail and in particular the emergence of the collateral Zulu clans in the context of Zulu expansionism. Its focus is on the practice of dabula and its implications and effects on the relationship between the monarchy and high aristocracy

in Zulu society. Firstly, the circumstances surrounding the excision of the collateral clans and the dating of this phenomenon largely to the reign of Shaka will be discussed. The status of the collateral clans will then be analysed, as will that of similarly situated groupings such as the 'Mphangisweni', 'Mandlakazi' and 'Qulusi', within the Zulu clan. It will then be posited that a key element of their status lay in their ideological distance from the Zulu kingship, and that this underlay their placement in high office. In the last section, the implications and effects of intermarriage amongst the Zulu and collateral clans, notably in the creation of a closed ruling elite, will be discussed.

The collateral Zulu clans: non-royal relatives

Two clans which were dabula'd from the Zulu royal house are frequently confused because of the similarity of their new izibongo, viz., the eGazini and the emGazini. The root of both names is 'igazi' (blood). This choice of names was considered significant by Mangati, one of Stuart's informants. He suggested that the idea of blood, or of drawing blood, was an associated feature of the notion of dabula,

In the separating off of a section of a chiefdom (dabula'ing) there must be shedding of blood, i.e. violence. As regards a girl, she is deflowered with the penis, which is regarded like an assegai, for it draws blood; the same, as regards the king or chief, when assassinated or wounded by some portion of his own tribe. In each case, there being an effusion of blood, there is dabula'ing or creation of new order, separation from the parent tribe after which intermarriage may lawfully occur.<sup>18</sup>

The link between marriage and stabbing is confirmed elsewhere, in the words used in the making of Zulu marriage arrangements, where the bride's father greets the news of the marriage with the words 'People of such and such a sib, Ye have stabbed me'.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the emergence of the collateral clans was usually represented

in the traditions in terms of one of these ways of drawing blood, either as following attempted stabbings of the king, or as a result of marriages.

Thus it is claimed in the traditions that both the eGazini and emGazini, as well as a third collateral, the Biyela, emerged as the result of a Zulu king marrying a clanswoman.<sup>20</sup> In the case of the establishment of another Zulu collateral, the Ntombela, it is recorded that a beast was slaughtered to solemnise the marriage of the king to his erstwhile clanswoman. The association of the dabula'd clans with blood and or blood-letting seems to be well-established. It seems likely therefore that the choice of the names eGazini and emGazini, embodying the notion of blood, was meant to emphasise continuously that these clans were *not of independent origin*, but that they had been dabula'd.<sup>21</sup> This observation stands in direct contradiction to Bryant's claim that the collateral Zulu clans like any other new clans were 'caused by the descendants of any particularly great man therein calling themselves after him and hanging his name onto that of uZulu in their isibongo'.<sup>22</sup>

The naming of the collateral clans according to precepts different from those usually operative in the creation of new izibongo distinguished dabula'd clans from clans that had dabuka'd, ensuring that the very different status of the dabula'd collateral clans was emphasised every time the name was used. Likewise, the choice of names for the collateral clans which involved the blood metaphor was meant continually to indicate both their separation from and their connection to the Zulu royal house - having a new isibongo and yet one which by its very form stressed its dabula'd status. The blood metaphor also constantly emphasised the exclusion of the collateral clans from the kingship, for it was known that 'a man may not rule with a red

assegai, one which has stabbed a king'.<sup>23</sup> Clans which had dabuka'd, by contrast, adopted new izibongo which did not stress their relationship with their parent clan, usually the name of the person from which the break was traced, and over time, the dabuka'd clans would have allowed connections with their clans of origin to lapse.

Two exceptions to the characteristic tendencies in the naming of the collateral clans were the Ntombela and the Mdhlalose. It was claimed that the origins of their names were either not known or were the names of early ancestors. It was claimed, for example, that 'The Mdhlalose and Zulu meet in Ntombela'.<sup>24</sup> The name 'Ntombela' is closely associated with Zulu royalty, and differs from the names of the other collaterals in that it is a name derived from a supposed Zulu ancestor. 'Ntombela' sometimes occurs in royal genealogies, and appears to be of great antiquity. Mayinga, one of Stuart's informants observed,

Ntombela may be a son of Malandela...  
Ntombela is spoke of as Zulu ka Ntombela.<sup>25</sup>

Whilst an Ntombela informant commented,

The Ntombela people are an off-shoot of the Zulus...  
We join the Zulu tribe with Zulu ka Mahlobo.  
I do not know the origin of the Ntombela name.  
We originated with the Zulu at Mahlabatini.<sup>26</sup>

Both the Ntombela and the Mdhlalose claimed to be the oldest and the most significant of the collateral Zulu clans.<sup>27</sup> The Ntombela was, moreover, differentiated within itself, having a number of 'sub-sections' like the Bahi, Oosi and Mahaye, indicative of long existence as a collateral clan separate from the Zulu royal house.<sup>28</sup>

While both the Ntombela and the Mdhlalose claimed to have been dabula'd by a Zulu king, the accounts of



which process assume the identical king-marries-clanswoman form of the other clans, the difference in the origins of their izibongo, and the antiquity of the figures from which the izibongo are supposed to derive, suggest that the Ntombela and the Mdhialose were a different order of collateral clan to the eGazini, emGazini and Biyela. They appear to have been dabula'd earlier and under different circumstances to the others. Their apparently greater antiquity suggests that they might have been thrown up by the normal processes of the expansion of the little Zulu clan in the generations prior to the accession of Shaka.

The question of the periodisation of the formation of the remainder of the collateral Zulu clans is especially complex, and the evidence inherently ambiguous. In an essay on collateral Zulu clan formation, Stuart<sup>29</sup> argued strongly that it was under Shaka that the collateral clans emerged on a vastly increased scale, a view supported by his informant Mangati.<sup>30</sup> Bryant, on the other hand, situated most of the separations in the reign of Shaka's grandfather, Ndaba.<sup>31</sup> On face value, the genealogical record supports Bryant's claim for the collaterals trace their connection to the royal line back in time to the reigns of Shaka's predecessors.

However, at this stage, two reservations have to be sounded. Firstly, other detailed parts of Bryant's own account explicitly contradict this claim.<sup>32</sup> Secondly, for Bryant's proposition to hold, it has to be assumed that Ndaba designated his own sons as separate clans - at a time when each was then the only member of the new clan or at best, was the head of a small family. This notion is inherently implausible and is rendered all the more unlikely when the role of the king's children (the abantwana) at the royal court is considered.<sup>33</sup> The king's heir from amongst the abantwana

was often not selected until late in his reign, and the royalty of all the abantwana was hence very immediate. They fulfilled special duties at the royal court as the most important members of the ruling lineage after their father and his brothers. Furthermore, it would have been diplomatically counter productive for a king to excise some of his sons from the ruling lineage for they would have been accompanied by their mothers, and such actions would have alienated the mothers' clans - the very clans with whom the king had earlier sought alliances through marriage.

The corollary of this argument is, of course, that it would have been equally impossible for Shaka to have designated any of the abantwana at his court as a separate collateral clan. Moreover, Shaka was himself not married - the abantwana at his court were the children of Senzangakhona. Therefore, during his reign, his most powerful relatives who were not abantwana were sections of the royal family who traced their connections to the royal line back to Jama, or Ndaba, his grandfather and great grandfather. A process of deductive reasoning suggests both that a clan which traced its connection to a particular figure in the gensalogy of the parent clan would only have separated from the parent clan some generations after the reign of that connecting ancestor, and that Shaka had sound political reasons for initiating this process in his reign. The views of Stuart, and the claims of other sources, that most of the collateral clans were dabula'd during the reign of Shaka consequently appear more worthy of credence than do those of Bryant who assigns the clan excisions to an earlier reign.<sup>34</sup>

#### Royal relatives

Under Shaka, sections known as the Mphangisweni, the 'Mandlakazi' and the Qulusi became attached to the Zulu

clan, enjoying a status in kingdom similar to that of the dabula'd clans.

Little is known about the Mphangisweni royal section, which apparently came into being under Shaka, and was based in an establishment of that same name at the sources of the Black Mfolozi river, under the rule of members of the royal family. Mphangisweni was built by Mthethwa subjects of Shaka as an ikhanda for the emBelebele ibutho on the very edge of the northern border of the kingdom, abutting on the recalcitrant Khumalo people, and until their defeat in 1826, acted as a check out post against the Ndwandwe. Subsequently, survivors of Ndwandwe who remained behind after the defeat of Zwide were incorporated under the Mphangisweni. Little is known of the circumstances of the establishment of the Mphangisweni except that it closely paralleled that of the 'Mandlakazi' and Qulusini about which more data is available.<sup>35</sup>

In the relevant traditions, the genealogical relationship between the 'Mandlakazi' and the Zulu royal house is highly ambiguous, particularly when contrasted with the other collateral clans, whose royal links were unchallenged. It was generally asserted that the founder of the 'Mandlakazi' was Ngwabi, a boy captive reared in the Zulu royal household as a foundling grafted onto the royal family. Foundlings in Zulu society typically assumed the isibongo of their adopted family. Ngwabi grew up and married, but died before his heir was born. It was claimed that the ngena (levirate) rule was adhered to by his adopted family, and that Ngwabi's widow was taken to wife by an adopted royal brother, Mhlaba kaJama, who 'raised up seed' for Ngwabi. In due course a child was born, Sojiyisa. According to Zulu custom, Sojiyisa was considered to be the heir of Ngwabi, rather than of his natural father.<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless, Sojiyisa, and later his

son, Mapitha, were raised as members of the royal family, were accorded the full rank of abantwana, lived in the izigodlo with the other royals, and were addressed as 'mtanenkosi', a title reserved for royalty.<sup>37</sup>

According to the traditions therefore, Sojijisa was the genealogical son of Ngwabi, a foundling originally from an outsider lineage. This aspect of his origins was subsequently emphasized at the time of the Zulu Civil War in an attempt to discredit his descendant Zibhebhu. At that time, it was suggested that Ngwabi's wife was already pregnant when he died - a claim which sought to deny the consanguinity of the Mandlakazi and the Zulu.<sup>38</sup> Simultaneously, other traditions claimed that Sojijisa was both the biological son of a member of the Zulu ruling lineage and was raised as a true prince. These aspects of his origins have misled later scholars like Hedges and Guy, who have claimed unambiguously that Sojijisa was the son of a Zulu king. They recognized the especially high status of the Mandlakazi, but have failed satisfactorily to account for the greater power and prestige allowed to accrue to Mapitha than any other of Shaka's royal relatives. Likewise, they offer no insights into how royal control was maintained over this mighty subject.<sup>39</sup>

These gaps are a result of two omissions: a failure to take cognizance of the essential ambiguities in Sojijisa's origins and their crucial ideological significance; and the consequently very different status of the 'Mandlakazi' when compared to the collateral clans. Under Shaka, the ambiguities of Sojijisa's origins meant that his son Mapitha was both royal and yet not royal - a tension located in the non-Zulu origins of the pater Ngwabi, and the consanguineal connection with the Zulu established through Mhlaba kaJama, the genitor, together with the extension of the

Zulu isibongo to the founding Ngwabi. The ambiguities were the ideological basis of the great autonomy allowed to Mapitha who was royal enough to rule on his king's behalf, but lacked the status easily to usurp the kingship for himself. As such, the descendants of Sojijisa differed from the collateral clans: the former were added to the Zulu clan, assuming and retaining the Zulu isibongo; the latter were excised from the Zulu clan, relinquishing the name 'Zulu' for new and different izibongo. It was noted by the informant Mangati that 'The Mandlakazi were not originally formed into a separate section (datshuwa'd) by the Zulu king'.<sup>40</sup> He claimed that the name 'Mandlakazi' was only first applied to the descendants of Sojijisa after the battle of Ndondakusuka, in 1856, in which they acquitted themselves valourously. Previously, the name Mandlakazi applied to an establishment of Sojijisa's and was then used to refer to the territory under the command of Mapitha. The status of the descendants of Sojijisa underwent a change much later, in the reign of Dinuzulu, when they were in fact dabula'd from the Zulu clan, with Dinuzulu marrying Mahayihayi, a daughter of Zibhebhu kaMapitha.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, under Shaka, while the descendants of Sojijisa did not constitute a collateral clan, their status was very similar to that of the collateral clans, being at once royal and not royal, although for the opposite reasons. The reasons for the ideological manipulation of the status of Mapitha lay in the great power and responsibilities invested in the 'Mandlakazi' by Shaka. The area occupied by the 'Mandlakazi' was the highly strategic north-eastern reaches of the kingdom, commanding the Delagoa Bay trade. Until 1826, this area was under constant threat of invasion by the Ndwandwe. After the defeat of Zwide, the region under Mapitha was extended, and he was made responsible for

the government of the old Ndwandwe heartland, in which numerous Ndwandwe remained who needed to be integrated into the Zulu kingdom. Returning Thembu refugees were also sent by Shaka to settle in the region. Mapitha's province was, furthermore, the Zulu kingdom's outpost against the Swazi to the west, the dissident followings of Soshangane, Nxaba and Mawewe to the north-east, and the Nyawo, Mgomezulu and Thonga just beyond the Lubombo who recognized Zulu hegemony.<sup>42</sup>

The 'Mandlakazi' area was far from the centre of the Zulu kingdom, and became increasingly remote as the Zulu capital and amakhande shifted steadily southwards, first to near present-day Eshowe, and subsequently around present-day Stanger.<sup>43</sup> This meant that central control over the north diminished significantly, to be replaced by the investment of ever greater autonomy in Mapitha. Mapitha erected four major establishments, 'Ekuvukeni', 'Enkungwini', 'Ebuxendeni' and 'kwaMandlakazi'. 'Ekuvukeni' appears to have been the establishment situated the furthest to the south, and was, presumably, the main contact point between the Zulu administration and Mapitha's chieftaincy.<sup>44</sup>

The 'Mandlakazi' outpost bore the trappings of the Zulu kingship, bringing to this extremity of the kingdom the immediacy of Zulu overrule. Mapitha's position within the Zulu ruling lineage meant that he could supervise rituals involving the invocation of the Zulu ancestors, unlike members of the dabula'd clans. Hedges has noted that this was a rare privilege, and must be seen as an absolutely essential ideological focus in hitherto hostile territory.<sup>45</sup> It appears to have been the basis of the great status enjoyed by Mapitha within the Zulu kingdom.

Like the royal amakhanda to the south, Mapitha's chief establishment was placed under the command of a powerful female figure, that of his mother, Bondile. Although Lunguza, one of Stuart's informants claimed that Mapitha did not have an isigodlo (a special establishment of women), there is evidence to indicate that there was an establishment of women in the area who had been assembled in the typical isigodlo manner, although it is not clear whether they belonged to the Zulu monarch or to Mapitha.<sup>46</sup> Other indicators of Mapitha's extraordinary status were that he had his own senior officers and had a wide scope to appoint people to office. He wielded significant judicial powers and had the prerogative of imposing the death sentence without prior reference to Shaka. His reputation for ordering frequent executions suggests that his rule of the north was harsh.<sup>47</sup>

But Mapitha was not simply a regional governor. He was himself a member of the amaWombe ibutho, and was renowned as a warrior of excellence, praised as

Stabber that cannot be denied  
 He who rolls back the mountain so that the sun  
 appears  
 Fierce piercer of the stomach.<sup>48</sup>

He was an important induna in the military high command, and the traditions accord him great influence in military planning and strategy. His izibongo recall his power and ruthlessness, and credit him with immense shrewdness,

Jackal that escaped the trap  
 When others had been caught the previous day.<sup>49</sup>

Other descendants of Sojiyisa came to occupy high positions under Shaka, including the brothers of Mapitha, Tokotoko and Dumba, and Mapitha's sons, who rapidly became izinduna.<sup>50</sup>

The confidence reposed in the descendants of Sojiyisa and the greater power extended to this section by the Zulu king derived from the fundamental tension in their origins. At once representative of the ruling lineage the descendants of Sojiyisa kaNgwabi were also, in ideological terms, not of the royal line. This meant that it would have been difficult for them to usurp the Zulu ubukosi for themselves. Their interests were thus tied to those of the Zulu rulers, and it was likely that they would have been concerned to support and entrench Shaka's rule.

The Qulusi were similarly not an excised section of the Zulu clan, but rather an agglomeration of refugees under Mnkabayi, a sister of Senzangakhona, who came to occupy a special position in relation to the Zulu ruling lineage. According to Guy, the Qulusi were the most important of the royal sections,<sup>51</sup> and represented the power of the Zulu royal house'.<sup>52</sup> Like Mapitha, Mnkabayi wielded enormous political power, and as the oldest surviving descendant of Jama could likewise supervise royal rituals at the remote Qulusini outpost. She was especially renowned for her role in the doctoring of amabutho for war.<sup>53</sup> Her rule was strong. She handled local administration, settled judicial issues, and like Mapitha, was empowered to administer the death sentence at her own discretion.<sup>54</sup> The reasons for her appointment to high office were similar to those governing Mapitha's appointment. As the senior surviving member of the ruling lineage she could carry out royal functions and impose royal rule. As a woman however, she was precluded by her gender from usurping the power and position of a monarch. She was, moreover, beyond the age of child bearing. This meant that in a ritual sense she could operate as a man, being free of the menstruation taboos and hlonipha restrictions placed on women. Having never yet married, this also



meant that there was no risk of her attempting to usurp power for her male heirs.<sup>55</sup>

Sections of the royal family which had not been dabula'd and whose power was not subject to the kinds of ideological restraints which operated in the cases of Mapitha and Mnkabayi, presented a very real threat to Shaka and his control over the Zulu ubukosi. One such section was the branch of the royal family under Mudhli (probably son of Jama), a politically active figure.<sup>56</sup> Mangati relates how Senzangakhona married the daughter of his kinsman Muzi:

Upon doing this, Mudhli's section became the left hand house of the Zulu people, but took no special name.<sup>57</sup>

The designation of the family of Mudhli as the 'left-hand house' of the Zulu royal family is significant because Zulu custom prohibits the left-hand side of a family from providing a heir.<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, after the death of Senzangakhona, Mudhli sought to oust Shaka, possibly in the hope of replacing him with a candidate of his own.<sup>59</sup> As a result of his scheming, Shaka was forced to kill his uncle, and indeed, others of his immediate family, notably Sigujana, Senzangakhona's heir designate, and to banish others of his brothers. Ultimately, the surviving brothers were to be responsible for Shaka's assassination in 1828.<sup>60</sup>

Excluding his brothers and uncles - his most immediately royal relatives who had to be dealt with more directly and decisively and who for practical reasons could not be dabula'd - the practice of dabula placed whole sections of Shaka's most powerful relatives outside of the royal house. This created an ideological distance between them and the kingship, and limited the threat which they posed to the monarchy. No longer 'Zulu' (the isibongo having the meaning of the heavens), they lacked the absolutely crucial abilities of the Zulu

proper to intervene in the heavens on behalf of the nation - not in the Christian sense of the heavens as the celestial home - but in the heavens as the source of rain, and in the control of lightening.<sup>61</sup> Nonetheless, they retained a residual authority as the result of their birth which lent them status and power when placed in high office.

Political office holding and status among the collateral clans

Whilst the position and status of Mapitha and Mukabayi was above and apart from that of other of Shaka's highest officers, prominent political figures and important office holders were drawn from all the collateral Zulu clans. In contrast to the case of Mudhli, the separation of their lines from the royal house and the adoption of new izibongo functioned to both separate them from the ubukhosi and yet to continue to identify them with royal power and imbue them with the authority of the rulers. Officers from the collateral clans; and indeed the clans themselves, could be scattered across the kingdom as their connection with the royal clan and to each other could be constantly reaffirmed through marriage alliances.

Prominent members of the emGazini included the sons of Ncidi: Hlathi, a renowned warrior and Mdlaka, the induna yesive, supreme commander of the Zulu nation, induna of the Dhlangezwa ibutho, and induna-in-charge of esiKlebheni, one of the most ritually significant establishments and important training quarters for new amabutho. Mdlaka was a close counsellor and advisor of the Zulu king.<sup>62</sup> Fynn described Mdlaka as being the second most important figure in the whole nation.<sup>63</sup> Other prominent emGazini include Tshemane kaNyati, induna of the Dhloko ibutho, and Masiphula kaMamba, initially an inceku to the Zulu king, ultimately to

become the most powerful figure in all Zululand under Mpande.<sup>64</sup>

The descendants of Zivalele who comprised the eGazini included Mkhanyile and Mataka, described as men of 'high standing', having a 'following of their own';<sup>65</sup> and Sitayi and his sons Nkunga and Mbopha, of whom the latter, as Shaka's assassin, is probably the most renowned. Mbopha was an inceku to the king, working in close proximity to the monarch within the isigodlo, and at the political heart of the kingdom. Mbopha was also in charge of the area south of the Nsuze river, below Kombe at Qudeni, where he built two large establishments, 'Egumeni' and 'Egumaneni'.<sup>66</sup>

Mvundhlana kaMenziwa was probably the most powerful and illustrious member of the Biyela collateral clan. Praised as 'He whose flaming walls answer my call' he is recalled in the traditions as a famous warrior, a commander in the Zulu army and regional governor of an area across the Mhlathuze alongside the Ntombela, and close to the heights of Mthonjaneni.<sup>67</sup> The eGazini leaders Mdhlaka and Masiphula both resided under Mvundhlana, as did Shaka's half brother, Ngwadi.<sup>68</sup> Other prominent Biyela were Mbonambi kaDidi and Vumandaba kaNteti, also to become important izinceku; and Gala kaModade, remembered for his bold remonstrances with the king.<sup>69</sup>

The Ntombela collateral clan also had its share of illustrious notables. The Ntombela originally inhabited the area immediately to the south of the Mkhumbane valley, in which they built two main establishments, Mungwini and Manqineni. They subsequently moved to an area just north-west of the core Zulu area, just beyond the Mpembeni tributary of the White Mfolozi. This move appears to have occurred some time shortly after the

accession of Shaka.<sup>70</sup> Leading scion of the Ntombela was Nzobo kaSobadli, alias Dambuza, of the amaWombe ibutho, who eventually became one of the most important political figures in all Zululand, and the most senior Zulu general.<sup>71</sup> Under Shaka, the Ntombela were under the rule of Lukwazi kaMatwana, a councillor of the king and a leading isikhulu (notable of high rank). Sidubele kaMakodama was another member of the Ntombela who achieved high office. He was appointed induna of the Dhloko ibutho.<sup>72</sup> From the Mdhlalose, Shaka drew on the services of Ntlaka who was made head induna at Qulusini, his son Seketwayo, a prominent induna, Sotshangana, a royal advisor and Ndengezi kaKhuzwayo, one of the greatest amaqawe ('hero') figures in all Zululand.<sup>73</sup> Of the known izinduna of Shaka's reign, just under one third were members of the collateral clans, and of those all, with only a single exception, were described as holding especially high office. Significantly, there are no records of any izinduna from the Zulu clan proper.<sup>74</sup>

Evidence gleaned from the oral record also suggests that the reign of Shaka and the following generation saw a high incidence of intermarriage amongst the various sections of the Zulu clan and its collaterals, a point noted by both Bryant and Stuart, and commented on by Stuart's informants.<sup>75</sup> While details of specific marriages are limited, it should be noted that there seems to be a complete absence in the oral record of references to marriages contracted by the Zulu and collateral clans with other outsider clans. Informants interviewed by Stuart typically mentioned the name of only one wife of the prominent figure under discussion. This wife was presumably the chief wife, and mother of the heir, or at least an important wife.<sup>76</sup> It is significant nonetheless that the choice of important wives followed a pattern of preference amongst the collaterals. Whilst other wives were chosen as a matter of personal preference or for a particular

strategic reason affecting the husband-to-be, the choice of the chief wife was a diplomatic decision, involving the whole lineage or clan. It was a liaison symbolic of the relations between the two groups concerned. The lineage or clan usually contributed to the lobola of the chief wife, and the amount of cattle involved tended to exceed that needed for other marriages.<sup>77</sup> The chief wife of a prominent man had important administrative responsibilities to fulfill, in particular the organisation of the head establishment, and the provision of food and shelter for visitors and travellers. Where her husband was the local chief, the house of the chief wife also had a crucial role to play in ritual matters affecting the whole clan.<sup>78</sup>

The effect of the dabula practice and the consequent preferential marriage pattern which arose, at least at the level of choice of chief wife, allowed wealth to follow an increasingly restrictive route, for it was the daughters of important men for whom the really large lobola's were demanded.<sup>79</sup> Whereas properly exogamous practices would have seen women of outsider lineages installed as the chief wives in the homesteads of the country's most important nobles, intermarriage amongst the collaterals meant these positions of influence and power were largely occupied by women of the Zulu clan and its collaterals. Where a chief wife was only barely an outsider in the home of her affines, her integration into her clan of marriage was more immediate and facilitated her development of authority in the homestead.<sup>80</sup> Finally, the fact that a limited group provided the mothers of the heirs of the most important lineages functioned to widen the division in Zulu society between the rulers and the ruled.

The dabula'ing of clans, and their adoption of new izibongo functioned to obscure what was effective intermarriage amongst the Zulu rulers. It allowed the social principle of exogamy to be upheld and Nguni-speakers continued to speak disparagingly of the Sotho as 'those who wear breeches and marry their sisters'.<sup>81</sup>

Analysing the intermarriage of near-kin amongst the Tswana, Schapera noted a marked correlation between the incidence of kin marriage and polygamy.<sup>82</sup> He observed that '... the fewer the wives, the fewer the children, the fewer the cousins in the next generation'<sup>83</sup> and the less opportunity for a marriage between kin. The inverse argument doubtless holds good - the more wives a man had, the greater the opportunities for his descendants to marry their kinspeople. Polygamy, Schapera notes further, was a practice generally confined to nobles, both because of their greater need to secure political alliances and because of their greater wealth.

The right to dabula a clan, the necessary prerequisite to intermarriage in Nguni-speaking societies, appears to have been a royal prerogative.<sup>84</sup> Intermarriage was thus restricted to the Zulu clan and its collaterals. Together with the strict prohibitions which prevailed in the society on marriage with a person of the same isibongo and on incest (punishable with death), the limitation of the creation of collateral clans to the royal Zulu meant that other groups in the kingdom were unable to follow a similar strategy.<sup>85</sup>

Further implications of the maintenance of a principle of exogamy and the practice of marrying kin by the elite are illuminated by Preston-Whyte's discussion of the effects of exogamy and endogamy on the social

organisation of Nguni and Sotho-speaking societies.<sup>86</sup> She suggests that where exogamous marriage practices prevail, a bride remains an outsider amongst her affines for a long time, and competition between the agnatic groups of the bride and groom is intensive, entrenching the development of *defined clans and lineages*. Endogamous marriages, on the other hand, were marked by the easy integration of a new bride amongst her affines and an absence of competition between the bride and groom's families. The effect of this was to make clans difficult to locate and to make lineages shallow in depth, and was associated with the conditions of little corporate activity by a group(s) claiming common descent. The effects of the marriage practices of the Zulu and its collateral clans clearly do not fall into either of these neat categories. However, effective endogamy in an otherwise exogamous society seems to have had the effect of blurring some of the distinctions between clans and creating grey areas in their current genealogical frameworks. The expansion of the Zulu kingdom saw a movement of some of the collateral clans away from the area of the original Zulu chiefdom to posts in other areas and on the peripheries of the kingdom. The effect of their dispersal was a decline in the corporate identity of the Zulu clan. However, this fissiparous tendency was counteracted by the practice of intermarriage amongst the scattered Zulu and collateral clans which reaffirmed their ties.

Kuper observed a similar phenomenon amongst the Swazi, noting that clan 'fission' occurred with the greatest frequency among the Nkosi clan, while intermarriage was only amongst collateral clans which were originally...<sup>87</sup> She considered that the main reason behind the fission of the Swazi royal clans was to allow their intermarriage, and through so doing, to create a ruling elite to which access was

curtailed. The creation of collateral clans amongst the Swazi had the further effect of placing powerful relatives of the king at one remove from the kingship by providing them with new tibongo (Zulu: izibongo) and a new status, different and separate from that of the royal house. Kuper ascribed this tendency towards intermarriage to the blending of the kinship patterns of the subject Sotho in Swaziland with those of their Nguni-speaking rulers. However, recent interviews conducted amongst the Swazi have addressed precisely this issue, and have shown that fission within the royal Swazi clans is recalled by informants in precisely the same terms employed in the Zulu traditions of dabula. Similarly, they indicate that the period of the most intensive fission amongst the royal Swazi clans was experienced by the expanding Swazi state.<sup>88</sup> It is not clear from the limited available data on Zulu marriages in the reign of Shaka whether intermarriage followed clear patterns of preference as occurred amongst the Swazi. Nonetheless, the comparative Zulu and Swazi data suggests that clan fission and the intermarriage of collateral clans exclusive to their ruling elites cannot be seen simply as a Sotho-borrowing, but appears to be a strategy for the entrenchment of clearly defined and bounded ruling elites in circumstances of state formation.

It has been argued elsewhere that the ideological foundation of the Zulu kingship lay in the fundamental conception that the spiritual and material welfare of the nation was associated with that of the king. The king was considered to be the necessary intermediary between the nation and the Zulu ancestors, the previous Zulu kings, who could be invoked to intervene in the present when necessary on behalf of the Zulu nation. The centrality to the Zulu kingship of the ancestors meant that



Opposition could be mounted effectively only by members of the ruling lineage. Moreover, the likelihood of opposition being so expressed was enhanced by the fact that the ruling lineage was collectively identified with the ubukosi since the ancestors of the inkosi were also those of members of the ruling lineage; the latter could therefore take on the mantle of the inkosi's ideological preeminence without a change in the hierarchical arrangement of lineages.<sup>89</sup>

Members of the collateral clans were excised from the ruling lineage and could not readily lay claim to the Zulu kingship. Imbued with a degree of royalty as office holders and administrators they wielded real power, but it was a power subject to the ideological limitations imposed by their new distance from the ubukhosi.

The excision of collateral clans of the ruling clan in terms of dabula was a strategy which functioned to secure the position of the monarchy vis-a-vis the rest of the Zulu clan, and would have been especially significant in the initially vulnerable period following Shaka's usurpation of power, as a means of entrenching his rule. The creation of collateral clans had the further strategic effect of facilitating intermarriage within the Zulu ruling elite at the apex of the society. This practice, and the existence of evidence which indicates that Shaka's highest izinduna were drawn from this group, suggests that Mael's notion of the emergence of a nascent appointive bureaucracy of commoners under Shaka, demands revision.<sup>90</sup> This is one of the questions more fully addressed in the next chapter which examines the early expansion of the Zulu kingdom and the close affiliation of the new Zulu royal house and collateral clans with the chiefdoms of their earliest conquests to form an extended aristocracy in the emerging state.

1. J. Omer-Cooper, 'Aspects of political change in the nineteenth century Mfecane', in L. Thompson (ed.), African Societies in Southern Africa, London, 1969, pp. 215-16; R. Mael, 'The Problem of Political Integration in the Zulu Empire', Ph.d. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974, pp. 29, 30.
2. Ibid., p. 39.
3. A.W. Hoernlé, 'The Importance of the Sib in the Marriage Ceremonies of the South-Eastern Bantu', South African Journal of Sciences, 22 (1925), p. 483.
4. Krige, Social System, p. 156.
5. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 581.
6. E. Preston-Whyte, 'Kinship and Marriage', in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed.), The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa, London, 1974, pp. 195, 205; Krige, Social System, p. 121; C. Lévi-Strauss, The Elementary Structures of Kinship, London, 1969.
7. I. Schapera, 'Marriage of the near kin among the Tswana', Africa, 27, 1 (1957), p. 157.
8. B. Sansom, 'Traditional Rulers and their Realms' in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed.), The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa, London, 1974, p. 246; Krige, Social System, p. 35.
9. Döhne, Dictionary, p. 56; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 88; Colenso, Dictionary, p. 80.

10. Rev. W. Wanger, 'The Zulu Notion of God', Anthropos, 19 (1924), p. 561.
11. See above, p. 31.
12. Callaway, Religious System, pp. 1-2.
13. Ibid.
14. Wanger, 'The Zulu Notion of God', 20 (1925), p. 361; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati (original Zulu, FN.59, p. 220).
15. Stuart, uVusezakithi, p. 100.
16. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 584; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 37, 40.
17. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 42, item xi, essay by Stuart entitled 'The Zulu Tribal System. How New Clans came to be Formed', p. 14.
18. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 214, evidence of Mangati. Also see Gluckman's comments, 'Kinship and marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal', in A.R. Radcliffe-Browne and D. Forde (eds.), African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, London, 1950, p. 170.
19. Krige, Social System, p. 210.
20. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 214, evidence of Mangati.
21. Döhne, Dictionary, p. 95, gives the etymology of the word 'igazi' as being from 'ga' meaning 'to force or to cut', and 'cizi', meaning 'that which is coming' - suggesting thus a conceptual proximity

to the term dabula. Also see Bryant, Oiden Times, pp. 37, 39; Wanger, 'The Zulu Notion of God', 20 (1925), p. 361; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 212-14, evidence of Mangati. (It is interesting to note that a dabula'd Langeni section was given a name of similar symbolic significance, viz. Magwaza from the verb 'ukugwaza' meaning 'to stab').

22. Bryant, Dictionary, p. 734. The particular blood-metaphor names selected for most of the collateral clans tended to be associated by informants with place names. Thus, eGazini and emGazini were also said to have been the names of very early Zulu royal establishments - possibly a case of retrospective appellation. Nonetheless, this aspect of the naming of the collateral clans stands in further contrast to that of dabuka'd clans. (K.C., Essery Papers, Ms. 2429, 'List of Zulu Kraals'; also see Bryant, Oiden Times, pp. 39, 40; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 756; Cope, Izibongo, p. 200; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 202, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 212, evidence of Mangati.)
23. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 106, evidence of Ndukwana.
24. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 210, evidence of Mkehlengana.
25. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 255, evidence of Mayinga.
26. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 165, evidence of Haiyana. On Ntombele and Mdhlalose as historic persons also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 202, evidence of Ndukwana in the testimony of Jantshi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 95, file 74, p. 140, evidence of Ndukwana; Bryant, Oiden Times, p. 53.

27. Ibid., pp. 37, 53; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 210, evidence of Mkehlengana; Webb and Wright, A Zulu King Speaks, p. 2; Guy, Destruction, p. 30.
28. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 37.
29. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 42, item xi, essay by Stuart, 'The Zulu Tribal System', p. 14.
30. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 208, 210, 211, 212, evidence of Mangati.
31. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 37-40.
32. eGazini: J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 29, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 202, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 355, evidence of Luzipo; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 210, 211, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 162, evidence of Mkando; Guy, Destruction, p. 35; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 758. EmGazini: J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 208, 210, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 355, evidence of Luzipo; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 111, evidence of Mkehlengana. Biyela: Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 39, 40, 632; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 210-11, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 11, evidence of Mgidhlana. Bryant's version of the excision of the eGazini (Olden Times, p. 39) claims that a daughter of Ndaba's married her clansman, and that the latter's branch of the family was then separated from the Zulu clan by Ndaba, and called the eGazini. This version flouts the conventional form of dabula accounts in which the story of an excision usually took the form of a king marrying his clanswoman. The doubts about Bryant's accuracy raised by this deviation are confirmed by evidence of contradictory claims implicit in Bryant's rendition of the eGazini

genealogy, Bryant identifies the 'clansman' as Jama, a son of Ndaba. Jama, however, became the next Zulu king. Clearly, his section of the Zulu clan was not excised by Ndaba. Bryant's data on the creation of the Ntombela seems to be equally unreliable, there being considerable confusion as to the identity of the chief actor, as well as a strange conflation of excisor and excised, contrary to the usual form assumed by the story of a clan excision. (Olden Times, p. 37.) Likewise, Bryant claims that the family of one Xoko became both the emGazini and Biyela collateral clans. (Olden Times, pp. 39-40)

33. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 463; also see Doke and Vilakazi, Dictionary, p. 609; Colenso, Dictionary, p. 423, and Bryant, Dictionary, p. 456.
34. See, for example, J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati; Webb and Wright, A Zulu King Speaks, p. 2; Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, p. 224 in conjunction with Guy, Destruction, p. 32.
35. See below p. 221; Guy, Destruction, p. 37; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, pp. 95, 96, evidence of Ndukwana. Another Zulu section about which even less evidence survives was the Fakazi, under Mkasana, which occupied an area near Babanango. (J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 29, evidence of Baleni; Webb and Wright, A Zulu King Speaks, p. 2; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 44)
36. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 45; Fuze, The Black People, p. 177, editor's n. 1. On the status of foundlings see p. 432, and Faye, Zulu References, p. 101.
37. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 202, evidence of Jantshi; Guy, Destruction, p. 37.

38. Fuze, The Black People, p. 177, editor's n. 1; Cope, Izibongo, p. 200; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 44-5.
39. Guy, Destruction, p. 37; Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 214-16. On Sojiyisa also see K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 98, evidence of Ndukwana; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 282, evidence of Lugubu.
40. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 212, evidence of Mangati.
41. Guy is therefore mistaken on two counts with regard to the historic status of the 'Mandlakazi' in unambiguously designating Mapitha as the grandson of Jama, and in claiming that the 'Mandlakazi' separated from the Zulu before the reign of Senzangakhona. (Destruction, p. 37)
42. Stuart, uHlangakula, p. 18; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 282, evidence of Lugubu; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 214, 258; Guy, Destruction, pp. 17, 37 (using the evidence of Ndukwana dated 20 October 1900 and 28 October 1902.)
43. See below, p. 350.
44. Guy, Destruction, p. 200.
45. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 215.
46. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 343, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 152, evidence of Mkando.
47. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 330, evidence of Lunguza; Guy, Destruction, p. 37.

48. Cope, Izibongo, p. 202; also see Fuze, The Black People, p. 49; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 213, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 268, evidence of Mmemi.
49. Cope, Izibongo, p. 202; also see Fuze, The Black People, p. 144; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 179, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3 p. 258, evidence of Mmemi.
50. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 25, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 202, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 304, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 244, evidence of Mmemi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 317, evidence of Mpatshana.
51. Guy, Destruction, p. 252.
52. Ibid., p. 36.
53. Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 503, 515; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 45, evidence of Ngidi.
54. Fuze, The Black People, p. 62.
55. See below p. 450.
56. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 41, 48; Fuze, The Black People, p. 45; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 178-79, evidence of Jantshi.
57. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati.
58. Krige, Social System, p. 41; Preston-Whyte, 'Kinship and Marriage', p. 182.



59. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 182, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 84, evidence of Melapi.
60. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 6, evidence of Baleni;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 195-96, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 182, 187, 194, 195, evidence  
of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 74, evidence of  
Melapi.
61. See below, p. 339.
62. Fuze, The Black People, p. 50; K.C., Stuart Papers,  
file 73, p. 95, evidence of Ndukwana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 208, 209, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 246, 258, 268, 270, evidence  
of Mmemi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 43, evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 217, evidence of Mkehlengana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 55, 66, evidence of Mcofoyi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 273, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 61, evidence of Madikane;  
Bryant, Oiden Times, pp. 279, 622.
63. Fynn, Diary, p. 50.
64. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, p. 224;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 25, evidence of Baleni;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati;  
Guy, Destruction, p. 32.
65. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 29, evidence of Baleni; also see  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 202, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 210, 213, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 162, evidence of Mkando;  
see also note 66.

66. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 130, 660; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 258, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 213, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 355, evidence of Jantshi; Fuze, The Black People, p. 71; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 756; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 93, evidence of Magidigidi. The precise genealogical relationship between the various members of the eGazini are not clear from the available evidence. Zivalele, which may have been alias for Sitayi, was the son of one of the Zulu kings, either Ndaba or Jama. Some sources claim that he was the father of Mkhanyile, Nobete and Sitayi(?), whilst others claim that Zivalele was their brother. (See Bryant, Olden Times, p. 39; Bryant, Dictionary, pp. 757, 758; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 29, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 202, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 355, evidence of Luzipo; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 210, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 162, evidence of Mkando.)
67. Fuze, The Black People, p. 49.
68. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 273, evidence of Maziyo; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 255, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 26, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 151, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlengana; also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 357, editors' n. 18.
69. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 25, evidence of Baleni; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, 'Historical Notes', p. 89.
70. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 29, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 255, evidence of Mayinga;

- Bryant, Olden Times, p. 37. In 1850, Guy notes, the Ntombela were resident near present-day Vryheid. (Destruction, p. 32)
71. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 429; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 201, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi.
  72. Ibid., J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 25, evidence of Baleni; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 65, notebook entitled 'The Diary of James Stuart', p. 14, evidence of Tshingana; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 429-30, 560; Guy, Destruction, p. 32.
  73. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 52, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 109, evidence of Mgidhlana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 79, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 267, evidence of Mmemi; Guy, Destruction, p. 36. Ndengezi kaKhuzwayo fought bravely against Zwide, but felt that he was not adequately rewarded by the king. He refused the cattle which he was offered, and he was banished from the Zulu kingdom by Shaka. His family remained behind however.
  74. See below, pp. 390-92.
  75. Bryant, Dictionary, p. 734; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 39, 40; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 42, item xi, essay by Stuart, 'The Zulu Tribal System', p. 14; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 23, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 104, evidence of Mgidhlana; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 95, evidence of Ndukwana.
  76. Preston-Whyte, 'Kinship and Marriage', p. 181.

77. Hoernlé 'The Importance of the Sib', pp. 484-85.
78. Isaacs, Travels, Vol. 1, p. 35; Callaway, Nursery Tales, p. 266; Krige, Social System, p. 40.
79. See Shooter's comments, The Kaffirs, p. 50; also Gardiner, Journey, p. 89; Callaway, Nursery Tales, p. 261; G. Whitfield, South Africa Native Law, Cape Town, 1948, pp. 60-1.
80. See Preston-Whyte, 'Kinship and Marriage', pp. 203-5, her discussion of the effects of endogamy amongst the Sotho. She comments of the new wife's position that 'Above all, she is known to her husband's ancestors, and indeed shares and sacrifices to many of them' (p. 205).
81. A.R. Radcliffe-Browne, 'Introduction', African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, London, 1950, p. 69. There is no question but that exogamy amongst Northern Nguni-speakers was as much the general social rule in the early nineteenth century as it was when documented by the early ethnographers in the twentieth century. In his evidence to the 1852 Commission to Enquire into the Past and Present State of the Kaffirs in the District of Natal (p. 65), Fynn confirmed the early existence of exogamous practices.
82. Schapera, 'Marriage', pp. 139 - 60.
83. Ibid., p. 145.
84. See, for example, the problems encountered by Nqeto, in marrying a clanswoman, because he was not a king (J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 249, evidence of Mmemi). Also see Krige, Social System, p. 35; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 37; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 583.

85. Fynn, 1852 Commission, p. 68; Krige, Social System, p. 224; Preston-Whyte, 'Kinship and Marriage', p. 201; A.C. Myburgh, 'Law and Justice, in D.W. Hammond-Tooke, (ed.), The Bantu Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa, London, 1974, p. 286.
86. Preston-Whyte, 'Kinship and Marriage', pp. 194-95, 203-5.
87. Kuper, An African Aristocracy, Chapter 2, also p. 233, and appendix II. Kuper, 'Kinship Among the Swazi', in A.R. Radcliffe-Browne and D. Forde (eds.), African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, London, 1950, p. 86.
88. Interviews with Nyanza Nhlabatsi at kaZamaya, Swaziland, 3.09.83; with Matsebula informants at Mbangweni, Swaziland, 20.09.83; with Simbimba Ndlela at eTibondzeni, Swaziland, 17.08.83.
89. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 219, 220.
90. See note 1.

## CHAPTER FIVE

'UKWEHLA NGESILULU': THE EMERGENCE OF THE AMANTUNGWA AS THE RULING CLASS IN ZULU SOCIETY

The previous chapter was concerned with shifts and changes within the ruling Zulu clan, and the consolidation of royal power around the king. In this chapter, we turn to examine the extension of Zulu power over non-Zulu lineages, in what can be broadly described as the first phase of Zulu expansion, i.e. from c. mid-1810s to c. mid-1820s.

The first section of the chapter examines the terms of incorporation of these lineages and identifies a pattern of close assimilation of the non-Zulu lineages incorporated earliest by the Zulu. In the next section, the basis of a growing cohesion amongst these lineages is analysed, while the final section looks toward the second phase in the expansion of the Zulu kingdom to consider the effect and significance of the development of a common identity by this group of lineages as against the remaining non-Zulu lineages within Zulu society.

The first phase of Zulu expansion: the incorporation of the upland neighbours of the Zulu

The murder of Dingiswayo and the attendant collapse of the Mthethwa paramountcy altered the position of the new Zulu chief dramatically, and with it, the course of Zulu history. The head of Dingiswayo was arrayed alongside that of other Ndwandwe trophies at the back

of Ntombazi's (Zwide's mother's) hut, the main section of the Mthethwa forces had been routed, and the Ndwandwe seemed near-invincible.<sup>2</sup>

Either by fate or through cunning, the Zulu contingent of the Mthethwa army had avoided encountering the Ndwandwe, and remained intact under Shaka in the west, but it was not long before Zwide descended on the Zulu. A brief engagement ensued, and in a desperate holding action, the small Zulu force managed to stay the Ndwandwe, although not without the loss of the greater part of their herds. It was clearly not the last the Zulu had seen of Zwide.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the addition of the Buthelezi, Qungebeni, and sections of the Langeni and Mbatha to the Zulu army while Dingiswayo was still alive, the Zulu army was the numerical inferior of that of the Ndwandwe.<sup>4</sup> Shaka was now faced by an urgent need to expand the military strength of his chiefdom if it was to survive further Ndwandwe attacks. This was to be achieved primarily through strategic local expansion, and the creation of a network of supportive alliances.

The precise sequence in which the Zulu extended their control over a still wider range of their neighbours cannot be established with any certainty for the period prior to the arrival of the first chroniclers of Zulu history in 1824. However, the rough sequence and direction of Zulu expansion can be shown to have been shaped by a variety of factors, chief amongst which were the relative strengths and weaknesses of the surrounding chiefdoms, their relative proximity to the Zulu chiefdom, and the resources which they could offer the Zulu.

The Sibiya occupied the area immediately east of the Mkhumbane heartland of the Zulu chiefdom, and it seems that they were probably the earliest object of Zulu attention both because of their proximity, and because of a long historical association with the Zulu, as evidenced by the intermarriage of their ruling lineages in the past.<sup>5</sup> The Sibiya submitted voluntarily to the Zulu after the death of Dingiswayo, and immediately provided battalions to augment the Zulu forces. They also provided important resources in the form of extensive holdings in cattle, and their renowned hunting skills. Of the wealth of the Sibiya it was said, 'Nampo-ke aba kwaSibiya, nga nkomo abanye bebiya ngamahlahla' ('the Sibiya fence their cattle byres with cattle whilst others use branches').<sup>6</sup>

The Zulu chiefdom then embarked on a cautious campaign of conquest. One immediate priority was to secure the intervening area between the Zulu and the Ndwandwe. The earliest Zulu overtures in this region were directed towards the Zungu, and the related Makhoba and Mpungose people. They occupied the strategic area immediately north and north-east of the Zulu and Sibiya, incorporating what later became known as the Ulundi plain, stretching from the isiHlalo and Ncwana mountains eastwards to Hlopekulu mountain, between the Black and White Mfolozi rivers.<sup>7</sup>

The Zungu thereby commanded access to the plains of the Mfolozi valley and straddled the high ground between the two rivers. This was a highly desirable area because of the diversity of resources available within a small radius. The range of temperature and rainfall characteristic of this area permits the development of a variety of grazing and vegetation cover. The highest areas were likely to have been well-wooded, the intermediate zones covered in sourveld grassland, while



the river valleys would have provided access to the all-important sweetveld winter grazing.<sup>8</sup>

A major factor impelling the Zulu to occupy this area was probably the concentration of the expanding Zulu army in a few establishments in the Mkhumbane valley and the mounting pressure which this would have placed on local grazing resources and on the available arable land. The Zungu area was the nearest point which would have ensured the Zulu access to a wider range of environments than was to be found in, and around the Mkhumbane valley, and which could be easily exploited from the existing establishments of the original Zulu chiefdom.<sup>9</sup> This direction of expansion is consistent, on a smaller scale, with Guy's argument that the expansion of the Zulu kingdom, like that of the Mthethwa and the Ndwandwe, was along the line of the finest grazing.<sup>10</sup>

Sandwiched between the expanding Zulu and Ndwandwe states, the Zungu initially sought to play off their two powerful neighbours against each other and so maintain an independent position at the pivot of an uneasy equilibrium. Although an informal alliance existed between the Zulu and the Zungu, in terms of which the Zungu forces conducted joint manoeuvres with the Zulu, Zulu expansionism was initially resisted by the Zungu chief, Manzini kaTshana. This led him to flirt with the Ndwandwe in the north. Impatient with Zungu equivocation, the Ndwandwe acted decisively. When the Zungu proposed the holding of an ijadu (so-called 'love dance') with the Ndwandwe (supposedly to facilitate inter-marriage between the two groups, and to develop a potential base for allied action), the Ndwandwe used the event as an opportunity for a surprise attack. The ijadu ended in a bloodbath. Manzini, the Zungu chief, having spurned earlier Zulu advances, was now forced to seek refuge amongst the

Qwabe, while the majority of his people, under his son, Sidinanda, sought Zulu support.<sup>11</sup> Zwide then attempted to promote the claims of a pretender, named Mjiza, to the Zungu chieftaincy.<sup>12</sup>

In the face of this, Shaka moved to bolster the rule of Sidinanda amongst the Zungu, and subsequently even sought out his father Manzini, and had him killed, thus removing a potential focus for Zungu disaffection.<sup>13</sup> He presented Sidinanda with a Zulu bride to cement the association. According to Bryant, the Zulu erected at least one establishment right in the Zungu territory, and were in the habit of hunting in the area.<sup>14</sup> The Zungu corps, the renowned amaNkenetshane, 'the Wild Dogs', joined the Zulu army. The amaNkenetshane seem to have initially retained their identity as a regional unit, and proved to be a decisive addition to the Zulu fighting force. Men of the Zungu and related groups were also drafted into Zulu amabutho at esiklebheni and at Nobamba.<sup>15</sup> Baleni, one of Stuart's informants from amongst the Mpungose, an offshoot of the Zungu, commented of the Zungu contribution to the Zulu war effort,

The tribe we sprang from is that of Zungu, but we are very intimately associated with the Zulu tribe ... When Tshaka became king, my father fought for him. It was the capacity of the Mpungose people to get very angry in wartime that caused so deep an alliance to spring up between them and the Zulu's. By 'angry in war' I mean so staunch, brave and absolutely true to the Zulus.<sup>16</sup>

Zungu related sections such as the Mpungose, Makhoba, Gwabini, Sengwayo, Pakati, Hlabaneni, Z.mbeni, Kunene and Nduneni followed the Zungu in tendering their allegiance to the Zulu.<sup>17</sup> The existence of a number of diverse izibongo within the Zungu polity amongst whom the intermarriage was possible suggests that it was probably an expanding political unit at the time



of its embroilment in the Ndwandwe-Zulu conflict, as do Baleni's remarks on its formidable military reputation and its independent political stance. The incorporation of the Zungu proved to be a successful opening gambit by Shaka. The Zungu constituted a stable and important component of the new kingdom emerging under Shaka's leadership.

The Thembu seem to have been the next major group to attract Zulu attention. According to Bryant, the Thembu were divided into a senior and a junior branch. The former lived along the Ntseleni river, near its confluence with the lower Mhlathuze, and were previously under the Hhethwa paramountcy. After Dingiswayo's death, this branch moved off and established themselves elsewhere in Zululand. The junior branch lived up-country in the area just south of the White Mfolozi, and recognized the Buthelezi as their suzerains. When Shaka conquered Buthelezi, this branch was driven some distance from the Zulu base, across the Mzinyathi river, to the area around Hlazakazi mountain.<sup>18</sup>

The evidence contained in Bryant's account of the junior branch of the Thembu suggests that they flourished at Hlazakazi, and were joined by other groups, such as the Sithole and Mbatha, who claimed an historical association with the Thembu. The local inhabitants, like the Khuze, 'Nhlanguwini' and others already living in the area were forcibly incorporated by the newcomers. Within a short space of time, a flourishing new polity had emerged on the south-western border of the Zulu kingdom, stretching from the Thukela in the south, to the old Hlubi country in the north.<sup>19</sup>

Like the Zungu at the time of their incorporation into the Zulu kingdom, the Thembu polity was characterised by a proliferation of different lineage names indicative

of an expanding polity and the development of a closed ruling elite.<sup>20</sup> Although the Thembu army was not organised on an age-basis, the Thembu polity appears to have been highly militarised, and Thembu warriors were renowned for their skill and daring. Lugubu, in his testimony to James Stuart, implied that the Thembu soon came to represent a serious threat to the Zulu.<sup>21</sup> The very quality of the Thembu military establishment would presumably have invited its cooption by the Zulu.

The Zulu army was soon despatched against the Thembu. After an initial engagement at Nqutu, the Thembu beat off Shaka's Bhekenya corps. The Thembu chief, Ngoza, then sought to consolidate his gains by enlisting the support of the Chunu nearby, but this alliance was pre-empted when Shaka sent reinforcements to displace the Chunu. Before they could be deployed, Ngoza, along with certain sections of the Thembu, and a section of the Mbatha, took flight southwards towards the Mpondo chiefdom of Faku.<sup>22</sup>

Some Thembu, however, remained behind, and while Ngoza's flight removed the cream of the Thembu fighting force from Shaka's reach, those that stayed were to play an important role in the expansion of the Zulu kingdom. Their numbers included the Dladla section of the Mbatha, another section of the Mbatha under Dilikana, who khonza'd Shaka after staging a brief resistance, and a section of the Sithole under Jobe.<sup>23</sup>

Precisely why one section of the Sithole chose to remain, when the greater part of the Thembu polity and the rest of the Sithole under Mbulungeni decamped, is not clear, but one possibility is that the division reflected tensions which existed within the polity prior to the Zulu attack. Indeed, some traditions suggest that Jobe actually conspired with the Zulu king against his

Thembu overlords.<sup>24</sup>

The issue is clouded by the existence of conflicting claims about Sithole origins. The relationship between the Thembu, and their erstwhile subjects, the Sithole, was the subject of considerable debate, at least in the 1920s. In an interview at that time, the Sithole chief Bande, and Mamunye Sithole of Mhlumaya, an authority on Sithole history, vehemently denied that the Sithole were in any way related to, or were ever subordinate to the Thembu. They claimed that prior to their incorporation into the Zulu kingdom, the Sithole had existed independently at Qudeni under the father of Jobe, Mapitha.<sup>25</sup>

The following year however, at a meeting of Thembu and Sithole clansmen in Helpmekaar, the interviewer, a local Resident Magistrate named Essery, heard a tradition to the effect that the Sithole people originally stemmed from a foundling taken in out of the bush and reared in the household of an early Thembu chief, Gela. The foundling was given the isibongo 'Sithole' by the chief. The connection between the Thembu and Sithole, denied by Sithole informants, was generally attested to by Thembu and other non-Sithole informants. Essery noted however, that the historical controversy was a consequence of political factionalism in the 1920s, and in particular a then-current debate over the chiefship of the area.<sup>26</sup>

Bryant's account of Sithole origins reflects similar contradictions and is presumably a product of the same controversy. In the text of Olden Times he suggests that the Thembu and the Sithole were related, yet his list of izithakazelo in the same volume indicates that they did not share any address-names, as was usual between related lineages.<sup>27</sup> Other sources, however,

claim that one of the Sithole izithakazelo was 'Mthembu'.<sup>28</sup> Olden Times was published in 1929. It can be inferred that the omission of the izithakazelo 'Mthembu' from Bryant's list was a product of the same Sithole-Thembu conflict noted by Essery in the early 1920s. Indeed, the correlation between Essery's notes and Bryant's text, and the personal correspondence between the two men suggests that Bryant's information was garnered on his behalf by Essery.<sup>29</sup>

Sithole assertions of an origin independent of the Thembu are rooted in the time of the Thembu flight and Jobe Sithole's assumption of governorship of the southern reaches of the Zulu kingdom. The version of these early events credited by Bryant, Essery and Bird was that Jobe, a local headman amongst the Sitholes, came to the notice of Shaka during the Thembu-Zulu engagement. Jobe apparently met the Zulu king on a hill overlooking the battle and conversed with him. Shaka was alone, and according to the tradition, Jobe did not recognise him as the Zulu leader, until a messenger arrived bringing news of the battle.<sup>30</sup> Whether the tradition has any literal substance to it or whether it was simply a retrospective rendition of Jobe's subsequent position, is immaterial. Either way, the tradition expressed a view of Jobe as a Zulu collaborator. At the same time, it stressed the highly personal aspect of his loyalty toward Shaka.

After Ngonza's flight, Shaka sought to bring order to the war-ravaged Thembu territory. He appointed the loyalist Jobe to take charge of the entire area between the Thukela and the Mzinyathi, extending westwards to the Drakensberg, 'a magnificent dukedom' including the notorious cannibal outpost of eLenge.<sup>31</sup> Jobe based himself in a stronghold near present-day Pomeroy, in an establishment called Ndini. He also built at

Mangeni, Hlabankosi and Ekupula near Mpukunyoni.<sup>32</sup> Jobe's accession was challenged by another chiefly aspirant among the remaining Sithole, but he was bolstered from the centre with Zulu military assistance. It was clear that 'he held his appointment by the grace of Tshaka alone', and that he had no power base of his own amongst the Sithole.<sup>33</sup> Shaka insisted that Jobe was accorded the status that befitted his station, and permitted Jobe considerable autonomy. He could, for example, put people to death without consulting the king.<sup>34</sup> It would seem that the king was able to repose considerable confidence in him precisely because of his dependence on royal favour. The extent of this is indicated by the care taken by Jobe at all times to avoid antagonizing his suzerain.

Jobe tactfully forbade his tribe to refer to him as nkosi or give him the royal salute. He stressed the fact that there was but one nkosi, viz. Shaka, and that he (Jobe) was but a mnumuzana.(sic)<sup>35</sup>

Jobe was so fearful of Shaka's displeasure, the traditions record, that he had a hut built with two doors, so as to facilitate rapid egress in the event of a surprise attack. Similar fears underlay his reluctance to attend at the royal capital in person.<sup>36</sup>

Jobe was given one of Shaka's sisters in marriage, and his other marriages seem to have been diplomatic moves designed to build alliances, notably with the Thembu and Madondo over whom he ruled. Jobe also married his daughter to a son of Ngoza, and his son to a woman of Shaka's izigodlo.<sup>37</sup> Under Shaka, the prestige of Jobe and of the Sithole was greatly enhanced, and over time, the power of the new ruling Sithole lineage was firmly entrenched.

As was the case with the groups incorporated earlier, like the Zungu, the Thembu, the Mbatha and the Sithole who



remained behind in Zululand were all rapidly incorporated into the Zulu amabutho.<sup>38</sup> The circumstances of the incorporation of the Mabaso closely paralleled that of the Mbatha. Some Mabaso accompanied the Thembu south and only returned after the death of Ngoza, but others joined the Zulu immediately and were drawn into the Zulu amabutho in the typically integrative manner characteristic of the assimilation of the early components of the kingdom.<sup>39</sup>

The establishment of Zulu control over the old Thembu area was significant for a number of reasons. It contained a highly advantageous combination of resources, probably the basis of earlier Thembu prosperity, and rapidly became an important supplying area of the Zulu kingdom.<sup>40</sup> Large royal herds were quartered in this area and it was the chief source of much of the royal insignia, notably of shields for the army, blue monkey skins, lourie plumes and crane feathers for amabutho dress, and especially softened hide skirts for the 'princesses'.<sup>41</sup>

The best cattle, the handsomest, with the best hides came from Jobe's country in the Nkandla district near the Mzinyathi and that is where Tshaka's shield used to come from.<sup>42</sup>

Jobe was also responsible for the collection of aloes for the tanning of the hides. This territory supplied the royal establishments with fat-tailed sheep, and in particular, with the fat with which it was the prerogative of the royal women to rub themselves. Finally, Jobe was also required to cultivate and supply a special white amabele (cereal) for the women of the izigodlo.<sup>43</sup>

Next to attract the attention of the Zulu king were the Chunu. Ngoza's appeal to Macingwane for assistance against the Zulu had focused the attention of the Zulu on the Chunu people resident in the south-east, on the

Mzinyathi river near Taleni mountain.<sup>44</sup>

Like the Qwabe and Zungu, the Chunu appear to have been a large and politically diverse chiefdom composed of numerous lineages.<sup>45</sup> It seems that there were deep cleavages and tensions within the Chunu chiefdom prior to the Zulu-Chunu conflict. The Mbumane section had decamped north to join the Hlubi. The Ndlela moved to Ntabankhulu because of local conflict, while the Ndlovu, renowned 'doctors' amongst the Chunu, are recalled in the traditions as having brought down the wrath of Macingwane on their heads for having worked the 'wrong magic'. They ultimately absconded to the Mbo and khonza'd Zihlandhlo. Shortly after the rise of Shaka, the Ximba separated off from the Chunu and went to live between the Mvungane and the White Mfolozi rivers.<sup>46</sup> Macingwane, the Chunu chief is remembered in the oral traditions as a fiercely repressive ruler who, fearing to be overthrown, killed off all his heirs.<sup>47</sup> The degree of internal conflict within the Chunu chiefdom suggests that the Chunu would have been an easy target of the expanding Zulu kingdom. Control over the Chunu was moreover of supreme importance to the Zulu king because the Chunu were 'responsible for arming their enemies, being famous as iron smelters and manufacturers of metal implements and weapons'.<sup>48</sup>

According to Magidigidi, one of Stuart's Chunu informants, Shaka's first foray into Chunu country was against the Ndwonde after the Ndwonde had attacked local Cube suppliers of brass and copper to the Zulu kingdom and had cut their supply route. The umGumanqa ibutho was dispatched against the Ndwonde.<sup>49</sup> In the meantime, the bulk of the Zulu army was engaged in battle with the Thembu nearby. When Ngoza requested Chunu assistance against the Zulu, the Zulu launched a preemptive strike against the Chunu. Macingwane fled

south leaving a trail of desolation across Natal. The Zulu army caught up with the Chunu and captured the bulk of their cattle. Macingwane disappeared, and the greater part of the leaderless Chunu returned to Zululand to khonza to Shaka. Their numbers included the young sons of the Chunu chief, Mfusi and Pakade. An immediate amnesty was extended to the returning Chunu and they too were rapidly incorporated into the Zulu amabutho.<sup>50</sup>

At more or less the same time Shaka undertook another foray against the nearby Cube. In a skilful feint, the Zulu outmanoeuvred the Ndwandwe who were also bidding for control over the Cube. Mvakelele, the Cube chief, was killed and his heir dispossessed. Shaka then appointed the son of his mother's sister, Zokufa kaMtshofoza, to the chieftaincy. Zokufa is remembered in the traditions as a great favourite of the Zulu monarch and as permitted considerable independence.<sup>51</sup>

Incorporation of the Cube into the emergent Zulu kingdom was likewise an enormous advantage for the highly militarised Zulu, for the Cube were the most renowned smiths in all Zululand. They produced spears for the king to distribute amongst the amabutho from a local ironstone known as umngamunye. Mqaikana commented

The Cube used to work iron for the whole country; hoes were got there. The iron-working went on in other tribes, but not on so general a scale.<sup>52</sup>

Ironstone found elsewhere in the Zulu kingdom was usually taken to the king and exchanged there for cattle. The iron was then presumably sent to the Cube smiths. In this way, the king established a royal monopoly over weaponry for war, and over ceremonial knives and spears, such as the izingindi, carried by

women during marriage ceremonies.<sup>53</sup> The Cube also used to manufacture prestige items out of the king's itusi (copper or brass) brought from the Thonga.<sup>54</sup>

The Cube were based in the Nkandla area, and the great Nkandla forest with its hidden paths and caves, such as those in the Mome gorge, offered a strategically important retreat for the Zulu, as did the nearby mountain fastness of Manzipambana. The broken country around Nkandla was used to great advantage by Shaka sometime later in his retreat from Zwide.<sup>55</sup> Finally the Cube were also renowned for their possession of rare magical skills, notably of itonya, the power to gain ascendancy over others, an important asset for a would-be conqueror like Shaka.<sup>56</sup>

Yet another early addition to the Zulu state were the Bhele (or Ntuli). Historically, the Bhele occupied the area around eLenge (also known as Jobe's Kop). Bryant suggests that the Bhele were scattered across a wide area bounded by the Biggarsberg hills, the Klip river and the Thukela. The loose Bhele polity was composed of numerous sections - the Ntshangase under Qunta, the Bhele paramount, resident near Klip river, the Shabane under Hlatf, the Memela under Mdingi on the Sundays river, and the cannibals under the notorious Mhlaphahlapha, resident between eLenge and the Mzinyathi, as well as sections under the chiefs Jojo and Maliwa.<sup>57</sup>

The traditions tend to characterise the Bhele as a kind of fringe group at the time of Shaka's accession. One informant described the Bhele thus,

These people lived in caves and caverns (emigedini nasemihhumeni) and were called Beles. They lived by hunting game and stealing cattle from other tribes which had many possessions while they themselves had none. They lived on meat and wild fruits as well as honey.<sup>58</sup>

It seems that the social dislocation of the Bhele was a consequence of the move south in the early nineteenth century of the Ngwane, and later, the Thembu and Chunu. Many Bhele were displaced by these waves of migrants, but those that remained did so amidst ongoing upheaval and devastation.<sup>59</sup> One refugee from this desolation found his way to the Zulu chiefdom and khonza'd Senzangakhona. He was Sompisi, alias Nkobe, so-called because he ground grain (nkobe) for the Zulu king. Sompisi became an inceku (attendant) in the royal household, and rose to prominence in that office.<sup>60</sup> Senzangakhona then married Bibi, a daughter of Sompisi, who is remembered in the traditions as his most favoured wife. It was about her that the saying arose 'una lukhe; u njengo, Bibi ka Nkobe okube ku ya vele leyo nkosi ku be uve' (he has good fortune, he is like Bibi, the daughter of Nkobe, who, whatever king may reign, is the head within).<sup>61</sup> Sompisi's sons, Nduvana and Ndlela, were butha'd into the Zulu army.<sup>62</sup> Nomantshali, another Bhele woman, was married to Mpande, a son of Senzangakhona, and, like Bibi, was considered to be the most favoured and influential of all Mpande's wives.<sup>63</sup>

When Shaka took over the Zulu chieftainship, the fortunes of the Bhele family continued to prosper. Ndlela was appointed governor of a large district along the Thukela river, between the Mpaphala flats and the Mfongosi river, and became an important army commander.<sup>64</sup> According to the essayist Yende, Shaka, in urgent need of fighting men, approached other Bhele living outside of the Zulu chiefdom. His overture was apparently rejected, but the Bhele were subsequently induced, by offers of cattle to assist the Zulu. Against Mhlaphahlapha, Shaka was obliged to mount a military campaign. The cannibals were defeated, and the Bhele became Zulu subjects. Henceforward, they were to be found in the forefront of Zulu campaigns.<sup>65</sup>

... Shaka enlisted many regiments from the Ntuli tribe as it seemed that they conquered many tribes for him. They united and were known as the Zulu tribe.<sup>66</sup>

Later generations of Bhele also prospered, with inter-marriage common between the royal family and the Bhele as were Bhele marriages to the women of the king's izigidlo. Shoba, of the Bhele, became one of Shaka's izinyanga with a special responsibility for the doctoring of the Zulu army. Bhele men and women joined the male and female amabutho of the Zulu army, and increasingly came to claim an intimate connection with the Zulu.<sup>67</sup> They were well rewarded for their loyalty by Shaka, and it was he who gave them the name 'Ntuli', from the saying 'dust (ntuli) of the cattle at Bhele's', a reference to their growing wealth.<sup>68</sup>

Very little information survives concerning the early history of yet another of the groups which Shaka first attended to, the Khumalo, apart from the claim that they originated together with the Mabaso. By the time Shaka acceded to the Zulu chiefship, it seems that the Khumalo and Mabaso were politically distinct groupings, with the Mabaso incorporated into the Thembu polity and the Khumalo having shifted northwards and having undergone internal splits. The Khumalo finally settled under four chiefs. They were Donda wesiZiba (the latter being his praise and having the literal meaning 'of the deep pools') in the area between esikwebezi and the Black Mfolozi; Beje, chief in the area around Ngome hill between present-day Nongoma and Vryheid; Mashobana, and subsequently his son Mzilikazi, around the upper Mkhuze; and finally a section under Mlotsha beyond the Mkhuze at the 'Mapondwana' hills.<sup>69</sup>

Prior to the accession of Shaka, the Khumalo appear to have recognised a loose form of Mthethwa hegemony, but

they occupied an especially invidious position between the Ndwandwe and the southern powers. When the Mthethwa were shattered by the Ndwandwe, the Khumalo chief Donda intervened to ensure that the Ndwandwe victory was not total. He warned Shaka of an imminent trap and in so doing succeeded in both upholding an uneasy equilibrium between the two superpowers, and bringing down the wrath of the Ndwandwe on himself. The traditions, in which there is an emphasis on the trickery used by the Ndwandwe against the Khumalo, suggest that the Khumalo were probably a powerful military force themselves. Bryant relates that Zwile lured the Khumalo to the usual ijadu, and having thus trapped them, murdered Donda and his heir. Zwile also slaughtered Mashobana, but his son Mzilikazi survived and apparently first khonza'd Zwile, before fleeing to Shaka. The remainder of the Khumalo appeared to have khonza'd Shaka soon afterwards, possibly after a light Zulu attack.<sup>70</sup>

Evidence on Khumalo-Zulu relations in Shaka's time is characteristically uneven, making a close periodisation of their subjugation a difficult exercise. While it seems that the Khumalo initially submitted to the Zulu early in the reign of Shaka, the evidence indicates that by c.1822, the Khumalo attitude to the Zulu was generally recalcitrant. When Shaka requested the participation of a Khumalo contingent in his campaigns into Natal, two of the Khumalo chiefs who nominally recognised Zulu overrule, Beje and Mlotsha, refused to participate. They subsequently resisted Shaka for three seasons, until 1826, when Shaka was obliged to call on the firepower of the traders at Port Natal to re-establish control over them. Finally defeated, the Khumalo were at last fully integrated into the Zulu kingdom.<sup>71</sup>

The story of the contumacy of Mzilikazi is better known. Initially, it seems that Mzilikazi was highly thought

of by the Zulu monarch. Later he was sent on a campaign into the Transvaal, and on his return, it was claimed that he kept back a portion of the spoils for himself. When Shaka sent messengers to enquire after the outstanding booty, Mzilikazi is reputed to have cut off the plumes of their headdresses. Another version has it that when summoned to go and 'cook meat' at the capital, he refused outright. Either way, Mzilikazi was then forced to flee across the Drakensberg.<sup>72</sup>

Although Khumalo resistance dragged on until 1826, the first phase of Zulu expansion really came to a close around 1821, by which time, the Zulu army had expanded sufficiently to administer a decisive blow to the Ndwandwe, and to drive them from the northern reaches of Zululand.

By then, Zulu rule had been extended over the immediate neighbours of the Zulu - the Mbatha, Qungebeni, Langeni, Buthelezi, Sibiya and Zungu.<sup>73</sup> The Zulu had also attacked groups further afield, such as the Thembu, Sithole, Mabaso, Chunu, Bhele and Cube, who were forced to submit or to flee from Shaka. In the lowlands, both the Mthethwa and the Qwabe were incorporated by the Zulu. This process had been characterized by the close assimilation of all the groups concerned, and it was the expansion of the Zulu army through the absorption of their able-bodied men which provided the means for the Ndwandwe rout.

#### Historical origins and the development of political cohesion

The thrust of early Zulu expansion seems to have been towards the full assimilation of those groups which acknowledged Zulu hegemony. The first phase of Bonner's two phase model of Swazi expansion can appropriately be applied to the Zulu. In the 1810s, when the Zulu nucleus



was still small and vulnerable, its first priority was to expand its nuclear strength, and a policy of intensive incorporation was accordingly pursued. Amongst the Swazi, the groups which were closely assimilated by the Ngwane came to be known and distinguished from the rest of Swazi society as the bemdzabuko (lit. those who originated together.)<sup>74</sup> Amongst the Zulu, a common historical origin was claimed by all the groups which had been assimilated by the Zulu in the earliest phase of expansion - that of amantungwa. It was their common identity as amantungwa, which provided the ideological basis of the social cohesion of this otherwise highly heterogeneous group.

Elsewhere, John Wright and I have argued that conflict between groups of genealogically unrelated chiefdoms would have escalated with the emergence of state societies in the later eighteenth century, to become a permanent feature of the political scene.<sup>75</sup> Under such conditions, we argued that the political arena saw the mobilisation of alliances based on ethnicity. We noted further that in small lineage-based chiefdoms, the political position of the dominant lineage was based primarily on the functions which its senior member, the chief, exercised in the sphere of ritual. State formation however, saw the development of new centrally controlled institutions of social domination, such as the amabutho, the so-called 'regiments', which dramatically increased the coercive capacity of the dominant lineage. This, we suggested, had the effect of allowing the emergence of clear social divisions between the ruler and the ruled. The distinction between such categories was no longer demarcated by criteria of genealogical descent but by various cultural markers. We argued that the culmination of these tendencies was to be found in the Zulu kingdom, where processes of class formation coincided with processes

of differentiation on ethnic lines.

As was indicated in the previous chapter, there emerged at the apex of Zulu society a high aristocracy made up of members who could demonstrate genealogical links with the Zulu royal line. However, the privileged, ruling echelon of Zulu society was not confined to the Zulu clan and their relatives, but embraced a wider category of people politically aligned with the Zulu aristocracy. Although this wider group could not demonstrate precise genealogical links with the royal house, they claimed to have the same historical origins, to share certain cultural traits through a common identity, as amantungwa.

The main argument of the next section of this chapter is that their identity as amantungwa was fabricated during the reign of Shaka. This claim will be supported from two directions. The first, focusing on the question of 'fabrication', will be concerned to demonstrate that the claims of the amantungwa groups to common historical origins are fundamentally contradictory in a manner indicative of systematic adulteration. In terms of the second direction, the question of the timing of this intervention will be addressed. It will be argued that the amantungwa identity was only ever applied to groups who were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom early in the reign of Shaka. Where one section of a chiefdom fled from the Zulu and another submitted, it will be demonstrated that only the latter claimed to be amantungwa, notwithstanding their genealogical relationship with the former. While 'ntungwa' may have had another, rather different, currency in earlier times, it will be argued that under Shaka it came to be applied to a genealogically heterogeneous nucleus in the Zulu kingdom, conferring a common identity on that group and distinguishing it from the remainder of the subject chief-

doms within the kingdom.

It will be further argued that this intervention was not only obscured by the natural process of adjustment of historical traditions to ideological shifts, but that the amantungwa identity was uncritically assimilated, and expanded on by subsequent scholars, notably Bryant, in such a way that contradictory evidence was ignored or effaced. Since Bryant's writings, more than any others', have served to fix notions about the origins of Nguni-speakers, it is to these that we must turn first.

Bryant classified all the Bantu-speakers of south-east Africa as 'Nguni' and distinguished them from the highveld Sotho-speakers to the west, and the Tsonga-speakers in the north-east. Amongst the 'Nguni', he distinguished between three different cultural and linguistic groupings, the Xhosa, the 'Tekela-Ngunis', and the 'Ntungwa-Ngunis'. The Xhosa, with whom we are little concerned here, separated from the rest of the stream and migrated rapidly southwards, almost in isolation, and evolved their own dialect.<sup>76</sup>

Bryant suggested that the 'Tekela-Nguni' and the 'Ntungwa-Nguni' separated in the very early stages of their existence. Beyond noting their membership of the same broad language family, he, in fact, offered no evidence as to why he considered them to have ever been connected. Their common origin, somewhere in the remote past, as 'Pure Ngunis', must, as John Wright has pointed out, be recognised as 'a substantial oversimplification, even a distortion of the historical picture'.<sup>77</sup> Wright has advanced a sophisticated explanation of how and why the term 'Nguni' came to be used as a generic label in this sense, and demonstrated at some length differences in its generic usage from

the original meaning of Nguni, and the manifold regional differences in the way that it was employed by the indigenous inhabitants of south-east Africa. Similar reservations need to be sounded about the rest of Bryant's typology.

Unlike 'Nguni', the terms 'Tekela-Nguni', 'Ntungwa-Nguni', 'Tsonga-Nguni' and 'Mbo-Nguni' were not picked up and much used by later scholars. Consequently, the unravelling of their meanings is slightly less complex than that of 'Nguni'. Bryant's 'Tekela-Nguni' category was so-called because it comprised speakers of the tekela dialect, distinguished by the pronouncement of certain consonants differently from the 'Ntungwa-Ngunis'. According to Bryant, the 'Tekela-Ngunis' shared the further common characteristic of having originated in the north-east, 'eNyakato'.<sup>78</sup> Bryant divided the 'Tekela-Ngunis' into the 'Tsonga-Nguni' and 'abaMbo', distinguished from each other by minor dialect differences and by having entered Zululand along coastal and interior routes respectively. Thus the 'Tsonga-Ngunis' demonstrated a strong 'Tsonga' connection and were associated with the coastal lowlands. The 'abaMbo' on the other hand, were credited with a strong 'Swazi' connection, and the Lubombo mountains served as a common point of reference to their claims of origination.<sup>79</sup> Neither of the terms 'Tekela-Nguni' nor 'Tsonga-Nguni' appear to have had any currency amongst Stuart's informants. Tekela speech was identified by numerous informants as a dialect specific to certain groups, such as the 'Lala', while Tsonga was the name given to the clans to the north-east of the Zulu kingdom. Both usages were highly specific and bore no resemblance to Bryant's compound categories.<sup>80</sup>

The term 'abaMbo' appears to have had three usages and meanings for the inhabitants of Zululand - Natal. Mbo was the isibongo of a group situated along the Thukela, and which, in Shaka's day lived under the chief Zihlandhlo. Known as the Mbo 'of Mkhize' (their isitakhazelo) this group claimed to have originated amongst the Swazi.<sup>81</sup> The term 'Mbo' also occurs in oral traditions in a non-clan specific sense, with two meanings. In c.1900, it was being used by the people to the south of Natal as a general description for the inhabitants of Natal.

The Natal people are called abaMbo by the Pondos without discrimination. A wind coming from the direction of Natal is said to come from the country of the abaMbo.<sup>82</sup>

Evidence of the informants Maziyana and Mahaya indicates that the 'Mbo' designation was also used by the Mpondo in the south to distinguish original inhabitants within their community from refugees from Natal - the so-called 'abaMbo'.<sup>83</sup> According to the accounts of the survivors of the wreck of the Stavenisse, 'Emboas' inhabited the Natal area as early as 1686.<sup>84</sup> But the term 'Mbo' also crops up far to the north in the early shipwreck records in the form 'Vambe'. In 1589, according to early Portuguese documents, the inhabitants of the coastal country to the south of Delagoa Bay were known as the 'Vambe'.<sup>85</sup> This suggests a very great age to the second non-clan specific usage of 'Mbo' which occurs in the testimonies of Stuart's informants. In terms of this usage, 'Mbo' was used to designate a common origin with 'the Swazi'.<sup>86</sup>

A number of clans within Swaziland today likewise claim to have 'Mbo' origins. The Swazi groups which acknowledge that the term 'Mbo' is of significance to them are the bemdzabuko (the so-called original Swazi), who claimed to have come from the east coast, over the Lubombo mountains, into Swaziland. Bemdzabuko informants today are generally uncertain as to the exact meaning of the

term, but vigorously claim it as an aspect of their identity and history. Two informants claimed that the name derived from 'imbo', a Swazi and Zulu term for malaria. Malaria was rife in precisely those areas around Delagoa Bay from which the bemdzabuko and a number of the Natal 'Mbo' claimed to originate.<sup>87</sup> This detail may confirm the notion of 'Mbo' as associated with a coastal, lowland identity in the north. Indeed, the various usages of 'Mbo' - as the isibongo of the people under Zihlandhlo, the appellation of the inhabitants of and refugees from Natal, and as connoting a connection with the 'Swazi' - all fit the broad geographical description as being, or having come from, coastal, lowland people in the north, in much the same way that John Wright has demonstrated that the term Nguni gained a directional connotation.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, the tekele dialect which characterized the speech of the Natal 'Mbo', was akin to siSwati, and this was one of the elements cited as underlying their common categorization as 'Mbo'.<sup>89</sup>

Whether or not 'Mbo' was a term which harked back to a previous era when the Natal 'Mbo' and the bemdzabuko lived together, is difficult to ascertain, but what does emerge clearly from the above review is its clear geographical connotations. These were picked up by Bryant, and explicitly opposed to his other major Nguni category, the upland, interior 'Ntungwa-Nguni', with their own distinctive dialect.<sup>90</sup> According to Bryant, between c.1550 and c.1750, the 'Ntungwa-Nguni' migrated into Zululand from the south-eastern Transvaal. The distinguishing feature of the 'Ntungwa-Nguni' was their adherence to a tradition of having come down from the interior with, or by means of a grain basket (isilulu). As will be shown later in this chapter, Bryant's employment of the term 'Ntungwa', like that of 'Mbo' and the other terms discussed above, differed

from its usage in the oral traditions which were current in the period when he did his research.

It is important to note that Bryant was working within the late Victorian scholarly traditions of Darwinism and diffusionism in a period when the theory of Bantu-migrations was emerging as an explanation of the historical 'tribes' of sub-equatorial Africa. The works of Theal, Stow and McKay had already advanced accounts of the populating of southern Africa.<sup>91</sup> It was this theory of migrations embraced by Bryant which gave form and a rigidity to his classificatory system which was absent in the oral traditions from which he derived his material.

Perhaps the most important consequence of these scholastic influences was Bryant's intervention in his data to eliminate from his account all inconsistencies. This was in accordance with his stated aim

to put the record straight and to fill in the gaps, linking together disconnected facts by probabilities based on other knowledge, moulding discrepant statements so that they harmonize with their surroundings, drawing conclusions following naturally from well-founded premises.<sup>92</sup>

The greatest difficulties of evidence encountered by Bryant occurred when he attempted rigidly to classify all the clans of Zululand - Natal as either 'Ntungwa-Nguni' or 'Mbo-Nguni', for there were a number of clans who claimed to be related to both 'Ntungwa-Nguni' and 'Mbo-Nguni' clans.

Occasionally, Bryant made these dilemmas of evidence explicit in his texts. One example of this is to be found in his discussion of Zungu origins. The Zungu, he noted, claimed to be related to both the Zulu (classified by Bryant as 'Ntungwa-Nguni') and the Zizi (classified by Bryant as 'Mbo-Nguni').<sup>93</sup> More often,

however, Bryant preferred to efface such contradictions from his account by choosing between the items of conflicting data, as can be seen by comparing his discussion of Bhele origins with those contained in the Stuart testimonies. It was widely stated by Stuart's informants that the Bhele were 'ntungwa'. At the same time, it was also claimed that they were related to the 'non-ntungwa' Zizi.<sup>94</sup> In his discussion of Bhele origins, Bryant classified the Bhele as non-'Ntungwa-Nguni', on the basis of the Zizi connection, and disregarded widespread Bhele claims to be 'ntungwa'.<sup>95</sup> A similar method was evident in his treatment of Nzuza origins. The Nzuza were described by Stuart's informants as being 'ntungwa', yet Bryant did not. He classified them as 'Ntungwa-Nguni'.<sup>96</sup> Bryant's failure to reproduce the contradictions typical of the oral testimonies helped to reify the category of 'Ntungwa'.

In the oral testimonies, two distinct types of contradictions concerning the common historical origins of the ntungwa can be identified. The first is that which occurs between the testimonies of two or more informants. Since this type of contradiction was unlikely to have been obvious to the informants concerned, it is usually easily located by the analyst of oral traditions. However, in northern Nguni-speaking societies, this exercise is hampered by the paucity of relevant sources, and frequent reliance on a single source or on fragmentary data, which militates against comparisons. The second type of contradiction is in the nature of a palimpsest, where a new (and fictitious) tradition of origin is imposed, but where the imprint of a previous tradition is not fully erased.<sup>97</sup> Where, for whatever reason, one point of origin came to be replaced by another, the informant would have tended to drop one location entirely, in favour of the other. However, other ingredients of



an informant's story of a group's origins are likely to be retained, and may tacitly continue to point to the other point of origin, giving rise to implicit contradictions within the text.

Deeper-lying contradictions of this nature have been explored in the case of the Qwabe, where, it was argued, a further dimension to the contradictions within the traditions was added by the processes of struggle and resistance in which the Qwabe engaged.<sup>98</sup> A similar example is provided by the Chunu, who, like the Qwabe claimed an origin in common with the Zulu through the Malandela tradition, asserting that their progenitor, 'Mchunu' was the third son of Malandela, and a brother of Zulu and Qwabe. The Chunu claim is subject to all the same reservations expressed about that of the Qwabe, and is similarly contradicted by other implicit and residual data which survives in Chunu oral traditions.<sup>99</sup> Similarly, the oral traditions of the Thembu, Mbatha and Mabaso are characterized by palimpsest-like signs of contradictions between their claims to a common origin with the Zulu, and the complex evidence of their separate origin elsewhere.<sup>100</sup> The evidence of contradictions strongly suggests that traditions of origin and statements of identity had been tampered with.

Reference to the izithakazelo (or 'address-names' of clans) confirms this suggestion. Izithakazelo are a much neglected and misunderstood body of evidence. In contrast to a claim made by the ethnologist Van Warmelo that izithakazelo are accurate indicators of historical origins, it should be noted that izithakazelo were, rather, a prime site of the manipulation of, and intervention in, the historical record.<sup>101</sup> Address-names appear to have been altered to suggest historical connections between groups who were entirely unrelated.

Indeed, Hilda Kuper in her comments on tinantelo, the parallel address-name form amongst the neighbouring Swazi, notes that the name 'tinantelo' derives from the verb, kunana, meaning to borrow, with the intention of returning, a point which emphasises the flexibility and flux of address-names.<sup>102</sup> Where certain izithakazelo were common to a number of izibongo they were used to suggest that the izibongo were related to each other. The acquisition of izithakazelo appears therefore to have been one means of cementing alliances between groups, and perhaps ultimately a part of the process of creating a common political identity. Within the traditions, these claims were usually consistent with overt claims to 'ntungwa' or 'Mbo' origins. Thus, all the groups who claimed the amantungwa identity tended to share the same izithakazelo. Where Bryant, in his concern for consistency often effaced from his text the overt claims of certain groups to being amantungwa in favour of implicit evidence of other origins, he often neglected to remove the traces of links to amantungwa groups contained in the izithakazelo. Thus, in the case of the Nzuza, we see that the contradiction between the claims of Stuart's informants that the Nzuza were 'ntungwa', and Bryant's claim that they were 'Mbo-Nguni', is reflected in a contradiction between Bryant's claim in his text that they were 'Mbo-Nguni', and the evidence in his izithakazelo list, which indicates that they shared an address-name with the Ntombela, an 'Ntungwa-Nguni' group, with whom they thereby claimed a historical connection.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, the Sibiya were described in Bryant's text as being 'Ntungwa-Nguni', while his list of izithakazelo reveals an ambiguity in Sibiya origins. This took the form of an implicit contradiction between the two Sibiya address names, Gumede and Ndaba, which connoted lowland (i.e. 'Mbo-Nguni') and upland (or 'Ntungwa-Nguni') connections respectively.<sup>104</sup>

Patterns to the contradictions in the evidence on origins suggests that the claims of the groups to a common descent may have been imposed over other, disparate claims of origin. How did this occur? The assumption of new izithakazelo was a recognized social practice. A number of traditions survive which testify to izithakazelo being acquired through exchange for goods or services.<sup>105</sup> From this, it can be inferred that the 'borrowing' or acquisition of new izithakazelo demanded the agreement, or at least the appearance of agreement of both parties concerned. Clearly it would have been of little effect for one party to claim that it was related through its izithakazelo to another party, if the latter denied the relationship, and if the former had no authoritative sources with which to bolster their claim to a particular izithakazelo. This is borne out in the traditions by the emphasis placed on the transactions involved in the change, and by the negative evidence of the absence of any accounts of the forcible appropriation of izithakazelo.

Shaka himself was one of the prime exponents of this practice and used it to mesh the widely disparate lineages incorporated under Zulu hegemony. It was noted in chapter three that the Qwabe isithakazelo of Gumedede, and the designation 'Nguni' were both appropriated by the Zulu.<sup>106</sup> Likewise, the Khumalo isithakazelo, of 'Ndabazitha' was also assumed by Shaka. This address-name was common to the Mbatha, Mabaso, Buthelezi and Thembu as well.<sup>107</sup> It was likewise variously claimed that 'Ndabazitha' was taken by Shaka from either the Mbatha or the Thembu, i.e. the quiescent uplanders, rather than the recalcitrant Khumalo.

Tshaka substituted it (the old Zulu name, Lufenulwenja) for the isibongo 'Ndabazitha' which he took over from the people he had conquered in war, viz. the Mbata tribe.<sup>108</sup>

In the Qwabe case we noted a similar trend, insofar as it was the quiescent element of the Qwabe who acknowledge Shaka's claims to the Gumedede isithakazelo and to the 'Nguni' identity.

Where the Zulu kingdom found resistance to the imposition of its rule, as amongst the Khumalo and the Qwabe, we find that ideological co-option took the form of recourse to the arena of the izithakazelo so as to suggest a historic relationship between the rulers and the ruled, and to lend legitimacy to the new relations of dominance. The historical content of izithakazelo was characteristically obscure, and therefore proved difficult to challenge in historical terms. In recent discussions with Swazi and Zulu informants, izithakazelo/tinanatelo were frequently referred to as indicators of the common origin of groups, even where the content of the address-names was acknowledged as being without meaning to the informants, and where they sometimes existed in spite of further information indicating otherwise.<sup>109</sup>

The widespread daily use of the izithakazelo made them an ideal vehicle for the transmission of new ideas concerning historical and socio-political relationships. In Zulu society, it was considered very important to know a wide range of izithakazelo and to be able to address people with the correct names.<sup>110</sup> The izithakazelo enjoyed daily currency,

Everyone was familiar with the izithakazelo of the clans about him, and in addressing their members, habitually used them.<sup>111</sup>

Assumption of the 'Ndabazitha' isithakazelo by the Zulu meant that it was by this name that the Zulu were henceforward to be the most commonly addressed,

... to a member of the Zulu clan (aba-kwaZulu) it could not be said, Sa-ku-bona Zulu (Good morning Zulu) - this could be said properly only to the Zulu king, as Zulu's living representative - but Sa-ku-Bona Ndabazitha (Good morning Ndabazitha), this latter being the isithakazelo (or address name) of this particular clan.<sup>112</sup>

The assumption of the 'Ndabazitha' isithakazelo by the Zulu thus had the effect of suggesting common origins and genealogical connections between the Zulu and their quiescent Mbatha and Mabaso subjects, the less amenable Thembu, and the strongly resistant Khumalo. It also connoted that these groups shared a common ancestor, Ndaba.<sup>113</sup>

Shaka did not limit his attempts to create a common identity between the recalcitrant Khumalo and the Zulu, to manipulating the Ndabazitha isithakazelo. In the same way that the Zulu appropriated the 'Nguni' appellation which was a distinctively Qwabe identity, they also laid claim to an appellation that was widely attested to as originally being a Khumalo identity: '... the Kumalo are the real abaNtungwa for they say "Mntungwa" to each other',<sup>114</sup> 'The Kumalo ... especially ... are amaNtungwa',<sup>115</sup> 'I know the Kumalo people only as being the amaNtungwa ... When one of the Kumalos gave one food, one originally said, "E" Mntungwa, but', continued the latter informant, 'Now, of course, many tribes are Ntungwa'.<sup>116</sup> What was originally an isithakazelo of the Khumalo was widely extended becoming less of an isithakazelo, and assuming the character of a statement of origin - and becoming the rallying point for a new political unity of the groups assimilated into the early Zulu kingdom.

Thus Stuart records,

Mxaba spoke of natives as abentungwa (umntungwa). He J.K. [the informant, J. Kumalo] and Mabaso are all of different clans, yet they sprang from one source, the one named.<sup>117</sup>

It would seem therefore, that similar circumstances underlay the adoption by the Zulu of the Nguni and amantungwa identities of the rebellious Qwabe and Khumalo. In chapter three above, it was argued that the Nguni identity was mobilised by dissident Qwabe to assert the greater antiquity of the Qwabe vis-a-vis the Zulu, and to resist incorporation under the Zulu in a wider Zulu identity. Shaka's appropriation of the Nguni identity in turn, was an attempt to nullify this assertion of an independent status. Similarly, the adoption of the amantungwa identity served to annul the apparent distinctiveness, and the independent status which the Khumalo sought to preserve for themselves. Unlike the Nguni identity, however, amantungwa came to be applied far more widely than to simply the Zulu.

The question which the next section addresses is when the term amantungwa was extended beyond the Khumalo, to apply to a large number of disparate chiefdoms. It was claimed by Stuart's informants that the term 'came into vogue principally in Tshaka's day'<sup>118</sup> and this claim is supported by widespread evidence that the amantungwa designation applied only to groups who shared the common experience of incorporation into the Zulu kingdom in the first phase of its expansion, regardless of their origins.

This evidence is marshalled in the charts on pp. 298 and 299. The charts contain the names of all the clans known to have been described as amantungwa. Of these names, four appear to have been designated amantungwa in error, and do not reflect wider usage. The Ndwandwe, for example, were described by a single informant as being amantungwa. This claim was denied by a number of Stuart's informants, by the early Zulu historian Bryant, by a student of the Swazi, Kuper, and

by Ndwandwe informants interviewed in 1983.<sup>119</sup>

Similarly, only one informant described the Xhosa as ama-ntungwa, in what seems to be an otherwise entirely unsupported claim. Recourse to the major historical writings on the Xhosa yields no mention of amantungwa, and in fact, this claim was explicitly denied by two sources, one of whom was the Zulu king, Cetshwayo himself, the other, one of Stuart's informants.<sup>120</sup> Another apparent error concerns the application of the ama-ntungwa designation to the Mpondo, again by a single source, Bryant. Bryant's claim, which occurs in his list of clans in Olden Times was only tentative, and elsewhere, is negated by his claims that the Mpondo spoke the tekele dialect, and were 'Mbo-Nguni'.<sup>121</sup>

A number of the names which appear on the list, are those of groups today resident in Swaziland. Of these, there appears to be one certain error, that of the 'Tabete'. This group was classified by Bryant as 'Ntungwa-Nguni', and, he noted that it was a Swazi group.<sup>122</sup> 'Tabete' probably corresponds to the modern Swazi sibongo of Thabedze. Matsebula, the Swazi historian, also describes the Thabedze as 'Ntungwa-Nguni', but he appears to be following Bryant, one of his chief sources.<sup>123</sup> Thabedze informants resident in Swaziland today, when questioned on this issue, expressly deny that they are or ever were amantungwa and describe themselves as being 'Sotho' in origin. There are no apparent anomalies in the accounts which they give which might indicate their claims to be incorrect.<sup>124</sup>

Turning now to firmer claims, the amantungwa identity of another Swazi group, the Simelane, is well-attested to by a number of sources. Under Shaka, the Simelane occupied the area between the Ndwandwe and the Ngwane on the Phongola. Writing on the early Simelane, the

essayist, Dalisu Simelane noted that the Simelane were first defeated by the Ndwandwe, under whom they remained for a short while. The Simelane subsequently came under the rule of the Zulu. Shaka permitted them to occupy their old lands, and to accrue to themselves considerable prestige. The Simelane were closely connected to their neighbours, the Ngwane, Khumalo and the Hlubi, and may have claimed a genealogical connection with the latter. Dalisu Simelane described the Simelane as the 'uncultured Ntungwas', possibly a reference to the distance at which they resided from the Zulu capital, and their concomitantly rude country ways. The Simelane only departed for Swaziland after their chief Magutshwa kaLuthuli was killed either later in the reign of Shaka, or by Dingane.<sup>125</sup> Little is known about the early history of the Matse, another Swazi clan which claimed to be amantungwa, beyond that they, like the Simelane, were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom by Shaka and subsequently moved northwards, into Swaziland.<sup>126</sup>

The early history of another Swazi group described as amantungwa, the Maseko, constitutes rather more of a problem. It was claimed by a single source, Bryant, that the Maseko were 'Ntungwa-Nguni'.<sup>127</sup> The only confirmation which this receives is an isolated reference in the testimony of a Maseko informant, given in 1970, to the effect that his ancestors arrived in Swaziland 'hidden in a grass-made grain storage tank', presumably the isilulu conventionally associated with the amantungwa identity.<sup>128</sup> Against this, it was strongly asserted that the Maseko were the original inhabitants of Swaziland, that they were Sotho in origin, and the fact that none of their izithakazelo (Swazi: tinanatelo) connected with the known izithakazelo of other amantungwa groups.<sup>129</sup> The root of the confusion seems to lie in unsatisfactorily explained connections claimed between



the Simelane and the Maseko. Both groups attested to the relationship, but the Maseko claimed that the Simelane were, like themselves, original inhabitants of Swaziland, a point denied by the Simelane account of their later settlement of the area. Further research is required to account for this tension in their respective claims this would presumably also account for the isolated reference to the Maseko being amantungwa, against substantial evidence that they were not even Nguni-speakers.

With the exception of the problematic Maseko, the Swazi clans which were credited with being amantungwa, were thus all upland groups incorporated by Shaka early in his reign, either prior to, or immediately after, his defeat of the Ndwandwe. Indeed, it would seem that this applies to the remaining names on the list - all of which are the clans or sections of the clans whose incorporation was discussed in detail in the first section of this chapter. Two apparent exceptions to this claim were the Hlubi and Ngwane, both of whom are probably best known for their dramatic departures from the Zulu kingdom, and their involvement in the upheavals of the so-called Mfecane.

Around c.1819-1820, the Hlubi chiefdom under Mthimkhulu in the north-west of Zululand came under attack from the neighbouring Ngwane under their chief, Matiwane. The Hlubi chiefdom disintegrated and the various fragments flew off in different directions. The bulk of the Hlubi appear to have fled across the Drakensberg, but one section remained behind, and submitted to the Zulu king. These Hlubi were butha'd together, and named the iziyendane, after their especially Hlubi characteristic of wearing their hair dangling in twisted tails. Hlubi izinduna were appointed from their ranks, and the iziyendane

were encouraged to identify closely with the new Zulu kingdom of which they were becoming a part.<sup>130</sup> However, the Hlubi proved to be contumacious subjects and appear to have occupied a precarious position within the kingdom.

According to Wright and Manson, another Hlubi remnant came to be incorporated into the Zulu kingdom on its return from the west, and was permitted to continue occupying the area around the Mzinyathi river, the original Hlubi lands. This section of the Hlubi appears to have had little or no significance in the history of the emerging Zulu state.<sup>131</sup> The different status of the two Hlubi sections under the Zulu is reflected in fundamental contradictions in the accounts of Hlubi origins. On the one hand, the primary source on Hlubi origins, Mabonsa kaSidlayi, claimed that the Hlubi originated in the east, in the Lubombo mountains and were related to the Swazi. Mabonsa likewise asserted very strongly that the Hlubi were not amantungwa, nor Nguni, and pointed to the differences between Hlubi dress styles, and dialect, compared to those of the Zulu.<sup>132</sup>

Other informants claim that the Hlubi were amantungwa, noting that they spoke the same dialect as the Khumalo and shared Khumalo and Mabaso cultural features, like refusing to eat amasif (soured milk).<sup>133</sup> Explanation of these contradictory claims comes from the testimony of the informant Mbovu. Mbovu notes that it was the iziYendane who were known as amantungwa, while those Hlubi who were not incorporated into the Zulu army were not considered to be amantungwa.<sup>134</sup> Mabonsa, the informant who denied vehemently that the Hlubi were amantungwa, had no connections with the iziYendane, but had been raised together with Langalibalele outside the Zulu kingdom. It would seem that Mbovu's contention

was borne out.<sup>135</sup> The Hlubi who submitted to Shaka claimed to be amantungwa, and those who departed from the Zulu kingdom did not, despite the fact that they were of one clan, and had, in pre-Shakan times all belonged to the same chiefdom.

The evidence on the origins of the Ngwane demonstrates a similar pattern of anomalies. On the one hand, it was claimed that the Ngwane had a strong historical connection with the Swazi, a connection supported by the number of names which the Ngwane chiefly genealogy had in common with the royal Swazi genealogy, by the significant number of clan names common to both chiefdoms, and by the evidence that a clan such as the Mdluli, which was of important ritual significance to the Swazi, enjoyed a similar status amongst the Ngwane.<sup>136</sup> On the other hand, it was strongly asserted that the Ngwane were amantungwa.<sup>137</sup>

The starkly contradictory quality of this evidence can be understood in terms of the specific history of the Ngwane, and their relations with the Zulu state over time. The Ngwane were one of the groups which were attacked by Shaka on behalf of the Mthethwa, and who became Mthethwa tributaries. According to Bryant, pressure on the Ngwane from their Ndwandwa neighbours and the looming presence of the Zulu eventually forced the Ngwane to move to the Drakensberg, into the vicinity of Champagne Castle. Then Shaka invaded Natal, and the Zulu army drove many of the Ngwane westwards, across the Drakensberg.<sup>138</sup>

According to the historian Magema Fuze, conflict between the Ngwane and the Zulu was a protracted affair, and one section of the Ngwane, known as the Mpembeni split off from the main group.<sup>139</sup> Amongst the Mpembeni were a section known as the Dladla, who gave their

allegiance to Shaka, and became renowned as the foremost amongst Shaka's rain makers.<sup>140</sup> Some sections of the Ngwane moved down towards the coast, and others, under a member of the Ngwane royal house, khonza'd Shaka. According to Fuze, Shaka wanted to see as many of the Ngwane as possible remain and settle down under Zulu rule.<sup>141</sup>

As was the case with the Hlubi, it was those Ngwane who remained behind and gave their allegiance to Shaka who appear to have been known as the amantungwa, while those who departed were the ones who stressed a common origin with the Swazi, and their 'Mbo-ness'. Amongst the Ngwane however, the sharpness of this dichotomy is complicated by the subsequent return to Zululand following the assassination of Shaka of those Ngwane who had left with Matiwane. Initially, this group was well received, and was permitted to settle in the old Ngwane lands. However, as Matiwane began to recoup some of his former power, regrouping the scattered Ngwane fragments, he attracted adverse attention and before long, he and many other Ngwane were brutally executed by Dingane. A large number of Ngwane then joined the Thembu chief in flight across Natal. Another section fled with Matiwane's heir to seek shelter amongst the Swazi. Their sojourn in the north was brief, for they were confronted there with a plot to kill the young heir, and they were forced to return to Zululand, finally to settle in Natal, under the Drakensberg.<sup>142</sup> Thus, one section of the Ngwane never experienced Zulu rule, another did so for only a short while, and still others became fully integrated Zulu subjects.

Msebenzi, the chief Ngwane informant, was the son of Macingwane kaMatiwane, the Ngwane regent after the death of Matiwane. It seems that Msebenzi belonged

therefore to the section of the Ngwane who had only a brief experience of the Zulu; Msebenzi was, moreover, trained as the historian of the Ngwane, and his accounts can be assumed to reflect prevailing subtleties of the history of the Ngwane people. Significantly, his extensive history of the Ngwane avoids the question of their origins.<sup>143</sup> In addition, his account reflects the tension between the section of the Ngwane who had originally left Zululand under Matiwane, and the section which remained behind - a point also evident from the praises of the Ngwane chief Matiwane and confirmed by other sources. The praises of Matiwane contained in Msebenzi's account are particularly interesting for the fact that the Zululand to which Matiwane returned is described as 'ebuNtungwa', translated as 'Ntungwaland'. It thus seems that the Ngwane who fled Zululand early in the reign of Shaka did not consider themselves to be amantungwa, whereas those Ngwane who remained behind and khonza'd Shaka did.<sup>144</sup>

The traditions of origin of the Buthelezi provide a further example of the connection between claims to be amantungwa and assimilation into the Zulu kingdom. Of all the non-Zulu clans within the nation, the Buthelezi were, and still are, the closest to the Zulu monarchy. The Buthelezj were considered to be amantungwa, but it was also claimed that they were connected to the 'Mbo-Nguni'. Moreover, those Buthelezi who were not close to the Zulu monarchy, i.e. the Buthelezi refugees in Natal who had fled from Shaka, were designated 'Lala', a term closely associated with the 'Mbo-Nguni' identity.<sup>145</sup> As with the Hlubi and Ngwane, it seems that it was those Buthelezi who were directly incorporated under Shaka that claimed to be amantungwa, while those sections which left the Zulu kingdom claimed other origins. The term amantungwa seems therefore to refer to a specific form of incorporation under Shaka, rather than to pre-Shakan

origins. This, together with the pattern of contradictions identified in the relevant origin traditions suggests that there was little historical basis to the claims of a common origin as amantungwa.

The way in which these claims of connection were formed through the appropriation of izithakazelo has been noted, but the question which remains is as to how new claims of origin (as amantungwa from the north) were reconciled, as rapidly as they evidently were, with pre-existing and highly disparate origin claims?

One way in which this was achieved was through the connection between the amantungwa identity, and the tradition to which all the amantungwa adhered, of having originated up-country in a grain basket. A number of versions of the grain basket (isilulu) tradition exist, most typically stating that

That the amaNtungwa are said to have come down in a grain basket (isilulu), by means of a grain basket (ngesilulu).<sup>146</sup>

but the informants who attested to this were themselves puzzled by its exact meaning. One informant suggested that

This means that they came floating down the river in this silulu. (The silulu seems to have been made of skins sewn together ...) <sup>147</sup>

whilst informants interviewed more recently simply repeated the story and evinced amusement at the imagery. <sup>148</sup>

In order to interpret this tradition, it is useful to examine a version of the tradition which is rather different from the standard account. Mangati, a Bhele informant, related to Stuart that the Bheles were

blood relations of the Basutu. Our place of origin is eLenge. Our great-grandfathers, the grandfathers of Ndlala, came down into the Zulu country by means of a grain basket. The grain basket rolled from eLenge (Job's Kop) with them inside it. There were people inside it. A piece

of fat appeared in the basket at the place where they were living. The person with the piece of fat ran away to the Zulu country. They followed him and so came to the Zulu country, travelling by means of a grain basket. They arrived in the Zulu country, at a time when the house of the Zulu was still small and had not yet increased in size ... We amaBele are amaNtungwa. These originated upcountry.<sup>149</sup>

In this version, the isilulu tradition is used in a unique manner, to explain the early history of a single group, the Bhele, whereas in the other instances of its occurrence, it is used typically to describe the origins of a number of groups. The chief feature of the Bhele version is the use of the isilulu as the vehicle of explanation for the entry of the Bhele into the Zulu orbit. This suggests that the tradition functioned as a device of association, indicating the way in which the Bhele and the Zulu came to be connected.

In the versions of the isilulu tradition which refer to the origins of a number of groups, the isilulu metaphor refers to a number of such groups once having been together (within the isilulu) journeying together (rolling down from the north), coming to rest, and then dispersing, like so many granules of grain. Early isilulu were distinguished by their rounded shape, narrow openings, the closeness of their weave, being sturdy yet flexible.<sup>150</sup> They were thus an appropriate sort of symbol for the movement of peoples across difficult terrain.

A significant comment made by two of Stuart's informants was that the tradition only ever referred to there being a single isilulu.<sup>151</sup> This suggests that the isilulu tradition was the means by which a common origin (in a single basket) was suggested, for a number of very separate groups (the grain inside). The type of common origin thus suggested would have been very

different from that which was asserted through the tradition that lineages were connected as were the offshoots of the reed which had stooled independently from a central reed which was typical of the lowland or zansi people.<sup>152</sup> Whereas the latter type of tradition implied that one reed was begotten of another, the isilulu tradition conveyed a sense of there being many separate entities contained together within the basket, rolling and tumbling against one another, and eventually dispersing, yet with that experience in common, and having had that contact with, and exposure to, each other. The association was thus one based on shared experience, history in common, a common direction of origin and a common region of subsequent settlement, rather than the creation of genealogically traceable connections. The tradition may also have referred specifically to the movement of the uplanders into the lowland, so as to facilitate the cultivation of grain, the symbol of the isilulu having the double meaning of movement of grain cultivation into the lowlands, and the ideas of the association of disparate elements, and a shape conducive to movement. As Madikane noted,

... they rolled from the north to the south where the country is wide and there settled, just as a grain basket rolled down a hill eventually rolls onto the flats below and its contents empty themselves there.<sup>153</sup>

Whereas the Nguni designation stressed the antiquity of occupation of a region by that group, the amantungwa-associated isilulu tradition was concerned to emphasise notions of movement, of expansion, settlement and colonization, and entry into new contexts and milieus,

... they spoke of themselves as having come down in a grain basket meaning that as compared with the other inhabitants they were not aboriginals or ancient occupants but had come from the north.<sup>154</sup>



The connotations of the term amantungwa itself are more difficult to elucidate. Like that of Nguni, it seems to have been appropriated by the Zulu rulers from a recalcitrant subject group. It was modified by the rulers to become a term suggestive of common origin, and was extended in its application to a much wider constituency, that of the chiefdoms first incorporated by the Zulu kingdom. Together with the isilulu tradition, this served to connect all of these disparate groups, conveying a sense of common origin and identity, and which distinguished the amantungwa from the rest of Zulu society who were not considered to be amantungwa.

The name amantungwa, unlike that of Nguni, 'Mbo' or 'Lala' has no echoes in European records prior to 1824. It may have had pre-Shakan resonances which have not survived, for it may have been a term geographically specific to the uplands, i.e. the interior of south-east Africa, into which the first Europeans only ventured much later than was the case with the coastal Nguni, 'Mbo' and 'Lala'. However, the origins of the term are suggested by the correspondence which exists between the distribution of the groups who claimed to be amantungwa as shown on the map on page 251, and the distribution of a distinctive grass type, Hyparrhenia Hirta, known in Zulu as inTunga grass. Typically found at low to mid-altitudes in the upland regions, inTunga is an important veld component, being particularly useful for grazing in early summer, and when it occurs in conjunction with Themeda Triandra (Z. inSinde), as is common, it provides a 'valuable mixed veld acceptable to animals for about 8 months of the year'.<sup>155</sup> inTunga is also an important thatching grass, and it should be noted that the large grain izilulu were typically made of such thatching grass.<sup>156</sup> Certainly, Stuart's informant, Ndambi kaSikakana understood this to be the

origin of the name. Describing the Mkhumbane valley, the heart of the new Zulu kingdom, he commented,

Insinde and intungwa grass is to be found there. Mtungwa grass is used to weave the mats used for thatching huts.

I have asked the amaMtungwa people the origin of their name, and they said that it originates from the intungwa grass (entungweni yo tshanji). This grass will stick in clothes and prick one. That is, the name arose from the grass used for thatching huts. Grain baskets (izilulu) were also made of intungwa grass.<sup>157</sup>

The intunga grass is characteristic of the upland veld region, particularly in late summer when it grows especially high and is tufted. It may well be that it was drawn on as a dominant symbolic feature for a rough association between the upland chiefdoms, an association which was further invested with connotations of common origin, by means of the isilulu tradition. The roughness of the claimed association was probably a consequence of the expediency and the haste under which the Zulu kingdom was first assembled, but at the same time, the very looseness of the connection was the greatest strength of these claims, for it made them near impossible to challenge on historical grounds.

Discussion of the historical origins of the groups who claimed to be amantungwa demonstrates that their assertions of a common origin were inherently contradictory, in a manner which strongly suggests that the claim of a common origin as amantungwa was imposed over a variety of other disparate origins. It was further suggested that the term amantungwa was originally a specifically Khumalo appellation, which was subsequently extended to a wider group of chiefdoms. The special circumstances surrounding its appropriation were illuminated through comparison with the occurrence of similar processes amongst the Qwabe. It was suggested that these processes

were probably characteristic of the extension of the rule of one group over another, where the ideological mechanisms employed were shaped by the nature of the resistance encountered.

These circumstances arose in the cases of both Qwabe and *Khumalo incorporation into the Zulu kingdom*. The thesis that the amantungwa identity was extended to a wider group of chiefdoms in the reign of Shaka was suggested by statements to that effect made by Stuart's informants, and by claims that the associated isilulu tradition sprang up at that time.<sup>158</sup> By means of a lengthy survey of the history of incorporation under Shaka of all groups designated amantungwa, these claims have been confirmed. The survey indicates a close connection between being amantungwa and incorporation into the Zulu kingdom early in the reign of Shaka. Negative confirmation comes from the evidence that groups related to the amantungwa who resisted incorporation eschewed the amantungwa identity. It seems therefore that the reign of Shaka saw the manipulation of the category 'amantungwa' notably in its extension to refer to a number of the chiefdoms of the Zulu kingdom, as well as to the Zulu clan itself.

The chief effect of this intervention lay in the unity and distinctiveness conferred on the groups concerned, in a form that was both credible and difficult to challenge on historical grounds. It was a unity which had reference to typically ethnic criteria - vague notions of a common origin and a shared history, common cultural and stylistic features, and a broad territorial area. The distinctiveness conferred by the amantungwa identity functioned to distinguish the amantungwa from the rest of Zulu society.

The proposition will be advanced that it was the ama-ntungwa who came to constitute the ruling echelon of Zulu society, and that members of the amantungwa lineages exerted a monopoly over access to privilege and appointment to high office. 'Ntungwa' origins would have been used as the criteria in the limitation in the preservation of this monopoly and as the basis of its legitimation.<sup>159</sup>

The demonstration and substantiation of amantungwa monopolization of privilege is complicated by the fragmentary nature of the available evidence, and attendant problems of its quantification. Two slightly different methods will be used. In the following chapter, the names of all known office holders within the army are listed and located according to their izibongo. This serves to indicate the extent to which high office within the Zulu army was filled by the amantungwa. However, a number of army officers also held office outside of the military establishment. Likewise, the names of many important figures occur in the oral record, about whom there are no references to an army rank, but whose prestige and power is attested to. The final section of this chapter will endeavour to give a sense of the status enjoyed by amantungwa outside of the army beyond that already discussed in the first section of this chapter. Further corroboration concerning the privileged position of the amantungwa can be gained by reversing the hypothesis, and examining the incidence of army officers, and extra-army office holders amongst the 'non-ntungwa'.

The charts on pp. 390-92, list all the known army officers of Shaka's reign. Although their discussion here anticipates the analysis advanced in chapter six, it should be noted that they suggest that of the thirty-six officers about whom data survives, twenty-two were amantungwa. Of the remaining fourteen, twelve

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were 'refugees' in the Zulu kingdom, whose status was quite special and different from that of Zulu subjects within the incorporated chiefdoms, and two were of the clan of the queen mother, whose status was also exceptional. There were no officers drawn from the commoner clans.

The oral traditions typically credit almost all men of importance with being 'heroes' in battle. Conversely, there are few if any accounts that describe 'non-ntungwa' as valorous. The amantungwa notables were also typically credited with having the power to pass the death sentence without consulting Shaka, and the freedom to rebuke the king.<sup>160</sup>

Thus it was said of the Mbatha, one of the amantungwa groups, that they provided the core of the fighting izinduna of the army.<sup>161</sup> The Mbatha also occupied important positions outside of the army. One of the most preeminent members of the Mbatha was Manyosi kaDlekezele, who held high office in Shaka's domestic establishment as well as being induna of esiKlebheni. He was greatly favoured by Shaka, as was another famous Mbatha, the chief Dilikana kaHlakanyana, who rose to become one of the most powerful figures in all Zululand.<sup>162</sup>

Another leading figure in Zululand who held office both within and outside of the army was Ngqengelele kaMvulane, of the Buthelezi. Under Shaka, the Buthelezi as a whole rose to a position of preeminence, but those Buthelezi who had defected to the Zulu before the Buthelezi were defeated by the Zulu, found themselves in the forefront of the Zulu king's favour. Chief amongst their ranks was Ngqengelele, a member of the Buthelezi chiefly house, who had early on thrown in his lot with the Zulu. Ngqengelele rose slowly through the ranks of the Zulu. 'He was at first literally a

hewer of wood and a drawer of water to Tshaka's people, also a nurse',<sup>163</sup> within the royal household. He was subsequently appointed inca to the Zulu king, and later intsila responsible for the well-being of the king.<sup>164</sup> He then became head induna at esiKlebhani, and was appointed to the Buthelezi chieftaincy. He eventually controlled the whole area from Mhlabathini to the Phongola.<sup>165</sup> Baleka, one of Stuart's informants, described him as 'a prominent figure who commanded the attention of the whole nation; when he spoke, no-one else would speak, only the king would speak.'<sup>166</sup> Following Ngqengelele, numerous other Buthelezi gained high office.<sup>167</sup>

Sotobe kaMpangala of the Sibiya was another of the kingdom's foremost political figures. He was best known for having led the Zulu embassy to the Cape in 1828. When questioned there on his status within the Zulu kingdom, he observed that it was only the king 'and two or three of his principal chiefs' who were allowed to wear the bunch of red feathers which he sported.<sup>168</sup> His special brief was care of the royal cattle, vast numbers of which were pastured at posts under his command. Sotobe was especially trusted and favoured by Shaka and under him governed the inland Thukela region. Under Dingane, Sotobe became the principal chief south of the Thukela.<sup>169</sup> Another Sibiya who occupied high office was Langazana kaGubetshe, a wife of the late king Senzangakhona. The details of her position are discussed at length in chapter seven.<sup>170</sup>

Of the Mabaso, information survives about one figure, the famous spy Nongila. Nongila was in charge of Zulu intelligence. His son, Jantshi commented that he must have enjoyed such status that people thought that he must be a member of the royal family. Amongst their relatives, the Khumalo, Mzilikazi was probably the best known of

Shaka's appointees.<sup>171</sup> Sidinanda kaManzini, chief of the Zungu, was probably the best known of the Zungu notables, but the names of many others who achieved prominence survive in the oral record. Under later kings too, the Zungu were favoured. Many became royal officers, either izinduna or izinceku.<sup>172</sup>

The Nzuza were renowned under Shaka as izinyanga ('doctors'), because of their possession of specialist skills. It was the Nzuza who contributed the important 'medicines of power', the intelezi (a prophylactic against misfortune and lightning, and crucial in the preparation of the army for war), ikathazo (a malaria preventative) and indungula (a general protective), and it was the Nzuza who were entrusted with their administration.<sup>173</sup> Mqalane kaNongweni of the Nzuza, was the foremost of all Shaka's izinyanga, and is credited in the oral record with having caused the Zulu to triumph in battle over their most powerful enemies, a fame shared by the other renowned Nzuza, Nondumo and Mbeleko. The Nzuza were also remembered as being amongst the most doughty of all Shaka's warriors, Maqoboza and Nozitshada being two of their greatest heroes.<sup>174</sup>

The only men to occupy positions of power inside the Zulu kingdom, who were not amantungwa, were those who did so by virtue of their positions within their own chiefdoms, such as Zihlandlo, chief of the Mbo, and Magaye, chief of the Cele. Although Zihlandlo was a chief in his own right, it was noted that when at the Zulu capital, his status was diminished. The case of Magaye is considered at greater length in chapter eight; suffice to note here that it was constantly reiterated that he owed his position to nothing more than the favour of the Zulu king.<sup>175</sup> While amantungwa who were not chiefs occupied positions of status, both within



and outside of the army, there seem to be few, if any records of 'non-ntungwa' who were not chiefs occupying such positions. Similarly, the traditions record a predominance of prominent amantungwa being permitted to contract marriages with women of the king's izigodlo. 176

#### Conclusion

It has been argued that the survey of the origin traditions of the groups incorporated in the first phase of Zulu expansion suggests that assumptions about the historical immutability of their identity as amantungwa are both unwarranted and have obscured key processes of social and political change within the Zulu kingdom. Rather, it has been argued, the amantungwa identity should be seen primarily as being a product of the emergence of the Zulu state. In the early years of the Zulu state, the amantungwa identity was probably not yet fully articulated as the basis for the cohesion of the lineages of the young state. Ideas about their common origin were probably bouncing off the existing traditions of genesis of the individual lineages in an unsystematic fashion. At that time, the primary cohesive force would have arisen out of the need for concerted action by a number of disparate lineages against the Ndwandwe. At the same time, the reformed amabutho system, through a variety of means (discussed at length in the next chapter) facilitated the emergence of a national unity as the loyalties of the men of numerous, disparate lineages were refocused on the person of the Zulu king, and the ascendancy of the Zulu royal house was constantly affirmed.

Once the Ndwandwe threat had fallen away, and as the Zulu kingdom expanded and prospered, the 'era of primitive accumulation passed', and the core group of amantungwa lineages became sufficiently numerous to extract tribute and military support from new subjects, without

sharing the full privileges of citizenship. This saw the Zulu kingdom move in Bonner's terms, into the second phase of its development.<sup>177</sup> The sharper focus of the amantungwa identity can be traced to a particular phase in the development of pre-capitalist systems. In this phase, the amantungwa identity would have gained in significance as it came to be the means whereby the privileged in Zulu society were distinguished from those without privilege, and the means whereby that distinction was legitimated.

Connected in terms of the amantungwa identity, this group of otherwise unrelated lineages came to occupy a particular position in the relations of production and surplus extraction in the Zulu kingdom. The discussion in the following chapters, on the amabutho, the position of the amantungwa in the amabutho and their position vis-a-vis the rest of Zulu society will extend this analysis to indicate a coincidence of the processes of ethnic differentiation and of class formation.

Claims to be amantungwa <sup>178</sup>	Name of 'parent- clan' <sup>179</sup>	Denials of the ama- ntungwa identity <sup>180</sup>
Bhaca <sup>181</sup>	Zulu <sup>182</sup>	
Bhele <sup>183</sup>	Bhele	Bhele <sup>184</sup>
Bisini <sup>185</sup>	Khumalo <sup>186</sup>	
Bomvu <sup>187</sup>	Ngwane <sup>188</sup>	
Buthelazi <sup>189</sup>	Buthelazi	
Cebekhulu <sup>190</sup>	Ngwane <sup>191</sup>	
Chunu <sup>192</sup>	Chunu	
Cube <sup>193</sup>	Cube	
Dletsheni <sup>194</sup>	Khumalo <sup>195</sup>	
Dlamini <sup>196</sup>	Ngwane <sup>197</sup>	
Gogo <sup>198</sup>	Khumalo <sup>199</sup>	
Gwabi <sup>200</sup>	Zungu <sup>201</sup>	
Hlubi <sup>202</sup>	Hlubi	Hlubi <sup>203</sup>
Khanyile <sup>204</sup>	Chunu <sup>205</sup>	
Khoza <sup>206</sup>	Khumalo, Qwabe? <sup>207</sup>	
Khumalo <sup>208</sup>	Khumalo	
Langa <sup>209</sup>	Khumalo	
Mabaso <sup>211</sup>	Mabaso	
Magubane <sup>212</sup>	Unknown	
Manzi <sup>213</sup>	Qwabe <sup>214</sup>	
Maseko <sup>215</sup>	Maseko	
'Mate' <sup>216</sup>	Matse	
Mazibuko <sup>217</sup>	Mbatha <sup>218</sup>	
Mgabi <sup>219</sup>	Khumalo <sup>220</sup>	
Mlambo <sup>221</sup>	Unknown	
Mpondo <sup>222</sup>	Mpondo	Mpondo <sup>223</sup>
Mpongose <sup>224</sup>	Zungu <sup>225</sup>	
Mtiyane <sup>226</sup>	Sithole <sup>227</sup>	
Myeni <sup>228</sup>	Mabaso, Chunu(?) <sup>229</sup>	
Ncube <sup>230</sup>	Khumalo <sup>231</sup>	
Ndhllovu <sup>232</sup>	Zungu, Chunu(?) <sup>233</sup>	
Ndwandwe <sup>234</sup>	Ndwandwe	Ndwandwe <sup>235</sup>
Ngadi <sup>236</sup>	Qwabe <sup>237</sup>	
Ngwane <sup>238</sup>	Ngwane	Ngwane <sup>239</sup>
Ngwe <sup>240</sup>	Ngwe(?) <sup>241</sup>	Ngwe <sup>242</sup>

<u>Claims to be amantungwa</u>	<u>Name of 'parent- clan'</u>	<u>Denials of the ama ntungwa identity</u>
Nkabini <sup>243</sup>	Khumalo <sup>244</sup>	
Ntsele <sup>245</sup>	Khumalo <sup>246</sup>	
Nthuli <sup>247</sup>	Bhele <sup>248</sup>	
Nyawo <sup>249</sup>	Sibiya <sup>250</sup>	
Nzuza <sup>251</sup>	Nzuza	
Qungebeni <sup>252</sup>	Qungebeni <sup>253</sup>	
Qwabe <sup>254</sup>	Qwabe <sup>255</sup>	
Sibiya <sup>256</sup>	Sibiya	
Simelane <sup>257</sup>	Simelane	
Sithole <sup>258</sup>	Sithole	
'Tabete' <sup>259</sup>	Thabedze	
Thembu <sup>260</sup>	Thembu	
Wushe <sup>261</sup>	Bhaca (Zulu) <sup>262</sup>	
Xhosa <sup>263</sup>	Xhosa	Xhosa <sup>264</sup>
Zelemu <sup>265</sup>	Bhaca (Zulu) <sup>266</sup>	
Zondo <sup>267</sup>	Ngwane <sup>268</sup>	Ngwane <sup>269</sup>
Zulu <sup>270</sup>	Zulu	
Zungu <sup>271</sup>	Zungu	

1. To originate in, or by means of, a grain basket.
2. See above, p. 137.
3. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 174-75.
4. See above, pp.
5. The Sibiya were described as being amongst the 'first people' attacked by Shaka, as were the Zungu and Thembu. It is likely that Sibiya who lay between the Zulu and the Zungu were the object of Shaka's attention before the Zungu. (Bryant, Olden Times, p. 27, also see position of the Sibiya on enclosed map; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 256, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Melapi, Maziyana, Socwatsha; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 109, evidence of Mgidhlana.)
6. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 27; Fuze, The Black People, p. 13.
7. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 25, 176, also see position of the Zungu on enclosed map. Bryant gives the pre-Shakan location of the Mpungose as south-west of the Zulu core area, but Guy, Destruction, pp. 32-4, says that the Mpungose spread from the White Mfolozi across the Mhlathuze in Shaka's time. Guy's sources are, unfortunately, not cited directly, but the location which he gives fits best with the Zungu traditions concerning pre-conquest Zungu history which stress the notion of the Zungu as sandwiched between the Zulu and Ndwandwe. Guy's location is also borne out by Zungu claims to have originated 'at Mahlabatini', i.e. the heart of the area described

- by Guy. The mountain called the Ncwana suggests that the Zungu territory stretched at least as far to the north-west as its situation, for Ncwana was the name of the Zungu founding ancestor; Fuze, The Black People, p. 22; H.P. Braatvedt, Roaming Zululand with a Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, 1949, p.3; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 104, evidence of Magojela; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Dinya in Melapi's testimony.
8. Based on Hall, 'The ecology of the Iron Age', chapter 8.
  9. On the localized environmental crisis experienced in the Mkhumbane valley, see below pp. 354-55.
  10. J.J. Guy, 'Some Aspects of the History of the Zulu Kingdom', paper presented to the History Workshop, Gaborone, Botswana, 1973, p. 7.
  11. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 176-77, 216, 218; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 104, evidence of Magojela. Magojela, a grandson of the Zungu chief Manzini, argued that Shaka, threatened by the prowess of the Zungu army, killed Manzini outright. However, Manzini was only killed in 1827, some years after the Zungu were incorporated by the Zulu (See note 13 below).
  12. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 176-77.
  13. Ibid., p. 219; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 104, evidence of Magojela.
  14. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 218-19.
  15. Ibid., p. 177; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 21, evidence of Baleni.

16. Ibid., pp.21-2.
17. Ibid., pp. 22, 29; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 105, evidence of Magojela; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 176, 219, 684, 697; Fuze, The Black People, p. 22.
18. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 242-48; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 37, 57, 61, evidence of Mbovu. Like the Sibiya and the Zungu, the Thembu were described by informants as being amongst the earliest objects of Zulu attention. The political coherence achieved by the Thembu in the period between their displacement following Shaka's attack on the Buthelezi, and their flight under Ngoza suggests that a development period of some length had elapsed. It seems likely therefore that Zulu expansion to the south-west occurred after that in the areas immediately surrounding the Zulu chiefdom.
19. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 242-48; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 282, evidence of Luguba; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 297-98, evidence of Lunguza.
20. These appear to have included the Khuza, 'Nhlangwini', Baleni, Caluza, Conci, Magosa, Mapanga, Mkulisa, Ncadi, Mvelase, Ngxongo, Nyawose, Sokela, Sosibo, Tinta and Qunta. (Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 242-48, 681-97; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 290, evidence of Lugubu.)
21. Ibid., pp. 281, 282; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 249.
22. Ibid., pp. 246-53; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 281, 282, evidence of Lugubu; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 37, pp. 5-7.

- Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 221, 226, 253, 259; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 292, evidence of Lugubu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, 'Mankayiyana' by Theunissen A. Mbata, pp. 6-8.
24. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 250-52; Fuze, The Black People, p. 21; K.C., Essery Papers, page marked C.N.C. 1724.09, 'The Sitoles', by G.V. Essery, 1922, at Helpmekaar, see appended genealogical tree; K.C., Essery Papers, correspondence, Essery to C. Faye, Helpmekaar, 29 Nov. 1922; Bird, The Annals of Natal, Vol. 1, p. 144.
25. K.C., Essery Papers, correspondence, Essery to Faye, Helpmekaar, 29 Nov. 1922; K.C., Essery Papers, 'The Sitoles'.
26. Ibid.
27. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 251, 696.
28. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 301, evidence of Lunguza.
29. K.C., Essery Papers, KCM 2429, articles on 'Zulu Tribes', by A.T. Bryant, collected by G.V. Essery, Vol. 2. Also see Essery Papers at Riet Valley, Mhlali, correspondence Bryant to Essery (n.d.). Also note the close correspondence between the evidence given to Essery by Njobo Ngubane, at Helpmekaar, 4 Dec. 1924 (K.C., Essery Papers) and Bryant, Olden Times, p. 259.
30. See note 24 above.
31. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 259; K.C., Essery Papers, statement by Njobo Ngubane.



32. K.C., Essery Papers, correspondence, Essery to Faye, 29 Nov. 1922; 'Sitoles Genealogy' and statement by Njobo Ngubane; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 301, 335, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 61, evidence of Madikane; Fuze, The Black People, p. 21; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 259.
33. K.C., Essery Papers, correspondence, Essery to Faye, 29 Nov. 1922.
34. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 314, 330, 331, evidence of Lunguza.
35. K.C., Essery Papers, 'The Sitoles', p.2.
36. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 326, 345, evidence of Lunguza.
37. Ibid., pp. 314, 332; K.C., Essery Papers, 'The Sitoles', and correspondence, Essery to Faye, 29 Nov. 1922.
38. K.C., Essery Papers, statement by Njobo Ngubane; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 302, 308, evidence of Lunguza.
39. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 49, 243, 417-18, 685; Fuze, The Black People, p. 18; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 174, 175, 176, 201, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 45, evidence of Madhlebe; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 97, evidence of Magidigidi.
40. See note 8 above.
41. K.C., Essery Papers, correspondence, Essery to Faye, 29 Nov. 1922; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 321, 322, 324, 325, evidence of Lunguza; also see T.V. Bulpin's remarks, in Shaka's Country, 1952, London and Cape Town, p. 66.
42. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 322, evidence of Lunguza.

43. Ibid., pp. 318, 324, 330.
44. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 56, 262, 270, also see the position of the Chunu on the enclosed map; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 5, evidence of Baleka.
45. These included the Khanyile, Ndlovu, Ndlela, Majola, Mcumane, Ndawonde, Ximba, Hlela, Congco, Manyoni, Molembe and Ngqulanga. (Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 262-65; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 89, 90, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 255, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 39, evidence of Mbovu.)
46. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 146, 262-65; Fuze, The Black People, p. 15.
47. Ibid., p. 52; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 264; K.C.; Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 2, evidence of Mqaikana.
48. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 262.
49. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 85, evidence of Magidigidi.
50. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 267, 270, 271; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 285, 288, evidence of Lugubu; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 304, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 83, 91, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 296, evidence of Maziyana; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 2, evidence of Mqaikana.
51. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 9, item 12; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 322, evidence of Mpatshana.

52. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 2, p. 14, evidence of Mqaikana; also see K.C., Stuart Papers, file 9, item 12; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 41, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 84, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 213, evidence of Socwatsha, in the testimony of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 234, evidence of Mlotkwa.
53. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 74, p. 7, evidence of Ndukwana.
54. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 85, evidence of Magidigidi.
55. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 77, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 271, evidence of Mmemi.
56. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 322, evidence of Mpatshana.
57. Bryant, History, p. 35; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 58, 347; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 24, evidence of Mabonsa; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 56, evidence of Mcotoyi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 2, evidence of Mqaikana.
58. K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, 'The Ntuli Tribe', by David A. Yende.
59. K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Tribal History - Ngwanes, Beles, Chunus, etc.', by Mrs. Andrina; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 154, 347-49; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 251, evidence of Mayinga.
60. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 52, 202; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 199, 202, evidence of Mangati.
61. Stuart, uKulumetule, chapter 2, and p. 35 especially; also see Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 52, 202; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 206, evidence of Mangati.

62. Ibid., pp. 199, 213; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 58-9.
63. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 207, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 106, evidence of Mgidhlana.
64. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 209, evidence of Mangati.
65. K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, 'Ukudabuka kwesizwe sakwaNtuli', by T.S. Dube; essay by Yende;  
essay by Mrs. Andrina.
66. K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Yende, p. 8;  
also see K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Some Historical Records of Places', by S.N. Mbhele,  
pp. 5-6; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 202, evidence of Mangati.
67. K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Mbhele, p. 9;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 230-31, evidence of Maputwana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 152, evidence of Mkando;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 261, evidence of Mmemi; also  
see note 62 above.
68. K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Yende, p. 8.
69. Fynn, Diary, pp. 128-29; Bryant, Olden Times,  
pp. 418-20; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 183, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 25, evidence of Mabonsa.
70. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 183, evidence of Jantshi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 102, 172, 566.
71. Ibid., pp. 595-97; Fynn, Diary, pp. 20-1, 128, 130;  
Isaacs, Travels, pp. 88, 91-3.

72. Fuze, The Black People, pp. 2, 22; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 422; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 307, evidence of Lunguza.
73. For Zulu incorporation of the Qungebeni, Buthelezi and Langeni, see pp. 135-36 above.
74. On Bonner's two phase model see Kings, chapter three; on the bemdzabuko, see H. Kuper, An African Aristocracy, London, 1947, pp. 13-4.
75. Hamilton and Wright, 'The Making of the Lala', p. 8.
76. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 3-9.
77. Wright, 'The invention of the Nguni', p. 7.
78. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 11.
79. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 6-8.
80. On the 'Lala', see below, pp. 478-79.
81. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 6, evidence of Mbokodo;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 31, 42, evidence of Mbovu;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 403.
82. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 129, evidence of Mahaya; also see  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 19, evidence of Mbokodo.
83. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 216, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 274, evidence of Maziyana.
84. Bird, Annals, Vol. 1, pp. 41, 47.

85. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 288.
86. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 129, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 6, evidence of Mbokodo;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 29, 31, 38, 42, 44, 45,  
evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 57, evidence of Mcotoyi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 134, evidence of Mini;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 225, evidence of Mkotana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 240, evidence of Mmemi.
87. Interview with Lushaba, Manzini, Swaziland, 8.03.83;  
Interview with Simimba Ndiele, eTibondzeni, Swaziland,  
27.07.83; Interview with Dlamini, kaKhohho,  
Swaziland, 17.07.83.
88. Wright, 'The invention of the Nguni', pp. 2-5.
89. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 279, evidence of Maziwana.
90. Bryant, Dictionary, p. 748; Bryant, Olden Times,  
p. 11.
91. G.M. Theal, History of South Africa 1486 - 1872,  
5 Vols, London, 1888 - 1900; G.W. Stow, The Native  
Races of South Africa, London, 1905; J. McKay,  
The Origin of the Xosas, Zulus and others, Cape  
Town, 1911.
92. Bryant, Olden Times, p. viii.
93. Ibid., p. 25; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 104, evidence  
of Magojela. Both sources locate the claims of the  
Zungu to a close connection with the Zulu in the  
Malandela tradition, the fundamental contradictions  
of which were discussed at length in chapter three.

In that tradition, the Zungu people were named as the clanspeople of Nozinja, mother of Qwabe and Zulu. The Zungu also claimed to have originated at Babanango, from whence Malandela himself was said to have come. At the same time, the accounts of Stuart's informants, and of Bryant, contradict these claims of origin. These contradictions take a number of forms, one of which was the claim made by Bryant that the Zungu were also related to the Zizi. This contradicted the connection between the Zulu and the Zungu, because Zizi origins were manifestly different and separate from those of the Zulu. (J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 104, evidence of Magojela; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 255, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 135, evidence of Stephen Mini; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 25, 175, 697).

94. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 126, evidence of Dunjwa;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 290, evidence of Lugubu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 129, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 203, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 246, evidence of Mayinga;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 42, evidence of Mbovu.
95. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 355, 681; Bryant, History, pp. 1, 18, 34; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 134-35, evidence of Stephen Mini.
96. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 57, 175; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlangana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 240, evidence of Mmemi.
97. On palimpsests in oral traditions see Vansina's discussion, 'Comment', p. 320.
98. See above, chapter three.

99. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 83, 84, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 129, evidence of Mini.
100. Bryant, Dictionary, p. 40, Olden Times, pp. 37, 222, 417-18; K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'The Story of Shandu kaNdaba', by S.U. Shandu; essay by Mbatha, J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 175, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 281, 283, 288-89, 290, 291, evidence of Lugubu; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 297, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 97, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of Mbovu.
101. Van Warmelo, Survey, p. 71.
102. Kuper, An African Aristocracy, p. 110.
103. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 694.
104. Ibid., pp. 25, 695.
105. Fuze, The Black People, p. 17; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 25.
106. See above p. 187, and J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 243, evidence of Mmemi.
107. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 221, 682, 684, 685, 686; Van Warmelo, Survey, pp. 26, 27, 29, 31, 32; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 298, evidence of Lunguza, J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 146, evidence of Mkando.
108. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 174, evidence of Jantshi.



109. Interviews conducted in southern Swaziland and northern Zululand, 1983; pers. comm. Henry 'Hlahlamehlo' Dlamini, 1983.
110. Van Warmelo, Survey, p. 71.
111. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 436; also see p. 209.
112. Ibid., p. 436.
113. Bryant, Dictionary, p. 40; Fuze, The Black People, pp. 43, 164 (Eds. n. 3, chapter 20).
114. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 12, 'Historical notes on Zululand', evidence of Socwatsha.
115. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlengana.
116. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 12, evidence of Mabonsa; also see, J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 292, evidence of Lugubu.
117. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 264, evidence of J. Kumafo; also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Socwatsha in the testimony of Mkehlengana.
118. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 54, evidence of Madikane; also see J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 12, evidence of Mabonsa.
119. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 692; Kuper, An African Aristocracy, p. 42; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 354, evidence of Luzipo; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 263, evidence of Mmeni; interview with Dabuluhlanga Nxumalo, at eSikotheni, Swaziland, 17.09.83.

120. Peires, The House of Phalo, particularly p. 13; J.H. Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu, Johannesburg, 1930, p. 6; C. de B. Webb and J.B. Wright (eds.), A Zulu King Speaks, Pietermaritzburg, 1978, p. 2; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 98, evidence of Dinya.
121. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 8, 227, 690.
122. Ibid., p. 696.
123. J.S.M. Matsebula, A History of Swaziland, Cape Town, 1972, p. 9.
124. Interview with Mangembu Thabedze, at Nsingizini, Swaziland, 1.09.83; interview with Thabedze informants at kwaMalinza, Swaziland, 30.9.83.
125. K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, 'The Simelane Tribe', by Dalisu Simelane; Matsebula, History p. 9; interview with Sidlane Simelane, at Ntshaseni, Swaziland, 9.07.83; interview by Bonner with Simelane Simelane and Jozi Simelane at KoNtshingila, Swaziland, 6.05.70 (see in particular answers to questions b, c and x; interview by Bonner with an Nkambule informant at Buseleni, Swaziland, 24.04.70; Sw.A, R.C.S. 115/14, encl. Marwick to Honey, 15.12.16; encl. Dawson to Marwick, 11.12.16; Kuper, An African Aristocracy, p. 59.
126. Interview by Bonner with Mandanda Mhethwa and Mkhabela at Sigodzi, Swaziland, 23.04.70.
127. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 687.
128. Interview by Bonner with Mahlobo Maseko, at Nqabaneni, Swaziland, 19.03.70.

129. Ibid.; J.S.A. Vol. 2, p. 11, evidence of Mabonsa; H. Kuper, The Swazi, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, 1952, see tinanatelo lists, pp. 58-81.
130. J. Wright and A. Manson, The Hlubi Chiefdom in Zululand - Natal, Ladysmith, 1983, pp. 12-14, 17; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 26, evidence of Mabonsa.
131. Wright and Manson, The Hlubi, p. 22.
132. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 147; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 11, 12, 15, 25, 28, evidence of Mabonsa; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 134, evidence of Mini.
133. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 176, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 45, evidence of Madhlebe; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 97, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 277, evidence of Maziyana; Fuze, The Black People, p. 22.
134. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of Mbovu.
135. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 20, evidence of Mabonsa; Wright and Manson, The Hlubi, p. 16.
136. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 134, evidence of Mini; Kuper, An African Aristocracy, pp. 79, 81, 233; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 146; N.J. van Warmelo, A History of Matiwane and the amaNgwane. Dept. of Native Affairs, Ethnological Publication, Vol. VII, p. 10, and chapters 23 and 24, where Msebenzi does not list 'Mntungwa' as one of the Ngwane izithakazelo.
137. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 692, lists 'Mntungwa' as an Ngwane isithakazelo. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 281, evidence of Lugubu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 203, evidence of Mangati.

138. Van Warmelo, Matiwane, chapter 1; Fuze, The Black People, p. 318; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 136, 137, 139.
139. Ibid., p. 690; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 749; Fuze, The Black People, pp. 16, 38; van Warmelo, Matiwane, p. 66.
140. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 331, 335, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 90, evidence of Magidigidi.
141. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 58, notebook 18, pp. 1-3, evidence of Singcofela; Fuze, The Black People, p. 50; van Warmelo, Matiwane, pp. 72, 74; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 616, Isaacs, Travels, pp. 189-9, editor's note 14.
142. Van Warmelo, Matiwane, chapters 7, 8 and 9; Fuze, The Black People, pp. 16-17, 51; Fynn, Diary, pp. 169, 320; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 145; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 126, evidence of Mahaya; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 37, evidence of Mbovu.
143. Van Warmelo, Matiwane, see p. 7 in particular.
144. Ibid., p. 67.
145. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 28; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 283, evidence of Lugubu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 42, evidence of Sigananda, and p. 45, evidence of Mbovu.
146. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 134, evidence of Mini.
147. Ibid.
148. Interview with Sidlane Simelane at Ntshaseni, Swaziland, 9.07.83; interview with Simbimba Ndlela, at eTibondzeni, Swaziland, 17.08.83.

149. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 202-03, evidence of Mangati.
150. Interview with laLukhele at Mahagane, Swaziland, 12.07.83.
151. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 281, evidence of Maziyana and Socwatsha.
152. See above pp. 164-66.
153. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 57, evidence of Madikane.
154. Ibid.
155. T.N.M. Tainton, D.I. Bransby and P. de V. Booysen, Common Veld and Pasture Grasses of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1976, p. 188, also see distribution map, p. 7.
156. Pers. Comm., Henry 'Hlahlamehlo' Dlamini, Swaziland, 1983; also see note 157 below.
157. J.S.A., Vol. 4 (forthcoming), p. 176, evidence of Ndambi. I am indebted to John Wright for bringing this comment to my notice, and to him, and A. Koopman, also of the University of Natal, for helpful discussions on the origins of the term 'Ntungwa'.
158. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 53-4, 57, evidence of Madikane.
159. Any claim that the amantungwa identity is one associated with privilege needs to take cognizance of a body of evidence which might, mistakenly, be interpreted as suggesting that the term 'ntungwa' was an insult. (See, for example, J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 264, evidence of Mmemi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 199, evidence of Mahaya).

The notion of 'ntungwa' as a perjorative expression has already been raised in chapter three. It was noted in that context that the amantungwa identity was readily acknowledged by the royal Zulu, and their supporters. Indeed, Stuart's informants credited Shaka with having personally laid claim to being an intungwa. (see above, p. 177). These points indicate that the term itself was not opprobrious. It was further suggested that insults of the Zulu ruling group, in which the term 'ntungwa' figured, were probably a consequence of the declining significance of 'ntungwa' as against Nguni, for historically specific reasons, in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Likewise, insults directed against the Zulu rulers in any form were likely to have been a product of the decline of the Zulu royal house in the late nineteenth century (See Wright's discussion, 'The invention of the Nguni'). Even where such insults occurred in the later period, with retrospective reference to the Shakan period, it should be noted that there is no evidence to suggest that 'ntungwa' alone had any inherent or associated derogatory connotations. Wherever Shaka was recorded, by a late nineteenth century informant, as having been insulted, the nub of the insult lay either in diminution or in derogatory references to sexual organs. Thus,

What sort of little Ntungwa is this, the one with the little half-cocked penis?  
(J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 180, evidence of Jantshi)

Another insult of Shaka which echoes this remark, was a retort supposedly delivered by the Qwabe chief Phakathwayo to Shaka,

Tshaka proposed to Pakatwayo that they should hold an ijadu dancing competition. Pakatwayo said 'How do you hope to surpass me, son of Senzangakhona?' He said that he would not dance with a man whose forces were not numerous enough to go round one's neck [the reference

is to a bead necklace whereas the Qwabe were unsurpassed in strength. Nor would he dance, with a little Ntungwa fellow from up-country, whose penis stood erect. (J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 168, evidence of Makuza).

In another version of Shaka's exchange with Phakathwayo, the insults about the size of Shaka's forces were repeated, but without any reference to Shaka being 'Ntungwa.' In the versions of this story recorded by Fuze and Bryant, Shaka is not referred to as the 'little Ntungwa', but as the 'troublesome stumpy little stick' (igamathandukwana), apparently a reference to the size of his penis. (Fuze, The Black People, p. 23; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 196; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 177, evidence of Mandhlakazi.)

160. See pp. 223, 256.
161. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 281, evidence of Lugubu; also see p. 292; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 225, and Kunene, Emperor Shaka, p. 85.
162. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 18, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 292, evidence of Lugubu; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 52, 227; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 755. For other famous Mbatha see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 292, evidence of Jantshi; K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Shandu, p. 2.
163. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 54, p. 134, evidence of Ndukwana.
164. The latter was an appointment of great significance, for the intsila of the king as the recipient and guardian of all the king's expectorations, excretions, secretions and body wastes like nail parings, the intsila was responsible for the well-being of the king, and by implication, through him, that of the nation. If such body discharges were to have

fallen into the hands of an enemy of the king, it was believed that powerful forces could have been invoked against the king. Another early office of Ngqengelele's was overseeing the brewing of beer at the royal household. He became a renowned herbalist and inyanga, thus investing his growing authority with a further mystical aspect. For a discussion of the role of the intsila, see Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 474-75, and Kuper, An African Aristocracy, pp. 78-83 for comparative material on the Swazi. On the career of Ngqengelele see B. Temkin, Gatsha Buthelezi, Cape Town, 1976, pp. 10-11; Fuze, The Black People, p. 18; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 134; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 79, evidence of Magidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 159, evidence of Mkando; K.C., Essay Competition, 1950, 'Izwe zase MahlabaTini' by S. Mkhize, p. 2, and 'The Buthelezis' by Benedicta Buthelezi, pp. 4-5; K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Some Zulu Customs' by O.F. Gumbi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 9, 'Historical Notes on Zululand'; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 98, evidence of Ndukwana.

165. Temkin, Buthelezi, pp. 11, 14; K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Buthelezi, p. 5; essay by Gumbi, p. 2; essay by Mkhize, pp. 1, 7, 9, 10; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 602.
166. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 12, evidence of Baleka; also see K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 98, and file 74, p. 34, evidence of Ndukwana; and J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 190, evidence of Jantshi; Kunene, Emperor Shaka, p. xxxii.
167. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 355, evidence of Luzipo; also see below, p. 390.



168. Isaacs, Travels, p. 120.
169. Ibid., pp. 66, 123, 173; Fynn, Diary, pp. 141, 184, 207; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 389, 495, 546, 560, 616, 621, 671; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 162, evidence of Makewu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 235, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 252, 254, 257, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 267, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 74, 81, 89, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 268, evidence of Mmemi.
170. See, for example, Leslie, Among the Zulus and Amatongas, Glasgow and Edinburgh, 1875, p. 70; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 49, 50; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 256, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 292, evidence of Mpambukeiwa. More generally on Sibiya officeholders see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 165, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 301, evidence of Mpatshana.
171. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 175, evidence of Jantshi.
172. Fuze, The Black People, p. 22; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 24, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 107, evidence of Mgidhiana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 311, evidence of Mpatshana; Braatvedt, Roaming Zululand, p. 3.
173. Callaway, The Religious System, pp. 434-37.
174. Ibid., Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 57, 204-5, 226, 508; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 184, 185, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 206, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 240, 241, evidence of Mmemi.

175. Isaacs, Travels, p. 78; see below, p. 471.
176. Zungu: Bryant, Olden Times, p. 218;  
 Buthelezi: K.C., Essay Competition, essay by  
 Benedicta Buthelezi, p. 5.  
 Mbatha: Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 52, 227;  
 Sithole: K.C., Essery Papers, 'The Sitoles';  
 Cube: K.C., Stuart Papers, file 9, item 12;  
 Bhele: see p. 262 above. Also see J.S.A., Vol. 3,  
 p. 152, evidence of Mkando.
177. Bonner, Kings, chapter three.
178. Arranged alphabetically, the names which appear  
 in the first column are those described as being ama-  
ntungwa. The source of each claim, is indicated  
 in the associated footnote.
179. The names in the second column are those of the  
 groups to which the names of the first  
 group were connected, i.e. what Bryant calls the  
 'parent-clan'. The basis and sources for connecting  
 a name in column one with a name in column two are  
 indicated in the associated footnotes listed in  
 column two.
180. The third column simply gives the incidence of  
 claims that the group concerned were not 'ntungwa'.
181. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 116, evidence of Mahaya.
182. The Bhaca were once a section of the Zulu, who,  
 under Sonyangwe, separated from the Zulu, and fled  
 south, across the Thukela. The relevant traditions  
 are ambiguous, and it is not clear whether this  
 occurred early in the reign of Shaka (because of a  
 conflict over resources, viz., brass or millet)

ur if it occurred just after the assassination of Shaka. This section gained its name, Bhaca, which means 'to hide', during their sojourn in Natal as fugitives. See Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 352, 369; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 5, evidence of Baleka; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 98, 108, 118, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 51, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 85, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 113, 115-19, evidence of Mahaya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 254, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 272, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 57, evidence of Mcotoyi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 264, evidence of Mmemi.

183. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 290, evidence of Lugubu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 203, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 246, evidence of Mayinga;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 42, evidence of Mbovu.
184. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 18, and Olden Times, p. 681.
185. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 682.
186. Ibid., p. 114.
187. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 231, evidence of Lugubu.
188. Fuze, The Black People, p. 23; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 682.
189. Ibid; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 159, evidence of Mkando;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlengana.
190. Van Warmelo, Survey, p. 72.

191. Ibid.
192. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 682; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 84, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 48, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 263, evidence of Mmemi.
193. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 682; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 84-5, evidence of Magidigidi.
194. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 683.
195. Ibid., p. 116; van Warmelo, Survey, p. 82.
196. Ibid., pp. 72, 204.
197. ibid., p. 205.
198. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 684.
199. The only information which I have been able to locate on the name 'Goqo', is a single reference in Olden Times, p. 684, that the Goqo isithakazelo was Ndabazitha. This places the Goqo squarely amongst the amantungwa, suggesting that it was a section of the Mbatha, Mabasa, Thembu, Buthelezi or Khumalo. The essential point, i.e. that it was one of the lineages incorporated in the first phase of Zulu expansion still holds, no matter to which 'parent-clan' it belonged. For convenience, Khumalo is used on the list.
200. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 684.
201. Ibid., p. 697. Bryant notes that the Gwabini and the Zungu were related, but suggests that it was the Gwabini who were the senior section. See p. above, where other evidence is marshalled to

- indicate that the Zungu were, in fact, the senior section.
202. Van Warmelo, Survey, p. 26; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 277, evidence of Maziwana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of Mbovu; also see implicit suggestion to this effect, J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 46, evidence of Madhlebe.
203. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 584; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 12, 15, 28, evidence of Mabonsa.
204. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 263, evidence of Mmemi.
205. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 90, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 39, evidence of Mbovu.
206. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 685.
207. Ibid. p. 655, but also see p. 274, and Dictionary, p. 749.
208. Van Warmelo, Survey, pp. 32, 35; Fuze, The Black People, p. 2; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 685; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 264, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 281, evidence of Lugubu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 12, evidence of Mabonsa; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 45, evidence of Madhlebe; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 97, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 209, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 280, evidence of Maziwana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 42, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlangana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 263, evidence of Mmemi.
209. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of Mbovu.

210. The name Langa is common in the genealogies of the amantungwa, but in this case, there are no pointers to which Langa refers.
211. Van Warmelo, Survey, p. 33; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 686; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 264, evidence of Kumafo; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 281, 290, evidence of Lugubu.
212. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 687.
213. Ibid.
214. Ibid. p. 283.
215. Ibid. p. 687.
216. Ibid.
217. Ibid. p. 688.
218. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 291, evidence of Lugubu. It should be noted that the Mazibuko lived as subjects of the Ngwe (J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 19, evidence of Mabonsa).
219. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 689.
220. Ibid.
221. Ibid.
222. Ibid., p. 690. It should be noted that Bryant's claim was tentatively advanced.
223. Ibid. pp. 8, 27.

224. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 29, evidence of Baleni.
225. See note 17, above.
226. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 690.
227. Ibid.
228. Ibid., p. 337.
229. Ibid.
230. Ibid., p. 691.
231. Ibid., p. 114.
232. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlengana.
233. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 592.
234. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya.
235. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 354, evidence of Luzipo;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 263, evidence of Mmemi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 692; Kuper, An African  
Aristocracy, p. 42; interview with Dabuluhlanga  
Nxumalo, at Mbilaneni, Swaziland, 17.09.83.
236. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 692.
237. See above, p. 156.
238. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 137, 245, 692;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 281, evidence of Lugubu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 203, evidence of Mangati.

239. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 18, evidence of Mabonsa; van Warmelo, Survey, p. 222; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 18.
240. Van Warmelo, Survey, pp. 27, 29; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 281, 290, evidence of Lugubu.
241. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 181.
242. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 181. The contradictory quality of the evidence on the Ngwe suggests that, like their neighbours, the Klubi and the Ngwane, sections of the Ngwe may have been incorporated by Shaka, whilst others may have fled the Zulu kingdom at the outset. Unfortunately, data on the early history of the Ngwe is limited.
243. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 693.
244. Ibid., p. 114.
245. Ibid., p. 694.
246. Ibid.
247. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 126, evidence of Dunjwa; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 42, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlengana.
248. See above, p. 260.
249. Interview with Sipho John Nyawo, at Mpatseni, Swaziland, 28.07.83; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 694.
250. Interview with Sipho John Nyawo at Mpatseni, Swaziland, 28.07.83.



251. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 211, evidence of Mkehlangana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 240, evidence of Mmemi.
252. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 695.
253. See above p. 135 for a description of their early incorporation into the Zulu kingdom.
254. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 104, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 84, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 110, 116, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 281, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 211-12, evidence of Mkehlangana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 259, evidence of Mmemi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 695.
255. On Qwabe incorporation into the Zulu kingdom, see above, chapter three.
256. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 695.
257. Interview with Sidlane Simelane, Ntshaseni, Swaziland, 9.07.83; van Warmelo, Survey, p. 35.
258. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 696;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 281, 290, evidence of Lugubu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 12, evidence of Mbovu.
259. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 696; Matsebula, Swaziland, p. 9.
260. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 696;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 281, 290, evidence of Lugubu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 297, evidence of Lunguza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 117, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 42, evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 239, evidence of Mmemi.

261. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 697.
262. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 51, evidence of Madikane;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 57, evidence of Mco toyi.
263. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 116, evidence of Mahaya.
264. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 98, evidence of Dinya;  
Webb and Wright A Zulu King Speaks, p. 2.
265. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 697.
266. Ibid., p. 369; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 116, evidence of Mahaya.
267. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 697.
268. Van Warmelo, Matiwane, p. 222;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 18, evidence of Mabonsa.
269. Ibid.
270. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 104, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 84, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 110, 116, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 281, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 75, 87, evidence of Melapi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 42, evidence of Mbovu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 105, evidence of Mgidhlana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 210, evidence of Mkehlungana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 263, evidence of Mmemi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 697.
271. Ibid., p. 175.

## CHAPTER SIX

THE AMABUTHO SYSTEM UNDER SHAKA, AND THE PROPAGATION  
OF A NEW IDEOLOGY OF STATEHOODIntroduction

Recent analyses of the development of the amabutho system (sing. ibutho: the organisation of young men and women into 'age-sets') have suggested that it was a key aspect of state formation in south-east Africa, and that the dominance of the Zulu ruling group was closely associated with its control over the amabutho.

Focusing on changes in the regional economy, Jeff Guy has posited that the amabutho emerged as a response to an environmental crisis which developed in the region in the late eighteenth century and culminated in the disastrous Madlathule famine in the early nineteenth century. Guy argues that this crisis was caused by an 'imbalance between population density and existing resources',<sup>1</sup> and resulted in a need to reorganise social relations. This was the underlying dynamic in the development of the amabutho as the means by which labour power came to be 'rationalised' under central state control. The diversion of labour into the service of the state through the amabutho, Guy argues, served to concentrate control over the process of production in the hands of the king. Through the restrictions placed on the marriage of the amabutho, the king also gained control over social reproduction.<sup>2</sup>

A similar conclusion was reached by Henry Slater.<sup>3</sup>

However, his argument employed the notion of a labour shortage, rather than that of overpopulation and environmental crisis, to account for the development of the amabutho. While much of Slater's thesis cannot be uncritically accepted, the notion of a 'labour shortage' in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries can be buttressed from a number of directions, and appears convincing.<sup>4</sup> Slater argues that an increase in the trade at Delagoa Bay, and later at Port Natal, encouraged powerholders to expand the production of local commodities for exchange. This necessitated the extension of their control over their subjects, achieved through the amabutho.

While for different reasons, both Guy and Slater were concerned to emphasise that the amabutho were primarily units of labour, each, in terms of his own thesis, considered the predominantly military character of the amabutho to be a consequence of the need to expand, territorially in the one case, and demographically in the other.

A third perspective on the amabutho has been advanced by David Hedges. While broadly agreeing with the notion that the amabutho permitted the intensified extraction of surplus labour and the exploitation of the ruled by the rulers, Hedges argues that the character and form of the amabutho system was shaped by the displacement of the trade with Delagoa Bay in ivory, a commodity of little local value, by a new trade in cattle, a highly valued commodity. This switched the emphasis in the activities of the amabutho from hunting, to raiding and tribute collection, and underlay the strong military inflection which characterized the amabutho under Shaka.<sup>5</sup>

The focus of these scholars on the labour functions of the amabutho greatly extends our understanding of the processes of precolonial state-formation, but has resulted in the development of an essentially structural-functional understanding of the amabutho system itself. To some extent, this problem has been countered by the more historical perspective advanced by John Wright on the development of the early age-sets out of precursor circumcision schools.<sup>6</sup> Wright suggests that the development of age-sets to replace territorial fighting units was a corollary of the abolition of circumcision, and that this change had the effect of postponing the time when men achieved social maturity. He argues that these changes should be understood in terms of the restructuring of institutionalized relationships between elders and juniors. In a time of social upheaval, he maintains, male elders would have sought to extend their control over the labour power of the society's primary producers. This extension was affected through the abolition of circumcision which hitherto marked the passage of boys of about seventeen years of age, from youth to manhood, after which marriage conventionally occurred.

Wright's argument is persuasive, but his emphasis on increased economic exploitation through the amabutho is at the expense of an understanding of the role of both the earlier circumcision schools and the amabutho in the socialisation of youths. It will be suggested in this chapter that the amabutho, under Shaka, were crucial mechanisms in the resocialization of adult men from a number of different chiefdoms, into a Zulu-dominated state society, and in the socialization of the youth of the new kingdom.

A further issue raised by the present state of research into the amabutho system is the need for the development

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A further issue raised by the present state of research into the amabutho system is the need for the development

of a contingent and processual perspective on the amabutho system itself, especially in response to the period of immense political flux which accompanied the emergence of the Zulu state. These issues demand systematic investigation through close empirical research. Because of the nature of the evidence available, this can only be done for the reign of Shaka and not the earlier period, and it is therefore on the reign of Shaka that this chapter will concentrate.

The changing functions and form of the amabutho are perhaps most dramatically indicated by the shifting geographical location of the bulk of the amabutho, and by modifications in their composition. Indeed, the mutability of the amabutho has constituted a complex problem in terms of evidence. For example, various sources indicate some five different sites for the amabutho residence of Nobamba, all within a few kilometers of each other, while two sites of the establishment Bulawayo are known, hundreds of kilometres apart. Again, men of the Dubinhlangu ibutho (alias 'Jubinqwanga'), were sometimes referred to as the men of 'inTontela' and at other times, as the men of the 'iziMpohlo'. Yet not all the men of the inTontela or of the iziMpohlo were of the Dubinhlangu. None of these names could be exactly equated, for each referred to a slightly different constituency, and came into usage in slightly different periods during the reign of Shaka.

Some of these problems, and their implications were spelt out at length by Julian Cobbing in an exploratory paper on the Zulu amabutho and production. Cobbing raised the important questions of how often, and under what circumstances, amabutho were created, and where they were based.<sup>7</sup> In another paper on amabutho, Cobbing answered some of these questions for the Ndebele system, which had its roots in that of the Zulu. Cobbing suggested

that earlier analyses of the amabutho were 'improbable' in respect of the degree of 'precise army organization' which they conferred on the system. Cobbing's study demonstrated that amongst the Ndebele 'at any given moment ... (amabutho) settlements of different composition and "stage" existed side by side' and that they 'not only moved physically from time to time, but were simultaneously in a state of evolution'.<sup>8</sup>

It will be suggested in this chapter that the continuing confusion over these questions with regard to the Zulu amabutho is the consequence of a static conception of the amabutho system. Viewed dynamically, the name and site variations of the amabutho and of the amakhandu bases reflect the development process of the system, both in response to the changing circumstances of the Zulu state, and in terms of its own internal dynamics - the establishment and training of the amabutho and their maturation into fully-fledged units.<sup>9</sup>

In the following discussion, the emergence of the Zulu amabutho system will be examined in terms of three development phases, defined by shifts in the geographical centre of the kingdom under Shaka. The period during which the centre of the kingdom continued to be located in the old Zulu heartland of the Mkhumbane valley will constitute the first phase. The second phase opened when the Zulu capital and the major amakhandu moved into the coastal lowlands around present-day Eshowe, sometime between 1818 and 1820. The third and final phase occurred when these establishments moved southwards across the Thukela river, in late 1825. It will be argued that these shifts were one of the major factors in the shaping of the amabutho system.

It will further be suggested that over time, the amabutho



provided a mechanism for entrenching the new amantungwa elite, both within and between various amabutho, and that existing notions of a rigid age-basis to the amabutho, and the possibilities of individual advancement through them, have in this context, to be at the very least qualified, if not abandoned.

Phase one: the reorganization and expansion of the army inherited from Senzangakhona and the establishment of training bases in the Mkhumbane Valley

The installation of Shaka as the new Zulu chief, c1816, introduced a new military imperative into the reaches of Dingiswayo's domain, centered on the Zulu tributary. It was required of Shaka both to remodel the existing military structures along the lines of the Mthethwa army, and to expand the strength of the armed forces at his disposal.

When Shaka first arrived amongst the Zulu to lay claim to the chieftaincy, he faced strong opposition from within the Zulu royal family. He ultimately gained the chieftaincy only by seizing it, and murdering the designated heir, Sigujana, and others like Mudhli and Zivalele, who opposed his accession. He was supported in his bid for the Zulu chieftaincy by the Mthethwa, and was accompanied amongst the Zulu by an armed Mthethwa contingent. In the opening years of his reign, Shaka had to contend with the opposition of powerful relatives and attendant tensions within the chieftaincy. Consequently, he was forced, at least initially, to rely on external support for his rule, both from the Mthethwa, and other non-Zulu elements. Even prior to the incorporation of neighbouring chiefdoms, Shaka made efforts to secure access to their military forces. The Nkenetshane, a Zungu 'regiment', for example, was used by Shaka for some time before the incorporation

of the Zungu into the Zulu kingdom and their integration into the Zulu amabutho.<sup>10</sup> Over time, the army inherited from Senzangakhona was extended to include many non-Zulu who had tendered allegiance directly to Shaka, and, as Shaka reorganized and implemented reforms in the military system, the men of the original nucleus were subjected to a process of resocialization into the new Shakan social order, such that the amabutho were eventually to become the very basis of the king's power.

The initial hostility to Shaka's accession indicates that a powerful impulse is likely to have existed for Shaka to undertake a fundamental restructuring of the army and the reordering of old loyalties. Shaka appears to have inherited three units from Senzangakhona, the amaWombe, isiPezi and the 'inTontela'.<sup>11</sup> The amaWombe veteran, head-ringed and married-men were little affected by this reorganisation.<sup>12</sup> The isiPezi, another veteran and head-ringed unit, was by contrast, subjected to radical restructuring.

Initially, the isiPezi were permitted to retain their prestigious headrings, probably until after the death of Dingiswayo, when Shaka felt sure of sufficient support within the kingdom to enforce potentially unpopular reforms. One reform which these took was the command that the isiPezi remove their headrings, and thus symbolically renounce the social maturity of which the headring was the outward manifestation. The isiPezi, again in contrast to the amaWombe, were further prohibited from marrying, although they were initially permitted to form liaisons with women (known as the izinggodosi), whom it was intended they would one day marry. The izinggodosi remained at the homes of their parents, and limited sexual relations were permitted in terms of the relationship. However, this privilege too was subsequently withdrawn.<sup>13</sup>

The 'inTontela', or more accurately, the section of the 'inTontela' known as the Dubinhlangu, was another veteran unit which experienced similar treatment. The Dubinhlangu was a unit butla'd (formed; 'called up') by Shaka from amongst Senzangakhona's men and who had already thunga'd (i.e. sewn on, or assumed the headdress). They too were made to relinquish this mark of status when they entered the service of the new Zulu monarch.

Tshaka ... ordered the Jibinqwanga to cut off their headdresses because they were still so young and had not attained the age of dignity. He said they were to drink from the udders like boys again.<sup>14</sup>

The name 'Jibinqwanga' (Jubinqwanga), given to the Dubinhlangu, was a reference to their shorn headdresses, and a lasting reminder of their demotion.<sup>15</sup>

The effect of the removal of the headdresses from the greater proportion of Senzangakhona's veterans was to reduce them to the status of izinsizwa ('warriors'), entirely in the king's service, and to expose them once more to the training process undergone by the newest recruits. Subjected and rendered susceptible in this way to the full ideological panoply of the new Zulu state, these elements were to be resocialized into a state society in which the person of the Zulu king bulked large.

The process by which the loyalties of veterans and new recruits alike were focused on the Zulu king was complex, and extended over time, for it involved an enormous shift in the conceptualisation of society then current. At the same time, the new Zulu rulers were under great pressure to mobilise a large army in a very short time. To achieve this as rapidly as possible, ideological elements from the previous era were mobilized to underpin the legitimacy of the new order. One obvious source of significant and powerful elements lay in appealing to

the hierarchy of Zulu ancestors. This was achieved through the concentration of the newly-enrolled units and the demoted veterans in the ideologically significant area of the Zulu kings' grave-sites.

The amaWombe and Dubinhlangu amabutho were initially based at esiKlebheni, probably together with the isiPezi, although no direct evidence exists on the isiPezi residence.<sup>16</sup> Units subsequently butha'd by Shaka, and a number of those butha'd by Dingane were also based initially at esiKlebheni or at nearby Nobamba.<sup>17</sup> Both of these establishments were taken over by Shaka from his father.<sup>18</sup> EsiKlebheni had been erected by Senzangakhona as his chief residence, and later became the site of his grave. Subsequently rebuilt by Shaka and Mpande, esiKlebheni assumed the significance and ideological weight of an ancestral establishment, and became an evocative and sacred site. In Shaka's time, esiKlebheni was situated in the heart of the original Zulu lands, on the summit of a high ridge overlooking the middle Mkhumbane river, amidst other significant and ancient sites.<sup>19</sup>

Nobamba was originally constructed by either Ndaba or Jama, and re-erected afterwards by successive Zulu chiefs.<sup>20</sup> The original Nobamba, like esiKlebheni, became a royal grave-site, since the burial of chiefs and kings usually took place in the isibaya (cattle enclosure in the centre of a residence) of the dead man's chief residence. Usually a keeper was appointed to look after the grave-site and to maintain a small establishment at the site. The original residence would be shifted to another site nearby.<sup>21</sup> Nobamba is known to have occupied some five different sites in roughly the same locality. Under Shaka, it was located on the banks of the Mpambeni.<sup>22</sup>

It was common therefore for a single name to refer to a number of establishments at different sites, at different points in time. As the name of a particular establishment was resurrected repeatedly over time, it gained in ritual significance.

The recurrence of site names was not only a consequence of kings' deaths causing shifts in the sites of major residences, but was also a device deliberately employed where rulers sought to evoke the legitimacy of an ancient kingship behind a new status quo.<sup>23</sup> The maintenance of old names under new circumstances suggested a continuity in the order of things and served to link back directly to the ancestors of the nation.

The whole Zulu heartland of the Mkhumbane valley was an especially important ritual centre. Known reverently as the Makhosini (place of kings), it was said to contain the graves of all the important Zulu ancestors - Zulu, Ntombela, Nkosinkhulu, Punga, Mageba, Ndaba, Jama and Senzangakhona.<sup>24</sup> The Makhosini became an increasingly reserved area associated with which were a whole range of taboos and respectful avoidances which had the effect of enhancing the prestige of the ruling lineage. Stuart noted that a person passing through the area would not dare to poke the ground with a stick, for it would be construed as stabbing at the king, and the person would be killed. 'Merely walking through the area was to walk in fear of death'.<sup>25</sup>

It was in the Makhosini, and at Nobamba and esiklebheni in particular, that invocations for rain were addressed to the Zulu ancestors.<sup>26</sup> It was there that the army was ritually strengthened before battle, and the intervention of the ancestors sought to ensure its success.<sup>27</sup> It was there too that the umkhosi (the 'first-fruits' ceremony) was celebrated.<sup>28</sup> The Makhosini

was hallowed ground. Fugitives could seek safety there, such was its inviolability, and as one informant described it, its 'sacredness'.<sup>29</sup> The whole of the Makhosini district was thus invested with a very strong sense of the continuity of the Zulu ruling lineage, its 'sacredness' and its antiquity. In particular, the Makhosini served to emphasise the proximity of the Zulu ruling lineage, and the king, to the ancestors on whom the well-being of the nation depended.

It was at esiKlebheni too, and to a lesser extent at Nobamba, that the new recruits to the Zulu army spent the first period of their training. The use of these establishments for this purpose continued even after the bulk of the Zulu amabutho shifted into the coastal lowlands. It would seem that the Makhosini served as an ideologically powerful environment for the reorientation of new recruits towards the idea of a Zulu nation, united under a Zulu king. The training period amidst the very graves of the Zulu ancestors created the opportunity for non-Zulu recruits to come to identify with the Zulu king and ancestors, at the same time that respect and fear of Zulu 'ancestral' power was inculcated in the men through their participation in the associated rituals.

The Makhosini was the home of the inkatha, the symbol of unity of the new Zulu nation.<sup>30</sup> The inkatha was a coil of grass and 'medicine', plastered with the vomit and body wastes of the men of the amabutho.<sup>31</sup>

All the men had great affection for their king. It could not be otherwise for they were songwa'd (rolled or tied together). This songwa'ing took place in the shape of an inkatha.<sup>32</sup>

Only the king had the power to construct an inkatha. It was thus an important symbol of the unity of the amabutho, of their intimate connection with the king and the legitimacy of his authority.<sup>33</sup>

The first experience of the Makhosini of many of the recruits to the Zulu amabutho was gained between the ages of thirteen and sixteen as udibi ( carriers ) for the men of the amabutho. Some of the youths carried for their fathers or brothers. Others amongst the ranks of the udibi had been taken as captives in war, and entered the Zulu military establishment as udibi, later to become izinsizwa. As udibi, the young boys became acquainted with amakhanda life and gained a taste of campaigning, although they were kept well in the rear of any battles.<sup>34</sup> 'This was really the commencement of their public career'.<sup>35</sup> On campaign, they carried food, mats, karosses, wooden pillows, gourds of water, spoons, and according to Bryant, 'chamber pots'.<sup>36</sup>

Their activities were not confined to portage. At the amakhanda they collected firewood and cleaned the huts of the men for whom they carried. At an ikhanda, one boy sometimes worked for men of two or three huts. They also laboured in the gardens of the ikhanda, and participated in the ritual life of the establishment.<sup>37</sup>

They learnt the life of high quarters which had to conform to fashions, requirements and orders which emanated from the King's royal kraal and these were very stringent and proper.

They also heard the history of their ancestors, the sagas of the lands with respect to kings and heroes, war songs and regimental war songs, and imbibed them, some better and some worse than others and were fired with the desire to emulate those heroes of yore and to do and die for their native land. They were thus built up to be brave and loyal citizens of their country.<sup>38</sup>

They absorbed the military ethos of Zulu society from an early age, and doubtless, many, by the time they formally entered the King's service, subscribed to the social values of heroism and an armigerous life.

The udibi carriership was not a static institution at this time, but, like the amabutho system itself, was evolving under Shaka and his successors. It was claimed that under Shaka, the numbers of the udibi were augmented by their sisters, although the girls, unlike the boys, did not spend long spells at the amakhanda. This seems to indicate that there was pressure for such forms of auxiliary labour.<sup>39</sup> The evidence also suggests however, that, over time, the period for which the boys 'carried' was progressively decreased while the next stage in their training was extended, until eventually, the udibi functions were fulfilled by 'weaklings (abafokazana); young men unsuitable to be enrolled',<sup>40</sup> or as Krige still later described the udibi, 'servants who were rather harshly treated'.<sup>41</sup> It seems that the immediately post-pubescent youths who had previously been the udibi were then drawn directly into the military cadetship, as the udibi-ship altered from being a 'junior' occupation to being an 'inferior' one.<sup>42</sup>

The next stage in the cadet's training was to kleza (lit. to drink milk directly from the udders of cattle) at esiKlebheni or Nobamba. The youths who kleza'd were all post-pubescent, and probably kleza'd for a couple of years, until they were about eighteen years of age, when they were formally constituted as an ibutho, and would go to war. The kleza period was thus the key training period which occurred over a long time, and at a particularly formative stage. It was the time when boys were taught to use weapons and were apprised of fighting techniques. Rivalry between factions of youths from the same areas would have become an established feature of their new existence, expressed in dancing and stick fighting competitions. Together with intensive drilling under the supervision of veteran soldiers, these activities



developed their martial prowess.<sup>43</sup>

It was also a key period in the shaping of their perceptions of society. The youths were harshly treated and unquestioning obedience was demanded. Any youths who had not yet had their ears incised were made to do so that their ears would be 'open' that they might 'hear' the commands given to them. Their loyalty to their king was constantly emphasised, as was the developing notion of the new Zulu nation. One form which this took was the requirements that they use only the Zulu dialect.<sup>44</sup>

The cadets were not only concerned with military training. They ran messages for the officers, hunted with dogs, and did chores for the women resident at the amakhanda. Their chief activity, in the early years of Shaka's reign, was to tend the royal herds at the amakhanda and to do the milking, in the course of which duties they were said 'to drink directly from the cattle udders'. However, in the same way that the functions of the udibi came to be taken over by social inferiors, aspects of the labour of the cadets seem to have become the responsibility of certain inferior but, by definition, older amabutho.<sup>45</sup> These shifts in the activities of the udibi and the cadets suggest that an 'ageist' society was gradually giving way to a new order characterized by stratification on the basis of birth and privilege.

Whilst kleza-ing, the cadets lived in temporary huts which they built alongside the amakhanda at which they were based. They erected a permanent base only after they were formed into fighting units (butha'd). This occurred at the time of the umkhosi (the annual 'first fruits' ceremony), where they were confronted with their king at the apogee of his ritual preeminence.<sup>46</sup>

The early amakhanda were all first established in close proximity to the sources of Zulu authority in the Makhosini. The amaWombe, for example, left esiKlebheni and built the emBelebeleni ikhanda close to the Mfolozi-Mkhumbane confluence.<sup>47</sup> The Dubinhlangu left and built the ikhanda inTonteleni on the Mthonjaneni ridge, just south of esiKlebheni,<sup>48</sup> while the isiPezi built the umGumanqa ikhanda near emBelebeleni, on the White Mfolozi, in the Mahlabatini country.<sup>49</sup>

Each ibutho consisted of a number of sections. These were usually made up of groups which had kleza'd together, and thus the sections tended to have a regional identity. The sections were further divided into amaviyo, which tended to correspond to the original groups from particular areas in which youths had come up to an ikhanda to kleza. Sometimes, their numbers were augmented by youths from other areas.<sup>50</sup> The new amabutho were distinguished from one another by the insignia which were assigned to them by the king. He also provided them with the implements of war, and gave them their names.<sup>51</sup>

The training programme to which the cadets were subjected, and indeed, the system into which they subsequently entered, was being refined over time, but it also comprised phases in the achievement of social maturity. In the eighteenth century, chiefdoms of Zululand, and amongst the neighbours of the Zulu like the Pedi, Xhosa and Sotho, social maturity was marked by circumcision, after which marriage was permitted. Under Shaka however, circumcision was no longer practiced. It was suggested by a number of Stuart's informants that the demise of circumcision was the result of an increase in the scale of warfare in south-east Africa in the early nineteenth century.<sup>52</sup> In such circumstances, the long period of seclusion

following circumcision would have been an enormous disadvantage as the 'people would not be able to fight'.<sup>53</sup> The abolition of circumcision also had the effect doing away with what was previously the chief marker of marriageability, and indeed, under Shaka, marriages of the men of the amabutho were curtailed. Celibacy however, was not demanded of amabutho. The social rules only demanded that conception should not occur. A form of external intercourse, known as ukuhlobonga, was widely practised.<sup>54</sup> It was the status of married men that was denied to the men of the amabutho, and the concomitant capacity to establish their own production units in the form of homesteads.

It is this aspect of delayed marriage and delayed social maturity which demands closer attention. How is it to be explained? Wright has suggested that the delay in marriage needs to be understood in terms of the restructuring of relationships between elders and juniors, where elders sought to delay the achievement of full status by juniors. He argues that

where elders were seeking to extend the scope of their authority over juniors, it would have been to their advantage to abolish circumcision and to replace it with another custom, such as the putting on of headdress, which could be carried out at a later stage in a man's life and so prolong the period when he was still regarded as a youth.<sup>55</sup>

Wright sees thungela (the sewing on of the headdress) as a new ceremony marking the attainment of social adulthood.<sup>56</sup> The isicoco (headdress) became the

formal and public recognition ... that now these men had attained their majority, as men, and conferred upon them a new dignity and superior status (that of amaKehla, or 'ring men') ...<sup>57</sup>

Wright's argument marks a significant advance in our understanding, but it does not explain why circumcision

did not simply take place at a later time, say at the age of thirty-five, as happened among the Swazi. On face value, the abolition of circumcision is at least as well explained by reference to the period of seclusion mentioned by Stuart's informants. The abolition of circumcision and the delay in thunga'ing could be completely unrelated. Yet their very coincidence in time suggests that they were. What other connections can be found? One suggestive piece of evidence, already noted in this chapter, was Shaka's instruction that certain men who already had headrings were to remove them. The enormity of this command is indicated by Krige's note to the effect that

one of the greatest insults that can be offered to a man would be to pull off his headring or even to catch hold of it in a moment of anger. This would be taken as an affront to his manhood, and to the chief who allowed him to wear it.<sup>58</sup>

The removal of the isicoco was thus symbolic of the removal and denial of social maturity and status. It was also the denial of the rights of the man's previous chief to confer that honour. It was the demand for a new allegiance.

Thunga'ing was moreover an easy process to reverse, whereas circumcision was not. Seeking the most rapid and expedient way to assert a real dominance over the men of the army, the question of thunga'ing was emphasised as the sign of social maturity, whilst circumcision was designated insignificant. Whilst this was, on the one hand, an expedient measure, the emphasis on thunga'ing also had the effect of making the attainment of full status revokable by the king, thus putting in his hands a new source of power. This revokability, I would suggest, was one of the factors underlying the replacement of circumcision with the rite of thunga'ing.

This demand for new allegiances also points to other aspects of the circumcision ceremony largely neglected in the literature. Amongst the Tswana and Pedi, the circumcision ceremony tended to mark the end of a period (of varying length) of service for the king or a chief. Only the most senior chief in a polity could authorise the holding of the ceremony. In the circumcision schools, the emphasis was on the inculcation of social values and appropriate modes of behaviour, notably loyalty to their chief. Strict notions of social hierarchy were also enforced. 'The aim of the exercise was to teach them where they belonged in the tribe'.<sup>59</sup> Clearly, one of the prime functions of the circumcision schools was the socialization of the youths.<sup>60</sup>

It is likely that the same processes of socialization characterized the circumcision schools of eighteenth century Nguni-speaking societies. The principal thrust of the abolition of circumcision by the early nineteenth century seems to have been the substitution and extension of the period of socialization associated with circumcision, by the period of a man's service in the amabutho. This was not without parallel in southern African Bantu-speaking societies. There were wide variations and limited juggling of the age of circumcision and the timing of marriage. In the Tswana case, the period involved was anything between six months and for four years.<sup>61</sup> Where Shaka differed was in the extremities to which he went in postponing the timing of marriage and in the length of the period of socialization which the amabutho underwent.

A new and distinctively Zulu ceremony was introduced to inaugurate this period of socialization, that of qhumbuza, the incision, rather than the piercing, of the ears.<sup>62</sup> This occurred at the age of puberty.

Like circumcision, it was important because it signified an increase in the status of the child, although to a much lesser degree than that of circumcision previously. It was proclaimed through the wearing of distinctive clay or horn ear-studs, known as iziviliba.<sup>63</sup> Those with unbored ears were known as izicuthe (lit. deaf persons),<sup>64</sup> or, according to Bryant, as 'oDlela emkombeni weMpaka' (lit. people who eat out of the trough of a wild cat),<sup>65</sup> suggesting that the qhumbuza ceremony 'opened the ears', and prepared the youths to hear commands. During the qhumbuza ceremony, social codes were taught to the youths by their elders, inculcating notions of respect and of rank. It was the time when every individual was placed in terms of the Zulu social hierarchy. The iziviliba thus became symbolic of the obedience of every child to the commands he or she was to be given and the acknowledgement of their deference to the social order. Qhumbuza thus involved a strong emphasis on the integration of individuals into society, an aspect of the ceremony which was probably most important at the time of the emergence of the Zulu state.<sup>66</sup>

It was after qhumbuza that youths could herd cattle, and could go and kleza. The qhumbuza ceremony therefore marked the entry of the youths into the military world and the service of the King. The advantage of qhumbuza was that the incisions were relatively painless, and little or no subsequent seclusion was necessary.

The introduction of qhumbuza meant that where previously there was one transformation in the status of a male from boy to man, together with thunga'ing, there were now two phases. This had the effect of separating the moment when a youth was old enough to labour outside his family home, from the moment of the achievement of

full adult status and marriage. Whereas previously a youth was circumcised, thunga'd and got married all in reasonably quick succession, the introduction of qhumbuza had the effect of creating a new status of a limited social maturity.

These changes which were effected under Shaka were not simply concerned to delay the attainment of social maturity and thus postpone the time when the king would lose the labour of a subject. They also had the effect of making the labour of youths available to the Zulu state earlier, through the introduction of qhumbuza.

Thus, Shaka's reorganization of the amabutho system served the twin purposes of extending royal control over the men of the kingdom, and in association with the ideological panoply of the Makhosini, integrating the component elements of the amabutho with each other, and connecting them to the person of the king.

The process of integration, it has been suggested, occurred in two stages. The first of these saw Shaka consolidate his chiefship with the assistance of external military support. After the death of Dingiswayo and the destruction of the Mthethwa paramountcy however, Shaka increasingly came to rely on support from within the army, as its numbers were expanded to include Mthethwa warriors and men from clans outside of the original Zulu chiefdom. Their effective integration together with Senzangakhona's veterans demanded extensive restructuring of prevailing systems of ideas about society. This was a thorough mobilisation around the ideologically powerful symbols of the Zulu kings graves in the Makhosini and the associated rituals performed there. This integration was symbolized by the Zulu inkatha.

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The process of integration, it has been suggested, occurred in two stages. The first of these saw Shaka consolidate his chieftainship with the assistance of external military support. After the death of Dingiswayo and the destruction of the Mthethwa paramountcy however, Shaka increasingly came to rely on support from within the army, as its numbers were expanded to include Mthethwa warriors and men from clans outside of the original Zulu chieftaindom. Their effective integration together with Senzangakhona's veterans demanded extensive restructuring of prevailing systems of ideas about society. This was achieved through mobilisation around the ideologically powerful symbols of the Zulu kings graves in the Makhosini and the associated rituals performed there. This integration was symbolized by the Zulu inkatha.



The Makhosini continued to play a crucial role in this way even once the heart of the Zulu kingdom shifted away from the Mkhumbane valley and into the coastal lowlands. As such, the discussion in this section of the restructuring of the Zulu army through reference to the Makhosini should be understood to have telescoped into the early period of Shaka's rule, processes and changes centered on the Mkhumbane valley, but which were probably much more extended over time. Nevertheless, the early years of Shaka's reign, characterized by an emphasis on amabutho expansion, differed from the subsequent period which saw the extension and diversification of amabutho activities, and growing differentiation within and between amabutho. The following sections consider such changes in the amabutho system associated with their move into the coastal lowlands.

Phase two: diversification of the amabutho and their move into the coastal lowlands

The second phase in the evolution of the Zulu amabutho was marked by the movement of the bulk of the Zulu amabutho out of the Mkhumbane valley down into the coastal lowlands around present-day Eshowe, and by the expansion and diversification of the army, well-beyond the original nucleus of Senzangakhona's veterans. This latter process, while greatly accelerating in this period, had its roots in the early phase of Zulu expansion. Indeed, as will be argued later in this section, the earlier primary growth of the amabutho was the major impetus in forcing a relocation of the kingdom's heartland from the Mkhumbane valley to the coastal lowlands. The move heralded a shift in the whole role of the amabutho, and in the character of the Zulu state.

Shaka's capital, Gibixhegu, was first erected in the Makhosini, on the banks of the Mhodi, a tributary of the Mkhumbane.<sup>67</sup> By 1824, when the first traders visited

Shaka, Gibixhegu was already rebuilt on the coastal plain between the Mhlathuze and Mlalazi rivers. Shortly afterwards, the name of the capital was changed to Bulawayo, and the inkatha was moved there from the Makhosini.<sup>68</sup>

The traders' accounts of Bulawayo are the earliest descriptions of a Zulu establishment available. The entire establishment was roughly five kilometers wide, and contained some one and a half thousand 'beehive' grass huts. About ten thousand men were resident at Bulawayo, but on special occasions, Fynn estimated, up to eighty thousand people could be accommodated. Isaacs described its surroundings thus,

... its appearance was singularly magnificent, and the scenery imposing and attractive. The kraal was situated on an eminence forming an oblong square, within a circumference of about 3 miles, and partly encompassed by a deep ravine. The whole was surrounded by high and irregular land, covered with lofty and thriving timber, the shading branches of which added much to the interest excited by the landscape.<sup>69</sup>

The whole of the outer circumference of Bulawayo was surrounded by a palisaded fence.

Within the fence the huts were arranged in a broad circular band. They were divided into two sides (uhlangoti). The huts nearest the gate were occupied by the persons of least consequence whilst the king himself resided at the point furthest from the gate at the top end of the establishment, in what was, in effect, a royal reserve. The huts of the most important officers and councillors were situated alongside this reserve; for example, Ngomane kaMqomboli, one of Shaka's closest advisors, had his quarters at the highest point, on the right hand side, alongside the royal reserve. Some of the huts were almost permanently occupied by full-time administrators and personnel of

the ikhanda as well as by the amabutho of the ikhanda. The remainder of the huts were occupied temporarily by members of the king's retinue who accompanied him from one ikhanda to the next, and by people who came to the capital to attend to the king, to participate in national ceremonies, to khonza (give fealty, on an ongoing basis), to attend court proceedings and for a variety of other reasons.<sup>70</sup>

In the centre of the huts was the isibaya, the great cattle enclosure. It was divided into areas in which cattle were kept and into an area where the men of the amabutho assembled and danced. There were two mounds in this latter area, on which the king stood to address the men. It was here that cattle were issued for slaughter for the amabutho, that justice was meted out, and where the king consulted with the leading men of the amakhanda, and of the nation. It was at the Bulawayo isibaya that the early traders were first received by Shaka. It was, quite literally, the public arena of affairs of state.<sup>71</sup> The resiting of the capital in the coastal lowlands of the Qwabe country meant that whole centre of the Zulu kingdom had shifted.

A number of the amabutho accompanied Shaka into the lowlands. The amaWombu were based at Bulawayo itself, while the Fasimba, butha'd just prior to the move, built an establishment in the immediate vicinity and remained closely associated with Bulawayo. The umGumanqa also built a new establishment nearby called kwaKhangelela. The isiPezi erected their own separate establishment near kwaKhangelela. The inTontela too shifted into the area and erected an ikhanda on the northern slope of the oBanjeni ridge, between the Mlalazi and Nyezane rivers.<sup>72</sup>

One ibutho which was formed earlier but which only built its own establishment at this time was the Gibabanye. The Gibabanye was initially attached to inTonteleni, but when its numbers were increased through the addition of a younger section, the Dlangubo, the latter section remained at inTonteleni to complete its training, while the veteran senior section left to build a new establishment nearer the coast. This establishment, known as Mkhahlwini, was situated on the lower Mhlathuze.<sup>73</sup>

A number of entirely new units appear to have been butha'd after Bulawayo was moved, so that when they left esiKlebheni on the completion of their training, the first establishments which they entered or built were situated in the coastal lowlands. One such unit was the inDabenkulu, of which there was, like the Gibabanye, a senior section, known as the Bhekenya, or the 'Great Ndabenkulu', and the junior section, simply known as the inDabenkulu.<sup>74</sup> The Gibabanye and the inDabenkulu, together with a number of other units butha'd still later, such as the Fojisa, umFolozi and Ngqobolondo, joined with the old inTontela and came to be known collectively as iziMpohlo, the 'bachelors' unit.<sup>75</sup> Another unit butha'd at that time, and which built its first ikhanda in the lowlands near the Mlalazi, was the Dlangezwa,<sup>76</sup> into which was later tela'd (added) a further section known as the abeSutu.<sup>77</sup>

By 1824 at least, the Zulu capital, and the bulk of the Zulu amakhanda had moved from the old Mkhumbane heartland onto the coastal plain between the Mhlathuze and Mlalazi rivers. The inland amakhanda in the Makhosini continued to exist, but with curtailed functions. They were evolving into centres that were exclusively concerned with ritual matters, and with the training of recruits, and were increasingly separate

from the daily administration and government of the kingdom. This separation of the ritual and administrative centres of the kingdom may well have been a function of the growing security of the Zulu king's position at this time, and would have served to invest the ritual centres with increased mystique.

The shift to the coastal lowland which saw the further expansion of the amabutho, and which produced these changes was probably the product of three related factors in the evolution of the Zulu state: enormous pressure placed on the limited resources of the Mkhumbane valley by the rapid expansion and centralization of the amabutho; changing political circumstances both externally (the defeat of the Ndwandwe), and internally (Qwabe rebellion), which respectively permitted and promoted a move to the coast; and thirdly, the enormous ecological advantages offered by the coastal lowlands.

The ecology of the Zululand area, and the notion of ecological crisis in particular, has been the subject of considerable debate and discussion, although in the rather different context of accounting for the broader phenomenon of state formation. In his study of the physical environment of Zululand, Guy has noted that the long dry Zululand winter places a particular emphasis on the availability and careful management of winter grazing. He noted that the grasses of Zululand are especially vulnerable and susceptible to the degenerative effects of human activity. The effect of over-stocking is rapidly to destroy the grass cover, which in turn gives rise to soil erosion and bush encroachment.<sup>78</sup> Shula Marks has argued in a similar vein that increased crop cultivation would also have led to soil erosion.<sup>79</sup>

While these theses are cast in terms of regional

overpopulation having such effects across Zululand as a whole, the same arguments can be marshalled to suggest that a specifically localised pressure on the environment of the Mkhumbane valley would have had similarly disastrous effects. It was likely that the concentration of the amakhanda in the Makhosini had precisely such an effect, placing great pressure on the limited resources of the area.

The decisive defeat of the Ndwandwe by the Zulu, c1819, permitted the Zulu, for the first time to turn their attention away from their northern border. It made possible movement out of the Mkhumbane valley, into more productive regions. It also permitted a degree of decentralization of the amakhanda, with some remaining in the Makhosini whilst others moved. Furthermore, the amabutho were freed to turn their attention to unrest internal to the kingdom. The most pressing problem appears to have been ongoing opposition in the Qwabe country, discussed at length in chapter two. It was in the very midst of the Qwabe that the new amakhanda were erected.

Qwabe opposition would have been one of the reasons for the movement into the Qwabe area of substantial Zulu forces, but the large-scale movement of the majority of the Zulu amabutho into the coastal lowlands is better accounted for in terms of the ecological advantages of the area.

Daniel's early study of the location of the Ndwandwe, Mthethwa and Ngwane (Swazi) capitals indicated that they had three features in common - they were located in areas with adequate water for crop cultivation, all had access to suitable soils, and most importantly, they were able to control access to both sweet and sour veld grazing.<sup>80</sup> The movement of the Zulu capital

and the bulk of the Zulu amakhanda into the Qwabe lowlands represented an improvement in terms of all three of these factors. Madikane's remark to Stuart that the move occurred because the land was better seems to be borne out.<sup>81</sup>

The area into which the amakhanda moved was on the edge of huge forest reserves, which would have provided a plentiful supply of fuel, for domestic use as well as in the large quantities necessary for iron working.<sup>82</sup> Game abounded and hunting prospects were better there than in the uplands. The accounts of Fynn and Isaacs indicate that hunting was a common activity at Bulawayo.<sup>83</sup> Their impression of the area was highly favourable.

Nature had been bountiful in supplying this district with innumerable objects of an attractive kind. Splendid scenery and magnificent landscapes, a luxuriant soil, rich vegetation, animal food in abundance, fish very plentiful and water from innumerable streams were to be found through the whole district. The forests in the neighbourhood, which are very extensive, contain almost every species of animal indigenous to Southern Africa, and are called by the natives Loonggoie. [Ngoye]<sup>84</sup>

The low-lying areas also offered vastly increased access to vital sweetveld wintergrazing, for the more fertile soils of the lowlands nurture grasses which are palatable throughout the year. At the same time, the area between the Mhlathuze and Mlalazi rivers is a narrower coastal plain than is the case north of the Mhlathuze. Spurs of highland, such as the Ngoye and others, extend deep into the coastal plain, allowing easy access to highland areas and permitting a seasonal exploitation of different grass types. The development of rotational grazing systems based on seasonal changes in the productivity between sweet and sourveld allows the crucial sweetveld areas a period of rest and facilitates the maintenance of overall high productivity.

These factors made the area excellent for game, but more importantly, from a Zulu point of view, they provided excellent conditions for cattle-keeping.

Grassland productivity is affected by many of the same factors which are important to crop cultivation. However, cereals, and maize in particular, are drought-sensitive. The territory occupied by the Qwabe receives a much higher annual rainfall (between 1040mm and 1300mm, or more) than the areas to the interior, and in particular, in comparison to the area originally occupied by the Zulu (between 690mm and 780mm).<sup>85</sup> Not only is the average rainfall higher, but the region in question is well-watered with large areas adjacent to rivers and streams which would have provided suitable growing conditions for crops even in times of drought. The coastal margin of the lowland area would have provided an insurance that was absent inland, against drought devastation, for Hall has demonstrated that the nature of the grasses which occur on the immediate coast in marshland conditions improves in quality in drought conditions.<sup>86</sup>

The sturdier and more productive coastal lowland area in which most of the amabutho were settled by 1824 was thus suited to intensive exploitation: The move, in its turn created the conditions for the further extension of the number of men in the amabutho and for a decrease in their reliance for subsistence on the products of raiding and tribute exaction, and on 'food from home'. It also created the circumstances for the extension and diversification of the productive activities of the amabutho, in the spheres of both agriculture and animal husbandry.

It has been noted that under Shaka, and subsequent Zulu kings, the rigid sexual division of labour typical of



Zulu society described by later ethnographers did not prevail in the amakhanda. There, the men were occupied in the 'building of military kraals, planting and reaping and making gardens for the king'.<sup>87</sup> While it is correct that the amabutho did perform agricultural labour, in the intensive campaigning era of Shaka's reign their agricultural activities at the amakhanda were probably less pronounced than was the case in later years. It will be suggested in the next chapter that, under Shaka, the numbers of women resident at the amakhanda were uniquely high and that the greater part of the agricultural labour was performed by them. Nonetheless, the men of the amabutho carried out key agricultural tasks at peak periods in the agricultural season.<sup>88</sup>

Phase three: the extension of Zulu rule across the Thukela and the shift of a number of amakhanda further south

The third phase in the development of the Zulu amabutho was marked by a move southwards across the Thukela, firstly by the Zulu herds and cattle posts, followed shortly by a large number of amakhanda, and ultimately by the Zulu capital.

The iziYendane were the first Zulu unit to move south. Their initial mission was to intervene in the civil war which had erupted in the Cele chiefdom just south of the Thukela. They were instrumental in securing the Cele chieftaincy for Shaka's candidate, Magaye. The movement of the Zulu across the Thukela, and the establishment of a series of cattle posts was then negotiated with the compliance of the new Cele chief. This was already in progress by 1824, when the first traders made their way northwards to Bulawayo through the Cele territory.<sup>89</sup>

Late in 1826, the Zulu capital itself was shifted from Bulawayo, to Dukuza, on the site of present-day Stanger. Isaacs, on his return from a trip into the interior witnessed the move.

We passed several Zoola kraals, the natives of which had lately removed from the other side of the river Ootogale: they were the people belonging to the new regiment, Toogoosa, and were taking possession of the kraal appointed for them, driving the Cayles (the original possessors of it) farther to the westward.<sup>90</sup>

The Fasimba, Bhekenya and other amabutho moved with Shaka. The Gibbabanye also settled south of the Thukela.<sup>91</sup>

The last unit to be butha'd by Shaka was the iNgcobinga (or iziNyosi), which was mostly comprised of youths of about twenty. They were also stationed at Dukuza, after the completion of their training at esiKlebheni.<sup>92</sup>

A new establishment was erected for Nandi, the queen mother. Known as Nyakumbi, it was there that the private herds of the king were based.<sup>93</sup> (Possibly a similar arrangement had prevailed previously at Bulawayo, with the king's private herds based at that time at Nandi's Mkhindini residence.)

Zulu cattle posts were erected between the Mvoti river and the Mzimkhulu. The inDabenkulu erected two cattle posts - one on the Bluff near present-day Durban, known as the 'Kayisa of the Ndabenkulu', and another further inland, known as the 'Ndomba of the Ndabenkulu' (Ndomba being the name of the herd at the post). After these cattle posts were erected, the inDabenkulu withdrew to the new capital, leaving local Thuli people to maintain the posts. The 'Kayisa' cattle were herded by young unmarried herders sent down by the king, while the 'Ndomba' cattle were herded by married men. The 'Ndomba' was a herd of oxen, and the cattle post was

probably used to supply beasts for the king to slaughter.<sup>94</sup>

Njanduna, situated between the Mdhloti and Thongati rivers was one of the largest cattle posts. It was initially a Cele establishment, but was taken over from the Cele chief by Shaka. The Cele inhabitants were retained to run the post. In the same way that the inDabenkulu ibutho was associated with the Thuli-run inDabenkulu cattle posts, the amaPele ibutho was associated with the Cele-run Njanduna cattle post.<sup>95</sup>

There were other cattle posts further south, such as the Mfume post near the iLovu river.<sup>96</sup> Yet another post, Mpiyake, was situated south of the Mkhomazi.<sup>97</sup> Shiyabantu was near present-day Stanger,<sup>98</sup> while another post was located on the Mlazi river.<sup>99</sup> The cattle post Mdimbili was near Mhlali, enTlangwini was on the emuShane river, and the Gqikazi establishment was located north of the Mdhloti.<sup>100</sup> One cattle post, under Lukilimba, was located as far south as the Mzimkhulu.<sup>101</sup> There were, presumably others, about which no records survive.

Khangela, another cattle post, was built on the site today known as 'Congella', and was probably the largest of all the posts.<sup>102</sup> It was erected by a section of the umGumanqa ibutho, who were known as the 'uKangela amankengane', the guards. The term amankengane is a term usually applied to low class persons,<sup>103</sup> and indeed, the cattle posts south of the Thukela appear to have been in the care of lower-class amabutho, or of the Thuli and Cele, who were known collectively by the derogatory appellation of amalala.<sup>104</sup>

These cattle posts were stocked largely with herds seized by the Zulu from the inhabitants of Natal and

from the Mpondo further to the south.<sup>105</sup> The quartering of cattle south of the Thukela offered a number of advantages. The coastal plain there was considerably narrower than that in the Qwabe territory, such that complementary grazing zones were in relatively greater proximity to each other. Presumably, the slightly more temperate climate south of the Thukela, and the lower densities of game than those of great river valleys and plains of the north, lowered the risk of trypanomiasis, and added to the attractiveness of the cattle country south of the Thukela.<sup>106</sup>

Another advantage was the natural barrier constituted by the Thukela itself. Melting snows on the Drakensberg and heavy summer rains rendered the Thukela impassable for at least three months of the year, while crocodiles were a perennial crossing hazard. Shaka took steps to exert a monopoly over the ways of crossing the river. One way in which this was achieved was through guarding the few drifts. Another was the monopoly which he exerted over the so-called 'water-doctors', whose job it was to conduct travellers across.<sup>107</sup> Such was the importance of this monopoly that when Shaka heard that the traders had a boat which they used to cross the river, he was immediately eager for a demonstration of its 'powers'.<sup>108</sup> The natural advantages of the Thukela were reinforced by the settlement of a length of the river by Shaka's closest allies within the kingdom, Ndhlela kaSompisi, Ngomane kaMqomboli and Mbikwana kaKhayi, and, further inland, the Mbo chief, Zihlandhlo.<sup>109</sup>

Access from the north of the kingdom to the great Zulu herds based in the south was thus limited, and controlled by the Zulu king. Similarly, the amakhanda enjoyed a new measure of security afforded by the Thukela. Zulu enemies to the north of the kingdom, amongst them the Ndwandwe, Swazi and the followings

of the renegades Mzilikazi, Nxaba and Soshangane who were, on the whole, more formidable than their southern neighbours amongst whom, the already twice defeated Mpondo were the only polity of any significance.

More importantly, however, the move south placed the Thukela between Shaka and the most recalcitrant elements within the kingdom. The historical record indicates that there were deep rumblings of discontent within the Zulu kingdom at this time, and suggests that it was a period of internal crisis. The pointers of crisis include the death (possibly murder by Shaka) of Nandi; the elaborate and stringently enforced mourning observations which ensued, and which were used to eliminate obdurate factions within the kingdom; the excessively harsh action taken by Shaka at that time against a recalcitrant ibutho; and the attempted assassination of Shaka, witnessed by Fynn and Isaacs.<sup>110</sup> It was immediately following the attempt on his life that Shaka moved,

One day as the Assembly debated the affairs of the land, Shaka spoke words that alarmed everyone. He said, 'I am moving from the capital of Bulawayo. The grounds of Bulawayo have begun to smell of death.'<sup>111</sup>

It was claimed that he moved because '...they threatened (xakalaze) him with spears at Bulawayo. Saying that Bulawayo was wild cat country (ku se Mpaka) he moved across the Tugela and settled there.'<sup>112</sup> The name of the new capital, Dukuza, was said to refer to a 'hide-away', or a place where one might get lost, which was, as Isaacs remarked, appropriate to Shaka's 'design of being absent from his palace Umbulali' or from the wish of his people that he should retire while they attacked his enemies'.<sup>113</sup>

The precise circumstances which gave rise to these expressions of unease are not known, but a year and a

Half later, Shaka was dead, having been assassinated in a palace coup. The move south, towards the Port Natal settlement, must be seen against this backdrop. The military strength and firepower of the traders had received widespread publicity after their successful participation in the campaign against the Khumalo chief, Bheje. The intimacy between Shaka and the traders served to stifle dissension within the kingdom, while the greater proximity of the Zulu capital to the traders' settlement would have appeared daunting to the kingdom's external enemies. Shaka's grant of land north of Dukuza, near the Mlalazi river mouth, to the traders meant that from a Zulu point of view, the traders would then have afforded the capital protection from both the north and the south.<sup>114</sup> The proximity of Dukuza to Port Natal also made the actions of the traders easier to monitor.

The move south was delayed until the final defeat of the Ndwandwe in 1826.<sup>115</sup> Thereafter, it seems that the orientation of Zulu foreign policy was to the south. Shaka was eager to establish relations with the British at the Cape, as evidenced by the Zulu deputation to the Cape. Moreover, the Mpondo in the south had, in the last campaign, provided the Zulu with a great booty in cattle, and were probably seen as a new sphere of raiding operations for the Zulu amabutho.<sup>116</sup>

#### Age, ranking and privilege in the amabutho

Close periodisation of the amabutho system thus resolves many of the difficulties in the mass of amabutho and amakhanda names which characterize the oral literature. It also emphasises the changing nature and function of the amabutho under Shaka, revealing a system that was still evolving, and was in the process of being refined.

Within this perspective, an implicit notion still exists of the relative homogeneity of the amabutho. However, this was far from the case. Indeed, it would be surprising to find an institution as uniform and systematic as the amabutho have generally been described. A further tendency exists within the literature on the amabutho to conceive of the units as being age-based, with a consequent failure to disaggregate individual amabutho, to discern status differences between them and the bases of privilege within them. In order to consider the complex questions of age, ranking and privilege within the amabutho, it is useful to distinguish between the Zulu forces living in the north of the kingdom, and those based in the south.

While the heart of the Zulu kingdom and the greater part of the army shifted steadily southwards, the northern reaches of the kingdom were protected by a few major amakhanda, kwaMandlakazi, Qulusini, Mphangisweni and oSebeni. Unlike the southern amakhanda, these were not erected by specific amabutho as their headquarters. They were amakhanda with a pronounced regional definition associated with a particular territory. The armed forces associated with these four amakhanda either lived permanently in the amakhanda or built homesteads in the vicinity. Their function was not simply the protection of the northern flank of the kingdom; they were also involved in the subjugation and colonization of the northern areas, and the integration of the local inhabitants into the Zulu kingdom.<sup>117</sup>

The position of the kwaMandlakazi establishment and the associated 'Mandlakazi' people has been discussed at length in the previous chapter. The character of the other three northern amakhanda resembled that of

kwaMandlakazi very closely.

The Qulusini ikhanda was erected in the north-western extremity of the kingdom near Hlobane, once the original Ngwe, Hlubi and Ngwane inhabitants of the area had moved.<sup>118</sup> Ntlaka, of the Mdlalose collateral Zulu clan, was sent by Shaka to build Qulusini, and to act as induna-in-charge. He was accompanied by numbers of the Mdlalose who settled near the ikhanda. The area of authority of the induna at Qulusini extended north across the Phongola, abutting on the Swazi kingdom. Mnkabayi, a senior member of the Zulu ruling lineage, and a paternal aunt of Shaka's was placed in supreme command of Qulusini.<sup>119</sup> As occurred with the 'Mandlakazi', Shaka resettled recalcitrant elements from other regions in the Qulusini area. By Cetshwayo's time, the people known as the Qulusi numbered thousands.<sup>120</sup>

The Qulusi were neither an ibutho nor a clan, or clan section. Ndukwana, one of Stuart's informants explained it thus,

Baqulusi is not the name of a regiment but of a people: these people take their name from the kraal of Mnkabayi, twin sister of Mmama, daughter of Jama.<sup>121</sup>

Similarly, Guy notes that

... the importance of the amakhanda had eclipsed the importance of the clan insofar as the relations of its members to the state were concerned.<sup>122</sup>

There was no isibongo 'Qulusi'. Mdlalose, Zulu, Mthethwa, and the Ndwandwe izibongo appear to have been the most common names at the ikhanda.<sup>123</sup> Neither was the ikhanda name 'Qulusini' ever used as a collective designation for a number of amabutho, in the way that 'emBelebeleni' or 'inTontoleni' were.



Guy described both the 'Mandlakazi' and the Qulusi as 'royal sections', in an apparent reference to their creation by the Zulu royal house. He elaborated saying,

They were not drafted into the conventional regiments but mobilised and fought as a royal section and they were not represented in the king's council by a chief, because they represented the power of the Zulu royal house, not a pre-Shakan chiefdom.<sup>124</sup>

Little is known about the Mphangisweni establishment, but its circumstances appear to be very similar to those of kwaMandlakazi and Qulusini. Mphangisweni was built at the sources of the Black Mfolozi river. It was initially occupied by the men of emBelebele, and also comprised a large Mthethwa contingent. It was under the control of members of the Zulu royal family. Abutting on the recalcitrant Khumaio, it acted as a watch-out post against the Ndwandwe. After the defeat in 1826, of Sikhunyana kaZwide, numerous Ndwandwe were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom, through Mphangisweni.<sup>125</sup>

The oSebeni ikhanda, again appears to have been very similar to the other northern amakhanda. It was established near the Nhlazatshe under Mmama, twin sister of Mnkabayi, and was considered to be another royal section, comparable to the Qulusi.<sup>126</sup>

Guy has claimed that these 'royal sections' represented the most radical departure from the pre-Shakan past and reduced the importance of the independent clans.<sup>127</sup> It is his contention that the sections like the Sebeni were a new and important means of social advancement for their non-Zulu members, but Guy gives little indication of precisely what this entailed. In fact, under Shaka the top offices at these amakhanda seem to have continued to be monopolized by the Zulu royals

and members of the collateral Zulu clans.

The principle purpose of all four amakhanda thus seems to have been as resettlement establishments, and the amakhanda were charged with the business of integrating the refugees and other settlers in their districts.

This seems to have determined a crucial difference between the amakhanda of the north and those of the south, which was their respective characteristics of permanence and mobility. The northern amakhanda had an especially long life.<sup>128</sup> Presumably, this difference related to the functions which they performed. The northern amakhanda dominated areas of conquered or tributary peoples. The emphasis was on their integration into the kingdom, and their effective government by the Zulu state. The exceptionally powerful members of the Zulu clan who commanded the northern amakhanda stood in marked contrast to an absence of any commanders from the Zulu clan, in the amakhanda in the south. This was probably because the emphasis on integration which prevailed in the north demanded powerful ideological foci. The royal or royal-related figures brought to the far north the power of the Zulu kingship, the ubukosi, for they were related to the line of the Zulu kings but as Mnkabayi and Mmama were women, and Mapitha and Ntlaka were members of collateral clans, it would have been difficult for them to seize power themselves. In the south, the peoples amongst whom the amakhanda were situated, were not incorporated into the Zulu kingdom in an inclusive, integrative way. They remained separate and distinct as outsiders. The amakhanda in the south were less concerned to consolidate the area in which they were built, than to exploit it for its cultivatable and pasturage potential.

The men of the northern amakhand were thus one section of the Zulu army that was not organized on an age-basis. A similar qualification needs to be made regarding the amabutho settled in the south. The units inherited from Senzangakhona were generally older than those butha'd by Shaka in the 1820s and while they may, originally, have been age-sets, under Shaka, this was not the case.

According to Bryant, the amaWombe were mostly between the ages of 35 and 40, and comprised 'the eldest of Senzangakhona's fighting men (b. c.1775-85...)'.<sup>129</sup> Under Shaka, the amaWombe was acknowledgedly the most senior unit, but this did not necessarily mean that it comprised the oldest men of the military establishment. Ndhlela kaSompisi, for example, was an eminent induna (officer) who was not of the amaWombe, but of the 'inTontela', conventionally considered to be a younger man's unit. His younger brother however, was a member of the amaWombe.<sup>130</sup> Analysis of the known membership of the amaWombe shows it to be overwhelmingly the ibutho of the royal Zulu and collateral clans, and the other elite amantungwa clans. It was, moreover, the ibutho of Shaka himself. Within the oral record, it was the amaWombe who enjoyed the greatest reputation of all the amabutho. Their bravery and prowess was extolled. They were praised and rewarded by Shaka, and in that way, their superior status was constantly enhanced.<sup>131</sup>

The case of the amaWombe suggests two things; that the amabutho were not exclusively age-based, and secondly, that differences in status were not necessarily related to age. These points are borne out in examination of other amabutho. The veteran isiPezi and Dubinhlangu who were roughly the same age or older than the men of the amaWombe. In contrast to the amaWombe, they saw their

status under Shaka diminish with the removal of their headrings.<sup>132</sup>

The distinctions in the status of these amabutho were daily manifest in the primary difference between the head-ringed and the ringless men. Those amabutho which were entitled to thunga (to assume the heading) were known as the 'white' amabutho as opposed to the 'black' amabutho, the men without headrings. Battle accounts typically depicted the 'white' amabutho as the veterans and the great warriors, whilst the 'black' amabutho were described as being inexperienced, if lusty.<sup>133</sup> As has been noted in a number of instances however, the 'black' amabutho were, in fact, seasoned soldiers who had been reduced to the status of recruits. This distinction was emphasised in the mainly white shields of the former, and the primarily black shields of the latter.

It was the "great warriors" that carried predominantly white shields, the young warriors who had black shields and the "Umfaudais" (inferiors) (umfokasi) who had red shields.<sup>134</sup>

The distinctive garb of each ibutho - ornaments, ways of dressing the hair, habiliments, and colours and styles of fighting sticks - rendered its members distinguishable at a glance, and was strictly adhered to.<sup>135</sup> Lunguza commented to Stuart that

It was a great offence for a man not belonging to a particular regiment to carry a shield of a colour used by a particular regiment.<sup>136</sup>

Any age-basis to the amabutho was further subverted through the practice of tela'ing (adding, or pouring into, as in adding one unit or section of a unit to another). To the amaWombe at emBelebeleni were tela'd the Nomdayana, Mpondozobekwapi, amaPela, iziKwembu and other units.<sup>137</sup> Collectively, and sometimes individually, the units were called the emBelebele.

with whom Shaka 'used to harass (belesela) other nations.<sup>138</sup> Indeed the emBelebele featured prominently in the accounts of almost all the major campaigns. They were frequently credited with turning the tide in battle in the favour of the Zulu. The emBelebele, more than any other unit, was said to have constituted the core of the Zulu army.<sup>139</sup> They were described as 'the headrest of our mothers at our place',<sup>140</sup> and the early trader Isaacs referred to them as 'the well-known invincibles'.<sup>141</sup>

To the Dubinhlangu too were added a number of units, notably the Dhlangubo, who were sometimes referred to by their common ikhanda name of inTontela. The inTontela also fought in the major campaigns against the Ndwandwe and the Mpondo.<sup>142</sup> To the isiPezi at umGumanqa were tela'd the Khangela, Nteke and possibly the Mbonambi (also known as the Zibolela). Collectively, and sometimes singly, these units were referred to by their ikhanda name, the umGumanqa. The umGumanqa featured prominently in a number of campaigns, notably against the Mpondo, and in the rout of the Ndwandwe.<sup>143</sup>

As the Zulu kingdom expanded, men of these units were sent further and further afield. EmBelebeleni was razed to the ground by the Ndwandwe, and was subsequently rebuilt on the Qwabe border. After the defeat of the Ndwandwe in 1818, it was the emBelebele who erected Shaka's new capital Gibixhegu, later called Bulawayo. Still later, the emBelebele were sent by Dingane to build beyond the Swazi border.<sup>144</sup>

Whilst Shaka was still a lieutenant of Dingiswayo, the inTontela was moved from the Mthonjaneni and sent

south to settle disturbances amongst the Nyuswa, another Mthethwa tributary. InTonteleni was rebuilt on the Mamba river and Nyuswa men were called up by Shaka and tela'd into the inTonteleni.<sup>145</sup> Shaka's Badaneni establishment was erected close to inTonteleni, and placed in the charge of Sirayo, a local Nyuswa man. The Badaneni ikhanda was responsible for the tobacco tribute which was demanded from the Nyuswa, and was presumably supervised from inTonteleni nearby.<sup>146</sup> These two amakhanda were situated on the southern border of the kingdom. They functioned thus as look-out posts, and border guards, and probably controlled the major inland drifts by which the Thukela could be crossed.<sup>147</sup> Ndhlela kaSompisi was a member of the inTontela, and had been granted a march territory abutting on the inTontela ikhanda, and extending along the Thukela.<sup>148</sup> Another prominent figure at inTonteleni was Sotobe kaMpangala of the Sibiya. He was apparently not a member of any of the amabutho based there, but was an induna in charge of the king's cattle in the area placed in the care of the inTontela.<sup>149</sup>

The larger divisions, consisting of a number of amabutho, were likewise distinguished from one another in terms of status, as well as being differentiated within themselves. The emBelebele was clearly the most prestigious division of all, and the available evidence strongly suggests that the men of the emBelebele were drawn from a narrow constituency comprising the Zulu royal clans, the collateral Zulu clans and men from clans with especially close ties to the royal house, such as the Nthuli.<sup>150</sup> Yet within the emBelebele, the amaWombe ibutho enjoyed the greatest status.

Similarly, within the inTontela division, it was the Dubinhlangu which was the most senior unit, and which enjoyed the greatest prestige, although not on a par with that of the amaWombe. The composition of the inTontela altered over time with the addition of new units, but on the whole, the available evidence indicates that its membership was drawn from a wider constituency than that of the emBelebele. Like the amaWombe, the inTontela drew members from the collateral Zulu clans and from the Nthuli, but there is no evidence of it having any royal Zulu members. The inTontela which also consisted of large numbers of Nyuswa, in the form of an exclusively Nyuswa section, thus had the appearance of being a somewhat less exclusive division than the emBelebele.<sup>151</sup>

Within the izimPohlo division, there were also marked differences of status amongst the amabutho, for while the majority of its sections were 'black' units, others, like the Fojiyisa, carried the red shields of 'inferiors'. Lacking any 'white' units, the izimPohlo was less prestigious than the emBelebele and the inTontela.<sup>152</sup> The umGumanqa division was the most diverse division of all. Samuelson suggested that the name 'umGumanqa' derives from the verb ukugumanqa, meaning to place in a combined heap in a hole, in the way that mielies are when thrown into a pit and begin to 'conglomerate'.<sup>153</sup> Certainly, the umGumanqa was made up of men of highly disparate backgrounds, including men of the Langeni, the Gasa, the Mbohambi and Kubisa (i.e. of the old Mthethwa polity), the Chunu, the Diadia and others. Of all the divisions, it was the least exclusive. Like the izimPohlo, there were units in the umGumanqa which carried shields that were predominantly red, but the umGumanqa also had units that carried predominantly white shields. Within the umGumanqa, the isiPezi and the

Khangela were the senior units, and were made up of older, generally experienced men. However, the umGumanqa also contained the newly butha'd youths of the Mbonambi unit.<sup>154</sup> There were also amabutho like the iziYendane, Badeneni and Njanduna which were made up exclusively of Hlubi, Nyuswa and Cele respectively, and which contained men of all ages.<sup>155</sup>

In contrast, one unit, the Fasimba, never became part of a wider division. The Fasimba passed through both esiKlebheni and emBelebeleni, but once Shaka's capital, Bulawayo had been erected, it became their base. They also built in outlying districts, such as amongst the Qwabe, but for the most part, they were remained in close proximity to the Zulu king.<sup>156</sup> The close identification between this ibutho and the monarch was probably an important factor in the increasingly strong position of the monarchy. The Fasimba was,

the one group which could be trained in his methods, from the start of his career ... here he placed his greatest reliance and it became the prototype for the regiments that followed.<sup>157</sup>

As the first unit butha'd of men who had not been in the Zulu army under Senzangakhona, it was made up of younger men than the amabutho already discussed. It was destined to become the cream of the Zulu amabutho. It was said to be Shaka's favourite ibutho, and was known as 'Tshaka's Own'.<sup>158</sup> The Fasimba carried shields that were all white, made from the hides of Shaka's pure white 'Phongola' herds. They were further distinguished from the other amabutho by ornamental incisions on the inner calves of their legs. References to the clan origins of the men of the Fasimba are scarce, but amongst the few available, the names of men of the collateral Zulu clans predominate in a manner that echoes the composition of the amaWombe. Like the amaWombe, the much younger Fasimba clearly



enjoyed high status.<sup>159</sup>

The picture which emerges from this evidence is one of the development of the amabutho on a contingent basis as new units were added to the original amabutho. The divisions which comprised the army were not uniform sections, but differed from one another in terms of both their status and their composition. Within the divisions, the component amabutho manifested similar distinctions, which qualify the notion of their rigid age-basis. Clear distinctions existed between privileged units and inferior units. The evidence suggests that access to former was determined by birth, rather than by age or ability, and was restricted to a specific, and privileged sector of Zulu society.

The restrictions on marriage to which the amabutho were subject, operated to enhance the position of privileged sectors within the army. From the perspective of Guy's thesis of ecological crisis and relative overpopulation, the enforced delay in marriage is seen as having had the effect of reducing the fertile span of women, and thus the potential rate of population increase, and by extension, the intensity with which the environment was exploited.<sup>160</sup> It has also been argued that the strict enforcement of marriage restrictions allowed elders to 'tighten their control over the means by which their positions of dominance were reproduced through time',<sup>161</sup> i.e. over human reproduction as much as over production. However, marriage controls appear to have been enforced predominantly over men, rather than over women. Women were centralized in two institutions, the izigodlo and the female amabutho, but their numbers were insignificant compared to the numbers of men in the amabutho.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, Zulu society was polygamous, and while fewer men were able to marry under Shaka, where men were sufficiently wealthy, they

could marry large numbers of women, and in theory at least, could beget as many children as they cared to. Effectively, this meant that the marriage restrictions served rather to concentrate the advantages of marriage in the hands of an increasingly restrictive group.

In addition, not all the men of the amabutho thunga'd and married at a late age. Some were more privileged in this respect than others. While the delay in the marriage age of the amabutho under Shaka can be understood as the extension of elder power over juniors, this intersected with the extension of the power of the Zulu aristocracy over the commoners. Many of the men who were required to remove their headrings were older, often circumcised men of considerable maturity and experience. Conversely many younger men sported headrings. It was claimed, for example, that under Shaka, 'it was the custom there in Zululand, that a man, if he was an only son, should tunga and marry for that reason',<sup>163</sup> even where his ibutho was prohibited from so doing. Nor were only sons the only young men to sew on the headring. Ndhlela kaSompisi, Zulu kaNogandaya and others of the 'black' 'bachelors' amabutho, thunga'd, married and had children during Shaka's reign. Similarly, the men of the elite amaWombe corps were permitted to marry, while those of the less privileged isiPezi who were of the same age and possibly older than the amaWombe, were not.<sup>164</sup> The development of the amabutho system under Shaka seems therefore, to have been characterized by the emergence of privileged sectors within the army, whose positions were not determined by age or experience.

Stratification within and amongst the amabutho reflected a wider transformation taking place within the Zulu. The reign of Shaka seems to have seen a steady advance in the power and prestige of the aristocracy in an

emerging new order where age, previously venerated, increasingly came to be denigrated. When Shaka first assumed the reins of government, he seems to have had encountered opposition from the Zulu elders who had hitherto monopolised power. His response was to eliminate a faction of that opposition and at least initially, to win over the support of the remainder.<sup>165</sup> Tensions re-emerged as the reorganisation of the Zulu army effected by Shaka made inroads into the traditional areas of elder authority. Sometime after the defeat of the Ndwandwe in 1818, Shaka delivered a final coup to those elements which still opposed his rule.

In a dramatic move, the 'old men' of the kingdom were 'thrown out', an event recalled thereafter in the name of Shaka's new capital, Gibixhegu.<sup>166</sup> According to Melapi, one of Stuart's informants, this action of Shaka's was precipitated by an attempt on his life.<sup>167</sup>

The Ndwandwes were no sooner defeated than he collected all the aged men in the country and had them killed. A special song was composed on that occasion, the words of which were: produce the cowards, etc. Each regiment produced its own, when they were at once carried off and killed.<sup>168</sup>

The twin elements of the story, cowardice and agedness, were repeated in other versions of this event, and the story seems to have an allegorical quality, being symbolic of the passing of the old order and the induction of the new.<sup>169</sup> The individuals who were removed at that time were not literally the oldest people. Many elder statesmen favoured by Shaka continued in high positions, notably Ngomane kaMqomboli, Sotobe kaMpangala and Manyosi kaDhlekezele.<sup>170</sup>

The precise sequence of events leading up to this action cannot be established, but it seems likely that the 'old men' were opponents of the Shakan regime. What is most significant about their elimination is

the form taken by the account, and in particular the emphasis on the negative aspect of agedness in which it was cast, and indeed, it seemed to be a common theme in stories about the Shakan kingdom.

Shaka's own desire for the traders' remedy for grey hair, macassar oil, is well known.<sup>171</sup> The reign of Shaka seems to have seen a process whereby the ideological basis for access to power was shifting, and being shifted, away from the elders and traditional local leaders, and concentrated in the hands of an increasingly narrow ruling elite.

The new accent as reflected in the tales about heroes, and in the traditions, was on youth, ability and bravery. The story of the rise to power of a great warrior like Zulu kaNogandaya was typical. Mandhlakazi, one of Stuart's informants told the story of Zulu like this:

I shall now tell you how Zulu won renown as a great warrior ... It was Zulu who opened the attack at Nomveve. It was he who stabbed first, and it was his opponent who was the first to fall. They drove the enemy back and forced them to retreat. It was reported to Tshaka that Komfiya, the son of Nogandaya, was fighting fiercely. When Tshaka was told, he said that he could hear where Zulu had been fighting, Zulu 'the heavens which thundered in the open, where there are no mimosas or acacias...'. The enemy army was reported to be in the wilderness, retreating homewards. The warriors broke into a war dance, but Zulu did not join in until Tshaka cried, 'Dance, Heavens which thundered in the open, where there are no mimosas or acacias!', upon which the son of Nogandaya danced. A number of cattle were selected and Zulu's mat-bearer was told to take them to Mtshaseni. (Zulu's residence).<sup>172</sup>

The traditions asserted the principle that it was courage and loyalty which brought reward and advancement in the Zulu army. In practice however, those already in power exerted a monopoly over 'bravery in battle', for it was the izinduna who reported the

courageous acts on which advancement was based.

Stuart's informants noted that this practice was widely abused. It was said of the izinduna that

they masked many heroes through mere self-seeking. A hero who had perhaps killed 3 or 4 would be silenced by its being said by the indunas that some other men, some special favourite (like a prince) had killed a couple of the very men claimed, and someone else would be declared to have killed the others, thereby leaving the true hero without anything to boast of.<sup>173</sup>

The 'princes' who were reported in an advantageous way repaid the favour by promoting the interests of the izinduna concerned.<sup>174</sup>

The common soldiers had no means of redress against such abuses, beyond appealing directly to the king himself. This was a rare occurrence for the izinduna monopolised access to the king. It was they whom the ordinary people had to rely on to intercede with the king on their behalf, and it was they who tried all cases except for the most serious.<sup>175</sup>

The izinduna saw to the distribution of the king's bounty to the men, not only as cattle rewards, but on a daily basis in the form of food and beer. They also supervised the arming of the amabutho. It was the induna of an ibutho who approached the king to beg for new shields for the unit. The izinduna were also powerful intermediaries in the redistribution of prestige goods and ornaments to their men. Writing in the mid-thirties, at a time when he considered the power of the izinduna of the Zulu army to have diminished significantly from what it was under Shaka, Gardiner commented

Considerable authority is delegated to the principal induna of each ekanda, as well as to inflict punishment as to reward, and he is always entrusted with a supply of brass armlets and collars for those whom he considered deserving of such distinctions.<sup>176</sup>

The izinduna under Shaka wielded thus enormous power. They occupied a position of great security for they were protected and could only be killed on the orders of the king himself. But they, in their turn, had the power of life and death over those who they commanded.

It was the izinduna who were responsible for the indiscriminate killing off that went on. Sometimes a man rewarded with cattle by the king would be killed just as he reached his home, and his cattle seized. These cattle ... would be taken off to the izindunas' kraals, and they would report that *nothing in the shape of cattle was at the kraal.*<sup>177</sup>

Cruel beatings were common. The izinduna were also notorious for illegally appropriating for themselves a portion of the cattle raided by the amabutho on campaign, a practice against which the men of the amabutho had no redress.<sup>178</sup> The izinduna were thus able to use their offices to amass wealth for themselves often at the expense of the men under them. Their rank entitled them to a number of further benefits. If one of the men under their command took girl captives in battle, he would give a portion of them to his commanding officer. The ransom for boy captives would accrue to the induna, and where boy captives were not redeemed, the induna would redistribute them amongst his men.<sup>179</sup> Many of the great izinduna were granted access to large estates which provided the basis for the development of great cattle herds, and on which, over time, they were able to build up followings of their supporters, through the extension of their patronage.<sup>180</sup>

The izinduna sat on the isiqogo, the main council at the king's headquarters, and it was the isiqogo which ultimately decided 'who was to be allowed to have authority, and would preserve power for themselves...'<sup>181</sup> In practice, honours were only conferred on men of rank, and new officers 'would be recruited from only the very

largest (i.e. most important) men'. It was asserted that 'anyone who was xwayile (wide awake) was bhekelwa'd (appointed) ... made an induna. A man who was hlakanpili (clever) was placed in a position though he was not of high birth', but as the same informant wryly noted, the sons of 'notable men' would be selected first.<sup>182</sup> These remarks by Stuart's informants suggest that the izinduna constituted an elite to which access was strictly limited. To what extent are their observations borne out by the composition of the izinduna class?

Any analysis of the composition of the group of officers in the Zulu army under Shaka is necessarily impressionistic because of the nature of the evidence available. Sources are sparse, and where the names of the izinduna have survived at all, it is often in isolation, apart from any further details of the clan, ibutho or status of the man concerned. On the accompanying chart all the available names of izinduna have been listed according to the ibutho or ikhanda over which they had command. The names on the list have been culled primarily, though not exclusively, from four sources - the works of the Rev. A.T. Bryant, the writings of the early Zulu historian, Magema Fuze, the three published volumes of the James Stuart Archive, and the archival holdings of the Stuart collection.<sup>183</sup> Only limited use was made of the latter source because of the difficulties involved in constantly cross-checking the loosely ordered original papers, without an index in the manner demanded by the drawing up of such a table. The data in the chart can and should be expanded on once the remaining section of the Stuart collection is published.

Writing in the early 1830s, Gardiner considered there to be between two and ten izinduna to every ibutho,

of whom one was the commander, and the others merely in charge of sections of the ibutho, seeing to the day-to-day administration of the ikhanda. The position of the commander was thus quite different from that of the subordinate officers, whom Gardiner described as an 'inferior class', and was probably a political appointment.<sup>184</sup> The chart sample probably represents this better-known, upper echelon of the induna class, since it can be assumed that over time, it is the most significant power holders of an era that are most likely to be remembered by informants, except where they refer to their relatives.

As a survey, the data on the chart is neither complete, nor is it necessarily representative. It simply reflects the existing state of information. Nonetheless, a number of significant patterns emerge in the data, which support claims made in a more general way about izinduna by various informants. It will be argued on the basis of this correlation that, like the men of the most prestigious amabutho, the izinduna were drawn from a limited sector of Zulu society.

The chart contains the names of forty-two individuals explicitly designated as izinduna in the original sources. Of these, there is no further data available on two of the names, and for the purposes of the following discussion, only the remaining forty izinduna will be considered.

Of the sixteen izinduna whose own amabutho are known, nine became izinduna over amabutho other than the ones to which they themselves belonged. Five of the remaining instances are indeterminate because the individuals are described as being izinduna at amakhanda rather than of specific amabutho. In some cases, this may have reflected the use of the ikhanda-name as a



collective term for the amabutho based there, or in other cases it may indicate that the individuals concerned were not in charge of specific amabutho but were simply officers at a particular ikhanda. Of these five however, four were described as being 'head izinduna', with functions that generally exceeded the scope of command of a single ibutho. Thus, only two izinduna on the chart were listed as being in command of the same amabutho as those to which they themselves belonged. Of these, Mapiloba kaNgomane was almost certainly appointed induna of his ibutho, the iziNyosi, after the death of Shaka. The other induna was Nduvana (brother of Ndhlela kaSompisi), who was himself of the amaWombe, the ibutho over which he was also appointed induna. As has already been noted, the status of the amaWombe was greater than that of the other amabutho. It would, presumably, have been difficult for an induna from any other, lower status unit to take charge of the amaWombe. The figures taken from the chart confirm thus the informant Mpatshana's observation that 'The izinduna were usually taken from the outside'.<sup>185</sup> Indeed, it makes sense that the men who were appointed as the izinduna of new units would usually have been older and more experienced.

Examination of the third column of the chart shows that the clan names of thirty-six of the forty izinduna are available. Of these thirty-six, the breakdown was one Sibiya, one Cube, one Buthelezi, two Mbatha and four Nthul, all from chiefdoms incorporated in the first phase of Zulu expansion. There were two izinduna from the Langeni, the clan of the queen mother, four Ndwandwe izinduna, eight Mthethwa, and ten izinduna from the collateral Zulu clans (including the Mandlakazi). Nine of the ten izinduna drawn from the collateral Zulu clans were described as 'head' or 'great' izinduna (see column one). Of the other eight

izinduna also described as 'head' izinduna, there were three Mthethwa, one Mbatha, one Ndwandwe, two Nthuli and one Langeni.

The data contained in the chart suggests that high office within the Zulu amabutho system was dominated by men of the collateral Zulu clans (including the Mandlakazi). The absence of izinduna drawn from the Zulu clan itself is conspicuous. The men of the old Mthethwa army were also important contenders for high office. Their appointment was probably determined in part by their military experience, as well as by their usefulness to Shaka as outsiders. The Ndwandwe who achieved high office were all men who had defected from the Ndwandwe early on, and who had khonza'd Shaka. They too would have been experienced in military affairs, and would have depended on the king himself for their advancement. It was also undoubtedly a significant coup for Shaka to be able to win over the officers of the army of his archrival.

Of the thirty-six izinduna whose clan names are known, further genealogical information is available for eighteen of them. Ten of these were connected to the Zulu royalty (i.e. through the collateral clans or as royal sections). All of the remaining eight were either the sons of chiefs, or connected closely to the chiefly house of a clan. Not one of the izinduna listed came from a clan that was without status under Shaka. It seems that commoners were unlikely to gain high office under Shaka without a concomitant improvement in the status of the lineage to which they were connected. At the same time, it seems that high office was not a monopoly of royalty. On the contrary, men of Shaka's immediate family, and of the Zulu clan more generally seem to have been excluded from high office in the amakhanda. While the collateral clans

tended to dominate the office holding class, an equal number of appointments seem to have been made from lineages which were not directly related to the ruling lineage. Yet the group of outsiders from whom such appointments were made was itself extremely curtailed. These izinduna were thus all either amantungwa, 'outsiders' like the Ndwandwe, or renowned Zulu loyalists. The officer class constituted a new elite that appears to have been narrowly defined and to which access was limited. Its criteria were not simply those of birth or genealogical seniority. New men did gain power, but as they did so, so the status of their lineages necessarily grew as well. The izinduna under Shaka were not the old pre-Shakan power holders in new positions, nor were they 'brave heroes' who gained high position through dint of their hard efforts.

For the entire period of Shaka's rule, the Zulu army was under the supreme command of a triumvirate consisting of the king, the elder Mthethwa statesman Ngomane kaMqomboli, and the commander-in-chief of the army, Mhlaka kaNcidi.<sup>186</sup> The balance of elements in this upper leadership echoed the composition of the class of izinduna.

Shaka belonged to the elite amaWombe corps. He was depicted in the traditions as an active member of the military establishment and was credited with a record for bravery in action whilst amongst the Mthethwa. He is remembered as being fit and agile, and as having accompanied his army on campaign. He moved across his domains regularly, inspecting the amakhanda and drilling the amabutho. The traditions represented Shaka as a warrior king par excellence.<sup>187</sup>

Ngomane kaMqomboli, of the Dletsheni, had occupied high office amongst the Mthethwa, probably as Dingiswayo's

head induna at oYengweni. When the young Shaka first arrived in the Mthethwa country to khunza Dingiswayo, it was into the care of Ngomane that this son of the Zulu chief was entrusted.<sup>188</sup> The traditions indicate that a relationship of especial closeness prevailed between the two. Ngomane was then 'already an old man', and he was given to Shaka as an elder guardian and advisor. 'Here is your father', Dingiswayo said to him.<sup>189</sup> Shaka lived at Ngomane's establishment, and later enrolled under him in an Mthethwa ibutho. The traditions relate that it was Ngomane who accompanied Shaka on his return to the Zulu to challenge the succession of his brother Sigujana, together with the rest of Shaka's immediate family, and his Mthethwa retinue, including a contingent of Mthethwa warriors.<sup>190</sup>

Ngomane and the Mthethwa who accompanied Shaka played a crucial role in the earliest phase of Shaka's reign, when the new Zulu chief sought to consolidate his position vis-a-vis his powerful royal siblings, and other challengers. After the murder of Dingiswayo, Ngomane as a powerful and respected Mthethwa representative at the court of the Zulu king would have been an absolutely key figure in the reorganization of the Mthethwa kingdom under Shaka's hegemony, and in facilitating the incorporation of the fragments of the once great Mthethwa army into the Zulu forces. It was Ngomane who manoeuvred on the delicate issue of the Mthethwa chieftaincy to ensure that its resolution was favourable to Zulu interests. The new incumbent, Mlandela kaMbiya, had trained together with Shaka in the Mthethwa army, and was subsequently enrolled in the iziMpho.<sup>191</sup>

Ngomane was accorded great prestige in the new Zulu kingdom. One informant claims that he was allowed the 'signal favour' of keeping an isigodlo (establishment

of women) generally a royal prerogative.<sup>192</sup> Other sources claimed that Ngomane was the king's foremost councillor and 'stood high in his esteem'.<sup>193</sup> He played an important role in the national rituals.<sup>194</sup>

Mdhlaka kaNcidi was described as the supreme commander of the army, the 'induna yeswe'.<sup>195</sup> Some sources claim however that he was not as senior a figure as Ngomane. Although Mdhlaka was an influential advisor of the king's, and an important policy maker, his primary role was in the field. He personally conducted the major campaigns, while Ngomane remained in control at home in the absence of the army, and often, of the king himself.<sup>196</sup>

The Zulu high command demonstrated thus a balance between the old and the new orders. The hierarchy of elder power was present in the figure of Ngomane, although, significantly, its representative was not of the royal line. Ngomane also represented the large Mthethwa contingent in the army. Mdhlaka represented both the ideal of a great hero, and at the same time, as a member of the emGazini, represented the power of the collateral clans.

Their offices were not rigidly fixed positions nor was the composition of the induna class, but were evolving in response to the changing circumstances and conditions of existence of the kingdom itself. In the early years of Shaka's reign, the influence of Ngomane probably exceeded that of Shaka's local advisors. As the Zulu king consolidated his rule, and then dabula'd certain sections of his family, to create the collateral clans such as the emGazini, so then did it become possible for there to be a shift away from reliance on 'external' elements. When Dingane became king, he found himself to be in a position of insecurity reminiscent of that

which Shaka first experienced. The effect of this seems to have been a harsh reaction on his part against his powerful relatives, and a renewed reliance on izinduna from other clans loyal to the Zulu monarchy, such as the Nthuli and Buthelezi represented by Ndhlela kaSompisi and Klwana kaNgqengelele respectively.

The chart further indicates the extent to which high offices and other appointments were held by the sons and other relatives of the senior izinduna. Klwana, induna of the emBelebele, was the son of Ngqengelele, the new chief of the Buthelezi, and a prominent figure in Shaka's government.<sup>197</sup> Klwana's brother, Mnyamana, succeeded to the Buthelezi chieftaincy, was induna of the Thulwana ibutho, and eventually became Cetshwayo's 'chief minister'.<sup>198</sup> Another brother, Mvubu also became a senior induna.<sup>199</sup> Ndhlela, and his brother Nduvana were both izinduna of consequence, as was Ndhlela's son, Godide, who became a member of the king's council. Another son of Ndhlela's, Mavumengwana, was made *second-in-command* to Mnyamana in the Thulwana ibutho, and yet another son, Mpandemana became a senior induna.<sup>200</sup> Ngomane's son, Mapoloba, was appointed induna of the iziNyosi, and Nyambose, son of Shaka's senior induna, the chief of the Magwaza, Manqondo, was also appointed to high office. Mbikwana kaKhayi, a direct descendant of the Mthethwa royal line, and an induna of the umGumanqa, was directly succeeded in office by his son, Sidunge.<sup>201</sup> The sons of Mapitha kaSojyisa were also made izinduna, as were the sons and grandsons of Sotobe kaMpangaia.<sup>202</sup>

Consideration of the composition of the izinduna class reveals thus a clear pattern to the organization of rank within the amabutho, and demonstrates its restriction to a limited constituency. The data examined indicates that all the officers came from

the amantungwa clans, with the specific exception of those drawn from the old Mthethwa army. Furthermore, the picture of the amabutho which emerges, is one of a highly diverse system, with multiple and varied functions at different points in time. Yet within that diversity, a further pattern can be located, the concentration of the men of the amantungwa clans (including the royal and collateral lineages) in a few select amabutho which enjoyed greater status than the rest of the amabutho. Access to the privileged amabutho and to the office within the system was thus not determined by age (or ability), but by both and social position. The waning significance of age was a symptom of a changing socio-political order. The amabutho constituted thus the primary site for the entrenchment of new ideas. As such, over and above being the mechanism whereby labour was centralized, marriage controlled, and coercion exerted on contumacious subjects and enemies, the amabutho were a crucial aspect of the process of the ideological restructuring which permitted the emergence of the Zulu state.





OFFICE <sup>203</sup>	NAME	CLAN <sup>204</sup>	OWN IBUTHO <sup>205</sup>	HEROES	STATUS	
Wombe	Nluvana kaSompisi	Nthuli	Wombe			(206)
emBelebele	Klwana kaNgqengelele	Buthelezi	-		Son of the new Buthelezi chief	(207)
Dlangezwa isiKiebhhe (Head Induna)	Mdlaka kaNcidi	emGazini	-	Hero	Collateral Zulu clan	(208)
iziNyosi, isiKiebhhe (Head Induna)	Manyosi kaDiekezele	Mbatha	(known to be elderly during the reign of Shaka)	Hero		(209)
Nobamba	Nomapela	Ndandwe	('Nobamba')			(210)
umGumanqa	Mbikwana kaKhayi	Mthethwa	-		Mthethwa Royal line	(211)
umGumanqa	Sidunge kaMbikwana	Mthethwa	-	-	Mthethwa Royal line	(212)
umGumanqa Zwangendaba	Mbilini kaCungeya	Mthethwa	-	Hero		(213)
umGumanqa (Head Induna) DUKUZA	Mbopha kaSitayi	emGazini			Collateral Zulu clan	(214)
Fasimba	Nombanga kaNgidhi	-	-	Hero		(215)
Fasimba iziNyosi	Mpangazitha kaMncumbata	Ndandwe	(was elderly during the reign of Shaka)			(216)
iziNyosi (Head Induna) emBelebele	Mvundlana kaMenziwa	Biyela	-	Hero	Collateral Zulu clan	(217)
iziNyosi	Mapoloba kaNgomane	Mthethwa (Dietsheni)	iziNyosi			(218)

OFFICE	NAME	CLAN	OWN <u>IBUTHO</u>	HEROES	STATUS
Dubinhlangu iziMpho	Dilikana kaHlanyana	Mbatha			Chief of Mbatha (219)
inTontela	Mangena kaNokupata	Ndwandwe (Nxumalo)			(220)
inTontela	Sotobe kaMpangala	Sibiya	(was elderly during the reign of Shaka		(221)
iziMpho Hlomendhlini	Zulu kaNogandaya	Qwabe (Ncwana)	umGumanqa	Hero	Ncwana (222)
iziMpho	NtoboTongwane kaMatshwayi- bana	Cube		Hero	Junior line of Cube chiefly house (223)
Gibbabanye Fojisa	Mfetshe kaMutiwensanga	Mthethwa (Kubisa)			(224)
Vungameni	Masawuzana	Qwabe			(225)
Mdadasa	Lukilimba kaMbasa			Hero	(226)
iziYendane	Nxazonke	Langeni			Clan of the queen mother (227)
Njanduna (Head Induna)	Khokhele kaMncumbata	Ndwandwe	Pela	Hero	(228)
Dukuza	Bilfbana	Nthuli (Thusi)			(229)
Dukuza (Head Induna)	Dambuza kaSobadhli	Ntombela	Nonbe		Collateral Zulu clan (230)
Dukuza Hlomendhlini	Nongalaza kaNondela	Qwabe (Nyanda)			(231)
Qulusini (Head Induna)	NtTaka	Mdlalose			Collateral Zulu clan (232)

OFFICE	NAME	CLAN	OWN <u>IBUTHO</u>	HEROES	STATUS
iziNyosi (Head <u>Induna</u> )	Lukwazi ka Zwana	Ntombela			Collateral Zulu clan (233)
Bulawayo (Head <u>Induna</u> )	Godide kaNdiela	Mthuli	iziNyosi		(234)
imiHaye	Buto kaVumazonke	-	inDabenkulu		(235)
imiHaye	Somuntsha	-	inDabenkulu		(236)
Diambedlu	Ndhlala kaSompisi	Nthuli	inTontela	Hero	(237)
inTonteleni	Ndengezi kaKhuzwayo	Mdialose	Wombe	Hero	(238)
(Head <u>Induna</u> )	Mayanda kaVeyane	Mthethwa (Mkhwanzazi)			Chief of the Mkhwanzazi (239)
(Head <u>Induna</u> )	Masiphula kaMamba	emGazini	Wombe		Collateral Zulu clan (240)
(Head <u>Induna</u> )	Sitshaluza kaMamba	emGazini			Collateral Zulu clan (241)
(Head <u>Induna</u> )	Manqondo kaMazwana	Langeni			(242)
(Head <u>Induna</u> )	Ngomane kaMqomboli	Mthethwa (Dietsheni)			(243)
(Head <u>Induna</u> )	Nqoboko ka Yanga	Mthethwa			Chief of the Sokhulu (244)
(Head <u>Induna</u> )	Mapitha kaSojijisa	Mandlakazi			(245)
iziYendane	Nonzamo				(246)
Gibbabanye	Manyundele kaMabuya				(247)

1. Guy, The Destruction, p. 9.
2. Ibid., pp. 9-11; also see Guy, 'Ecological factors'.
3. Slater, 'Transitions', chapter 9. For a discussion of the notion of a labour shortage, see p. 6.
4. Hamilton, 'A fragment of the jigsaw: authority and labour control amongst the early nineteenth century Northern Nguni', B.A. (hons.) dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1980, chapter 1.
5. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics' pp. 198-99.
6. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation' pp. 23-9.
7. J. Cobbing, 'Zulu amabutho and production: Some preliminary questions', unpublished paper, Rhodes University, Oct. 1977.
8. J. Cobbing, 'The Evolution of the Ndebele amabutho', Journal of African History, XV, 4 (1974), especially pp. 610, 617, 619.
9. It is not possible, in a single chapter, to discuss all the amakhanda and amabutho known to have existed in the 1820s. Many names occur in the evidence as isolated references. Those which have been selected for discussion in this chapter are the ones about which some further data is available.

10. See above, p. 250.
11. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 50, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 94, 96 evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 204, 210, 211, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 146, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 180, 189, evidence of Jantshi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 42, item 7, evidence of Ntshuku (?); K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 39, evidence of Ngidi, p. 5; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 236. Samuelson claimed that 'Kangela' was another 'regiment' of Senzangakhona's taken over by Shaka. This name was, in fact, given to an establishment erected in Shaka's reign by the umGumanqa unit (see below p.260) It may be, nonetheless, that Khangela, like the isiPezi was a section of the umGumanqa, dating back to the reign of Senzangakhona. Khangela was also the name of a section of one of Dingane's units, the Khokhothi. (J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 310, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 94, evidence of Magidigidi.) Likewise, Bryant claimed that the Dhlambedhlu or umGamule was another unit which had seen action in Senzangakhona's day, and was taken over by Shaka. In this claim, he is clearly in error, for according to a range of other sources, the Dhlambedhlu were butha'd by Dingane c.1829, and only saw action in the next decade. (Bryant, Olden Times, p. 64; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 214, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 110, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 304, 312-13 evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 62, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 81, evidence of Magidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 83, 90, 92, evidence of Magidigidi.)

12. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 642; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 204, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 50, evidence of Madikane; Mmemi, however, (J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 270) contradicts the bulk of the sources, claiming that the amaWombe and the isiPezi, were not married. In the amaWombe case, individual instances indicate that the unit contained both married and unmarried men. See p.390 below.
13. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 16, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 94, 95, 96, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 235, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of M'anga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 51-2, evidence of M'anga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 84, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 148, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 270-71, evidence of Mmemi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, item 2a, evidence of M'ayeza. It should be noted that another of Stuart's informants, Tununu considered the isiPezi to be a section of the amaWombe. (K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 83).
14. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 213, evidence of Kumalo.
15. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 642. On the Dubinhlangu, also see K.C., Essery Papers, 'AmaZulu', chapter 2, entitled 'Zulu Royal Regiments', p. 128.
16. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 642; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga.
17. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 642-43; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 304, 308, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 91, 93, evidence of Magidigidi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 9, item 13, evidence of Xubu; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Zulu Royal Regiments', p. 128.

18. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 46; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 28, evidence of Baleni; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 7, evidence of Mgidhlana.
19. H.C. Lugg, Historic Natal and Zululand, Pietermaritzburg, 1948, p. 112; Stuart, uKulumetule, p. 122; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 46.
20. Ibid., pp. 20, 46,
21. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 289; Krige, Social System, p. 161; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 108, evidence of Mgidhlana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 141, evidence of Mjobo.
22. It should be noted further that, on the death of its founder, Nobamba moved from its original site on the White Mfolozi, near the upper Mpembeni, and a small establishment called eMqekwini 'remained behind' at the old site. Under Jama, Nobamba was the residence of his chief wife, Mntaniya, and Senzangakhona was born there. This Nobamba was probably located on the Qanqato ridge, near the 'Munqwa' stream. Senzangakhona erected yet another Nobamba nearby, after the death and burial of his father at the previous Nobamba. This Nobamba was built on the Mthandane, a small tributary of the Mkhumbane. Finally, Shaka in his turn rebuilt Nobamba on the banks of the Mpembeni, very near to its former site. (K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Historical Documentation of the Valley of Mqangqatho', by Charles Mpanza, pp. 1-2; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 28, 29, 36, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 90, 94, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 159, evidence of Mkando; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 7, evidence of Mgidhlana; K.C., Essery Papers 'AmaZulu', chapter 13 entitled 'Royal Kraals'. p. 131; Bryant, Olden

Times, pp. 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, and the enclosed map; also see Report of E.G.H. Rössler, Assistant Magistrate, Babanango, 24 January, 1917, 'Sites of the Graves of Zulu Kings at Makosini', reproduced in Olden Times, p. 21; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, pp. 225, 257, 258; Fynn, Diary, p. 86; 'History of Chaka from the works of N. Isaacs and Lieutenant King, quoted by Isaacs', in Bird, Annals. p. 166.

23. See also, for example, the revival of Mfemfeni, an establishment of Senzangakhona's mother, which was 'reawakened' by one of Senzangakhona's sons, Nzibe, and still later again, revived for Nzibe, when Mpande gave it to Hamu. Similarly, eMqekwini was another old establishment which was 'reawakened' by Dingane as the name of his new residence after the boers burnt Mgungundhlovu. Also see the instance of the revival of Mlambongwenya, in J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 24, evidence of Baleni; Lugg, Historic Natal, p. 112; Stuart, uKulumetule, p. 122; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 22, 50; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 40, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 179, 189, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 91, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 252, evidence of Mayinga.
24. Lugg, Historic Natal, p. 117; Bryant, Olden Times, Rössler's report, p. 21; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 108, evidence of Mgidlana. Also see Stuart, uKulumetule, chapter 39.
25. Ibid.; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga.
26. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 69, evidence of Bikwayo.



27. See below, p. 446.
28. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga.
29. K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Some Places of Historical Importance in Natal and Zululand', by Thomas Dlamini, p. 1; Stuart, uKulumetule, chapter 39; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 61, evidence of Bikwayo; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga.
30. Lugg, Historic Natal, p. 112; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 40, evidence of Baleni. The essayist Mpanza who described the Makhosini at length was aware of its role in the creation of social cohesion, commenting thus on Nobamba, 'The name carries with it a special significance. It was called Nobriba for keeping the Zulus together, or 'catching the Zulus', ukubamba being a Zulu verb meaning 'to catch'.' (K.C., Essay Competition, 'Historical Documentation', pp. 1-2).
31. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 40, evidence of Baleni; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 11, 'Historical Notes', evidence of Socwatsha.
32. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 28, p. 19, evidence of Tununu.
33. Ibid.; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 11, 'Historical Notes', evidence of Socwatsha; also see K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 41, evidence of Baleni; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 476; Stuart, uKulumetule, chapter 20.
34. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 163, evidence of Mkando. On the age of the udibi see K.C., Stuart Papers,

- file 61, notebook 31, p. 3, evidence of Ndukwana, who notes that while some boys became udibi at a young age only the udibi over about fourteen would accompany the army on campaign. Also see Bryant, Zulu People, p. 494; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 128, evidence of Mini kaNdhlovu, who was himself an udibi, although after the death of Shaka.
35. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 496; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 355.
  36. Ibid.; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 187.
  37. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 355; Krige, Social System, p. 112; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 316, evidence of Mpatshana; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 31, pp. 3, 4, evidence of Ndukwana.
  38. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, pp. 355-56.
  39. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 145, evidence of Mkando; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 31, p. 3, evidence of Ndukwana.
  40. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 316, evidence of Mpatshana.
  41. Krige, Social System, p. 112.
  42. See, for example, the case of the Mbo, who were not butha'd into the Zulu army, but who were used as 'porters' (Isaacs, Travels, p. 78). Also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 21, evidence of Baleni, on carrier units.
  43. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 96, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 181, 182, evidence of Mandhlakazi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 96, evidence of Socwatsha.

44. Krige, Social System, pp. 109-11, Samuelson, pp. 237, 253; Döhne, Zulu-Kafir Dictionary, p. xv; I.S. Kubeka, 'A Preliminary Survey of Zulu Dialects in Natal and Zululand', unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Natal, Durban, 1979 pp. 1-2. On ear-incision, see below, pp. 347-49.
45. On the herding activities of inferior amabutho, see below pp. 358-60. Krige, Social System, p. 107; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 34, evidence of Baleni; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 31, evidence of Ndukwana.
46. J.S.A. Vol. 2, p. 251, evidence of Mayinga; K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Some Zulu Customs', by O.F. Gumbi, p. 3.
47. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 19, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga, also see editors' note 50, p. 261.
48. Bryant, Oiden Times, p. 124; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 252, evidence of Mayinga.
49. Ibid., pp. 246, 252.
50. Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 496, 497; Krige, Social System, p. 262; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 301, evidence of Mpatshana.
51. Fynn, Diary, pp. 284-85.
52. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 76, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 248, evidence of Mmeri.
53. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 76, evidence of Melapi.

44. Krige, Social System, pp. 109-12, Samuelson, pp. 237, 253; Döhne, Zulu-Kafir Dictionary, p. xv; I.S. Kubeka, 'A Preliminary Survey of Zulu Dialects in Natal and Zululand', unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Natal, Durban, 1979 pp. 1-2. On ear-incision, see below, pp. 347-49.
45. On the herding activities of inferior amabutho, see below pp. 358-60. Krige, Social System, p. 107; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 34, evidence of Baleni; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 31, evidence of Ndukwana.
46. J.S.A. Vol. 2, p. 251, evidence of Mayinga; K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Some Zulu Customs', by O.F. Gumbi, p. 3.
47. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 19, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga, also see editors' note 50, p. 261.
48. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 124; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 252, evidence of Mayinga.
49. Ibid., pp. 246, 252.
50. Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 496, 497; Krige, Social System, p. 262; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 301, evidence of Mpatshana.
51. Fynn, Diary, pp. 284-85.
52. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 76, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 248, evidence of Mmemi.
53. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 76, evidence of Melapi.

54. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 12, evidence of Baleka.
55. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age group formation', p. 27.
56. Ibid.
57. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 141.
58. Krige, Social System, p. 373. On Swazi circumcision see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 284, evidence of Mkonkoni.
59. I. Schapera, Bagwera Kgatla initiation, Phulthadikobo Museum Publications, Mochudi, 1978, p. 6.
60. Ibid., pp. 6, 7; G.M. Pitje, 'Traditional Systems of Male Education among Pedi and Cognate Tribes', African Studies, IX, No.'s 2, 3, 4, (1950), pp. 53-75, 105-24, 194-201.
61. Schapera, Bogwera, p. 7.
62. K.C., Essay Competition, essay by B. Buthelezi, p. 5; K.C., Essay Competition, essay by Gumbi, p. 2; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 98, evidence of Ndukwana; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 100, evidence of Dinya.
63. Ibid., Diary, p. 293; Krige, Social System, pp. 81-7; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 87, evidence of Magidigidi.
64. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 112.
65. Ibid.
66. Krige, Social System, pp. 81-7.
67. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 123; Lugg, Historic Natal, p. 124; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 40, evidence of Baleni; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 7, 'Historical Notes' evidence of Socwatsna.

68. Isaacs, Travels, p. 149; also see note 31 above; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Royal kraals', p. 132.
69. Isaacs, Travels, p. 49, also see p. 35; Fynn, Diary, pp. 71, 78; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 475; Krige, Social System, p. 42.
70. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 473; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 313, evidence of Mpatshana.
71. Fynn, Diary, p. 31; Isaacs, Travels, pp. 52, 64-5, 72-5, 157; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 473; Shooter, The Kafirs, p. 116.
72. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 124, 569, 643, 649; Isaacs, Travels, p. 85; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane. The Mdadasa ikhanda, about which little is known, was situated near inTonteleni. (K.C., Essery Papers, 'Royal kraals', p. 132.)
73. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 644, 645; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 236; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 180, 196, evidence of Janzshi; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 213, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 61, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 90, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 235, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 248-49, evidence of Mayinga; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 42, item 29, evidence of Ntshuku (?); K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 7, evidence of Socwatsha; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 2, p. 58, evidence of Mgcukana (?) The Gibbabanye was also known by the name of 'uPoko'. (J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 248, evidence of Mayinga).

74. Bryant claimed that the inDabenkulu was an ibutho of Senzangakhona's (Olden Times, pp. 643, 645), but other sources indicate that it was first 'raised' by Shaka. (Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 241; Isaacs, Travels, p. 100; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 213, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 94, 96, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 160, evidence of Mkando.)
- Maquza claimed that the Bhekenya was a section of the iziNyosi (J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 235), but this is unlikely for the Bhekenya participated in a campaign against the Thembu before the iziNyosi were butha'd. (J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 298, evidence of Lunguza)
75. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 642, 643, 645; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 236; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 188, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 113, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 90, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 175, evidence of Mandhiakazi; It is not absolutely certain whether they were banded together late in the reign of Shaka or early in that of Dingane (see, e.g. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 90, 91, 96, evidence of Magidigidi). They had all trained at esiKlebbeni. It seems to have been Shaka's policy to merge amabutho into larger divisions. In his reign, there were only two exceptions: the amabutho which were called-up just before his death, viz. the Dlangezwa and Ncobinga, which were not yet ready to merge; and the Fasimba, known to be exceptional in that they 'stood alone'. (Bryant, Olden Times, p. 645; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 31, evidence of Baleni.)

76. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Royal kraals', p. 132.
77. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, pp. 241, 247; Lugg, Historic Natal, p. 136; Fynn, Diary, p. 249; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 644, 645; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 299, 303, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 94, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 148, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 271, evidence of Mmemi.
78. Guy, 'Ecological factors', pp. 4-10.
79. Marks (1967) quoted in Hall, 'The Ecology of the Iron Age', p. 269.
80. Daniels, 'A Geographical Study of Pre-Shakan Zululand'.
81. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane.
82. On the importance of large timber reserves, see the discussion in Hall, 'The Ecology of the Iron Age' pp. 259-60; also see Isaacs description of the wooded reserves at the time, Travels, p. 49.
83. Isaacs, Travels, p. 53; Fynn, Diary, p. 131. This discussion draws on Hall's ecological data, 'The Ecology of the Iron Age', chapters 8 and 9.
84. Isaacs, Travels, p. 89, also see pp. 85, 103.
85. Figures drawn from Guy, The Destruction, map, p. 6.
86. Hall, 'The Ecology of the Iron Age', especially p. 253.



87. Quoted in Guy, The Destruction, p. 29.
88. See below, pp. 438-42, for a fuller discussion of agricultural production at the amakhanda.
89. On the rôle of the iziyendane, see below, p. 471. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 79, 83, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 37, evidence of Mbovu; Isaacs, Travels, pp. 245-46.
90. Ibid., p. 84.
91. Ibid., p. 140.
92. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 31, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 161, evidence of Makewu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 296, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 83, evidence of Melapi; Isaacs, Travels, p. 577; Grant, Zululand, p. 73; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 643; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Zulu Royal Regiments', p. 128.
93. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 661; Fynn, Diary, p. 156; K.C., Essery Papers, Ms. 1473, 'The Murder of Shaka Zulu'; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 232, 237, evidence of Maquza.
94. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 31, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 293, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 66, evidence of Mcoyoyi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 83, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 245, evidence of Mmemi.
95. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 541, 644; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 236; Fynn, Diary, p. 223; Isaacs, Travels, pp. 246, 260; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 53,

- evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 71, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 236, evidence of Maquza.
96. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga.
97. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 237, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 83, evidence of Melapi.
98. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 644; Isaacs, Travels, p. 89; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 83, evidence of Melapi.
99. Ibid.
100. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 544; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Royal Kraals', p. 132.
101. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 83, evidence of Melapi.
102. Isaacs, Travels, p. 182.
103. Doke and Viyakazi, Zulu-English Dictionary, pp. 379, 576; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Zulu Royal Regiments', pp. 128, 132.
104. Fuze, The Black People, p. 65; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 643, 644; Kunene, Emperor Shaka, p. xxv. There was another cattle post of the same name inland, near the Thukela. (Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 247; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 161, evidence of Makehu.)
105. Isaacs, Travels, p. 127; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, pp. 402-3; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 245, evidence of Mmemi.

106. I am grateful to John Wright for important insights in assessing the grazing capacity of this area.
107. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 41-5, 47, 89.
108. Isaacs, Travels, p. 45.
109. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 45, 77, 85, 86, 114; Fynn, Diary, p. 65; also see pp. 261, 476.
110. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 71-5; Fynn, Diary, pp. 83-6.
111. Kunene, Emperor Shaka, pp. 303-4.
112. Stuart, uKulumentule, chapter 2.
113. Isaacs, Travels, p. 77.
114. Fynn, Diary, pp. 87-8.
115. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 71-2.
116. Ibid., p. 119.
117. Guy, Destruction, pp. 36-7; see above, pp. 219, 222.
118. K.C., Essery Papers, 'Royal kraals', pp. 131, 132; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 181.
119. Ibid.; Fuze, The R... le, p. 62; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 230; evidence ... wana.
120. Ibid.; Guy, Destruction, pp. 36, 63, 72, 252.
121. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, p. 95, evidence of Ndukwana.

122. Guy, Destruction, p. 36.
123. See the izibongo lists in Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 681-97; and Bryant, Dictionary, pp. 748-51.
124. Guy, Destruction, p. 36.
125. Ibid., p. 37; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, pp. 95, 96, evidence of Ndukwana.
126. Guy, Destruction, p. 37; Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 214-16 Stuart, uKulumetule, p. 86; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 41, 42.
127. Guy, Destruction, p. 37.
128. Ibid., pp. 22, 36-7; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 42; C. Vijn, Cetshwayo's Dutchman, (ed) J.W. Colenso, London, 1880; p. 94.
129. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 642, also see p. 645.
130. Ibid., p. 59; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 199, evidence of Mandhlakazi, J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 202, 213, evidence of Mangat'.
131. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 24, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 189, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 52, evidence of Madikane;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 89, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 201, 211, 213, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 228, evidence of Manyonyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 257, evidence of Mayinga;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 129, evidence of Hini;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 151, 162, 166, evidence of Mkando;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 258, 260, 270, evidence of Mmemi.

132. See above, pp. 336-37.
133. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 91, evidence of Magidigi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 271, evidence of Mmemi.
134. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 157, 159; also see  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza.
135. Isaacs, Travels, p. 56; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago,  
pp. 237, 239; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of  
Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 148, evidence of Mkando;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 293, evidence of Mpambukelwa;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 318, 319, evidence of Mpatshana.  
An interesting comparison in terms of dress and  
status can be made with King Mpande's Thulwana  
ibutho, somewhat later. The Thulwana was made up  
of 'the Princes and nobility of Zululand ... the  
Select Ones', and were described as the 'best  
dressed' ibutho in all Zululand. (Samuelson,  
Long, Long Ago, p. 239).
136. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza.
137. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 643-45 Samuelson, Long, Long Ago,  
p. 235; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 33, evidence of Baleni;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 91, evidence of Magidigi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 215, evidence of Maquza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 177, evidence of Mkando;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 229, evidence of Mputshana;  
K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 83, 'Historical  
Notes', evidence of Ntshuku (?).
138. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 85, 94, evidence of Magidigi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 643.

139. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 597, and chapter 23; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 85, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 177, 180, evidence of Mandhlakazi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 249, 253, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 273, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 271, evidence of Mmemi; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Zulu Royal Regiments', p. 128.
140. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga.
141. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 204, 261.
142. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 103, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 180, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 61, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A. Vol. 2, p. 205, evidence of Mangati.
143. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 645; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 235; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 103, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 94, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 146, evidence of Nkando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 216, evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 270, evidence of Mmemi; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Zulu Royal Regiments', p. 128.
144. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 91, 94, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 177, 181, evidence of Mandhlakazi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, 'Historical Notes', evidence of Ndukwana.
145. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 47, evidence of Madilane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 271, evidence of Mmemi.
146. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, pp. 13, 24, 95, evidence of Socwatsha; K.C. Essery Papers, 'Royal Kraals', pp. 131, 132.

147. Near the confluence of the Mamba and Thukela, the presence of a huge island mid-river suggests that it would have been a major site for the crossing of large herds.
148. See above, p. 261.
149. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 252, evidence of Mayinga, also see above, p. 248.
150. See charts, pp.390-92 where of the nine izinduna whose own amabutho were known, four were of the emBelebele.
151. See below, p. 476; and note 155; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 199, 209, evidence of Mangati.
152. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza.
153. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 241.
154. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 643; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 103, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 85, 95, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 184, evidence of Mandhakazi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 250-51, 258, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 51, evidence of Mbulo; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 210, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp.268, 270, evidence of Mmemi.
155. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 14, 20, 26, evidence of Mabonsa; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 47, 57, 60, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 96, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 277, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Melapi;

- K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, pp. 13, 24, 95, evidence of Socwatsha; J. Wright and A. Manson, The Hlubi Chiefdom of Zululand - Natal, Ladysmith, 1983, pp. 21-4; Fynn, Diary, p. 131; Lugg, Historic Natal, p. 126; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 605. Also see note 164.
156. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 123, 643; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253, evidence of Mayinga.
157. D. Morris, The Washing of the Spears, London, 1966, p. 51.
158. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 125, 643; Isaacs, Travels, p. 65; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 8, evidence of Baleka; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 213, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 50, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 84, evidence of Melapi; also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 94, editors' note 1.
159. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 125, 643; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 8, evidence of Baleka; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 213, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 303, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 50, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 95, evidence of Magidigidi; Isaacs, Travels, p. 65; K.C., Essery Papers, 'Zulu Royal Regiments', p. 128. Also read J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 94, evidence of Dhlhozi in conjunction with Bryant, Olden Times, p. 683.
160. Guy, Destruction, pp. 11-12.
161. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age group formation', p. 27.
162. See below p. 434.



163. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 12, evidence of Baleka.
164. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 195, to be read in conjunction with p. 174, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 210, 215, evidence of Mkehlangana. Ndhlela's son Godide was born during Shaka's reign, (see J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 199, 201, 204, evidence of Mangati, where Mangati claims that Godide was born in Dingane's reign - but he contradicts himself, for Mangati himself was Godide's son, and was born in 1842. If Godide was born after Shaka's death, his son Mangati was born when Godide was only fourteen).
165. See above, p. 207.
166. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 35, 64, 129; Fynn, Diary, p. 30; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 586; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 85, evidence of Melapi.
167. Ibid.
168. Fynn, Diary, p. 30.
169. Isaacs, Travels, p. 35; Mayinga, (J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 253) claimed that the 'old men' were Zwide and his supporters, while Fuze (The Black People, p. 22) and Samuelson (Long, Long Ago, p. 247) claimed they were Mzilikazi and his followers. Nonetheless, all the accounts link the notions of 'old age', disability, cowardice and inadequacy.
170. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 174, 225-26; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 253-54, evidence of Mayinga. Also see above, pp. 293, 294.
171. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 54, 106, 134; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 22, evidence of Mabonsa.

172. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 180-81 evidence of Mandhlakazi.
173. Ibid., p. 179.
174. Ibid. p. 178.
175. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 108, 109, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 330, evidence of Lunguza.  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 179, 182, evidence of Mandhlakazi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 257-58, evidence of Mayinga;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 270, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 141, evidence of Mjobo.
176. A. Gardiner, Narrative of a Journey undertaken in Zulu Country, London, 1836, pp. 47, 94.
177. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 314, evidence of Lunguza.
178. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 100, 108, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 343, evidence of Lunguza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 297, evidence of Maziyana.
179. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 163, 164, evidence of Mkando.
180. See, for example, the case of Ndhlela, who was granted a large estate along the Thukela, at Mpaphala. By the 1870s his descendants dominated large tracts of land in the area. (Guy, Destruction, p. 28; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 59). Also see Zulu's estates, p. 179 above.
181. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 257, evidence of Mmemi.
182. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 25, evidence of Tununu.

183. Bryant, Olden Times and Zulu People;  
Fuze, The Black People.
184. Gardiner, Journey, p. 32; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 301;  
evidence of Mpatshana; K.C., Stuart Papers,  
file 58, notebook 17, evidence of Mtshopi;  
K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 30,  
p. 21, evidence of Mgidhlana.
185. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 301, evidence of Mpatshana.
186. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 594, 613; Fuze, The  
Black People, p. 50; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 246, 270,  
evidence of Mmemi.
187. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 179, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 197, evidence of Mpatshana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 196, evidence of Mcotoyi;
188. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 79, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 197, evidence of Mkebenti.
189. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 180, 190, evidence of Jantshi.
190. Ibid., p. 180; also see p. 132 above.
191. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 202-3.
192. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 150, evidence of Jantshi.
193. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 247, evidence of Mmemi.
194. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 611, 613;  
Fuze, The Black People, p. 64; see also the debate  
between two of Stuart's informants, Jantshi and  
Ndukwana on the precise status of Ngomane.  
(J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 190).

195. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 671; Fuze, The Black People, p. 50; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 61, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 43, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 55, 66, evidence of Mcofoyi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 217, evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 268, evidence of Mmemi.
196. See above p. 385.
197. See above p. 293.
198. Guy, Destruction, pp. 31, 32.
199. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 313, evidence of Mpatshana.
200. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 60; Guy, Destruction, p. 28; Fuze, The Black People, p. 117; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 259, evidence of Mayinga.
201. See chart p.390.
202. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 165, evidence of M'ando; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 301, 317, evidence of Mpatshana.
203. The office referred to in this column is of induna. The names that appear in the column are those of the amabutho over which the man was appointed as an induna. The names in brackets are the exact name given in the source, whereas the name outside the bracket is usually the mere appellation of that unit. Where the names of more than one ibutho appear, both being inside, or outside of the brackets, they reflect claims that the man was induna at two units. Wherever the sources have indicated that the induna was a senior officer, this is represented on the chart as 'head induna'.

204. The names in brackets reflect the specific term used in the source.
205. Names in brackets reflect the original usage in the source.
206. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 213, evidence of Mangati; also see above, p. 382.
207. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 91, 92, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 273, evidence of Maziyana; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, evidence of Socwatsha.
208. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 279; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 61, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 43, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 55, evidence of Mcotoyi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 217, evidence of Mkehlengana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 258, 268, evidence of Mmami also see above p. 386.
209. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 253-54, evidence of Mayinga, also see above, p. 293.
210. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 273, evidence of Maziyana.
211. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 659; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 268, evidence of Mmami.
212. Ibid.
213. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 258, 259, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, 268, evidence of Mmami.
214. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 18, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 212, evidence of Mangati;

J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 313, evidence of Mpatshana.  
Also see above p. 227.

215. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 195;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 8, evidence of Baleni;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 71, evidence of Mageza.
216. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 237, evidence of Maquza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 273, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 216, evidence of Mkehlengana.
217. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 107, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 180, evidence of Mandhlakazi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 273, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi;  
also see p. 227 above.
218. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 81, evidence of Magidi.
219. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 292, evidence of Lugubu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 90, evidence of Magidigidi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 226-27.
220. Ibid. pp. 217, 693; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 57,  
evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 243,  
258, evidence of Mmemi.
221. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 247, 252, 258, evidence of Mayinga;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 268, evidence of Mmemi;  
also see above p. 294.
222. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 102, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 181, evidence of Mandhlakazi;  
also see above p. 176-80.

223. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 227, evidence of Manyoryama.
224. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 91, 95, evidence of Magidigidi; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 685, to be read in conjunction with pp. 114-15.
225. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 100, evidence of Dinya.
226. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 112, evidence of Mahaya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 269, 270, evidence of Maziwana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 83, evidence of Melapi; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 526.
227. Ibid., p. 66; Kuxene, Emperor Shaka, p. 400.
228. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 184, evidence of Mandhlakazi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 237, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 19, evidence of Mbokodo; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi.
229. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 246, 254, evidence of Mayinga.
230. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 201, 202, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 37; Isaacs, Travels, p. 275; Fuze, The Black People, p. 171, editor's note 2.
231. Ibid., p. 81; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 102, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 88, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 245, 258, evidence of Mmemi.
232. See above p. 228.
233. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 429; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 165, evidence of Hayiyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi.

23. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 199, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 259, evidence of Mayinga;  
Fuze, The Black People, p. 117.
235. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 108, evidence of Dinya.
236. Ibid.
237. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 59; Stuart, uKulumetule,  
pp. 37-8; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 128, evidence of Mini;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 199, evidence of Magidigidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi; also see  
above p. 261.
238. Stuart, uKulumetule, p. 89; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 52,  
evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 109,  
evidence of Mgidhlana.
239. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 113; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 216,  
evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258,  
evidence of Mmemi.
240. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 355, evidence of Luzipo;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 201, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 227, evidence of Mkotana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi;  
Fuze, The Black People, p. 90.
241. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi.
242. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 257, evidence of Mayinga;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi.
243. Ibid., pp. 258, 268; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 217,  
evidence of Mkehlengana.



244. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 107.
245. Fuze, The Black People, p. 144; Cope, Izibongo,  
p. 202; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 213, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 179, evidence of Mkando;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 258, evidence of Mmemi.
246. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 103, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of Mbovu.
247. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 622.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

WOMEN'S LABOUR AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN THE EARLY ZULU STATE

In the previous chapter, consideration was given to the processes of socialization and integration into the new Zulu kingdom experienced by the bulk of Shaka's male subjects. This was largely effected, it was argued, through the amabutho system. The training of the amabutho at the ritually important amakhanda served to focus their loyalties on the person of the king, and created the perception that their welfare, and indeed, that of the nation, rested in the king's hands as the living representative of the Zulu ancestors. The amabutho system also served to locate individuals and groups within the social hierarchy, and to entrench and legitimate divisions between the privileged and unprivileged in the society. But what of the other half of the Zulu population not accommodated in the amabutho, the women? What were the ideological and material forms taken by their incorporation into the new nation?

Women, on the whole, remain hidden in the precolonial history of northern Nguni-speakers. The oral record consists primarily of formally recounted traditions, delivered by men, about men and concerning the male dominated spheres of politics and warfare. The history of women seems to be history of a different order to that of men, for although women undoubtedly recounted historical anecdotes in the domestic arena, they did

not do so at a public level. Similarly, the other source for the precolonial period, the accounts of the early traders in Zululand, contain only passing remarks on the position of women, for women's affairs and agricultural activities do not seem to have been their concern. There thus exists a dearth of direct evidence on the position of women in the early Zulu state.

One notable exception to the silence on precolonial women has been John Wright's seminal study of women and production in the Zulu kingdom.<sup>1</sup> Wright focuses on the oppression of Zulu women and the range of structural mechanisms by which a hierarchical and unequal relationship between men and women was maintained. He examines the ways in which a sexual division of labour was entrenched from childhood, and continually reinforced in marriage. He also examines the main forms of control exerted by men over the productive labour of women: men's positions as heads of households comprised of a number of rival segments; their monopolization of certain prerequisites for the households' subsistence - such as rituals for productivity, and iron manufacture; their management of cattle and dairy products; and their supervision of the main grain pits in the cattle enclosures to which women had only limited access.

The picture which emerges from Wright's study is one of the comprehensive control of women's labour in the homesteads which existed before the rise of the Zulu state. This, Wright suggests, would have intensified with the establishment under Shaka of

a powerful ideological and coercive state apparatus [which] would presumably have served to strengthen the position of the authority holders at all levels in the hierarchy of command, including that of the homestead head vis-a-vis his wives.<sup>2</sup>

Wright draws most of his evidence on the position of precolonial women from twentieth century ethnographic studies, and extrapolates backwards to illuminate aspects of the precolonial past for which there is little or no contemporary evidence. This unavoidably static model presents a number of problems. The development of capitalism in the intervening period eroded the position of women, and subjected them to a vast new array of disabilities, many of which are reflected in the ethnographic studies, but which are not pertinent to the precolonial period.<sup>3</sup> The identification and disentanglement of these later effects from earlier forms of subordination is a difficult exercise. The transition to capitalism also saw the demise of certain aspects of precolonial society, probably those aspects most integral to a precolonial 'state apparatus', the recovery of which constitute a further problem.<sup>4</sup>

These difficulties of evidence unavoidably colour the picture of precolonial women in the homesteads, but they are compounded by Wright's tendency to consider 'women' as a homogenous stratum within Zulu society, resulting in a picture of their generalized subordination to men. What Wright largely neglects is the position of women in state institutions. On this subject a relative abundance of information exists in contrast to the dearth of evidence on the position of women in precolonial homesteads, probably because of the powerful political character assumed by these institutions, especially under Shaka. In particular, an extensive body of historical data, as yet untapped, exists on the position of women leaders who participated actively in what were usually male spheres of action and who became influential political figures. Such evidence, pointing to distinctions of status amongst precolonial women, demands for the analysis of their

position, a focus on the interaction of gender and class.

Although never analysed in terms of social stratification, women in state institutions have not been wholly ignored by scholars. Henry Slater's early analysis suggested that centralized aggregates of women in the form of female amabutho, represented state labour gangs comparable to the male amabutho.<sup>5</sup> Slater's formulation has been criticised on two counts. Such evidence as there is on the activities of the female amabutho, argues Wright, seems to show that they were 'largely ceremonial in nature'.<sup>6</sup> Wright further questions the ability of the Zulu state to intervene in homestead life to remove women's labour on the same scale as it appropriated male labour, and doubts that there is sufficient evidence to support such a contention. Rather, he suggests, the female amabutho should be seen as a further means for implementing the marriage controls which characterized Zulu society under Shaka.

The other means by which women were centralized in the Zulu kingdom, through the izigodlo (sing. isigodlo), has received less attention. In their characterization of the izigodlo, early writers like Fynn, Isaacs, and later Bryant, described the izigodlo women as 'houris', 'the king's seraglio', 'harem' or his 'concubines', in language derived from an earlier imperial experience at the courts of eastern potentates.<sup>7</sup> Thus their accounts stress the comeliness, grace and beauty of the women, suggesting these as the criteria for their selection to office. They contain extensive descriptions of their dancing abilities, details of their attire, and accounts of their performance of personal and domestic services for the king. These, it was implied, were all for the sensual gratification of the king.

The whole time of the inmates of the main seraglio is taken up in decorating themselves according to the king's fanciful tastes and attending on him. Shaka usually passed his evenings with these girls often by joining in the dances and himself dancing in the centre of those dancing. They dressed in accordance with the modes in vogue at the respective seraglios they had come from. Such costumes were superb and far beyond anything the reader would imagine after taking into consideration the apparent absence of articles which would seem to be necessary for creating grand effects.<sup>8</sup>

The oral testimonies of Zulu informants are similarly limited on the subject of the izigodlo, a consequence of the many associated taboos and avoidances, and the great respect and deference afforded to its inmates. Only the king's favourites were permitted to address them, while the izigodlo areas could be entered solely with the king's permission, and even then, a man was expected to keep his eyes averted from the women.<sup>9</sup> It seems that most people were deliberately kept in ignorance of izigodlo matters.

The restrictions imposed on the movement and conduct of the izigodlo members were interpreted in the early travellers accounts and mission reports, along with the practice of polygamy, as evidence of the total abuse of Zulu womanhood. The so-called 'seraglios' were considered particularly heightened forms of such exploitation and evidence of the moral degeneracy of the Zulu monarchy. A closer look at the evidence shows that this emphasis on concupiscence was misplaced. While unmarried Zulu kings may have selected paramours from amongst the extensive ranks of the izigodlo, their functions extended beyond that of concubinage. Wright, for example, has argued that the izigodlo, as establishments of young women whom the king could dispose of in marriage as he wished, were primarily a source of royal patronage.<sup>10</sup>

However, the issues of both control over marriage through the amabutho, and the extension of royal patronage through isigodlo marriages, were responsive to changing historical conditions in a manner not accounted for by the structural-functionalism of either Slater's or Wright's models. One significant historical shift of which they take no account, was from the limitation of marriages of women in state institutions under Shaka, to their encouragement in the time of Dingane. This move was a response to the political instability of Dingane's reign, and a need for the extension of royal patronage through strategic marriage alliances. Consequently, Dingane's reign, in contrast to that of Shaka, is remembered for the low numbers of women in centralized state institutions.<sup>11</sup> An historical perspective therefore demonstrates a connection between limited royal patronage and expanded women's state institutions, and vice-versa. However, the exceptionally high numbers of women in Shaka's izigodlo and amabutho, and the low numbers under Dingane, cannot be accounted for solely in terms of patronage functions and marriage controls.

While the extensive marriages of Dingane's reign raise problems about the role of the amabutho in controlling marriage in that period, the same difficulty does not arise for the Shakan period when marriages were limited. The problem posed for the reign of Shaka is rather that of establishing the purposes of the izigodlo, beyond that of the extension of patronage through marriage. To answer this, we need to look more closely at the izigodlo themselves: at differentiation within the isigodlo, as well as the position of the izigodlo women vis-a-vis the rest of Zulu society.

Used locatively, the word isigodlo refers to the royal

reserve occupying a large segment at the upper end of the royal homestead, opposite the main entrance and across the cattle fold from it.<sup>12</sup> Significantly it dominated the settlement. Access to this area was strictly limited, and it was screened from the rest of the settlement by a high fence.<sup>13</sup>

Within, the isigodlo was divided into the black reserve ('isigodlo esiMnyama') and the white reserve ('isigodlo esiMhlope'), separated from each other by a fence. The black reserve housed the senior women of the isigodlo. Their numbers were made up of any royal women resident at the establishment, as well as the senior women of a specially designated section of the isigodlo known as the umndlunkulu. When in residence, the king slept in the black reserve.<sup>14</sup> The white reserve was, in turn, divided into two. On one side of the white reserve were the 'imvoko', a term usually translated as 'royal children'. Their ranks seem to have included the youngest additions to the isigodlo from outside the royal family, for the term is one also commonly applied to wards or dependents.<sup>15</sup> Baleni, one of Stuart's informants, described the imvoko as a section of the isigodlo made up of girls who did not bear children.<sup>16</sup> On the other side of the white reserve were the huts occupied by the remainder of the umndlunkulu women. These women were younger, less-favoured and lower-ranking than the umndlunkulu women of the black reserve. Samuelson described them as 'maids-in-waiting' as opposed to the 'maids-of-honour' of the black reserve.<sup>17</sup> The umndlunkulu women of the white reserve were also referred to as izigqila, a term normally applied to captives taken in battle and subsequently brought up in their captor's home.<sup>18</sup> Izigqila were also taken from homesteads within the kingdom destroyed for becoming overmighty.<sup>19</sup> It is likely therefore, that there was a distinction between



those umndlunkulu who were voluntarily sent to the izigodlo, and those who were included by force. The latter section appears to have been a harder labouring group, paralleling the status of the iziggila in the homesteads who performed menial tasks. The distinctions in status between the women of the various sections of the isigodlo were marked by differences of dress. Likewise all the women of the izigodlo were distinguished by their ornaments from the rest of the women in the Zulu kingdom.<sup>20</sup>

As was the case with the men's amabutho, the centralization and ranking of women in the izigodlo served to emphasize and entrench social stratification. Likewise, the izigodlo manifested considerable internal diversification. Two significant forms of differentiation have been identified: between the royal women of the isigodlo and the non-royal umndlunkulu; and between the privileged senior women in the umndlunkulu and the menial labouring women.

The overlap in the designation of a section of the izigodlo as the umndlunkulu, and the use of the term indlunkulu (and in some texts, 'umndlunkulu') for the chief 'hut' in a homestead, suggests that a parallel might usefully be drawn between the homestead, i.e. localised social relations, and wider, state organization, and in particular, Shaka's umndlunkulu. It seems that the assiduous chronicler of Zulu affairs, the Rev. A.T. Bryant, may have made this connection, albeit intuitively, when he translated the umndlunkulu of the king's isigodlo, as the 'Great Hut Troupe', employing thus the idiom of the homestead to describe something that had been transformed into a state institution.<sup>21</sup> The parallels between the two establishments were not limited to the associated terminology.

A king or a wealthy man normally married a large number of wives and had numerous offspring. Thus his family would have included substantial numbers of young women whom he could dispose of in marriage. These marriages were a source of lobola for the father, and the means of creating alliances with other families. His sons, by contrast, remained within the family, and were often a source of division within the family. Both Shaka and Dingane however, expressly eschewed marriage and heirs, largely because the practice of polygamy tended to be a divisive factor subverting the cohesion required by a strong central authority. The absence of offspring would however have limited the extension of Zulu influence, and the potential for enrichment through favourable lobola transactions. It will be suggested that one of the functions of the izigodlo under Shaka was to fill this vacuum.

The way in which this occurred can best be grasped by referring back once again to the homestead. At that time, it was also common practice for a king or wealthy man to augment his polygamous domestic establishment through the system of ethula. Within the homestead, each hut affiliated to the indlunkulu (or chief) section of the homestead gave 'tribute' to the chief wife of that section under the system of ethula, either in the form of some cattle, or the promise of the lobola of one of its daughters (this was particularly the case where the indlunkulu hut provided the lobola cattle for a new wife, in another hut). Likewise in the iqadi, yet another section of the homestead, the affiliated huts paid 'tribute' to their chief wife, who in turn through the ethula system paid 'tribute' to the indlunkulu.<sup>22</sup>

Ukwethula is primarily a domestic feudal obligation on the part of junior to senior houses on the same side of the kraal and denotes the transfer of the eldest daughter of each house and the cattle received from her marriage to the head of its own particular section, ikholwa or umndlunkulu.<sup>23</sup>

Dependents would enter into an ethula arrangement in much the same way as they would take sisa cattle and would be bound closely to their patrons in whose debt they were then placed.<sup>24</sup> Through ukwethula a wealthy man could accumulate a large collection of his dependent's daughters, who would be brought up in his household, attached to the umndlunkulu section, and who were his to dispose of in marriage.

Zulu informants describing the king's umndlunkulu employ the same terminology used in the homestead, saying that girls were 'ethula'd' to the king,<sup>25</sup> which suggests that a similar system existed at state level. In defining the word umndlunkulu, Doke and Vilakazi describe them as girls 'of royal blood', 'maids-of-honour' in the royal household sent to the king as tribute by prominent chiefs, who waited on the king's wives, until married with the king's permission to some high official.<sup>26</sup> Bryant suggests that the umndlunkulu were accumulated from the gifts of 'favour currying sycophants'.<sup>27</sup> Other sources suggest it was the king's right to choose, according to his 'taste', the women for the umndlunkulu,<sup>28</sup> and there are indications that their numbers were also made up from raid booty.<sup>29</sup> The term umndlunkulu seems therefore to refer specifically to the ethula'd women in the izigodlo.

Evidence of the presence of young children in the isigodlo, who could not, on pain of death, have been the offspring of the secluded isigodlo women, seems to confirm that female children were given to the king under the ethula system, in a manner closely paralleling

its operation in the homestead.<sup>30</sup> In a homestead the first daughter of a marriage taken as due under the ethula system, would be reared as a daughter of that household. She joined it at the age of about six and grew up to think of herself as being part of that family and clan. Similarly, captives taken in battle were subject to the same sort of total incorporation.<sup>31</sup>

A foundling is grafted into the family it joins and takes their isibongo. Should it be old enough to know its real isibongo this will not prevent the adoption of the new family isibongo, it will only affect it with regard to marriage.<sup>32</sup>

This mechanism of incorporation applied equally on a state level and provided the means for the small Zulu ruling elite to expand its numbers, without the marriage of the king, since the umndlunkulu were attached to the ruling lineage in the same way that foundlings were adopted into an ordinary homestead. This explains the apparent contradiction in the Doko and Vilakazi definition of the umndlunkulu, consisting at once of girls who were 'of' the royal house, yet were 'given' as tribute by subjects.

In this way, the umndlunkulu fulfilled the functions usually performed by a married king's wives, daughters and other female dependents. The major distinction between the umndlunkulu women and real daughters of the Zulu royal house however, lay in the fact that they were differently affected by the rules of exogamous marriage; in other words, the women of the umndlunkulu were a source of marriageable options open to members of the Zulu ruling elite within its wider limits, as occurred when Nomantshali kaZigwana of the Ntuli, a member of Shaka's umndlunkulu, married Mpande and bore Mthonga.<sup>33</sup> This meant that the effective monopolization of wealth and resources by a small group could occur despite exogamous marriage practices.

Where umndlunkulu girls married out of the ruling elite, they brought in high lobola as did royal daughters. They also brought Zulu influence to bear on the clan into which they married. This sphere of influence is investigated by Lancaster, who suggests that where the first daughter of a marriage is substituted for bridewealth, elders tend to retain control over their woman, and her descendants.<sup>34</sup> This suggests that the Zulu ruling lineage could expect to monitor and influence events in a clan into which an umndlunkulu girl had married. Furthermore, umndlunkulu women usually received substantial 'dowries' in the form of endisa cattle, which ensured them substantial independence of action in their new homes.<sup>35</sup> The high lobola demanded for an umndlunkulu girl encouraged further ethula arrangements, and also conferred greater status on her, outwardly demonstrated by the four brass neck rings which were the privilege of the umndlunkulu to wear.<sup>36</sup> This mark of favour was conferred by the king, and for the rest, the high rank of the umndlunkulu was due to their position vis-a-vis the monarch, as his wards, a relationship expressed in the kinship idiom of 'sisters'.

Like many other institutions in Zulu society, the izigodlo had antecedents in earlier chiefdoms, such as the Mthethwa, the Chunu, the Qwabe, 'the clan of Mjezi' and the Zulu before the accession of Shaka. Where a chief, such as Dingiswayo, extended his authority over other chiefdoms, the izigodlo of the subordinate chiefdoms were appropriated by the paramount.<sup>37</sup> It seems therefore that the extension of control over centralized aggregates of women predated the rise of the Zulu kingdom, and characterized the expansion of a king's authority even where such kings were married. The extension of the izigodlo in these societies seems to have broadly paralleled the emergence of the amabutho system amongst the pre-Shakan states.

The first mention of an umndlunkulu within the izigodlo however refers to the reign of Shaka. Moreover, under Shaka, the numbers of women involved were much greater than ever before, and well above the levels accounted for by diplomatic needs, or for that matter, necessary to perform the domestic labour of the king's household. Fynn estimated that Shaka's izigodlo comprised between five and ten thousand, and pointed out that many members only glimpsed Shaka once in three years,<sup>38</sup> whilst Bryant maintained that there were between twenty and two hundred women at every ikhanda.<sup>39</sup>

In order to account for the enormous extension of the izigodlo under Shaka, let us turn back to the comparison with the organization of the homestead. Zulu society, was marked by a strict sexual division of labour,

Able-bodied women and girls were primarily responsible for agricultural production and for domestic labour, including the rearing of children. Women also manufactured pottery and mats, thatched houses and did most portering work. Able-bodied men and youths were responsible for the husbandry of livestock, for building and repairing the framework of houses and the fences of homesteads. Men alone manufactured articles of wood, iron (this being the field of specialists), and basketry, and tanned hides. They were also expected to clear bush and long grass from land intended for agricultural use, and to cut bushes for fencing fields.<sup>40</sup>

The historical record indicates that the women of the izigodlo performed many of the tasks of women in the homesteads.

The girls used to leave the isigodhlo, three and four at a time, to cultivate the fields. When there was amabele (sorghum) to be carried from the gardens one might see a large number of girls going out to fetch it.<sup>41</sup>

In particular, they were credited with working the 'king's fields', their own fields and 'imphi grounds' and with brewing the 'king's beer'.<sup>42</sup> However, their numbers were well in excess of the labour necessary

for the maintenance of the immediate royal household. From the accounts of the early traders and of Stuart's informants it is clear that the activities of these women extended to the provisioning of the king's 'guests'.

The isigodhlo girls used to occupy themselves by making beer and food. They brewed the beer. This beer would be drunk by the king and by other people: i.e. those called to the king's hut or those seated at the men's assembly place in the cattle enclosure.<sup>43</sup>

Just how far this 'hospitality' extended, and just how agriculturally productive the izigodlo were, is not clearly indicated by the oral record.

The lack of evidence on the scale of the agricultural activities of the izigodlo has been read as indicative of their relative unimportance. However, the traditions of the northern Nguni-speakers were typically not concerned with issues like the agricultural production of women, either inside or out of the izigodlo. This silence on agriculture in the oral record is reflected in the neglect of agricultural production by scholars of the Zulu kingdom. Any discussion of agricultural practices under Shaka, must therefore draw on indirect evidence from a range of sources, and, for want of conclusive data, must be tentative.

The corollary of the silence on agriculture has been an emphasis on cattle keeping, although for slightly different reasons, in both the testimonies of Zulu informants and the accounts of scholars of that society. This has resulted in the notion that the Zulu army survived largely on the cattle slaughtered for it by the king. This was, however, a mark of prestige, and a form of conspicuous consumption.<sup>44</sup> Although there are no direct statements on the frequency with which cattle were slaughtered in Shaka's time, in the reign of Dingane, when the slaughter of cattle was held

to have been greater than ever before, cattle were slaughtered at the capital in 'small droves', of about ten at a time.<sup>45</sup> The slaughter of cattle for the amabutho occurred only 'two or three times a month',<sup>46</sup> or, as Lunguza, one of Stuart's informants implies, even more irregularly.<sup>47</sup> Mkando, another of Stuart's informants observed of meat consumption at the capital that 'one had to fight for one's food in the Zulu country. You would get nothing unless you did. This would take place when beasts were killed ...'<sup>48</sup> It seems that this kind of slaughter was confined to the capital, or the place where the king was then resident.<sup>49</sup>

The occasions when cattle were slaughtered for all the amabutho were when they were called up for service, after battle, and on ritual occasions.<sup>50</sup> Slaughtering in the traditions was most often mentioned in the latter context. Krige, in fact, argued that cattle in Zulu society were more important for their ritual than their economic value.<sup>51</sup> Guy is probably closer to the mark in locating the importance of cattle in his observation that in 'Zulu society, there was no large scale production of any form of permanent storable wealth: in other words, it was not possible for surplus labour to be materialized in any permanent storable form, that is, with the exception of cattle'.<sup>52</sup> 'Our great bank is cattle', commented Mbovu.<sup>53</sup> Cattle were thus the primary form of transferable wealth in Zulu society, and were not likely to have been slaughtered wholesale in the numbers necessary to sustain the entire Zulu army over time.

Grain must therefore have been an important aspect of the amabutho's diet. One indication of this is the frequent crises which arose when armies on campaign were deprived of corn supplies.<sup>54</sup> It has generally



been assumed that the grain needs of the amakhanda were provided for from the homesteads of the men based there.<sup>55</sup> This was probably the case whenever the amakhanda were located in reasonable proximity to the men's homesteads. Shaka's Njanduna ibutho, made up of Cele, had its ikhanda in Cele country.<sup>56</sup> Presumably it was supplied from the surrounding Cele homesteads. However, in most instances, this does not appear to have been the case. Insofar as the amabutho were age-sets or status units, they incorporated men of widely different localities, which meant that no matter where an ikhanda was situated, it was not likely to be readily accessible to the families of more than a small percentage of the men.<sup>57</sup> With the exception of the Njanduna, where an ibutho was made up of men from a single clan or chiefdom, it was invariably posted at the opposite end of the kingdom to its home area. Thus the iziYendane ibutho of the northern Hlubi manned the southernmost cattle posts in Natal,<sup>58</sup> while the Mpiyaka ibutho, taken from the Mbo chief Zihlandhlo, resident on the Thukela, was quartered far to the north in Mhlabatini country.<sup>59</sup>

Furthermore, it would have been both difficult and hazardous for young girls to have undertaken the long journeys necessary without escorts. The terrain was broken by interminable, wide, crocodile-filled rivers, which were at best difficult to cross and which entailed continual ascent and descent of their valleys. As a consequence of the ravages and dislocation of continual war, the countryside was full of refugees, vagrants and even cannibals.<sup>60</sup> It is also difficult to see how the labour-power of those girls left at home (i.e. not drafted into the female amabutho or one of the izigodlo) could be spared for long periods and at great risk, from homesteads already debilitated by the departure of males over fourteen. David Hedges

has pointed out that high transport costs all over Zululand in this period, meant that a high volume trade in food was not viable.<sup>61</sup>

The homesteads surrounding the amakhanda did supply some of the products necessary for the maintenance of the army, often in the form of tribute.<sup>62</sup> However, in the 1820s first Qwabe, and then Cele country was extensively settled by the Zulu army and local populations would not have been able to meet the demands of supplying the highly centralized army.<sup>63</sup> The gap was at least partially closed by the use of amabutho labour. As was discussed in chapter five, the lands in which the amabutho successively settled were extremely fertile, and diminishing external pressures released their labour for agricultural labour. This productive role of the amabutho has been much stressed in the recent literature but the timing and specific location of its deployment has never been closely scrutinised.<sup>64</sup> One of the main arguments of this chapter is that while the labour of the amabutho was important, it was only important at specific times in the agricultural cycle, and that much that was crucial to provisioning at the capital and the amakhanda, was provided by the associated izigodlo. A close inspection of the crop regime and agricultural cycle of Shaka Zululand must thus be undertaken.

The coastal plain into which the amakhanda shifted was eminently suitable for maize production because of the overall high rainfall and highly fertile soils.<sup>65</sup> Although it seems that maize only became the dominant crop in the mid-nineteenth century, it was nonetheless cultivated in the lowlands in Shaka's time, apparently in small pockets.<sup>66</sup> The staple crops were rather amabele (sorghum) and uphoko (eleusine millet, used in

the making of 'beer'). Both of these crops were considerably more drought resistant than maize, an important factor given the periodic droughts experienced by the Zululand region. They also had a longer storage life than maize.<sup>67</sup> It seems, therefore, that a complex, mixed cereal production pattern prevailed, with the quick maturing maize being planted in a few select superior sites, such as at the mouth of the Mhlathuze; and on river banks, where residual moistness permitted planting before the first summer rains.<sup>68</sup>

The early maize crop would have yielded by mid-summer, the period known to the Zulu as the 'uNgcala-mkwekazi' moon, when 'a man's mother-in-law goes to visit her married daughter to ask for (cela) maize. She does so because she sees that people are now eating new maize.'<sup>69</sup> Maize thus provided an interim crop to augment the diminishing supplies of the previous season. After the first rains had fallen, usually in September known as 'uMandulo', 'the first-fields moon',<sup>70</sup> the main inland gardens were prepared, and sown with amabele and uphoko.

The ethnographic evidence indicates that the peak period in the agricultural cycle in terms of labour occurred in mid-summer, when the small maize crop had to be harvested, and when the major fields in which the new crops were sprouting and beginning to ripen had to be weeded and protected against birds and animals. This was the period which saw maximum male participation in the fields. It culminated in the great umkhosi, the centralized first-fruits ceremony which all the amabutho attended, as did representatives of the rest of the nation.<sup>71</sup>

The umkhosi demonstrated the king's control over agricultural production, his responsibilities to ensure

a good harvest and adequate rainfall through his intercession with the ancestors as their direct and living representative.

The king is thus the leader in all agricultural operations, and at certain times, such as at the sowing of the seed and the eating of the first-fruits, he is strengthened with medicines so as to ensure a good harvest. Indeed, on no occasion is the king's position as representative of the tribe as a whole, and as a person on whom the strength of the army and success of the crops depends, more clearly seen than at the First Fruit Ceremonies.<sup>72</sup>

Little data exists on the umkhosi under Shaka, but the ceremony can be illuminated through comparison with its better known Swazi counterpart, the incwala. It is significant that an important aspect of the Swazi ceremony was the weeding of the fields of the Queen-mother, the king, and the other 'queens' by the amabutho, a point corroborated briefly for the Zulu in Bryant's description of the umkhosi.<sup>73</sup> It seems thus that the mid-summer period around the umkhosi saw the gathering of the amabutho at the central amakhanda and their concerted participation in centralized agricultural production for a period of about twenty days, under the immediate command of the king.<sup>74</sup> At the end of the umkhosi, the 'royal mind was made known on foreign affairs', the following campaigning season was planned, and the nation's affairs were debated in the umpakathi, a meeting of the men of the land.<sup>75</sup> Thereafter, the men dispersed from the capital, apparently not to gather again en masse until late February-March, when the major campaigns were embarked on.<sup>76</sup>

Both uphoko and amabele took some six months to mature. This suggests that the bulk of the harvesting, winnowing and storing of the crops occurred when the men of the amabutho and the udibi were not at the main amakhanda, and indicates that the role of women

in the agricultural production of the amakhanda was of major importance.

Direct evidence to support this is both elusive and suggestive. Informant John Kumalo commented to Stuart that while men used to work in the gardens along with their wives prior to the reign of Shaka,

Tshaka ... terrible tyrant that he was, diverted the natural inclinations of men by establishing what was practically the whole people into a standing army. This spirit of aggressiveness caused men, when they were not actually engaged in battle, to lead a more or less indolent existence, casting the duty of labour chiefly upon women.<sup>77</sup>

The significance of women's agricultural labour, and in particular that of the izigodlo, is more concretely indicated by the large grain stores attached to the izigodlo within the amakhanda. Described as the 'kraals of the king's grain', the best known of these were the 'Cele store at Bulawayo, 'Beje' at Mgungundhlovu, and 'Vemvaneni' at Mhlambongwenya. Access to these stores was only possible through the izigodlo.<sup>78</sup>

These points suggest that the women in the izigodlo across the country, undertook agricultural production for the king, and through him, for his court, his diplomatic visitors, people who had come to khonza (i.e. to tender their allegiance), visiting amabutho, and the units based at the amakhanda.<sup>79</sup> It

was most likely that this was made available primarily in the form of 'beer', brewed within the izigodlo. Fynn saw pots for beer brewing in the possession of the chief women of the izigodlo, which made over sixty gallons each.<sup>80</sup> According to Gardiner, who visited Zululand just after the death of Shaka, the amabutho received 'beer' in the morning, which they consumed together in the central enclosure of the ikhanda.<sup>81</sup> Krige noted that the warriors did not eat amasi (the soured milk staple in Zulu society), which could only

be eaten amongst one's family, but 'meat, beer and cooked mealies'.<sup>82</sup> The beer, she claimed, was made 'from the grain grown in the king's fields at the ikhanda...'.<sup>83</sup>

Under Dingane, however, izigodlo numbers were drastically reduced, and it was claimed that girls were no longer 'specially called up, as in Tshaka's day' to the amakhanda, but instead, that they used to 'carry food' to Mgungundhlovu.<sup>84</sup> This suggests that the reign of Shaka may have seen a far greater centralization of food production than that of his successors. While it was claimed that Dingane was generous with cattle, it was said that 'Tshaka used to be liberal in giving food'.<sup>85</sup>

It seems that, through the large izigodlo, the reign of Shaka saw a concentration of agricultural labour, and its products in the hands of the king. This would have provided a source of direct control over the men of the amabutho who were forbidden from entering the izigodlo on pain of death.<sup>86</sup> This argument is strongly supported by the presence of an izigodlo at every one of Shaka's amakhanda; and the parallel development and expansion of the izigodlo and the amabutho.<sup>87</sup>

In order to fully appreciate the significance of royal controls exerted through the izigodlo, it is necessary to examine the remaining sections of the izigodlo. The izigodlo were not made up only of women. They also harboured within their walls certain men. These included members of the royal family, and a special category of non-royal men, known as the izinceku (sing. inceku). Although neither eunuchs nor of a great age, the izinceku were permitted free access to the izigodlo where ordinary men entered only at the command of the king. The izinceku were exempted from military service,

although they were required to act as guards of the izigodlo.<sup>88</sup> They were essential to the autonomy of the izigodlo within the amakhandu, carrying out the activities which were traditionally performed by men only, such as the milking of the izigodlo cattle.<sup>89</sup> They attended the umphakati (meeting of important men for the settlement of disputes) where they exerted influence on behalf of the izigodlo.<sup>90</sup> They performed the necessary heavy labour of clearing bush, and of building. They frequently acted as the personal agents, messengers and spies of the izigodlo women.<sup>91</sup>

The izinceku were mostly refugees or individuals who had sought the protection of the Zulu king, and whose loyalties were due to his person. The izinceku were drawn into the extended royal lineage through mechanisms similar to those at work on the umndlunkulu, and in much the same way that dependents in small homesteads were absorbed.<sup>92</sup>

Since the izinceku were attached to the royal household as individuals, they depended directly on the ruling lineage for advancement. The oral record abounds with stories of izinceku who gained high positions through their loyalty to the Zulu royal house.<sup>93</sup> They were frequently rewarded with appointments as izinduna and placed in charge of amabutho where they represented the interests of the ruling group with which they were so closely associated. They did not draw support from the ranks of the men that they commanded, but from above, from the king to whom they owed their position. Izinceku were amongst the primary recipients of marks of the king's favour and were, to a large extent, free from the usual retribution that success drew from the state, in the burning of wealthy establishments, and the murder of over-influential subjects.<sup>94</sup> Often of shadowy origins, and evoking little comment

in the literature, the izinceku were nonetheless a vital component of the izigodlo, operating as one of the most public arms of the household corps, closely linked into the administration of the state and to the person of the king.

The isigodlo at each ikhanda was thus the local nerve centre of royal administration. The izigodlo contained huts for audiences,<sup>95</sup> and the king's own quarters, while the quarters of the most important men were found closest to the izigodlo.<sup>96</sup> This concentration gave the izigodlo a sense of being an inner cabal of limited access - the hub of the nation - where future events were determined.

The final major component of the izigodlo comprised the amakhosikazi - the older women, usually of royal blood - who were placed in charge of both the isigodlo and the ikhanda at which they were based.<sup>97</sup> As such, they were the chief figures amongst the royal administrative corps in the locality. The power of these women depended on their dual position as heads of both the izigodlo and the amakhanda, and it was through their offices that the two institutions were separately maintained. The amakhosikazi were responsible for the maintenance of izigodlo security and the enforcement of the range of taboos surrounding the izigodlo which was the basis of this division. The measures taken to separate the men of the amakhanda from the women included the use of 'night-police', escorts and high palisaded fences.<sup>98</sup> Through their control over the izigodlo, the amakhosikazi exerted a direct royal monopoly over access to the products of women's agricultural labour, and its redistribution to the men of the amakhanda. Gardiner described these leaders thus,



The appellation Incosa-case (literally female chief) is applied to all women of high rank, many of whom, from the practice of polygamy are to be met with in every part of the country. These as well as the immediate relations of the King are generally placid as pensioners, one or two together, in the different military towns, where they preside, and are particularly charged with the distribution of provisions.<sup>99</sup>

The amakhosikazi also enforced controls over the marriages of the women of the izigodlo. The latter were considered to be of high status. They were valued by the king because of the high lobola which they commanded, and by the men whom they married because of the associated prestige, and the links forged through such a marriage with the Zulu rulers.<sup>100</sup> The amakhosikazi occupied thus a pivotal position between two of the most important institutions of state, as the direct representatives of royal power.

Mnkabayi kaJama, paternal aunt of Shaka and Dingane, was perhaps the most important prominent and powerful ikhanda - head ever. Her praise poem suggests that she wielded great power and influence, and was personally responsible for the destruction of many personages and groups of people. She was known to be a cunning plotter, 'the father of guile'.<sup>101</sup> She was also known to advance careers and protect those whom she favoured.

Mnkabayi's praise poem refers in two places to the Zulu ancestors from whom she, as a daughter of Jama, drew her authority. The ideological emphasis was a key feature of control by the amakhanda-heads over the izinduna under them. Propitiation of ancestral spirits was crucial to the successful pursuit of war, and war was increasingly becoming a way of life, 'the only ancestral clan gods (amakosi) that mattered now, since the foundation of the Zulu "nation", were those of the

Zulu clan.<sup>102</sup> The preparations for the amabutho to go to war centered on Mnkabayi. First they were treated by the king's doctors, then they proceeded to the Makhosini, to the graves of the kings. Finally, they wound their way down to Mnkabayi's establishment,

War has in the past had its seat in Mnkabayi's Mahlabaeni kraal. When the men of that place take the field, it is generally known that war has broken out in the land in earnest.<sup>103</sup>

Mnkabayi also ruled at Nobamba and at esiKlebheni.<sup>104</sup> Thus she controlled the areas central to the major rituals associated with war, rain, the agricultural cycle and the training camps of the amabutho.<sup>105</sup> Her sisters, Mawa and Mmama, were also amakhosikazi of great prestige and power.<sup>106</sup>

Certain of the surviving wives of Senzangakhona likewise became important amakhosikazi under Shaka, although they were not themselves of the ruling lineage. Pre-eminent amongst their ranks was Nandi, the mother of Shaka, who ruled at Nyakamubi and Ndulinde, and was in charge of the iziYendane ibutho. She had the power to put people to death.<sup>107</sup> Another was Langazana kaGubetshe of the Sibiya, who had been Senzangakhona's chief wife. At various times, she ruled at esiKlebheni, Zembeni, Mkonjeni, Ndlawayini and iNfonteleni. She was known to have had 'many followers'.<sup>108</sup>

Politically, the amakhosikazi were extremely powerful. When Shaka returned to the Zulu on the death of his father, to claim the chieftaincy, it was his three paternal aunts, Mnkabayi, Mmama and Mawa who ensured his successful candidature. They rejected the designated heir Sigujana in favour of Shaka on the grounds that Mphikase, mother of Sigujana, was not a woman of rank, whereas Nandi, daughter of Mbhengi was.<sup>109</sup> After the assassination of Shaka, and the murder of Mhlangana, both of which Mnkabayi was credited with

engineering,

She was summoned either to Dukuza or Bulawayo. She was dressed as a man. She had a white shield with a black spot, assegais, also imphendhla with which she dondalazela'd - she chose Dingaan.<sup>110</sup>

She was appropriately praised as the little mouse that started the run's at Mandela's, for she determined the course of Zulu history. It seemed that she was able to make and unmake kings.<sup>111</sup>

The enormous authority invested in certain of the king's female relatives in this period, is best explained through further reference to the homestead. In northern Nguni-speaking societies, the expansion of the individual homestead of a sub-chief or umnumzana was facilitated by the movement away from the original homestead of some of its sections, under the authority of a wife of the homestead. In a wealthy expanding homestead, the first wife married, known as the isokangqi (as was her son), was frequently given her own separate establishment.<sup>112</sup> The ikholwa, another section of the homestead, was also usually built separately under its chief wife, and included the huts of those wives affiliated to it.<sup>113</sup> A separate homestead was also established when a new wife was presented by the king to a man who had already appointed his own chief wife, as a mark of respect and to preserve her status.<sup>114</sup> When the sons of these women left their homes and built their own establishments, it was common for them to take their elderly mothers with them and to place them in charge of one of their new establishments.<sup>115</sup>

A homestead head relied on his mother and his wives to look after his interests and to exert his authority over a greater number of dependents, a wider geographical area and a larger number of resources than he personally was capable of administering. Thus the expansion of an individual homestead depended on the

expansion of this group of 'administrators'. A mother or chief wife drew her authority in part from the position of her husband, but also from the direct control which she exerted over the agricultural production of her household. This control was imposed not only on the co-wives and their offspring, but also on distant kin and other dependents resident with the chief women. A man was able to repose the greatest confidence in his mothers and wives, not only because it was supposed that their interests were congruent, but also because they were excluded as potential loci of opposition to him by their gender. Unlike a brother or an uncle, a woman was excluded from succession in her own right. Curtailed in her activities, she was dependent on her husband or son in a way that male relatives were not. Precisely those features which characterize the different status of a woman, interpreted by Wright as responsible for her total subordination, made her an eminently suitable administrator, albeit on behalf of her husband or son. Thus although the prevailing ideology denied her an existence independent of her menfolk, her gender did not prevent her from holding a position of authority and commanding respect from those males under her. <sup>116</sup>

While a wife was excluded from the succession in her own right, her sons were not. As her sons attained adulthood, and began to fulfill adult male functions, it was possible for a wife to become independent of her husband through her sons, and ultimately for them to challenge his authority or contest the succession. Thus the system of the expansion of a man's authority through the system of polygamous marriage while offering the means for the extension of his influence, was ultimately inherently divisive.

The extent to which the basic principles of administration

of the extended homestead of an individual were applied on a state level can only be observed for the somewhat later reign of Mpande, since he was the first Zulu monarch to marry, and to set up establishments of wives which functioned to extend his authority in this manner, and which ultimately divided the Zulu nation.

The major establishments of Mpande's reign included that of Mdumezulu, which had separated off from esiKlebheni (in the same way that the ikhohwa section might separate off from its original homestead) under Mpande's wife, Nomantshali with her son Mthonga. Prior to this, Nomantshali had ruled at Nodwengu, another of Mpande's settlements.<sup>117</sup> Fudukazi kaNgwane, also a wife of Mpande, was the inkosikazi at Bulawayo,<sup>118</sup> while Gudayi kaMqomboli was in charge of Ndabakawombe.<sup>119</sup> Cetshwayo's mother, Nqumbazi was inkosikazi at Gqikazi, from which Ondini, Bangibone and other establishments of Cetshwayo later sprang. Gqikazi was known as one of Mpande's own establishments, but was considered too far away for him to visit himself,<sup>120</sup> which indicates the measure of independence allowed to Nqumbazi. These wives begat sons with aspirations to the throne, and internal conflict and civil war resulted, culminating in the battle of Ndondakusuka in 1856, involving seven sons of Mpande.

The bachelor kings Shaka and Dingane strictly avoided this situation. According to the oral record, Nandi once attempted to raise a son of Shaka's in secret, but was discovered, and the child was killed.<sup>121</sup> Under Shaka and Dingane, the duties normally fulfilled by a king's wives, were assigned to the amakhosikazi.<sup>122</sup>

The crucial difference between the amakhosikazi and wives that the kings might have married is noted in the lines of Mnkabayi's praise poem referring to her

rejection of men and marriage:

Intomb' ethombe yom' umlamo,  
Zase ziyihlab' imithanti ezawonina.

( Maid that matured and her mouth dried up,  
And then they criticised her among the old  
women ).<sup>123</sup>

The amakhosikazi were all women past child-bearing age, and were usually without heirs. Bryant described the amakhosikazi as 'bold and independent hussies. They evinced aversions to the bonds of matrimony and preferred to remain queans' (sic).<sup>124</sup> Mostly the amakhosikazi were old female relatives, particularly aunts of the kings, but were sometimes appointed from the ranks of ex-izigodlo girls who had no issue.<sup>125</sup> As Lancaster indicates, the demands of child care and concomitant domestic labour tend to keep women out of the political arena.<sup>126</sup> Under the Shakan regime however, this limitation fell away with the ban on marriage and hence certain women had opportunity to penetrate the political sphere. Since the amakhanda heads had no heirs, usually no longer even the possibility of conceiving, and were excluded from the succession themselves by their gender, they could not constitute foci of rival factions. Furthermore, since most of these female amakhanda heads were beyond menopause, they were no longer restricted by the cattle taboos and other avoidances observed by menstruating women. Old women were also released from the hlonipha taboos of speech that dominated the life of the young bride.<sup>127</sup> This meant that the amakhosikazi, to all intents and purposes, functioned as 'men' within Zulu society and as if confirming this, the praise poems of both Mnkabayi and Nandi address their subjects as men.<sup>128</sup> These women also derived added status by virtue of their great age, which demanded that young men accord them respect. They were able to use their position within the ruling lineage, as elders, to

influence the king. Until a man was married, he remained attached to the household of his mother, and of course neither Shaka nor Dingane ever married. The influence of Nandi over Shaka is demonstrated by the king's izibongo which closely associates many of his actions with his mother, and by the many tales concerning their inter-relationship.<sup>129</sup>

On the basis of their positions within, or in relation to, the royal family, the amakhosikazi commanded a ritual authority which their great age enabled them to exploit as 'men', while their positions as dutiful heads of the amakhanda and izigodlo constituted the material basis of real power. In placing the amakhosikazi in high positions in some of the most remote areas, the Zulu king was able to exploit this conjunction, secure in the knowledge that their gender mitigated against any usurpation of his position.

The pre-eminent position of the amakhosikazi represents an important modification of the notion of the generalized subordination of women under Shaka, and illuminates the stratification of Zulu society from a new angle. While it is not possible to move beyond Wright's thesis on the position of the majority of Zulu women in the homesteads, the focus on the izigodlo demonstrates differences in the position of various women in the kingdom and further illuminates the processes of the entrenchment of the Zulu ruling group. The development of the izigodlo as state institutions modelled on the known structures of local homestead administration, also indicates the parameters of the operation of pre-colonial ideologies, and the continuity of a broad framework of kin-based relations.

The picture which emerges of the izigodlo unveils Shaka's of an institutionalized system for drawing on the labour power of women, in a manner parallel to that of

the male amabutho system. In the centralization of labour power, the controls enforced over marriage, and, presumably, the socialization process which occurred in the amakhanda, the functions of the izigodlo mirrored those of its male counterpart, although on a smaller scale. The extension of the izigodlo, and their assumption of responsibility for agricultural production at the amakhanda, allowed the king to monopolize access to agricultural produce in the amakhanda over and above the control which he wielded over the nation's agriculture through the umkhosi. In this respect, the izigodlo's functions were very different from the amabutho, for the newly extended izigodlo provided a direct means of control over the men at the amakhanda. As such, they became the basis of power of the great amakhosikazi who represented royal interests in the amakhanda.



1. J. Wright, 'Control of Women's Labour in the Zulu Kingdom', in J.B. Peires (ed.), Before and After Shaka, Grahamstown, 1981, pp. 82-95.
2. Ibid., p. 91.
3. See, for example, H.J. Simons, The Legal Status of African Women, London, 1968; B. Bozzoli, 'Marxism, feminism and South African studies', Journal of Southern African Studies, 9, 2 (1983), pp. 139-71; J. Beale, 'The changing role and status of African women in the political economy of colonial Natal', unpublished paper presented to the thirteenth annual congress of the Association for Sociology in Southern Africa, Durban, 1982.
4. Krige, in The Social System of the Zulus, pp. 234-35, for example, mentions the izigodlo only insofar as they were a feature of the King's 'kraal', and draws her information entirely from late nineteenth century historical sources.
5. Slater, 'Transitions', pp. 302, 308.
6. Wright, 'Control', pp. 92-3.
7. Fynn, Diary, p. 25; Isacs, Travels, Vol. 1, pp. 19, 202; Bryant, Zulu People, see especially p. 5/7.
8. Fynn, Diary, p. 26.
9. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 310, 326, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 179, evidence of Mandhlakazi.

10. Wright, 'Control', pp.92-3.
11. Fynn, Diary, p. 164; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 139, evidence of Ndukwana; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 196, 197, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 316, evidence of Lunguza.
12. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 473, K.C., Stuart Papers, file 41, p. 2, evidence of Ndukwana.
13. Ibid; Krige, Social System, p. 42.
14. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 473; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, pp. 246-53; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 1, evidence of Baleni.
15. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 473; Doke and Vilakazi, Dictionary, p. 837.
16. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 28, evidence of Baleni.
17. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 214; also see K.C., Stuart Papers, file 72, p. 1.
18. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 214; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 6, evidence of Mkando; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 72, pp. 1, 3-6, evidence of Mkando.
19. Ibid; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 7, evidence of Mkando; also see Stuart's discussion, yKulumetule, chapter 2.
20. See note 17.
21. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 428.

22. Krige, Social System, p. 39; Samuelson, Long,  
Long Ago, p. 250.
23. Krige, Social System, p. 180.
24. Sisa cattle were lent to destitute relations or dependents who sought the patronage of a wealthy homestead head. The dependent cared for the cattle on the owner's behalf, but was entitled to keep the products and offspring that ensued. In this manner, a man of resources was able to build up a substantial following. The sisa'ing of cattle brought a wealthy man an immediate return in the form of the labour of his client in caring for his cattle. Ethula'd cattle, by way of contrast, constituted a more long term investment, for the cattle concerned were permanently disposed of, and the daughter given in exchange had to be reared before her lobola cattle could be realised.
25. Isaacs, Travels, Vol. 1, p. 29, Vol. 2, p. 286; Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 75.
26. Doke and Vilakazi, Dictionary, p. 540.
27. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 577.
28. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 5, evidence of Mkando.
29. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka'.
30. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 473; Doke and Vilakazi, Dictionary, p. 252.
31. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 6, evidence of Mkando.

32. Krige, Social System, p. 34.
33. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 27, evidence of Baleni.
34. C.S. Lancaster, 'Women, horticulture and society in sub-Saharan Africa', American Anthropologist, Vol. 78 (1976), pp. 539-64.
35. Krige, Social System, p. 177; National Archives, Pietermaritzburg, 'Zulu Land Archive', report of resident magistrate J. Knight on Jobola rates.
36. Isaacs, Travels, p. 221.
37. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 70-1, evidence of Mandhlakazi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 47, evidence of Madikane;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 29, evidence of Mabhonsa;  
K.C., Stuart Papers, file 53, 'The Life of Tshaka';  
also see Bryant, Olden Times, chapter 12.
38. Fynn, Diary, pp. 24-5.
39. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 478; Isaacs Travels, Vol. 1, pp. 56, 149.
40. Wright, 'Control', pp. 82-3.
41. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 45-46; also see pp. 38-9, evidence of Baleni; and for further discussion of the izigodlo's cultivation of amabele see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 153, evidence of Mkando.
42. Gardiner, Journey, p. 40; Krige, Social System, p. 238; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 25, 38, 45, evidence of Baleni.

43. Ibid., p. 38; Fynn, Diary, pp. 27, 31;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 320, evidence of Lunguza.
44. See, for example, Fynn, Diary, p. 77.
45. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 343, evidence of Lunguza.
46. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 107, evidence of Mgidhlana.
47. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 323, evidence of Lunguza.
48. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 162, evidence of Mkando.
49. Fynn, Diary, p. 31; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 343,  
evidence of Lunguza.
50. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 69, evidence of Bikwayo;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 124, evidence of Dunjwa;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 159, evidence of Gxubu;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 341, evidence of Lunguza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 80, evidence of Magidi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 180, evidence of Mandhiskazi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 108, evidence of Mgidhlana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 296, 298-99, 300, 303, 306-13,  
evidence of Mpatshana (for later period); K.C.,  
Stuart Papers, File 73, p. 158, evidence of Ndukwana.
51. Krige, Social System, pp. 187-88.
52. J. Guy, 'The Destruction and Reconstruction of  
Zulu Society', paper presented to the South  
African History Conference, 1980, p. 4.
53. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 28, evidence of Mbovu.
54. Fynn, Diary, pp. 10, 17, 64, 124, 143; Slater,  
'Transitions', p. 279.

55. Guy, Dest. iction, p. 11; J. Cobbing, 'Zulu amabutho', p. 4; J. Peires, in Before and After Shaka, (ed), J. Peires, Grahamstown, 1981, p. 11.
56. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 239, evidence of Maquza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 296, evidence of Maziyana.
57. See chapter six.
58. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 20, evidence of Mabhonsa.
59. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 53, evidence of Madikane.
60. See pp. 260, 473;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 53, evidence of Bazley;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 90, evidence of Dabula;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 201, evidence of Jantshi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 301, 302, evidence of Lunguza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 31, evidence of Mabhonsa;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 202, evidence of Mangati;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 277, evidence of Maziyana;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 267, evidence of Mbovu.
61. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 42.
62. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 330, evidence of Lunguza.
63. See chapters three and eight.
64. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', p. 25; Slater, 'Transitions', chapter 9.
65. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', p. 30;  
B.E. Beater, Soils of the Sugar Belt, National Regional Survey Report, 5, (1962).

66. Maize was not listed by Fynn as an important Zulu crop (Diary, pp. 304-5); also see Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 36-9, on the dating of the introduction of maize into south-east Africa. For references to the cultivation of maize, see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 142, evidence of Gama; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 203, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 148, evidence of Mkando; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 84, evidence of Sivivi.
67. Fynn, Diary, pp. 304-5; Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 40-4; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 113, evidence of Mahaya.
68. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 62, notebook 61, p. 10, evidence of Mkehlengana and Socwatsha. Also see Kuper, An African Aristocracy, p. 35, for comparative planting strategies amongst the neighbouring Swazi.
69. Ibid., p. 35; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 148, evidence of Mkando.
70. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 254.
71. Ibid., pp. 46<sup>d</sup>, 509; Krige, Social System, p. 253; Kuper, An African Aristocracy, p. 35.
72. Krige, Social System, p. 249.
73. Kuper, An African Aristocracy, p. 221, Bryant, Zulu People, p. 509.
74. Krige, Social System, p. 253.
75. Ibid., p. 267; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 464.

76. On campaigning in late February, March and April, see Fynn, Diary, pp. 60, 91, 137, 143; Isaacs, Travels, Vol. 1, pp. 79, 179, 180, 227; on campaigning in September, see Fynn, Diary, p. 156, and Isaacs, Travels, Vol. 1, p. 258.
77. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 255, evidence of Lunguza.
78. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 24, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 91, evidence of Magidigidi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 150, evidence of Mkando; Stuart, uKulumetule, chapter 2. It should be noted that this evidence draws on data from the post-Shakan era to flesh out and contextualize the few references to 'grain kraals' at Shaka's establishments.
79. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 38, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 211, evidence of Kambi; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, pp. 14-15, evidence of Tununu.
80. Fynn, Diary, p. 269.
81. Gardiner, Journey, p. 51.
82. Krige, Social System, p. 383; see also J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 25, evidence of Baleni.
83. Krige, Social System, p. 265.
84. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 73, p. 138, evidence of Ndukwana. On reduction of izigodto numbers under Dingane see ibid.; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 316, 343, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 196-97 evidence of Jantshi.



85. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 323, evidence of Lunguza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 19, evidence of Baleni.
86. Ibid., pp. 37-8;  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 310, evidence of Lunguza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 179, evidence of Mandhlakazi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 153, evidence of Mkando.
87. Fynn, Diary, pp. 25, 298; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 39, evidence of Ngidi; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 497; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 149, 153, evidence of Mkando. On specific amakhanda see Fynn, Diary, p. 82; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 16, 24, 33, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 197, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 91, evidence of Magidigidi; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 661.
88. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 5, evidence of Mkando; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 475.
89. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 25, 33, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 328, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 238, evidence of Social System, p. 238.
90. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 62, notebook 84, evidence of Sivivi.
91. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 179, evidence of Jantshi.
92. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 179-83, evidence of Mandhlakazi; Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 250. Also see the famous stories of Zulu kaNogandaya, pp. 176-80, and that of Ngqengelele, p. 293.

93. Ibid; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 62, notebook 74, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 107, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 19, evidence of Mabhonsa.
94. See notes 90, 91.
95. Fynn, Diary, p. 27.
96. Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 473-75. Krige, Social System, p. 42; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 311, evidence of Lunguza.
97. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 497; Fynn, Diary, p. 284; Gardiner; Journey, p. 146.
98. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 474; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 178, evidence of Jantshi and Ndukwana; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 310, 343, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 150, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 37-8, evidence of Baleni.
99. Gardiner, Journey, p. 146.
100. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 29, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 152, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 332, evidence of Lunguza.
101. Isibongo of Mnkabayi kaJama in Cope, Isibongo, p. 172. Note that one of Stuart's informants commented that she was the first Zulu woman to become 'queen and sovereign' (K.C., Stuart Papers, file 57, notebook 7).
102. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 503.
103. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 45, evidence of Ngidi.

93. Ibid; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 62, notebook 74, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 107, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 19, evidence of Mabhonsa.
94. See notes 90, 91.
95. Fynn, Diary, p. 27.
96. Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 473-75. Krige, Social System, p. 42; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 311, evidence of Lunguza.
97. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 497; Fynn, Diary, p. 284; Gardiner; Journey, p. 146.
98. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 474; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 178, evidence of Jantshi and Ndukwana; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 310, 343, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 150, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 37-8, evidence of Baleni.
99. Gardiner, Journey, p. 146.
100. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 29, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 152, evidence of Mkando; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 332, evidence of Lunguza.
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102. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 503.
103. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61, notebook 45, evidence of Ngidi.

104. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 252, evidence of Mayinga;  
K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 29,  
evidence of Ndukwana and Madikane.
105. Fynn, Diary, pp. 29, 140; see above, pp. 224, 338-40.
106. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 41-4. See, for example,  
the story of Mawa, and her followers crossing into  
Natal (J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 200, evidence of Jantshi);  
on Mmama's activities see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 194,  
evidence of Jantshi.
107. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 20, evidence of Mabhónsa.  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 7, evidence of Baleka.  
J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 193, evidence of Mandhlakazi.
108. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 20, 36, evidence of Baleni;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 256, evidence of Mayinga.
109. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 41, 42, 46, and also see  
pp. 659, 669; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 47, 51, evidence  
of Madikane; K.C., Stuart Papers, file 61,  
notebook 39, evidence of Ngidi.
110. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 58, notebook 23,  
evidence of Socwatsha.
111. Isibongo of Mnkabayi, in Cope, Izibongo, p. 172.
112. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 250; on separate  
homesteads also see M. Wilson, 'The Nguni People',  
Oxford History, Vol. 1, p. 119.
113. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, p. 250.
114. Ibid., pp. 250-51.

115. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 42, item 28.
116. Fynn, Diary, p. 300.
117. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 27, 39, evidence of Baieni.
118. Ibid., p. 29.
119. Ibid., p. 33.
120. Ibid., pp. 36, 40; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 208, evidence of Mangati.
121. Fynn, Diary, p. 29.
122. Krige, Social System, p. 247; Bryant, Zulu People, p. 476.
123. Isibongo of Mnkabayi, in Cope, Izibongo, pp. 172-73.
124. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 41.
125. K.C., Stuart Papers, file 60, notebook 21, evidence of Mdabukelwa.
126. Lancaster, 'Women', p. 540.
127. Krige, Social System, p. 30.
128. Izibongo of Mnkabayi in Cope, Izibongo, pp. 172-75. Mnkabayi is addressed as a man, as is Nandi, in the praise 'Sontanti'.
129. Ibid., p. 88.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

RELATIONS OF EXPLOITATION AND THE IDEOLOGY OF  
SUBORDINATION: THE CASE OF THE AMALALA

The preceding chapters have examined the move of the Zulu amakhanda onto the coastal plain between the Thukela river and the Port Natal trading settlement. The region in which the Zulu capital, Dukuza, was built was occupied by the Cele, the Thuli, and other peoples subordinate to them. Zulu cattle posts extended still further south, as far as the Mzimkhulu river. This move, it was suggested, was prompted by a combination of strategic and environmental considerations which came to bear at a particular moment in Zulu history.

This chapter turns to an analysis of the articulation of Zulu state politics with those of the chiefdoms on the periphery of the kingdom. In the first section, the background to the Cele and Thuli occupation of the Natal coast will be examined, as will the nature of Zulu intervention in their internal affairs.

In the second section, the subordination of the Natal coastal chiefdoms to the Zulu state will be examined. It will be argued that, while chiefdoms north of the Thukela which were politically aligned with the Zulu aristocracy, enjoyed the status of full subjects of the kingdom, the chiefdoms on the periphery of the kingdom became 'super-exploited' tributaries, in

terms of cattle, land and labour, and were denied the rights of Zulu citizenship. The similar experience of another major group of chiefdoms on the Zulu periphery, situated in and around the mid-Thukela valley, will also be analysed, with a view to demonstrating that their tributary relationship with the Zulu closely paralleled that of the Natal coastal chiefdoms. It is suggested that it was these conditions of exploitation which led to both groups being collectively designated amalala

In the final section of this chapter, the means by which the Zulu state was able to maintain relations of 'super-exploitation' with their tributaries will be considered. It will be argued that this was effected on the one hand through the cooption of a small stratum of local chiefs, and on the other hand, through a combination of direct coercion and the development of powerful ideological forms of subordination - notably the creation and manipulation of ethnic identities. The formation of a number of ethnic identities, notably that of amantungwa, has already been discussed. It will be argued that while the amantungwa identity was used to define and legitimate access to power and resources, the ethnic identity with which the inhabitants of Natal and the Thukela valley were associated, was used to justify their lack of rights, and the heavier obligations which characterized their relations with the Zulu state.

The establishment of hakan Thuli and Cele paramountcies in Na.

On the eve of Zulu initiation south of the Thukela, a loose Cele paramountcy seems to have extended along the Natal coastal plain down towards Port Natal. Cele dominance in this area was comparatively recent





and was not deeply entrenched, particularly in the southern reaches shading into Thuli country.

Like the Thuli, the Cele had previously inhabited an area north of the Thukela, sandwiched between the Nyuswa and the Qwabe. Qwabe expansion in the later eighteenth century squeezed out first the Thuli and later the Cele. In two separate, but consecutive waves, the Thuli and the Cele crossed into Natal. Both groups migrated not as refugees, but as powerful chiefdoms, able to crush the resistance of the groups they found already living in the area.<sup>1</sup>

The Thuli paramount chiefdom which was established first was highly heterogeneous in composition. The invading Thuli contingent was made up of members of the Thuli ruling lineage, a number of related lineages like the Zuba, Khomo and Shaba, and a number of other unrelated lineages such as the Khwela, Mbili and a Cele section.<sup>2</sup> From amongst the original inhabitants whom they found in Natal, the traditions record that the Thuli incorporated sections of the Thembu, Jali, Vangane, Kanyawo and Nqondo, and drove out many others.<sup>3</sup>

The Thuli ruling lineage, and its' junior branches settled separately along the coastal plain between the Mgeni and Mlazi rivers. Those subordinate lineages which were not related to the Thuli settled amongst and around the Thuli, some as far afield as the Mzimkhulu. No centralized *umkhosi* was held by the Thuli ruling lineage. Policy decisions were taken at a local level, and military units were regionally based.<sup>4</sup> In contrast to the emergence of proto-state and state societies like the Qwabe, north of the Thukela, the Thuli polity was at best a 'loose confederation of lineages', largely unrelated, of

disparate origins and with different cultural identities.<sup>5</sup>

The decentralization which characterized the Thuli confederacy probably allowed the Cele, on their arrival in Natal, to impose their rule over the northern coastal plain, and the lineages which they found there.

The Cele, under Mkhokheleli, initially settled an area to the north of the major Thuli establishments, and built their capital between the Nonoti and Mdhloti rivers.<sup>6</sup> It is not clear whether the Thuli acknowledged Cele overrule prior to the arrival of the Zulu, although the two groups undoubtedly interacted closely. Intermarriage between the Cele ruling lineage and one of the Thuli lineages led to the Thuli being spoken of as 'abalanda' to the Cele, i.e. being 'of the wife's family'.<sup>7</sup>

Cele rule was formally extended over a number of the lineages settled in Natal, including the Ndhlovu, Nghathi, Ngangeni, Ntshangase, Nxamalala, Nhl'oko, Somi and Hlongwa, and, the Mbilli and Ndhlelu of the Thuli confederacy.<sup>8</sup> Incorporating in this way groups of widely disparate origins, the Cele paramountcy was, in its turn, as heterogeneous a polity as the Thuli.

Shaka acceded to the Zulu chieftaincy in the closing years of the reign of Mkhokheleli's son, Dibandlela, in what was a period of instability for the Cele paramountcy. It was with trepidation that Dibandlela observed the growth of Zulu power and the devastation wreaked on those who attempted to oppose Shaka. According to Mageza, one of Stuart's Cele informants, Dibandlela was convinced that submission to Zulu

hegemony was the only possible course if the Cele patrimony was to survive intact. He prepared to submit himself. Eschewing ubukhosi - the outward signs of kingship, such as an army or an establishment of girls along the lines of the izigodlo - he indicated his willingness to accept Zulu rule, but died before this was implemented.<sup>9</sup>

The impact of Zulu expansion on the Cele polity is generally represented in Cele oral history in terms of the succession dispute which followed, although the traditions, do suggest some of the wider issues at stake. It seems the dispute between Magaye, supposedly Dibandlela's heir designate who was brought up amongst the Qwabe, and Mande, his rival, revolved around the appropriate Cele response to the Zulu, and more particularly on the desirability of paying an extremely large cattle tribute demanded by the latter.<sup>10</sup>

The faction led by Mande argued that Cele interests and position of privilege south of the Thukela would be best served by opposition to the Zulu. It was felt that the acceptance of Zulu hegemony on the terms proposed by Shaka would drastically erode the material basis of Cele power, and Mande boldly rejected Zulu aspirations south of the Thukela, insulting Shaka as the 'Mntungwana who wears the shell of the itongwane fruit as a penis-cover'.<sup>11</sup>

As opposition mounted to the policy of submission, Dibandlela had been led in desperation 'to fetch back' Magaye from amongst his mother's people, the Qwabe, where he had been reared.<sup>12</sup> Magaye was suddenly billed as the rightful heir, and pushed into the forefront of the political struggle on a ticket of

Shaka's appeasement.<sup>13</sup> In the meantime, support for Mande's position coalesced, and it was reported to Shaka that he enjoyed increasing backing from factions sceptical of Magaye and his Qwabe heritage.<sup>14</sup>

The Zulu king, well-informed as ever of distant events by his intelligence network, decided, on the death of Dibandlela, to intervene. Magaye's willingness to treat with the Zulu monarch, combined with the relative weakness of his position, and the dubiety of his claim to be the rightful heir, earned him this support against Mande. The Zulu ibutho, the iziYendane, was sent south, but failed to come to grips with the elusive and wily Mande who beat a strategic retreat into the coastal bush between the Mhloti and Thongati rivers. This move was accompanied by the wholesale abandonment of his herds to the Zulu army, which saved him from a remorseless hunt and certain death. In the meantime, Magaye himself was obliged to sustain and provision the Zulu forces. The emphasis in the relevant traditions is overwhelmingly on the issue of cattle, either as tribute, or as beef for the consumption of the army - on the abundance of Cele cattle, and Zulu demands on them.<sup>15</sup>

The traditions suggest that henceforward Magaye found favour with Shaka, who addressed him as umnawe, (young brother). This patronage was sufficient to secure Magaye's position as chief of the Cele, and to render Mande impotent. Mande's only other attempt to intervene in Cele politics earned him a swift and conclusive reprisal from Shaka.<sup>16</sup>

Cele obligations, other than participation in Shaka's southern campaigns, and the carrying out of local police work, were confined to supplying provisions to the centre of the state, an obligation which

increased substantially with shift of the capital and associated establishments south of the Thukela, into the very heart of the Cele chiefdom. Cattle were primarily handled by the Cele imizi of Ngwazi, Nkhela, and Swazini, under the rule of members of the royal lineage with strong loyalties to Magaye. It seems that the continued pre-eminence and dominance of the Cele ruling lineage in the Natal area rested on the monopolization and manipulation of cattle given as tribute to the Zulu, in return for which Cele royal policies were bolstered from the centre.<sup>17</sup>

The major change which characterized the era of Shakan hegemony in Celesland was that the Cele ruling lineage no longer controlled the means of realizing surplus directly for their own benefit. Rather, they acted as agents on behalf of the Zulu, and depended on Zulu forces for military support. They 'ate up' the cattle holdings of groups like the Mbili, and organized an ever-tighter control over and rationalization of the cattle-keeping practices of the inhabitants of Natal. This took the form of the employment of the Ndhlelu as the herdsmen of Cele cattle, while the Thuli herded the cattle that had been seized from the inhabitants of Natal and from the Mpondo further south, and which were kept in the Natal area, as the king's herds.<sup>18</sup>

Whether or not the Thuli recognized Cele overrule prior to their conquest by the Zulu as was claimed by Magaye is not certain.<sup>19</sup> However, after Shaka attacked the Thuli in c. 1821, it seems certain that Magaye ruled the country south of the Thukela.<sup>20</sup> Shaka destroyed the Thuli ruling lineage, and raised up in its place a junior section, designating a minor as the heir. As regent, he appointed one of his supporters, Mathubane, who belonged to neither the old nor the new Thuli ruling lineages.<sup>21</sup>

The result of these changes was not that the Natal coastal plain was denuded of cattle, but that they were appropriated by the Zulu king, and relocated and concentrated amongst people specially designated as herdsmen.<sup>22</sup> For the rest however, the common people fell into increasing straightened circumstances. It was the consequences of this process which confronted the first Europeans who stepped off the 'Julia' in 1824. Fynn evoked a depressing picture of their destitution and marginalization,

Many of the inhabitants who escaped from the spear were left to perish by starvation. Their cattle having been taken and their grain destroyed, thousands were left for years to linger on the slender sustenance of roots - some even of a poisonous kind. One species could not be safely eaten until it had been boiled repeatedly for 24 hours; and if the cravings of starvation led to a disregard of caution, they knew the fate that awaited them. Insanity was the invariable consequence.<sup>23</sup>

Cannibalism was another feature of this destitution.<sup>24</sup> Numbers of Thuli were cattleless, and subsisted on a diet of fish, but the Thuli chiefs were in possession of cattle. Isaacs also described the people of Natal as 'timid and apprehensive'.<sup>25</sup>

The picture which emerges of the southern coastal periphery is one of the 'super-exploitation' of the area. The material basis of the lives of the majority of the inhabitants was destroyed with the removal of their cattle and their grain. Many became vagrants, others settled as refugees south of the Mzimkhulu or under the early traders at Port Natal. Some were re-employed in the care of the appropriated cattle - not in their homesteads as before, but under centralized control in the Zulu cattle posts. Zulu rule over the area was not direct, but was mediated through local chiefs supported in office by the Zulu. In this way,

responsibility for the well-being and the social reproduction of the Natal inhabitants was displaced onto non-Zulu local authorities.

It will be argued in the last section of this chapter that this situation was rationalized and underpinned by the manufacture of the perjorative category of amalala. This was an ethnic designation delineated by linguistic, cultural and historical markers. While the basis of such a common identity was undoubtedly present among some the coastal chiefdoms of Natal, it will be argued that it was remodelled in the reign of Shaka, and applied to a wider group of chiefdoms who were not linguistically, culturally or historically homogenous, to serve as the ideological basis of that groups' exploitation by the Zulu state.

In order to sustain this argument it is necessary to examine the chiefdoms of the Thukela valley, who were also known as amalala. Similar relations of exploitation and incorporation by the Zulu state had been experienced by the mid-Thukela chiefdoms. These chiefdoms, the Mbo, Ngcolosi, Ngcobo and their subordinate lineages became part of the Zulu state considerably earlier than the coastal chiefdoms, possibly while Dingiswayo was still alive, but at least by the time that their Chunu and Cube neighbours came under Zulu sway, i.e. before the bulk of the Zulu amakhanda left the Zulu heartland in the Mkhumbane valley.<sup>26</sup>

This period, as has been argued in chapter five, saw the Zulu kingdom and amabutho undergo extensive and rapid expansion. This created an enormous demand for cattle, both for provisioning, but more importantly, for redistribution as largesse, a situation exacerbated by the loss of the greater part of the Zulu herds to the

Ndwandwe in their first encounter, c. 1817.<sup>27</sup>

Cattle could be acquired through raiding, but a more reliable and regular method was the extension of political control over cattle-producing areas close at hand. Moreover, as has already been noted, Zulu expansion rapidly outstripped Zulu resources, notably in terms of their pasture requirements,<sup>28</sup> while the growing numbers of raided cattle needed access to larger grazing areas on a regular basis.

Zulu options in terms of these needs were limited. Expansion to the north was inhibited by the looming threat of an Ndwandwe invasion, while the territory to the north-east was poor cattle country because of the presence of tsetse fly. The western uplands were inferior cattle country, and in the 1820s were in political turmoil, as was inland Natal.<sup>29</sup> Expansion into the excellent pastures of the south-east was delayed by sustained Qwabe resistance to Zulu domination.<sup>30</sup>

From a Zulu perspective, the nearest, the most accessible and the most suitable area capable of supporting a high density of cattle was the Thukela basin. The Thukela valley is deeply incised, but its base is extremely wide in places, and provides extensive winter grazing and all year water resources in close proximity to combinations of upland grazing best utilized in summer.<sup>31</sup> The area also offered an opportunity for the Zulu to gain control over the major Thukela fords. This would have permitted the Zulu to pasture their great herds south of the Thukela, from where they would have been easy to defend against Ndwandwe raids.<sup>32</sup> Lastly, it seemed that the Zulu aristocracy was not prepared to tolerate the existence of independent chiefdoms so close to the Zulu heartland



as the Thukela valley, at a time when Zulu dominance was by no means secure.

The extension of Zulu control over two of the Thukela chiefdoms, the Mbo and Ngcolosi, was easily effected, as both submitted without any resistance.<sup>33</sup> The neighbouring Ngcobo lineages, the Nyuswa, sections of the Qadi, Langeni, Ngongoma, Fuze and Woziyana initially resisted Shaka. However, a sustained Zulu onslaught ultimately forced them to surrender or to flee. Those that remained were gathered together and placed under the rule of Zihlandhlo, the Mbo chief.<sup>34</sup>

As was the case with the Cele and the other chiefdoms on the coast, a cattle tribute was levied by the Zulu, and large numbers of cattle appear to have been appropriated from the Thukela chiefdoms.<sup>35</sup> The responsibility for this was placed on Zihlandhlo. Some of the cattle were sent on to Shaka, but large numbers were kept in the Mbo country. A Zulu ikhanda, inTonteleni, was established in the area, at which large royal herds were based, and which was operated by local Nyuswa men.<sup>36</sup> Cattle posts were also erected in the area, although it cannot be established exactly when in the reign of Shaka they were built.<sup>37</sup> One of these was the 'Mnkangala cattle post', which Isaac described as having over three thousand bullocks.<sup>38</sup>

This closely paralleled the demands made on the Natal coastal area, but the latter area appears to have experienced Zulu exploitation in a more acute and systematic form than the Thukela chiefdoms. One reason may be that at the time when the coastal chiefdoms were incorporated, the Zulu state was considerably more powerful than it had been when Zihlandhlo had first acknowledged Zulu hegemony.

The coastal plain south of the Thukela was, moreover, a superior tract of land, capable of supporting greater numbers of people and cattle.<sup>39</sup> Lastly, the settlement of the greater part of the Zulu army in the coastal area facilitated its harsher exploitation.

Nonetheless, the political relations established between the Thukela chiefdoms and the Zulu, and the Natal coastal chiefdoms and the Zulu, were very similar, and are represented in the traditions in the form of explicit parallels. The position of the Mbo chief was identical to that of the Cele chief. It was said of Zihlandhlo that 'he was liked by Tshaka and treated like Magaye'.<sup>40</sup> The subjects of neither group of chiefdoms were incorporated directly into the Zulu amabutho, but Shaka did appropriate a unit wholesale from both Zihlandhlo and Magaye. Both chiefs maintained their own police force, with which they carried out local raids, largely on the Zulu behalf, and which they used to administer the area.<sup>41</sup> Representatives of Zulu power were posted in both areas to monitor the Mbo and Cele administrations.<sup>42</sup>

Although the two chiefs, Zihlandhlo and Magaye, maintained personal links with the Zulu monarch, and cooperated closely with their Zulu overlords, both groups of chiefdoms were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom on the basis of clear social and political distinctions between themselves and the chiefdoms of the heartland. The form which these distinctions took was the categorization of both the chiefdoms of the Thukela Basin, and those of the Natal coast as the amalala. It is to the manufacture of this identity that this chapter now turns.<sup>43</sup>

Since the publication of Bryant's Olden Times in Zululand and Natal in 1929, the term 'Lala' has been used as a generic designation for a group of lineages who were supposed to share a common language and culture, and who claimed to have originated together in the north-east from where they migrated southwards along the coast into Natal.<sup>44</sup> The foregoing survey of the early history of the Thuli and Cele paramountcies gives lie to these claims of homogeneity. Analysis of the traditions of genesis of the individual lineages concerned does not corroborate Bryant's assertion that they shared a common origin. Nor did they have origins in common with the Thukela chiefdoms, their fellow amalala. Rather, the traditions are marked by a pattern of contradictions between their claims to all being amalala, and evidence of other highly disparate origins from one another.<sup>45</sup>

Such evidence as there is on the origins of the term amalala as an ethnic designation indicates that it was an invention of the Shakan period. Bryant himself records that the name was not one known to the inhabitants of Natal, but rather was one 'contemptuously applied to them by Shaka's people'.<sup>46</sup> He also notes that the peoples of the coastal regions of Natal and Zululand, the very ones whom he designates as 'Lala', 'were ignorant of any common family name peculiar to themselves'.<sup>47</sup> Two of Stuart's informants made similar statements. Madikane kaMlomowethole noted, 'these names Lala and Nyakeni [to be explained later] may have been and probably were in existence long before Tshaka's day, but it was in his day that they came to be widely known i.e. when all these people were incorporated into the Zulu empire'.<sup>48</sup> Mqayikana kaYenge likewise recalled: 'The name amaLala came from the Zulu, for they conquered the land. They then called us amaLala, just as you Europeans call us

amaka '... for people that defeat others insult them'.

Indeed, there is no evidence to suggest that the word 'lala' had currency as a generic designation before the emergence of the Zulu state. Rather, it seems to have existed as a term of contempt for individuals of real or ascribed lowly status. In Natal and Zululand, the word was used in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and presumably before, as a designation for a metal-worker and a rain-maker.<sup>50</sup> As specialists, metal-workers and rain-makers had the capacity to accumulate great wealth in cattle and to acquire prestige that could rival that of political rulers.<sup>51</sup> They were therefore subject to close social control. One aspect of this, as Hedges argues, was the paradox that their occupations were designated in pejorative terms in order to demean their social value.<sup>52</sup> An explicit example of this practice comes from the regions to the north of the Zulu kingdom, where the term umthonga, meaning a destitute person or outsider, was applied to iron-workers.<sup>53</sup> The term ilala may well have carried similar connotations and have been applied in a similar fashion in the Thukela-Phongolo region well before the nineteenth century. More explicit evidence that the word ilala had a pejorative meaning in the nineteenth century comes from outside the Zulu area. Among the Tswana, according to Stow, the word 'lala' meant 'the Poor Ones or the Sons of Slaves',<sup>54</sup> More specifically, according to Moffat, the word referred to members of small, impermanent communities without cattle, and whose members were dependent for subsistence on gathering and on occasional employment in menial capacities.<sup>55</sup> In the early twentieth century Molema gave 'lala' as a Tswana term for 'vassal', 'serf', or 'minion'.<sup>56</sup>

Writing in the 1850s the early philologist, Bleek, who carried out the bulk of his Zululand research amongst the Mbo, claimed that ilala was a local word for famine or destitution.<sup>57</sup> Before the rise of the Zulu kingdom, it can be postulated, the word ilala as used in the Thukela-Phongolo region meant something like 'menial'. With the emergence of the Zulu kingdom, the word seems to have been taken up by the newly formed Zulu aristocracy and applied as a term of abuse to a particular category of the people tributary to the Zulu king, that is, to the partially incorporated peoples of the kingdom's southern periphery.

It seems likely that Shaka's manipulation of the amalala category involved two steps. The first was the invigoration of the existing term 'lala', imbuing it with added meaning, and its application to a group of people who did not previously call themselves ama-lala, but whom the Zulu king was concerned to subordinate and to denigrate. A section of this group was probably already distinguished from other groups in Zululand-Natal by differences of language, culture and history, and these markers were picked up and associated with the designation amalala.

The second step in the evolution of the amalala identity involved the extension of these markers to a wider group, whose numbers included people who did not speak that dialect or claim such origins, but whom the Zulu rulers were concerned to subordinate in the same way as those who did. The generic category ama-lala was thus made up of groups who were markedly different from the Zulu, and others who were not, but who were required to lopt the characteristics of being different. This is evidenced by the lack of

homogeneous in the amalala claims of origin discussed above. Even more persuasive is the evidence that certain sections of groups like the Buthelezi, which only split from each other in the reign of Shaka, were assigned different identities, with only those sections which moved into Natal being designated amalala.<sup>58</sup> Further evidence is provided by claims that certain of the groups, such as the Cele, who were designated amalala, did not originally speak the amalala dialect of tekela, but were required to adopt it.<sup>59</sup>

Conversely, there were groups and individuals who occupied high office and other positions within the Zulu heartland who shared the origins and dialect of the amalala chiefdoms, but whom, the Zulu, for historically specific reasons, were anxious not to stigmatize but to support. They were designated 'non-lala', and encouraged to relinquish their amalala attributes. This too is evidenced by contradictory data on origins.<sup>60</sup> It is further confirmed by evidence that there were tekela speakers at the Zulu capital who were forced to adopt the official Zulu dialect.<sup>61</sup>

Within both amalala speech i.e. tekela, and amantungwa speech i.e. that spoken at the Zulu court, there was considerable variety.<sup>62</sup> The division between the two forms of speech was by no means clear cut, and indeed in the 1850s it was recorded that the process of language realignment was known as the 'nkukulumanje' which Bleek translated as 'the slaughter of the languages',<sup>63</sup> which suggests a high level of awareness of the manipulation of language markers which occurred in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Further confirmation of the creation of derogatory identities for highly exploited tributaries of the Zulu state, which involved the reworking and manipulation of existing differences, is provided by the Ronga chiefdoms on the north-eastern periphery of the Zulu kingdom.

The Ronga chiefdoms appear to have experienced Zulu incorporation later, rather than earlier, in the reign of Shaka. Like the amalala, they entered into harsh tributary relations with the Zulu kingdom, although they gave tribute in the form of metals, beads, plumes and skins, rather than cattle, and their country was not directly settled on by the Zulu. However, they too were clearly distinguished from the chiefdoms of the heartland. They were designated the amanhlengwa by the Zulu.<sup>64</sup> Although the language spoken by the Ronga was slightly different to that of the amalala, both variants were described as tekela, while both groups were further denigrated as 'fish-eaters', something which the amantungwa expressly denied doing.<sup>65</sup> The Ronga case, in conjunction with that of the amalala chiefdoms, suggests that the identities of the peripheral chiefdoms were shaped both by existing markers amongst some of the peripheral chiefdoms, but also by the amantungwa identity that was emerging and assuming a particular form within the Zulu heartland. The identities of the peripheral chiefdoms were defined in linguistic, cultural and historical terms as being that which intungwa was not.

This form of definition in opposition to intungwa was particularly the case with the amalala. It was remarked by a ilala informant to Stuart that Shaka used to say that 'we were Lala ... We could not speak in the Ntungwa fashion'.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, it was claimed

by another informant, 'We are not Amantungwa who came down in a grain basket. We are Amalala.'<sup>67</sup> while yet another remarked, 'The Ngcobos are not amaNtungwa; they are amaLala'.<sup>68</sup> The reason for constant contrast between intungwa and ilala is probably a result of the movement of the predominantly amantungwa amabutho into the heart of amalala country.<sup>69</sup> It is likely that this was a period of direct confrontation of the privileged orders and the unprivileged in Zulu society, and that it was at this time that the two identities crystallized fully and in clear opposition to each other.

However, the ilala identity was not used simply to distinguish the chiefdoms of the southern periphery from the people of the heartland chiefdoms. It also had highly derogatory connotations. The amalala were 'those who sleep (ukulala) with their fingers up their anuses'<sup>70</sup> or those who 'farted on the mimosa tree and it dried up'.<sup>71</sup> It can be argued that this kind of categorization operated to inhibit mobilization for resistance to the Zulu among those to whom it was applied by inducing feelings of shame and inadequacy.

He (Tshaka) used to insult us and frighten us by saying that we did not have the cunning to invent things out of nothing ... He said that we were Lala because our tongues lay flat (lala) in our mouths, and we could not speak in the Ntungwa fashion.<sup>72</sup>

One effect of this may well have been to induce the timidity and servility among the inhabitants of Natal commented on by white traders as early as 1824.

These epithets indicate a process at work in which ethnic slurs as symbols of stereotyping and prejudice were used ideologically to justify discrimination and exploitation. As Lewis Allen has noted in his work on the language of ethnic conflict,



Name-calling is a technique by which outgroups are defined as legitimate targets of aggression and is an effort to control outgroups by neutralising their efforts to gain resources and influence values ... name-calling justifies inequality and discrimination by sanctioning invidious cultural comparisons. That is, nicknames are a device that helps produce and maintain social class and privilege.<sup>73</sup>

The category amalala should not be seen as developing solely in consequence of its imposition from above: an important factor in shaping the way in which it came to be used was the response of the amalala people themselves, or at least of their rulers, to being so categorized. To some extent the Cele ruling lineage was able to avoid the full social and political implications of being designated as amalala by imposing yet another derogatory categorization, that of inyakeni, on the lineages subordinate to it. The word may derive from inyaka, which Colenso gives as 'Commoner (term of contempt)', and Bryant as 'A thoroughly indolent person'.<sup>74</sup> The inyakeni were described as 'those who knew nothing', who had '... dirty habits and did not distinguish between what was good and what was bad. A person of the inyakeni did not pay respect to chiefs, nor did he wash or keep himself neat'.<sup>75</sup>

The effects of this categorization would have been to stratify the lineages of the coastlands still further, and make them yet more vulnerable to exploitation by the Cele in the first instance, and ultimately by the Zulu power. This extra division would, presumably, have also served to inhibit ilala being transformed into a symbol of local unity around which a resistance to Zulu rule could have cohered. From the point of view of the Cele, the extension of ideological controls over their subordinate lineages was becoming increasingly necessary as their Zulu

overlords stepped up their demands for cattle. If Zulu demands were to be met, and Cele pre-eminence in the coastal regions maintained, exploitation of their subordinate lineages had to be increased. This in turn, entailed making the mechanisms of Cele domination at once more effective and more sophisticated. Crude coercion alone was not enough: something more stable than a debilitating raiding economy had to be established if extraction of cattle from their subordinates over the long term was the aim. The Cele ruling lineage thus had good reasons of its own for resorting to ethnic discrimination within the polity which it controlled.

The inyakeni and ilala categories demonstrate the highly 'situational' nature of ethnic categories.<sup>76</sup> They are, by definition, fluid, because of the looseness of the criteria by which they are defined. These are usually, but not necessarily, common cultural features within a broad spectrum, a common language, and a sense of 'group history', often little more than a vague concept of common origin.<sup>77</sup> In consequence, ethnic groups often see changing membership and participation.<sup>78</sup> Their definitional ambiguity reflects fundamental struggles over content, and as such, it is clear that ethnic identities cannot be understood as simply being imposed on society by its rulers, but rather, as coming into existence through a process of struggle.<sup>79</sup>

It is precisely these characteristics which, Sau'i has argued, make ethnicity an appropriate response for a society in transition.

Given the flexibility and fuzziness at the edges of ethnic divisions, and the fact that their activation is far from inevitable, it should not be surprising that political processes are crucial to such activation as may occur.<sup>80</sup>

It is also appropriate, as Jewsiewicki pointed out, to see ethnic identities as becoming especially significant in periods of scarcity, and/or under circumstances of competition for resources.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, it was not surprising that in the Zulu kingdom, it was ethnicity that developed as the cognitive basis of the emerging system of social stratification. In this chapter, the focus has been of the process of what Saul calls 'political creativity', the manufacture of an ethnic category, in a precolonial context, but with the particular emphasis on the way in which such identities could be constructed to underpin relations of subordination. What emerges is a picture of a correspondence between the ethnic identity of ijala and a lack of status, opposed to the correspondence between the intunqwa identity and privilege, which emerged in the process of the subordination of the former to the latter.

1. Hedges, 'Trade and Politics', pp. 167-70;  
 Bryant, Olden Times, p. 188;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 248, evidence of Mmemi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 54, 58, 64, evidence of Mco toyi;  
J.S.A., Vol. -2, pp. 114, 116, evidence of Mahaya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 68, 70, 72, 73, evidence of Mageza.  
 For a discussion of the Thuli and Cele conquests  
 of Natal, and a detailed review of this evidence  
 see C.A. Hamilton, 'The amaLala of Natal, 1750-1826',  
 unpublished seminar paper, University of the  
 Witwatersrand, 1982, pp. 7, 9, 11, 16.
  
2. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 98; evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 269, evidence of Mmemi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 54, 58, 64, 65, evidence of Mco toyi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 265, 274, 275, 281, 300,  
 evidence of Mazi yana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 30, 33, 38,  
 41, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 114, 116,  
 evidence of Mahaya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 69, evidence  
 of Mageza; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 188, 561, 685,  
 688; Bryant, History, p. 85. For a detailed discussion  
 of this evidence see Hamilton, The 'amaLala',  
 pp. 8-10. On the Shaba, see J. Wright, 'Political  
 transformations in the coastlands south of the  
 Thukela c. 1750 - c. 1820', unpublished paper,  
 Pietermaritzburg, 1984, p. 5.
  
3. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 54, 64, evidence of Mco toyi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 274-78, 282, 284, 287, evidence  
 of Mazi yana. On the Vangane, see Wright,  
 'Political transformations', p. 7.

4. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 275, 282, 288, 292, 299, 302; evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 26, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 54, 56, 65, evidence of Mco toyi; Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 501, 502; Shooter, The Kaffirs of Natal, pp. 261-62.
5. Wright, 'Political transformations', p. 12; see for example Mco toyi's discussion of Thuli speech differing from that of the inhabitants of Natal who were incorporated by the Thuli (J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 57); see also descriptions of differences in the practices of body markings between the Thuli and their subjects (J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 65, evidence of Mco toyi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 276 evidence of Maziyana).
6. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 68, 70, 72, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 235, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 74, evidence of Malapi; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 538.
7. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 30, 33, evidence of Mbovu; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 348. Also see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 86, where the informant Malapi indicates that the Thuli had recourse to Cale ritual authority.
8. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 69, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 33, evidence of Mbovu. For a detailed discussion of the origins of the lineages, see Hamilton, 'The amaLala', pp. 7, 16, and p. 468 above.

9. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 72, evidence of Mageza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 33, evidence of Mbovu;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 538.
10. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 72, evidence of Mageza;  
Bryant, History, p. 85; Fynn, Diary,  
p. 70.
11. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 72, evidence of Mageza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 78, evidence of Melapi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, p. 539.
12. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 115-16 evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 71, evidence of Mageza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 74, evidence of Melapi;  
also see p. 77, evidence of Maziwana and Dinya,  
in Melapi's testimony.
13. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 155-56 evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 77, evidence of Mageza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 77, evidence of Melapi.
14. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 116, evidence of Dinya;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 77, evidence of Melapi.
15. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 539-40;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 296, 302, evidence of Maziwana;  
J.S.A. Vol. 3, pp. 78, 83, 92, evidence of Melapi;  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 72, evidence of Mageza.
16. Mande first sought refuge amongst the Ndwandwe,  
but later returned, and appeared to make his peace  
with Magaye. Shaka was sceptical of his intentions,  
and within a few months, had sent out a force to  
kill Mande, and to raze his new homestead.  
J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 72, evidence of Mageza;  
J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 77, evidence of Melapi;  
Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 539-40.

17. Ibid., J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 115-16 evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 77, evidence of Melapi.
18. On Magaye caring for royal cattle, see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 106, evidence of Dinya. Also see p. 472 below, for Cele control of Thuli herdsmen of Zulu cattle. On Magaye's removal of cattle from subordinate chiefdoms, see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 92, evidence of Melapi. Also see p. 83 of Melapi's testimony, and J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 237, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 293, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A. Vol. 3, pp. 65, 66, evidence of Mcoyoi. (The transfer of cattle between the Cele and the Zulu is symbolised in the traditions by Magaye's submission to Shaka through the presentation of a beast, see J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 72, evidence of Mageza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 78, evidence of Melapi.)
19. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 69, evidence of Mageza.
20. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 73, 86, evidence of Melapi.
21. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 265, 284, 292, 298, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 25, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 53, 65, evidence of Mcoyoi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 85, evidence of Melapi. Regarding this date, see Stuart's note, J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 301; Shooter, The Kaffirs of Natal, p. 260 and Bryant, Olden Times, p. 503.
22. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 505; Isaacs, Travels, p. 32.
23. Fynn, Diary, p.21.

24. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 26-7, evidence of Mbovu; Fynn, Diary, p. 22.
25. Isaacs, Travels, pp. 25-6.
26. See above, p. 350; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Melapi; Bryant, Olden Times, p. 124. Also see Madikane's periodisation, J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 60.
27. See above, p. 247.
28. See above, pp. 354-55.
29. Hamilton and Wright, 'The Making of the Lala', pp. 11-12.
30. See above, pp. 172-86.
31. This description draws broadly on the conclusions presented in 'The Agricultural Region of Natal', unpublished paper, produced by the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, Natal, n.d., and J. Philips; 'The Agriculture and related development of the Tugela Basin and its influent surroundings', Natal Town and Regional Planning Report, Vol. 19, 1973.
32. See, for example, Mmemi's account of the strategic retreat into this area of the Zulu, during a campaign against the Ndwandwe (J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 271).
33. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 405-12; 507-8, 513; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 115, evidence of Dinya.



34. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 478, 481-82, 489, 490-91; Fuze, The Black People, p. 67; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 183, evidence of Jantshi; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 60-1, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 33, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Melapi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 245, evidence of Mmemi.
35. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 412, 487, 491, 507, 511; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 115, evidence of Dinya.
36. See above, p. 344; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 252, evidence of Mayinga; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 81, evidence of Melapi.
37. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 237, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 245, evidence of Mmemi; Isaacs, Travels p. 89, where it is noted that Shiyabantu was near Zihlandhlo. Shiyabantu was the name of a cattle post, but its situation is a matter of debate. It is possible that, like Khangela, there were two cattleposts of this name, one under Zihlandhlo and the other under Magaye. (See above, p. 360).
38. Ibid., p. 182. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 249, evidence of Mayinga. Also see K.C., Essay Competition, 1942, 'Some Historical Records of Places' by S. Mbhele, p. 2, and 'Tribal History' by Mrs. Andrina.
39. Hamilton and Wright, 'The Making of the lala', p. 17.
40. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya. Like Magaye, Zihlandhlo was credited with being addressed as umnawe (younger brother) by Shaka, and as similarly enjoying his special favour.

(J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 279, 280, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 6, 7; evidence of Mbovu; Hamilton and Wright, 'The Making of the amalala, p. 17). Both chiefs had the authority to kill off subjects without consulting Shaka. (Fuze, The Black People, pp. 20, 58; J.S.A. Vol. 1, p. 117, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 237, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 280, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 73, evidence of Melapi).

41. See above, p. 472; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 96, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 51, 52, 53, evidence of Madikane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 236, 237, evidence of Maquza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 266, 268, 296, 297, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 92, evidence of Melapi.
42. Zulu interests on the coast were supervised by Mbikwana kaKhayi, 'Shaka's most tactful and imposing diplomat', who was based in an establishment on the north side of the lower Mlalazi river. (Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 569-70, 595; also see Kunene, Emperor Shaka, pp. XXXII, 210; Fynn, Diary, pp. 64, 65, 68, 70.) In the Mbo country, Shaka's representative was Sotobe kaMpangala, a Zulu notable of equal stature, who was responsible for the royal cattle amongst the Mbo. (See above, p. 294; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 252, 257).
43. The following section draws on a paper written by J. Wright and myself, and presented at the History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, 1984, entitled 'The Making of the Lala - Ethnicity, Ideology and Class-Formation in a Precolonial Context.'

44. Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 7, 232-36 also see the discussion of Bryant's typology on p. 267.
45. For a close discussion of the claims of origin made by the various lala groups, see Hamilton, 'The amaLala', pp. 4, 6-10, 12, 16. This discussion is not reproduced here because it repeats the overall approach adopted in the analysis of traditions of origin in this study.
46. Bryant, Dictionary, p. 26.
47. Bryant, History, p. 127.
48. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 55, evidence of Madikane.
49. J.S.A., Vol. 4 (forthcoming), p. 14, evidence of Mqayikana.
50. J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 318, 342, evidence of Lunguza; Bryant, Dictionary, p. 346.
51. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 233, evidence of Maquza; Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 385, 389; Krige, Social System, p. 247.
52. Hedges, 'Trade and politics', p. 188.
53. Ibid.; P. Harries, 'Slavery, social incorporation and surplus extraction: the nature of free and unfree labour in south-east Africa', unpublished paper presented to the History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, 1981, p. 10.
54. G. Stow, The Native Races of South Africa, London, 1905, p. 425.

55. Ibid., pp. 425-27.
56. S. Molema, The Bantu Past and Present, Edinburgh, 1920, reprinted Cape Town, pp. 36, 37.
57. S.A.L., Bleek Collection, storage box marked 'Papers 2'.
58. See above, p. 285.
59. J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 53, 56, evidence of Mco toyi; J.S.A., Vol. 3, pp. 75-6, evidence of Melapi; also see J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 107, evidence of Dinya, where it is claimed that initial effect on the Cele dialect was through close contact with the Thuli, but that this was resisted by the Cele, who wished to retain their Mthethwa speech. Ultimately, however, the change to tekela by the Cele was effected.
60. See above, chapter five.
61. Döhne, Dictionary, p. xv, S.A.L., Bleek Collection, storage box marked 'Papers 3'.
62. On variations in the tekela dialect, see J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 57, evidence of Mco toyi; S.A.L., Bleek Collection, storage box marked 'Papers 2'. On variations within the official speech, sometimes called isiNtu. see S.A.L., Bleek Collection, storage box marked 'Papers 2'; The Natal Diaries of Dr. W. Bleek, O.H. Spohr (ed.), Cape Town, 1965, p. 77; Faye, Zulu References, p. 63; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 28, evidence of Mabonsa; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 70, evidence of Mageza.
63. Bleek, Diary, p. 76.

64. Ibid., pp. 34, 36, 76; Fynn, Diary, p. 46; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 24, 41, evidence of Baleni; J.S.A., Vol. 1, pp. 238, 240, evidence of Kumalo; J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 322, evidence of Lunguza; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 143, 145, 147, 149, evidence of Mahungane; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 230, evidence of Maputwana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 45, evidence of Mbovu; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 157, evidence of Mkando; Fuze, The Black People, p. 66.
65. Bleek, Diary, pp. 36, 76; S.A.L., Bleek Collection, MSB 71, notebook marked 'Africa'; J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 279, evidence of Maziyana; J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 144, evidence of Nkakwa.
66. J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 54-5, evidence of Madikane.
67. J.S.A. Vol. 3, p. 150, evidence of Mkando.
68. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 279, evidence of Maziyana.
69. See above, pp. 358-63.
70. J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya.
71. J.S.A., Vol. 3, p. 158, evidence of Mkando.
72. J.S.A., Vol. 2, p. 55, evidence of Madikane.
73. J. Allen, The Language of Ethnic Conflict, New York, 1983, p. 431.
74. Colenso, Dictionary, p. 431; Bryant, Dictionary, pp. 462, 469.
75. The inyakeni were the Kabeleni, Mxamalala, Mapamulo, Hlongwa; Khuze, and Nhlangwini. Those

who were explicitly described as not being inyakani were the Cele, Thuli, Makhanya and Nsomi. (J.S.A., Vol. 1, p. 118, evidence of Dinya; J.S.A., Vol. 2, pp. 53, 55, evidence of Madikane.)

76. J. Saul, 'The dialectic of class and tribe', Race and Class, XX, 4 (1979), p. 349.
77. A.D. Smith, Ethnic Revival, Cambridge, 1981, p. 71.
78. Saul, 'The dialectic'; F. Barth, Ethnic Groups and Boundaries, Farlaget, 1969.
79. I. Goldin, 'Coloured ethnicity and coloured politics in the Western Cape region of South Africa'; In paper presented to the International Conference on the History of Ethnic Awareness, Charlottesville, April, 1983, p. 5.
80. Saul, 'The dialectic', p. 352.
81. B. Jewsiewicki, 'Some preliminary reflexions [sic] on the study of the history of ideology and the experience of ethnicity in Zaire', paper presented to the International Conference on the History of Ethnic Awareness, Charlottesville, April 1983, p. 1.

### CONCLUSION

In 1828, Shaka was murdered at his new capital Dukuza, in the lala country. Details of the palace coup by his half-brothers are well-known, and need not be rehearsed here.<sup>1</sup> The reign of his successor, Dingane, saw the kingdom in retreat northwards, back across the Thukela.<sup>2</sup> Thus the assassination of Shaka marked the end of the era of 'state formation' in south-east Africa.

The period c.1750-1828 had seen the emergence of two types of centralized polities: the trading states of Mabhudu, Ndwandwe and Mthethwa; and the essentially defensive states of the Thukela valley, the Hlubi and the Qwabe. The most persuasive arguments so far put forward to account for their emergence are based on the Smith-Hedges hypothesis that the initial dynamic, at least, was provided by the effects of international trade.<sup>3</sup> Growth in the ivory trade at Delagoa Bay in the second half of the eighteenth century probably prompted increased centralization and territorial expansion on the part of certain of the chiefdoms south of the Bay. In the 1790s, when the ivory trade was superseded by a trade in cattle, strong incentives arose for chiefdoms to raid cattle from their neighbours, and to gain control over areas of good grazing land. The political turbulence surrounding the emergence of the new trading states was increasingly felt by the chiefdoms on their immediate peripheries. Needing to defend themselves against aggressive expansion, these chiefdoms in turn responded with militarization. In circumstances of crisis, the rulers in both types of emerging polity were able to greatly entrench their positions of dominance, and to extend the social controls

at their disposal. Amabutho replaced circumcision schools, and were mobilised for longer and longer periods, largely at the expense of local lineage heads. The development of sizeable standing armies, demanding an increase in central authority and the accumulation of surplus for redistribution, in itself, would have set in motion certain transformations within the defensive chiefdoms - although generally not of the magnitude of those which characterized the chief trading states. One form which this was likely to have taken was a bid to enter the trade, but it was their failure in this respect which resulted in the continued existence of a crucial difference between the essentially 'defensive' states and those actively engaged in the trade, viz., the absence in the former of the kinds of social and economic stratification which were emerging in the latter.<sup>4</sup>

The contrast between the trading states and the defensive polities of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is illuminated in the early chapters of this thesis concerning the origins of the Mthethwa and the Qwabe, the pre-Shakan kingdoms of each type for which the greatest evidence is still extant and which, for historically specific reasons, was the least affected by subsequent events. It has been argued that signs of the systematic adulteration of Mthethwa oral traditions suggest that in the earliest phase of Mthethwa expansion a number of disparate groups were thoroughly assimilated by the Mthethwa ruling lineage - all of the groups incorporated by the Mthethwa at this time claiming to be the kinsfolk of the Mthethwa ruling lineage. The subsequent development of the amabutho in response to the expansion and changing nature of the trade provided the means for Mthethwa rulers to extend their control over new subject chiefdoms, extracting from them a regular tribute without extending to them



the full rights and benefits of Mthethwa citizenship. Unlike the groups incorporated earlier, the tributary chiefdoms were not assimilated by the Mthethwa and did not come to think of themselves as the kinsfolk of their rulers. By the late eighteenth century, a tribute-based society had emerged between the Mfolozi and Mhlathuze rivers, characterized by a dichotomy between, on the one hand, the hegemonic Mthethwa ruling lineage and its associated kin lineages, and, on the other hand, the Mthethwa tributary chiefdoms excluded from the benefits of trade and obliged to surrender to their Mthethwa overlords a large percentage of their surplus produce.

Immediately to the south of the Mthethwa, Qwabe expansion took a rather different form. The traditions of origin of the various component Qwabe groups did not evidence a similar dichotomy between early 'kin' lineages and later 'non-kin' additions. Other forms of evidence indicative of sharp social stratification and the existence of embryonic social classes are similarly absent in the Qwabe case. Likewise, the available evidence suggests scant involvement in the Delagoa Bay trade by the Qwabe. The early Qwabe amabutho system appears to have been concomitantly less-developed, ultimately to be overrun with relative ease by the Mthethwa. Left relatively intact, Qwabe was incorporated under the Mthethwa paramountcy as a tributary chiefdom.

One effect of the failure of Mthethwa fully to incorporate tributary chiefdoms like the Qwabe was that the Mthethwa polity remained relatively decentralized. Although the new tributaries were deprived of the symbols of an independent chieftaincy, they retained considerable local autonomy, notably their territorial integrity, their chiefships (although largely filled

by Mthethwa nominees) and their own military forces.

The failure of Mthethwa to develop resilient bonds of social cohesion amongst its component parts, and the continued decentralization of Mthethwa military resources were ultimately to be major factors in its undoing. The reluctance of the Mthethwa rulers to assimilate their new subjects facilitated the concentration of wealth at the apex of Mthethwa society, but the lack of integration made it difficult for Mthethwa to recruit soldiers from amongst their subjects for a centralized Mthethwa army.

Expansion of Mthethwa in the late 1810s brought them into conflict with their northern neighbours, the state of Ndwandwe. Bonner has argued that the Ndwandwe, living in the relatively low rainfall area around Magudu, were probably especially hard-pressed to reproduce the material basis of their existence following the Madlathule famine some time around the turn of the century.<sup>5</sup> Economic recovery for the Ndwandwe, he posits, was likely to have been more dependent on the forcible appropriation of vital resources. These circumstances probably stimulated Ndwandwe centralization and militarization, ultimately with self-sustaining effects, which continued into the 1810s and underlay the numerical superiority and military efficiency of the Ndwandwe army, and its defeat of the Mthethwa.

The collapse of Mthethwa allowed the Mthethwa tributary chiefdoms to reassert themselves in the sub-region. The groups which emerged as the most significant local forces at this time were the Zulu in the north-west in close proximity to the aggressively expanding Ndwandwe, and the Qwabe, further away in the south. The Zulu chiefdom, under imminent threat of being overwhelmed by their more powerful neighbours, also faced an internal crisis in the form of ongoing opposition to

the ruling Shakan party.

Political competition within the chiefdom had to be neutralized. One of the ways in which this was achieved, was through the murder of a number of Shaka's half-brothers, his rival claimants for the chieftaincy. The other way was through the excision (dabula) of certain highly placed sections of the Zulu clan to form new clans, with their own izibongo (clan-names). This had the effect of establishing ideological distance between Shaka's most powerful royal relatives and the kingship. Royal by birth and yet excised from the royal line, the members of the dabula'd clans retained a degree of authority sufficient to support them in high office, but in a diluted form, which ensured that they could not easily usurp the Zulu kingship. Elderly women of the royal house proper occupied a similar position; past the age of childbearing, they were free of the ritual constraints placed on menstruating women in Zulu society, and as the direct descendants of past Zulu kings, they shared in the Zulu ubukhosi (kingship). Thus they were invested with sufficient royal authority to occupy important positions as the king's representatives, but, they, in their turn, were prevented by their gender from usurping the kingship for themselves.

The reign of Shaka saw the placement of these women in high office on a scale apparently unprecedented in the early state societies. Likewise, it saw the coherence around the king of a core group of semi-royal male administrators, the men of the dabula'd clans, a situation which differed markedly from that of Dingiswayo's reliance on non-Mthethwa regional commanders. The dabula'ing of sections of the Zulu clan had the further effect of facilitating the practice of a form of endogamy within the clan, creating and constantly repeating bonds of alliance within a limited

group and permitting the concentration of wealth and resources at the apex of Zulu society.

Continued disaffection concerning the seizure of power by the Shakan party, and the looming threat of Ndwandwe attack also demanded the immediate expansion and reorganization of the Zulu army. Despite the limited expansion of the Zulu army which occurred under Shaka before the collapse of the Mthethwa paramountcy, the Zulu army was the numerical inferior of the Ndwandwe. Shaka was faced with an urgent need to expand the military strength of his chiefdom if it was to survive, and if he was to remain in power. This was achieved through strategic local expansion and the creation of a network of supportive alliances.

The early consolidation of Zulu power saw the incorporation of the Sibiya, the Zungu, sections of the Thembu, Sithole, Mabaso and Chunu, the Cube, and the Bhele. The Zulu also attempted to incorporate the populous and powerful Qwabe polity to the south, and the Khumalo chiefdom to their north. Although nominal rule was established in both areas, sustained resistance continued well into the 1820s. It has been argued in this thesis that this resistance was an important factor in shaping the hegemonic ideology of the emerging state, notably in the development of the amantungwa identity as the basis of unity amongst the core chiefdoms comprising the early Zulu kingdom. Close assimilation as amantungwa ensued of all the groups incorporated into the Zulu kingdom at this time, providing, in turn, for the incorporation of large numbers of men into the Zulu amabutho. This phase of expansion also saw the Zulu extend their cattle holdings, gain access to superior tracts of pasture and agricultural land, as well as control of areas important for the supply of amabutho attire and insignia, areas of local iron

resources, and the attainment of political sway over Zululand's most renowned iron smiths.

Access to these key resources enabled Shaka to undertake the extensive reorganization of the Zulu army and to impose on it a degree of centralization probably unprecedented in the sub-region. Internal reorganization of the Zulu amabutho system was designed as much to consolidate the position of the Zulu ruling lineage vis-a-vis the army as to increase military effectivity.

The initial hostility to Shaka's accession indicates that a powerful impulse was likely to have existed for Shaka to undertake the fundamental restructuring of the army itself. The process whereby loyalties of the veterans of Senzangakhona's army and the new recruits to the Zulu amabutho alike came to focus on the Zulu king were complex and extended over time, involving substantial shifts in the conceptions about society then current. At the same time, the new Zulu rulers were under great pressure to mobilise a large army in a very short time. To achieve this as rapidly as possible, a range of ideological elements already in existence in the society were mobilised and restructured to underpin the legitimacy of the new order. In particular, the training of the amabutho at the ritually important amakhanda served to focus the loyalties of *new male subjects on the person of the Zulu king*. The amabutho system also served to locate individuals and groups within the social hierarchy and to entrench divisions between the privileged and unprivileged in the society. Under Shaka, the range of controls exerted by a king over his amabutho, were widened and refined, most notably through the status conferring ceremonies of ghumbuza and thunga, and via the centralized state institution of the izigodlo.

Under Shaka, izigodlo were established at every ikhanda, housing large numbers of women, well above the levels necessary to fulfil the functions of diplomatic marriages and royal patronage, or those necessary to perform the domestic labour of the king's household. Close examination of provisioning at the amakhanda and of the local agricultural cycle suggests that the existence of the hugely expanded women's institutions played a crucial role in crop production for the people based in the amakhanda. The concentration of agricultural labour in the izigodlo under the aegis of the king, represented at every izigodlo by an eminent elderly female relative, facilitated the increased centralization of the amabutho and provided an added source of royal control. The izigodlo became thus a crucial power base for the amakhosikazi directly governing the amakhanda.

These reforms, together with the rapid expansion of the Zulu kingdom enabled it to defeat the Ndwandwe in c.1819. The collapse of Ndwandwe completely altered the circumstances in which the hitherto essentially defensive Zulu kingdom found itself.

The enormous degree of centralization of the Zulu army, under the immediate control of the king extensively underpinned the hegemonic position of the new power-holders in the kingdom. The continued rule of this grouping over the extended kingdom depended on the maintenance of the army. However, by its very existence, the Zulu army generated a dynamic for further expansion to ensure its maintenance and reproduction. Most notably, this entailed an insatiable demand for cattle for redistribution.

The Zulu state which emerged in the 1820s in response to these imperatives differed markedly from the

precursor trading states of the eighteenth century, and from the early Zulu defensive state. This period saw the Zulu extend direct rule over a wide range of tributaries, forcibly appropriating their land, labour and surplus products. Next the Zulu took control of the chiefdoms of the Thukela valley; then they entrenched and consolidated Zulu rule over the recalcitrant Qwabe, quartering the bulk of the Zulu amabutho in Qwabe territory. Subsequently, Zulu rule was extended south across the Thukela into the Natal lowlands. Zulu influence was also extended over the Ronga chiefdoms to the north of Zululand.

The incorporation of the chiefdoms on the periphery of the Zulu state was along very different lines from the chiefdoms incorporated in the early phase of Zulu expansion. On the peripheries of the kingdom, members of existing lineages tended to be incorporated less as subjects of the kingdom and more as super-exploited tributaries. Their chiefly houses were required to maintain identities clearly separate from the Zulu royal house, and their young men, far from being recruited into the ranks of the king's amabutho, were put to work at menial tasks like herding cattle at outlying royal cattle posts. Altogether, members of these lineages seem to have had fewer rights and heavier obligations than members of the lineages of the heartland.

In ideological terms, the exclusion of members of some lineages from the rights and benefits of Zulu citizenship and their subordination to others was effected through their derogatory designation as separate and inferior ethnic groups. The subordinate lineages on the southern periphery of the kingdom were denigrated as the amalala, while members of the commoner Ronga chiefdoms were called amanhlangwa by the Zulu. These categories operated both to distinguish these chiefdoms from the

amantungwa of the heartland, to justify their subordination and, by inducing feelings of shame and inadequacy amongst those thus denigrated, to inhibit mobilisation for resistance.

What emerged under Shaka was essentially a society of three tiers. At the apex were located the king and members of the royal and associated collateral clans. Immediately below, and closely interconnected with this group were the other privileged clans of the kingdom. Collectively designated the amantungwa, these two tiers constituted the aristocracy of the new society. The third tier of Zulu society comprised the majority of the people of the exploited peripheries, derogatorily referred to as the amaJala, amanhlangwa and the like. This commoner class demonstrated further social stratification within itself, as well as regional variations in their status and relation with the core chiefdoms.

These divisions were underpinned by the state's sophisticated coercive apparatus, but they were also entrenched and legitimated through the development of an ideology of state. The state system and the associated ideology were largely shaped by economic and social forces, but to a remarkable degree, they were also shaped by prevailing perceptions of the world. In particular, the new ideology necessarily conformed to previous notions of legitimacy. These were derived from the social principles of the pre-state period, notably that of common descent typical of 'kinship' ideology. The new ideology was also shaped by the ideas current at the time of the emergence of the Zulu state, especially those located in resistance and opposition cultures.



Co-opted and rearranged, it is argued that these ideas developed into an ideology of ethnicity. The social cohesion conveyed by ethnicity developed out of residual notions of kinship insofar as ethnic identities imply common origin and descent for all the groups concerned, but it differed from an ideology of kinship in two ways. Within a lineage-based society, an ideology of kinship functions to unite all the members of that society or polity. In contrast, the coexistence of a number of ethnic groups within a polity allows for both exclusion and inclusion within the polity, fostering a corporate sense of the superiority of elites and inculcating a sense of common identity and obedience in inferiors, making it an especially appropriate response to a situation characterized by conflicts over resources. Ethnicity also differs from an ideology of kinship in failing to reproduce the rigidity of traceable (fictive or genuine) genealogical connections. The greater flexibility and highly situational nature of ethnicity makes it especially effective in societies undergoing transitions and in the restructuring of social relations.

However, the capacity of ethnicity to refer to complex and contradictory, shifting patterns of consciousness, renders the ethnic identities of historically remote societies elusive. In the case of the early Zulu kingdom, the problem is compounded by the relative brevity of Shaka's reign. While ethnic categories dating to that period continued to have a currency and relevance long afterwards, changing conditions in the 1830s, notably the incorporation of a large sector of the commoner echelon of Zulu society into the new colony of Natal, meant that the system of social stratification and the associated ideology which prevailed under Shaka was never fully systematized and universalized.

As a result, the reconstruction of precolonial ethnicity must take cognizance of the effects of subsequent events and ideological shifts in data which appears to refer to the Shakan period. The major exercise in this context lies in the exploration of the categories amantungwa and amalala. As was remarked by Maqandeyana of the Nthuli, reputedly a great sage, 'the secret of ancient wisdom lies in the names of things and their forgotten meanings'.<sup>6</sup> The unpacking of these terms, and the establishment of their meaning and application in the Shakan period, some eighty years prior to their earliest transcription, is an historical exercise requiring great sensitivity.

At the same time, extensive excursions into the pre-Shakan past are also necessary to reconstruct precursor ideologies and earlier ethnic identities so as to give full weight to the events and phenomena of the Shakan period. Consideration of the earliest origins and history of the subject chiefdoms is demanded by the important role in the legitimation of precolonial ideologies played by appeals to the past, casting a new light on the role of history in precolonial societies and on the manipulation of oral traditions in the creation of ethnic identities. The methods developed for the deconstruction of oral texts and the identification of latter-day interpolations push the period for which oral traditions can be used as historical sources well back in time, before the reign of Shaka.

In attempting to illuminate a conceptual framework for understanding Zulu views of politics and political change at a particular period, this study does not seek to describe the ideology of the Shakan period as a static, achieved phenomenon. Like all constructs of ideas, the ideology of state which prevailed was in the process of being modified and refined by historical

forces, necessitating a focus on the dialectical relationship between ideology and action over time. It is the signs of this process, characteristically contradictory, which speak of the struggles of the groups involved in the achievement of the hegemony of one group over others. As such, this study marks a move away from the writing of precolonial history from above, and a shift of the emphasis in the precolonial history of the Phongola-Mzimkhulu area away from the achievements of the Zulu kings and royal house, and onto the activities of the historic peoples of the region.

1. See for example Morris' accurate and readable account, The Washing of the Spears, pp. 105-8.
2. For a summary of the pressures on Dingane, see Bonner, Kings, pp. 40, 42-4.
3. See discussion, pp. 6-7.
4. The conceptualization of the different types of early states presented here owes much to extensive collaboration with John Wright of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
5. Bonner, Kings, p. 23.
6. Kunene, Anthem of the Decades, p. ix.

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