

**CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN XHOSA HISTORIOGRAPHY
DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: AN EXPLORATION
THROUGH TEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

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Abstract

This study is an exploration of the making of Xhosa historiography from the end of the eighteenth century to the close of the nineteenth century. Continuity and change are key features that are identifiable in the writing of Xhosa history over the period. Selected documents provide evidence on how different writers built on the works of their predecessors. At the same time, over a period of hundred years, due to changing socio-political contexts, new ideas and perceptions crept into Xhosa history. European writers, who dominated the writing of Xhosa history, were made up of colonial officials, missionaries, and travellers. Sharing a common European Christian background these writers brought along their particular understanding of history, and held assumptions about the indigenous people and their past. However such assumptions were always in a state of flux. South-east Africans were also major contributors to the making of Xhosa history. Their oral traditions were important sources from which Xhosa history was produced. The African and European encounter in the making of Xhosa history meant that historicity and historiography came together in the production of Xhosa history.

At the end of the eighteenth century there were a handful of European travellers who explored the interior of southern Africa and recorded their observations of indigenous communities. These observations of south-east Africans, whom they divided into three racial groups, formed the basis of later writings about the indigenous communities. The beginning of the nineteenth century brought the establishment of British rule at the Cape. This introduced new players into the African-European drama that was being acted out on the frontier. Colonial officials set out to inform themselves about the indigenous people, and this meant writing up their history. From the 1820s missionaries were a main source of information on amaXhosa. Xhosa history produced under the missionary influence included works by African converts, among whom Noyi was the most noteworthy. As British imperialism gained ground from the middle of the nineteenth century, history was increasingly used by British officials as a tool to justify their colonial expansion. Under Governor Grey there was a deliberate production of a Xhosa history that depicted amaXhosa as having a barbaric past and in need of civilisation. Theal who consulted Dutch and British archives as well as oral tradition made a major contribution to the writing of Xhosa history. But Theal later began to select evidence to show that amaXhosa were recent immigrants into south-east Africa. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century a band of literate Africans, using

newspapers like *Isigidimi* and later *Imvo Zabantsundu*, embarked on writing African history.

This study highlights the development of certain themes in Xhosa history, themes which remained central in later years. The royal theme became pivotal and in the process displaced other histories in African communities, like clan histories. This study has also traced the roots of some historical myths. For example claims by early travellers about an empty land fed into the migration theme which sought to explain amaXhosa as recent immigrants into south-east Africa. Xhosa historiography, just like its European counterpart, marginalised ordinary people, especially women, and became primarily an account of the lives and activities of ruling men.

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INTRODUCTION

This study traces the making of Xhosa historiography during the nineteenth century by analysing selected texts. It involves identifying relevant texts, exploring processes of recreating the past, and listening to the innumerable voices that got included in the texts - "the production of history".¹ In an introduction to his book Crais claims to be exploring "ways in which people with radically different ways of perceiving the world around them participated in the construction of an unequal and racially divided colonial society."² This study also looks at how people coming from different traditions worked together, or against each other, in the creation of Xhosa history during the nineteenth century. The focus is on the trends that emerged in the writing of Xhosa history. The study should be seen as an expression of what Neale describes as "a desire to achieve intellectual decolonisation through a revision of African history."³ The initial euphoria of post-independence history gave way to disillusionment as the new African history was perceived as not having broken colonial ties: "African history was stuck with the traditional Western view of what was important in the past."⁴ The search for an African history continues, and concern about the domination of European concepts and notions about the past remains. Fage,⁵ a leading historian of Africa, has as recently as 1993 raised this concern: "In the last analysis, it does need to be asked whether European concepts of history are suitable for the understanding of African history."⁶ In tracing the evolution of Xhosa historiography I have had an opportunity to analyse the process of history production from the time of the earliest encounters between Africans and Europeans. It was a time when historiography⁷ encountered historiography.

In this thesis it is argued that the writing of Xhosa history went through a number of phases over a century. Such phases took shape mainly around the stages of colonisation - early contact and co-existence, the stage of autochthon resistance and military conflict, and the final stage of establishing colonial authority. Trends in historical writing were influenced by the fast pace of change that accompanied the establishment of the colonial system and the spread of Christianity among south-east Africans. The way Xhosa history was written included both continuity and change as historical themes evolved. This at times resulted in ambiguities and contradictions in Xhosa historiography.⁸

The different themes that made up Xhosa history were a combination of what colonial writers regarded important in the history of the autochthons as well as dominant themes in Xhosa tradition. Further contradictions in the writings on Xhosa history during the nineteenth century are due to the fact that there were a number of voices which at times were conflicting. Although the indigenous people and the settlers sometimes worked together in the production of Xhosa history they were not always in harmony.

A study of early historical writing about amaXhosa expands and enriches South African historiography. It should be seen as part of the search for an inclusive history for the people of South Africa. It also reveals the foundation on which later historical writings are based. Since the early 1960s, the era of decolonisation in Africa, there has been a re-writing of African history- a process that has gone through a number of phases. Although South Africa missed out on that first wave of African nationalist historiography, by the late 1960s there were important initiatives in bringing African history to the fore.⁹ Commenting on the work of Wilson and Thompson, Saunders observed, "In general, Wilson and Thompson strove to move away from an ethnocentric focus, and to look at the history of all South Africa's people on an equal basis."¹⁰ From the 1970s it was the radical historians who breathed fresh air into South African historiography. Their approach questioned a history that celebrated a white, and mainly male story in South Africa. Through a class analysis the radicals focused on the past of the working class and produced a new history. As Grundlingh reminds us, the radicals were not a homogenous group. "Different varieties of Marxism emerged; sometimes intersecting and at other times competing with one another."¹¹ There were two main divisions - the structuralists who were mainly influenced by European Marxists and the social historians who were critical of their rivals for pursuing "a sterile structuralism...[that was] devoid of human agency, consciousness, experience and at times of regional and chronological specificities."¹² Although work by the structuralists did extend historical research to include urban workers and peasants, it still did not bring out the African voice. The structuralists did not adequately address the question of the marginalisation of Africans in South African historiography. Cross argues that "the emphasis on class analysis in history production did not solve the problems posed by the complexity of South African society."¹³ Stapleton, concerned to place Africans at the centre of history, accuses both the

liberal and radical schools of having inherited from settler history the practice of “forgetting” or degrading Africans in their writings.¹⁴

During the 1970s a group of historians undertook research on the history of a number of African societies who had hitherto been excluded from mainstream history. Extensive work was done on African societies before contact with European settlers. Most of the scholars in this group also applied techniques of oral history to expand their source material. The importance of oral sources in the writing of African history had, since the early 1960s, been recognised and made use of in other African countries. Oral tradition does not only have the potential to bring in new evidence for researchers, but also allows African voices to be heard. Philip Bonner,¹⁵ who undertook research on the Swazi state, was one of the first historians with an Africanist slant to have studied an African polity before the impact of colonial rule.¹⁶ Other researchers who followed were Beinart, whose focus was on amaMpondo, and Delius on Pedi. Of special relevance for this study is the research done by Peires¹⁷ on amaXhosa. The growing use of oral sources precipitated the birth of oral history projects which were engaged in collecting and storing oral tradition. Some projects were attached to universities and had a more formal and academic approach to their work,¹⁸ and others were independent non-governmental organisation initiatives.¹⁹

Although oral traditions form the core of texts that are analysed in this work, little work was done in collecting current oral history. Any extensive use of contemporary traditions would have included evidence from the twentieth century in a study that is otherwise focussing on nineteenth century texts. I have directed my research to oral traditions that were recorded during the nineteenth century, the period covered by this study. Different factors influenced the early collection and recording of oral traditions among amaXhosa. The oral texts that were recorded, on which scholars have for so long relied, were produced at a particular time and by certain individuals. Besides, recordings of oral traditions avail versions from which a researcher can identify both continuity and change.

This study does not just explore what the historical texts say about the Xhosa past, it also probes how these came about, and in what ways the knowledge within them was produced.²⁰ Such a study is

important for a number of reasons. It captures some of the earliest historical writing about the indigenous people of southern Africa. The texts throw up various nineteenth century representations of Africans. It is possible to analyse the discourses of the period as the researcher is also exposed to the language, metaphors, and images used to describe Africans. Thus, the study does not only show what was written about Xhosa history, it also reveals how the evidence was shaped by various writers operating in different contexts. In this thesis it is possible to trace how European writers, relying on their images of indigenous people, grouped south-east Africans into three racial categories - "Bushmen", "Hottentots", and "Kaffirs". Through these racial labels Europeans created what Cohen defines as "rigid ethnic classifications".²¹ As the century progressed, it is possible to discern how a distinct Xhosa group, with a history that was built around the Tshawe royal house, came into being.

I will try to identify the genesis of some "myths" that have wormed their way into South African historiography. During the 1980s there were calls from historians for the identification and eradication of such myths.²² This study will trace how certain themes developed in Xhosa historiography, and how some of them over time evolved into historical myths. For example, early travellers frequently remarked on "unoccupied" areas through which they passed. There could have been two reasons for such observations. Firstly, the indigenous people could have temporarily moved away from a place because of seasonal migration. Secondly, during the process of colonisation, Europeans assumed ownership of the lands of the indigenous people. One of the pretexts they gave was that the autochthons were not making use of the land through cultivation and industry. Early travellers in southern Africa would remark about the "emptiness" of the African landscape which, to them, was teeming with "Hottentots" or "Kaffirs", animals, and plants. This was the genesis of the "myth of the empty land".²³

The texts analysed in this study have been selected because they make reference to Xhosa history, to a greater or lesser extent. Some of the texts were produced in the late eighteenth century, others during the nineteenth century. They were written mostly by people with no training in history. They appeared mainly in the form of journals, reports, diaries, letters, histories, and recorded traditions.

From the late 1820s, in addition to English and Dutch documents, texts written and published in siXhosa. Later, when newspapers began to be published, some carried articles on Xhosa history.²⁴ During the first half of the nineteenth century mission stations were the main centres where writing on Xhosa history was produced. During the second half of the nineteenth century there was a broader combination of writers which included colonial officials, missionaries, African intellectuals, and amateur historians. Two newspapers, *Isigidimi* and *Imvo Zabantsundu* were used by Africans to debate historical issues among themselves.

Xhosa history written in the two languages - Xhosa and English - also reflected divisions within colonial society. English as the “master code”²⁵ was the language of the powerful colonial officials and European missionaries. English texts circulated mainly among the colonists and had limited readership among amaXhosa. The reverse was true where Xhosa texts were concerned. By the second half of the nineteenth century it was the English texts which were increasingly accepted in the colony as official versions of Xhosa history. Although African intellectuals wrote and published African history during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, their texts remained on the periphery of colonial literature. Texts written in Afrikaans and English have had a greater impact on South African historiography than those in siXhosa. The reason for the limited use of the texts written in siXhosa may be that the majority of people who have written on South African history have little or no knowledge of African languages.²⁶ This shortcoming has serious implications for the re-writing of an inclusive history. The majority of the texts written in siXhosa were written by Africans. From such texts it becomes possible for the researcher to hear the African voice. This however, does not mean such texts are not interrogated; they have to be subjected to criticism. Through this study I have tried to bring to the fore African perspectives on what history is and how it is produced. Before the overthrow of African political systems a number of writers were able to capture what amaXhosa said about their history. Even more important the texts show how amaXhosa began to adapt their history in order to accommodate the new realities of Christian teaching and colonialism.

The importance of oral tradition in the writing of African history is unquestionable and in this thesis reference is made to a number of recorded Xhosa traditions. However, debates about the relevance

of oral tradition in African history have moved on to include questions about the production of the oral texts within the indigenous societies. Oral traditions are no more perceived as unchanging texts that are handed from generation to generation. Cohen points out that there were debates about the past among oral historians.²⁷ That implies multiperspectivity in oral tradition itself. In this research on early historical texts it has sometimes been possible to identify debates and tensions among Xhosa oral historians. There are other disadvantages about the use of oral tradition in the writing of history which have to be borne in mind. The contamination of oral sources by extraneous material is a problem researchers have to contend with. In his research on Maqoma, Stapleton observed how even amaXhosa without formal schooling were influenced by contact with those with western education.²⁸ By identifying the earliest recorded traditions, the researcher is able to trace instances of contamination. Future research could make a comparative study of traditions on Xhosa history that were recorded during the nineteenth century and those that still exist.

The approach adopted in this study is eclectic. The work is open to influences from a number of paradigms. The analysis of texts in this study has been influenced by postmodernist thinking which has raised questions about discourses and how they exist within power relations. There is also a focus on the making of texts, the use of metaphors, and imagery. The texts were produced during the early colonial phase. Consequently these texts are steeped in missionary and colonial discourses. One finds, for example, the division of people into the barbarian/civilised binary, typical of colonial discourse. There is also the pagan/Christian divide found in missionary discourse. Newton-King notes that both these discourses applied at the Cape.²⁹ Within such discourses were standard images and metaphors. The very term 'kaffir' which referred to amaXhosa was an epithet used within a religious discourse. Postmodernist scholars have raised questions about what history is. In his famous work Hayden White dismisses claims to objectivity: "One of the things that one learns from the study of history is that such study is never innocent, ideologically or otherwise."³⁰ Many of the writers of the texts analysed in this study professed neutrality and disinterest.

Recent studies of southern African history and culture have focussed on the making of texts. A number of such studies have been produced on Zulu historiography. The catalyst to these studies is

generally attributed to the mfecane debate of the 1980s.³¹ Satir argued that the *difaqane/mfecane*, which he defined as forced migration,³² was a myth that had been “fabricated by the Boers and the British to disguise and justify their land-robbery and to whitewash their own genocidal Mfecane or Difaqane, their crushing and chasing out of the peoples whose land they wanted to grab.”³³ Julian Cobbing took up the *mfecane* question arguing that Shakan historiography was based on the writings of Natal traders whose main aim was to provide an alibi for their illicit activities in Natal during the late 1820s.³⁴ Scholars like Said³⁵, and Mudimbe³⁶ have argued that the people from the east, in the case of Said, and Africans, as argued by Mudimbe, were re-created in the image Europeans held of them; descriptions of indigenous people in colonial texts bore little relation to reality. Satir and Cobbing argue that texts about Shaka were written to hide the illegal activities of Europeans in Natal. Mudimbe argues that the writing of European colonists about Africa and Africans was a misrepresentation, designed to “justify the process of inventing and conquering a continent and naming its ‘primitiveness’ or ‘disorder,’ as well as the subsequent means of its exploitation and methods for its ‘regeneration’.”³⁷

Hamilton has followed a different line, arguing that the indigenous voice was not totally submerged in colonial texts on Shaka. She contends that there were different voices that contributed to the making of Zulu history. This is apparent in texts about Shaka: “Indigenous communities had a lot to say and spoke with many voices, and more importantly, were heard.”³⁸ Hamilton’s contention counters a new form of eurocentrism that was creeping into the notion of invented tradition according to which indigenous people are presented as pliable victims who could be moulded by Europeans. Hamilton’s view calls for a more rigorous use of oral traditions which should include identifying the informants and noting the many histories that existed within African societies. In this thesis I argue that during the early phase of colonisation, the writers of history were more dependent on the indigenous people as informants. The autochthons had a greater opportunity to shape the history that was being written about them. AmaXhosa, as they served as guides, interpreters, and informants, selected what information the European writers had access to. They withheld information on the House of Gcaleka, which was the senior house. Instead they put the Rharhabe House at the centre and diverted the attention of Europeans from amaGcaleka. During later phases the situation

was different. Having attained military ascendancy, the coloniser had a greater scope to produce a history of the indigenes which might serve the colonial enterprise. The indigenous people had to seek other options for the production of their history. In this study the examination of texts on Xhosa history seeks to discover the voice and degree of involvement of amaXhosa in the writing of their history through different phases.

Peires is the only scholar to have written on Xhosa historiography.³⁹ In a ten-page essay he gives an overview of Xhosa historiography from 1845 till the 1970s. He discusses the place of oral tradition in Xhosa history, identifying three genres that were directly related to history - genealogies (*iminombo*), praises (*izibongo*), and tales (*amabali*).⁴⁰ Stapleton later follows Peires' breakdown of traditions.⁴¹ Both Peires and Stapleton undertook extensive fieldwork and were able to collect and record Xhosa oral traditions. Peires seems to have been inclined to use oral tradition to support written evidence rather than to question it. He contends that Xhosa oral traditions yield relatively little new information that is not already known from written sources.⁴² Stapleton identifies evidence which he believes he would not get from written sources.

Peires' work on Xhosa historiography suffers from some limitations. Even though he identifies three types of Xhosa tradition his analysis of the manner in which the three traditions are "related to history"⁴³ is cursory. This may be because the traditions are not the main focus of his work. Peires also is silent on the changes Xhosa royal genealogies underwent during the nineteenth century. In this study the importance of genealogy is recognised and its place in the production of Xhosa history is given fuller analysis. Moreover, although Peires admits that clan praises are still in use, he fails to explore further the nature and role of this tradition in the preservation of family and clan histories. By ignoring *iziduko* (clan praises) Peires effectively excludes clan and family histories. In Xhosa society clan histories co-exist with royal histories. In his research on Xhosa history Stapleton contends that his best Jingqi informants were descendants of Maqoma's councillors.⁴⁴ Such information could have been preserved in clan histories rather than through royal *iimbali*. Peires further interprets *ibali/ amabali* as tales. Peires' examples of *amabali* - the stories of Tshawe, Phalo, and an account of the War of the Axe - are in fact *iimbali* (historical narratives) which are

different from ordinary stories, *amabali*. In *iimbali* evidence is given about the past with specific reference to names of people and places. These traditions usually have specific people who relate them. Royal history is remembered through *iimbali* and these are performed in formal settings by recognised oral historians.

Peires offers a brief sketch of Xhosa historiography from mid-nineteenth century to the last quarter of the twentieth century. He identifies an article on Ntsikana in *Ikhwezi* of 1845 as the first historical account in siXhosa. This study has identified earlier texts. Peires' rush to comment about the writers of the last quarter of the nineteenth century like Gqoba, Jabavu, and Rubusana omits important mid-nineteenth century historical works on the Xhosa past by missionaries and colonial officials. He then follows with a brief discussion of writings on Xhosa history during the twentieth century.

There has been no extensive study of Xhosa historiography. Digging back to the roots of indigenous history is important in the search for a new history of South Africa. This study will contribute to the unravelling of a standard narrative which came to form the basis of Xhosa history.

1. DW Cohen, *The Combing of History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 4.

2. CC Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1992), 1.

3. C. Neale, *Writing "Independent" History: African Historiography 1960-1980* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), 3.

4. *Ibid.*, 39.

5. Jan Vansina makes a brief comment on Fage's early career. See J. Vansina, "Some Perceptions on the Writing of African History: 1948-1992", *Itinerario*, 16, No. 1 (1992), 77-78.

6. J.D. Fage, "Reflections on the genesis of Anglophone African History After World War II", *History in Africa*, 20 (1993), 24.

7. E. Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of Oral History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 11.

8. Marks writes about ambiguities in African societies which were mainly due to the co-existence of older hierarchies with new capitalist modes of production under the colonial order. See S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism, and the State in Twentieth Century Natal* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986), 1.

9. The work of Wilson and Thompson exemplifies a major development in South African historiography during the late 1960s. See M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds), *The Oxford History of South Africa: South Africa to 1870*, i (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

10. CC Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past: Major Historians on Race and Class* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1988), 154.

11. A.M. Grundlingh, *Transcending Transitions? The Social History Tradition of Historical Writing in South Africa in the 1990's* (Pretoria: UNISA, 1997), 4.

12. *Ibid.*

13. M. Cross, "Changing Frontiers of Academic Discourse: Knowledge, Power, and the Production of History in South Africa" (Paper presented at the University of the Witwatersrand History Workshop, 1994), 7.

14. T.J. Stapleton, "The Memory of Maqoma: An Assessment of Jingqi Oral Tradition in Ciskei and Transkei", *History in Africa*, 20 (1993), 321.

15. See P. Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires: The Evolution and Dissolution of the Nineteenth-Century Swazi State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1983).

16. See Paul la Hausse, "Oral History and South African Historians", *Radical History Review*, (1990), 346.

17. See J.B. Peires, *The House of Phalo: A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of their Independence* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1981).

18. Examples of such projects include the University of Natal Oral History Project which started in 1980. An Oral History Project was established at the National University of Lesotho, and a similar project at the University of Zimbabwe.

19. For example, the South African Institute of Race Relations Oral History Project which was formed in 1982, and Eyethu Imbali Oral History Trust which was founded in Grahamstown in 1989.

20. Cohen, *The Combing of History*, xv.

21. *Ibid.*, 11.

22. Among others see M. Cornevin, *Apartheid Power and Historical Falsification* (France: UNESCO, 1980). J. Naidoo, *Tracking down Historical Myths: Eight South African Cases* (Cape Town: Crede Press, 1989). L. Thompson, *The Political Mythology of Apartheid* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

23. This is the title of an article in which Marks discusses the claim that the interior of South Africa was empty and occupied by immigrants who moved in from the north during the sixteenth century. See S. Marks, "The Myth of the Empty Land", *History Today*, Vol. 30, January 1980, 8-12.

24. The first Xhosa newspaper was *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba* which first appeared in 1837. It was closed down in 1841 after 15 issues.

25. In his book De Kock discusses how English was a dominant language in the colonial society. See L. de Kock, *Civilising Barbarians: Missionary Narrative and African Textual Response in Nineteenth-Century South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1996), 3.

26. This is with the exception of scholars like Hodgson, Peires, Odendaal. See J. Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa: A Study of the Origins and Development of the Traditional Concepts of the Supreme Being* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1982). Peires, *The House of Phalo*. A. Odendaal, "African Political Mobilisation in the Eastern Cape, 1880-1910" (Ph.D. Thesis, Cambridge University, 1983).

27. Cohen, *The Combing of History*, xv.

28. Stapleton, "The Memory of Maqoma", 329.

29. Although in her work Newton-King refers to the Khoisan, I believe that the two discourses are discernible in writings about amaXhosa as well. See S. Newton-King, *Masters and Servants on the Cape Eastern Frontier* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

30. H. White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 82.

31. Some of the works on this topic are the following: V.E. Satir, "The Difaqane: Fact vs Fiction", *The Educational Journal*, September 1983, 6-10. J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo", *Journal of African History*, 29 (1988), 487-519. D. Golan, *Inventing Shaka: Using History in the Construction of Zulu Nationalism* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1994); and D.A. Wylie, "White Writers and Shaka Zulu" (Ph.D. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1995).

32. Satir, "The Difaqane: Fact vs Fiction", 6.

33. *Ibid.*, 10.

34. See Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi".

35. E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

36. V. Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (London: James Currey, 1988) and *The Idea of Africa* (London: James Currey, 1994).

37. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, 20.

38. C. Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1998), 27.

39. Peires' Xhosa historiography appears as an appendix in his book. See Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 170-180.

40. *Ibid.*, 170.

41. Stapleton, "The Memory of Maqoma", 323.

42. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 175.

43. *Ibid.*, 170

44. Stapleton, "The Memory of Maqoma", 322.

CHAPTER 1

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TRAVELOGUES AND THE BEGINNING OF XHOSA HISTORIOGRAPHY

European travel writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is increasingly attracting the attention of scholars.¹ Travellers' journals have become source material for a number of disciplines. In the South African context travellers' narratives represent early literary documents. They are thus a crucial part of literary history.² Through the observations of early European explorers, anthropologists are afforded a glimpse of indigenous communities before they changed under the impact of European contact.³ Historians have also resorted to these documents in their search for evidence to bring what Thompson referred to as the "forgotten factor"⁴ into the historiographical stream. But the interrogation of these texts goes beyond the search for evidence. The focus is on the nature of travellers' discourses. Spurr argues that for early European travel writers and colonisers there were "twelve rhetorical modes or ways of writing about non-Western peoples constituting a kind of repertoire for colonial discourse".⁵ Eighteenth century travel writing in southern Africa also carries evidence on early contact between the autochthons and the travellers.

The writers whose texts are under scrutiny in this chapter never intended to write about the history of amaXhosa or of other indigenous communities they came across. Coetzee notes that the European travellers of the time had a basic framework according to which they shaped their descriptions of the autochthons. Some of the key features they observed and noted were physical appearance, dress, diet, medicine, defence and weaponry, religion and magic, law, economy, foreign relations, trade and language.⁶ Any reference to the past was accidental. However, such information slipped through as the writers were gathering evidence on topics such as government, trade, and language. Although there are few specific references to Xhosa history in the texts under discussion, clues and leads into the Xhosa past can be found. Some of the travellers's observations formed the basis of dominant themes in Xhosa historiography.

There are other reasons why the travellers did not consciously delve into the past of the aborigines. In the first place most of the explorers were natural historians or geographers. The humans they encountered were part of the landscape and these they studied and categorised in a manner similar to their classification of plants and animals. The travellers were thus mainly interested in the present state of the people they met. As the Comaroffs put it, “The symbolic terrain of a rarely seen Africa was being shaped by a cascade of narratives that strung together motley scientific facts and poetic images.”⁷ Secondly, the travellers were at the service of their European patrons and European reading audiences whose expectations they felt obliged to satisfy.⁸ Thus they did not necessarily describe what they actually encountered.⁹ The other reason for travellers not consciously delving into the past of the aborigines is that during Europe’s age of travel a major distinction was made between Europe and the rest of the world. The difference was between the civilised and the savage. The latter, who included Africans, had no history. Hegel’s remark captures the view: “Africa proper has no historical interest of its own.....inhabitants living in barbarism and savagery.. .Removed from the light of self-conscious history.”¹⁰ Young has also stated, “The savage was thought of as timeless, living in the eternal present, like a child.”¹¹

In European representation indigenes, in our case siXhosa-speaking south-east Africans, were constructed as the Other, in accordance with the image Europeans had of autochthons. In this exercise Europe perceived the “New World” as its counter-image. As the Comaroffs observe, “Africa became [the] negative trope” to Europe.¹² My intention is to analyse eighteenth century travel writing on south-east Africans and identify some of the writers’ preconceptions of Africans. In that way it will be possible to detect how certain themes in historical writing on amaXhosa first emerged. Although this representation of the indigenous people was essentially European, this does not mean that the aborigines played no part in the creation of the texts. Scholars are increasingly sensitive to the tendency to diminish indigenous agency in the making of histories. Hamilton calls for an ear for the African voice, “because the sub-alterns spoke.”¹³ Behind the assumed facade of innocence and subservience, the aborigines had control and knowledge of their environment. It was their territory and that gave them the power European travellers lacked. At times, such power and knowledge were recognised by the travellers. For example, having been saved from a buffalo attack by Klaas, his interpreter, Le Vaillant admitted

that, “Klaas was now my equal, my brother, and confidante of my hopes and fears.”¹⁴ This is in spite of the fact that Le Vaillant later described himself as leading a “caravan”, while aborigines “obeyed and relied on him as the sole author of their preservation.”¹⁵ Instances of silence in travel writing, through deliberate omission or ignorance, will be noted as being pregnant with meaning. Abrahams and Dubinsky, for example, interpret silences as “a lot of words about silence”.¹⁶ Discussing travel writing in Canada and South Africa, they argue that silences and omissions in travelogue are inaudible statements that need to be unpacked by scholars. In this study, texts will be approached as if they were, in Barthes’ words, “skeins of different voices and multiple codes which are at once interwoven and unfinished.”¹⁷

The texts to be analysed were written by five eighteenth century travellers. Before plunging into the texts themselves, short biographical information on the writers will be presented.¹⁸ Carl Peter Thunberg, a Swede born in 1743, was the first European traveller with scientific training to traverse the Cape Colony, in the year 1772.¹⁹ He has been referred to as the “Father of Botany”.²⁰ Between 1772 and 1774 Thunberg undertook four journeys into the interior of the Cape Colony. Two of these trips were towards the eastern region where amaXhosa and their neighbours resided. For his second and third journeys Thunberg was joined by, besides his guides, Francis Masson, a gardener who had been sent by the king of England to collect plants for Kew Gardens.²¹ Forbes has little regard for Thunberg as a writer, claiming that his two volumes “have no claim as literary work.”²² However, Thunberg has been used as a historical source.

Anders Sparrman, another Swede, was born in 1748. He initially trained as a botanist under Karl Linnaeus²³ but later showed an interest in zoology.²⁴ By the time Sparrman penetrated the interior of the Cape Colony he had had the opportunity to travel to the Antarctic Polar Circle and around the world. Indeed, Sparrman’s travels around the globe in the company of Captain Cook - Cook briefly visited Cape Town during his world travels in 1771 and 1772²⁵ - connected the explorations into the interior of southern Africa to the wider drama that was being played out by Europeans in the south seas.²⁶ Sparrman’s extensive travel experience and his literary skills enabled him to write two volumes about his travels into the Cape interior from 1775 to 1776. These works, published in 1783, were the first to appear from among the group of travellers of the 1770s. His journals also influenced the writings of those who came after him.

William Paterson, an Englishman born in 1755, was twenty-one years old when he landed at the Cape in 1777. Forbes claims that Paterson was of gentle birth.²⁷ Evidence, however, shows that Paterson was a son of a gardener²⁸ who had been commissioned to explore the Cape interior in search of new plants. *A Narrative of Four Journeys into the Country of the Hottentots and Caffraria* was first published in 1789.²⁹ During the four journeys into the interior, Paterson covered a greater distance than any of the other travellers. Though he augmented his writings with material from Sparrman,³⁰ he nonetheless made his original contribution to knowledge about south-east Africans. Paterson, like other travellers of the time, had a patron, Lady Stratmore, who sponsored his scientific research. A most remarkable aspect of his journal is a claim that, during his third journey, he penetrated “Caffraria” and actually reached the village of “Chief Khouta”, the reigning Xhosa monarch.³¹

On arrival at Table Bay Paterson met another traveller, Captain Robert Jacob Gordon, a Dutchman of Scottish descent born in Gelderland in 1743. Forbes suggests that Gordon may have journeyed to the eastern parts of the Cape in 1773.³² What is more certain is that he journeyed to the interior in 1777.³³ In another journey, which he undertook in 1778, Gordon was in the company of Joachim van Plettenberg, then governor of the Cape.³⁴ Gordon was a witness when Plettenberg placed a beacon marking the northern boundary of the colony, not far from present-day Colesberg, in September 1778.³⁵ Gordon was again part of Plettenberg’s entourage when the former had a meeting with Xhosa *iinkosi*³⁶ about setting a boundary between the Dutch and amaXhosa.³⁷ Gordon travelled further into the interior than any of his contemporaries. His writings are important sources, particularly as he recorded his encounters with *iinkosi* and their retinues along the Nxuba/Fish River. Raper and Boucher contend that Gordon could converse in Khoisan and isiXhosa and had a smattering of Tswana.³⁸

Francois Le Vaillant, the last of the group of travellers, was a French³⁹ ornithologist who undertook his travels at the Cape between 1781 and 1784. An English translation of his two volumes was published in London in 1790.⁴⁰ The popularity of Le Vaillant’s work among the European public is attributed to his style, “whose romantic sentiments and flowery verbiage apparently recommended them to many of his contemporaries.”⁴¹ Forbes complains that some of Le Vaillant’s claims about the extent of his travels are questionable.⁴²

Some of the central themes in Xhosa historiography are traceable to eighteenth century travel writing. A “combing” of the travel texts will reveal how the themes were products of a variety of actors that included the writers, the indigenous people, the colonists and colonial officials. The themes arose from both the observations and the imagination of the travellers. An explorer’s text, as Mudimbe points out, “follows a path prescribed by a tradition.”⁴³ Perhaps, one may add, a number of traditions. The major tradition under which the travellers operated was the prevailing European thinking about the “New World” and its peoples. As Cohn observes, “Whites everywhere came into other people’s world with models and logics, means of representation, forms of knowledge and action with which they adapted to the construction of new environments peopled by others.”⁴⁴ European travel outside Europe did not just mean moving from one space to another, it also meant the European “discovery” of lands.⁴⁵ Some travel writings are records of such “discoveries”. Through surveillance, Spurr argues, western writers would descend from the heights [of their presumed cultural superiority] and “discover” what to them were new lands.⁴⁶ Travellers seem to have assumed that “mere presence [in a territory] and a simple verbal assertion can be transformed into possession.”⁴⁷

Such “discoveries” sometimes implied that the lands concerned were unoccupied. Le Vaillant recorded such thoughts in his journal: “What ... shall these charming fields, hills and valleys be forever uninhabited?”⁴⁸ Paterson, after crossing the Nxuba/Fish River in 1779, also remarked that he had travelled through uninhabited land.⁴⁹ The concept of *terra nullius* -vacant land-⁵⁰ is central to the notion of “discovery”. The idea that the interior of southern Africa was uninhabited was often suggested in the travellers’ texts, and assumptions about uninhabited land took root in southern African historiography.⁵¹ The travellers sometimes described land as unoccupied even when it was clearly inhabited by autochthons. The land could also be declared vacant if its occupiers had temporarily moved as transhumant farmers. For example, land reserved for game by the indigenous people could have also been declared vacant by the travellers.⁵² Europeans understood themselves as having the expertise to use land in the most productive way, and that gave them the right to appropriate it. They believed that cultivation was a civilised form of land use. However, the travellers did not apply the principle of right to land through cultivation to amaXhosa. Sparrman noted that land had been cultivated along the Maxelexwa/Gamtoos River⁵³ and yet the same traveller failed to recognise the African ownership of that land. When scholars like Marks and Cornevin discuss “the myth of the empty land”⁵⁴ they do not trace the roots of the

myth. Marks confronts the myth and seeks to disprove it through archaeological evidence.⁵⁵ Cornevin identifies two such myths. The first is that blacks migrated into southern Africa at the same time as the whites settled at the Cape.⁵⁶ The second emanates from claims made by the trekboers that when they moved into the interior of southern Africa the area was uninhabited.⁵⁷ The genesis of the myths is traceable to early writers like the travellers.

European travellers of the eighteenth century also went about mapping the lands of the indigenous people. To geographers like Forbes, the maps the travellers drew were important documents. Virtually all the travellers had maps attached to their texts. Forbes pays tribute to Sparrman's pioneering work in southern African cartography.⁵⁸ Gordon's maps help to give a clearer picture of the areas he traversed during his travels.⁵⁹ Such maps were colonial inscriptions that usually preceded European settlement. Even though drawn according to measurements and with the use of instruments like an astrolabe, "maps are," in Ryan's words, "productions of complex social forces: they create, manipulate reality as much as they record it."⁶⁰ They were evidence of social, political, and economic processes. One can assume that the indigenous people had their own markers on the landscape they occupied. They had political centres, *komkhulu*. Individuals had homes and ancestral graves. New key points in the landscape were established by the travellers on their maps which in most instances ignored indigenous landmarks. Blanks in travellers' maps were sometimes filled with pictures of animals. Ryan again observes, "A blank does not simply....reflect gaps in European knowledge but actively erases existing social and geo-cultural formations in preparation for the projection and subsequent emplacement of a new order."⁶¹ Maps introduced new ways of deciphering the landscape.

Eighteenth century travellers in southern Africa adopted some of the new names already imposed on the African landscape, mainly by the Dutch colonists - names like Sneeuberg, Langkloof, Swartkops and others. African words were often pronounced and transcribed wrongly resulting in the creation of new names like Gamtoos, Camdeboo,⁶² Kuka (Ngqura). In some instances colonial names co-existed with indigenous placenames. The Nxuba/Fish River continued to have both names used.⁶³ The use of both names symbolises the co-existence of the African and colonial past in the region. In cases where the travellers failed to record and use indigenous names, they effectively erased the African past. The loss of indigenous placenames also meant an erasure, Cohen argues, "of meanings which people make out of and infuse upon their

landscapes.”⁶⁴ The travellers figuratively took ownership of the land by renaming it. Renaming other people’s lands was an act of baptism, formally ushering in a new order. In Sparrman’s map there appears a Point Ekeberg, which must have been in honour of his kinsman and benefactor, Ekeberg.⁶⁵ In 1777, when Gordon reached the Gariep/Gqili River, he renamed it Orange, in honour of the Dutch royal house.⁶⁶

Also likely to have influenced these early southern African travellers were Dutch colonial perceptions, knowledge, and understanding of amaXhosa. The Dutch had since the middle of the seventeenth century established a settlement at the western corner of southern Africa. Knowledge about the area east of the Dutch settlement and its people mainly came from the indigenous people with whom the Dutch had contact, as well as from the Dutch pastoralists who had migrated eastwards. Moreover, the travellers had access to seventeenth century Dutch writings about African communities. Peter Kolb,⁶⁷ O. Dapper, W. ten Rhyne, J.G Grevenbroek,⁶⁸ and others had written about the autochthons although none of them had travelled more than a few kilometres from Cape Town. Le Vaillant observed that Kolb had “never left the town though he spoke with the certainty of an eye witness on the manners and customs of the internal parts of the colony.”⁶⁹ In conversing with indigenous people during his travels, Le Vaillant found some of Kolb’s claims about the laws, customs and religion of the indigenous people to be untrue, and even insulting.⁷⁰

The eighteenth century travellers could have had access to earlier journals which reported encounters between Europeans and the aborigines of south-east Africa. Such texts were sources that could have influenced the thinking and perceptions of travellers. One of these was a report of Dutch explorers, Bergh and Schrijver, who had travelled to the east of the Dutch settlement.⁷¹ In 1689 Schrijver embarked on a journey to the east in order to make contact with the Inqua, from whom the Dutch wanted to buy cattle, and also to search for minerals. Schrijver’s journal gives the names of various Khoisan groups the expedition came across.⁷² A general picture that came from Schrijver’s text was that the people east of the Dutch were wealthy pastoralists, who occupied houses of clay. Schrijver’s expedition was made at the time the survivors of the *Stavenisse*⁷³ shipwreck had made contact with colonists and had also given reports on their experiences among the people east of the Dutch settlement. There was also an account of a skirmish between amaXhosa and Dutch colonists in 1702, recorded in the *Christian Voyage*.⁷⁴

In addition there were some reports on the indigenous people by Dutch colonists in the Beutler journal.⁷⁵ The journal was a record of a 1752 expedition, led by Beutler, whose members travelled as far as the Qora River, east of the Kei River. Beutler had demarcated the land, declaring that the Keiskamma River was a boundary between the “Gonaqua” and the “Kaffirs”.

From the Dutch settlement at the Cape the travellers obtained guides, interpreters and servants who in turn would have been important sources of information and influenced what the travellers saw and heard. Some of the fellow travellers were colonial officials. Paterson for example travelled with Lyster, a surveyor for the colonial government. Lyster’s task was to survey the countryside up to the Nxuba/Fish River.⁷⁶ As the journey was undertaken in 1777, before the declaration of the Nxuba/Fish River as a boundary between amaXhosa and the colony, one can assume that Lyster’s work was preparation for that demarcation. Some of the guides who assisted travellers built up a body of knowledge to be shared with the travellers. For example, Thunberg was accompanied by a guide named Ange who had taken part in eighteen such trips.⁷⁷

It would be naive to assume that the travellers were engaged in benign scientific explorations. They were commissioned by governments, private companies, or individuals. In the end their findings were put to the service of imperialist expansion. Travel writing disseminated information that established and consolidated European power in the remotest corners of the globe.⁷⁸ At the same time the travellers who came to the Cape worked closely with the Cape government.⁷⁹ This could have been for protection. It could also be that through their travels, the Cape government could gain information about the eastern boundary over which they had little control. The travellers’ writings, especially those about south-east Africans, informed and most probably influenced the policies of the Cape government. Rivalry among European powers over settlements in newly discovered territories meant that sometimes travellers were accused of being spies. For instance, there were allegations that Paterson’s visit to the Dutch settlement at the Cape was more than a mere exploration, but was an espionage mission for the English. Forbes contends that Paterson was innocent.⁸⁰ Pratt nonetheless argues that the British are likely to have benefited from Paterson’s strategic knowledge.⁸¹

The travellers also joined in the classification and naming of African people. There was an erasure and at times a distortion of old names which the indigenous people had used to describe

themselves. Through this process the history of south-east Africans became distorted. When the writing of Xhosa history began during the nineteenth century it was founded in a context that had already been affected by European writings. South-east Africans were divided into three racial groups, “Bushmen, Hottentots, and Caffres”,⁸² in the travellers’ accounts. It needs to be pointed out, however that these appellations had long been in use in the colony. As early as 1623, a Danish sailor, Jon Olafsson reported that the Khoi danced on uttering the word “Hottentot”.⁸³ The name, Khoikhoi, meaning “men of men”, was a more generic term used by some south-east Africans to describe themselves.⁸⁴ An intriguing fact about the name Khoikhoi is that in siXhosa the word *ingqwayingqwayi* means a great person, an outstanding figure. It is highly probable that Khoikhoi is a Europeanised version of *ngqwayingqwayi*, a word that is still in use in siXhosa.⁸⁵ So the appellation *inqwayingqwayi* may have referred to a broader and different group from what was suggested by early European writers. Although there is evidence that the colonists had heard of a people sometimes referred to as Chobona or Magosi or Hoosa, they ignored such appellations.⁸⁶ Instead they referred to the people who called themselves amaXhosa as “Caffres”. The *Stavenisse* survivors had written about African groups along the south-eastern board providing their names.⁸⁷ The racial divisions created by the colonists and confirmed by the travellers were new classifications and had little to do with what had existed previously. On arrival at the Cape Europeans had encountered indigenous inhabitants who fell into several groups with specific names.⁸⁸ It is mainly around colonial classifications that the history of siXhosa-speaking people began to be written.

The colonial racial classification of south-east Africans ignored indigenous categorisations of groups which were in place. South-east Africans could have classified themselves according to their occupations, religious beliefs, political affiliations, and clan systems. Mobility within some of these categorisations is likely to have been high. As a result there could have been groups of people who fell between these categorisations in defiance of static classifications. When analysing colonial writing on the indigenes there is a contradiction between the way the Africans grouped themselves and the colonial classification. The travellers adopted a racial classification based on ideas prevalent in Europe during the eighteenth century. As botanists and zoologists they discovered and categorised animals and plants according to their physical characteristics. This concern for classification was extended to indigenous people as well.⁸⁹ In dividing up south-east Africans, physical traits were important criteria.⁹⁰ Sparrman described the “Hottentots” as

tall like Europeans, and yellowish brown in colour; and the men were not monoclides.⁹¹ Sparrman saw amaXhosa as resembling Mozambican slaves, black in colour, strong and robust.⁹² Paterson described amaXhosa as jet black with white teeth and large eyes.⁹³ Thus a profile of each racial group evolved in the writings. A sharp contrast was drawn between amaXhosa and Khoisan.

The travellers were also at pains to prove a correspondence between race and culture. The “Bushmen” were depicted as hunter-gatherers who did not rear stock or work the land. They were also gatherers of honey who fought with bows and arrows.⁹⁴ On the other hand the “Hottentots” were painted as pastoralists who lived for their herds.⁹⁵ In contrast to the “Bushman-Hottentot” groups, amaXhosa were described as people who had progressed to the level of agronomy and metallurgy. The travellers’ texts contain a number of observations according to which agriculture was associated with “Caffers”. Thunberg was the first to observe in 1774, that “Caffres raise a kind of peas and beans.”⁹⁶ Sparrman on the other hand recorded that the “Caffers” in Sitsicamma planted “caffer” corn which they made bread with and even fermented.⁹⁷ Le Vaillant noted that after crossing the Sundays/Nqweba River, which was understood by European observers then to have been the area inhabited by “Caffers”, “For the first time since leaving the colony I encountered signs of cultivation...corn ready for cutting.”⁹⁸ Paterson noted that “Caffres” planted Guinea corn from which they brewed an intoxicating drink called pombie.⁹⁹ AmaXhosa were described as using assegais and shields for fighting,¹⁰⁰ and they could forge metal.¹⁰¹ AmaXhosa were also said to have been practising the rite of circumcision. This custom was perceived by eighteenth century Europeans as one practised by an advanced group.

In colonial literature a sharp distinction was drawn between the civilised and the savage,¹⁰² sometimes expressed in the form of the heathen-Christian binary. In the writings of the period the Dutch colonists were referred to as Christians. Sometimes, when the travellers were not using the new names they had coined, they would refer to the autochthons simply as pagans.¹⁰³ In following these divisions the travellers were confirming and authenticating colonial thinking. The view that amaXhosa and other African groups were savages created the perception that they had no history before the coming of Europeans. Even though the travellers did not explicitly state that amaXhosa had no history before the advent of Europeans, they implied it through their silences and even some of their observations.

The indigenous people were persistently likened to animals. At times the comparison was explicit. The “Bushmen”, for example, were depicted as beings fairly close to animals and described as the “beastly savage”.¹⁰⁴ The “Hottentots” were seen by some European thinkers as the “missing link” between humans and apes.¹⁰⁵ Thunberg stated that he had come across “Hottentots” who had had no contact with Europeans and lived “in a state of nature”.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps that is why he described servants and guides as “domesticated Hottentots”.¹⁰⁷ Elsewhere Le Vaillant wrote about “a troop of Caffres”.¹⁰⁸ Sparrman seemed surprised to hear Gonaquas, who were a mixture of “Hottentots” and “Caffres”, making utterances “which [were] like [those] of humans.”¹⁰⁹ In some cases insinuations were made by the travellers about the animal nature of south-east Africans. Le Vaillant observed that a “Hottentot” family lived in a “kraal”.¹¹⁰

In the travellers’ texts there was a hierarchy among the “savages”. The harshest description was reserved for the “Bushmen”. They occupied the lowest rung of the human chain as hunter-gatherers, and were also painted as “plundering savages”.¹¹¹ Thunberg noted that the “The Bushieman Hottentots ..have no cattle...support themselves [through] plunder and theft.”¹¹² Further, they were “sworn enemies of pastoral life.”¹¹³ Paterson observed that anyone taking a journey in the interior was exposed to danger from wild animals and “Boshmens ...who...come..plundering the inhabitants of their cattle,”¹¹⁴ and are “fierce, cruel, and dishonest”.¹¹⁵ Thunberg’s view of the “Bushmen” seems to have been shaped by local conflicts as he went on to discuss the bad relations that existed between the “Bushmen” and the Dutch colonists.¹¹⁶ Sparrman justified the killing of “Bushmen” by Dutch farmers: “The Boschiesmen... are sworn enemies of pastoral life... By this means they render themselves odious to the rest of mankind and are pursued and exterminated like the wild beasts whose manners they have assumed.”¹¹⁷

What was portrayed in traveller and Dutch literature as destructive characteristics among the Khoisan¹¹⁸ may have been a form of resistance precipitated by land loss they suffered under Dutch colonialism. It was not a cultural trait but rather their loss of land and access to game which led them to raid stock. In the travellers’ writings there are a few instances where the travellers cited the views of the Khoisan on the loss they were undergoing. Thunberg claimed to have met some “Hottentot-Boshiesmen” who had been brought to the Cape, accused of having committed crimes against the Dutch inhabitants. They informed Thunberg that they had “acted

so in their own defence...the Europeans making every year fresh encroachments upon their lands and possessions and forcing them continually further up into the country.”¹¹⁹ In one isolated case the issue of land loss and resistance came up in the words of Koerikei¹²⁰ (escaper of bullets) who was, according to Gordon, a famous “chief” of the “Bushmen”.¹²¹ Koerikei is said to have raised the following questions with Van der Merwe, a veldwagtermeester: “What are you doing in my territory? You occupy all the places where eland and game are. Why do you not remain where the sun sets, where you first were?”¹²² Koerikei made it clear that he was never going to leave his birthplace. He further assured him that the struggle would continue as he would persist in killing their shepherds and eventually drive them away.¹²³ The hunter-gatherers’ nomadic lifestyle made them vulnerable to intruders who moved in and occupied “vacant” land and its springs. The demonising of the Khoisan, who were victims of land appropriation under the colonial system, marks the early stage of an approach that was later followed by writers of Xhosa history.¹²⁴

Although the indigenous people were viewed as savages, as opposed to the civilised Europeans, another differentiation within the “savage” division is discernible from early colonial writings. The image of the Khoisan in travel writing contrasted with that of amaXhosa who were represented as the antithesis of the “Bushmen”. During the Enlightenment, an anti-slavery movement emerged in Europe and the romantics came up with the idea of a noble savage.¹²⁵ The travellers seem to have been influenced by these ideas. At times the description of amaXhosa in the travellers’ accounts fitted the image of a noble savage. According to the Comaroffs the idea of the noble savage in English writing was most salient between 1750 and 1830.¹²⁶ A noble savage was attributed physical features that were attractive in European eyes. In some travellers’ accounts amaXhosa were described as tall and elegant in stature. Le Vaillant pointed out that they were taller than “Hottentots”,¹²⁷ and that their cheek-bones did not project like those of “Hottentots”.¹²⁸ According to Thunberg, amaXhosa had the admirable qualities of being, “valiant and strong”.¹²⁹ Elsewhere he noted that amaXhosa were, “courageous, and intrepid”.¹³⁰ Gordon noted that amaXhosa “were the most audacious and cheerful people,”¹³¹ as well as being “attractive, free, and happy by nature”.¹³² The travellers placed amaXhosa in a higher rank than the San. This noble image of amaXhosa survived into early writings on Xhosa history. Later, however, colonial perceptions of amaXhosa hardened as conflict between the settlers and the autochthons intensified. In the writings of missionaries and colonists amaXhosa lost the romantic image and became pillagers and thieves, as the “Bushmen” had been portrayed.¹³³

A perusal of eighteenth century travellers' texts shows that attempts by the travellers to present a rigid racial classification of the autochthons could be contradictory. This was mainly because such categorisation did not accommodate a history of overlap and interaction among south-east Africans. For example, in instances where the indigenous people were referred to as "Bushmen Hottentots", there was a tacit admission of that failure. Also, when the travellers encountered the people they referred to as the Gonaqua the classification system collapsed. Paterson described "Ghonaqua Hottentots" in a way which defied the standard colonial description. He described them as darker [than Hottentots], better shaped, and mixing with "Caffers". At the same time these "Gonaqua Hottentots" were shown to have fought with bows and arrows. In the travellers' writings such a description would have put them in the San category.¹³⁴ Gordon described the Gonaquas as larger than "Hottentots", going on to observe that they had almost been absorbed by amaXhosa.¹³⁵ The travellers became uneasy when their racial demarcations seemed to fall away. For example, Thunberg complained that at the Maxelexwa/Gamtoos River "Hottentots" and "Caffers" lived "promiscuously together".¹³⁶ Another group of people that fell outside the colonial racial classification were the descendants of African-European unions. Le Vaillant met one Hans of "mixed race" and gave a profile that was emerging about people like Hans. He described them as courageous and enterprising.¹³⁷ These were features that were generally associated with Europeans in colonial writing. The history of interaction between southern Africans before the arrival of Europeans was submerged under the new racial framework. Later writers adopted the three-race classification. George M Theal followed a rigid racial classification when writing the history of the "ancient inhabitants of South Africa".¹³⁸ The racial distinctions among the indigenous people of southern Africa came to be taken for granted by historians.

From the travellers' texts it emerges that the region between the Maxelexwa/Gamtoos and Keiskamma Rivers was multilingual. In line with their racial classification the travellers identified languages and dialects in the region as "Hottentot", "Caffer", and Dutch. They drew up vocabulary lists for the first two languages. Language was thus identified by the travellers as another differentiating feature of the south-east Africans. However, the Gonaqua language may have been a hybrid Khoi/siNtu language, implying a history of contact between the two groups. For example some words taken from Sparrman's "Hottentot language" vocabulary¹³⁹ are similar or related to isiXhosa words today.

“Hottentot language”	English	IsiXhosa
mama	mother	mama
kobbo	slave	koboka
guka	wolf	ngcuka
hango	hog	ihagu
t’Gus	sheep	igusha
za	roebuck	ingxa
oi	bee	inyosi
bi	milk	ubisi
t’Gulu	thunder	izulu

Observations by travellers about separate and distinct languages were in contradiction to the existence of hybrid languages like that of the Gonaqua. Subsequent research has shown a close affinity between the languages spoken by south-east Africans.¹⁴⁰ Even though isiXhosa is classified as belonging to the siNtu language family, it has been heavily influenced by Khoisan languages.¹⁴¹

The travellers’ texts provided some information on areas of co-operation between the Dutch colonists and the indigenous people. The interdependence that had developed between the African communities and the Dutch colonists was often overshadowed by the European writers’ emphasis on conflict. The travellers met a number of Africans who were fluent in Dutch. Since that time isiXhosa contains a large number of words of Dutch origin. It can be assumed that the borrowing of such words took place mainly during the period just before the take over of the Cape by the English in 1795. These words were not dropped when English became the colonial language. English words were simply added to isiXhosa. These words testify to a history of Xhosa-Dutch interaction during the eighteenth century. Here are some examples of words in isiXhosa with Dutch roots. They are mainly concerned with domestic items and clothing.

IsiXhosa	Dutch	English
itafile	tafel	table
ifestile	venster	window

isitulo	stoel	chair
ilokhwe	rok	dress
ibhulukhwe	broek	trousers
ibhatyi	badjie	jacket

The most remarkable borrowing that took place was the adoption of the Dutch “more” to be a Xhosa greeting “molo” (hello) which is still in use today. This word has almost displaced the Xhosa greeting “bhota” or “sakubona”. The absorption of Dutch words into isiXhosa is indicative of a process of interaction between the Dutch and siXhosa speakers during the eighteenth century.

The theme of conflict between amaXhosa and European settlers in historical writing on amaXhosa is traceable to eighteenth century texts. The travellers recorded the growing conflict between the Dutch migrant farmers and the aborigines. Thunberg reported the intensification of conflict between the Dutch and the “Boshiemans”, remarking on “three large commandos that had been sent into three different quarters in 1773.”¹⁴² Later Le Vaillant encountered “Caffres” who complained of depredations by colonists.¹⁴³ Paterson also noted tension between amaXhosa and the Dutch: the former were angered by Dutch encroachments into their settlements.¹⁴⁴ In many instances when writing about the conflict the travellers displayed some empathy for their fellow Europeans, the Dutch colonists. During the travels into the interior the Dutch colonists were the companions of the travellers while the indigenous people were the servants. The neutrality of the travellers as observers and commentators on Dutch-Xhosa relations was likely to be compromised. There was also a mutual interdependence between the travellers and colonists. The travellers relied on the support and hospitality of the colonists for the success of their ventures. On the other hand the travellers supplied the isolated colonists with goods that they needed, especially gunpowder.¹⁴⁵

Travellers in their texts identified some individuals or groups of autochthons who were allies of the colonists and stood against other autochthons. Although the long-term effects of such claims were not immediately apparent during the eighteenth century, they nonetheless were a nascent form of what was to happen later. That was when colonial writers would identify “good” individuals and groups, who would be pitted against other Africans while the settlers were

consolidating their own political power. The story of Hoengeyqua leader, Captain Ruiter, represents one such case during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Ruiter was reported to have carved his own political niche on the frontier between the Dutch and amaXhosa. He was portrayed by the travellers as an ally of the Dutch. The very name “Ruiter” betrays his Dutch connection. He collaborated with the Dutch by enslaving Khoisan children. This was an unholy alliance that must have had dire consequences for the Khoisan communities. Ruiter was described by Sparrman as having been at war with amaXhosa.¹⁴⁶ His alliance with the Dutch helped him to establish a strong polity which could withstand Xhosa attacks. Figures like Ruiter and his people are precursors of those individuals or African groups who were depicted in Xhosa history as having been good and co-operative allies of the colonists.

Recorded in the travellers’ texts were accounts of the political systems of south-east Africans. From these descriptions an impression is created that the Khoi political system by then had already been subjected to Dutch influence. Thunberg noted that the “Hottentots” elected their “captains” whose appointment was then confirmed by the Cape colonial government with the presentation of a stick engraved with the company’s coat of arms.¹⁴⁷ Seemingly, these “captains” were of different levels of influence. At the Maxelexwa/Gamtoos River Sparrman came across a “captain” whose following numbered about fifty. He also had been granted a colonial staff. “King Ruyter”, referred to above,¹⁴⁸ appears to have been quite powerful. He had organised followers and settled near the mouth of the Nxuba/Fish River.¹⁴⁹ Gordon visited Ruiter’s residence in January 1778 and assured him of the respect the colonial government had for him as he had always been a good chief.¹⁵⁰ When Paterson passed near Bushmans River in 1779 “Captain De Royter” still commanded a following of about two hundred “Hottentots and Caffres”.¹⁵¹ The portrayal of the political dependence of the “captains” on Dutch support, as recorded by the travellers, minimised any form of political initiative or agency that could have been undertaken by the “captains”. Their political impotence was in line with the image of “Hottentots” in colonial literature who were shown as increasingly dependent on their Dutch masters.

Scattered through the writings of the eighteenth century travellers are references to “Caffre chiefs” whose relations with the Dutch contrasted with those of the “Hottentots”. Travellers’ records show that the “Caffres” were governed by many different “chiefs”, whose positions were

hereditary.¹⁵² This implied that there was a royal house from which the leaders came. These “chiefs” were to serve as beacons for the travellers as they sought to understand the political dynamics of the Xhosa community.¹⁵³ However, the identification of “chiefs” as the sole repositories of power in the Xhosa political system did not give a full picture of the political history of amaXhosa and such observations distorted Xhosa history. *Iinkosi* operated within a system that included other sectors like *amaphakathi*, queen mothers and, at times, paternal aunts. To just focus on one sector, royal men, presented an incomplete and distorted view of the Xhosa political system. The travellers’ documents mark the beginning of a focus on *iinkosi* as the sole and central pillar in writings on Xhosa history.

The travellers gathered information about some leading Xhosa royal figures at the time. Writing in 1775, while still in Swellendam, and most probably when *kumkani* Phalo was still alive, Sparrman made reference to “a Caffre Prince”¹⁵⁴ who had ordered the death of traditional healers after they failed to cure his sore eyes.¹⁵⁵ In Sparrman’s remark one can detect an early example of a negative depiction of an African leader. Later in his travels Sparrman seems to have been informed of Phalo’s death which must have occurred some time in 1775. He was further told that the most powerful princes after the death of Phalo were “Amahote [most probably Mahote¹⁵⁶] and Tamus”. The name of “Mahoti” was also mentioned by Gordon.¹⁵⁷ During his journey Paterson’s cattle went astray and he was told by the Dutch colonists that footprints of his cattle had been traced to Mahote’s village. In the report Paterson did not just mention Mahote but also introduced what would become an enduring theme in writings about Xhosa history, the depiction of *iinkosi* as cattle thieves.¹⁵⁸ Gordon seems to have spent more time with Xhosa princes than any other traveller. He claimed to have met the followers of Langa, a son of Phalo.¹⁵⁹ Gordon also spent ten days with Xhosa princes, “Coba, Cabera, and Godissa” near the Nxuba/Fish River in December 1777.¹⁶⁰ It was probably because of this meeting that Gordon became part of the Governor’s entourage that visited Xhosa communities in 1778. Indeed, Plettenberg met Kobe and Godissa in 1778, in all likelihood through Gordon’s connections. It is thus probable that the first political “agreement” between amaXhosa and the Dutch colonial government was mediated by Gordon.

This “agreement” between the colonial government and a few Xhosa *iinkosi* highlights an important feature of colonial writing on Xhosa politics. According to Plettenberg, Koba and

Godissa, two junior *iinkosi*, reached an agreement about a boundary. The validity of that agreement is questionable. Nonetheless, subsequent writers of Xhosa history continued to use agreements or treaties with a plethora of *iinkosi* of different ranks as the basis for Xhosa-European contracts. On the other hand it is possible that *iinkosi* like Koba and Godissa through such “agreements” were able to pursue their own individual agendas in their dealings with the settlers. Ngqika, a senior *inkosi*, came to a number of agreements with British colonial officials during the early part of the nineteenth century. These were usually to serve his interests and were often opposed by other Xhosa groups. Such individual actions have tended to be collapsed into group decisions by historians, in the process submerging the individuality of actors in the production of Xhosa history.

A more detailed account of amaXhosa came from Paterson who claimed to have reached the *komkhulu* (Great Place) of Khawuta, the reigning *kumkani*, on the Bira River, and to have spent a night there in 1779.¹⁶¹ Paterson’s narrative was the first account of a European visit to a *komkhulu*. Paterson and his colleague, a Dutch colonist, Jacob Kock,¹⁶² started their journey across the Nxuba/Fish River on 3 February and returned on 9 February 1777. Kock, who had become familiar with amaXhosa and their world, was the main source of information for Paterson. Paterson was also accompanied by a nameless person called “Hottentot”, who was to serve as an interpreter because of his knowledge of isiXhosa.¹⁶³ Paterson set out a scene that was to be familiar in historical writing about amaXhosa during the next hundred years. The countryside through which Paterson and his companions travelled was described in the familiar discourse of travel writing. The land was uninhabited. At the same time it was teeming with animals, and the grass was high.¹⁶⁴ In short it was verdant, virgin and with no people in sight.¹⁶⁵ Paterson was depicting an empty landscape ready to be inhabited by Europeans. For a natural scientist Paterson’s research was fruitful as he found animal species he did not know as well as beautiful plants. The edenic sense conveyed by Paterson’s description of the countryside conceals the more serious aim of his adventure - his intrusion into the Xhosa king’s place. There is a familiar ring to Paterson’s remark about a palm tree from which indigenous people made bread and brewed beer. The observation was similar to comments which travellers like James Cook had made about the bread fruit tree in Tahiti. Joseph Banks had recorded that the Tahitians did not have to cultivate land in order to get their bread.¹⁶⁶ Paterson’s remark about the palm tree reveals how there was a body of information that was circulating among European travellers about the indigenous people and their societies.

Even though Paterson and his companions had entered what the Dutch, through the setting of the Nxuba/Fish River boundary, had demarcated as Xhosa territory, some landmarks in the region already had Dutch names. For example, they saw a mountain range called Bamboo Berg.¹⁶⁷ The naming of Xhosa spaces by the colonists had already begun. Paterson did acknowledge local names - he recorded stopping on the banks of "Muguranie".¹⁶⁸ His report on his first encounter with amaXhosa in many ways followed what had become standard accounts of indigenous people in other parts of the world. In the first place amaXhosa were depicted as showing surprise on seeing Europeans for the first time. They were the ignorant ones who were on the defensive while the intruders had everything under control.¹⁶⁹ After the indigenous people had recovered their senses, in childlike trust, they began to entertain these otherwise unknown beings. AmaXhosa were represented as having been so enchanted with Paterson's company that whole villages followed them about. Paterson went on to present them with trinkets, much to their apparent delight. Paterson, like other European travellers, painted a scene of "happy natives". Scholars refer to the portrayal of indigenous people as happy, innocent, and childlike as primitivism.¹⁷⁰ Perceptions that amaXhosa were children who needed to be nurtured by Europeans constitute, with slight variations, a thread that runs through colonial writing on amaXhosa.

Paterson then offered a description of the village. He contended that the village belonged to the chief. He recorded that, "It contains 300 inhabitants all of whom were servants and soldiers to their chief, who was likewise the proprietor of the numerous herds of cattle."¹⁷¹ He identified an aristocratic class made up of the chief and soldiers (knights) as well as servants (serfs). Paterson superimposed feudal concepts on the Xhosa community he encountered. This misrepresentation of the Xhosa world did not end with Paterson. Forbes and Bourke, who edited Paterson's work, came with yet another interpretation: "There were about three hundred inhabitants who were all servants or soldiers. All the cattle belong to this chief: the people live on milk and game, they not being allowed to kill any cattle."¹⁷² In the latter quotation the "chief" is said to have owned all the cattle. This was further extended to mean that in the Xhosa world cattle belonged to "chiefs". Paterson emphasised the centrality of "chiefs" in the political lives of amaXhosa.¹⁷³

Paterson was the first traveller to gather oral history among amaXhosa. This he did while visiting Khawuta's village. The oral texts covered the recent history of the Xhosa royal family. *Kumkani* Phalo had been dead for four years and Paterson gave an account of a schism between the sons of Phalo, "ChaChaBe and Dfrika" (most probably Rharhabe and Gcaleka). Rharhabe as a refugee,

had then established himself in a new area and had formed an alliance with the “Boshieman-Hottentots”.¹⁷⁴ Paterson noted, “This nation is now divided into two parties... northward are a number of them commanded by one Chatha Bea or Tambushie”.¹⁷⁵ Paterson’s visit to the royal village marked the first direct encounter between a traveller and *ukumkani*. Snippets about Xhosa royalty which had appeared in earlier writings received fuller discussion in Paterson’s account. The theme of political schism in history writing on amaXhosa is a well developed one.¹⁷⁶ Paterson’s narrative about the Gcaleka-Rharhabe split seems to have been the foundation for subsequent accounts of the fissiparous nature of Xhosa society. Paterson seems to have elicited very little information on Khawuta himself.¹⁷⁷ It is possible that the account of the civil war and Rharhabe’s flight was told to the stranger because it was information about a renegade who had just been defeated. Paterson made the important observation that Rharhabe, after his flight, had struck up an alliance with the “Boschmens”. This ran counter to the idea that the San were natural enemies of the pastoralists. The story about Rharhabe’s flight also touched on an important theme in Xhosa history - migration led by prodigal princes. It appears amaXhosa kept accounts of the foundation of new settlements through stories about flights of royal sons. Such oral traditions/*iimbali*¹⁷⁸ were important sources for the production of Xhosa history. The tradition Paterson recorded on Gcaleka and Rharhabe may have been narrated through a standard storyline which was part of Xhosa oral tradition.

Even though Paterson was one of the first travellers to reach the king’s residence and make first-hand observations, the rest of his account was largely made up of information that had already appeared in travel writing. For example, he seems to have relied on Gordon’s writings. As they had been once fellow-travellers it is possible that they shared notes. Paterson made reference to assegais that amaXhosa made, as well as to baskets which amaXhosa used to carry water.¹⁷⁹ Paterson also observed that amaXhosa planted crops among which was Guinea corn.¹⁸⁰ The description Paterson gave of amaXhosa and their ornaments was also similar to that presented by Thunberg.¹⁸¹ Sparrman¹⁸² had observed in his 1775 journal that amaXhosa practised circumcision; so did Paterson. Although he was the first to visit *komkhulu* he augmented his writing with material that had already been recorded by his predecessors.

Traveller accounts generally made no reference to royal women. Gordon, who spent several days with Xhosa princes along the Nxuba/Fish River, remarked that the princes had given him the names of their wives. These he failed to record.¹⁸³ Paterson referred to Phalo’s wives only in

relation to the practice by which the status of a royal son was determined by the social position of his mother.¹⁸⁴ Whatever role royal women played in Xhosa politics the travellers were silent on. Descriptions of ordinary women were however given. The main emphasis was on the work they did, as tillers of the land. From the travellers' texts, one can trace the beginning of the marginalisation of women in writing on Xhosa public life and history.

The travellers were also silent on the role of commoners in the Xhosa political system. Gordon and Paterson who interacted with *iinkosi* and their retinues merely represented ordinary people as voiceless shadows, as simple followers who spent their time singing and dancing. Clan lineages and the authority they enjoyed did not feature at all. Monarchs and princes were depicted as centres of power and it was mainly royal discourse that the travellers imbibed. Yet clans had a special political role in the Xhosa polity. From the commoners powerful *amaphakathi* emerged who could become king-makers. Furthermore, different generations of *amaphakathi* vied for power. A senior generation of princes and *amaphakathi*, especially those of a deceased monarch, occupied a special place in Xhosa politics and competed with the young monarch, who had for support his own young "bulls", usually those he had been circumcised with.¹⁸⁵ These were sites of political struggle which were overlooked by the travellers. Their exclusion was perpetuated by later generations of writers.

The travellers moved into the eastern parts of the colony where both Dutch colonists and the colonial government had been exercising claims to the land. From then the question of land and boundaries became a dominant theme in writings on Xhosa history. Africans and Europeans had different understandings of land rights and usage. The colonial government progressively proclaimed boundaries. These proclamations were swallowing up land to which the indigenous people had claims. The migrant farmers, with no reference to the colonial government, had also been staking their claims to land. As Crais puts it, "In typically marking off an area of about 6,000 acres....trekboers initiated a powerful reshaping of the land."¹⁸⁶ In 1772 Thunberg noted that the Maxelexwa/Gamtoos River was the colonial boundary.¹⁸⁷ Later, as an afterthought,¹⁸⁸ he stated that the land of "Caffres" properly began at the Great Fish River.¹⁸⁹ In 1775 Sparrman also noted the Nxuba/Fish River as the boundary separating amaXhosa¹⁹⁰ from the colony. Thus, the travellers ratified land claims by the Dutch colonists. In fact Sparrman was the first to identify the Nxuba/Fish River as a boundary even before Plettenberg did in 1778.

The identification of boundaries by the travellers in their texts was an imposition of western notions of space demarcation and precision on the indigenous people. Further, by sticking to their racial classification, the travellers endorsed the idea of a separate territory for amaXhosa which they called Caffraria. In the process they “deterritorialised”¹⁹¹ those Africans that were not “Kaffir”. For example, the Khoisan were cut off from the land and from their history. Also the colonial boundaries, as they appeared in the travellers’ texts, dispossessed amaXhosa of their land that fell within the colony. The people the European colonists and travellers called Caffres were scattered all over the southern tip of Africa rather than being confined to “Caffraria”. The description of the Inqua, given by Shrijver, a Dutch traveller of the seventeenth century, suggests that the lifestyle and physical appearance of those Inqua were much closer to the travellers’ picture of the “Caffres” than the “Hottentots”.¹⁹² Despite such inconsistencies, travellers ratified specific demarcations of land that separated amaXhosa from what was proclaimed as the Cape Colony. Since then Xhosa historiography has been dominated by contradictory claims between settlers and autochthons over land possession and boundaries in south-east Africa.

The issue of Xhosa origins also surfaced in the travellers’ texts. Gordon noted that rivers in “Cafferland” had “Hottentot” names.¹⁹³ He went on to argue that, “Just as we have, I think that the Kaffirs have advanced their territory further,....the Kaffirs say that they and all their cattle came from the direction of Mtamboenas.”¹⁹⁴ Gordon’s observation implied that amaXhosa were recent arrivals who found rivers and places already named by the “Hottentots”. Gordon’s remarks opened up a theme which dominated in nineteenth century historical writing on amaXhosa and thereafter. Since then scholars have operated from a premise that amaXhosa were immigrants in south-east Africa. Any differences among scholars over this claim have centred on the period when amaXhosa were supposed to have moved in during their migration from the north. From the time of Gordon, writings on Xhosa history have been much concerned with places of Xhosa origin, their migration routes, and the reason for their dispersal. The dearth of archaeological data on the Xhosa past deprives researchers of better information on this question. The latest archaeological findings suggest a possible Xhosa presence in the eastern Cape around the seventh or eighth centuries.¹⁹⁵

The writings of eighteenth century travellers were used by a later generation. Barrow, for instance, referred to, among others, Sparrman, Paterson, and Thunberg. He criticised Sparrman for having repeated what he called Kolb’s absurd observations about the Khoisan.¹⁹⁶ Nonetheless

Barrow based some of his own writing on the observations of these travellers. There was a direct link between the travellers' texts and the writings that were produced at the beginning of the nineteenth century on amaXhosa. For example, Barrow's description of amaXhosa was similar to that given by Sparrman.¹⁹⁷ Barrow's influence filtered through to writers like Lichtenstein, Alberti, and Van der Kemp, who also wrote on Xhosa history.¹⁹⁸ Theal appears to have used the travellers' texts extensively. He, however, was not consistent in citing his sources. He nonetheless indicated that he was familiar with Sparrman's writings, acknowledging that he had given "accurate descriptions of the people of South Africa."¹⁹⁹ Theal also made reference to Thunberg, Paterson and Le Vaillant. In his *Catalogue*²⁰⁰ Theal gave an assessment of various writers, including the travellers. Some of their ideas about the Xhosa past were adopted by Theal and then passed on to the many historians who drew upon Theal's works.

Contemporary writers continue to use the journals of the second half of the eighteenth century as source material. Newton-King has used the travellers' texts in her writing about Dutch-Khoisan relations on the frontier between 1760 and 1803.²⁰¹ She follows the clear distinction between amaXhosa and the Khoisan depicted in the travellers' texts. She argues for a differentiation between the Gonaqua and amaXhosa despite some similarities in language and cultural practices, like circumcision.²⁰² Hodgson made use of Sparrman, Thunberg and Le Vaillant in her reconstruction of Xhosa religious beliefs.²⁰³ In her work on African communities before the arrival of Europeans Wilson also relied on early traveller writings.²⁰⁴ Her main sources were Sparrman and Thunberg. Elphick consulted the works of early travellers in his reconstruction of the Khoi past.²⁰⁵ Writers like Peires and Crais indirectly used the information from travellers, drawing on writers like Barrow and Lichtenstein whose writings had been informed by the travellers.

The writings of the five European travellers discussed in this chapter who explored the interior of southern Africa and south-east Africa mark an early stage of writing on amaXhosa and their past. Although their observations about amaXhosa, with a few exceptions, did not refer directly to the Xhosa past, their descriptions of amaXhosa carried inferences about Xhosa history. They did not deliberately set out to find out about the African past, but they could not fully understand the world of the indigenous people into which they entered without making reference to their past. From an analysis of the travellers' texts it is possible to identify the genesis of some of the themes that later became dominant in writings on Xhosa history. The travellers adopted the

colonial racial classification of south-east Africans into “Bushman”, “Hottentot” and “Kaffir” races. As Xhosa history began to be written, it was fashioned according to that rigid racial framework. This was contrary to the fluidity and flexibility that had characterised the lifestyle of African people for generations. The political system of the south-east Africans was complex and the travellers could not fully comprehend it. Nonetheless their view that the Xhosa polity was highly centralised around royalty, and at the same time prone to division and dissension, became a dominant theme in works on Xhosa history. The centrality of the royal family in the writing of Xhosa history has its beginning with the travellers’ texts. Paterson’s account of his visit to *Kumkani* Khawuta’s residence provided additional information on Xhosa socio-political history which has been regarded as authentic by scholars. The encounter between Europeans and the indigenous people, who each had a different cosmological outlook, resulted in conflict. This the travellers captured well in their writing. In their depiction of such conflict the travellers often portrayed the indigenous people as the major cause of conflict. The travellers did not adequately record the co-operation, co-existence and sometimes peaceful interaction that had developed between the various communities in south-east Africa. Travellers like Gordon participated in the process that led to the setting of the Nxuba/Fish River boundary between amaXhosa and the Cape Colony. Gordon’s observations helped to legitimise the creation of a colonial boundary in 1778. In that way the travellers were part of the colonial system that appropriated the land of south-east Africans. This was further reinforced by their imposition of new place-names. Under the colonial order indigenous knowledge about the African past was submerged and threatened with erasure. The voices of Africans were hardly discernible in the travellers’ texts, but could be deduced in some instances from the observations of the travellers and even from their silences. The travellers, who gained authority through being eye-witnesses, set the tone and content of what were to be dominant themes in Xhosa historiography.

1 . See for example A Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). Also ML Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), as well as N Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the Southern Seas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); and D Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing and Imperial Administration* (Durham: Duke University, 1993).

2 . See Ampie Coetzee, “Rethinking South African National Literary History: South Africa? History? Literary History?” in Johannes A Smit, Johan van Wyk and Jean-Philippe Wade (eds), *Rethinking South African Literary History* (Durban: Y Press, 1996), 15.

- 3 . The notion of pre-European contact is however an elusive one. Cohn raises the point that the very move by an anthropologist or explorer into indigenous communities interfered with an authentic and untouched indigenous situation. It marked the making of a colonial context. See B.S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist Among the Historians and Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 19.
- 4 . Leonard Thompson, "The Forgotten Factor in Southern African History" in L. Thompson (ed), *African Societies in Southern Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 1-23.
- 5 . Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, 3.
- 6 . J.M. Coetzee, "Idleness in South Africa", in Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (eds), *The Violence of Representation: Literature and the History of Violence* (London: Routledge, 1989), 120.
- 7 . Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa*, i (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87.
- 8 . An example of the fabulous writings of the times is the *Voyage* which was produced by Hawkesworth through his adaptation of the journals of Captain James Cook, Wallis Banks and Robertson. See Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts* , 93-108. Le Vaillant's writings about his travels into the interior of southern Africa were also highly embellished, no doubt to titillate European readers. There will be more discussion on Le Vaillant below.
- 9 . This does not mean there was no genuine interest among certain sectors of European society. Diderot, for example, presented a response to Bougainville's writings about Tahitians. For a discussion of Diderot's *Dialogues* see Dennis Porter, *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 94-102.
- 10 . G.W. Hegel, "Race, History and Imperialism" in E.C. Eze (ed), *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 124.
- 11 . Robert J.C. Young, *Torn Halves: Political Conflict in Literary and Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 146.
- 12 . Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, i, 80.
- 13 . C Hamilton, "Authoring Shaka: Models and Metaphors and Historiography" (Ph.D. Thesis, The Johns Hopkins University, 1993), 68.
- 14 . Francois Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape of Good Hope into the Interior Parts of Africa*, i (London: William Lane, 1790), 252.
- 15 . *Ibid.*, 318.
- 16 . See Yvette Abrahams and Karen Dubinsky, "Creating the 'Native': A Comparative Study of Travel writing in Canada and South Africa" (Unpublished Paper).
- 17 . Roland Barthes, "Textual Analysis: Poe's Valdemar" in David Lodge (ed), *Modern Criticism and Theory* (London and New York: Longman, 1988), 193.

18 . Vernon S Forbes, a geographer, has written widely about the eighteenth century travellers in southern Africa. His main interest in the travellers' writings is the evidence they provide on geographical themes like topography, climate, and vegetation. There is very little work on travel writing in southern Africa that has been done by historians.

19 . Thunberg was one of Karl Linnaeus' disciples who trotted across the globe during the second half of the eighteenth century. Initially, Thunberg stopped at the Cape in order to learn Dutch, when he was heading for Japan.

20 . See Vernon S Forbes, *Pioneer Travellers of South Africa: A Geographical Commentary Upon Routes, Records, Observations and Opinions of Travellers at the Cape 1750-1800* (Cape Town: A.A.Balkema, 1965), 25.

21 . V.S.Forbes, "Thunberg's Travels", *South African Geographical Journal* , Vols 27-32, 1945-50,40.

22 . V.S.Forbes, *Early Visitors to the Eastern Cape* (Grahamstown: Rhodes University, 1967), 13. Forbes' views on Thunberg may have been influenced by Theal who also had uncomplimentary things to say about Thunberg's writings. See GM Theal, *Catalogue of Books and Pamphlets Relating to Africa South of the Zambesi in the English, Dutch, French and Portuguese Languages in the Collection of George McCall Theal* (Cape Town: Cape Times Limited, 1912), 304-5.

23 .Karl Linnaeus was an outstanding scientist of the time who used to send botanical expeditions from Uppsala from the 1740s. In his publication *Systema Naturae* Linnaeus presented a classificatory system through which he categorised all plant forms on the planet. See Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 15-27. Also see P D Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action 1780-1850* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1964) 37.

24 . Sparrman's family background exposed him to a world of scientists and travel. As a boy he had travelled as far as Canton in the care of a kinsman, C.G. Ekeberg. It was the same Ekeberg, who, with Linnaeus, arranged for Sparrman to visit the Cape. See VS Forbes, "Sparrman's Travels", *South African Geographical Journal*, Vols 27-32, 1945-50, 39.

25 . See G.M. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration of the Dutch East India Company 1652 to 1795* (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., 1897), 194-195.

26 . Cook's travels and writings about the indigenous people like the Tahitians, together with other writers like Bougainville brought a new kind of literature to the European readership from the "New World". See Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World*. Also see Porter, *Haunted Journeys*.

27 . See V.S.Forbes, "Paterson's Travels" *South African Geographical Journal*, Vols 27-32, 1945-50, 53.

28 . Duckworth refutes the claim by Forbes that Paterson was of gentle birth. See Dennis Duckworth, "The Log-Book of William Paterson" *Africana Notes and News*, Vol XII, March 1956-December 1957, 193.

29 . William Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys into the Country of the Hottentots and Caffraria in the Years 1777, 1778, 1779* (London: J Johnson, 1790). Duckworth strongly argues that the *Narrative* was based on a manuscript he discovered in London in 1956. From the manuscript, Duckworth maintains that the *Narrative* had such a polished style that it could not have been written by Paterson. Duckworth suggests that there was a shadow writer. See Duckworth, "The Log-Book of William Paterson", 193.

30 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 2.

31 . *Ibid.*, 88.

32 . Forbes, *Pioneer Travellers of South Africa*, 94.

33 . Peter E Raper and Maurice Boucher (eds), *Robert Jacob Gordon: Cape Travels 1777 to 1786*, i (Houghton: Brenthurst Press, 1988).

34 . On the details of that journey see Olof Godlieb de Wet, "Dagverhaal", MIC 14, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

35 . For a discussion of the event and some of the political issues that surround the location of the beacon see V.S. Forbes, "Colonel RJ Gordon's Contribution to Cape Geography", *South African Geographical Journal*, Vols 27-32, 1945-50, 13.

36 . It was Gordon who introduced Plettenberg to Koba, son of Titi of the Gwali clan, and other *iinkosi*. For a list of the names of *iinkosi* and some of their followers see MIC 14, 55-56.

38 . The account of the actual meeting of Plettenberg and *iinkosi*, which is supposed to have taken place between 16 and 18 October 1778, is missing in Gordon's journal. See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 184-186. This suggests that the journal was edited after it had been written. In all likelihood, evidence on the actual meeting was excised.

38 . Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 33.

39 . Pratt notes that Le Vaillant had in fact grown up in Surinam and was thus a product of a frontier zone. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 90.

40 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape of Good Hope* .

41 . Forbes, *Pioneer Travellers of South Africa*, 117.

42 . *Ibid.* For example, Forbes questions the claim by Le Vaillant that he had travelled as far as the Nxuba/Fish River. Further, there is confusion about the dates of his travels. See V.S. Forbes, "Le Vaillant's Travels", *South African Geographical Journal*, Vols 27-32, 1945-50, 34-35.

43 . Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, 16.

44 . Cohn, *An Anthropologist Among Historians and Other Essays*, 44.

45 . N Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 5.

46 . Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, 19.

47 . Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World*, 158.

48 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, i, 215.

49 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 127.

50 . Jan N Pieterse, *White on Black: Images of Africa in Western Popular Culture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 35.

51 . The notion of the “emptiness” of land has been expressed in different ways in historical writings. For example, the claim in much Great Trek historiography is that the trekkers moved into unoccupied land in the interior of southern Africa. Equally, in their writings the Natal “traders” made assertions that Natal had been denuded by “tribal” wars.

52 . MacKenzie argues that hunting in southern African societies before the coming of Europeans was an important economic and social activity. See J.M. MacKenzie, “The Natural World and the Popular Consciousness in Southern Africa: The European appropriation of Nature”, in P. Kaarsholm (ed), *Cultural Struggle and Development in Southern Africa* (Harare: Baobab Books, 1991), 13-19.

53 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 10.

54 . See S. Marks, “The myth of the empty land”, *History Today*, Vol 30, January 1980, 8-12.

55 . *Ibid.*

56 . M. Cornevin, *Apartheid Power and Historical Falsification* (Paris: UNESCO, 1980), 77-82.

57 . *Ibid.*, 101-105.

58 . Forbes, “Sparrman’s Travels”, 45.

59 . Forbes, “Colonel RJ Gordon’s Contribution to Cape Geography”, 5.

60 . See Simon Ryan, “Inscribing the Emptiness: Cartography, Exploration and the Construction of Australia” in Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson, *De-Scribing the Empire: Post-Colonialism and Textuality* (London: Routledge, 1994), 116.

61 . *Ibid.*

62 . Some African names were lost for ever and what remains are colonial versions. Camdeboo is most likely a colonial version coined from an indigenous name.

63 . What is interesting about the replacement of African names is that in some cases the travellers were aware of the indigenous names. Gordon, for example noted that the African name for the Fish River was “Oebaa” (Nxuba). See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 108.

64 . Cohen, *The Combining of History*, 129.

65 . Ekeberg had been a member of the Swedish Academy of Sciences. Point Ekeberg is now known as Port St Francis. See Forbes, "Sparman's Travels", 40.

66 . Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 33.

67 . Peter Kolb, (Translated into English by Mr Medley) *The Present State of the Cape of Good Hope*, 2nd Edition (London: W Innys and R Manby, 1738). For a discussion of Kolb's writings on the "Hottentots" see Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 41-49.

68 . See I. Schapera (ed), *The Early Cape Hottentots Described in the Writings of Olfert Dapper (1668), Willem ten Rhyne (1686) and Johannes Gulielmus de Grevenbroek* (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 1933).

69 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, i,109.

70 . *Ibid.*, 159-160.

71 . See O. Bergh and I.Schrijver, *Journals of the Expedition of the Honourable Ensign Olof Bergh 1682 and 1683 and the Ensign Isaaq Schrijver 1689* (Translated by E.E. Mossop) (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 1933).

72 . *Ibid.*, 216-234.

73 . The Stavenisse foundered off the coast of Terra de Natal in 1686. For An account of the experiences of the survivors see D. Moodie, *The Record: Or a Series of Official Papers Relative to the Condition and Treatment of the Native Tribes of South Africa* (Cape Town: 1840), 425.

74 . For a discussion of the event see among others R Elphick, *Kraal and Castle: Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa* (London: Yale University Press, 1977), 227-8.

75 . For a discussion of the Beutler expedition see Forbes, *Early Visitors*, 11-13. Also see below, chapter 6.

76 . See Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 29.

77 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 53.

78 . Porter argues that these travels, together with the accompanying reports, should be seen as a culmination of two thousand years of European cultural development whose climax was the Enlightenment. See Porter, *Haunted Journeys*, 17-26.

79 . Thunberg actually entered the service of the Dutch East India Company. See Forbes, "Thunberg's Travels", 39-40. On his arrival at the Cape Sparman visited the then governor Von Plettenberg in 1772, to pay his respects. See Sparman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, i, 12. Gordon was a captain and later colonel of the Dutch garrison and was part of Plettenberg's entourage during his visit to the eastern frontier. See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 177- 225.

80 . Forbes argues that Paterson would not have suffered the financial embarrassment he had after his return from the Cape if he had been a government spy. See Forbes, "Paterson's Travels", 53-54.

- 81 . Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 50.
- 82 . In 1671 a Dutch expedition from the Cape travelled eastwards and they reported meeting people who looked like “Hottentots” but had longer hair. They identified such people as “Caffres”, with an explanation that the word had come to mean “A Negro race”. See Moodie, *The Record*, 308.
- 83 . It was from the sounds made by the Khoikhoi which were unintelligible to Europeans that “Hottentot” probably originates. See Jon Olafsson in R Raven-Hart, *Before Van Riebeeck: Callers at South Africa from 1488-1652* (Cape Town, 1967), 112. For a short discussion on the word “Hottentot” see Elphick, *Kraal and Castle*, xv.
- 84 . Barrow recorded the name “Quaiquae” when he was writing about “Hottentots”. He noted that “Hottentot” was a name which was a European fabrication. See John Barrow, *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa*, i (Second Edition) (London: T Cadell and W Davies, 1806), 101.
- 85 . There is evidence of borrowing and exchange of words between siXhosa and Khoisan languages.
- 86 . For example, in 1657 Jan Van Riebeeck was told about a great lord, emperor or king who ruled a people called Chobona. See Moodie, *The Record* , 110. For further discussion about the Chobona see Elphick, *Kraal and Castle* ,50.
- 87 . Moodie, *The Record*, 431.
- 88 . In his study of south-west Africans, Elphick divided them up according to the various names they used to call themselves. See Richard Elphick, *Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985).
- 89 . The classification of *homo sapiens* had already been undertaken by Linnaeus in 1758 when he divided humans into six categories. See Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 32.
- 90 . The travellers went to great lengths in their study and classification of the physical characteristics of the indigenous people. Studying the genitals of the autochthons seems to have been a strong fascination among these natural scientists. That is the degree to which the Africans were objects of study. Gordon for example, entered in his journal that he had examined the genitals of a “Hottentot” woman. See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 82.
- 91 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, i, 180. Paterson echoed these observations four years later. See Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 13.
- 92 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 7-8. When Gordon described the “Gonaqua” whom he claimed had been absorbed by the “Caffres”, he further noted that they had a larger physique than the “Hottentots”. Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 145.
- 93 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 93.
- 94 . *Ibid.*, 29.
- 95 . Travellers consistently painted a picture of “Hottentots” as herders. See *ibid.*, 61, as well as Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 102.

- 96 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 246.
- 97 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 10.
- 98 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, ii, 275.
- 99 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 92.
- 100 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 159.
- 101 . See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 106. Sparrman was also informed by the “Sneeu-Hottentots” that “Mambukies” probably abaThembu, neighbours of amaXhosa had furnaces for smelting metal. Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 147.
- 102 . For a discussion of the concepts “civilised and savage” see among others De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 10.
- 103 . When Sparrman was relating an incident that had involved the Dutch and Africans he referred to the latter as the “Pagan crew” see Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, i, 283.
- 104 . A Jablow, “The Development of the Image of Africa in British Popular Literature 1530-1910” (PhD. Thesis, Columbia University, 1963) 43-44.
- 105 . Pieterse, *White on Black*, 41.
- 106 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 79.
- 107 . *Ibid.*, 54.
- 108 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, i, 316.
- 109 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, 2, 7.
- 110 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, i, 163. It is significant to note that even in contemporary times an African homestead is called a kraal in South Africa. Theal claims that “kraal” is a corruption of the Portuguese “curral”. See GM Theal, *South Africa* (Third Edition) (London: T Fisher Unwin, 1896), xiv.
- 111 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 22.
- 112 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 290.
- 113 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 198.
- 114 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 29.
- 115 . *Ibid.*, 71.
- 116 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 290.
- 117 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, i, 197.

118 . Ironically, a recording that purported to be a confession of a convicted “Bushman” was made during the 1820s. In the statement the “Bushman” whose name was given as Matroos admitted that he had never behaved well and had preferred wandering about, marauding and murdering. The “confession” still carried eighteenth century perceptions about “Bushman”. See LH Wells “Some Bushman Skulls from the Old Cape Frontier”, *Africana Notes and News*, Vol 12, 289.

119 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 46.

120 . For a discussion of Koerikei as leader in the Seacow River region see Newton-King, *Masters and Servants on the Cape Eastern Frontier*, 90.

121 . Raper and Boucher, *Jacob Robert Gordon*, 81.

122 . *Ibid.*

123 . *Ibid.*

124 . In a way the creation of an image of a vile and depraved Bushman, and later a wily and thieving Xhosa provided strong justification for the appropriation of the land of the autochthons.

125 . Jablow, “The Development of the Image”, 43-44. The notion of a noble savage was also applied to other autochthons like Native Americans. See R Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

126 . Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, i, 110.

127 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, ii, 334.

128 . *Ibid.*

129 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 101.

130 . *Ibid.*, 236.

131 . Raper and Boucher, *Jacob Robert Gordon*, 103.

132 . *Ibid.*, 102.

133 . The image of amaXhosa as predators and thieves is discussed in chapters 3 and 5 of this thesis.

134 . From Paterson’s description Ghonaqua Hottentots had the features of the three groupings that the travellers had created. See *ibid.*, 85.

135 . Raper and Boucher, *Jacob Robert Gordon*, 145.

136 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 100.

137 . See Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, i, 350.

138 . See for example, GM Theal, *South Africa (The Cape Colony, Orange Free State, South African Republic, And All Other Territories South Of the Zambesi)* (Third Edition) (London: T Fisher Unwin, 1896), 2-7.

139 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 351-352.

140 . For example see L. F. Maingard, "The linguistic approach to South African prehistory and ethnology", *South African Journal of Science*, Vol.XXX1, 117-143. As well as Gerrit Harinck, "Interaction between Xhosa and Khoi: emphasis on the period 1620-1750" in Thompson(ed), *African Societies in Southern Africa*, 145-169.

141 . An area that awaits further research is the presence of Arabic words in isiXhosa. Such words are evidence of a link to a past that is earlier than the period under discussion.

142 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 290.

143 . Le Vaillant, *Travels from the Cape*, ii, 219.

144 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 77

145 . Pratt points to the silence on exchanges between eighteenth century European travellers and colonists and suggests that the former could have been suppliers of gunpowder, and thus indirect participants in colonial wars. *Ibid.*, 53.

146 . For a short account of the rise of Ruiter see Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 155.

147 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 165.

148 . For a discussion of Khoi communities and leaders see Newton-King and Malherbe, *The Khoikhoi Rebellion in the Eastern Cape 1799-1803*, 5.

149 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 155.

150 . Raper and Boucher, *Jacob Robert Gordon*, 140.

151 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 85.

152 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii , 153.

153 . Jablow criticises the elevation of African aristocracy by European writers, a process which left the commoners in a state of beastliness and anonymity. See Jablow, "The Development of Africa", 49.

154 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 210.

155 . Natal "traders" often reported similar acts of cruelty about Zulu *Kumkani*, Shaka. See, for example, letter of Nathaniel Isaacs to his Excellency the Governor, December 1832 in B J T Leverton (ed), *Records of Natal*, i, 2 September, 1828-July 1835 (Pretoria: The Government Printer, 1989), 226.

156 . Mahote, son of Mdange, belonged to another powerful Xhosa House, ImiDange, whose ascendancy as a frontier force came about towards the close of the eighteenth century. Although Mahote was not in the direct line to succeed, Sparrman may have been told about Mahote during an interregnum, soon after Phalo's death.

157 . See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 138.

158 . See Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 86.

159 . See *ibid.*, 140. The followers of Langa, known as amaMbalu, were, according to Mostert one of the two strongest chiefdoms in the Zuurveld area that confronted the colonists during the First Frontier War. See Mostert, *Frontiers*, 233-235.

160 . Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 103.

161 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 87-89.

162 . For some more information on Jacob Kock see V.S. Forbes and J. Bourke (eds), *Paterson's Cape Travels 1777 to 1779* (Johannesburg: The Brenthurst Press, 1980), 125, n.57.

163 . *Ibid.*, 88.

164 . *Ibid.*

165 . Such scenic descriptions had become familiar in travel writings. Journals of travellers like Cook, Banks, and Bougainville on the indigenous people of the South Seas presented paradisaical scenes. See Porter, *Haunted Journeys*, 86-94.

166 . See Rennie, *Far -Fetched Facts*, 104.

167 . *Ibid.*, 89.

168 . In editing Paterson's journal Forbes followed the traveller's route and tried to identify some of the indigenous names that sounded similar to Paterson's. Thus Forbes suggests that Muguranie is Mgwalana River. See *ibid.*, 132, n. 89.

169 . It is highly unlikely that amaXhosa were seeing Europeans for the first time in 1779. They are likely to have been surprised at seeing the unexpected visitors. The element of surprise and ignorance was also part of the exercise of "Othering" the indigenous people. They would be portrayed as surprised and frightened, while the Europeans remained in control.

170 . For a discussion of primitivism in travellers' writings see Porter, *Haunted Journeys*, 115.

171 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 90.

172 . Forbes and Bourke, *Paterson's Cape Travels*, 130.

173 . Another possibility about Patersons' village is that it was *ithanga*, a cattle post for *ukumkani*. The fact that there were no gardens suggests a transient settlement. If then, it was a royal cattle post, then the majority of the cattle belonged to *ukumkani*. Even then, *abasengi*, the milkmen, would have had their own cattle too.

174 . Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 93.

175 . *Ibid.*, 92.

176 . This account of the civil war between Gcaleka and Rharhabe falls neatly into a perception by scholars that indigenous communities were often riddled with internal dissension. The account is also one of the early narratives to confirm the notion that Xhosa society was fissiparous. A number of scholars have propounded this view. See among others David Hammond-Tooke, "The 'other side' of frontier history: a model of Cape Nguni political process" in Thompson, *African Societies in Southern Africa*, 230-231.

177 . Very little is known of Khawuta by historians. He is likely to have succeeded his father, Gcaleka soon after his death in 1778. He seems to have withdrawn his seat to an area across the Kei, away from the colonial glare. Mostert, when giving a breakdown of Xhosa royalty during the 1780s does not even mention him. Maylam says Khawuta's reign from 1778 to 1794 was ineffectual. See Mostert, *Frontiers*, 236. Also see Paul Maylam, *A History of the African People of South Africa from the Early Iron Age to the 1970s* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1986), 37. For an account of Khawuta see JH Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu: Abenguni, Abambo, Amalala* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1930), 145-147. The memory of Khawuta is nonetheless kept by amaXhosa through *iziduko*, clan-praises of amaTshawe.

178 . *Iimbali*/ historical narratives were important sources of evidence in Xhosa historiography. These traditions will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.

179 . In his journal Gordon had given a description of the manner amaXhosa forged iron to make assegais. Also , it was Gordon who had made reference to baskets with which amaXhosa carried water. See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 107 and 106.

180 . By the end of the eighteenth century maize was a crop that was widely planted in south-east Africa. Gordon had also noted that amaXhosa planted maize. See *ibid.*, 106.

181 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 101.

182 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 8. Also, see Forbes, "Paterson's Travels", 52.

183 . Raper and Boucher, *Jacob Robert Gordon*, 103.

184 . Another possible reason for Paterson's silence on royal women is that he may have found Khawuta at a cattle post rather than in his *Komkhulu*

185 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 20.

186 . *Ibid.*, 42

187 . Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape*, 100.

188 . Most probably the change came after the Nxuba/Fish River had been declared a boundary by Plettenberg in 1778, which was before Thunberg's book was published.

189 . *Ibid.*, 246.

- 190 . Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape*, ii, 152.
- 191 . Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 53.
- 192 . Bergh and Schrijver, *Journals of the Expeditions of the Honourable Ensign Olof Bergh 1682 and 1683 and the Ensign Isaq Schrijver 1689*, 198.
- 193 . Raper and Boucher, *Jacob Robert Gordon*, 114.
- 194 . *Ibid.*
- 195 . Mostert, *Frontiers*, 184. Archaeologists who discovered a mummified body in April 1999, on the Ngqura mountains, not far from Port Elizabeth, immediately classified it as Khoisan. This is possibly based on the fact that the finding is estimated to be two thousand years old, and therefore not likely to be a member of the siNtu-speaking group which is supposed to have moved in much at a later date.
- 196 . Barrow, *Travels into the Interior*, viii.
- 197 . *Ibid.*, 157. Equally, Barrow's description of scenery is similar to Paterson's style soon after he had crossed Nxuba/Fish River in page 176.
- 198 . The writings of Lichtenstein, Van der Kemp, and Alberti will be discussed in detail in chapter 2 of this thesis.
- 199 . GM Theal, *Compendium of South African History and Geography*, (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1874), v.
- 200 . GM Theal, *Catalogue of Books and Pamphlets Relating to Africa South of the Zambesi in the English, Dutch, French, and Portuguese Languages in the Collection of George McCall Theal* (Cape Town: Cape Town Times, 1912).
- 201 . Newton-King, *Masters and Servants on the Cape Eastern Frontier* .
- 202 . Newton-King refutes suggestions that have been made by historians who perceive closeness between amaXhosa and the Gonaqua. For a discussion on the topic see *ibid.*, 32-36.
- 203 . Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 41 and 84.
- 204 . See M Wilson, "The Hunters and Herders" in M Wilson and L Thompson (eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i (third impression) (Cape Town: David Philip, 1986), 41-130.
- 205 . Elphick relied mainly on the travellers' texts to reconstruct Khoi communities especially those along the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony. See Elphick, *Kraal and Castle*.

CHAPTER 2

EARLY COLONIAL WRITING ON XHOSA HISTORY

The last quarter of the eighteenth century ushered in a new era in the lives of south-east Africans. Before then the presence of the Dutch colonists had not seriously affected amaXhosa as contact with Europeans had generally been intermittent. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century Dutch colonist hunters and adventurers had penetrated Xhosaland. In 1752 the Beutler party, commissioned by the Company in Cape Town to explore the region east of the Dutch settlement, had travelled as far as the Qora River, just across the Kei River.¹ AmaXhosa had also encountered the world of Dutch farmers and a few had travelled as far as Cape Town.² However, the British take-over of the Cape in 1795 began a new colonial phase.³ This also marked the intensification of a frontier struggle that had carried on since the 1770s, as the Dutch attempted to assert their rule on the frontier they shared with the indigenous people. From 1795 a flurry of colonial officials visited the frontier on a number of missions. Some were to collect information about conditions at the frontier in order to inform policy-makers, others were military men sent to establish European authority and maintain "order". In the process of executing their tasks they also collected information on amaXhosa, and some began to write about Xhosa history. Crais observes that the initial period of encounter between colonists and the indigenous people was a time of "accumulation of knowledge and its inscription and transmittal in written texts".⁴

In Europe there was a Christian revival which resulted in an upsurge of missionary work. Mostert describes this religious revival: "It was a spiritual gale through the country after 1740, gathering power decade after decade, to become an unprecedented outpouring of public feeling and emotional excitement."⁵ Missionaries moved into south-east Africa, resulting in the exposure of the indigenous people to a "proliferation of Protestant movements [as] South Africa was soon awash in newly imported churches."⁶ By the early nineteenth century South Africa was a popular destination for European missionary enterprise.⁷ Missionaries played an important role in producing early writing on Xhosa history.⁸

These religious, military, and political developments brought new European actors to the sub-region. Some of these produced writings about the indigenous people. Representatives of missionary societies and the colonial government were to be important contributors to the writing of Xhosa history during the nineteenth century. There is a noticeable transition in the texts about amaXhosa from the cursory documents that were scripted by passing travellers to works that arose from closer and longer interaction between the writers and indigenous people. The travellers' journals had provided no more than loose sketches of amaXhosa. These contained many stereotypes. With closer interaction there were opportunities to delve deeper into the Xhosa past. Initially these texts were usually short, running for about five pages. The production of Xhosa history during this early colonial phase took place at a time when amaXhosa still enjoyed political autonomy and had been hardly touched by Christian teaching. Even though amaXhosa did not actually participate in the writing, their contribution to the production of texts was important.

Both the colonial and missionary writers were influenced by earlier accounts of amaXhosa. The new work carried ideas and perceptions that can be found in the travellers' journals. Thus there was continuity in the manner amaXhosa were portrayed by European writers. However, there were also innovations that reflected wider observation on the part of the writers. Information derived from Xhosa historical knowledge was integrated into these accounts. The writers must have relied on Xhosa informants. Hodgson argues that the initial phase of contact between colonists and autochthons was characterised by a "mutual borrowing [of symbols] across the cultural divide".⁹ Lichtenstein observed that there were special people in Xhosa society whose task was to construct, keep, and pass on knowledge about the past.¹⁰ Lichtenstein may have been referring to those oral historians who were attached to *Komkhulu* (Great Place) and were knowledgeable about past events. Most of these historians composed and presented their work through *izibongo* (poetry).¹¹ For *iimbali*¹² covering the remote past, narrators tended to use generic frameworks to relate events. *Iimbali* that conveyed recent events were, however, more specific. Narrators would identify people involved as well as name places where events had taken place. *Iimbali* were a source of evidence for the early colonial writers of Xhosa history discussed under this chapter.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Xhosa history was written in the context of complex interactions and conflict characteristic of frontier zones.¹³ The usual approach when writing about frontier societies is to focus on the “endemic conflict”¹⁴ that emanates from the interaction of two culturally different people who are thrown together at the frontier. The complexity is deepened by instances of overlap and crossing of boundaries, physically and figuratively. This is not just where “forms of knowledge and identity are contested”¹⁵ as de Kock argues, but also where new knowledges are constructed and new identities fashioned. The frontier zone in south-east Africa at the beginning of the nineteenth century was made up of African and European players. There was no homogeneity within the particular groups themselves. They would, from time to time split into smaller divisions with differing and even conflicting interests. Among colonists, for example, there were those who identified with the outgoing Dutch government and those who represented the new British order. A few colonists had for various reasons left their communities to live among amaXhosa.¹⁶ Xhosa divisions were based on loyalty to a particular leader, *inkosi*. A clan system, *iziduko*, was another form of grouping people within Xhosa society.

The British take-over of the Cape in 1795 resulted in the institution of new colonial policies. Inevitably there were changes in colonial staff as well. John Barrow, as secretary to the first British Governor, Lord Macartney, arrived at the Cape in 1797. He left behind a record of his experiences at the frontier and his encounters with the indigenous people. Barrow had wide experience in world travel. He had accompanied Macartney on the first British embassy to China, and left a record of his travels in the East.¹⁷ Barrow was highly critical of existing literature on the Cape and complained that it did “not afford such satisfactory information as would enable the most diligent inquirer after truth to form a just estimate of the Cape Colony as a settlement, much less of the real character and condition of the native inhabitants dwelling beyond its limits.”¹⁸ His two volumes were written to provide such information. Although Barrow did not write specifically on Xhosa history, he nonetheless presented clear and detailed observations of amaXhosa. His work is a bridge between traveller and colonial writings. He was probably familiar with the work of the earlier European travellers. He credited Sparrman with having supplied extensive information on the region. At the same time he criticised Sparrman for having drawn an inaccurate map.¹⁹ Barrow’s style of writing shared certain features with that of the travelling natural scientists. He showed an interest in nature and gave descriptions of the fauna

and flora. He described the landscape in relation to its suitability for cultivation and grazing. Barrow studied trees to discern their potential value; he made reference to a “Kaffer bread tree”.²⁰ He was also on the look out for animals that could be domesticated. His observations were not those of an explorer; rather was he gathering information to facilitate the process of instituting more effective colonial government at the Cape. He was not travelling in search of exotic plants and animals; Pratt suggests Barrow was journeying “in the name of a Euro-colonial territorial enterprise”.²¹ Barrow’s writings on amaXhosa should be seen in the light of his mission - colonisation.

Barrow’s writings assumed the standard colonial racial divisions. He stereotyped the “Bushmen” as a people perpetually at war, while viewing the “Hottentots” as being in a state of decline: “The name Hottentot will be forgotten or remembered only as that of a deceased person of little note.”²² He noted that there was not “a single horde of independent Hottentots”.²³ Barrow viewed “Hottentots” as less than human and dismissed them as a factor in frontier affairs. As a colonial agent Barrow identified two groups that the colonial power should interact with amaXhosa and Dutch colonists, whom he represented in a binary set. In his writings the colonists represented the negative element in the binary. He referred to their “miserable hovels [which were] the pictures of want and wretchedness”.²⁴ He also decried the Dutch for their cruel treatment of farm workers and slaves. Barrow was disgusted by the lawless, barbaric lifestyle of the colonists.²⁵ This depiction of the Dutch was a way of marginalising them, paving the way for the entrance of the British.²⁶ Barrow applied the image of the “noble savage” to amaXhosa. Xhosa men were described as the “finest figures I ever beheld...tall robust and muscular”.²⁷ His description of Xhosa princes was equally complimentary. One of them, Thole, was described as muscular, good-humoured and cheerful. Other *iinkosi* were stout, well-formed men.²⁸ But, it was Ngqika, whom Barrow extolled for his physical beauty, intelligence, firmness of character and popularity with his people.²⁹ Here was a British imperialist, on a colonising mission, giving high praise to amaXhosa.

In their writings the travellers had made cursory references to *iinkosi*. Paterson, for instance, claimed to have visited *Kumkani* Khawuta. Barrow expanded on the theme of *iinkosi* and their history. He had a number of meetings with them. He conferred with Ngqika whom he designated

Xhosa king. Barrow's approach to Xhosa politics was to influence Xhosa-British relations for the next thirty years. Through his identification of Ngqika as king the British would accord Ngqika central power over amaXhosa. Barrow went on to write a short history of Ngqika.³⁰ This became the basis for early colonial writing on Xhosa history. The narrative centred around a Ngqika who in his youth was weak and under the care of his uncle Ndlambe, who also acted as regent. Ngqika managed to build a following and grew strong enough to claim his throne from a cruel uncle, after a civil war. This was a common narrative framework in Xhosa oral tradition.³¹ Barrow used the same story to create a king³² who would become a central figure in the colonial version of Xhosa history at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Even though writers after Barrow had points of disagreement with him³³, they nonetheless consulted his writings extensively.

In this chapter the focus will be on the production of historical texts by four writers between 1803 and 1809. A short biographical background for each of the four will be given before the discussion moves on to their writings. They are Reverend John Theodosius Van der Kemp, Henry Lichtenstein, Ludwig Alberti, and Colonel Collins. The four came from different backgrounds and at the Cape were engaged in various occupations. Van der Kemp was a pioneer in the missionary sector that would be a major producer of literature about indigenous people during the nineteenth century. The other three writers were colonial officials. Lichtenstein and Alberti were members of the Batavian government (1803-1806), while Collins was a British military officer. Different though these writers were, they had access to existing accounts for background, and they influenced one another to a considerable degree.³⁴

Van der Kemp is one of the most intriguing frontier characters of the early nineteenth century. His biographers, Martin and Enklaar shower him with accolades. To Martin, Van der Kemp was a "remarkable man",³⁵ and Enklaar describes him as having been, "an exceptionally gifted man".³⁶ Van der Kemp was a pioneer in the missionary field and was admired by succeeding generations of missionaries. Moffat described him as having forced "his way into the headquarters of the enemy, and raise[d] the standard of the cross."³⁷ Nonetheless throughout his life Van der Kemp was embroiled in controversy. Martin describes him as having been "the rebel against conventionality and social prestige".³⁸ One unconventional act was to marry a slave girl.

A widely read man, his studies covered a number of fields including the military, medicine, physical science, philosophy, theology, classical and eastern languages. From such a background Van der Kemp moved into the world of amaXhosa with a colleague, John Edmond³⁹ in 1799. Van der Kemp was the first European to live among amaXhosa, for a period of six months, and to leave a record of his experiences. He also drew up a Xhosa vocabulary list of about 600 words.⁴⁰ His diary is a valuable record of life at the frontier at the close of the eighteenth century.⁴¹ The journal also contains material on the Xhosa past. Van der Kemp's journal traces his journey from conversion to his life as a missionary in the heartland of amaNgqika, until his flight back to the colony in 1800. During that time he met leading frontier figures both in the colony and among amaXhosa. The text is therefore an important historical source. Van der Kemp also put together an "Account of the religion, customs, population, government, language, History, and natural production of Caffraria". The historical section covered two and a half pages,⁴² and it will be one of the key texts to be analysed in this chapter. Reference will also be made to other parts of Van der Kemp's journal which contain evidence on Xhosa history.

Heinrich Lichtenstein⁴³ was a member of the entourage of General Janssens who was appointed Governor of the Cape of Good Hope by the government of the Batavian Republic in 1803.⁴⁴ Lichtenstein was a learned man with a doctorate in medicine and philosophy.⁴⁵ When General Janssens and Commissioner De Mist⁴⁶ toured the colonial frontier, Lichtenstein accompanied them. In two volumes⁴⁷ he wrote about "Caffres" or "Koossas", "Hottentots" and "Boşjemans". Later he travelled north and spent some time with Muliawana, king of "Beetjuan tribe".⁴⁸ Included in the record of his frontier travels is a short chapter entitled, "History of the Koossa Tribe and of its wars with the Colony and with the English - The Caffre Tribes of the Interior".⁴⁹ Lichtenstein's "History of the Koossa Tribe" is fourteen pages long. Lichtenstein also included "Fragments from the Journal of General Janssens" containing information on meetings between Batavian government officials and *iinkosi*, and later Ngqika. Lichtenstein's work gives a picture of the colony, the frontier and the residents at the turn of the nineteenth century. As a member of Janssens' party, Lichtenstein was more sympathetic towards the Dutch colonists than Barrow had been. For example, he defended the colonists against an accusation that they organised commandoes and hunted the San. He noted that "the African colonists are a remarkably sober race."⁵⁰ In his description of the indigenous people he adopted the racial stereotypes of the day.

The “Bushmen” were described as “half-naked”⁵¹ and he drew attention to their “natural indolence”.⁵² Lichtenstein blamed amaXhosa for the 1799-1803 war which had led to the plunder and destruction of trekboer homes.⁵³

The work of Ludwig Alberti⁵⁴, first printed in 1810, also forms an important component of early Xhosa historiography. Alberti was a military man who in 1802, like Lichtenstein, accompanied Janssens to the Cape of Good Hope. He was captain of the 5th Battalion of Waldeck which was stationed at Fort Frederick at Algoa Bay. This fort marked the first Dutch military presence at the frontier. From 1803 to 1806 Alberti was stationed on the frontier, initially, as a soldier, but in 1804 as a magistrate of the newly formed district of Uitenhage.⁵⁵ Alberti worked closely with indigenous communities in his capacity as a soldier and later as an administrator. He was described as an “expert on Kaffirs” by Augusta de Mist.⁵⁶ Alberti was a member of Janssens’ entourage that held a historic meeting with Ngqika on the banks of the Kat/Ngxwengxwe River on 23 June 1803. Alberti undertook extensive research on the life of amaXhosa. His book, *Account of the Tribal Life and Customs of the Xhosa in 1807*, provides extensive information on amaXhosa at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He also covered “an earlier epoch”⁵⁷ in a section of eleven pages.

With the second British take-over of the Cape in 1806, a new set of colonial government personnel moved in. In 1809 Colonel Collins was commissioned by the British colonial government to tour the area close to the north-eastern and eastern boundary of the colony to gather information about the state of the indigenous people. According to Bannister the principal object of Collins’ mission was to remove amaXhosa beyond the Nxuba/Fish River.⁵⁸ Collins left a journal⁵⁹ in which he recorded information and observations. He prefaced his report with a brief history of amaXhosa, highlighting their relations with the colonists. His text reveals that he was acquainted with existing literature on the indigenous people. He credited Van der Kemp as being “the only person who has attempted to give a history of the Caffres”.⁶⁰ Collins’ tour took him to the various centres of *iinkosi* in the Xhosa polity. His “Journal” took the form of a report to the Governor of the Cape. The author gave details of his travels and interviews with various people in the Xhosa polity.

The writers claimed to have had no ulterior motives in the production of their texts. In his journal Lichtenstein claimed that his intention had been to “Put the reader in possession of data which will enable him to form a tolerably accurate idea of the situation of the Caffre tribes.”⁶¹ Collins solemnly declared his neutrality and lack of bias on the ground that he did not “...entertain any feelings with regard to the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, except such as I ought to cherish for every possession of his Majesty.”⁶² He remarked, “If I am so fortunate as to convey truth to those whom it is most necessary should know it, I shall have done enough.”⁶³ Alberti contended that his *Account* was based mainly on his actual experiences and information he had gathered during his numerous journeys.⁶⁴ However all the texts were written in the context of intensifying military and colonial operations between the settlers and the indigenous people.

Initial attempts at producing Xhosa history by colonial writers were made from a premise that indigenous people had no history. Several times the writers complained about how amaXhosa had no history or knew very little about their past. The writers therefore understood themselves as working from a clean slate. Alberti, for instance, observed that, “All efforts to discover something of the real history of these people amongst themselves, proved quite fruitless, it remains shrouded in darkness up to the time of the last generation.”⁶⁵ In the four texts the dominating voice was that of the author as an individual or a member of a group, selecting and reporting on events witnessed. Writing in the first person has an effect of authenticating the text. Other voices were marginalised or suppressed. The texts were about amaXhosa, but were creations by non-Xhosa. The debate as to whether outsiders can do justice to writing about insiders is an old one. Evans warns against a view that “Experience is the sole arbiter of truth.”⁶⁶ While a perspective that calls for each group to write its history is not a valid one, texts written about the Xhosa past were to a large extent the work of strangers to the Xhosa world. Europeans writing about indigenous people simply moulded them according to pre-existing images. Moreover, they reconstructed the past in accordance with their own frameworks and values.⁶⁷

The four writers relied mainly on interpreters who themselves had their own interests which were served through the information they passed on. These interpreters came from varied backgrounds. “Hottentot” interpreters had come to be accepted by the colonists as bridges between the European settlers and indigenous communities at the frontier. Wilson identified the first

interpreters as Khoikhoi who had learnt Dutch at the Cape and whose language was close to the Gona language.⁶⁸ This language was a hybrid language that contained siXhosa and Khoisan words.⁶⁹ Van der Kemp, who communicated in Dutch, left a clearer picture of the interpreters than the other writers. He gave their names and conceded that he used them as guides and advisers. He put his trust in Bruntje, who had already established fame as an elephant hunter at the frontier.⁷⁰ There was also Valentine Hartenberg, another “Hottentot” interpreter and guide.⁷¹ The Dutch names that these individuals carried indicate that they lived in a bicultural world as “men between”,⁷² a factor which complicates further the information they gave. Van der Kemp also had a Xhosa interpreter, “Oukootzo”.⁷³ Ngqika had his emissaries and interpreters one of whom was Zila, to whom Van der Kemp constantly made reference.

The most famous interpreter at Ngqika’s court was Coenraad de Buys.⁷⁴ An intriguing character in frontier history, he was an influential person at Ngqika’s court at the time of Van der Kemp’s stay in Xhosaland. His relationship with MamThebu, Ngqika’s mother, was close,⁷⁵ but the extent of his political influence is a matter of conjecture. Both Van der Kemp and Lichtenstein noted his role as Ngqika’s interpreter in 1799-1800 and 1803.⁷⁶ As much as Peires observes that “Ngqika was nobody’s puppet”,⁷⁷ the influence of interpreters like De Buys cannot be underestimated. Even Van der Kemp, who was suspicious of the political games De Buys was playing, could not have avoided using him as a source of information. De Buys is likely to have assisted in the writing of the “History of Caffraria”⁷⁸ which appears at the end of Van der Kemp’s diary. The love-hate relationship⁷⁹ between Ngqika and De Buys that comes out in Van der Kemp’s journal complicates further any attempt to assess his influence in the writing of Xhosa history.

A study of the four historical texts reveals similar themes. Most of these can be traced back to the earlier writings of the travellers. Royal history again became central, as it had been in the travellers’ writings. Van der Kemp opened his “History” by tabling a list of “six Kings”.⁸⁰ The first five: “Togou, Qonde, Tz̄io, Tqareka, Khauta” were written in capital letters; so was “Gika” who however did not appear under the main line of “kings”.⁸¹ The rest of the names in the table were written in small letters. These included “Kh’endi-Hientza”, whose name appeared under the main line of “kings”, and “Palo”, represented as the founder of a junior line from which

“king Gika” emerged.⁸² Confusion in Van der Kemp’s royal table can be discerned from his presentation. Hintsa, who appeared under the list of “kings”, was suddenly demoted through the use of small letters, and Ngqika was put on a par with earlier “kings”, his name written in capital letters.

Van der Kemp’s royal genealogy covered six generations. It began with “Togou”(Togu) and ended with “Hietnza”(Hintsa) the reigning monarch at that time. From “Palo” a new family tree branched out from the main line. It would appear Van der Kemp wanted to trace the genealogical line of Ngqika, *inkosi*, in whose area he resided. There was little information on the names that appeared before Phalo as Van der Kemp’s historical account only began with “Palo”.⁸³ This may have been due to Van der Kemp’s wish to focus on the line of Ngqika rather than to give a general Xhosa history. Phalo’s name had already appeared in some of the travellers’ accounts where he was sometimes referred to as ‘Pharaoh’.⁸⁴ In contesting a claim by Le Vaillant that Phalo had been a king, Van der Kemp showed that he was acquainted with the travellers’ texts. Moreover, in the same text, Van der Kemp described “Tqareka” (Gcaleka) as the brother of Phalo, and went on to claim that “Gika” (Ngqika) had declared “Hientsa” to be his successor. Van der Kemp’s account mainly covered the history of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The author would not only have relied on written sources, but also on oral history which was still being narrated among amaXhosa, especially at the royal court. The accessibility of royal *iimbali* at the court must have provided the evidence the writers used. But it also meant that he was mainly exposed to royal history.

Van der Kemp’s text was full of mistakes. These went beyond simply mixing up the names of historical figures. Firstly, although he had put Phalo’s name in the genealogical table of Xhosa kings, he also claimed that Phalo was not king. He however added that he had enjoyed “great authority”.⁸⁵ Van der Kemp’s confusion continued in his observation that Khawuta, the grandson of Phalo “transferred the royal dignity in the family of Phalo and appointed Gaika the present king.”⁸⁶ Van der Kemp also mistakenly claimed that “Tgareka” was the brother of Phalo, whereas he was the son. There may be several reasons for Van der Kemp’s mistakes. He had limited knowledge of amaXhosa and their language. Van der Kemp may have tried to summarise *iimbali* which he had been told by Xhosa informants. The possibility that he could have picked some

snippets of history from *iimbongi zakomkhulu*⁸⁷, who performed at Xhosa royal courts and in the process recounted the history of the royal family, also cannot be ruled out.⁸⁸ It is highly likely that Van der Kemp, as he operated through interpreters, mixed up his evidence. The other possibility is that Van der Kemp may have received versions of *iimbali* that were anti-Phalo, possibly from amaGwali, who were from Tshiwo's Right Hand House. *Imbali* recorded in Soga tells of Phalo as having been born after the death of his father, Tshiwo. Phalo's accession to the throne was contested by the eldest, though not necessarily the most senior son, Gwali. In the military skirmish that ensued, another son of Tshiwo, Mdange, sided with Phalo and defeated Gwali.⁸⁹ Gwali's subsequent removal from power may have engendered anti-Phalo feeling among those who had sided with Gwali. This might explain versions of *iimbali* that refused to accept Phalo's kingship.⁹⁰ Another oral tradition claims that Phalo and Rharhabe were attacked by Gcaleka and had to flee across the Kei River.⁹¹ That event could have been responsible for the confusion about the relationship between Phalo and Gcaleka. Van der Kemp's text should be a reminder of the factors that shape the construction of oral history. In all probability the Van der Kemp text was influenced by internal politics in the Xhosa polity. It was also influenced by the fact that since the beginning of the nineteenth century colonial officials like Barrow had identified Ngqika as the senior *inkosi*. Van der Kemp himself had confirmed such a stance by seeking permission to settle and work in Xhosaland from Ngqika, whom he saw as representing the centre of Xhosa power.

In his "History of the Koossa Tribe" Lichtenstein also tried to outline a Xhosa royal genealogy.⁹² Lichtenstein's royal genealogical table is similar to Van der Kemp's, except for a few deviations like the spelling of names as well as the addition of a Xhosa prince, "Tolly",⁹³ whom Lichtenstein had met and interviewed, and the omission of "Louzjabba".⁹⁴ Even though Hintsu appeared after Khawuta in the main line, he was presented as distant and isolated. That he used Van der Kemp as a source is further borne out by the fact that Lichtenstein also stated that Phalo was the brother of "Tgareka" and was never king. Lichtenstein however noted that Phalo had been "regent"⁹⁵ under Gcaleka. He added that Phalo had been a powerful chief. Lichtenstein further portrayed Phalo as having had a brother who had made unjust demands on the people and had subsequently faced an uprising.⁹⁶ Lichtenstein was also informed that amaXhosa knew a people far to their north who were said to have a yellow complexion and long hair.⁹⁷

Lichtenstein, whose sources were Ngqika and his *amaphakathi*, was exposed to a partisan history. He pushed a pro-Rharhabe stance, observing that the period between 1780 and 1790 “is rather called the period when Chachabe lived, than when Khawuta reigned.”⁹⁸ It would appear as though Ngqika was creating a past that would favour his political ambitions.⁹⁹ It was most likely Ngqika who discredited Phalo and created doubt about his kingship. It would appear that he planned to consolidate his power by building a strong profile of his grandfather, Rharhabe. There were *iimbali* about Rharhabe’s love for war and ruthlessness.¹⁰⁰ One *imbali* tells how Rharhabe ordered the extermination of San because the latter had killed his favourite ox.¹⁰¹ The pre-eminence of Rharhabe over Phalo and Gcaleka was new in colonial literature. In earlier writings Rharhabe had not had as strong a presence in the Xhosa polity as Lichtenstein claimed. In 1752 Beutler only made contact with Gcaleka, Rharhabe’s senior brother. There was no mention of Rharhabe. In the writings of the travellers Rharhabe appeared only fleetingly in the background.

Alberti also produced a royal genealogical table.¹⁰² It began with “the male progeny of Phalo”,¹⁰³ who “was the principal chief of a large population group living to the East of the river Key, which then formed the general border-line of the Kaffir state and the Colony”.¹⁰⁴ Alberti’s royal genealogy differed from the preceding ones. Phalo was the founding father whose sons “Kaleka” (Gcaleka) and “Chachabe” (Rharhabe) founded the two main houses in the Xhosa polity. Hintsa did not appear alone as he appeared with his brother “Buchu”. Alberti tried to gain an understanding of the conditions of the “principal chief’s family in particular, which at present rules over that section of people living on the border of the Colony”.¹⁰⁵ Alberti, who had served as a soldier and later as a magistrate in the new district of Uitenhage, had enjoyed a longer interaction with amaXhosa than the other two writers. His royal genealogy was less confused than those produced by Van der Kemp and Lichtenstein. However, Alberti’s Xhosa royal history had serious omissions. He did not include influential houses like amaGwali, imiDange, and amaMbalu.

Colonel Collins’ genealogical table was the most detailed yet to appear. Like Van der Kemp and Lichtenstein, Collins began his table with “Togow” who begot “Gonde”, the father of “Tzeeo”.¹⁰⁶ Phalo appeared in the main line of the table and Collins identified him as having been the most

senior of his generation. Thus Collins' table refuted Van der Kemp's contention that Phalo was never king. Collins did not give much information on Phalo, instead he went on to discuss his sons, Gcaleka and Rharhabe. Collins also referred to the division of amaXhosa into two during the era of these two powerful royal brothers. Reference was also made to the powerful brother of Phalo, "Mandankee", and his descendants.¹⁰⁷ In following the history of Mdange and his followers, together with Langa (the son of Phalo), Collins discussed the history of the Xhosa wing that was the first to confront the boer intrusion militarily. He also recorded the in-fighting that frequently broke out between *iinkosi*, a topic that was to become popular in writings on Xhosa history.¹⁰⁸ Collins' table included the names of some junior princes who were important role players at the frontier at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Collins seems to have been a discerning observer who came across oral traditions different from those of Van der Kemp.¹⁰⁹ Further, he was open about his own lack of understanding. For instance, he could not understand why Langa's¹¹⁰ people were called "Barrokas"¹¹¹ or, the vassals of Teachoo, (possibly Tshatshu) who were called Tindees."¹¹² He also was perceptive enough to note that Xhosa princes despised "Konga" whose father was said to have been a cattle holder of Phalo.¹¹³

Collins mentioned Ruiter, a frontier figure who had also featured in the travellers' texts.¹¹⁴ Collins noted that Ruiter had originally come from Roggeveld and had fled to the frontier because of a murder he had committed. The other frontier figure was "Zaka". It is possible that this was the "Tsaka" Gordon had mentioned in his journal.¹¹⁵ In all probability this was Tshaka, the father of Cungwa of amaGqunukhwebe.¹¹⁶ Collins related how initially Tshaka had applied to Ruiter for permission to hunt in the area over which he had authority. Later, Collins noted, Tshaka claimed to have purchased the territory "on the right bank of the Great Fish River".¹¹⁷ According to Collins this claim was denied by Ruiter's descendants and other "Hottentots" he questioned on the issue.¹¹⁸ In 1786, with the assistance of Ndlambe, the colonists attacked the "Genookaquas" and killed their leader. According to Collins Ndlambe "was imprudently permitted to continue in the colony."¹¹⁹ Thereafter Konga (Cungwa) who succeeded Tshaka, was joined by the sons of Langa when he "returned" to the colony. Collins' history gave a detailed account of the movement and actions of the "Hottentot" leader, Ruiter, Gqunukhwebe leaders, and *iinkosi* at the frontier during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

These early texts laid special emphasis on Xhosa royal history. The four writers may have wanted to identify a system which made a strange society comprehensible. They were familiar with the institution of royalty and could identify with its workings, but they did not understand that the king shared power with other sectors in the Xhosa polity, like clans, *amaphakathi*, and traditional doctors. The European writers had no understanding of power dynamics in a Xhosa polity and placed royalty too firmly at the centre. This was made possible by the existence of a strong royal discourse which writers could access at the Great Place. With the exception of Collins, whose text included other non-royal characters and junior royal houses, the writers tended to build their history around the main line of the royal genealogy. This meant that important historical evidence associated with the subsidiary royal houses was excluded.

Xhosa society did not just retain knowledge of its past through oral genres that celebrated royalty. Lineages¹²⁰ and clans¹²¹ formed separate sub-groups, created and kept their own oral histories. This was important information for the shaping of the identity of individuals. Lineages and clans also used their histories as they observed their religious ceremonies.¹²² At times such clans originated outside the Xhosa polity and were newcomers to the Xhosa world. Collins did make reference to sub-groups within the Xhosa polity. Besides Cungwa and Ruitter he related a narrative of a Khoi group under Quama (most probably Chwama) who after being dislodged from the western Cape had resisted being assimilated by Tshiwo.¹²³ Such narratives produced a broader, more inclusive Xhosa history. But these accounts were brief and were placed by the writers on the periphery of Xhosa history. It was only during the middle of the nineteenth century that further details on lineage histories, like that of amaGqunukhwebe, surfaced.¹²⁴ Clan histories going back even to pre-Tshawe times emerged with Kaye's compilation of recorded traditions in the mid-nineteenth century.¹²⁵ Xhosa history was not just the story of royalty. Clans¹²⁶ and lineages retained their own histories.

There were other silences and omissions in these writings. Names of numerous regents who stepped in when the heir to the throne was a minor were omitted.¹²⁷ Failure to include the names of regents may have been because their inclusion might have disturbed the neat and clean tables that the writers had drawn up. The colonisers were concerned to bring order to the world of the autochthons. The historical texts had thus to appear neat and orderly. Secondly, during the many

interregna, it was usually queen mothers that stood in for their sons. That would have meant bringing women into the picture. It is noticeable that the writers excised women from royal genealogies. But there was an ambiguity, as in some instances women were included and in others there was a recognition of their role. For example, Van der Kemp noted how he interacted with MamThembu and “Hoby”, Ngqika’s mother and sister, even though he had not included them in his table. Moreover he pointed out in his *Transactions* that Ngqika “made it his rule never to resolve upon any matter of consequence unless he had previously taken the advice of his mother...and his sister.”¹²⁸ The authority of MamThembu at her son’s court when Van der Kemp arrived in Xhosaland, is demonstrated by the fact that Van der Kemp was interrogated by a Bengalese interpreter sent by MamThembu.¹²⁹ In his book Alberti produced a genealogical table that excluded women but made frequent references to Xhosa women and their participation in public life. In a meeting General Janssens had with Ngqika in 1803, Alberti noted the presence of MamThembu “who is accustomed to accompany her son at such functions and to conduct negotiations herself.”¹³⁰ Alberti also observed that in times of war between African groups women were used as emissaries who would open peace negotiations.¹³¹ In view of Alberti’s remark that wives of chiefs “are accorded even greater respect if they themselves descended from the family of a noble chief”,¹³² it can be assumed that there were many royal women who featured prominently in Xhosa history, but whose part was largely ignored by the four authors.

It is possible that the intergroup tension stressed by these European writers was symptomatic of the disorganisation and dislocation of Xhosa life as a result of the advancement of Europeans from the west, into Xhosa territory. There was increasing competition for land between the Nxuba/Fish and Nqweba/Sundays Rivers.¹³³ Just as the hunter-gatherers had been squeezed out during the second half of the eighteenth century, the pastoralists and the agronomists were facing the same pressures at the close of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century. The four writers were however silent on the impact of the boer intrusion on amaXhosa. Their major concern was with any fighting that could lead to defeated groups spilling over into the colony and disturbing the peace. In absolving Europeans of responsibility for conflict among amaXhosa the writers made suggestions that the Xhosa polity was continuously being ripped apart by internal conflicts.¹³⁴ Such a picture was in keeping with the view among nineteenth Europeans that African societies were characterised by chaos and disorder.¹³⁵ At the same time

such generalisations were contradicted by observations the writers themselves noted. For example, Van der Kemp who resided among amaNgqika for six months in 1799, observed that there was no war between Ngqika and the various Xhosa groups. Instead, Van der Kemp witnessed the reception of emissaries from neighbouring *iinkosi* in a friendly manner.¹³⁶

In writing the history of Xhosa intra-group relations the writers generally failed to discern and interpret the nuances of Xhosa life. They simply gave a picture of endless fights without an adequate explanation of the causes. Relations among Xhosa *iinkosi* were regulated through a maze of rules that the writers failed to fathom. The writers seem to have identified status simply according to birth. Many times that rule was overridden by other legal procedures. For example, Langa, the son of Phalo was a junior prince. His name appeared frequently in colonial writings and he was portrayed by colonial writers as a troublesome figure. Colonists and writers failed to understand that Langa, whose subjects were amaMbalu, had attained a senior position through being invited to *ukuvusa indlu* (resurrect a House) of his dead uncle, Tiso, who was Phalo's brother.¹³⁷ This new status then placed Langa in the generation of Phalo, making him senior to those who came after that generation. In Xhosa *imbali* Langa is remembered as having been a brave, restless spirit who attracted a significant following.¹³⁸

The four writers also concentrated on military conflict between the colonists and the indigenous people. They were more inclined to represent the voice of the Dutch colonists than that of the Africans. The writers placed the blame for both the 1793 and 1799-1803 wars on amaXhosa. Van der Kemp attributed the 1799-1803 war to the "[Caffre] vexations with respect to the adjacent colonists".¹³⁹ Van der Kemp's flight from the land of amaNgqika in 1800 would have alienated him from amaXhosa. Lichtenstein, writing about the alliance between the "Caffres and the Hottentots", observed, "They hoped to find an opportunity at once of revenging their alleged treatment, and of enriching themselves by plunder."¹⁴⁰ In colonial literature autochthons were commonly stereotyped as lawless thieves. Their stock raids were not interpreted as revenge or resistance against the stealing of stock or the colonial appropriation of land.

Lichtenstein was the only writer of the four who referred to amaXhosa as the "Koossa Tribe".¹⁴¹ He noted that "The tribe ...call themselves Koossas or Kaussa, but to their country they give the

name of Ammakosina.”¹⁴² Lichtenstein observed that “these people are exceedingly offended at being called Caffers.”¹⁴³ Lichtenstein’s remark suggests that the colonists are likely to have been aware of how amaXhosa wished to be called. The use of colonial names was explained by Collins as “the reluctance which Europeans appear to have felt in preserving the national names of the countries they have discovered.”¹⁴⁴ Collins felt that it was easier to stick to the new colonial names which had become known.¹⁴⁵ The racial categorisation of south-east Africans into “Caffre”, “Hottentot”, and “Bushman” was followed by the writers despite the fact that it was not acceptable to amaXhosa. Lichtenstein, reporting on an interview Janssens had had with *iinkosi* observed that the latter had noted that “there were no Hottentots with them except with Stuurman, Boewesek, and Trumpeter.”¹⁴⁶ This suggests that to amaXhosa “Hottentots” were people who fell under the jurisdiction of the three leaders who were in close alliance with the Dutch. Conversely, no one under *inkosi* was a “Hottentot”.

AmaXhosa, who were becoming a separate unit from other south-east Africans in colonial discourse, were further broken down in colonial writings. The writers created divisions between amaXhosa who were good and co-operative and those who continued to resist European intrusion and ignored the colonial boundary.¹⁴⁷ The place of the “Bosjemans” as the inveterate enemy was, in the texts under discussion, increasingly being taken over by amaMbalu of Langa, imiDange and amaNdlambe. Collins described amaMbalu as “hostile Caffres”.¹⁴⁸ Van der Kemp drew a negative picture of imiDange, who were “always hovering about the Fish river and commit very troublesome depredations within the Colony.”¹⁴⁹ According to Collins, Ndlambe also took part in the 1799 war against the colonists.¹⁵⁰ On the other hand Ngqika was represented as a “noble savage”, a good “Caffre”. Barrow was the first to present such a picture of Ngqika, who was also depicted by Collins as a regal young man with “a majestic and solemn attitude”.¹⁵¹ Lichtenstein also described Ngqika in laudatory terms: “Geika is one of the handsomest men that can be seen, ..uncommonly tall, with strong limbs and very fine features....It is not hazarding too much to say that among savages all over the globe a handsomer man could scarcely be found.”¹⁵² Moreover Lichtenstein appreciated “the rational views [Ngqika] took of things.”¹⁵³ The writers also portrayed Ngqika as a victim who in his youth had had to contend with a greedy uncle. At the same time colonial officials accorded Ngqika the status of the most senior *inkosi* among amaXhosa. They referred to him as the “principal chief”.¹⁵⁴ The story of Ngqika’s kind treatment

of his “treacherous” uncle appeared in all four texts and Lichtenstein was moved to note, “the noble behaviour of the young king towards his prisoner [Ndlambe]”.¹⁵⁵ Barrow and the Dutch colonial officers who visited Ngqika built up a positive image of him, in contrast to that of Africans engaged in resistance.

Collins, writing in 1809, seems to have had a slightly different view of Ngqika from his fellow writers. It may be that Collins was keen to build a new Xhosa-British alliance instead of inheriting what had been cultivated by Dutch officials like Lichtenstein and Alberti. Collins offered some criticism of Ngqika. He pointed out that Ngqika had administered, “punishments..[that were] the most cruel of any used among Caffres”.¹⁵⁶ Collins’ account of Ngqika’s fight against amaGcaleka portrayed him as ruthless. He described Ngqika as having “slaughtered”¹⁵⁷ his opponents. Collins’ views of Ngqika may have been influenced by the broad picture he had obtained of amaXhosa through his extensive tour. During his tour of Xhosaland he met Hintsa, *ukumkani*, and was fully aware that Ngqika was not the most senior in the Xhosa polity. His predecessors and fellow writers had mainly dealt with Ngqika’s court and had thus built their history on limited evidence.

An important aspect of the colonisation process is the demarcation of land.¹⁵⁸ The changing of landscape through re-naming and spatial demarcation is at the heart of colonisation. Early writings on Xhosa history made little reference to the pre-contact phase, concentrating mainly on the period of Afro-European interaction from the 1770s. It is not surprising therefore that in the four texts the authors focussed on the question of colonial boundaries, and, in particular, on the alleged Xhosa failure to observe and honour such boundaries. All four writers shared a common understanding of a boundary as a line that was used for separating people - in this instance amaXhosa - from a territory that was being designated a colony. Given such an outlook it was inevitable that the question of setting a boundary between the autochthons and the European settlers would become a dominant theme in early historical writing on amaXhosa. A close analysis of the texts however reveals differences among the writers on the boundary issue. Van der Kemp was vague and evasive on the issue. He did, though, note that a group led by Jaluza of amaNdlambe rejected the idea that the “Fish river marked the limits between Caffraria and the Colony.”¹⁵⁹ This group, Van der Kemp recalled, maintained rather that the

Nqweba/Sundays River was the boundary. At least Van der Kemp was aware that the boundary issue was contested. Moreover, he confessed that he was privy to information about the original ownership of the disputed territory between the Nxuba/Fish and the Nqweba/Sundays Rivers, but “wishing not to interfere with political disputes, I think it more prudent to pass over them with silence.”¹⁶⁰ Lichtenstein, who cited Van der Kemp as his main source, also identified the subjects of Jaluza, son of Rharhabe, and Tshatshu of amaNtinde, as well as amaMbalu, as the occupiers of the “territories of the colonists”.¹⁶¹ This was the region on the western side of the Nxuba/Fish Rivers. Thus, Lichtenstein accepted the colonial claim that the Nxuba /Fish River was the boundary between the colony and amaXhosa. Lichtenstein was however silent about the boundary agreement that was supposed to have been made between the colonists and amaXhosa. His major concern was with a boundary that would help ensure peace between the contending pastoralists. He however was aware that Alberti had different information.

Alberti noted that “Palo was the principal chief of a large population group living to the East of the river Key, which then formed the general border-line of the Kaffir state and the Colony.”¹⁶² Alberti then explained that it was after a civil war between Gcaleka and Rharhabe that the latter migrated westwards and settled near the colony. Alberti may have been confusing the Kei with the Keiskamma when he claimed that the Kei River had once been a boundary between amaXhosa and the colony.¹⁶³ Alberti observed that the land appropriated by Rharhabe after his flight had once belonged to the Gonaquas.¹⁶⁴ The latter had since co-existed with amaXhosa and had joined the “invading Kaffirs”.¹⁶⁵ Alberti’s observation about the Gonaqua and Rharhabe was one of the few occasions when the writers alluded to a history of interaction between amaXhosa and the people colonists called ‘Hottentots’. In his account of Ndlambe’s flight across the Nxuba/Fish River Alberti made out that it was the first time amaXhosa had crossed the river. Alberti then contended that after the 1793 war “The Great Fish River [was] accepted as the dividing line between Kaffir-land and the Colony.”¹⁶⁶ Neither Van der Kemp nor Lichtenstein made any reference to a 1793 agreement about the Nxuba/Fish River as a boundary. Actually, it was Macartney who claimed that an agreement had been reached between the colonists and amaXhosa, at the end of the 1793 war, that the Nxuba/Fish River was the boundary.¹⁶⁷ Barrow also made a similar observation, adding, “The treaty made with them in the time of the governor Van Plettenberg [was] renewed in the year 1793.”¹⁶⁸ Whereas Van der Kemp had conceded that

the issue of a boundary was contested by amaXhosa, Alberti strengthened the claim for the Nxuba/Fish River boundary by making reference to the 1793 “agreement”.

The assertion that there was a renewal of a treaty in 1793 is questionable. In the 1793 war amaXhosa had had the upper hand and it is most unlikely that they would have been party to such an agreement. As late as 1794 Van Jaarsveld, one of the leading colonists on the frontier, maintained that, “the best way of making a lasting peace with the Kafirs would be to give them back the Zuurveld, as having formerly been their own land.”¹⁶⁹ About that time burghers of Graaff- Reinet wrote to General Craig, in 1795, asking for permission to “occupy another tract of land situated on the other side of the Great Fish River.”¹⁷⁰ In fact the burgher request was merely an attempt to condone the crossing of the colonial boundary by the colonists. In relying solely on Barrow as a source Alberti was guilty of omitting comments made by Xhosa princes to Barrow in 1797 regarding the crossing of the colonial boundary. Barrow was informed by Thole and Nqeno that “the Dutch peasants have not only gone into Kaffer country since 1793, to hunt...[and] sow, and plant...but have driven over the cattle to graze.”¹⁷¹ Thus, in his account of the boundary Alberti was vague like Van der Kemp. Later however, he became definite about the existence of a boundary.

Collins had at his disposal a wider array of documents as sources than the other three writers. Before giving an account of Plettenberg’s visit to the frontier in 1778 Collins recorded how different leaders had moved into the region between Nqweba/Sundays and Nxuba/Fish Rivers. Ruiters was said to have been the first to move in from Roggeveld and later “Zaka” had joined him in order to hunt. That implied that those African leaders had no valid claim to the territory as they were portrayed as recent immigrants. The claim of Ndlambe, who came into the region after Tshaka, was equally invalidated. Collins gave an account of Governor Plettenberg’s visit in 1778 during which he “entered into an agreement with them”,¹⁷² that is, *iinkosi*. These *iinkosi*, according to Collins, had been located by Colonel Gordon at the “Kyskamma”. In fact, according to an entry in Gordon’s journal, Gordon had met *iinkosi* on the Sneeu Berg Mountains.¹⁷³ Whereas Barrow had written about a “treaty” being drawn between Plettenberg and Koba and Godissa,¹⁷⁴ Collins wrote about an “agreement”. Collins’ contention about a Plettenberg agreement implied that that was more valid and carried greater weight than the claim in the

region made by Ruiter, who was described as a murderer, and a hunter, Tshaka. According to his *Diary*, Plettenberg asked "Capitains Koba en Godissa" that they should regard the Nxuba/Fish River as a "grensschidinge"¹⁷⁵ between the Dutch East India Company and amaXhosa.

The four writers created an impression that a boundary had been settled upon either through a treaty or an agreement between the colonists and amaXhosa. Although they did mention in passing that the observance of such a boundary was lacking on both sides, a strong impression was created in the writings that it was amaXhosa who were forever breaking agreements by transgressing the line. It is unlikely, however, that the said treaty would have had any credibility with amaXhosa. These writers failed to take note of Xhosa notions of boundaries. It would have been surprising if amaXhosa had allowed themselves to be hemmed in by a line drawn by the colonisers. AmaXhosa had always operated from a position of open frontiers, where they had co-existed with other groups like the Khoisan. Their political system "was geared towards indefinite expansion."¹⁷⁶ It therefore is fair to assume that amaXhosa would have viewed the colonists as yet another group to assimilate.¹⁷⁷ The boundary issue was tackled in early texts mainly with a view to legitimising colonial land claims. Further, the "treaty" was used by Collins as a means of justifying the killing of a senior *inkosi*, Jalamba, of the Mdange House, through the infamous tobacco ruse.¹⁷⁸ Collins suggested that Jalamba and his followers had refused to observe the boundary when they were tricked into picking up tobacco by the boers and were shot while doing so. The incident took place as the colonists were attempting to drive imiDange out of an area west of the Nxuba/Fish River.¹⁷⁹

"Treaties" and "agreements" are often used by writers of historical texts as evidence of firm contracts between colonists and indigenous people. The Plettenberg "treaty" or "agreement" is one such example. In this early phase of writing on Xhosa history there was a suggestion that a form of understanding about the boundary had been reached, even though there was some vagueness about the nature of that understanding. The writers interpreted such deals from their own western presuppositions.¹⁸⁰ With the exception of Van der Kemp, they further overlooked or ignored the fact that there was a dispute over the deal. This demonstrates the hegemony of western thought in the construction of knowledge about indigenous people. It also shows how other understandings came to be ignored and forgotten.

Other themes covered in the writings were the origin and early migrations of amaXhosa. Nineteenth century Europeans seem to have assumed that migration was a common theme in the early history of indigenous groups. What may have influenced early nineteenth writers, including the four in our study, is the migration of Germanic tribes in early European history.¹⁸¹ Hobsbawm contends that pre-occupation with migrations by Europeans may be due to the fact that Europe had been on the defensive for more than a millennium from waves of migrating “barbarians” from east Asia.¹⁸² Moreover, the migration stories that pre-occupied early ethnographers were linked to the quest to understand the origins of indigenous people. Early nineteenth century Europeans still operated strongly under the influence of biblical teaching. They linked the beginnings of humanity with the Middle East which they associated with the biblical Garden of Eden. Lichtenstein suggested that the place of origin of amaXhosa was somewhere among the “Aethopian nations, in the vicinity of Meroe and Arabain Felix.”¹⁸³ He cited the similarity of Arabic words to some Xhosa words as proof of his claims. Lichtenstein’s observation that siXhosa had words with Arabic roots is interesting, as at that time little advance had been made in the study of African languages. Lichtenstein’s suggestion of an Arab-Xhosa connection still awaits further investigation by historians.

Van der Kemp recorded some migration stories from the more recent Xhosa past. These were later reproduced by Lichtenstein. Most were to do with divisions between *iinkosi* within the Tshawe House. It would seem that in every reign there was a movement by a section of the polity to found a new settlement. During the time of Phalo a group of people under Madjoagga migrated, heading north-westwards. There was also another tradition about a group of emigrants under Bakka who left Xhosaland.¹⁸⁴ Migrations sometimes happened after a civil war or in the course of political expansion. Such movements were usually the basis of founding stories for that particular group, not for the whole Xhosa polity. On occasions migrants would cut their links with the Xhosa world. Many migrants, however, remained attached to the Xhosa polity and received “fat” from *ukumkani*.¹⁸⁵ The writings of Collins and Alberti on migration traditions were largely based on Alberti’s claim that Phalo “was the principal chief of a large population group living to the East of the river Key, which then formed the general border-line of the Kaffir state and the Colony.”¹⁸⁶ This point was then picked up by Collins who observed that from very ancient times, until the death of Tshiwo, amaXhosa appear to have resided altogether near “the

Kyba”, that is, the Nciba/Kei River.¹⁸⁷ Collins’ version thus corroborated Alberti’s account as they both had Phalo living east of the Kei.

Both writers attributed the occupation of the region west of the Kei to a migration that resulted from a civil war between Phalo’s successors. According to Alberti and Collins the conflicts and divisions among Rharhabe’s descendants also resulted in the settlement of the region west of the Nxuba/Fish River, closer to the colony. The stories of migration from across the Nxuba/Fish River, with names of monarchs and *iinkosi* given as leaders of such movements, as expounded by Alberti and Collins, are the foundation of the claim that amaXhosa were recent immigrants into the Kei-Nqweba/Sundays region. Indeed, the migration stories were interpreted in such a way as to imply that the movement of Phalo’s descendants signified the first arrival of amaXhosa in the sub-region. The argument, when stretched further, implies that such Rharhabe expansion coincided with the arrival of Europeans in the eastern Cape. This claim has been expanded, though slightly changed to suggest that the arrival of Dutch colonists at the Cape coincided with the entry of the migrating “Bantu” into South Africa. This claim has been identified as myth number one by Cornevin in her study of South African historiography.¹⁸⁸

The selection of the migration stories of Rharhabe’s descendants by Alberti and Collins¹⁸⁹ from possibly hundreds of other Xhosa migration narratives was not accidental. They mainly chose those narrations that were about westward movements of Xhosa groups. The two writers were loyal colonial officials before they were historians. They were producing knowledge that could help legitimise the colonisation process. The four writers concentrated their focus on the western wing of the Xhosa polity - mainly the history of amaRharhabe and the other groups like amaGqunukhwebe, amaMbalu, and imiDange. The western wing was the first to be exposed to colonial intrusion and had to deal with it. Very little was written about the rest of the Xhosa people, away from the colonial gaze. They were ignored, omitted, and suppressed.¹⁹⁰ There is however a possibility that amaXhosa had chosen to be silent about their *kumkani*. They could have believed that sharing all could have unnecessarily exposed the royal person to the colonists.

Early colonial writers about the Xhosa past also recorded myths of origin which they may have collected from Xhosa informants.¹⁹¹ Such *amabali emvelo*/creation stories form an important part

of the repertoire of Xhosa oral tradition. In his *Account* Alberti recorded a “national legend concerning the origin and descent of the Kaffirs.”¹⁹² He was told:

In the land in which the sun rises, there was a cavern, from which the first Kaffirs, and in fact all peoples, as also stock of every kind of animal, came forth. At the same time, the sun and moon came into being, to shed their light, and trees, grass and other plants to provide food for men and cattle.¹⁹³

Through the narrative amaXhosa identified the east, where the sun rises, as a place where the cave from which creation first emerged was to be found. Lichtenstein’s *ibali lemvelo* was slightly different. He noted that among amaXhosa there was a story that “to the north of the country, there is a vast subterraneous cavern, from which their horned cattle originally came.”¹⁹⁴ Although in Lichtenstein’s tradition there was no reference to humans emerging from the cavern, the text is close to Alberti’s. The two creation myths, as is in the nature of *amabali emvelo*, gave no specific locality as a birthplace of amaXhosa.¹⁹⁵ The place of myths in historiography continues to be a controversial issue. Hill observes that “both history and myth are modes of social consciousness through which the people construct shared interpretive frameworks.”¹⁹⁶ To Hill myths and consciousness complement one another: “Mythic consciousness can become the basis for reflexive understanding of temporal processes within a social order and the principal metaphors through which the society reproduces itself.”¹⁹⁷ The four writers did not take into account the influence *amabali emvelo* could have had on the way amaXhosa produced their history. The writers continued to hypothesise about distant Xhosa origins, somewhere in the north. No such claims were made by amaXhosa. To them the place of origin was somewhere in the east, and that could have been associated with the sun as the source of life. As will be discussed below¹⁹⁸ *amabali emvelo* covered that mythic time in Xhosa historical perspective which also overflowed to the remembered time in *iimbali*.

The writings of the three colonial officials, Lichtenstein, Alberti, and Collins, and the missionary, Van der Kemp, represent early texts on Xhosa history. Their work was produced at the time governments - Dutch and British - were establishing their presence on the frontier and were framing policies relating to amaXhosa. The writing of Xhosa history began in a context of spreading colonisation and the introduction of Christianity. These early texts on Xhosa history have been used as source material by historians. Collins’ detailed Xhosa royal genealogy, which was an improvement on earlier genealogical outlines, has been a foundation of later tables.¹⁹⁹ The

building of Xhosa history around the history of Xhosa royalty has its origins in the works of these early writers. Moreover, the focus on Ngqika by these early nineteenth-century writers created a tradition among Xhosa historians which placed Ngqika at the centre and marginalised the senior Xhosa royal House under Hintsá.

In his work on early Xhosa history Peires made extensive use of the writings of the four authors. For the fine details on the workings of the pre-colonial Xhosa society Peires relied mainly on the evidence of early colonial and missionary writings. Peires' Xhosa political history was also structured according to the early genealogies, especially Collins' table. In his discussion of Phalo, Peires observed that "Phalo remains a shadowy figure about whom almost nothing is known."²⁰⁰ This observation is difficult to understand as the title of Peires' book, *The House of Phalo*, is an indirect tribute to that figure. Instead of being shadowy, Phalo's life is remembered through a number of traditions that are sometimes confusing and contradictory, a confusion that is noticeable in the writings of the four. It is equally strange that Peires failed to pick up the reverence with which Phalo is regarded in Xhosa oral history. amaXhosa still refer to one another as *mzi kaPhalo* (the homestead of Phalo) or *lusapho lukaPhalo* (family of Phalo). This may be in recognition of the fact that Phalo may be perceived by amaXhosa as the last Xhosa monarch to represent Xhosa unity. Peires' strength in his early Xhosa history comes from his wide use of *iimbali*. From the Sogas²⁰¹ and Xhosa informants²⁰² Peires was able to gather evidence that enabled him to break away from the Rharhabe-Ngqika focus, as stressed by Lichtenstein, Alberti and Van der Kemp, and provide the history of the line of Gcaleka and his descendants.

In her work on Xhosa history Wilson used the records of Van der Kemp and Lichtenstein which mainly were observations on Ngqika's rule and his relationship with his subjects.²⁰³ Wilson's description of Ngqika's rule depicted *inkosi* as having exercised limited powers and being liable to admonishment by *amaphakathi*. In his discussion of Xhosa politics Crais pointed out that ordinary people could vote with their feet against a dictatorial *inkosi*.²⁰⁴ Observations by Barrow and Lichtenstein enabled Wilson to reconstruct trade routes amaXhosa were engaged in with African groups to the north.²⁰⁵

In her study of Xhosa religion Hodgson discussed creation myths recorded by Alberti and

Lichtenstein. From her discussion of myths and other religious beliefs Hodgson was able to present a Xhosa religious history. From Alberti Hodgson learnt that “chiefs” were buried in the cattle byre, as against commoners who were left exposed in the veld.²⁰⁶ Despite Alberti’s observation that amaXhosa had “no conception of God, or an invisible being”,²⁰⁷ Hodgson went on to gather evidence from Alberti’s contemporaries and produced works in which she discussed Xhosa religious beliefs and their conception of a deity.²⁰⁸

The four writers examined in this chapter came from two influential institutions in the colony, the church and government. That in itself signals the importance and authority the texts enjoyed and have continued to enjoy among historians. They built their historical texts from evidence obtained from earlier texts especially writings by eighteenth century travellers. There is thus a noticeable thematic continuity between the two phases. The texts have come to occupy a seminal place in Xhosa historiography. On the other hand even though they represent early writing on Xhosa history, their production has to be interrogated. Questions have to be posed about the identity of authors, the contexts of their writing and the audiences for whom the texts were meant. All four writers placed the history of the royal family at the centre of Xhosa history. They began their accounts with one Xhosa monarch or another. The centrality of Xhosa royal history in the colonial texts was influenced by the desire of writers to understand Xhosa political institutions. The history of kings was also a historical tradition that the writers were familiar with. The majority of historical events they recorded centred around the actions of *ookumkani* or *iinkosi*. These narratives highlighted civil strife and fission within the Xhosa polity. In that way the theme of political instability became a dominant one in early writings on Xhosa history. The four writers also focussed on Afro-European relations. The narratives dwelt mainly on conflict and military engagements and they were inclined to lay the blame on amaXhosa for the conflict. In the accounts there was a tendency to depict certain groups like amaMbalu, imiDange, and later Ndlambe’s people as the villains responsible for frontier depredations. On the other hand the writers carefully constructed an image of Ngqika as a ‘noble savage’, in contrast to other amaXhosa. Conflict over boundaries was another important theme. A surprising similarity is noticeable in the four texts. This was inevitable as the writers, to some extent with the exception of Van der Kemp, were part of the colonial venture that involved appropriating the land of the autochthons. Even though Collins generally followed the line of his predecessors, at times he differed from them. These were Europeans who shared a similar understanding of history. Their

selection of themes was similar. Equally their silences, omissions and suppressions were the same. Their history focussed mainly on amaRharhabe and other groups that were attached to the Right Hand House of the line of Phalo. The concern of the writers was to produce a history of those groups with whom the colony shared a frontier. That effectively excluded amaGcaleka, the senior House among whom *ukumkani* resided. That slant has continued to characterise Xhosa history to the present. The four writers left a record which later historians have relied on as source material for the writing of Xhosa history.

1 . An account of this expedition is found in GM Theal, *Belanrijke Historische Dokumenten: Verzameld in de Kaap Kolonie en Elders* (Kaapstad: Van de Sandt de Villiers & Co., 1896). For a discussion of the Beutler expedition see chapter six.

2 . H Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, and 1806*, i (Cape Town: The Van Riebeeck Society, 1928), 268.

3 . With the outbreak of the French Revolution the Allies feared that the Cape might fall into the hands of the French. To forestall that eventuality the British moved in and occupied the Cape.

4 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order* , 3.

5 . Mostert, *Frontiers* , 283. For a comment on the coming of the religious revival to the Cape see Timothy Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1996), 18.

6 . R Elphick, "Christianity in South African History" in R Elphick and R Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1997), 3.

7 . Elphick observes that South Africa was the area most intensively "occupied" by Christian missionaries in the world. *Ibid.*

8 . De Kock discusses how the writings of missionaries created certain representations of Africans. He argues that these texts were "narratives of legitimation" and were part of evangelical colonialism. See De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 141-187. Also see Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, i, 80-87.

9 . J Hodgson, "A Battle for Sacred Power: Christian Beginnings among the Xhosa" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa*, 68.

10 . See Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa* , i, 355.

11 . Such performers were observed and described by some early visitors who visited kings and princes. It was a well developed tradition in southern Africa. For example, when Reverend Kay visited the Ndlambe *inkosi*, Mdushane, he noted that each morning they were awakened by the cries of *imbongi* “who was proclaiming the praises of his chief”. See Stephen Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria Describing the Character, Customs and Moral Condition of the Tribes Inhabiting that Portion of Southern Africa* (London: John Mason, 1833), 75.

12 . For an in-depth discussion of *iimbali* as history see NC Tisani, “Classified Material in Oral Tradition: Its Survival and Transmission” in E. R. Sienaert, Meg Cowper-Lewis, Nigel Bell (eds), *Oral Tradition and Its Transmission: The Many Forms of Message* (Durban: The Campbell Collections and centre for Oral Studies, 1994), 169-178.

13 . See M Wilson, “Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier” in Wilson and Thompson (eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i , 233-271.

14 . Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 53.

15 . De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 31.

16 . Examples of such groups can be found in the white community that hovered around Ngqika’s *Komkhulu* which featured quite prominently in Van der Kemp’s diary. See J T Van der Kemp, *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*, i (1804), 349-505.

17 . See John Barrow, *A Voyage to CochinChina in the Years 1792 and 1793* (London: T Cadell and W Davies, 1806).

18 . J. Barrow, *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa* , i (London: T Cadell and W Davies, 1806), vi.

19 . *Ibid.*, viii.

20 . The idea of bread trees is traceable back to the Cook explorers in Tahiti. In 1779 Paterson also found a bread tree for the “Hottentots”. Barrow, seemingly did the same for amaXhosa. See *Ibid.*, 141.

21 . Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 58.

22 . Barrow, *Travels into the Interior*, 94.

23 . *Ibid.*, 93.

24 . *Ibid.*, 84.

25 . Ironically in his description of the colonists Barrow sometimes used the same epithets that had been thrown at the “Hottentots” in colonial literature like laziness, slovenliness, and idleness. See JM Coetzee, *White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa* (London: Yale University Press, 1988), 28.

26 . Pratt observes that Barrow’s text aimed at discrediting Dutch colonialism. See Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 61.

- 27 . Barrow, *Travels into the Interior*, 119.
- 28 . *Ibid.*, 126.
- 29 . *Ibid.*, 251.
- 30 . *Ibid.*, 146.
- 31 . This plot will be discussed further when discussing the rise of Tshawe in chapter 4.
- 32 . Ngqika was not *ukumkani* among amaXhosa. He was of the Right Hand House of Phalo. It was the colonists who proclaimed him king.
- 33 . Lichtenstein in particular did not always agree with the way Barrow described the Dutch colonists, but he built Xhosa history around what Barrow had left behind.
- 34 . This is not to suggest that there were no tensions between missionaries and the colonial government. Janssens expressed serious reservations about missionaries and their work in colonies. See P J Idenburg, *The Cape of Good Hope at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Universitaire Pers, 1963), 84.
- 35 . *Ibid.*, viii.
- 36 . E Enklaar, *Life and Work of Dr J The. van der Kemp: Missionary Pioneer and Protagonist of Racial Equality in South Africa* (Cape Town: A A Balkema, 1988), ix.
- 37 . De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 147.
- 38 . Martin, *Dr Vanderkemp*, 20.
- 39 . Van der Kemp, "Second Attempt to enter Caffraria" in *Transactions*, 392.
- 40 . See Van der Kemp, "Specimen of Kaffrarian Language". G.10.b.7(1), South African Library.
- 41 . Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 432-505.
- 42 . *Ibid.*, 464-467.
- 43 . Martin Karl Heinrich Lichtenstein was born in Hamburg on 10 January 1780. He studied at Jena and Halmstadt universities. His studies covered the field of medicine, zoology and philosophy. For a short biography of Lichtenstein see O H Spohr (Translator and editor), *W H C Lichtenstein: Foundation of the Cape About the Bechuanas* (Cape Town: A A Balkema, 1973), 3-14.
- 44 . General Jan Willem Janssens (1762-1838) came to the Cape Colony as Governor under the Batavian Government. For a discussion on Janssens at the Cape see, among others, J P van der Merwe, *Die Kaap Onder die Bataafse Republiek 1803-1806* (Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger, 1926).

45 . For a discussion of eighteenth century intellectual explorers see chapter 1 of this thesis.

46 . Commissioner-General J A De Mist (1749-1823) arrived at the Cape on 23 December 1802. See AH Murray, *The Political Philosophy of JA De Mist: Commissioner-General at the Cape 1803-1805* (Cape Town: Citadel Press,dng).

47 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa* (translated by A Plumtree) 2 Vols (1812-1815) Reprinted in(Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 1928 and1930).

48 . *Ibid.*, ii, 373-422. Also see Spohr, *WHC Lichtenstein*, 61-83.

49 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 357-370.

50 . *Ibid.*, 143.

51 . *Ibid.*, 69.

52 . *Ibid.*, 121.

53 . For an account of that war see S Newton-King and VC Malherbe, *The Khoikhoi Rebellion in the Eastern Cape 1799-1803* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Centre for African Studies, 1981).

54 . A short biography of Alberti is given in his book. See Ludwig Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life and Customs of the Xhosa in 1807* (Cape Town: A A Balkema, 1968).

55 . The district of Uitenhage was founded by de Mist who gave it his family name. *Ibid.*, 106.

56 . Augusta de Mist was the eighteen-year-old daughter of the Commissioner-General de Mist who accompanied her father to the eastern frontier in 1802. See Augusta Uitenhage de Mist, *Diary of a Journey to the Cape of Good Hope and the Interior of Africa 1802 and 1803* (Cape Town: A A Balkema, 1954), 46.

57 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 97.

58 . S.Bannister, *Humane Policy Or Justice to the Aborigines of New Settlements* (reprint) (London: Dawson of Pall Mall, 1968), ccxxii.

59 . See Colonel Collins, "Journal of a Tour to the North-Eastern Boundary, the Orange River, and the Storm Mountains" in Moodie, *The Record*, Part V, 1808-1819.

60 . *Ibid.*, 1

61 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in South Africa*, i, 350.

62 . Collins, "Journal", 7.

63 . *Ibid.*

64 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 1.

65. *Ibid.*, 12.

66. Richard J Evans, *In Defence of History* (London: Granta Books, 1997), 211.

67. Cohen makes the point that African history continues to be constructed outside Africa mainly by non-Africans. This is attributed to the general collapse of publishing across Africa. The question is whether the continued production of African history outside the continent is a form of neo-colonialism or not. See Cohen, *The Combining of History*, 76-77.

68. M. Wilson, *The Interpreters* (Grahamstown: The 1820 Settlers National Monument Foundation, 1972), 8.

69. On affinity between siXhosa and Gona see chapter one.

70. Van der Kemp, "Journey to Caffraria", in *Transactions*, 372.

71. *Ibid.*

72. Wilson, *The Interpreters*, 22.

73. Van der Kemp, "First Attempt to Enter Caffraria", *Transactions*, 381.

74. A biography of De Buys by Schoeman romanticises this complex character who lived in a number of worlds in the South Africa of the end of the eighteenth as well as the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. See AE Schoeman, *Coenraad De Buys: The First Transvaler* (Pretoria: JH De Bussy, 1938).

75. Lichtenstein contended that Buys "gained the confidence of the mother of king Gaika, then a minor, ..as sort of marriage was concluded between them, after the manner of Caffers." See Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 259. Schoeman noted that a deserter had reported that "D'Gaika's mother sleeps with Conraad Buis". See Schoeman, *Coenraad De Buys*, 53. In discussing De Buys' relationship with MamThembu Peires adds a dimension that De Buys was valued at Ngqika's court because he had "access to Colonial gunpowder". Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 52.

76. This was in the meeting of 1803 between the Dutch under Janssens and Ngqika. See Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 389-397.

77. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 52.

78. Van der Kemp, "History of Caffraria", *Transactions*, 464-467.

79. The relationship was inclined towards hatred though both Ngqika and De Buys could not openly express their feelings. To Ngqika De Buys was a window to the colonist world, knowledge, and commodities. To De Buys Ngqika offered refuge and power during his time in Xhosaland.

80. See Appendix 1.

81. *Ibid.*

82 . *Ibid.*

83 . For a discussion of Phalo see Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 45-46.

84 . The first text to carry the name “Paro” was Beutler’s journal. See ECG Molsbergen, *Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd (Derde Deel)* (‘S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1922), 288. Also see Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 53.

85 . Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 465.

86 . *Ibid.*

87 . *Iimbongi zakomkhulu*, royal bards, were important and influential personalities at royal courts who, through their poetry renditions, constructed and passed on knowledge about the past of the royal family. See Jeff Opland, *Xhosa Oral Poetry: Aspects of a Black South African Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 51-57.

88 . See the comments of Yali-Manisi in *Ibid.*, 107-109.

89 . JH Soga, *The Ama-Xosa: Life and Customs* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1931), 23-24. Also see Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 45-47.

90 . In some Xhosa circles a claim is even made that Phalo, who was born after Tshiwo’s death, could not have been the son of the late king.

91 . See L Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society: The Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1993), 39.

92 . See Appendix 2.

93 . Thole, son of Langa, was one of the Xhosa princes Barrow met and was given a noble savage image. See Barrow, *Travels into the Interior*, i, 123-124.

94 . This was probably Lutshaba, a name that did not appear in other early genealogical tables. Lutshaba resurfaced in Soga and is given as the eldest son of Phalo, and his “House” is Umtshayelo. See Soga, “AmaXosa” in Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, npg.

95 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, 358.

96 . *Ibid.*

97 . *Ibid.*, 369.

98 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 358.

99 . Crais remarks that Ngqika began his own centralising exploits at the end of the eighteenth century. See Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 28. The story, as told by Lichtenstein, about the greatness of Rharhabe can be linked to that centralising process.

100 . Rharhabe died at war in a battle against abaThembu. For a recorded *imbali* of his death see Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 131-132.

101 . Wilson, "The Nguni People" in Wilson and Thompson (eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i, 106.

102 . See Appendix 3.

103 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 98.

104 . *Ibid.*, 97-98.

105 . *Ibid.*

106 . See Appendix 4

107 . Collins "Journal" , 9. What Collins did not explain was that Mdange was a king-maker. When Gwali tried to usurp Phalo's throne it was Mdange who intervened. This *imbali* is recorded in Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 113.

108 . Collins, 'Journal', 9.

109 . *Ibid.*, 8.

110 . Langa was another son of Phalo whose name had not appeared in any of the other genealogical tables.

111 . The answer to this interesting question can be found in an *imbali* recorded by Soga. It is said that Tiso, one of Tshiwo's sons died without issue and Langa was placed in that house (as an heir). He then adopted the name of Tiso's ox, Mbalu. Langa's people then became amaMbalu, what Collins called Barooka. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 63 and 113.

112 . Collins' Tindees were most probably amaNtinde. According to *imbali*, recorded in Soga Ntinde was Tshiwo's son who sided with Gwali when a civil war broke out between the sons of Tshiwo. See Soga, *The Ama-Xosa*, 23-24.

113 . Through his observation that "Konga" was despised Collins touches on a Xhosa oral tradition. The background to such a state of affairs emanated from the fact that Cungwa was a descendant of Khwane, a mGqunukhwebe, who had been assimilated into the Xhosa polity. Cungwa's royal status therefore was through assimilation rather than birth.

114 . For a discussion of Ruiter (Ruyter) see chapter one. Also see Raper and Boucher (eds), *Robert Jacob Gordon*, i, 140.

115 . *Ibid.*, 141-142.

116 . For a genealogical table of amaGqunukhwebe see Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 56.

117 . Collins, "Journal", 10.

118 . *Ibid.*

119 . *Ibid.*

120 . Wilson defines a lineage as consisting of individuals who are descendants of a common ancestor in the male line. See Wilson, "The Nguni People" in Wilson and Thompson(eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i, 116.

121 . Peires claims that amaXhosa did not differentiate between a clan and chiefdom as they used the word *isizwe* for both concepts. See Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 196, footnote 6. Peires is mistaken. There is a difference in the use of the word *isizwe*. In the narrow sense the word is used to refer to a clan, an exogamous group that claims to descend from one ancestor. In such a context the word *isizwe* emphasises the autonomy of a clan in relation to other clans. This is usually noted in religious contexts. *Isizwe* under *inkosi* is a politically independent unit that is separate from other *isizwe*, with different *iinkosi*.

122 . For Xhosa clan histories see *Ibid.*, 188-189.

123 . Collins, "Journal", 12.

124 . The early history of amaGqunukhwebe will be covered in chapters 3 and 4.

125 . For a discussion of this part of Xhosa history see chapter 5.

126 . Switzer observes that among the Khoikhoi clans enjoyed considerable autonomy. See Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society*, 22. Such a practice could have had an impact on Xhosa clans.

127 . Alberti is the only one who mentioned the fact that Ndlambe ruled "together with Gaika's mother". See Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 99.

128 . Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 397.

129 . *Ibid.*, 396.

130 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 50.

131 . *Ibid.*, 60. There are several recorded instances where African women were used as emissaries during military engagements. For example, during the 1819 Afro-British War Pringle recorded that two women approached Commander Stockenstrom claiming that they had been sent by Makana to make an appointment with the British. See Thomas Pringle, *Narrative of a Residence in South Africa* (Cape Town: C Struik, 1966), 284.

132 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 82.

133 . Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society*, 48.

134 . The theme of upheavals and disintegration of societies also dominates early Zulu history. Such violence became personified in Shaka Zulu. The making of Shaka's image in history is a topic that has received attention from scholars. See among others Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty*.

135 . Hegel observed that “..outbreaks occur from time to time and they are among the oldest traditions of the African continent”. See Hegel, “Race, History, and Imperialism” in Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment*, 125.

136 . Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 466.

137 . Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 113.

138 . *Ibid.*, 125-126.

139 . *Ibid.*

140 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 362.

141 . *Ibid.*, 357.

142 . *Ibid.*, 309.

143 . *Ibid.*, 357.

144 . Collins, “Journal”, 8.

145 . Naming was a colonial process in itself.

146 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 385.

147 . In her work Jablow identifies the changing descriptions of amaXhosa in colonial literature. She however only takes note of the shift that took place during the 1830s, giving the example of Steedman’s writings. See Jablow, “The Development of the Image of Africa in the British Popular Literature 1530-1910”, 95.

148 . *Ibid.*, 11.

149 . Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 467. Van der Kemp also claimed that it was imiDange that attacked his party as they moved into Xhosaland in 1799. *Ibid.*, 336.

150 . Collins, “Journal”, 14.

151 . *Ibid.*, 394.

152 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 393-394.

153 . *Ibid.*

154 . Alberti, *Account of the Fribal Life*, 107.

155 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 350

156 . Collins, “Journal”, 13.

157 . *Ibid.*

158 . This is what Crais refers to as “the re-organisation of space”. See Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order* , 2.

159 . Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 466-467.

160 . *Ibid.*, 467.

161 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 361.

162 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 97-98.

163 . Earlier in his book Alberti had shown himself ignorant of the physical geography of south-east Africa. For example he had claimed that Rio de la Goa, a Portuguese settlement, was the bay adjacent to the Great Fish River. *Ibid.*, 6.

164 . *Ibid.*, 98.

165 . *Ibid.*

166 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 99.

167 . Macartney to Bresler in G M Theal, *The Records of the Cape Colony from December 1796 to December 1799*, ii (London: William Cloves and Sons, 1898), 98.

168 . Barrow, *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa*, i, 136.

169 . See Andre du Toit and Hermann Giliomee, *Afrikaner Political Thought: Analysis and Documents 1780-1850*, i (Cape Town: David Philip, 1983), 148.

170 . Letter from some burghers of Graaff-Reinet to General Craig in Theal, *Records of the Cape Colony 1793-1796*, 480.

171 . Barrow, *Travels into the Interior*, i, 123.

172 . Collins, “Journal”, 9-10.

173 . It can be assumed that Collins’ claim that Gordon met *iinkosi* on the Keiskamma stemmed from a desire to place amaXhosa as far east as was possible. See Raper and Boucher, *Robert Jacob Gordon*, 184.

174 . Barrow, *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa*, i, 136.

175 . “Dagverhaal van Joachim Baron van Plettenberg”, MIC 14, Cory Library, Rhodes University, 64.

176 . Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 53.

177 . *Ibid.*

178 . See Collins, “Journal”, 10.

179 . In discussing the death of Jalamba, *inkosi* of imiDange, Peires also, like early writers, gives an account of a fight Jalamba had with Rharhabe. Then Jalamba is said to have retreated to the territory of the boers. See Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 50. What needs mentioning is that imiDange were another old and senior House that had been influential at the time of Phalo. Rharhabe and later Ngqika may have been contesting that position.

180 . Elizabeth Tonkin argues quite strongly about the way cosmological outlook informs and undergirds thinking. See Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts*, 69.

181 . See Peter Buchholz, "German Antiquity for Antiquarians Only", *South African Journal of Folklore Studies*, Vol i, (1990), 121.

182 . Hobsbawm, *On History*, 221.

183 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 304.

184 . *Ibid.*, 369-370.

185 . Fat from *ukumkani* was used for anointing a new *inkosi*. This point was made by Burhu, brother of Hintsá, to Collins when he was telling him about the status of Hintsá. See Collins, "Journal", 40.

186 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 97-98.

187 . Collins, "Journal", 9. This observation was later to be crucial in Theal's writings about amaXhosa and their place in south-east Africa. The issue is discussed in detail in chapter six.

188 . Cornevin, *Apartheid Power and Historical Falsification*, 78-80.

189 . See an account of the westward movement of Xhosa groups from the Kei River in Collins, "Journal", 9.

190 . Cohen writes at length about silence and forgetting in the production of history. See in particular, Cohen, *The Combing of History*, 243-248.

191 . The *Stavenisse* castaways had recorded *ibali lemvelo*/creation story in 1689. For a discussion of these narratives see Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 18-19.

192 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 13.

193 . *Ibid.*

194 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 314.

195 . See Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 18-22.

196 . JD Hill, *Rethinking History and Myth: Indigenous South American Perspectives on the Past* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 5.

197 . *Ibid.*, 7.

198 . See chapter four.

199 . The nineteenth century table by Dugmore which was published in the *South African Christian Journal and Magazine* of 1846 and which was a foundation frame for other genealogical tables, was based on the Collins version.

200 . *Ibid.*, 46.

201 . See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, and *The Ama-Xhosa*, and TB Soga, *Inlalo KaXhosa* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, nd).

202 . For his oral sources see Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 260-261.

203 . Wilson, "The Nguni People" , 122.

204 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 21.

205 . Wilson, "The Nguni people", 114.

206 . Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 37.

207 . Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 47.

208 . See Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*.

CHAPTER 3

WRITING ON XHOSA HISTORY AT MISSION STATIONS FROM THE 1820s TO MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

The first venture of Christian missionaries into Xhosa territory suffered a momentary setback when Van der Kemp fled back into the Colony in 1800.¹ A second brave attempt by a missionary to enter Xhosaland ended tragically with the death, from ill-health, of Rev Joseph Williams on 23 August 1818 at his mission station on the Kat/Ngxwengxwe River.² These ill-fated beginnings to missionary work among amaXhosa were followed by a more aggressive outreach from the 1820s when the London, Scottish, Wesleyan Methodist and Moravian Missionary Societies began operating. Their stations were dotted across the land occupied by amaXhosa east of the Nxuba/Fish River.³ The arrival of Scottish missionaries, Reverend and Mrs John Ross and John Bennie in 1823, with a printing press,⁴ initiated a new era in missionary work. The missionaries began to “reduce to form and rule this language [siXhosa] which hitherto had floated in the wind.”⁵ The first book written in siXhosa was produced on 7 February 1824.⁶ The missionaries in conjunction with Xhosa workmates developed an orthography of indigenous languages so that converts could become literate and read the bible for themselves. De Kock argues that the “reduction” of African languages into written form was the foundation of missionary work.⁷ Also, the printing press was “his foremost weapon of civilisation”.⁸ The first substantial writings on amaXhosa which emanated from mission stations were largely in English, and mainly on Christian themes. From the late 1830s there began to appear regular periodicals in siXhosa. AmaXhosa also began to make contributions to these publications. Even though these writings were under the dominating umbrella of Christian discourse, writers at times managed to wrestle with broader themes, including the history of the autochthons.

Missionary discourse has become a subject of growing interest among scholars.⁹ Consideration is given to the power and authority missionaries enjoyed and how that affected what they wrote. Some missionaries enjoyed a degree of secular power as they worked closely with the colonial authorities. Thus, for example, during the early 1820s, Reverends Thompson¹⁰ and Brownlee¹¹

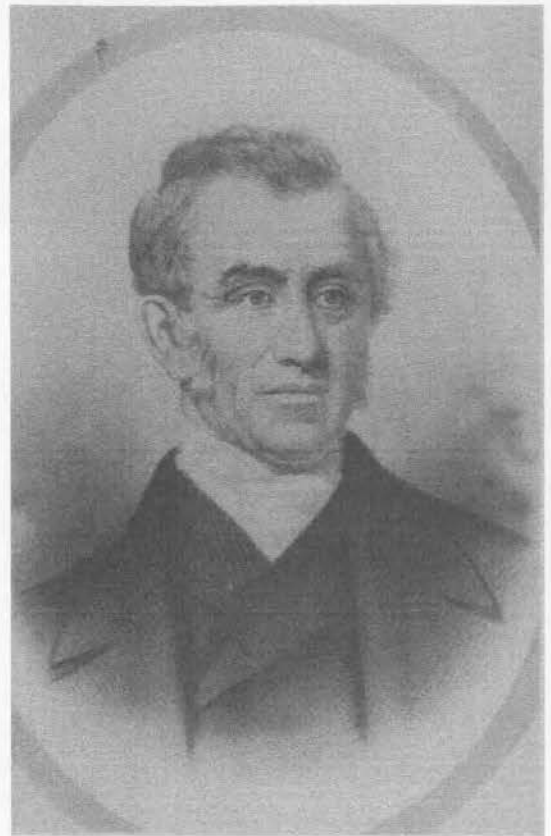
worked as government agents, prompting Shaw to describe their mission station at Tyhume as “a species of combined political and religious mission”.¹² In southern Africa missionaries often enjoyed the support and protection of the colonial government. But there were also instances of tension between missionaries and colonial governments. The classic southern African example is the wrangling between Dr Philip of the London Missionary Society and the colonial government from the late 1820s onwards.¹³ On the other hand missionaries enjoyed moral authority from the belief in the absolute and exclusive truth of the religion they preached. This belief, coupled with a strong faith in the superiority of European culture, placed missionaries on a high pedestal as they began to write about Africans.

From the 1820s a few autochthons could express their thoughts in writing. The question that immediately arises is whether converts were able to distance themselves from their new religion and its teachings. Scholars have been quick to point out that these writers were simply replicating their masters’ voices. Kunene observes that the African convert writer “belonged to the new elite [and was] separated from his compatriots ...felt a strong urge to ‘save’ his unconverted fellow Africans from ignorance.”¹⁴ The process of conversion demanded such a cultural shift that it is not surprising that converts displayed outlooks similar to those of the missionaries.¹⁵ Converts also seem to have harboured strong feelings of inferiority, consistently describing themselves in self-denigrating terms. For instance, in one of the first issues of *Um-Shumayeli Wen-daba*, an observation was made, *Abefundisi benz’amalinga okusinceda tina ‘zityakala’*¹⁶ (The teachers are making efforts to help us poor fools). Reverend Laing pointed out that a common saying among converts was, “ We are stupid, teach us.”¹⁷ However, writings by Xhosa converts, even if couched in missionary language, carried elements of African thinking. De Kock describes some of the ways in which, during the nineteenth century, Africans appropriated and contested an “aggressive colonising discourse.”¹⁸ In studying these early works by African writers it is important not to overlook the way they contested as well as accommodated features of the missionary order. The indigenous writers adopted the thinking and language of the missionaries. At the same time they infused their own ideas and experiences. The elasticity of the African worldview allowed converts to adopt new ideas and integrate them into existing belief systems.

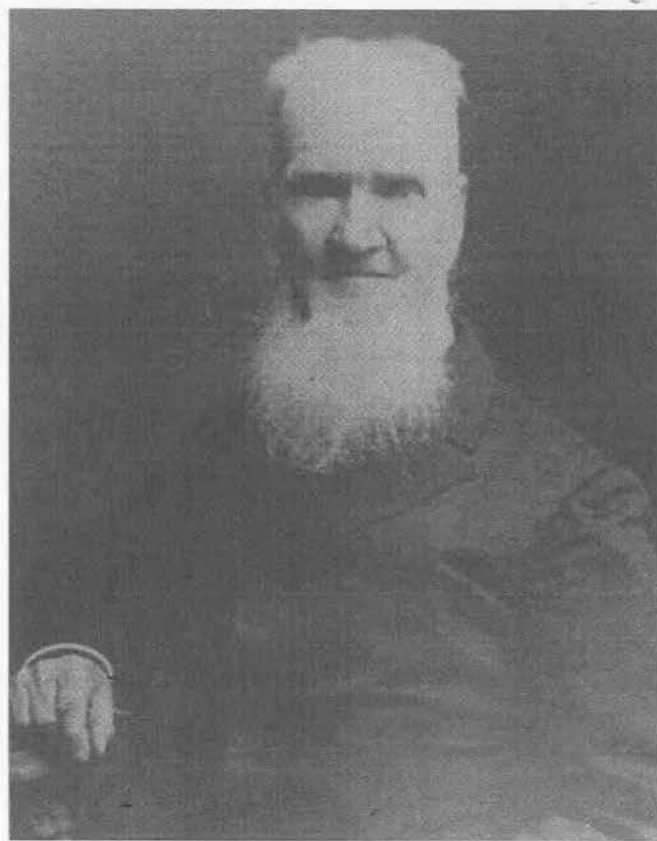
Xhosa history that emanated from the mission stations was based on preceding works.¹⁹ But there



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were significant innovations as well. By the third decade of the nineteenth century, European settlers in southern Africa had a better knowledge of the geography and people of the sub-region. So Xhosa history was written with a better understanding than before. The writers also took into consideration other ethnic groups who were neighbours of amaXhosa. As missionaries extended their focus eastwards they came to know other groups, such as abaThembu, amaMpondo, amaMpondomise, and amaZulu. With the arrival of British adventurers in Natal in 1824 there was a flow of information between missionaries and the Natal “traders” which influenced writing on the Xhosa past.²⁰ But more than any other factor, writing on amaXhosa and their past was influenced by relations between blacks and whites on the frontier.

The focus of this chapter will be on two texts written by people associated with mission stations. The first, *Iziqwenge Zembali YamaXosa Ezishicilelweyo*,²¹ is a booklet published in 1838, and is the first history text to be written by an mXhosa, Noyi Gciniswa. Ten years after the publication of *Iziqwenge* an abridged English version, “Ama-Xosa History”, appeared in the *Glasgow Missionary Record*, in 1848. Although these texts have minor differences, in this study they will be treated as one. The second text is “Kaffraria. II. Its Tribes”, written by Reverend HH Dugmore in 1846 and published in *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*.²² Before the discussion centres on these two texts, reference will first be made to other writings of the period which touched on aspects of the Xhosa past. The two texts were not constructed in isolation and a discussion of contemporary works will provide the necessary background. The history of Christianity among amaXhosa was a major theme of these works, which covered a number of topics and included autobiographies of African converts and missionaries who had worked among the indigenous people. Biographies of early converts were also written. Reports on past events in the life of the Christian church among amaXhosa were produced. These were usually written for the benefit of missionary societies and benefactors overseas. In 1838 the Glasgow Missionary Society asked for information on the “History of the Caffres.”²³ Reverend Dohne, a German missionary working among amaXhosa, put together a document for missionary friends about the heathen land and its inhabitants.²⁴ Most of these writings on the Xhosa past are not long texts, but they are important. From the late 1830s there also began to appear in newspapers texts which touched on different aspects of the Xhosa past.

An autobiographical letter written by three converts at Gwali Mission Station in June 1823²⁵ represents an early text by Xhosa writers. The three were among the first five Xhosa converts to be baptised²⁶ at Gwali by the Scottish missionaries.²⁷ This letter was addressed to the Directors of the Glasgow Missionary Society, who were referred to as “Great Benefactors”.²⁸ The converts expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Directors for having sent them missionaries to teach them about God. They stated how good the Word had been to them and how their lives had been changed for the better. The writers extolled the love of Christ, their saviour who had died for them. They asked for further help for their people as they were still in darkness, while the directors knew all things.²⁹ Since the coming of the missionaries the writers knew the Word and were no longer on the mountain of sin. The letter ended with an expression of hope that the Word would grow like a tree or would grow all over like grass.

In the letter the converts made no reference to Xhosa religious beliefs. Instead they portrayed their past as a life of sin and ignorance.³⁰ They further described themselves as having been wandering children. The writers were trying to distance themselves from their Xhosa past. By implication theirs was a history of ignorance and childish prattles. But, whose voices did the letter carry? Holt contends that Bennie, “took it [the letter] down in Xhosa from their lips and sent to Scotland this translation.”³¹ The letter is an example of multiple authorship that characterises early documents from mission stations. Such texts contain a web of voices. In the letter the Africans share the Christian language and imagery with the missionary, Bennie. However, the Africans also cower to the “great benefactors”, to whom they are also “servants”. But the converts refer to the Xhosa past as something unworthy, to be forgotten. The letter marks a beginning of a tradition whereby converts wrote letters confessing their new faith and expressing gratitude to overseas churchwomen and men.

Early Xhosa newspapers are also repositories of Xhosa history. The first Xhosa newspaper was *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba* (Preacher of [Good] News), which first appeared in 1837. This was a monthly publication produced by the Methodists in siXhosa. First published at Rhini (Grahamstown), it was later published at Ngqushwa³² (Peddie). *Um-shumayeli* ceased publication in 1841.³³ The newspapers were Christian publications and thus didactic in style, expounding on Christian teachings. Some articles were short progress reports on schools at the various

mission stations. There was one article in *Um-shumayeli*, entitled “Imbali Zezikolo Zasema-Xoseni”³⁴ (A History of Xhosa Schools), in which the establishment and development of 28 schools was outlined. In the same issue there was an article entitled “Indaba Zakwa-Kama”³⁵ (News from Kama’s Place), telling the story of how the converted *inkosi*, Kama,³⁶ had refused to accept a Mdushane princess as his second wife.³⁷

The publication of articles on the young African church continued in other newspapers after the closure of *Um-shumayeli*. One of these was *Isibuto Samavo* (Collection of Narratives) a Wesleyan Methodist publication which first came out in January 1843. In the very first issue of *Isibuto* there appeared an account of church history among amaXhosa. It recounted the attempt of Nyengane (Van der Kemp) to establish a school at “Gqwakwebi”³⁸ (Mgqakwebe) mission station. The account followed the outline of Van der Kemp’s story as recorded in his *Transactions*.³⁹ The author attributed the failure of Van der Kemp’s mission to the hard-heartedness of amaXhosa. He also alleged that the troubles that had befallen amaXhosa after the departure of Van der Kemp were due to their unwillingness to accept the word.⁴⁰ Events were perceived as a medium through which God conveyed anger or love. In the *Isibuto* issue of July 1843 an interesting dialogue was recorded between mXhosa and an Englishman. The former asked for information on British history. The author of the article, H (most probably Dugmore), told how the English had been conquered and ruled by the Romans. Later, however, the Romans had departed from Britain, leaving the English to rule themselves. The Romans were then likened to imfecane,⁴¹ who, according to the Englishman, had once threatened amaXhosa. The author concluded that God allows those people who are sinners to be at the mercy of conquerors.⁴² The history written by missionaries was not just a Christian interpretation, it also tried to justify colonisation. While God determined the fate of people, he also punished those who did not take heed of missionary teachings. Another article that appeared in the fourth issue of *Isibuto*, was again about Kama,⁴³ portraying him as a model *inkosi*.⁴⁴

*Isitunywa Senyanga*⁴⁵ (The Monthly Messenger), a Wesleyan publication that first appeared in August 1850, started raising broader secular questions than did the earlier newspapers. In its very first issue an article entitled, “Umbuzo wendaba zakudala”⁴⁶ (A question about news of old), appeared, posing a question about Xhosa origins. The enquirer specifically challenged the literate

amaXhosa to reach out to those who could not read and find out what information they could give. A response to a question about Xhosa origins was given by one Kongo. His source, the “Testamente”, told him that black people are descendants of Abraham. Kongo also claimed that blacks had come from the direction of Port Natal.⁴⁷ He went on to request readers to refrain from using insulting appellations like “Ennye yeyobukafiri, ennye yeyobufengu”⁴⁸ (one is Kaffir and the other Fingo), as such words caused enmity between Africans.

The two articles in *Isitunywa* reveal important aspects of Xhosa historical understanding and awareness during the mid-nineteenth century. The articles show how amaXhosa in their search for their past were prepared to explore two divergent sources of information. Reference to the bible (testamente) comes as no surprise from the pens of converts. But, in their search for origins the illiterate (which also meant non-Christian at that time) were recognised as possible informants. This is another indication of a dualism in the thinking of amaXhosa at that time. The missionary influence was coming to bear on the way amaXhosa interpreted reality. At the same time they had not dropped their African outlook. In claiming a common ancestry through Abraham, Kongo was able to identify a common past that transcended colonial divisions of Kaffir and Fingo. It was a call for unity among Africans. “*Ndinga mina angapela lawo amagama awabanga ubutshaba*”⁴⁹ (I wish to see an end of the appellations that cause hostility), Kongo concluded.

Life stories of early Xhosa converts are an important part of the history of Christianity among amaXhosa. These texts were often included in progress reports to directors of missionary societies, and might be written in an allegorical form. They would begin with a picture of the early life of a convert spent in darkness and ignorance. This would be followed by the almost miraculous experience of conversion. A description of a convert living a new life in Christ would follow. Most of the autobiographies included a description of the convert’s work in saving his compatriots from sin. Missionaries of the Glasgow Missionary Society like Bennie, Laing, and Ross were faithful in “helping” the converts write their life stories. Most of these men served as evangelists, bible translators, interpreters, and teachers. Texts on the lives of converts like Tente, Joseph Williams, John Muir Vimbe, and Charles Henry Matshaya represent the way church history, in the form of biographies among amaXhosa, was written. They show the various

journeys the African converts travelled in their new faith.

The narrative about Vimbe, whose 'Christian' name was John Muir⁵⁰ was drawn up by Rev Laing. In a brief reference to Vimbe's childhood mention was made of his father who was described as having been a "Hottentot" and a sorcerer.⁵¹ When the Vimbe family arrived at the Tyhume station they were poor, and had no cattle. Vimbe's early struggle was against poverty. The fact that his father was a 'sorcerer' also highlights his benighted family background as traditional doctors were detested by missionaries. Vimbe joined the mission community at a time when Ross had predicted a solar eclipse which had frightened many amaXhosa into fleeing to the mission station. The incident portrayed mission stations as centres of knowledge and light where amaXhosa sought refuge. In his life story Vimbe observed that he went to a circumcision school even though he already was living in the Christian community. Such an act can be seen as an example of backsliding. In describing circumcision as foolish and sinful⁵² Vimbe shows the degree to which he was prepared to echo the voice of the missionaries. Conversely, the remark may be an indication of the depth of his conversion and new life. Early Xhosa history is an account of intermingled voices that find expression through the pens and mouths of converts and missionaries.

Like many converts of the time Vimbe was caught up in the colonial conflict. He was among the converts taken to Grahamstown and given employment during the war of 1834-35. When Vimbe got married in 1833, he paid no *lobola* for his bride. This is another example of how converts were made to turn their backs on their beliefs and practices and to suppress their past. Even when he got sick, he refrained from using African medicine which was not acceptable to missionaries. In 1838 he was appointed as a 'native' schoolteacher earning eight pounds a year. His wife was an excellent sewer who earned by sewing for missionaries. Vimbe was given instructions to teach his pupils "the histories and doctrines of the Bible".⁵³ When the Lovedale seminary was opened in 1841 Vimbe was one of the students to be admitted.

Joseph Williams, named after Reverend Joseph Williams, had his life story printed in the *Quartely Intelligence* of 1840.⁵⁴ Williams and his father heard the Good News from the followers of Ntsikana whose community they later joined. Even then, Williams left the community in order

to observe the ritual of circumcision like all young Xhosa men. This act shows a Williams who was still caught between the beliefs and customs of his people and the teachings of missionaries. After Ntsikana's death Williams became a member of Rev Brownlee's church group. He was baptised and married one of the female candidates for baptism. He went to work as a 'native teacher' at Mqgakhwebe⁵⁵ (Pirie) with Rev Ross in 1830. During the 1834-35 war Williams had to flee into the colony with Brownlee. Williams touched on the suffering that converts faced during times of war. He noted how at that time he "had no friend, white or black".⁵⁶ In his autobiography Williams does not go into the details of his alienation from whites. In the minutes of the presbytery Ross recorded how he suspected Williams of having collaborated with the war party.⁵⁷ Williams' autobiography gives a glimpse of the history of the early Xhosa church whose members were engaged in a struggle to break off from their African roots.

Another autobiography, that of Charles Henry Matshaya, was published in the *Glasgow Missionary Record* of 1842.⁵⁸ This, like others, had been written in collaboration with Laing. At that time Matshaya was at Burnshill Mission Station, serving as an African teacher. Matshaya's life story corresponds closely with the history of the young Xhosa church. He had been a boy during the time of Van der Kemp's ministry at Mqgakhwebe. Through the teaching of Rev Williams he had, after an inner struggle, embraced Christian beliefs. After the death of Williams Matshaya became a member of the Christian community under the leadership of Ntsikana. Following Ntsikana's death in 1821, Matshaya, with other converts, joined Rev Brownlee's station, which had been established on the Gwali, a tributary of the Tyhume River, in June 1820. Matshaya's autobiography is a record of the struggles that Xhosa converts wrestled with. Such struggles manifested themselves in different forms of behaviour variously described by missionaries as conversion, back-sliding, or syncretism. For example, there was a family crisis when Mrs Matshaya would not accept Christianity, so Matshaya left her and his children when he moved to a mission station.⁵⁹ Embracing Christianity and associating with missionaries also negatively affected Matshaya's relationship with his *inkosi*, Ngqika, who, according to Matshaya, threatened to kill him because of his new-found faith. Matshaya's autobiographical account revealed the impact of Christianity on family life and political relations. By 1842 Matshaya had spent no fewer than twenty-six years with Christians, so the degree to which he was steeped in missionary discourse is not surprising.⁶⁰

Through the autobiographies missionaries like Laing were acknowledging and making room for African agency in missionary work. Missionaries might have been agents of colonialism and capitalism but Africans also made choices about their involvement with missionaries and what they stood for. They exchanged the leadership of *iinkosi* for that of missionaries. They might have seen themselves operating as *amaphakathi* who would influence the direction and tenor of their newly found communities. The texts co-produced by the converts and the missionaries should be read as continuing dialogues between the two sectors. Circumcision, which the converts admitted to have continued practising even after their conversion, was a contentious issue in missionary circles.⁶¹ Admitting participating in the rite may have been an insistence on the right to decide what African customs to retain. On the other hand readers of the texts could have interpreted such admissions as acts of contrition.

Two figures whose life stories and teachings attracted the attention of early colonial and missionary writers were Makana/Nxele⁶² and Ntsikana. These two characters represent different early Xhosa responses to Christianity. The most celebrated figure around whom early missionaries and converts built church history was Ntsikana.⁶³ There exists among amaXhosa an oral history of Ntsikana and his first Christian community, which has been passed from generation to generation through *iimbali*⁶⁴ (historical narratives) and *iingoma* (songs). Rev Brownlee was the first to record an account of the Ntsikana community that had survived the death of Rev Williams in 1816.⁶⁵ Brownlee recounted that on his arrival at Tyhume he had found a congregation of about a hundred people who, from the time of the death of Rev Williams, had continued to meet and worship under the leadership of Ntsikana. In missionary documents there were *iingoma* which were referred to as Ntsikana's songs/hymns⁶⁶ by nineteenth century writers;⁶⁷ these were most probably composed during his life as a Christian between 1816 and 1821. These hymns initially existed as oral texts,⁶⁸ but they were later transcribed. The hymn "Unguwena wena kaka lenyaniso" was recorded by John Bennie in his "*Inncwadana Yamaculo Gokwamaxosa*"⁶⁹ in 1839. Another Ntsikana hymn "Ulo Tixo mkulu" was recorded in 1844 by Ludwig Dohne.⁷⁰ These hymns which were produced and used by converts are records that capture an early phase in Xhosa church history. They reveal the use of new concepts in siXhosa like 'Tixo' and *izulu* (heaven) which were used to convey Christian beliefs. The hymns are commentaries on early African theology⁷¹ as they reveal how early Xhosa converts expressed

themselves in their new religion.

In 1839 Bennie wrote about Makana/Nxele⁷² and Ntsikana.⁷³ It would appear that this text was used by teachers at Lovedale school. By 1838 Bennie was running a school for ninety-four girls and thirty-eight boys.⁷⁴ The scholars were divided into seven classes. The seventh class was taught, among other subjects, history and geography.⁷⁵ It is highly likely that the chapter on the history of Ntsikana and Makana/Nxele in Bennie's *Eyesibini Inncwadana* was the first text on Xhosa history in a school book. The book itself was divided into chapters covering a variety of topics, mainly religious. Some topics, however, were secular. One chapter was entitled "Intwana Yembali Ya maxosa" (A Short Xhosa History).⁷⁶ In this chapter Bennie focussed on the history of Makana/Nxele and Ntsikana who, as Christian converts, went out to preach the Christian faith among amaXhosa. Bennie began his account with Makana/Nxele: "Lo ndoda yazenza u-Tixo gesiqu" (This man made himself God). According to Bennie, Makana/Nxele claimed that he had been sent by the creator, by the same God who had sent Nyengane (Van der Kemp).⁷⁷ Through his teaching Makana/Nxele built up a following among amaXhosa. Makana/Nxele also claimed that Ntsikana was his servant, in the way Nyengane had been.⁷⁸ Makana/Nxele also demanded dun and black cattle be paid to him as tribute, contending that he had the power to raise the dead.⁷⁹ Bennie's narrative went on to relate how Ntsikana came forward and contested the teachings of Makana/Nxele.⁸⁰ According to Bennie, Makana/Nxele smeared his body with red ochre, as amaXhosa did, and encouraged the people to dance as they were wont. Bennie pointed out that Makana/Nxele insisted that amaXhosa were not guilty of murdering Christ in the eyes of God. It was whites who had to carry that guilt.⁸¹ Ntsikana on the other hand discouraged people from attending dances and applying red ochre.

Bennie's article about Makana/Nxele and Ntsikana reveals the different religious strands among amaXhosa at that time. Makana/Nxele adopted an Africanist approach through his appreciation of African practices as he encouraged his followers to retain the use of ochre and to continue with their dances. He adapted Christian teachings to his own world-view. On the other hand Ntsikana stayed close to missionary teaching. The contestation between Makana/Nxele and Ntsikana had taken place before 1820⁸² and Bennie's article appeared almost twenty years later. Ntsikana's orthodox Christian approach had been more acceptable to the missionaries. In "Intwana

Yembali” Bennie contended that the differences between the teachings of Nxele and Ntsikana had an impact on Xhosa politics at the time. Nxele had aligned himself with Ndlambe, and often visited Mdushane, Ndlambe’s son. On the other hand Ntsikana had attached himself to Ngqika. Thus Bennie’s historical account added another dimension to the Ngqika-Ndlambe conflict.⁸³ It showed how different views on Christian teaching among amaXhosa might also have had political implications.

A longer and more detailed article on Ntsikana, entitled, “Imbaliso Ka-Ntsikana” (The history of Ntsikana), appeared in a Tyhume publication, *Ikwezi*, in 1845.⁸⁴ Written in siXhosa the article of ten pages was a revised version of the one that had appeared in Bennie’s publication of 1839. Nonetheless the gist of the story was the same. The tone was openly hostile towards Makana/ Nxele. Ntsikana on the other hand was shown to have been a brave and committed Xhosa convert. The account traced Ntsikana’s spiritual journey from the time he attended Xhosa dances smeared in red ochre, to the period when he was preaching and telling amaXhosa to refrain from such practices. The narrative included Ntsikana’s instruction that he be buried in a coffin. This was a sign of the depth of his conversion. In this *Ikwezi* article one can see a model of an ideal African convert as represented in missionary discourse. It is likely that this portrait of Ntsikana had been written by one of his many followers. It is also possible that the author was Dukwana, the son of Ntsikana. Dukwana served as an African teacher under the Glasgow African Missionary Society,⁸⁵ and became a printer at ‘Chumie’ Mission Station. Trained in Grahamstown, Dukwana, according to Chalmers, had in a short time produced 500 copies of hymns and an equal number of copies of an elementary school book.⁸⁶ In 1841 Chalmers reported that Dukwana had been chosen as an elder by his fellow congregants.⁸⁷ Dukwana was thus an influential person among Xhosa converts, inheriting his father’s mantle.

In view of the slow progress missionaries were making among amaXhosa, it is understandable that much importance was attached to the life story of Ntsikana. During the 1840s there was a questioning of the teaching of the Scottish missionaries.⁸⁸ In 1840 Rev Chalmers reported that amaXhosa showed hostility towards Thomas Brown, an African exhorter who had been sent to work in their community.⁸⁹ Curiosity about missionaries among amaXhosa was wearing off and a period of disillusionment was setting in. In some instances drought, sickness and even death

were attributed by amaXhosa to missionary teaching.⁹⁰ Some Africans were beginning to desire an African input into the church. For example, old Soga⁹¹, the father of one of the teachers, Festiri, instructed his son not to use hymns that had been composed by the missionaries: "He would only allow him to sing the hymn which was composed by Untukana [Ntsikana]."⁹² There was evidence of growing tension between the Scottish missionaries and mission-dwellers. Matshaya was suspended because "of certain compliances on the part of his family with heathen customs."⁹³ In the minutes of the Caffrarian Presbytery reference was made to some acts of defiance by converts. It was recorded that Robert Balfour and other members of the church had "apparently opposed themselves to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ."⁹⁴ This resulted in the suspension of Balfour in December 1842 and other converts in January the following year. It is possible that the episode was responsible for the transfer of Bennie to Burnshill and Laing to Lovedale. It is also likely that "Imbaliso", written in siXhosa, was meant to strengthen the small Xhosa Christian community that had probably been shaken by these internal tremors.

From the text, "Imbaliso Ka-Ntsikana", it is easy to pick up the standard imagery of missionary discourse. The world of darkness from which the converts had come is conveyed through stories of "smellings" and killings. One such story tells how Ntsikana's mother was smelled out and had to return to her people. In another story a woman, Nontsangweni, was accused of causing drought, and was killed.⁹⁵ The story of Ntsikana included a detailed account of his pre-conversion life of "darkness": "He participated in all heathenish activities...like dancing...smearing red ochre, singing African songs, committing adultery. At that time he had two wives."⁹⁶ Early Xhosa history was expressed through the metaphors of darkness and light which were commonly found in Christian discourse. There were African motifs that were also woven into the accounts. For example, the theme of a difficult childhood - a common refrain in the oral life stories of outstanding figures - is discernible in the account of Ntsikana. Writings on the history of Ntsikana which began to appear from the late 1830s seem to have been produced to give lustre to the work of missionaries which was being tarnished by apparent acts of disobedience by converts. The Ntsikana history can therefore be seen as part of the "pious hagiography"⁹⁷ which Erlank claims characterises the early historiography of missions.

From the 1830s a number of brief texts on Xhosa history appeared mainly from the pens of

missionaries, travellers and newspaper journalists. There were accounts by missionaries like Stephen Kay who claimed to have consulted “a very old native, son of Gcaleka...[about the history of his people].”⁹⁸ Rev Kay recorded what the “venerable genealogist gave [as] the names of several ancient rulers of the Amakosae.”⁹⁹ The royal genealogy which Kay drew up was different from those that had appeared in the works of Van der Kemp, Lichtenstein, and Collins.¹⁰⁰ It began with “Thlanga”, who was identified as the oldest of Xhosa kings. “Thlanga” was then succeeded by “Goosh” who was followed by his son Malangana, and from Malangana sprang “Isikomo.”¹⁰¹ After that Togu¹⁰² took over, to be succeeded by Ngconde, the father of Tshiwo, who begot Phalo. Phalo fathered Gcaleka and Rharhabe. Phalo was succeeded by his son Gcaleka, who was followed by Khawuta, the father of Hintsas who was then the reigning *kumkani*. Kay sought the views of others to verify his genealogical table. He was aware of the confusion that resulted in the claim by earlier writers that Phalo was the brother of Gcaleka.¹⁰³ Kay had lengthened the genealogical table by providing names of rulers before Togu. Names like Malangana and Sikhomo¹⁰⁴ became part of later Xhosa royal genealogies. With the mention of “Thlanga” Kay’s table began with creation as the name Hlanga is associated with source of life in Xhosa religion.¹⁰⁵ His history demonstrates the influence of Xhosa historiography as the practice of mixing religion with narratives about mortals is common among amaXhosa. Also the convention of beginning with creation when narrating history is found in the production of history among amaXhosa. This is discernible in some *imbali* which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

From the 1830s writing on Xhosa history was also influenced by information emanating from the “Natal traders”.¹⁰⁶ The “Natal traders” and the missionaries, especially those in Butterworth and beyond, spread news about “Zulus” and “Fitcane”¹⁰⁷ marauders who were said to have been hovering on the outskirts of the Colony, ready to strike. Missionaries would sometimes receive such reports and forward them to the colony or include the information in their own writings.¹⁰⁸ In the writings of Natal traders Shaka embodied all that was savage and uncivilised.¹⁰⁹ Gradually barbarism, conflicts, and chaos were highlighted in missionary writings about amaXhosa as well. *Ukumkani* Hintsas was ascribed a monster image.¹¹⁰ These images were, according to Pridmore, part of “a distinct discourse of Cape colonial writing.”¹¹¹ The assassination of Hintsas in 1835 was the climax of the demonising process that had been engineered mainly from the Butterworth

mission station.¹¹² The vilifying of *ukumkani* of amaXhosa and his murder was a concerted attack on amaXhosa who had proved militarily obdurate and religiously intractable. These events marked a significant shift in missionary-colonial writing on Xhosa history. The change was from depicting amaXhosa, especially in the person of Ngqika, as noble savages at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to portraying them as irredeemable, bloodthirsty, plundering “Kaffirs”.¹¹³

It is in this context that the appearance of the “Fingoes” in colonial literature, especially in missionary writings, should be understood. Writings on the “Fingoes”, mostly by missionaries, confirm how missionaries were engaged in the creation of a new Xhosa history. The missionaries wanted to separate the “good” Xhosa who had attached themselves to mission stations from those Xhosa who clung to their freedom. Missionaries and colonial officials who wrote about the “Fingoes” described them as remnants of groups that had been dispersed by the Shakan wars¹¹⁴ and had found their way to Xhosa territory. Missionary-colonial writings publicised the degrading treatment the “Fingoes” had suffered at the hands of amaXhosa.¹¹⁵ Claims about the maltreatment of the “Fingoes” by amaXhosa were consistent with the negative image of amaXhosa in missionary and colonial literature. It was also in line with the strategy of dividing and ruling the indigenous people.

Some scholars have concentrated on identifying who the “Fingoes” were. Cobbing refutes the conventional claim that the Fingoes were refugees from Natal, as the missionaries claimed. He argues they were amaXhosa of the Gcaleka sub-group who had found themselves caught up in the military turmoil of the frontier.¹¹⁶ Webster echoes Cobbing’s view, arguing that the “Fingoes” were mainly made up of Gcaleka women and children whose communities had been destabilised during cattle raids by the British.¹¹⁷ Stapleton is of the opinion that the “Fingo” were Xhosa captives and collaborators who were put under colonial headmen.¹¹⁸ These explanations portray Europeans as the main actors in the making of the Fingo and so have invited charges of eurocentrism.¹¹⁹ Also the claim that the “Fingo” were just amaGcaleka, and did not include immigrants from beyond Hintsas’ territory, is also questioned.

The making of the “Fingo” was not a one-sided process directed by Europeans in search of docile and pliable labour. The Africans, especially those who were “fingoised”, allowed the process to

take place to satisfy their own agendas.¹²⁰ There were possible political, social and material gains in exchanging one chief, Hintsa, for another, D'Urban, even if the new one happened to be pale-skinned. That a "Fingo" could enter the colony without a pass, whereas a "Kaffir" could not¹²¹, must have been one advantage. Moreover there would be no work in the colony for people who attached themselves to Hintsa, Ngqika, and Ndlambe.¹²² In addition, the slaves liberated in 1834 might have discovered that their former masters could have them "apprenticed". Reverend Kayser, for example, recorded a case of a Dutch farmer who fetched a liberated slave from his mission station.¹²³ It is highly likely that going "Fingo" must have been an option whereby liberated slaves could escape "apprenticeship".

The discussion in this chapter is not so much about the "Fingoes", as is about the writing of "Fingo" history. Ayliff's Fingo history identified them as remnants of "10 distinct people".¹²⁴ On arriving in the colony he divided them into eight tribes whose origins were in the Thukela-Mzimkhulu region.¹²⁵ The writing of "Fingo" history provided a past for this new group of "good" Africans who made their appearance in the colony. The making and the coming of the "Fingoes" into the Colony after their "liberation" in May 1835 provided the colonists and missionaries with good autochthons. The "Fingoes" completed the image of amaXhosa as "depredators".¹²⁶ To amaXhosa the colonial history of "Fingoes" meant an excision of a group of people from their polity. A segment of amaXhosa was put aside and given a history which separated them from the main body spatially, as they were said to have come from Natal, as well as historically, as they were given a new and different history. Xhosa history was affected by the colonial-missionary endeavour to separate "good" Africans, with a new name, the "Fingoes", from the "bad" ones, the "Kaffirs".

The first booklet on Xhosa history, entitled "*Iziqwenge*¹²⁷ *Zembali YamaXhosa Ezishicilelweyo*" (A Short Published History of AmaXhosa)¹²⁸ was published in 1838. The author's name was not indicated. What appears on the cover page is the name of Umshicileli (printer) G J Pike.¹²⁹ Pike was a publisher in Cape Town between 1835 and 1868, during which years he printed many newspapers. These included the *Commercial Advertiser* from 1837 to 1858.¹³⁰ In the Grey Collection in the South African Library, there are many articles in African languages that were printed by Pike.¹³¹ A factor that can account for the publication of *Iziqwenge* in Cape Town in



Rev J. Bennie's Picture on the Printing Press
Courtesy of National Archives, Pretoria

1838 may be that the Tyhume press had been rendered useless during the war of 1835 and so missionaries had had to send their writings to Cape Town for publication.¹³² In the Grey Collection there are *Iziqwenge* manuscripts, including hand-written drafts,¹³³ and typed scripts.¹³⁴ One manuscript in the collection had been edited and signed by J Bennie, Tyhume Vale, 21 May 1838.¹³⁵

The authorship of *Iziqwenge*, typical of early texts by converts, poses problems for historians as there were a number of people who participated in its production. Opland argues that *Iziqwenge* was written by Noyi,¹³⁶ suggesting that he might have dictated the text to Bennie. There is no way Bennie would have known all the material contained in *Iziqwenge* even if he knew isiXhosa. It is likely that Noyi narrated the history and Bennie put it down in writing and facilitated the process of publishing it.¹³⁷ An entry was made in the Report of the Glasgow Missionary Society that, "Robert Balfour, one of our native readers, ...had been for some time employed on the history of his countrymen, the Caffres."¹³⁸ *Iziqwenge* was most likely written during the years 1836-1837 when Bennie and Noyi took leave from missionary work and went to work at Somerset East, concentrating on writing and translation.¹³⁹

The secrecy surrounding the writing of *Iziqwenge* gives a hint of some of the constraints encountered by those who wished to write Xhosa history. The absence of progress reports on the writing of *Iziqwenge* may stem from the fact that the Caffrarian Presbytery seems to have been primarily concerned with writings that were directly linked to missionary work.¹⁴⁰ Secondly, the division of the Glasgow Missionary Society into two in 1837 must have kept the Scottish missionaries pre-occupied. Such a state of affairs could have given Bennie and Noyi the space to undertake their writing without the presbytery monitoring them closely. Thus Bennie was able to obtain an extension of leave for which he applied in January 1837.¹⁴¹ *Iziqwenge* was produced by independent-minded people. Noyi was a person who could stand his ground, and Bennie chafed at the boundaries within which he had to operate in the presbytery.¹⁴²

Iziqwenge runs to five pages.¹⁴³ It begins with a statement that "a-Maxosa ahlukana na-Malawo abe banye abantu babusela nelizwe"¹⁴⁴ (AmaXhosa and the Khoi split, [before] they were one people sharing the same country). It goes on to say that amaXhosa came from the north moving

southwards towards the sea, when they met the Khoi. The contradiction in the first two sentences in *Iziqwenge* may be due to a misunderstanding on the part of the scribe, Bennie, who recorded the oral account. It may also be indicative of Noyi's confusion in trying to explain the history of the split between amaXhosa and the Khoikhoi. This could be due to the fact that such an emphasis on the division between the two groups was a colonial construction. Also, the idea of northern origins for amaXhosa seems to have emanated from European writers like Lichtenstein. The narrator then refers to Sikomo,¹⁴⁵ an early Xhosa monarch, and Togu, his son. Then follows Ngconde, the son of Togu, who lived across the Kei River and about whose history the writer knew little. The writer narrates the history of Tshiwo, the son of Ngconde. The former, after breaking away from his father, crossed the Kei and settled at Nxaruni. The date 1670 is then given in brackets. The narration continues stating that in the new settlement under Tshiwo there was much immorality, with people committing adultery. Tshiwo is said to have been distressed by the developments and often executed culprits. Tshiwo also punished *amagqwira* (witches) by having them pushed over precipices.

The narrator observes that there was "innqina enkulu"¹⁴⁶ (a great hunt). In African history great hunts were occasions of land exploration and expansion. They were also military exercises as the hunting of big animals like elephants and leopards needed military skills and organisation. The narrator also recounts that there was a scarcity of rain for years and people died of hunger and thirst.¹⁴⁷ There was a breakdown of law and order as people began to steal each other's corn and stock. There were many destitute people who took flight, leaving their homes and becoming beggars. Very few had corn and stock. Tshiwo organised *amaphakathi* to collect and feed his destitute subjects. Any one found failing in their duty to feed the hungry was punished severely. A number of *amaphakathi* failed to carry out this task. In the end the rains fell and Tshiwo distributed cattle among the poor. Thereafter trouble broke out between Tshiwo and his brother Gando. Gando showed no respect for Tshiwo. This led to a civil war which resulted in Gando fleeing and crossing the Qonce/Buffalo, Keiskamma and Mgwalana Rivers, with Tshiwo's army in full pursuit. The final battle was fought at Cihoshe, a drift on the Nxuba/Fish River. Tshiwo won the battle and captured Gando's cattle. The date 1683 is given in brackets. Gando crossed the Nxuba/Fish River and settled along the Khobonqaba River. Tshiwo sent messengers to invite Gando back. Gando's counsellors advised their leader to return. Gando was reluctant saying he

was prepared to be a refugee and become iDama.¹⁴⁸ In the end Gando returned to Tshiwo. Some of his followers went on to settle in another beautiful country that was teeming with game.

The account proceeded to mention two attendants, Kwane and Gaba, at Tshiwo's place. These two set free the people who had been condemned to death. One day Tshiwo met the people who had been saved and he thanked Kwane and Gaba, pointing out that when *inkosi* errs *amaphakathi* should be there to correct such mistakes. One day Tshiwo asked women at the Great Place which *amaphakathi* was the most just and who deserved to be *inkosi*. The response was Kwane and Gaba. So Tshiwo announced in a council meeting that Kwane and Gaba would from then be *iinkosi*. He then dressed them with crane feathers and gave them the authority to eat the breast of a bluebuck,¹⁴⁹ as they had become *iinkosi*. When Tshiwo died he had a son Gwali, who took over as monarch. However, there were rumours that the Great Wife of Tshiwo was expectant and she later bore a son who was called Phalo. The date 1700 was given in brackets and that marked the end of *Iziqwenge*.

A manuscript of four pages,¹⁵⁰ written in English and entitled, "Ama-Xosa History", seems to have been based largely on *Iziqwenge* except for minor changes and omissions. This text, written by Noyi and translated by Bennie, was published in the *Glasgow Missionary Record* in 1848. *Iziqwenge* and "Ama-Xosa History" can be linked to Noyi. The two publications are the first works on Xhosa history written by an mXhosa. Noyi opened the article by noting that the term "Kaffir" meant an infidel. He then identified amaXhosa as the people with whom "this country [colony] has been at war"¹⁵¹ and among whom Scottish missionaries had worked. He then identified the five "races"¹⁵² of southern Africa - "Hottentots", "Namaquas", the "bushmen", "Betshuanas", and the "Kafirs".¹⁵³ Noyi explained that amaXhosa were distinct from "Ama-Ibranana (Hottentots)",¹⁵⁴ the people who were the original residents of southern Africa. In their migration from the north amaXhosa met the Ibranana. He remarked that it was common knowledge that the "Hottentots" had at one time occupied all the area "eastward to the Kei river"¹⁵⁵ while the "Bushmen" occupied the mountainous regions.

Noyi then referred to an oral tradition that purported to explain the origins of the three racial groups in south-east Africa. In the tradition it is said a man had three sons Ibranana, Xosa and

Twa. The first two were pastoralists and the last was a keeper of bees. Noyi went on to provide royal history, beginning with Sikomo. As was the case in *Iziqwenge* the narrative began with Tshiwo who was said to have crossed the Nciba/Kei River in 1670. An account of the civil war between Tshiwo and Gando followed. In *Iziqwenge* Tshiwo was referred to as the uncle of Gando whereas in "Ama-Xhosa History" the two were brothers.¹⁵⁶ Gando's followers fled to the north-west and later became known as the "Damara Kafirs", north of Namaqualand.¹⁵⁷ The "Ama-Xosa" concluded with a genealogical outline of Noyi's own family. The inclusion of Noyi's genealogy in his 1848 text while there had been no reference to it in *Iziqwenge* needs noting. Noyi wrote "AmaXosa History" after Dugmore had produced his 1846 royal genealogical table. In that table, the Gando House had been excluded. Instead, Dugmore had inserted the Gqunukhwebe House under Kwane. Noyi, in providing his family tree, which linked him to *kumkani* Ngconde he may have been contesting the Dugmore version. Noyi also excluded the promotion of Kwane to the position of *inkosi* even though he had included it in *Iziqwenge* in 1838.

Robert Balfour Noyi, son of Gciniswa, had been writing since 1823 when he contributed to the letter to the Directors of the Glasgow Mission Society. He was one of the first Xhosa converts to be baptised by the Scottish missionaries, and probably one of the first to have his whole household baptised.¹⁵⁸ He was appointed as the first African teacher in "Caffraria" in 1826.¹⁵⁹ By 1829 Noyi was in charge of a school at "Chumie station". By then he had been joined by two other African teachers, Matshaya and John Burns. Noyi's intellectual abilities and the depth of his christian faith were underlined by the dedication with which he undertook his work as a teacher and evangeliser. Williams' observation that Noyi was "a man of limited talents"¹⁶⁰ is hard to understand. He was one of the first Africans to engage in literary work. He was a pioneer who deserves better recognition as a historian, teacher of isiXhosa and the Gospel, as well as a bible translator.¹⁶¹

The centrality of the Tshawe dynasty was again a theme in *Iziqwenge*. There were, however, noticeable innovations in the way the royal theme was presented. Earlier texts by Lichtenstein, Alberti and others covered mainly the era of Phalo's sons and their descendants - roughly the last quarter of the eighteenth century. *Iziqwenge* began its Xhosa royal genealogical outline with Sikomo who begot Togu, who begot Ngconde, the father of Tshiwo. Reference was made to

Tshiwo's attempts to stem moral decay among his people during his reign. He was also depicted as having been a humane monarch who took particular care of the destitute during a severe famine. The *Iziqwenge* account of Tshiwo's reign is a remarkable socio-political history. Noyi must have relied on *iimbali*, as his narrative covered an era that was more than a hundred years past. Noyi also discussed social issues, such as immorality, which Tshiwo had had to address. The account of the famine and its effects on the Xhosa polity provides interesting social history. It is significant that Tshiwo was depicted as a civil, humane ruler who looked after his people. *Iziqwenge* was published in 1838, three years after a war that had aroused strong animosity against amaXhosa among missionaries and colonists. The approach in *Iziqwenge* may have been an attempt by the writer to counter the growing hostility against amaXhosa by giving an account of a monarch who loved and cared for his people. That was a deliberate break from the standard themes of tyranny and civil disorder.¹⁶²

In "Ama-Xosa History", which is a shortened version of *Iziqwenge* but was published ten years later, the account of Tshiwo's reign was omitted. The omission may reflect shifts in perception that could have taken place between 1838 and 1848. "Ama-Xosa History" appeared in 1848 after the damaging war of 1846-47. Mostert makes this point about the war: "This time, compared with the last [1835] no public case was made on behalf of the Xhosa, either in the Colony or in Britain."¹⁶³ There was a general condemnation of what were perceived as the anarchic and barbaric actions of amaXhosa. Amidst such racial tension converts like Noyi may have been alienated from their fellow Xhosa. There is evidence that converts' lives were threatened during the war.¹⁶⁴ Moreover Noyi was not entirely free in the writing of the article. It was a joint project with Bennie, who translated it into English. It is not surprising therefore that the 1848 text did not adopt the pro-royalty stance that had characterised *Iziqwenge*. The writing of Xhosa history was influenced by the exigencies of colonial conquest.

Noyi's history was produced around themes common in African history. These included stories about hunts and natural disasters. The account on royalty was also a popular theme. The narrative on the civil war between Tshiwo and Gando also formed part of accounts on royal history. The fact that Noyi was a descendant of Gando also brought in a popular theme in African history, family history. *Iziqwenge* also shows European influence in its making. It was the Europeans who

were pre-occupied with identifying the geographical origins of amaXhosa and often made a number of speculations. The inclusion of dates in Noyi's texts is another example of Bennie's additions to the text. Identification of eras in Xhosa history was done with reference to reigns and unusual natural episodes rather than dates.

The second text on Xhosa history to be analysed is entitled "Kaffraria. II. Its Tribes", which appeared in *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine* of 1846.¹⁶⁵ The article, written in English, is nine pages long. *The South African Christian Watchman* was a Wesleyan monthly periodical. In the first volume there was an article about "Kaffraria [as] the various tribes that inhabit it are engaged in dreadful hostility with our colonial forces."¹⁶⁶ This article dealt with the geography of "Kaffraria". The second, entitled "Its Tribes", was an exposition on Xhosa history. The initial "H" which appeared at the end of the first article, but did not appear in subsequent articles, was most probably the initial of the writer. The author could have been H.H. Dugmore, a Wesleyan missionary who over a long period of service had worked at Salem, Grahamstown, Wesleyville, Mt Coke, Buntingville, and Queenstown. "Its Tribes" was written at a time of great anxiety among colonists owing to the outbreak of the war.¹⁶⁷ Because of the hostilities, missionary labours among amaXhosa had to be suspended until the end of the war in 1847. Dugmore felt it was important to record Xhosa history "as there was an anticipation that the independence of Kaffir tribes would soon be no more...Such a history would show what has powerfully affected ..the colony."¹⁶⁸

In "Its Tribes" the author began by pointing to the problem of inadequate records with which to write the history of the "barbarous tribes".¹⁶⁹ He observed that groups such as abaThembu, amaMpondo, abeTswana had dialects similar to isiXhosa. The writer admitted ignorance about the origins of "Kaffrarian tribes".¹⁷⁰ He further argued that the distinctions between the groups were recent, this he attributed to the "law of succession"¹⁷¹ to the chieftainship. Attached to the text was a genealogical table of Xhosa chiefs,¹⁷² covering twelve generations. There was also an outline of *Ekunene* (Right Hard Houses), besides the Great House. No information was given from Xhosa, the first on the genealogical table, to Ngconde as there were no *iimbali* that could avail evidence to cover that period. Knowledge about the past was retained by the "antiquarians of Kaffirland".¹⁷³ From Ngconde onwards details on Xhosa history began to emerge. The writer

then discussed the Xhosa law of succession which was applied through the ranking of royal wives. According to African law the ruler came from the Great House. If *Omkhulu* (the Great Wife) was childless an heir would be obtained from the supporting Houses. A son from the Right Hand House was usually the founder of a new house, and thus the originator of a new settlement. Ngqika was said to have introduced or revived the House of *Exibeni*.¹⁷⁴ This involved placing one of the royal sons in the House of his grandfather who would inherit his grandfather's *amaphakathi* and his status. Such a step meant further devolution of power within the Xhosa polity. The writer pointed out that the status of *exibeni* was usually disputed and was a cause of tension. The writer noted that Sandile was, in 1845, the head of "the third division of the Kaffir nation".¹⁷⁵ He went on to discuss the House of Langa and the House of Gwali, relating the story of the civil war between Mdange and Gwali when the latter had tried to usurp the position of Phalo. The writer made reference to the conflicting accounts of *iimbali* on the status of Ntinde. One view placed Ntinde as the son of Ngconde's junior wife. Others claimed that Ntinde was adopted into the Great House when *Umfazi Omkhulu* (the Great Wife) was childless.

Then followed the history of Rharhabe and his descendants. The account included figures like Ndlambe, Ngqika, and their houses. The narrative ended with the story of amaGqunukhwebe who were under the leadership of Pato. The writer traced the history of amaGqunukhwebe to Khwane, who was *iphakathi* of Tshiwo, "a man [Khwane] very popular with the tribe at large".¹⁷⁶ Besides Khwane, there was another *iphakathi*, also senior. These two men had to carry out executions of people who had been condemned to death by Tshiwo. It was the second *iphakathi* who relentlessly carried out such sentences. Kwane, on the other hand spared the lives of the condemned and hid them. A misunderstanding with the other *iphakathi* threatened Kwane with exposure, so he brought his followers to Tshiwo and confessed what he had done. Instead of punishing Kwane Tshiwo constituted Kwane's people into "a distinct tribe",¹⁷⁷ amaGqunukhwebe. Kwane himself was given the designation of *inkosi*.

In his article Dugmore focussed on Tshawe royalty and his table was slightly different from that in previous accounts. The *Christian Watchman* version was based on a Xhosa royal genealogy covering sixteen generations.¹⁷⁸ This was the most detailed genealogical table to have been constructed so far. It began with "Xosa" as the progenitor and included the supporting houses to

the main stem of the Tshawe house. There had been genealogical tables since Van der Kemp's first compilation. These had been lengthening over some time.¹⁷⁹ In his 1844 book Reverend Dohne also presented a genealogy of *iinkosi* that began with Phalo and then simply gave the first generation descendants of two of Phalo's sons, Gcaleka and Rharhabe.¹⁸⁰ Whereas, colonial literature had tended to focus on Hintsa and his descendants, Dohne's genealogical table gave more detail on Ndlambe's line.¹⁸¹ This was probably due to the fact that Dohne lived among Ndlambe's descendants. The focus on the main line of Xhosa royalty excluded the history of subsidiary houses.

Dugmore was the first writer to place "Xosa" at the head of the royal genealogical line.¹⁸² In that table the name of Tshawe also appeared for the first time. He was depicted as a direct descendant of "Xosa". Dugmore confessed ignorance about royal figures before Ngconde. The linking of Tshawe to "Xosa" by Dugmore is problematic. Peires questions the identification of Xhosa as a great ancestor.¹⁸³ Rather, he accepts the contention of linguists like Maingard that the word Xhosa is derived from Khoi *//Kosa*, meaning angry men.¹⁸⁴ The name Xhosa with its distinctive click may have Khoisan roots. Sintu-speaking people may have integrated with Khoisan communities who then had lost their language, and adopted a siNtu language, except for a few words. It is also possible that the appearance of the name "Xosa" in the genealogy stemmed from an insistence by amaXhosa that they were amaXhosa and not Kaffirs. Both amaXhosa, especially the royals, and the colonisers may have, for different reasons, welcomed this detailed genealogy. For amaXhosa a long genealogical table of sixteen generations gave them credibility as a people with a long past. For the colonisers, such an extensive and detailed breakdown of Xhosa *iinkosi* helped to identify centres of Xhosa power, so that the colonial authorities knew who to deal with and to fear.

The *Christian Watchman* text also examined the "Kaffir law of succession".¹⁸⁵ The complexity of that law, which was in many ways different from European practices, must have required information from amaXhosa who were knowledgeable about their laws and customs. Use must have been made of *iimbali* as the account once again harked back to Tshiwo's reign, more than a hundred years earlier. However, such evidence could have been obtained from *Iziqwenge* of 1838. The account of Phalo's succession could have been based on an unpublished section of

Iziqwenge in which the birth of Tshiwo's son, Phalo, was narrated.¹⁸⁶ In addition, a history of each of the senior houses within the Tshawe lineage was given. The various *iinkosi*, many of whom were key figures in the wars of resistance, were placed in their respective positions within the complex web of Xhosa royalty. Dugmore's genealogical table of Xhosa royalty and his discussion of the history of *iinkosi* was a result of knowledge and experience missionaries had gathered in their close association with Xhosa royalty.

Ever since Van der Kemp's work among amaXhosa at Ngqika's residence in 1799 missionaries had always attached themselves to *iinkosi*. In 1823 the Scottish missionaries at the Tyhume valley had settled close to Ngqika and his sons Maqoma, Sandile and Tyhali. In 1830 when they expanded from Thyume they established a mission station under Ross and Joseph Williams at Mqgakwebe which was *nkosi* Vazi's residence. In 1823 Wesleyan Methodists under Shaw set up a station they named Wesleyville among amaGqunukhwebe of Pato. Another Methodist station was set up among amaNdlambe in 1826. Ndlambe placed the missionaries under a junior son, Mqhayi, and next to the latter's residence. With great reluctance *kumkani* Hintsa allowed the Methodists to set up a station next to his residence in 1827.¹⁸⁷ The close association missionaries had with royalty is the main reason for the dominance of the royal theme in their writings on Xhosa history. The missionaries were largely exposed to *imbali* dominant at the Great Places. *Iinkosi*, especially during the first phase of missionary work, provided security for missionaries and the right to proselytise. It is a truism that royalty were willing partners in the development of a royal history by missionaries. Although initially reluctant to have missionaries, *iinkosi* were soon competing for them. Having a missionary at a Great Place enhanced the political status of *iinkosi*¹⁸⁸ and provided them with intermediaries with colonial officials.¹⁸⁹ This was true for the colonial authorities as well. In some cases *iinkosi* believed that missionaries conferred some protection against colonial attacks and rival African groups.¹⁹⁰

There is evidence that a number of missionaries began to dabble in royal politics at the Great Places to which they were attached. The missionary strategy was to convert *iinkosi*, hoping that that would initiate an *en masse* conversion. When they failed to interest the reigning *iinkosi* they focussed their attention on junior princes. At Burnshill Laing flattered and tried to win over Matwa and Tente,¹⁹¹ two of Ngqika's sons. Tente was eventually baptised and died a Christian.

However, the Ngqika House had formidable figures like Maqoma, Sandile, and Tyhali, and thus Tente's conversion had little impact on amaNgqika. Among amaGqunukhwebe the story is slightly different. The Methodist missionaries were successful in converting Kama, a prince, who was described by Dugmore as the "flower of the family".¹⁹² He was baptised in 1825 together with his wife, Nongwane.¹⁹³ For a long time Gqunukhwebe politics and the writing of their history were influenced by the division in the royal family resulting from the conversion of Kama. At Hintsa's place Ayliff tried to woo one of the princes. At some time he also claimed to have collaborated with Hintsa's senior wife, Nomsa, who was the mother of Sarhili.¹⁹⁴

Knowledge accumulated and produced by missionaries on Xhosa history was available to colonial officials. Accumulation of knowledge in a colonial context about the indigenous people was a form of power in itself, as Crais points out.¹⁹⁵ Missionary accounts about Xhosa royal history influenced colonial policies. By the late 1840s colonial officials were formulating policies that were built around the royal institution by drawing up treaties and in some instances forging alliances with one royal leader against others. In 1848, Kama, who was a favourite Christian prince, was separated from his people, amaGqunukhwebe, and relocated in a new area. In their determination to bring amaXhosa to their knees their strategies were set on attacking those Xhosa leaders that were perceived to be troublesome. The capture and imprisonment of Sandile and other *iinkosi* during the war of 1847 shows how the colonisers were focussing on the royal centre in their attacks. In October 1850 Harry Smith "deposed" Sandile, probably aiming to paralyse amaNgqika.¹⁹⁶

A feature of missionary texts on Xhosa history is their patriarchal bias. Only passing references were made to women. The reports, life-stories, and historical accounts portrayed men as the main actors. Yet women were participants in the establishment of the church among amaXhosa from its inception, as converts, teachers, interpreters and evangelists. But no full accounts were given of their contribution. Van der Kemp's first pupil who showed a desire to learn was Pao, a Xhosa woman.¹⁹⁷ Also, among his candidates for baptism were African women.¹⁹⁸ Of the first five people to be baptised at Tyhume in 1823, two were women.¹⁹⁹ In 1826 Mary, the daughter of Jan Tshatshu, was running a nursery school at her father's place.²⁰⁰ While a number of biographies of converts who had been with Ntsikana were written up, there was very little mention of women

who had been part of the early church and had been members of Ntsikana's Christian community. A brief tribute was made to Thomas Brown's mother (no name was given) when she died in 1831. It was pointed out that she had been one of Van der Kemp's converts. It was said of her, "Her life was a living epistle of the truth of Christianity".²⁰¹ Her story, had it been written up, would have formed a rich part of the history of Christianity among amaXhosa. In their reports missionaries wrote about countless nameless women who bore witness to their faith and were teachers in their families and villages.²⁰² In 1831 one of the few letters sent overseas by a Xhosa woman was from Lentje Love, who was Mrs Weir's interpreter.²⁰³ Like the men before her, she also was begging for help on behalf of "poor Caffre girls"²⁰⁴ This letter is a reminder of the dependence of some of the missionaries and their wives on Xhosa women.

In *The Christian Watchman* women were mentioned only in so far as rank among co-wives would determine who was to be heir to the throne.²⁰⁵ In *Iziqwenge* mention was made of Tshiwo consulting with women about *amaphakathi* (counsellors), Kwane and Gaba. But the tone of the account trivialised the consultation. The women were referred to in a condescending, even insulting manner when they were called *amadikazana*.²⁰⁶ The exclusion of women from the writings belied what was happening at the time. During the 1830s four senior houses in the Xhosa polity, as listed in the genealogical table in *The Christian Watchman*, had had Queen Mothers taking charge of affairs while heirs were minors. With the sudden death of Hinṭsa in 1835, Nomsa had to step in²⁰⁷ and support her son who was still *ikrwala* (a young man who has just returned from an initiation school).²⁰⁸ When Ngqika died in November 1829, Sutu became regent during the minority of the Rharhabe heir, Sandile.²⁰⁹ Ndlambe had died in 1828, and, according to Philipps, there was no clarity as to who would succeed him.²¹⁰ According to Bunbury, Nonibe, widow of Mdushane who had died in 1829, was the regent who attended meetings with colonial authorities.²¹¹ At the time Noyi and Dugmore wrote their texts at least four royal houses in the Xhosa polity had young and inexperienced rulers who relied mainly on their Queen Mothers²¹² and *amaphakathi* for support.²¹³

In oral texts there is evidence of socio-political struggles between men and women which do not feature in early writings on Xhosa history. Xhosa oral traditions, especially *iintsomi*, would sometimes touch on gender tension. In *iimbali* however such themes were avoided. That was

equally the case in colonial documents. However some evidence of struggles between women and men did filter through. For example, in Ayliff's writings, reference was made to domestic tension between Hintsa and his great wife, Nomsa. The latter was banished after being smelt out by a "Fingo" doctor, Jokwini. Nomsa only returned at the insistence of her son, Sarhili.²¹⁴ There were other instances where royal women were smelt out and executed. Nobutho, Mhala's mother, is said to have been executed through *ukucandela isiphunzi*. Through this method of execution the victim would be strangled to death when his neck was put between two sides of a tree trunk that had been split. On letting the sides fall back the victim would be squeezed and strangled to death.²¹⁵ One of Ngqika's wives, Msali (or Mbali) was pushed down a precipice at "Kuxhwane" (or Xhukwane) near Fort Cox.²¹⁶

Another theme in these early historical texts was the political absorption of groups into the Xhosa polity. This process, which appears to have been crucial in Tshawe's rise to power, began with the submission of Cirha and Jwarha to Tshawe rule²¹⁷ and continued under Tshawe's successors. The only difference is that Tshiwo, whose assimilation policy was discussed in *Iziqwenge*, used peaceful means to expand his kingdom. Evidence of the process of assimilation can be found in *imbali* about Kwane (and Gaba) who during Tshiwo's reign had saved people who had been condemned to death. After being advised by the womenfolk, Tshiwo recognised the wisdom in the actions of Kwane and Gaba and promoted them to a royal status with these words, "*Izenisithle isifuba sempofu, nizinkosi*"²¹⁸ (You may eat the breast of an eland. You are now chiefs). The same *imbali* was recounted in the *Christian Watchman*,²¹⁹ though the details were slightly different from the *Iziqwenge* version. Both texts were recounting the assimilation of amaGqunukhwebe, who most probably had been Khoi, into the Xhosa polity.

The origins of the narrative of Gqunukhwebe absorption are not clear. There are several possibilities. The account may have been created by certain amaGqunukhwebe themselves in order to strengthen their own position among amaXhosa. There is evidence that their "royal status" was being challenged by some *iinkosi*.²²⁰ That Kama had married Nongwane, who was Ngqika's daughter and therefore a Tshawe princess, suggests that amaGqunukhwebe did not see themselves as members of the Tshawe House.²²¹ The offer of an Mdushane princess of the Rharhabe line to Kama, a Gqunukhwebe prince, may have been a way of confirming their non-

Tshawe status.²²² If the Chungwa House had been fully accepted as Tshawe, no Tshawe princess could have been sent to another Tshawe prince in marriage. The Mdushane princess was a ploy by amaXhosa to excise amaGqunukhwebe from royal rank. The Mdushane princess could also have been used by amaXhosa to wean Kama away from the strong missionary influence he was under. In marrying the Mdushane princess Kama would have become a bigamist, alienating him from the missionaries. The narrative on the assimilation of amaGqunukhwebe may have served the interests of amaGqunukhwebe who would have benefited from the royal status they obtained through *imbali*. The missionaries could also have been keen to publicise the story. Methodist missionaries who had worked among amaGqunukhwebe since 1823 would have been keen to support the royal claims by amaGqunukhwebe. The support Kama obtained from the missionaries in refusing the princess was probably part of a political struggle rather than just a stand against polygamy.

AmaGqunukhwebe, the people of Kama, the Christian prince, were a special group to the missionaries and later received favourable treatment from colonial authorities. The missionaries would have been favourably disposed towards claims to seniority, through *iimbali* if need be, by amaGqunukhwebe. Noyi, the son of Gciniswa, son of Pazima, who was the son of Gando,²²³ was a Mkwayi. He thus belonged to a lineage that had been excised from the Tshawe line, when his ancestor, Gando fled. In his "History" Noyi did not include the Kwane *imbali* which claimed the assimilation of amaGqunukhwebe into Xhosa royalty. AmaKwayi, who had been excised from the Tshawe fold, were less likely to acknowledge the assimilation of outsiders. Differences in the historical texts under discussion were also determined by the identity of the writers and their needs.

The origins of amaXhosa was another theme discussed in early Xhosa histories. It surfaced in the two texts under discussion. Common to most accounts was the idea that amaXhosa had origins outside south-east Africa. In *Iziqwenge* a claim was made that amaXhosa migrated from the north and later encountered the Khoi in the southern regions, near the sea.²²⁴ This point was re-iterated by Noyi, in his "Ama-Xosa History", identifying a northern origin.²²⁵ The question of Xhosa origins was posed by colonisers wanting to portray amaXhosa as new arrivals in the region. Kay, for example, suggested that the Arabs or the Bedouins were the ancestors of amaXhosa.²²⁶ Pringle

also noted that amaXhosa had customs resembling “Levitical rulers.”²²⁷ Kay and Pringle might have got their ideas from the writings of Lichtenstein.²²⁸ The view was also propounded by some writers that river names in south-east Africa were mainly of Khoisan origin. Such a view further reinforced the claim that amaXhosa had arrived recently in the sub-region. In the southern African context the idea of Africans being refugees was reinforced by early Natal traders who claimed that they had moved into an unpopulated area.

The narrative in Noyi which saw the three races, the Khoi, amaXhosa, and the San, in southern Africa springing from three progenitors, “Ibranana, Xosa, and Twa”²²⁹ respectively, provided a past that explained the existence of three distinct groups, the Khoi, amaXhosa and the San. The myth narrated by Noyi also demonstrates how amaXhosa tried to reconcile colonial ideas about races, Christian teachings on the origins of humanity, with their own beliefs. There is a clear Hebraic influence in this tradition. Reverend Posselt, a German missionary who worked among amaXhosa conceded that when working among “raw heathens, I usually began by introducing the Bible story of creation. I observed that this drew their attention.”²³⁰ This tradition of three progenitors suggests a strong biblical influence. It is similar to the story of Noah’s three sons, Ham, Shem and Japhet who, during the nineteenth century were perceived in some European theological circles to be the progenitors of the three primary races, Mongolians, Ethiopians, and Caucasians. Noyi’s tradition is an attempt by an African convert to accommodate himself and his African background to a new colonial-Christian world. This he did by adapting a biblical tradition and substituting the characters in the story with his own.²³¹ This tradition reflected mid-nineteenth century colonial racial categorisations. San people, AmaXhosa, and Khoi were distinct units. Africans such as Noyi were coming forward with traditions that could explain such racial divisions.

Another tradition recorded by Harriet Ward in a book published in 1848²³² tells of two chasms in the earth. From one emerged a “Kafir, Bushman, and a white man and from the other, cattle”.²³³ This tradition depicts a search for a past that would explain the presence of whites in south-east Africa during the 1840s. The notion of a chasm from which life emerged was based on a Xhosa tradition.²³⁴ There are other instances where indigenous people sought ways of assimilating whites into their traditions of origin.²³⁵ In this tradition whites were being incorporated into a long standing creation myth.²³⁶ These two recorded traditions raise further questions. Firstly, the

researcher is confronted with what are obviously invented traditions. Through the two narratives Noyi and the narrator of the tradition recorded in Ward fall back on mythical texts to explain puzzles that confronted them in the present. This was a method amaXhosa used through oral traditions like *iintsomi* and *amabali emvelo*. This practice was not peculiar to amaXhosa only. Some nineteenth century missionaries treated biblical stories as representing real events in the remote past. For example, in *Um-Shumayeli Wen-daba* there was a series of articles by missionaries entitled, “Imbali Zabantu Bakudala” (Historical Narratives about People from the Past). These articles were in reality biblical stories about Adam, Cain, Abel, and others.²³⁷

There is another important deduction that can be made from Noyi’s tradition about three progenitors, Ibranana, Xhosa, and Twa, who were brothers. It suggests a long-standing fraternal relationship between the Khoi, amaXhosa, and the San. Observations made through this tradition were in contradiction to the sharp distinction drawn between amaXhosa and the Khoisan. Also, the account in *Iziqwenge* about Gando’s followers joining amaDama and other “Twa” and “Lawo” communities provides an instance when amaXhosa were absorbed into neighbouring Khoisan communities, amaDama. The creation tradition and the story in *Iziqwenge* suggested a more integrated past for south-east Africans than a racially based history. That the San under colonial pressure had been driven to the mountains, and the Khoi had all but broken down, does not mean that they had never been viable communities that co-existed with amaXhosa.

Noyi wrote a text on Xhosa migration which was probably based on *iimbali*. In *Iziqwenge* the account, which Noyi repeated in his 1848 text, tells of Tshiwo’s crossing the Kei in a hunting expedition from which he did not return.²³⁸ According to Noyi, it was during Tshiwo’s reign that the dispersal of amaXhosa into Khoi territory was supposed to have taken place. This happened during the civil war between Tshiwo and his younger brother, Gando, in 1683.²³⁹ After Gando’s defeat a lot of his followers fled and went to join some Khoi communities, as amaDama. The inclusion of dates in *Iziqwenge* and the 1848 text is worthy of note. Noyi was practising what Henige refers to as the “transfer [of] our own calendrical biases to societies in which the past is neither lineally conceived nor even approximately measurable.”²⁴⁰ These texts are full of contradictions and also carry a confusing time scale. The period of creation, which is the time of emerging from the bowels of the earth, is collapsed into the remembered past, in this case the time

of Tshiwo. The texts merge pre-history and history. The pre-history is being invented and introduced in order to make sense of the present. The western chronological method is juxtaposed with the Xhosa notion of going right back to the beginning.²⁴¹

Writings on Xhosa history emanating from mission stations constitute an important phase in the development of Xhosa historiography. For a period of thirty to forty years missionaries and African converts took the lead in writing Xhosa history. These writers relied on their predecessors, building on evidence already recorded. They tackled the history of the Xhosa royal house; they examined the origins of amaXhosa; and they slipped into what would become standard stereotypes of African people. These writers expanded on existing information and examined old themes through new lenses. Missionary writers such as Kay and Dugmore, and a convert like Noyi, focussed on the history of the Xhosa royal house. Their royal genealogies were longer and more detailed than earlier versions. Xhosa royal history produced at mission stations was tainted by the major design of missionaries - to convert *ukumkani*, *iinkosi*, and their subjects. Xhosa royalty in turn, took advantage of missionary interest in their history and participated in the production of a Xhosa history centred on the Tshawe House, to the exclusion of other histories - clan histories, historical accounts of leading commoner men and women, and other significant events in the lives of south-east Africans. On the theme of Xhosa origins two lines were followed. Some writers presented creation stories. Accommodated in these stories was the division of the autochthons into three racial groups. In another tradition whites were depicted as having also emerged out of a chasm at creation. The second line was to identify more recent geographical roots. Writers like Kay and Noyi echoed what had appeared earlier by suggesting amaXhosa were of northern origin. The idea that amaXhosa had originally migrated at some unknown time from outside south-east Africa took root in Xhosa history, albeit with very little evidence. The division of indigenous people into good and bad also appeared in missionary writings. The bad elements were the 'Bushmen', and later some Xhosa groups like imiDange and amaMbalu. Writers like Rev Ayliff, Shrewsbury, and Shepstone as well as Natal 'traders' formulated history for "Fingoes", a group that included amaXhosa who were friendly to the missionaries and the colony. The "Fingoes" represented good and co-operative Africans, while amaXhosa, as "Kaffirs", were painted as plundering thieves. Dugmore and Noyi represented Kwane as the founder of amaGqunukhwebe and as a good man who had been granted royal status by *kumkani* Tshiwo. This

contrasted with the negative image of Hintsa that missionaries like Ayliff had been projecting in their writings from the 1830s. A new theme pursued by these writers was the history of Christianity among amaXhosa. By the 1830s they were writing on the history of the church, and providing sketches of early Xhosa converts. The figure whose life story was akin to the history of the young church among amaXhosa was Ntsikana. A number of articles about him were produced for school-children and for general readers. A biography of Ntsikana by Dukwana, his son, appeared in a newspaper in 1845. Ntsikana, the model African convert, was contrasted with Nxele/Makana, who was represented as having used Christianity for his nationalist ends. Writers of Xhosa history in this phase became more diverse and, significantly, included Xhosa writers.

1. Reverend John Theodosius Van der Kemp had tried to establish a mission station among amaNgqika from 1799 to 1800. The time was, however, most inopportune as it was a period of great political instability on the frontier. See Van der Kemp, "Journey to Caffraria from the Cape of Good Hope", *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*, i, 373-509.

2. On the life of Reverend Joseph Williams see Basil Holt, *Joseph Williams: and the Pioneer Mission to the South-Eastern Bantu* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1954).

3. By 1830, for example, Wesleyan Methodists had set up six mission stations next to *iikomkhulu* (Great Places) of senior Xhosa *iinkosi*. See *Colonial Archives, 1825-1835*, Vol iv, 136. Also see MS 17042, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

4. See Appendix 5.

5. *Report of the GMS with an Appendix* (1825), 12.

6. See letter of John Ross to Thomas Main, Edinburgh, MS 8145, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

7. De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 48.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.* Also, Mudimbe devotes a chapter to missionary discourse in Africa. See Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, 44-64. For a discussion of missionaries in South Africa and their writings see Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, i.

10. For a discussion of Reverend Thomson's role as a "Colonial Missionary to the Caffres" see Donovan Williams, *When Races Meet: The Life and Times of William Ritchie Thomson, Glasgow Society Missionary, Government Agent and Dutch Reformed Church Minister 1794-1891* (Johannesburg: APB Publishers, 1967.)

11. John Brownlee held office as an agent and missionary under the colonial government in June 1820. See B.Holt, *Greatheart of the Border: A Life of John Brownlee, Pioneer Missionary in South Africa* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1976), 14-18.

12. W Shaw, *Memoir of the Reverend William Shaw, Late General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Mission in South East Africa* (London: Paternoster, 1874), 94.

13. For a discussion of John Philip's missionary career in South Africa and his relationship with politicians see Andrew Ross, *John Philip (1775-1851): Mission, Race and Politics in South Africa* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986).

14. Daniel P Kunene, "The Crusading Writer, his Modes, Themes and Styles", *African Perspectives: Texts and Context*, Vol.1, 1977, 99.

15. For a discussion of the changes converts underwent and the manner in which they adopted new thoughts and behaviour see among others Hildergarde Fast, "African Perspectives of the Missionaries and their Message: Wesleyans at Mount Coke and Butterworth 1825-1835" (MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1991), 141-147.

16. See *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba*, No.3, December 1837, 5. MS 15312, Cory Library.

17. See Minutes of the Presbytery of Caffraria, MS 9038, Cory Library, Rhodes University. This self-effacing language, verging on flattery of the listener was used even in politics. Maqoma, talking to a visiting Englishman in 1846 described amaXhosa as "so poor, and so weak; besides the Englishmen were so kind to the Kaffirs and they, poor fellows felt grateful". See Alfred W Cole, *The Cape and the Kafirs Or Notes of Five Years' Residence in South Africa* (London: Richmond Bentley, 1857), 182.

18. De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 5.

19. In this thesis the missionary phase covers the period from the 1820s to the middle of the nineteenth century. I argue that during that time missionaries in southern Africa were at their most powerful and were also the most relied on sources on the indigenous people. Such writings have become important historical sources.

20. For example, there was a flow of information as well as misinformation from the "Natal traders" about Africans in that region and beyond. Writings by Henry Fynn, Nathaniel Isaacs, King and others are important sources on African communities along the Thukela, Mngeni, Mzimkhulu, and Mzimvubu Rivers. For a collection of some of the Natal letters see BJT Leverton (ed.), *Records of Natal*, i, ii, iii (1989, 1990).

21. See GJ Pike (Umshicileli), *Iziqwenge(sic) Zembali YamaXosa Ezishicilelweyo* (eBotwe, 1838) No. 157 (a), Grey Collection, South African Library.

22. "Kaffraria. II. Its Tribes", *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*, Vol.1. September, 1846, 318-327.

23. *GMS Winter Quarterly Intelligence, 1838/1839*, No, 11, 2.

- 24 . JL Dohne, *Das Kafferland und seine Bewohner* (Berlin: Missionahause, 1844), 1
- 25 . For a full copy of the letter see *Report of the GMS with an Appendix*, 1824, 13. The authors were Uhanisi, Umatshala (Matshaya), and Enoi (Noyi) - Caffres.
- 26 . The five Africans were given new names - Robert Balfour, Mary Ann, Elizabeth Love and John Love as well as Charles Henry. See *Report of the GMS for 1824 with an Appendix*, 12.
- 27 . On the baptism of the first converts also see *ibid.*, 12
- 28 . A copy of the letter can be found in Holt, *Greatheart of the Border*, 51-52.
- 29 . *Ibid.*, 52.
- 30 . The converts were echoing sentiments of missionaries. Soon after his arrival John Bennie, writing to the Glasgow Missionary Society, noted, "Caffres are ignorant and are...slaves of sin". See Letter from Bennie, *Report of the GMS with an Appendix* 1822, 28.
- 31 . *Ibid.*, 51.
- 32 . I am using modern Xhosa orthography for place names unless it is a quotation or a citation.
- 33 . In all there were 15 issues which appeared from 1837 to 1841.
- 34 . "Imbali Zezikolo Zasema-Xoseni", *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba*, -No.13, October, 1840 (Nnqushwa), 6-7.
- 35 . *Ibid.*
- 36 . Kama, a junior prince among amaGqunukhwebe was the first royal to adopt the Christian faith. He seems to have been a convert highly valued by the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries.
- 37 . The story about Kama is that he was a Christian and already had a wife, Nongwane, Maqoma's twin sister.
- 38 . "Izikolo Zasema-Xoseni, Eska-Nyengane", *Isibuto Samavo*, No.1, January, 1843 (Ennqushwa), 12-14.
- 39 . Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 361-490.
- 40 . "Izikolo Zasema-Xoseni, Eska-Nyengane", *Isibutho Samavo*, No.I, January, 1843, 12-14.
- 41 . In the article *imfecane* was used to refer to a people who were said in missionary writings to have been a threat to amaXhosa and other groups during the 1820s until they were "saved" by the British. In all likelihood Dugmore was referring to rumours of an enemy poised to attack the autochthons.
- 42 . "Isincokolo Gokwama-geṣi", *Isibuto*, No III July 1843, 10-12.
- 43 . "Indaba Zakwa-Kama" *Isibuto*, No IV, October, 1843, 19-20

44 . The Scottish missionaries tried to win Matwa and Tente over as their own converted princes. These were the sons of Ngqika. See “Minutes of Caffrarian Presbytery”, MS 9037 and 9038, Cory Library. Among abeTswana one who I see as having been Kama’s counterpart was Molema. See Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, I, 240.

45 . This publication only had five issues before its demise, most probably due to the 1850-1853 war.

46 . ”Umbuzo Wendaba Zakudala”, *Isitunywa Sennyanga*, inani 1, Inyanga 8, 1850 (Eqonci), 3.

47 . W Kongo, *Isitunywa*, Inani 3, Inyanga 10, 1850, 11.

48 . *Ibid.*

49 . *Ibid.*

50 . He was named after Dr J Muir of St James, Glasgow, who was a friend of the GMS. See “Narrative of Vimbe, schoolmaster near Burnshill”, *Report of the GMS, Autumn*, 1839.

51 . *Ibid.*

52 . *Ibid.*

53 . *Ibid.*

54 . See “Memoir of Joseph Williams”, *GMS Autumn Quarterly Intelligence*, 1840, 1-2.

55 . This was Van der Kemp’s mission station among amaXhosa.

56 . “Memoir of Joseph Williams”, *GMS*, 2.

57 . See “Minutes of the Caffrarian Presbytery”, February, 1841, MS 9039, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

58 . This article was later published by Bokwe. See Matshaya, “Charles Henry Matshaya: A Follower and Convert” in Bokwe, *Ntsikana*, 32-35.

59 . Missionary documents are generally silent about the disruptions their teachings brought to families. Erlank points out that Christianity split families, especially husbands and wives. N Erlank, “Gender and Christianity Among Africans Attached to Scottish Mission Stations in Xhosaland in the Nineteenth Century”(PhD. Thesis: Cambridge University, 1998), 255.

60 . This is the same Matshaya who, together with other fellow converts, had written to the directors of the Glasgow Missionary Society. See the discussion of that letter above.

61 . In the second issue of *Ikwezi* there was an article on “Golwaluko LwamaXosa”(On Xhosa Circumcision). See “Golwaluko LwamaXosa”, *Ikwezi*, Inani II, December, 1844, 21-28.

62 . This man’s name was Makana, but he appears in colonial literature as Nxele. In this study the names Makana/Nxele will be used jointly.

63 . For an in-depth study of Ntsikana see J Hodgson, "Ntsikana the Xhosa Prophet: A History of Religious Change Among Xhosa-Speaking People" (PhD Thesis: University of Cape Town, 1984). Ezra Tisani undertakes a comparative study of two figures. See EV Tisani, "Nxele and Ntsikana: A Critical Study of the Religious Outlooks of the Nineteenth Century Prophets and their Consequences for Xhosa Christian Practice in the Eastern Cape" (MA Thesis: University of Cape Town, 1987).

64 . Some of these historical narratives were transcribed by writers like Zaze Soga, Makapela Noyi and Jacob M Noyi and were published by Bokwe. See Bokwe, *Ntsikana*, 52-64.

65 . See a letter by Brownlee dated 3 April 1821 in *GMS Autumn Quarterly Intelligence*, 1838.

66 . For a detailed study of the "Ntsikana" hymns see Hodgson, "Ntsikana", 137-187.

67 . For example, in 1826 Steedman noted in his journal that converts at Wesleyville sang a hymn composed by 'Sicana'. See A Steedman, *Wanderings and Adventures in the Interior of Southern Africa*, i (London: Longman and Co., 1835), 32.

68 . Authorship is associated with writing. It therefore is an anomaly to ascribe the hymns to Ntsikana. It is an imposition of a practice that belongs to the literary mode. Rather a point should be made that the hymns were composed and performed by the Ntsikana community which continued even after his death.

69 . John Bennie, *Inncwadana Yamaculo Gokwamaxosa* (Grahamstown: Aldun and Harvey, 1839).

70 . Jacob Ludwig Dohne, *Das Kafferland und sein Bewohner* (Berlin: 1844), 69-70.

71 . Janet Hodgson, "Ntsikana's Great Hymn: A Xhosa Expression of Christianity in the Early 19th Century Eastern Cape" (Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1980), 4.

72 . Reference had been made to Makana/Nxele in missionary documents . See for example, "Extracts from the Narratives of the Journey of Mr Read and Others to Caffraria, 21 May 1826", *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*, Vol IV, (1813-1818), 258.

73 . Bennie, *Eyesibini Inncwadana Yokufunda*" (e-Hreni: Aldun and Harvey, 1839) G.9.d.18(7), SAL..Hodgson is thus mistaken to cite Reverend Dohne as having been the first to write down the Ntsikana story in 1844. See Hodgson, "Ntsikana", 230.

74 . *GMS Summer Quarterly Intelligence*, 1839, 2.

75 . *Ibid.*, *Winter Quarterly Intelligence*, 1838/9 , 5.

76 . *Ibid.*, 95.

77 . A Tswana woman is reported to have adopted a stance similar to Nxele's. She is said to have been a candidate for baptism, but after a while went off and presented her own theological teachings. See Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, I, 248.

78 . Makana/Nxele seems to have been keen to establish that he was operating independently of missionaries and even claimed that Van der Kemp had been under him.

79 . Bennie, "Intwana Yembali YamaXosa", 93-94.

80 . Bennie, *Eyesibini Inncwadana*, 95.

81 . *Ibid.*, 99. Significantly, this teaching propounded by Nxele is said to have been quoted by Sarhili when he was interviewed by Reverend Bryce Ross in 1846. See Erlank, "Gender and Christianity Among Africans", 257.

82 . For another discussion of the teachings of the two see J.B. Peires, "Nxele, Ntsikana and the Origins of the Xhosa Religious Reaction", *The Journal of African History*, 20 (1), (1979), 51-61.

83 . The conflict between Ngqika and Ndlambe has been discussed in chapter two of this thesis.

84 . "Imbaliso KaNtsikana", *Ikwezi*, Inani iii, February, 1845, and Inani iv, December, 1845, 39-49.

85 . For a discussion of Dukwana see Hodgson, "Ntsikana", 224-228.

86 . *The Caffrarian Messenger and Reports of the Glasgow African Mission Society*, October 1838 to February 1845, 10.

87 . *The Caffrarian Messenger of the Glasgow African Missionary Society*. No. VII, January 1841, 108.

88 . Erlank, "Gender and Christianity Among Africans", 219.

89 . *The Caffrarian Messenger*, 1840, 11.

90 . In the reports to the Directors of the Glasgow African Missionary Society there are several instances where the Christians were linked to misfortunes that befell the Xhosa community. In 1843, for example, Koti, the African teacher was debarred from continuing with his school work because the child of a local headman had died and Koti was held responsible for the death. See *Ibid.*

91 . He was the father of the famous Reverend Tiyo Soga hence the qualification.

92 . *Ibid.*

93 . See *GMS Winter Quarterly Intelligence*, 1840, 8.

94 . "Minutes of the Caffrarian Presbytery", MS 9038, Cory Library. The entry in the minutes is about converts, including leaders like Balfour, who had stayed away from church services. They also would not respond when summoned to a meeting by the missionaries.

95 . Significantly, this motif is common in African oral traditions. It is not impossible that, missionaries, trying to convey a sense of suffering actually used the metaphors found in African oral texts.

- 96 . My translation. See “Imbaliso KaNtsikana”, 40.
- 97 . Erlank, “Gender and Christianity Among Africans”, 8.
- 98 . Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 149.
- 99 . *Ibid*, 149-153.
- 100 . For a discussion of the royal genealogical tables of early nineteenth century see chapter 2.
- 101 . *Ibid.*, 149.
- 102 . Togu was the starting point of the genealogical tables drawn up by Van der Kemp, Lichtenstein, and Collins. See appendices.
- 103 . This is a mistake that had been made by Van der Kemp in 1799. See Van der Kemp, “History of Caffraria”, in *Transactions*, 465.
- 104 . The name Sikhomo appears as *isiduko* of amaNgwevu who, though not royal, may have been associated with that royal figure in the past.
- 105 . The religious belief in Hlanga is discussed in chapter 4.
- 106 . Mission stations like Butterworth and Morley further east seem to have been stop-overs for the Natal “traders” and ivory hunters as they moved between Natal and the colony. There seems to have developed a close relationship between the two groups, the “traders” and the missionaries.
- 107 . In 1826 Mrs Ross at Ncerha Mission, writing to her mother, made reference to “Imficane”. See Mrs Ross to her mother, 24 April 1826 in Una Long, *An Index to Authors of Unofficial Privately Owned Manuscripts Relating to the History of South Africa 1812-1920* (London: Lund Humphries, 1947), 223.
- 108 . Colonel Somerset’s correspondence between 1827 and 1828 is full of reports about “Fetcani” attacks on the “Tambookies” which culminated in the attack on amaNgwane on 28 August 1828. See *Colonial Archives*, MS 17042, Cory Library, Rhodes University.
- 109 . Wylie discusses the construction of the Shaka image by “White Writers”. The essence of his argument is that Shaka was created by these writers mainly from the conventional images Europeans had of Africans. See Wylie, “White Writers and Shaka Zulu”.
- 110 . Reverend Ayliff whose mission station was next to Hintsas’s *Komkhulu* constructed a negative image of Hintsas. He portrayed him as one who had held the “Fingoes” in thralldom. See “Extracts from the Diary of John Ayliff”, MS 15 544, Cory Library. Colonial officials also painted a negative image of Hintsas. Harry Smith, writing to Governor D’Urban claimed that Hintsas had dashed one of his wives’ brains. He also related a story of how one of Hintsas’s brothers was tied to wild horses which tore him to pieces. See Smith to D’Urban, D’Urban Papers, Vol 2, MS 2033, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

111 . Pridmore, "Henry Francis Fynn", 90.

112 . See also "Ayliff Diary", MS 14 515, Cory Library.

113 . A letter written by Ayliff while escorting the "Fingoes" into the Colony in 1835 captures the anti-Xhosa mood well. Ayliff wrote, "I found the Kafirs to a man reject the Gospel of Christ. During the six years of labour not one Kafir was persuaded to become Christian... but the Fingoes, I found prepared to receive the word of life.." See Ayliff Papers, MS 15 380, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

114 . One of the earliest references to "Fingoes" who lived among Hintsa's people was made by Shrewsbury in 1826 during his first visit to the *Komkhulu* of Hintsa. See JVB Shrewsbury, *Memorial of the Reverend William J Shrewsbury* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 1868), 235-236.

115 . In one of his numerous writings about "Kaffir-Fingo" relations Ayliff claimed that the "Fingoes" were called dogs by amaXhosa and were treated as such. See "Ayliff Papers", MS 15 276, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

116 . See Julian Cobbing, "Jettisoning the Mfecane (with Perestroika)" (Unpublished paper, Rhodes University, 1988), 12-13

117 . Alan Webster, "Unmasking the Fingo: The War of 1835 Revisited" in Carolyn Hamilton (ed), *The Mfecane Aftermath: Reconstructive Debates in Southern African History* (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand Press, 1995), 262-266.

118 . Timothy J Stapleton, "Oral Evidence in a Pseudo Ethnicity: The Fingo Debate" (Unpublished Paper, Fort Hare University, 1995), 2-3.

119 . For example Peires argues that oral traditions on Matiwane and the Battle of Mbholompo indicate that Matiwane and his people amaNgwane had originally come from northern Natal region and had in their travels interacted and fought with amaHlubi, and abeSuthu. See Jeff Peires, "Matiwane's Road to Mbholompo: A Reprieve for the Mfecane?" in Hamilton (ed), *The Mfecane Aftermath*, 213-239.

120 . Such Africans were heterogenous groups that are likely to have been made up of displaced Xhosa, Africans from the groups that were neighbours to amaXhosa, liberated slaves, as well as people who had fled from their homes from the interior of South Africa as well as from the area along the eastern coast. Those from the east could have brought along a Swahili term *mfungo* (prisoner) which could have been corrupted to *mfengu* in siXhosa.

121 . See a letter of William Smith to the Civil Commissioner of Uitenhage, December 1835 in "D'Urban Papers", Vol i, MS 2033, Cory Library.

122 . See a letter from Somerset to Field Cornets Coetzee and Greyling in *ibid*.

123 . See Chris Hummel (ed), *Rev. FG Kayser: Journals and Letters* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller, 1990), 100.

124 . “History of the Fingoes”, MS 15 292, Cory Library.

125 . “History of the Wars Producing Dispersion”, MS 15 276, Cory Library, Rhodes University. For the breakdown of the “Fingo tribes” also see “D’Urban Papers”, i, MS 2033, Cory Library.

126 . This term which was generally used in colonial discourse to mean a barbarian and a plunderer had also crept into missionary discourse. In 1834, just before the outbreak of the Xhosa-Anglo War Rev Laing made an entry in his journal about “frequent depredations of the Kafirs on the flocks of the Colonists”. See J Laing, *Memorials of the Missionary Career of the Rev James Laing, Missionary of the Free Church of Scotland in Kaffraria* (Glasgow: David Bryce, 1875), 37.

127 . This word was misspelt. It should have been *iziqwenga* -fragments or snippets, not *iziqwenge*.

127 . “Fragments of Kaffir History” was the title Bennie gave to the book in his report to the GMS. See *GMS Autumn Quarterly Intelligence*, 1840,6

129 . George James Pike was born in London in 1810 and died in Cape Town. For a short biography of Pike see Fransie Roussouw (Compiler), *South African Printers and Publishers 1795-1925* (Cape Town: South African Library, 1987), 119.

130 . See Fransie Rossouw (compiler), *South African Printers and Publishers 1795-1925* (Cape Town: South African Library, 1987), 119.

131 . *Ibid.*

132 . Letter from John Ross to Thomas Main, Edinburgh, MS 8145, Cory Library, Rhodes University. Also in the minutes of the Caffrarian presbytery there are reports about work done with Cape Town printers. See “Minutes”, 5 April, 1836, MS 9037 and 2 September 1836, MS 9038, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

133 . Grey Collection, No 157(a), SAL.

134 . *Ibid.*, No 157(b).

135 . *Ibid.*, No 157(d).

136 . See “Noyi Gciniswa”, in Jeff Opland and PT Mtuze (abahleli), *Izwi Labantu* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1994), 62-66.

137 . *Ibid.*, 62.

138 . *GMS*, 1838/1839 , 2.

139 . In January 1836 Bennie applied for leave, because of health reasons. His fellow missionaries allowed him to withdraw from missionary work and concentrate on the correction of a translation of the New Testament. The presbytery appointed Balfour to reside with Bennie as his assistant. See “Minutes of the Caffrarian Presbytery”, 6 January 1836, MS 9037, Cory

Library, Rhodes University.

140 . Bennie is said to have refused to accept a report on Mrs Chalmers' sewing school in 1829 as he regarded such business as secular. See Erlank, "Gender and Christianity Among Africans", 132.

141 . See "Minutes of the Caffrarian Presbytery", 5 January 1837, MS 9038, Cory Library, Rhodes University. In October an entry was made in the minutes of the presbytery that Balfour was still assisting Bennie with translation. See MS 9038.

142 . In 1843, giving Sandile as a pretext, Bennie once again applied for leave from mission work and set out on an adventure, joining the Trekkers in Transorangia and the Potchefstroom-Winburg Republics. See D Williams (ed), *An Account of a Journey into Transorangia and the Potchefstroom -Winburg Trekker Republic by the Rev John Bennie* (Cape Town: AA Balkema, 1956).

143 . It would appear the author of *Iziqwenge* had intended writing a longer document, with a number of chapters. On the first page, below the full title *Iziqwenge*... a sub-title appears, "Eyokuqala Intloko" (Chapter One). See Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.

144 . *Ibid.*

145 . Sikhomo had first appeared in Kay's Xhosa genealogy. See above.

146 . Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 4.

147 . Natural disasters like famine or floods and epidemics were events that were often recalled in African history.

148 . Probably these were the Damasonquas who were first written about in Beutler's journal.

149 . In *imbali* on the rise of Tshawe a story is told that the quarrel between Tshawe and his brothers Cirha and Jwarha arose over a dispute about the breast of a bluebuck. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 105-106.

150 . Robert Balfour Noyi, "Ama-Xosa History", in Bokwe, *Ntsikana*, 36-39.

151 . *Ibid.*, 36.

152 . *Ibid.*

153 . A breakdown of "races" in southern Africa does not appear in *Iziqwenge*. Noyi may have obtained the idea from Dugmore, "Its Tribes", *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*, Vol.I, (Grahamstown: R Godlonton, 1846), 318.

154 . *Ibid.*, 37.

155 . *Ibid.*

156 . The difference may have come about in the course of translation. *Iziqwenge* was written in siXhosa and “Ama-Xosa History” was in English.

156. The observer (Noyi or Laing) about ‘Damara Kaffirs’ may have been confusing amaDama, a Khoi group on the eastern frontier and the Damara to the north-west. Elphick differentiates between the two groups. See Elphick, *Kraal and Castle*, 66(map 3) and 27.

158 . Two of the Noyi children were baptised in 1824. See *Report of GMS with an Appendix*, 1825, 1. His wife, in turn, was baptised in 1825. See *Report of GMS with an Appendix*, 1826, 9.

159 . *Report of the GMS, with an Appendix*, 1826, 23.

160 . Williams, *When Races Meet*, 65.

161 . For a notice on Noyi’s death see “Death of Noyi or Robert Balfour”, *Isigidimi*, 1 September, 1872.

162 . *Iziqwenge* was also written at a time when missionary writings about the history of the “Fingoes” for example, depicted amaXhosa as having treated amaMfengu harshly and their flight to the colony had been an escape from Xhosa thralldom. See discussion above.

163 . Mostert, *Frontiers*, 871.

164 . Reverend Appleyard’s journal on the 1846-1847 war states that mission families and catechists had to flee to safety. See John Frye (ed), *The War of the Axe and the Xhosa Bible: The Journal of the Rev J.W. Appleyard* (Cape Town: Struik, 1971), 39.

165 . See *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*, Vol I, 318-327.

166 . *Ibid.*, 270.

167 . For an account of the incident involving the stealing of an axe, which triggered the war which broke out in March 1846 see a report in the Glasgow Missionary Report, 16 March 1846, MS9039, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

168 . “Purpose for writing History”, *The South African Christian Watchman*, 271.

169 . “Its Tribes”, *The South African Christian Watchman*, 318.

170 . *Ibid.*, 319.

171 . *Ibid.*

172 . See Appendix 6.

173 . “Its Tribes”, *The South African Christian Watchman*, 319.

174 . *Ibid.*, 320-321.

175 . *Ibid.*, 322.

176 . *Ibid.*, 326.

177 . *Ibid.*

178 . See Appendix 6, A Genealogical Table in *The South African Christian Watchman*, 1, 1846, 319.

179 . For Xhosa royal genealogical tables refer to appendices A,B, C,and D in this study.

180 . Dohne, *Das Kafferland*, 13.

181 . *Ibid.*, 13-14.

182 . See Appendix 6.

183 . Peires, *The House Of Phalo*, 15.

184 . LF Maingard, "The Linguistic Approach to South African Prehistory and Ethnology", *South African Journal of Science* 32, (1934), 117-143.

185 . *The South African Christian Watchman*, 319.

186 . See "Eyesibini Intloko"(Chapter 2), 157(b), Grey Collection, S.A.L.

187 . Rev Shrewsbury had arrived at Hintsas' place in December 1826. Hintsas had been reluctant to grant him permission to settle and the monarch had held consultation meetings with *amaphakathi* and eventually decided to allow Shrewsbury to settle in August 1827. See Shrewsbury, *Memorial of the Rev William J Shrewsbury*, 237-264.

188 . In 1832 Rev Kayser noted that Maqoma, a leading *inkosi* in the resistance against colonialism, had asked for a missionary. See Hummel (ed), *Rev F G Kayser*, 85.

189 . An interesting example of the way *inkosi* used the missionaries as intermediaries with colonial authorities can best be seen at the outbreak of the 1834-35 war when Pato of amaGqunukhwebe did not want Rev Dugmore to leave them as they would "have no one to talk for us to the Government and no one would make any distinction ..between us and other Kafirs". See "Reflections of the War of 1834-35" MS 15 791(b), Cory Library, Rhodes University.

190 . When Pato gave permission to Shaw to set up a station among amaGqunukhwebe in 1823 he made it clear that his people would make Shaw a "beschem bosch"(a bush behind which they would hide). See Shaw, *Memoir of the Rev William Shaw*, 107.

191 . See an autobiography by Tente which was sent to the Foreign Secretary of the GMS. "Letter of Tente to the Foreign Secretary translated by Rev Laing", *GMS Winter Quarterly* 1841, 2-3. Tente received a lot of attention from the missionaries. In 1838 he was appointed schoolmaster together with Vimbe and was later sent to Lovedale. See *GMS Winter Quarterly Intelligence* 1838/1839, 5. Tente died in July 1843. See *Fifth Annual Report of the GMS Spring Quarterly Intelligence*, 1843, 7.

192 . *Ibid.*

193 . Shaw, *Memoirs of the Rev Shaw*, 137.

194 . Ayliff claims that when relations between Hintsas and himself became strained it was Hintsas's senior wife Nomasa and another one Noloka who warned him against Hintsas. See "Extracts from the Diary of John Ayliff", MS 15 544, 221. The possible reason for Nomasa's friendliness towards Ayliff is that the latter had supported *amaphakathi* who had called for the return of Nomasa to Hintsas's Great Place. Nomasa had been driven away after she had been accused of witchcraft. Also see below.

195 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 87.

196 . For events leading to the deposition of Sandile see J Meintjes, *Sandile: The Fall of the Xhosa Nation* (Cape Town: Cape and Transvaal Printers, 1971), 187-189.

197 . See Van der Kemp, "Attempt to Settle in Caffraria", *Transactions*, 407.

198 . *Ibid.*, 424-425.

199 . The women's 'Christian names' were Elizabeth Love and Mary-Ann. See *Report of the GMS with an Appendix*, 1824, 12

200 . D Crafford (ed), *Trail-Blazers of the Gospel: Black Pioneers in the Missionary History of Southern Africa* (Bloemfontein: Pro Christo Publication, 1991), 16.

201 . See *Thirty-Seventh Year's Report of the GMS*, 1832, 20.

202 . Kayser's journal is full of references to such women. For example see Hummel, *Rev FG Kayser*, 43 and 133.

203 . See *Report of the GMS*, 1831, 14-15.

204 . *Ibid.*, 15.

205 . Again, reference to women is not out of respect. It is essentially to enable colonisers to obtain an understanding of the laws of succession. See *The South African Christian Watchman*, 320.

206 . The use of the word *amadikazana* verges on insulting women. *Idikazi* is an unmarried woman, who, would be at the *Komkhulu* to entertain visitors and *amaphakathi*.

207 . Nomasa was in the *Ndlunkulu* (Great House) and was the mother of Sarhili. Her regency was not mentioned in colonial literature. With the death of Hintsas, Smith and D'Urban turned their full attention to Sarhili.

208 . For example, six months after Hintsas's death, Smith reported to D'Urban, the Cape governor, that Nomasa was interceding on behalf of her son, Sarhili, explaining that he was inexperienced. See HG Smith to D'Urban, 30 November 1835 in Leverton, *Records of Natal*, iii,

6.

209 . Significantly, when Mrs Ross, wife of a missionary at Chumie, wrote to her father and made reference to Ngqika's death, she went on to observe that Maqoma was the "principle" (sic) chief, Ross did not mention Sutu at all. See Long, *Index*, 235. During the 1835 war Sutu was involved in keeping the lines of communication between amaNgqika, her people, and the British. See Basil le Cordeur (ed), *The Journal of Charles Lennox Stretch* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1988), 67-69.

210 . See A.Keppel-Jones (ed), *Philipps, 1820 Settler* (Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1960), 333.

211 . See CJF Bunbury, *Journal of a Residence at the Cape of Good Hope with Excursions into the Interior and Notes on the Natural History and Native Tribes* (London: John Murray, 1848), 151-153.

212 . When Reverend Shaw visited Ngqika in 1827 he was informed that Ngqika had gone to his mother's place "which according to Caffre custom was considered the true Great Place". See DW Hammond-Tooke, *The Journal of William Shaw* (Cape Town: AA Balkema, 1972), 73.

213 . Bunbury's uncomplimentary physical description of Sutu, who had attended a conference with the colonial governor in 1838 indicates how observers of the time failed to recognise the role royal women and their advisers played in Xhosa politics and history. See Bunbury, *Journal of a Residence*, 159.

214 . See "Ayliff Papers", MS 15 289.

215 . For a description of the method see "Parts of Kaffer History", 157(e), Grey's Collection, SAL.

216 . *Ibid.*

217 . The story about Cirha and Jwarha is told in kin language. The two, after being defeated by Tshawe, submitted to Tshawe rule. This narrative can be interpreted as an account of the assimilation of two ethnic groups into the Tshawe polity.

218 . Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 7.

219 . *The South African Christian Watchman*, 326-327.

220 . In 1809 Collins questioned the fact that Chungwa, *inkosi* of amaGqunukhwebe, was actually despised by other *iinkosi*. See Collins, "Journal of a Tour" in Moodie, *The Record*, 9.

221 . AmaXhosa observed very strict rules of exogamy. No mXhosa would marry one from the same clan. Kama's marriage to Nongwane strongly suggests that the Chungwa House did not see themselves as of the Tshawe House.

222 . For an account of the incident when the Mdushane princess was brought to Kama, and the support the missionaries gave to Kama, see *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba*, October, 1840.

- 223 . Noyi “Ama-Xosa History”, 39.
- 224 . Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.
- 225 . Noyi, “Ama-Xosa History”, 37.
- 226 . Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 195.
- 227 . Pringle, *Narrative of a Residence*. 266.
- 228 . In chapter two of this study, Lichtenstein’s hypothesis about the origins of amaXhosa are discussed.
- 229 . Noyi, “Ama-Xosa History” in Bokwe, *Ntsikana*, 37.
- 230 . S Bourquin (translator and ed.) *Wilhelm Posselt: A Pioneer Missionary Among the Xhosa and Zulu and the First Pastor of New Germany Natal* (Westville, Natal: Bergtheil Museum, 1994), 47.
- 231 . The three were the ‘races’ Noyi identified - “Ama-Ibranana, ama-Xosa and the Bushman”. See Noyi, ‘Ama-Xosa History’ in Bokwe, *Ntsikana*, 37.
- 232 . See Harriet Ward, *Five Years in Kaffirland with Sketches of the Late War in that Country to the Conclusion of Peace* (London: Henry Colburn, 1848), 146.
- 233 . *Ibid.*
- 234 . At the beginning of the nineteenth century Alberti recorded a Xhosa tradition in which life emerged from a cavern. This tradition is discussed in chapter 2. See Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 13.
- 235 . Okpewho cites an oral text told by a Nigerian on the origins of a clan. Later a new version, which included Europeans was constructed. See Isidore Okpewho, *African Oral Literature: Backgrounds, Character, Continuity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 111. On this issue of inclusion of whites into pre-contact texts by indigenous people also see Jonathan D Hill and Robin M Wright, “Time, Narrative, and Ritual: Historical Interpretations from an Amazon Society” in Hill(ed), *Rethinking History and Myth*, 78-79.
- 236 . See Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 13.
- 237 . See “U-Adam”, *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba*, No 12, July, 1840, 1-4. Also “U-Kayine no-Abel”, *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba*, No 14, January 1841, 5-7. As well as “U-Enoki”, *Um-shumayeli Wen-daba*, No 15, April, 1841, 1-2.
- 238 . Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.
- 239 . *Ibid.*, 5
- 240 . DP Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 14.

241 . A more detailed discussion of the integration of African and western conventions in the production of Xhosa history will be given in chapter four.

CHAPTER 4

“KAFIR LEGENDS AND HISTORY”: A COLLECTION OF MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY HISTORICAL TEXTS.

The discussion in the preceding chapters has shown that by 1850 there were a number of texts on Xhosa history that had been produced by various writers. In this chapter the focus will be on a collection entitled, “Kafir Legends and History”, compiled by William Kekale Kaye.¹ The Kaye compilation is part of the Grey Collection that is stored in the South African Library in Cape Town. It is not clear how the texts were selected to form this particular collection. In the collection Kaye included legends about the remote Xhosa past. There were also texts about events within remembered time. There is no concrete evidence to indicate when the documents were put together. However, 1857 seems to be a likely date. In a letter written in January 1857 by G Cyrus to R Graham, Civil Commissioner of Albany, reference is made to a tradition which had been submitted by two “Fingoes”, Dapa and Gwija. According to Cyrus the tradition had been collected in response to a request of the Governor, Sir George Grey.² On one of the texts there is a hand-written note to the effect that the traditions had been submitted by “William Kaye, A Christian Native, 1857”.³ The collection was probably part of a larger batch of texts that had been gathered at the behest of Grey.⁴ Grey arrived at the Cape in December 1854 as an experienced colonial administrator. He had spent years in Australia and New Zealand.⁵ One of his innovations as a colonial ruler was the collection of indigenous mythology. Grey had believed that it was essential for himself as governor of New Zealand, to “acquaint myself with the ancient language of the country, to collect its traditional poems and legends, to induce their priests to impart to me their mythology and to study their proverbs”.⁶ When Grey got to the Cape Colony, he was not just interested in collecting oral traditions, he was also keen to create a library that would store information about the autochthons.⁷

The Kaye collection is made up of eight texts written in siXhosa with English translations. These texts have features that deserve further analysis as they represent an important phase in our study of Xhosa historiography. Some of these texts, probably the ones Kaye classified as legends,⁸ can

be categorised into genres of oral traditions that are found in most African societies. Through these oral texts Africans created their knowledge of the past. The association of oral traditions with the past was strengthened by a belief that the traditions themselves originated from ancestors.⁹ The most important are *amabali emvelo* (creation stories), *iintsomi* (folktales), and *iimbali* (historical narratives). There are other texts that combined oral tradition with western historical conventions.

This chapter occupies the middle point in a study that spans a century and carries features of Xhosa historiography that belong to the first half of the century as well as innovations of the second half. The inclusion of “legends” and “history” in the collection highlights the co-existence of two conventions in Xhosa historiography. It was a time when “historioracy”¹⁰ was transforming into historiography. It is also a reminder that by the mid-nineteenth century an African readership was emerging in southern Africa. Kaye’s collection carries a mixture of content similar to that found in earlier writings such as the *Um-shumayeli* articles and the Noyi and Bennie histories.¹¹ The African informants and writers operated according to their own conventions when producing history. The traveller and missionary influence is fairly strong in some of the texts in the Kaye collection. At the same time a more formal approach to writing the history of indigenous people was becoming apparent, evidenced by the deliberate collection and storage of documents. What the Kaye collection may also reveal is the degree to which Xhosa historical conventions were fused into Xhosa historiography.

In trying to better understand the texts that make up “Kafir Legends and History” it is important to examine who was involved in compiling the collection and what her/his interest was. The name William Kekale Kaye is given as the compiler of the texts.¹² Kaye was an interpreter¹³ who is also described as a Christian Native.¹⁴ Another document, entitled “On the ‘Koobutu of Umlanjeni’”, bearing the name of Wm Kekale Kaye was given to a Mr Thompson.¹⁵ This document links Kaye with the 1850s, the time of Mlanjeni.¹⁶ There are unknown people who must have participated in the compilation of “Kafir Legends and History”. The collection is likely to have been influenced by colonial officials who were carrying out Grey’s instruction to collect documents on indigenous people. The choice of texts collected must also have been influenced by Grey’s colonial policy.¹⁷ Other important figures in the production of the texts

were the translators. Their identities and the interest they might have had in the translation add another dimension to the construction of the texts. The two whose names appeared as translators were Geo Shepstone¹⁸ and John Ayliff.¹⁹ As sons of missionaries who had worked among amaXhosa they spoke isiXhosa and were familiar with the Xhosa world. Their contribution to writing on the Xhosa past represented a second tier of missionary influence in such work.²⁰ At the same time, as colonial officials, they bridged missionary and colonial participation in collecting and creating knowledge about the indigenous people. John Ayliff was continuing the work of his father who had written widely about “Fingoes” and had taken a lead in constructing “Fingo” history.²¹ Ayliff did more than half of the translating of the Kaye texts. The rest fell on the shoulders of Geo Shepstone, then interpreter to Colonel Maclean,²² Civil Commissioner for British Kaffraria.

This discussion will focus on the nature and relevance of some of the oral traditions in the Kaye collection. Three genres of Xhosa oral tradition in the collection will be examined. These traditions, in different ways, are media through which amaXhosa retained and passed on their knowledge of the past. The first are *amabali emvelo* which include stories of creation, texts on the origins of humankind, on the causes of death, and on the origins of fire. They are typical of those mythical stories defined by Bascom as “Prose narratives which in the society in which they are told are considered to be truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past ...often associated with theology and ritual.”²³ *Amabali emvelo* are pathways to events that are believed to have happened, but at the same time are beyond comprehension because of their supernatural nature. These traditions give generic answers to puzzles that human beings contend with, and are more cultural than historical. They however influence the way the past is remembered. Although no history can be reconstructed through evidence from such texts, these narratives cannot be ignored. They form a mental backdrop against which the past is re-visited and recollected. They hover on the mental horizon of their owners and at times survive through figures of expression. For example, the Xhosa idiom, *Ukubamba elentulo*,²⁴ is based on *ibali lemvelo* that tells of the origins of death.²⁵ These texts may be given symbolic expression, especially at religious ceremonies. For example, among amaXhosa the birth of a child brings a re-enactment of the first *ukuphuma eluhlangeni* (bursting forth from the source of life which is symbolised by a reed).²⁶ Setiloane explains, “So the coming of the child into the world is the

occasion for an enactment of that first event of our parents.”²⁷

A core African belief about the origins of the world and humankind, expressed through *amabali emvelo*, is that life burst from a source symbolised by a reed or tree. Among amaXhosa in particular, Hlanga *waphuma eluhlangeni*.²⁸ Nkonki explains that *uhlanga* is an old Xhosa word meaning reed.²⁹ This is a literal translation, however. A better interpretation is given by Callaway as an emergence “from the source of being”.³⁰ The similarity of Xhosa and Zulu *amabali emvelo* suggests either a common source for these two ethnic groups or a long history of interaction. Variants of the Hlanga tradition are found among various ethnic groups in southern and central Africa. According to a BaKongo myth the first being to be created embraced a tree which split into male and female.³¹ This myth is similar to one told by the Ovambo. They believe that four people came out of a leadwood tree.³²

Hlanga as an all-pervading force in Xhosa spirituality manifests itself in facets of life other than rites of passage. For example, in the healing process *igqira* (the medical doctor) will mark an ailing body with *iintlanga*³³ (incisions), possibly a symbol of life and regeneration. These incisions are cuts that stand parallel to one another like reeds. They are placed on the joints of the human body. The purpose is to fortify the individual against all sorts of dangers, especially the supernatural. *Iintlanga* can be seen as a brand, marking the individual as of and with Hlanga from where she/he burst.³⁴ The word *uhlanga* is also used for deep feelings that are stirred in highly emotional situations. A special type of music may deeply affect an individual *avukelwe luhlanga* (an arousal of the spirit). Someone with *uhlanga* is also understood to be in that state which Setiloane describes as “The coming in of Divinity into the human person... to make it blossom to a higher level of sensitivity and availability.”³⁵ AmaXhosa explain such a state as *ukuthwasa*.

To what degree did amaXhosa, during the middle of the nineteenth century, understand Hlanga to be a force in their actions as well as an influence on what befell the wider community? The first to record a reference to Hlanga was Bennie in 1822. In response to a question he had posed about the maker of the sun, moon and stars, Bennie was told by a “chief” that it was “Rutlanga”.³⁶ In 1826 Reverend Kay was told by an old Xhosa man “that the eldest of our kings is Thlanga.”³⁷

Such a remark introduced Hlanga into the political realm. At about the same time Thompson noted that amaXhosa believed in a “Supreme Being to whom they give the appellation of *Uhlanga* (Supreme).”³⁸ Pringle was informed that Makana, the famous Xhosa nationalist and leader in the 1819 British-Xhosa war, had claimed that he had been sent by Hlanga, which Pringle translated to mean the Great Spirit.³⁹ The notion of Hlanga also appeared in texts about amaZulu. Callaway was told by a Zulu informant that “*Uhlanga wazala oKhulu, oKhulu bazala obaba*” (Hlanga begot our ancestors who in turn bore our fathers). There is a belief in Bunyoro and Ankole in central Africa that at the time of creation “Ruhanga” created the world.⁴⁰ These beliefs enabled amaZulu, amaXhosa and other African groups to claim a direct link with Hlanga, to be of Hlanga, and to be Hlanga. Because of the importance of the Xhosa belief in Hlanga, the text that refers to Hlanga in Kaye’s collection will be studied in greater detail below.

Another oral genre included in Kaye’s collection was *iintsomi*. This is a well known oral text that makes reference to the Xhosa past. Sotho-Tswana speakers refer to these texts as *dinonwane* or *tsomo*, while in Swazi-Zulu languages they are *izinganekwane*. Like *amabali emvelo*, *iintsomi* had a pervasive influence on the manner in which amaXhosa narrated their past. Early recorders of *iintsomi* tended to view them as folktales, fables or nursery tales.⁴¹ However, to counteract the distortion that can occur with translation, researchers are increasingly opting for the retention of words as used by the owners of the tradition. Scheub, for instance, sticks to the word *iintsomi*.⁴² *Iintsomi* are ancient texts that have passed from generation to generation. In the process their language constantly changes to gain meaning in the present. They also carry words that are possibly so archaic that they have lost meaning.⁴³ For example, when the audience responded to the performer’s invitation to pay attention, the words “*Chosi*” or “*Chosi chebelele*”, are uttered. These words are not translatable as they are no longer in everyday usage. Moreover, in some *iintsomi* there are names of animals that are unknown, probably extinct. *Imbulu* is one such animal, and *inabulele* as well as *inkalimeva* are equally unknown species that feature in the texts.

Iintsomi refer to the past, but do not focus on a specific event. There is usually no identifiable geographical setting. Characters involved in the plot are often endowed with animal and sometimes supernatural features. The time factor is equally indeterminate. This may be what Mbiti refers to as the *Zamani*, an age of mythical religious beings.⁴⁴ Another feature of *iintsomi*

which makes their use as a historical source problematic is their highly symbolic discourse. For example, the kinship language used in the texts may refer to human relations outside the family in a polity or different ethnic groupings. Even more problematic is the manner in which the *iintsomi* world appears to transcend boundaries of nature. *Iintsomi* are sometimes full of aberrations. For example, a boy may fall pregnant; a girl marries a dog; grandchildren cook and eat their grandmother.⁴⁵ Through *iintsomi* listeners have an opportunity to re-live the extremities of human experience. The challenge for historians is to unravel and interpret such symbolism and hidden meanings. In *iintsomi* there are discernible themes which are identifiable through repetition and frequency. Some of these themes can also be found in *iimbali* (historical narratives). Because there are common themes among oral narratives the classification of genres becomes blurred.

A third category of oral tradition included in the Kaye collection is *imbali* (historical narrative). This genre is constructed around a specific event. *Imbali* always include names of participants, as opposed to animal figures. Names of rulers and other outstanding characters will sometimes be used as pillars around which a text is constructed. *Imbali* also have a spatial dimension. Landmarks are often used to anchor the events of the past to memory. For example, Idabi LasemaLinde (the battle of amaLinde) is still remembered as having taken place not far from present day King Williamstown, a place that is still full of *amalinde* (ditches). Another *imbali* associated with a specific site refers to the occasion when *ukumkani* Gcaleka was initiated as *igqira lomlambo* (a river doctor) at Ngxingxolo river, not far from East London. Also, the battle that marked the schism between Gandoweentshaba and Tshiwo is remembered to have taken place at the Cihoshe ford on the Nxuba/Fish river. Periodisation in *iimbali* is based on political epochs or reigns. For example, in *imbali* about Gxuluwe and abaThwa, the dating of the historical narrative is made possible by reference to Gcaleka, who then was *inkosi* to Gxuluwe. *Imbali* seem to have been the texts which early writers of Xhosa history relied on most. Campbell, who travelled on the eastern frontier in 1813 noted that amaXhosa retained knowledge about the history of their forefathers, their kings and chiefs and “they can relate them with great distinctness.”⁴⁶

The differentiation between these three genres of oral tradition is artificial. Form in oral tradition

is more fluid than in written texts. There is a constant flow of one text format into another. Okpewho likened this to an arc. One arm of the arc represents historical time and points towards factual texts. The other arm of the same arc stands for mythical time and points towards fiction.⁴⁷ In *iimbali* the specificity of place and time sometimes gives way to an elasticity that stretches into a state of vagueness, into *intsomi* world. In such instances *iimbali* may be found to embrace both mythic or *intsomi* time as well as the present. Also *iimbali* at times rely on motifs used in *iintsomi*. Thus, although amaXhosa have different pathways into the past, there is occasional overlap between them. This overlap may be due to a number of reasons. Tonkin argues that the making of historical narratives is “influenced by prevailing cosmologies and cultural expectations or theories.”⁴⁸ There are Xhosa beliefs which transcend the different categories of oral tradition. For example there is a belief that what is created contains so much of the creator that it has the potential to be the creator itself. Thus there is a strong tendency in the construction of a historical text to revert constantly to the beginning, sometimes to mythical time. This will usually be done through providing the names of group progenitors of individuals, clans, and ethnic groups, real or created. This explains the frequent reference to Hlanga.⁴⁹ For individuals, their personal fullness is achieved by making reference to the ancestors who carry the story of that individual’s beginning. Thus to amaXhosa, the present does not attain full meaning outside the past. Such a belief then negates any notion of an event’s uniqueness. That perhaps explains why at times amaXhosa simply use existing and standard motifs to give an account of an event. A study of *iintsomi*, for example, reveals that these texts have a number of plots that are interchangeable.

The understanding that the progenitors or ancestors of an individual or people were a take-off point in the construction of their history may be the reason for the preponderance of stories of origin in Kaye’s collection and other writings of the period. In Kaye there is *ibali lemvelo*, entitled “Gokudalwa kwabantu”⁵⁰ “About the Creation of People”.⁵¹ The story recounts that at the beginning there was *inkosi*, Tixo, and Satan, the cook. There were four huts of which one was for *inkosi*, the other served as a kitchen, the third one was again for *inkosi* and the last one, which was round and made of grass, was for two people. The man was first created with mud and cloud, so that human beings cannot become dry like trees. The man was put to a deep sleep and [Tixo] took out his rib which he mixed with the moon and cloud and made a woman. That is why a woman has monthly periods of abstinence. One day the man went to look after cattle. During

his absence Satan visited the woman and made a proposal which she turned down. Satan promised her the tree that Tixo eats, which was responsible for his wisdom. Satan brought the tree and it was only after they had slept that she had the tree. When the man returned he found the woman ashamed of her nakedness. The woman persuaded the man to take a bite, when he did, it stuck at his throat and he developed the Adam's apple. The *inkosi* visited them and asked what they had done. They were told that for having disobeyed instructions they were going to undergo a lot of suffering. They would have to work for their living. The woman was told that she would conceive but would lose the child. She would also lose other children she might bear.

It is surprising that the story was referred to as a "Kafir legend"⁵² when it was clearly based on the creation story of the Book of Genesis. The writer had adapted a biblical story to a Xhosa setting. For example, the man was said to have been away looking after cattle when the snake visited his wife at home. God was referred to as the Chief. Hodgson interprets this tradition as an attempt to bring a Xhosa myth into line with biblical teaching.⁵³ This is not a correct reading of the tradition. The biblical myth retained its form and only a few Xhosa concepts were added. A few points need further exploration in this text that tells of the origins of humanity, the birth of sin, and death. In the first place the text is merely a Judaic myth that seeks to fill in the void about the beginning of humankind. The story signals the biblical influence on Xhosa thinking and Xhosa tradition by the middle of the nineteenth century. It also is an example of the weaving of a number of plots into one by Xhosa narrators.

It would appear that amaXhosa were fascinated by the biblical story of creation from the time that Christian teachings were introduced to them. Reverend Shaw, a minister at Wesleyville, in 1828 noted "how the reading of the first chapter of Genesis in the Caffre language ...produced much discussion among the people."⁵⁴ It is also possible that Christian teachings sharpened their curiosity about human origins. In 1834 Rev Kayser reported that when he visited Maqoma the latter related the story of Adam and Eve to him.⁵⁵ Such teachings differed drastically from what amaXhosa believed to be the nature and origins of being. AmaXhosa believed that humanity *waphuma eluhlangeni* (emerged from Hlanga)⁵⁶ or came out of a cavern with cattle. AmaXhosa had several *amabali emvelo* on creation, some of which had been recorded by the middle of the nineteenth century. For example, there was Alberti's creation story which claimed that humans

and animals emerged from a cavern in the east.⁵⁷ Reverend Ayliff had recorded an *ibali lemvelo* in 1834 when he lived among amaGcaleka.⁵⁸ The story went that a chameleon had been sent by Hlanga to deliver a message that there would be no death. Because of its slow pace the chameleon had been overtaken by the faster lizard which had carried a new message that humankind would die.⁵⁹ Despite the existence of such narratives, Kaye decided on a story that had been adapted from the biblical myth, because it was in line with missionary teaching. Those under missionary influence may have believed that the biblical myth was the truth, while the Xhosa narrative had to be suppressed. The inclusion of the narrative, “About the Creation of People”, instead of other *amabali emvelo* indicates a strong missionary influence. It also shows how amaXhosa were beginning to explore other understandings of the past. It is possible that the story “About the Creation of People” was produced by mission connected people who wanted to make the myth about the fall more accessible to Xhosa listeners. Its relevance lies in the manner in which a biblical text was restructured to accommodate Xhosa concepts, resulting in a hybrid text. The text is an example of the convergence of two conventions - Xhosa and western - a convergence that was central to the making of Xhosa history.

The story entitled “Sikulume Gabafazi Bentsomi”⁶⁰ (The Story of Sikulume, as related by the women)⁶¹ is *intsomi*. It is a story about a man with two wives. There was conflict between the co-wives. The younger wife suffered due to the death of her children in infancy. She eventually bore a son whom she hid from the family. The father, who was *inkosi*, discovered the son and named him Sikulume.⁶² He further promised that when the boy grew up he would dress him in an *inabulele*⁶³ robe. When the young man reached manhood he would not speak. One old *iphakathi* (counsellor) successfully coaxed him into telling what was bothering him. Sikulume explained that he was expecting an *inabulele* robe as his father had promised him. *Amaphakathi* then undertook the long and dangerous journey in search of *inabulele* which they eventually found in a deep pool. *Inabulele* chased them, but they eventually managed to kill it by making it swallow a red hot axe.

The narrative about Sikulume contained a number of themes that feature in both oral tradition and Xhosa history. One is that of domestic conflict between co-wives or brothers. The complex theme of human relations in domestic situations and in the political realm is expressed in a

simple story that would be understandable to young listeners.⁶⁴ In Xhosa history the theme of domestic conflict and intrigue, especially within the royal family, sometimes spilling over into civil war, is common. The conflict might arise from competition between royal co-wives, as was the case in *intsomi* about Sikulume, or between brothers and uncles. An eye-witness account of a struggle between royal wives and *ukumkani* was recorded by Ayliff in his journal during the 1830s. Nomsa, the Queen Mother in Hintsas's court, together with Noloko, a co-wife, sided with Ayliff who was increasingly viewed with suspicion by Hintsas.⁶⁵ In another instance a report was entered by Ayliff that one of the wives of Hintsas, Nodosi, was accused of bewitching the child of a co-wife, Noloko.⁶⁶ Childlessness⁶⁷ in Xhosa society encapsulated all that went with such a condition: sterility, non-productivity, and a barren future. In Xhosa history there are countless instances of barren queens. In such cases court intrigues developed around the choosing of a son to be placed in the Great House from the junior Houses.⁶⁸ Barrenness was anathema to amaXhosa as it was a state that threatened all facets of Xhosa life - social, economic and political.

The next important theme in *intsomi* of Sikulume is the position and role of *amaphakathi*. In the story it was *amaphakathi* who intervened in the case of a prince who had embarked on some kind of passive resistance by refusing to speak. These counsellors stepped into the conflict between father and son and sought a solution. The search for *inabulele* may symbolise the continuous search for solutions to innumerable problems that arise in a polity. The dangerous journey may signify the constant dangers faced by those in higher office while executing their duties. It is important to note that in the story, *inkosi*, Sikulume's father, is an insignificant background figure. The solution to the problem is sought and found by *amaphakathi*. The prominence of *amaphakathi*, overshadowing *inkosi*, implies their powerful presence in the Xhosa world. Furthermore, the picture painted of *inkosi* suggests he was not as central in the life of the polity as had been implied through the genealogical tables. *Inabulele* which was a mythic or extinct animal, conveyed a sense of antiquity in the story of Sikulume. At the same time *inkosi* and *amaphakathi* were everyday Xhosa words. In "Sikulume" the narrator drew together remote mythic time and the present.

A third text in Kaye's collection, entitled "Ati Maxosa Enbalini Yawo"⁶⁹ (According to Xhosa History), is an interesting mixture of Xhosa oral genres. It has elements of *ibali lemvelo* as well

as *intsomi*. The main part of the text is *imbali*. The various units that make up the narrative will be explored individually. The tradition begins with a creation story in which long ago three people, a man, a woman, and a girl emerged from *eluhlangeni*. The notion of emergence from *eluhlangeni* refers to a Xhosa myth that humankind “*Hlanga waphuma eluhlangeni*”. The inclusion of a man and a woman emerging from *eluhlangeni* has traces of the biblical creation story. This narrative can also be linked to a tradition that was recorded by Ward in 1848⁷⁰, according to which three people, “Kafir, Bushman, and white man”, had emerged from a chasm.⁷¹ “Ati Maxosa” was based on *ibali lemvelo* as well as a biblical myth. This is an interesting example of cosmological interplay in mid-nineteenth century texts about the Xhosa past.

The tradition continued, stating that the first three people “*Bavela Gasembo*”⁷² (They came from eMbo). The narrator had jumped from explaining the birth of humanity to identifying a geographical place of origin for the three. Mythical time was collapsed into the remembered past. The man’s name was given as Sidamba, the son of Godongwana. The girl’s name was Nolushungu, the mother of Nxele. In the story, the man and woman are said to have been killed by amaZizi, but the girl escaped by fleeing. The story of the three characters introduced a different time frame and sense of space. It had jumped to the remembered past, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Nxele was a historic figure. AmaZizi were a group who kept appearing in oral tradition and colonial literature, but there are contradictory descriptions given in those texts about amaZizi. In *intsomi* under discussion amaZizi were portrayed as marauders and destroyers of communities and were responsible for the death of the first couple. According to Rev Boyce amaZizi were initially the victims of an attack by Matiwane. Later they joined Matiwane in attacking others, like amaHlubi.⁷³ After 1835 Ayliff included amaZizi in the list of “nations” that had been taken into the colony as part of the “Fingo” exodus.⁷⁴

The story of the first couple and the dangers they encountered until their demise at the hands of amaZizi is similar to plots found in *intsomi* about travellers who face dangers and are sometimes killed.⁷⁵ Similarly, the account of Nxele and his mother is couched in a motif that depicts extraordinary situations in which a future hero is born. *Imbali* about the birth and rise of Nxele is told through standard Xhosa motifs. Chronology, or “Western temporality”,⁷⁶ was not an essential feature of the text.⁷⁷ Rather, it was a matter of identifying key characters and through

these relating important trends of the time. In the text the birth of Nxele is shrouded in mystery,⁷⁸ preparing the ground for an eventful life. This is similar to the story of Jesus Christ. In the story of Sundiata, a West African tradition, the hero also had a most unusual birth and childhood.⁷⁹ He is said to have walked soon after his birth and to have uprooted a huge tree, as if it were a branch, for his mother's firewood.

In "Ati Maxosa Enbalini Yawo", in Kaye's collection, mention was also made of *uphundlo* custom. This involved marrying off virgins to old Xhosa men, a custom which missionaries had vehemently preached against. The mention of *uphundlo* may have reflected the influence of missionaries keen to expose customs they perceived as barbaric. After the war of Mlanjeni the battle against "barbaric" customs was taken up by the colonial authorities, especially Grey.⁸⁰ The conflict between missionary morality and African beliefs and practices was intensifying by the middle of the nineteenth century. There is evidence that amaNgqika were deliberately working to undo some of the missionary inroads into Xhosa culture. *Uphundlo* is said to have been one of the practices restored by Sandile during the 1840s when he became the senior *inkosi* among amaRharhabe.⁸¹ The narrative then covered the life of Nxele/Makana and his teachings among his people, amaNdlambe, a story that is well documented in early writing on Xhosa history.⁸² This was based on *iimbali* that were probably circulating among amaXhosa at that time. In the story it was said that Nxele claimed to be the nephew of Tayi, who was the son of Dalidiphu, who had been sent to the world, *eluhlangeni*. This last remark linked the end of the story to the beginning of the text where reference had been made to *eluhlangeni*.

In "Ati Maxosa Enbalini Yawo" there is evidence of multicultural approaches to the reconstruction of the past. The African voice reveals itself through the use of *iintsomi* plots as well as *amabali emvelo*. The text retains a strong African style in its narration and emplotment. There is a sense of time that is repeatedly returning to the beginning.⁸³ This is different from the western lineal conception. The missionary voice is also present. The text is an attempt by the narrator to blend and integrate these various paths to the past. "Ati Maxosa Enbalini Yawo" is a "cultural hybrid". Both historioracy and historiography are identifiable as the text meanders from one form to another. The text reveals multiple voices. With shifting power relations there are voices that are drowned and muffled. As the coloniser grew stronger, so did the colonial voice

and culture become more noticeable in Xhosa historiography. At the same time suppressed cultural practices and voices are not extinguished.

The text that forms the core of this chapter is entitled, “Gesimilo Senvelo Senkosi Zamaxosa”⁸⁴ (On the manner of the origins of *iinkosi*). It comprises sixteen pages written in isiXhosa with an English translation by Geo Shepstone. The English translation was produced in 1857.⁸⁵ The Xhosa text is likely to have been written at the same time. The Xhosa orthography in the text is a great improvement on that of *Iziqwenge* of the late 1830s and even some articles of *Ikwezi* of the 1840s. It would appear that the Xhosa text was edited after it had been written. There was a repeated correction of the word Tshawe which was changed to Tshiwo, and vice-versa. In the English translation, however, there was no such correction. In the Xhosa text Tshawe appeared first in the genealogical list, and later mention was made of Tshiwo. There was more evidence of tampering with the Xhosa version. On page 9 the writer identified the direction from which amaXhosa came. He observed, “Amaxosa avela gase nouth [sic] East” (AmaXosa come from nouth east). The underlined word was neither south nor north. Whatever it was it had been written over. The possibility is that the original word was south. It was then changed to north, and ended up looking like nouth. In the English version it was said, “The Kaffirs came from north-east.”⁸⁶ The correction in the Xhosa version seems to have been influenced by the English version.

The Kaye collection shows how, during the translation of texts, meaning could be distorted. Shepstone’s English translation suffers from a number of weaknesses. He was not always faithful to the original. For example, right from the beginning, the Xhosa text identified, “Inkosi enkul’ ebizwa ngokumkani wamxosa GuXosa”⁸⁷ (The great *inkosi* who is also known as the king/monarch of amaXhosa is Xhosa). Shepstone translated the sentence to mean “The origin of the Kaffir chiefs is traced back as far as Xosa.”⁸⁸ Shepstone’s translation lost the essence of the opening statement of the text, making no reference to the idea of a great monarch (*ukumkani*). There were other instances where Shepstone fell short in his translation and transcription. On the first page he failed to present the genealogical table as set out in the Xhosa version. In his translation “Togu begot Unconde and Tshiwo”,⁸⁹ in the Xhosa text Tshiwo is the son of Ngconde. Transcription of the texts from an oral to a written form resulted in a distortion. Further

disfigurement followed translation from isiXhosa to English. Even with all the distortion in Shepstone's translation, an inscription on the text described his work as "a correct translation"⁹⁰ of the text.

The history of the Tshawe dynasty received a lot of attention in the text. As in earlier writing on Xhosa history "Gesimilo Senvelo" had a genealogical table of *iinkosi* which began with Xosa, "Inkosi enkulu". The narrator again referred to Xhosa as having been "ukumkani".⁹¹ The Kaye text was written ten years after the Dugmore genealogical table of 1846.⁹² Dugmore had not given any particular designation to Xhosa. He simply referred to "the chief from whom the Amaxosa Kaffirs profess to derive their national designation."⁹³ Thus specific reference to Xhosa as "Inkos' enkulu" and "ukumkani" in Kaye's text is worthy of note. The designation "Inkos' enkulu" was used by Reverend Kay in his 1833 book to refer to a senior *inkosi*.⁹⁴ In 1848, when Harry Smith, the new High Commissioner of British Kaffraria, arrived in Grahamstown he announced that, "He, the High Commissioner of British Kaffraria was henceforth their Inkosi Enkulu, Great Chief."⁹⁵ Later, Smith passed the same message to a gathering of *iinkosi*.⁹⁶ Ten years later the concept of *inkosi enkulu* was re-inserted into Xhosa history, but with a different meaning from Smith's.

In his translation Shepstone seems to have been reluctant to recognise the status of "*ukumkani*" (king or monarch). While Kaye identified the successors of Tshawe as "Ezike Zi nkosi ezibizwa ngokuba ngokumkani"⁹⁷ (These *iinkosi* are referred to as *ookumkani*"), Shepstone in his translation simply noted, "These are the chiefs of the Kaffirs not including petty chiefs." Initially colonial writers had referred to Ngqika as king. By the middle of the century, however, no such title was used to refer to Sarhili who was the actual *ukumkani*. In 1857 Shepstone was interpreter to the Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria, Colonel Maclean. Maclean, Grey and others were in the process of re-structuring the institution of *ubukhosi* (chieftainship), by putting *iinkosi* under colonial authority. The chief of the late 1850s had been emptied of his traditional authority and had become a paid agent of the colonial government. It would not have been in line with colonial policy for Shepstone to endorse the idea of *ukumkani* as king or monarch. Under Grey there was a shift in the manner the colonial government related to *iinkosi*. Under the new system, there was no place or recognition of *ukumkani*. There were just "chiefs", whose scope and

authority was to be defined by the colonial government.

The genealogical list of *iinkosi* in “Gesimilo Senvelo” had grown longer than Dugmore’s. There were new additions, like Mvulande, Malangana, and Nkosiyamntwana.⁹⁸ This may be interpreted as evidence of expanding knowledge on the Tshawe past. Or the new names in the list may have been added by the genealogist, or Xhosa informants. There were factors that could have encouraged amaXhosa to undertake the lengthening of their royal genealogy. By the middle of the nineteenth century royal genealogies were being used to prove the seniority of one ethnic group over others. In a book written in 1854⁹⁹ Rev Holden had presented the royal genealogical tables of abaThembu, amaMpondo, amaMpondomise and amaXhosa. He argued that abaThembu were the “paramount, being the oldest or great stock of the tree, from which other divisions in remote periods have probably descended.”¹⁰⁰ AmaXhosa were placed fourth in the line, coming after amaMpondomise and amaMpondo.¹⁰¹ From 1854, during Grey’s governorship, colonial policies involved using *iinkosi* as paid colonial agents.¹⁰² Knowledge of Xhosa royal history was important in the implementation of colonial policies. AmaXhosa, beleaguered under the British onslaught, may have believed it strategic to focus on producing a detailed royal history, as a way of consolidating the institution. In “Gesimilo Senvelo” the narrator presented royal history to serve as a central pillar around which ama Xhosa could rally in the face of colonialism.

The opening line of “Gesimilo Senvelo” goes like this: “Inkos ‘Enkulu ebizwa ngokumkani wamxosa (sic) GuXosa” (my emphasis) (The most senior *inkosi* whose title is *ukumkani* of amaXhosa is Xhosa). The storyline that begins with Xhosa, an individual, progresses to a bigger entity, amaXhosa. This entity (amaXhosa) nonetheless still carries elements of Xhosa the individual as the latter continues to exist in the former. The idea of a progenitor, Xhosa, who represents the past, helps to explain the existence of amaXhosa in the present. There has to be a return to Xhosa to explain the origins and present existence of amaXhosa. The full meaning is lost if one aspect is missing. It is the same return to the beginning that is found in the narrative, “Ati Maxosa Enbalini Yawo,”¹⁰³ which began with *eluhlangeni* and ended with the same concept. The narrator may also have been trying to give firm historical roots to the Xhosa name. Since the coming of colonists amaXhosa had to contend with a colonial appellation, “Kaffir”. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Lichtenstein had pointed out that “these people are

exceedingly offended at being called Caffres.”¹⁰⁴In 1848 Noyi observed that the word “Kaffir” was used by colonists and was never adopted by Africans themselves.¹⁰⁵

The identification of Xhosa as the first *kumkani* served another purpose. In most African religions there is a strong ancestor cult. Xhosa was a common, binding ancestor for all those who identify with *ubuXhosa* (state of being Xhosa). The elevation of figures to a sacred ancestry was important in the reconstruction of the Xhosa past. As a progenitor Xhosa was an ancestor who sanctified the past. The royal genealogical line also served to commemorate national ancestors. Ancestors were a link, as intermediaries, to Qamata, Mvelinqangi. Peires questions the identification of Xhosa as the great ancestor.¹⁰⁶ He accepts the view propounded by Maingard, a linguist, that the word *xhosa* is derived from a Khoisan word *//kosa* which means angry men.¹⁰⁷ I suggest that the person of Xhosa is taken by amaXhosa as marking the beginning of *ubuXhosa*.

“Gesimilo Senvelo” contains *imbali* on the rise of the Tshawe dynasty. It is one of the few *iimbali* that was fully recorded at that time. In the tradition Tshawe is said to have had two brothers, Cirha and Jwarha. The story began with Cirha as *inkosi*. Tshawe is then said to have quarrelled with his two brothers over *iphuthi* (bluebuck). Because of continued friction between the brothers, Tshawe eventually fled to his mother’s people. There he asked for, “iintonga nobugqi, wabuya nazoke”¹⁰⁸ (weapons and magic with which he returned home). Tension between the brothers continued, and in the end the polity divided. Some people attached themselves to Tshawe and others to Cirha and Jwarha. War broke out and Tshawe was victorious. Cirha’s rule came to an end and the two brothers submitted to Tshawe. This narrative is told through a motif found in a number of traditions. The motif has been used to explain political changes, such as the rise of a new dynasty, through a story of fraternal conflict. The oral tradition about the sons of the Mpondo *kumkani*, Cabe, runs on the same lines. It is said that Gangatha quarrelled with his brother Qiya because the former refused to pay homage to the latter.¹⁰⁹ Henige points to another popular motif in African traditions - the one about a lost son or someone who grows up elsewhere and later returns to claim his birthright¹¹⁰. This is also what is supposed to have happened to Tshawe.

In “Gesimilo Senvelo” Xhosa is identified as the father of Cirha, Jwarha and Tshawe. This *imbali*

is narrated through the use of a kin idiom, with characters in the story given as relations. Kopytoff argues that the practice of expressing political associations through a family metaphor is common in oral traditions in Africa.¹¹¹ Through such a metaphor a history of different groups or polities is narrated in the language of family relations. It is possible therefore that the tradition about Xhosa and his sons is an oral history about three independent groups who as neighbours fought and also formed alliances. The *imbali* about the rise of Tshawe may be a story that celebrates the victory of a Tshawe group over rival political groups - Cirha and Jwarha. The name Tshawe may also have marked a transition to the hegemony of siNtu-speaking rulers who replaced Khoisan groups. Three *iziduko* of Cirha - "Cirha, Qhankqolo, Ncibane" - can be classified as belonging to Khoisan languages. That suggests possible Khoisan roots. *Imbali* about the rise of Tshawe links his descendants to Xhosa who represents the beginning. This can be seen as a way of legitimising Tshawe, of the siNtu-speaking group, over the south-east Africans he ruled over.

Scholars have tried to interpret the underlying meaning and historical significance of *imbali* on the rise of Tshawe. There is no single interpretation of the texts, and there are different versions. In Theal's version Tshawe is the son of Nkoziyamntu (sic) who is the son of Malangana, the son of Xhosa.¹¹² Soga introduces new information noting how Tshawe obtained additional help from neighbouring groups like amaMpondomise, and imiHega during his fight against Cirha and Jwarha.¹¹³ However, as Peires has pointed out,¹¹⁴ Soga gave a literal interpretation of the tradition. In the first place Soga tried to locate the geographical origins of amaXhosa and also attempted to trace their southward migration.¹¹⁵ Secondly, Soga seemed to believe that Cirha and Jwarha were individuals. Whereas these may have been independent groups or clans.¹¹⁶ The story of Tshawe's rise reinforced the centrality of the royal theme in Xhosa history. The narrative furnished a fuller account of *ookumkani* (monarchs), more than just the genealogical outlines of earlier texts. Tshawe in particular emerged as a historical figure who won wars and established a polity. The story of the rise of Tshawe qualifies to be *imbali* as there are identifiable names of characters or polities of amaCirha and amaJwarha,¹¹⁷ and other groups that appeared. But the silence on the locality of the events tilts the tradition towards being *intsomi*.

Historians have tried to date the rise of Tshawe. Working backwards from Phalo, Peires

suggested “some time before 1675, but [it would be] rash to say anything more than that.”¹¹⁸ Theal based his calculation on an assumption that Togu was *inkosi* in the text written by the survivors of the Stavenisse wreck.¹¹⁹ This assertion has since been challenged by Peires.¹²⁰ Dating the rise of Tshawe continues to be problematic. Any calculation based on royal genealogies will be bedevilled by the lengthenings, interregna, and omissions of unpopular or insignificant monarchs. It is possible that dates for Tshawe could be calculated by other means. Some names of *ookumkani* may be referring to some historic events. For example, the name Mvulande, literally means unceasing rain. Thus, the name may be associated with a flood that was experienced in the region. Equally, Malangana, literally means scorching sun. This particular *kumkani* may have been born at a time of exceptional drought.

“Gesimilo Senvelo” provided a historical basis for the dominance of the Tshawe House. Besides the royal genealogical tables, which had grown longer and longer from the beginning of the nineteenth century, observations by nineteenth century writers testified to the power that was enjoyed by *ukumkani* in the Xhosa polity. *Ukumkani* had the religious authority to provide the fat that was to be used to anoint any *inkosi*. Without this authority, no one could be anointed *inkosi*. Buru explained the authority of Hintsá, his brother, to Collins in 1808: “Hintsá was the first of the ...Kozas and added, with uplifted hands, He is so great that when Gyka, Zlambee or any of the other chiefs want fat, they send to him for it.”¹²¹ Cungwa, *inkosi* of amaGqunukhwebe, expressed similar sentiments to the traveller, Cowper Rose, when explaining who was the most powerful chief during the late eighteenth century: “Hintsá - a long pause - then Gaika, then St’lanly... We [amaGqunukhwebe] are but as dogs to Hintsá - as the dust is to my foot.”¹²²

The story of Tshawe’s ascent to power resembles written accounts of the rise of Shaka.¹²³ Like Tshawe, Shaka was said to have fled from his father’s people, and found refuge with his mother’s community. Shaka and Tshawe are also described as having built their polities through military prowess. In the two accounts there is also a strong kin idiom, expressed in terms of bloodletting fratricide. Shaka was assassinated by his brothers in 1828, while Tshawe fought and dethroned his brother. In addition Shaka and Tshawe are shown as having managed to amalgamate and consolidate different groups under their sway. The narratives about the birth and early lives of Shaka and Tshawe bore features of a motif found in African oral tradition. In the history of the

two characters there were metaphors commonly used in African traditions which trace the early life of a leading figure. These included an inhospitable home situation, together with the rejection of the leader by his/her own people. Such a setting then gives the leader an opportunity to return and claim his/her own birthright.

The story of Tshawe shares features with other historical accounts found in Africa. The narrative about the rise of the Mbegha dynasty found in present day Tanzania is described by Feierman as an interplay between symbolic and historical elements.¹²⁴ The symbolic elements are mythical, while the historical features refer to specific places and people. In the Mbegha story the hero is said to have hunted pigs. Later, to denote the transition from hunting to farming Mbegha is said to have chased pigs away as pests. In the narrative mention is made of groups like the Shambaa, Nango, and Mbungu whom Mbegha is said to have united.¹²⁵ In the rise of Tshawe the cause of conflict was *iphuthi* (bluebuck). Later when Tshawe returned from exile he had knowledge of iron-working. These narratives may be symbolic accounts of historic transitions that a group of people underwent over time.

The context in which the story of Tshawe appeared deserves exploration. The late 1850s, when Grey was governor, was a particularly traumatic time for amaXhosa. The war of 1850-53 had been fought with religious fervour by amaXhosa but they had lost. A greater tragedy awaited them with the cattle killing of 1856-7. These reverses were accompanied by the consolidation of colonial power through the introduction of magistrates and paid chiefs. The story of Tshawe may have been recalled to strengthen *iinkosi* at the time when their authority was systematically being eroded by Grey. Tshawe history may have been a tool to enhance Xhosa solidarity in the face of political emasculation by colonial administrators. Grey's policy of using *iinkosi* as chiefs under colonial pay was being resisted by invoking *imbali* that accorded the Tshawe House authority through history.

As narrated in "Gesimilo Senvelo", after his victory Tshawe established a polity in which there emerged "*izizwe*" under his rule.¹²⁶ As used in the text the term *izizwe* referred to the different branches of the Tshawe House. Examples of *izizwe* were amaGcaleka, amaRharhabe, imiDange, amaLanga, amaNtinde, and amaNdlambe. The narrator identified *izizwe* as offshoots that had

been founded by regional *iinkosi* from the main Tshawe line, and was suggesting a measure of political independence for these units.¹²⁷ There was a tension in the Xhosa polity between the centralised power of the monarch and the decentralised authority of regional *iinkosi*. The mention of *izizwe* added a dimension not captured by the genealogical tables that strongly suggested royal unity. The notion of royal *izizwe* helped to identify an important factor in Xhosa history - rival sites for political power.

The different sites of power within the Tshawe royal family were a replication of a similar, broader pattern in Xhosa society. It was stated in “Gesimilo Senvelo” that there were clans that claimed a pre-Tshawe existence. The statement ran: “Kodwa noko zibe ziko izizwe ngezizwe kakade ezahlukileyo ngobukhulu bazo zinobukumkani bazo ngokwazo zizilawula ngokwazo zona.”¹²⁸ These groups were the following: amaTipa, amaNgwevu, amaQocwa, amaCete, amaNgqosini, and amaNkabane.¹²⁹ Here again the writer used the word *izizwe*, but to refer to groups that had a pre-Tshawe existence. The narrator in “Gesimilo Senvelo” actually stated that they were not descendants of Xhosa.¹³⁰ Having made the point about the independent *izizwe*, the narrator then explained that these *izizwe* were overwhelmed by Tshawe and were fully incorporated under his rule. Thus, their assimilation came through conquest. “Gesimilo Senvelo” was the first written text to make any reference to the existence of independent political units before the rise of Tshawe. Cirha and Jwarha may have been independent political units or clans that had a pre-Tshawe existence, even though their names do not appear in Kaye’s list of independent *izizwe*. The story of the rise of Tshawe is as much the story of Cirha’s downfall. And, as is stated in the Kaye text, Cirha and Jwarha were later absorbed by Tshawe.¹³¹

Mention of independent *izizwe* that had a pre-Tshawe existence suggested the presence of a broader Xhosa history than the one that had focussed on the Tshawe history. The history of different clans is further proof of this point.¹³² Up to then, writers of Xhosa history had downplayed a history that went beyond the royal story. Even amaXhosa themselves had participated in placing royal history at the centre. This had come about because of the aggressive colonisation they had faced since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Silence on a broader history did not mean that amaXhosa had forfeited their clan and lineage histories. In his study of oral history in Africa Vansina differentiates between official traditions, mainly royal narratives, as well as

unofficial traditions - family, clan and village stories. In his work among the Bushong he collected both genres.¹³³

The heterogeneity of the Xhosa polity can be likened to that of the Sotho polity under Moshoeshe. Thompson observes that a typical Sotho village was made up of lineages separated from each other through *liboko/iziduko* (clan names and praises).¹³⁴ Some lineages had Nguni and San backgrounds.¹³⁵ The symbols used by the Tshawe rulers during the nineteenth century indicate that they had adopted some elements of the Cirha dynasty. AmaTshawe make no reference to the elephant in their praises. AmaCirha were likely to have had the elephant as their totem as they refer to themselves as *Mhlantl' endlovu* (tooth-gap of an elephant). It is possible that when Cirha was overthrown, Tshawe adopted the elephant, a Cirha royal animal, as one of his symbols of authority. Nineteenth century observers noted that *iinkosi* used the tail of an elephant as a symbol of authority.¹³⁶ The tail would be used when *iinkosi* were issuing summonses. The elephant tail could have been adopted from the dynasty amaTshawe had replaced to create a semblance of continuity with the old order. Analysis of *iziduko* (clan praises and names) of amaCirha reveals remnants of the Cirha past, independent of the Tshawe narrative. The story of their lost royal status remained an important part of their past. Through *iziduko* amaCirha have kept the memory of their loss alive. One of their praises, "Mhlomla-lidala kuba lineempondo" (Let us share because it[the eland] is big enough, it has horns) touches on the conflict of the "brothers" Cirha and Jwarha with Tshawe over an eland.

Another clan claiming a royal status before amaTshawe are AmaQwambi, who come seventh in the list of Xhosa clans drawn up by Jabavu.¹³⁷ However, in Soga's list of amaXhosa of "pure stock" amaQwambi come fifth¹³⁸. Peires observes that amaQwambi claim descent from Nkosiyamntu.¹³⁹ Two of their *iziduko*, "Ngonyama, Mpumlwenkulu"¹⁴⁰ (lion, big nose [elephant]), also associate amaQwambi with royal animals. Some *iziduko* of amaQwambi also appear to have Khoisan roots, like the following, "Qwambi, Mqwakangqwa, Qhwangqwa".¹⁴¹ AmaQwambi were prominent in Xhosa religious ceremonies.¹⁴² It is also significant that the Qwambi totem is *gqoloma* (a magical snake believed by amaXhosa to be in the eye of a tornado). The belief in *gqoloma* may have belonged to an ancient snake cult which in many African communities, as suggested by Webster, was later replaced by ancestor veneration.¹⁴³

AmaQwambi are said to have fallen out of the royal line and become content to be senior councillors in the service of amaTshawe.¹⁴⁴

In “Gesimilo Senvelo” amaQocwa were also on the list of *izizwe* that were independent before Tshawe’s time. AmaQocwa have been classified by Jabavu as abaThembu.¹⁴⁵ However, Peires refers to an oral tradition that traces amaQocwa to present-day Swaziland.¹⁴⁶ AmaQocwa are renowned as smiths among African communities in southern Africa.¹⁴⁷ Their special knowledge of metals probably gave them a multiple identity, as they must have served and lived among different communities. It seems they were specially valued as makers of iron weaponry. *Iziduko* of amaQocwa do make reference to their skills: “Zikhali mazembe, Xhwayimpi, Mkhont’ ubomvu, Tsha’ng’ elanga”¹⁴⁸ (Axe weaponry, Stirrer of War, Red assegai that burns like the sun). If amaQocwa pre-date amaTshawe, as claimed in the text, that raises doubts about the claim that Tshawe returned with iron-working skills from his mother’s people. The inclusion of amaQocwa in the list of *izizwe* may be seen as a statement by non-Tshawe that the Xhosa community before Tshawe was a vibrant society, with knowledge of metals.

The history of amaNgqosini, one of the independent *izizwe* listed in “Gesimilo Senvelo”, also deserves analysis. AmaNgqosini have a complex background. Soga¹⁴⁹ and Jabavu¹⁵⁰ classify them as having Sotho roots. Yet in Xhosa oral tradition they are said to have been the Khoisan group that threatened *kumkani* Tshiwo on the occasion the king was saved by Khwane. Peires confirms this dual Sotho-Khoi background accredited to amaNgqosini. He argues however that amaNgqosini are most likely Khoi, because their name has a click and is not totemic.¹⁵¹ *Iziduko* of amaNgqosini point to Sotho origins. Praises such as “Msuthu, uMshweshwe”¹⁵² suggest Sotho links. AmaXhosa never fail to acknowledge the special status accorded to amaNgqosini as “Abantu bomlambo” (river people). Chigwedere claims that there is evidence that about a millennium ago there was a people in southern Africa with a strong riverine cult.¹⁵³ Given names like Molapo (river), clan names like Kwena (crocodile), abeSuthu seem to have remnants of such a cult; and some scholars argue that amaXhosa do as well.¹⁵⁴ During the 1820s Thompson observed that during a time of drought amaXhosa would sacrifice an ox and throw parts of it into the river.¹⁵⁵ Thus, amaNgqosini may be a people who have retained certain features of an ancient culture that existed before the time of Tshawe and may originally have had Sotho links.¹⁵⁶

AmaNkabane were another clan identified by Kaye as having been independent before the rise of Tshawe. An oral tradition that tells of events during the reign of *kumkani* Tshiwo identified amaNkabane as having been one of a number of clans that were collected by a junior wife of Tshiwo. The royal wife, Noqazo, founded a new house, called amaNdluntsha (New House¹⁵⁷). According to Soga, Noqazo's new house attracted, "broken clans, especially those whose line of chiefs had died out, or whose condition had changed from the royal clans to commoners."¹⁵⁸ The historic connection between Noqazo and amaNkabane is retained in their *iziduko*: "Ndluntsha, Noqazo, Ntshinga"¹⁵⁹ *Imbali* about how amaNdluntsha came into being, which Soga narrates, deserves analysis. AmaTshawe had probably not assimilated them. Noqazo, as a junior wife of Tshiwo, who also had no male issue, could not have had any political power. Her role would have been to assist other senior royal wives. Therefore, her move to strengthen her political base by consolidating "broken clans" was a rebellion against the established order. Peires fails to grasp this political move by amaNdluntsha when he refers to them as "commoner clans [who] attempted to strengthen their position by forming an alliance called the amaNdluntsha."¹⁶⁰ There is a strong possibility that amaNdluntsha were former independent *izizwe*, and not commoner clans, as Peires referred to them, who most probably wanted to regain their lost status and chose to do so by engineering a palace revolution. Genealogical lists drawn up in nineteenth century documents hardly ever mentioned women. The story of Noqazo, however, gives some idea of the political struggles within the Xhosa polity. It would appear as though Tshawe's successors had to cope with resistance to their authority. Tshiwo seems to have accommodated the aspirations of amaNdluntsha by recognising them and giving them political space in the Xhosa polity.

This discussion about amaCirha, amaQwambi, amaNgqosini, amaQocwa, and amaNkabane is meant to explore further the claim made by the narrator in "Gesimilo Senvelo" that before Tshawe there had been independent *izizwe*. The narrator's claim threw new light on the history of amaXhosa. *Iziduko*, which are oral texts still found among amaXhosa, carry vestiges of clan histories. In some *iziduko* there is evidence of independent *izizwe* before Tshawe. "Gesimilo Senvelo" provided evidence for historians in their search for Xhosa history before Tshawe. There is evidence that even after the rise of Tshawe separate histories for various clans were retained through *iziduko*. The study of African history stands to be enriched and broadened through the analysis of clan histories as sources. This is an area for future research.

The narrator in “Gesimilo Senvelo” traced Xhosa beginnings, “ngevelo”,¹⁶¹ and claimed that pastoralism was long practised by amaXhosa. They were said from the outset to have reared cattle, sheep and goats, but not horses. This echoed claims made in *amabali emvelo*, one of which had been recorded by Alberti in 1807. In this it was said that stock of every kind emerged from the cavern from which humans also came.¹⁶² Similar claims about Xhosa pastoralism were made in oral traditions recorded during the 1840s.¹⁶³ Pastoralism held great social, economic and religious significance for amaXhosa. In Xhosa traditions there was the repeated claim that cattle keeping could be traced back to creation. A contrary view by scholars is that cattle-keeping was developed by south-east Africans about two thousand years ago. What may appear to be a contradiction may be the result of differences in African and western conventions in the production of history. A claim that cattle emerged at creation, in the beginning, may be alluding to a socio-economic revolution that was brought about by the coming of the pastoral age. This is the era that westerners calculate to have begun two millennia ago.

In “Gesimilo Senvelo” there is a brief discussion of some aspects of Xhosa social history before contact with Europeans. An observation is made that thieving was a detested act among amaXhosa, and that severe forms of punishment were meted out to thieves. Stealing had only become a problem among amaXhosa since contact with Europeans. This remark could have been a response to the colonial image of amaXhosa who were portrayed as thieves. The golden age of the Xhosa past, before the arrival of Europeans, was further linked to the reign of, *kumkani* Tshiwo, who was described in the text as someone who loved justice and was heavy on wrongdoers, especially adulterers and homosexuals. Punishment included being thrown over a precipice, called “iliwa lamagqwira,” at Nxaruni.¹⁶⁴ During a journey from Mt Coke to Hintsa’s residence Shaw passed by a huge rock which he was told was a witches’ rock.¹⁶⁵ Phalo, the son and successor of Tshiwo, followed the same policy in punishing witches. Rharhabe initially did the same,¹⁶⁶ but at a later stage slackened. Gcaleka and later Ngqika avoided such practices. The narrator’s image of Tshiwo is similar to the one drawn by Noyi in *Iziqwenge* in 1838.¹⁶⁷

The time of the Xhosa arrival in the region was the next topic to be raised. “Kutiwa ngamaxosa Enbalini yawo amaXhosa avela gase nouth East.”¹⁶⁸ (We are told by amaXhosa in their history that amaXhosa come from nouth East.) The idea of an original Xhosa homeland somewhere in

the north had been presented for almost fifty years in writings on Xhosa history. The narrator in the text joined those who had made claims about the remote origins of amaXhosa.

The first “chief” to arrive on the Kei River was identified by Kay in 1825 as Togu.¹⁶⁹ In his journal of 1827 Shaw also described Togu as “the first Caffre Chief of whom they have any traditions, and who must have lived less than two hundred years ago.”¹⁷⁰ The narrator explained that expansion took place through hunting parties penetrating the then unknown land.¹⁷¹ This was a gradual expansion, seemingly undertaken over generations. AmaXhosa found abaThwa as the original inhabitants. Later they met amaKhotla “ukubizwa kwamalawo geloxesha”¹⁷² (as the Khoi were called at that time), under Kotla.¹⁷³ Kotla was the father of Hinsati who then fathered Cwama. This account of the arrival of amaXhosa in the region was similar to earlier versions produced by Noyi, Kay and Shaw. In “Kutiwa ngamaxosa Enbalini yawo” there is a possibility of written material seeping into an oral text.

The next theme to be tackled in the text was Xhosa religion. The discussion covered various religious practices that were observed when a child was born, as well as ceremonies for honouring and venerating the ancestors. Mention was made of *izivivane*¹⁷⁴ (cairns) at which amaXhosa would assemble stones on the roadside for good luck and blessings. Kay had also written in similar vein about “large stone heaps”.¹⁷⁵ In 1840, Tente,¹⁷⁶ one of the converts at Burnshill, as part of his conversion testimony, described *isivivane* as “an idol for Kaffirs”.¹⁷⁷ A brief explanation was given in “Gesimilo Senvelo” of how amaXhosa perceived death, and how they regarded the end of earthly life as a passage to a higher status, that of *umnyanya*.¹⁷⁸ *Iminyanya* were in a position to bring blessings and good fortune to people. AmaXhosa performed ceremonies like *ukuhlwayela*,¹⁷⁹ as a way of asking for favour from *iminyanya*.

The Kaye collection in some respects reproduced what had already been written on Xhosa history by the middle of the nineteenth century. There is strong evidence that the narrators in Kaye were influenced by preceding writers like Thompson, Kay, Noyi, and Dugmore. Even earlier writings, such as those of Collins and Lichtenstein, seem to have influenced ideas expressed in the text. Included in the Kaye collection were Xhosa oral texts that made reference to a remote past. Even though the texts made no reference to specific events in the past, they touched on themes and

motifs that are usually covered in Xhosa history. Xhosa oral traditions are constructed through a number of motifs that are interchangeable among other oral texts. These motifs were sometimes used even in the construction of the remembered past, through *iimbali*. When *iimbali* were used as sources for the writing of Xhosa history, some of the Xhosa conventions of constructing the past, were incorporated in the Xhosa history texts. The Kaye collection has been used by a few writers of Xhosa history. Peires, who has produced important work on Xhosa history, made limited use of Kaye's collection, but in his discussion of Nxele he did cite one of the texts in the Kaye collection.¹⁸⁰ When considering the question of the first occupants in south-east Africa Crais also made use of a Kaye text that had been translated by Shepstone.¹⁸¹ Hodgson consulted Kaye extensively for her work.¹⁸² She seems to have found the collection valuable in tracing developments in Xhosa religious belief during the nineteenth century. She analysed oral traditions on creation collected by Kaye.

“Kafir Legends and History” represents a fraction of the repertoire of oral texts on Xhosa tradition and history during the middle of the nineteenth century. The collection covers a few of the historical themes that were emerging in the writings of the time. However there is silence on how amaXhosa saw major events at the time the collection was being compiled. Wars, accompanied by loss of life, land, and cattle, had become a yearly occurrence which must have formed a central theme in their oral history. This silence is a serious gap in the search for an African voice in mid-nineteenth century Xhosa historiography.

The Kaye collection represents an important phase in the writing of Xhosa history. Kaye selected texts from different genres of Xhosa oral tradition which provide various pathways to the Xhosa past. The production of the collection was influenced by the fact that Kaye was an African Christian and an interpreter. It therefore is not surprising that Xhosa conventions and western methods of producing history are observed in some of the texts. John Ayliff and Geo Shepstone seem to have edited as well as translated the texts. Thus colonial and missionary influences converged in the production of the Kaye collection as the compiler and the translators had strong missionary links, and Shepstone and Ayliff were colonial officials.

Four texts selected for analysis in this chapter depict three different oral genres: *amabali emvelo*,

iintsomi, and *iimbali*. The first two are oral traditions that are mythic and refer to life in remote times. Although *amabali emvelo* and *iintsomi* do not provide concrete historical evidence, some of the motifs that were used in these genres reappear in the history texts in the collection. It is *iimbali* which contain evidence on events that happened during remembered time. The main narrative in the collection “Gesimilo Senvelo Senkosi Zamaxosa” is largely *imbali*. The text nonetheless carries features peculiar to *iintsomi* and *amabali emvelo*. The main story is about the rise of Tshawe. This narrative, which appeared for the first time in print in the Kaye collection, tells of an important event in Xhosa history, the birth of the Tshawe dynasty. The narrative is told through a storyline that is used in many historical texts in African communities. An important element of Xhosa history was the royal genealogical table. The table followed what had appeared in the works of Kay and Dugmore. However, it had two names added to the list. This suggests that additional evidence was being revealed or that amaXhosa were beginning to perceive the “lengthening” of their royal genealogy as giving them advantage over other groups. Important information was also appearing for the first time on *izizwe* that had been politically independent before the rise of Tshawe. *Iziduko* of some of these clans, like amaNkabane, amaQocwa, amaQwambi, and amaCirha, seem to confirm some of the claims by the narrators in Kaye. A further point raised in “Gesimilo Senvelo” is that amaXhosa were pastoralists from the beginning. This claim is traceable to *amabali emvelo* where an observation is made that cattle and people emerged from the cavern together at creation. Then there was a short discussion on Xhosa legal history. Some of the observations made about the manner amaXhosa punished wrongdoers, like the reference to “iliwa lamagqwira”, had already appeared in missionary texts. The point about the distant origins of amaXhosa and their recent arrival in south-east Africa was re-visited. In “Gesimilo Senvelo” it was said amaXhosa come from “nouth east”. This point in the Xhosa text appeared as though it had been edited by being written over. Xhosa expansion into south-east Africa was said to have been led by Togu. An interesting feature in the text is the open discussion of Xhosa religious beliefs and practices about *iminyanya* and *imishologu*. “Kafir Legends and History” is a collection that stands at the crossroads in the writing of Xhosa history, as it incorporated both Xhosa conventions and western practices in writing history.

1. See William Kekale Kaye, “Kafir Legends and History”. G.10.C.13(16), Grey Collection, South African Library, Cape Town.

2. See letter from G Cyrus to R Graham, January 1857. 157f, S.A.L.
3. G.10.C.13(16), S.A.L.
4. See for example, a collection entitled, "Manuscript History and Legends". PR 3530, Cory Library, Rhodes University.
5. Though dated Henderson gives a well documented account of Grey as an imperial administrator. See Geo C Henderson, *Sir George Grey: Pioneer of Empire in Southern Lands* (London: JM Dent and Co., 1907).
6. Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealanders as Furnished by their Priests and Chiefs* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1907), xi.
7. For example, a letter in the Grey Collection written in 1857 by Pike, a publisher, to Grey makes reference to a reprint of a Korana Catechism. This shows that by that time Grey was already involved in the collection of documents about the indigenous people. See G.J.Pike to Grey, 13 June 1857. G.10.C.16 (26a), South African Library, Cape Town.
8. The word "legend" has multiple meanings. Kaye seems to have used it to accommodate narratives that referred to the Xhosa past. These included accounts on creation and the mythical past as well as the remembered past. Finnegan gives a "cross-generic" analysis of traditions belonging to an Indian community in Brazil. See Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts: A Guide to Research Practices* (London: Routledge, 1992), 146-153.
9. This is an observation made by Nongenile Masithathu Zenani, "Prologue- Origins", in Harold Scheub (ed), *The World and the Word: Tales and Observations from Xhosa Oral Tradition* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin, 1992), 8.
10. Tonkin uses this term. She means the way the past is captured and represented through oracy. See Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts*, 4.
11. For a discussion of some of these writings see chapter three.
12. What appears on the text is "Kafir Legends and History", by Wm Kekale Kaye, Interpreter. This however is likely to have meant that the collection had been compiled by Kaye. See Wm Kekale Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History". G. 10.C.13(16), S.A.L.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. See "On the 'Koobutu of Umlanjani'", MS 158(d), Grey Collection, S.A.L. For a discussion of Mlanjeni, the Xhosa war doctor in the 1850-1853 war, see J.B. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989), 1-30.

16. Mlanjeni's teachings centred around the need to cleanse the world of *ubuthi* (bewitching portion). See *Ibid.*, 2-3.

17. Grey's policy in British Kaffraria is discussed in chapter five.

18. George Morley Shepstone was the fourth son of the missionaries Reverend and Mrs William Shepstone. He was born in Morley in 1829 and grew up among the various indigenous communities in places like Morley, Buntingville and Wesleyville where his father had served. From the age of nineteen Geo Shepstone joined the colonial service as an interpreter and was later promoted to the position of Superintendent of the "Fingoes". For further details see RE Gordon, *Shepstone: The Role of the Family in the History of South Africa 1820-1900* (Cape Town: AA Balkema, 1968).

19. John Ayliff was the eldest son of Reverend John and Mrs Ayliff of "Fingo" fame. He was born in Albany in 1821 and grew up at the various mission stations where his father had worked. In 1852 he was appointed secretary to the High Commissioner, Sir George Cathcart and later served under Sir George Grey. John Ayliff was a member of the colonial staff that was put together by Maclean to implement the new policies in British Kaffraria during the late 1850s. Ayliff served as an auditor in British Kaffraria. For further details on Ayliff see WJ de Kock (editor-in-Chief), *Dictionary of South African Biography*, ii (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1968), 17.

20. The first tier was the direct influence of missionaries through their writings on Xhosa history. This theme has been discussed in chapter three.

21. See for example, "Ayliff Papers", MS 15 276.

22. Ayliff and Shepstone were members of a civil service that was also engaged in compiling a book on Xhosa laws and customs. Chapter 5 is about the work of colonial policy-makers in the writing of Xhosa history. These included Maclean and Ayliff (junior).

23. Bascom quoted in Finnegan, *Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts*, 147.

24. *Ukubamba elentulo* is today an idiomatic expression that means to listen to the first report one gets.

25. This *ibali lemvelo* about the origins of death was recorded by John Ayliff when he worked at Butterworth mission station during the 1830s. See "Extracts from the Diary of John Ayliff", MS 15544, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

26. For example, among amaXhosa, and even their neighbours, *umdlezane* (the nursing mother) is made to lie on *inxopho* (marsh grass). A reed is also placed at the door of the hut to indicate that men should not enter. Also, *abakhwetha* (boy initiates) cover their faces and loins with reeds as they await "bursting" into manhood.

27. GM Setiloane, *African Theology: An Introduction* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1986), 5.

28. For a discussion of this belief see Garvey Nkonki, "The Traditional Prose Literature of the Ngqika" (MA Thesis, UNISA, 1968), 30.

29. *Ibid.*, 31.

30. Although Callaway was writing about oral traditions of amaZulu, they were a group close to amaXhosa. See Canon Callaway, *The Religious System of the Amazulu* (Pietermaritzburg: Davis and Sons, 1870), 2.

31. For a full account of the tradition see Jan Knappert, *The Aquarian Guide to African Mythology* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1990), 33.

32. Frieda-Nela Williams, *Pre-colonial Communities in South Western Africa: A History of Ovambo Kingdoms 1600-1920* (Windhoek: Star Binders, 1991), 58.

33. *Iintlanga* is the plural of *uhlanga*.

34. I see the cutting of *iintlanga* as a "symbolic statement" that Vansina writes about. See Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (London: James Currey, 1985), 69.

35. Setiloane, *African Theology*, 35.

36. See "Letters from Bennie", *Report of the GMS with an Appendix*, 1822, 29.

37. Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 149.

38. G. Thompson, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*, Parts 2&3 (Cape Town: The Van Riebeeck Society, 1968), 203.

39. Pringle, *Narrative of a Residence*, 281.

40. See G.S. Were, "The Western Bantu Peoples from AD 1300 to 1800" in B.A. Ogot (ed), *Zamani: A Survey of East African History* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1975), 171.

41. Nineteenth century recorders used different names. They used folktales. See GM Theal, *Kaffir Folklore: Or a Selection from the Traditional Tales* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1882). Also see Bleek who described them as fables, WHI Bleek, *Hottentot Fables and Tales* (London: Trubner and Co., 1864). See also Henry Callaway, *Nursery Tales, Traditions and Histories of the Zulus in their Own Words* (Pietermaritzburg: Davis and Sons, 1868).

42. See HE Scheub, *The Xhosa Ntsomi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). Also Scheub, *The World and the Word*.

43. Vansina, *Oral Tradition*, 14.

44. I Okpewho, *Myth in Africa: A Study of its Aesthetic and Cultural Relevance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 64.

45. Isobel Hofmeyr, "We Spend Our Years As A Tale Is Told": *Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chiefdom* (London: James Currey, 1994), 35.

46. J. Campbell, *Travels in South Africa Undertaken at the Request of the Missionary Society* (third edition) (London: Black, Parry and Co., 1815), 367.

47. See figure 1 in page 67 as well as the discussion in Okpewho, *Myth in Africa*, 67-69.

48. Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts*, 66.

49. For example in Rev Kay's royal genealogy which he drew up in 1826, the list began with Hlanga. See chapter 3.

50. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 57-73.

51. The English version was translated by Ayliff (junior) who gave the title as "Of the Creation of People" *ibid.*, 156-164.

52. *Ibid.*, 156.

53. See Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 22.

54. Hammond-Tooke, *The Journal of William Shaw*, 114.

55. See Hummel, *Rev FG Kayser*.

56. See above for a discussion of the Xhosa belief in Hlanga.

57. Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 13.

58. "Extracts from the Diary of John Ayliff", MS 15544, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

59. Knappert discusses other myths about the origin of death in Sub-Saharan Africa. See Knappert, *The Aquarian Guide to African Mythology*, 63-64. Also see Benjamin Ray, "The Story of Kintu: Myth, Death and Ontology in Buganda" in Ivan Karp and Charles Bird (eds), *Exploration in African Systems of Thoughts* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987), 60.

60. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 105-115.

61. The English translation was by John Ayliff. *Ibid.*, 117-133.

62. In other versions of this *intsomi* the full name of the character is Sikhulum' akathethi (the speaker who will not speak). The shortened version of the name may have been done during the transcription of the text. In its mutilated form the recorded text with a shortened name "Sikulume" lost its full meaning. This is one example of the effects of transcription of oral texts.

63. Ayliff did not attempt to translate the word *inabulele*. It is one of those that refers to animals that are not known by amaXhosa anymore. Such words simply added to the mystery in the plot.

64. For examples of narratives on domestic conflict see Zenani, "Tales" in Scheub, *The World and the Word*, 402-472.

65. J. Ayliff, "Extracts from the Diary of John Ayliff", MS 15 544, Cory Library, Rhodes University, 221.

66. *Ibid.*, 233.

67. See Zenani, "The Barren Woman" in Scheub, *The World and the Word*, 473-481

68. Noposi, the Great wife of Sandile of amaRharhabe had no children. There was a similar case with Nonesi, the Queen of abaThembu.

69. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 57-73.

70. Reference is also made to this tradition in chapter three.

71. Ward claimed to have heard the tradition from Shepstone, then Government Agent. See Ward, *Five Years in Kaffirland*, 140-141.

72. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 57.

73. See Reverend Boyce, *The Grahamstown Journal*, March 1833.

74. See J. Ayliff, "History of the Wars", MS 15 544, and "To His Excellency Sir Geo Cathcart", MS 15 543, Cory Library. Also see "D'Urban Papers", MS 2033, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

75. Even in *intsomi* about Sikulume *amaphakathi* that went to find a robe of *inabulele* faced innumerable dangers. It was through the use of magic and tricks that they survived.

76. Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts*, 69.

77. Oloniyan contends that the African views history as a continuum consisting of a past, present and future, all inseparably linked together. See R. Oloniyan, "African History and Culture: An Overview" in R. Oloniyan (ed), *African History and Culture* (London: Longman, 1982), 1.

78. Nxele's mother is said to have been a refugee who sought a place of safety among abaThembu. Later she migrated to the Xhosa region where she lived with a man called Balala, of the Mbalwini clan. After the birth of Nxele his mother would leave him in a ditch or cover him with branches. As a young man Nxele would sometimes disappear mysteriously.

79. See D.T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* (London: Longman, 1986), 3-4.

80. Grey's "civilising" policy which included forbidding "barbaric" customs is discussed in chapter five.

81. For a discussion of the revival of practices like *uphundlo* see Erlank, "Gender and Christianity among Africans Attached to Scottish Mission Stations in Xhosaland in the Nineteenth Century", 166-167.

82. See "Imbaliso KaNtsikana", *Ikwezi*, Inani iii, February 1845 and Inani iv, December 1855, 39-49 and J. Bennie, *Eyesibini Innchwadana Yokufunda* (e-Hreni: Aldun and Harvey, 1839), 98-103. G.9.d.18(7), S.A.L. Also see chapter three.

83. Callinicos observes that in the West a cyclical view of history which belongs to the era of Greeks was replaced by the lineal movement into the future propounded by Augustine and other Christian Fathers. This is part of the Christian eschatological belief. See A. Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives: Reflections and the Philosophy of History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 59-64.

84. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 1-16.

85. *Ibid.*

86. *Ibid.*, 23.

87. *Ibid.*, 1

88. *Ibid.*, 17.

89. *Ibid.*

90. *Ibid.*, 3.

91. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 1.

92. See *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*; Vol 1, September 1846, 318.

93. *Ibid.*, 319.

94. Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 126.

95. See Mostert, *Frontiers*, 937.

96. *Ibid.*

97. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 2.

98. Malangana had appeared in Kay's genealogical list but had been omitted by Dugmore. See Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 149.

99. Although Holden had started the book in 1854, it was published in 1866.

100. W.C. Holden, *The Past and Future of Kafir Races*, (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1963), 142-143.

101. *Ibid.*, 143.

102. See chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of Grey's policy.

103. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 57- 67. For the English version 77- 90

106. Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 309.

105. Noyi, "Ama-Xosa History", in Bokwe, *Ntsikana*, 36.
106. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 13.
107. *Ibid.*
108. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 3.
109. V P Ndamase, *AmaMpondo: Ibali Nentlalo* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, dng), 3-4.
110. David P Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 64.
111. I. Kopytoff, *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 37.
112. See G.M. Theal, *Compendium of South African History and Geography* (second edition) (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1876), 117.
113. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 104-106.
114. JB Peires, "Xhosa Expansion Before 1800", (*The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Century*), 8.
115. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 109.
116. For a discussion on clans and how they became assimilated under Tshawe see below.
117. In contemporary Xhosa society there are families that still carry the names Cirha and Jwarha.
118. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 17.
119. For a full account on the Stavenisse shipwreck see Moodie, *The Record*, 415- 433.
120. Peires, *The House Of Phalo*, 17. For further discussion of this point see chapter 6.
121. Colonel Collins, "Journal of a Tour", 40.
122. Cowper Rose, *Four Years in Southern Africa* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1829), 179.
123. There has been a spate of research on images of Shaka. See Wylie, "White Writers", and Golan, *Inventing Shaka*, as well as CA Hamilton, "Authoring Shaka: Models, Metaphors and Historiography" (PhD. Thesis, The Johns Hopkins University, 1993).
124. S. Feierman, *The Shambaã Kingdom: A History* (London: University of Wisconsin, 1974), 65.
125. *Ibid.*, 82.
126. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 4.

127. In modern use the words *isizwe* (singular) and *izizwe* (plural) mean nation and nations. It may not have necessarily been the case during the middle of the nineteenth century. From *imbali* under discussion the word could have referred to any political unit that enjoyed independence. See also footnote 118 in chapter 2.

128. *Ibid.*, 5. My translation: Nonetheless there were independent nations of various sizes with their own sovereignty and enjoying self-rule.

129. *Ibid.*

130. *Ibid.*

131. For a discussion of this issue see Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 15-16.

132. For histories of clans see *ibid.*, 188-191.

133. J Vansina, *Living With Africa* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 17-21.

134. Thompson, *Survival in two Worlds*, 174.

135. *Ibid.*

136. See Steedman, *Wanderings and Adventures*, i, 24-25. Xhosa royalty used leopard cloaks. Vansina observes that the leopard was also a royal animal among royalty in the rainforest region. See J. Vansina, *Paths in the Rainforests: Towards a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa* (London: James Currey, 1990), 104.

137. Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama*, 36.

138. Soga, *The Ama-Xosa*, 18.

139. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 16.

140. *Ibid.*

141. *Ibid.*

142. Listen to Mrs MamQwambi Faku interviewed by N Tisani, February 1995, Grahamstown. Mrs Faku's claim to royalty is strengthened by the fact that whenever there is to be a ritual in the Xhosa community, be it circumcision or whatever, "Kondlala amaQwambi" (AmaQwambi pave the way).

143. See JB Webster, "Techniques in the Methodology of Oral History: Where are we now?" in *Oral Traditions Associations of Southern Africa Second Biennial Seminar* (Harare: Otasa, 1990), 18. Webster estimates that the snake cults were replaced by ancestral veneration between 1000 AD and 1200AD. Such a claim in all likelihood puts the *gqoloma* totem belief before the rise of amaTshawe.

144. Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 283-284.

145. Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama*, 36.

146. Peires, *House of Phalo*, 187.

147. *Ibid.*, 190.

148. Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama*, 36.

149. Soga, *The Ama-Xosa*, 17.

150. Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama*, 38.

151. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 189-190.

152. Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama*, 38.

153. For a discussion of the pre-colonial riverain cult among the people of southern Africa see Aeneas Chigwedere, *From Mutapa to Rhodes 1000-1890 AD* (London: Macmillan, 1980).

154. Siphon Burns-Ncamashe observed that there were important religious ceremonies performed in rivers by amaXhosa. For example, *ukuhlwayēla* and *ukuphehlelela igqira* (initiation of a doctor). S Burns-Ncamashe interviewed by N Tisani, KwaGwali, July 1991. It is also interesting to note that in the oral traditions of abaThembu, it is said that when they (abaThembu) adopted a religious ceremony that involved throwing sacrificial meat into a pool on the Mbashe River, it was amaMvulane, known to have Sotho origins, who were designated chief councillors of the riverain ceremonies. See M Mbuthuma, "Vumani Ndibalise", 25 June 1958, PR 3668, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

155. Thompson, *Travels and Adventures*, 1&2, 203.

156. According to Hodgson amaNgqosini are associated with the pool of Cihoshe on the Nxuba/Fish River. See Hodgson, "Ntsikana", 196.

157. Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 114-115.

158. *Ibid.*, 114.

159. Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama*, 35.

160. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 25.

161. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 6.

162. Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 13.

163. These have already been discussed above.

164. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 8.

165. Hammond-Tooke, *The Journal of William Shaw*, 77.

166. This observation was also made in Shaw's journal. *Ibid.*
167. Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.
168. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 9.
169. Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 108.
170. Hammond-Tooke, *The Journal of William Shaw*, 91.
171. Hunting was an important occupation in pre-colonial Xhosa society. *Inggina* was a national hunting party for which *inkosi* would assemble the men in preparation for a hunt of the big animals. On the other hand *iphulo* was a smaller party of hunters. Several early writers described hunting expeditions among amaXhosa. Alberti wrote about hunts in 1807. See Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 74-76. Kay also gave a described a hunt of a lion in his book. See Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 135-136.
172. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 11.
173. In his book Kay described Kohla as the ruler of the "Gonaqua". See Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, 108.
174. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 14
175. Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, 211.
176. For a discussion on Tente, the son of Ngqika and a convert see Chapter three.
177. "Letter of Tente to the Foreign Secretary", *Report of the GMS Winter Quarterly Intelligence*, 1841, 3.
178. Kaye, "Kafir Legends", 15.
179. *Ibid.*, 16 for details on how *ukuhlwayela* was done. For the English translation see page 28.
180. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 69 and 72-73.
181. Crais seems to have taken Shepstone's translation and expanded it beyond what was actually contained in the text. See Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order* 17.
182. Hodgson reprinted a text "On the Creation of People" which appears in the Kaye collection. See Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 110-111.

CHAPTER 5

COLONIAL WRITING ON XHOSA HISTORY

The writing of Xhosa history by colonial officials in the mid-nineteenth century took place against the background of a growing, aggressive British imperialism. Most British colonial officials who came to southern Africa had had experience in other British colonies.¹ They brought along colonial forms of knowledge about indigenous people. Such knowledge would inform investigations into Xhosa society and history. In making colonial policy British officials had to gain an understanding of the colonised and their past. Such knowledge was important whether the colonial policies were based on direct or indirect rule. Some scholars link the production of knowledge to power. Foucault argues that there is a struggle “around truth...which is linked ..to systems of power which provide and sustain it.”² The colonisers constructed knowledge about the colonised to suit their colonial needs. Switzer observes that “settler apologists created tribes, codified native laws and in other ways sought to invent an African tradition to conform to the world they had created themselves.”³ Knowledge construction in a colonial situation is largely determined by the balance of power between the parties involved. In the colonial context power relations between the settler and the indigenous people were forever changing. In the context of the heightened military confrontation of the late 1840s and 1850s and the cattle killing disaster, amaXhosa had limited scope to be co-constructors of their history. This does not mean that their earlier contributions were completely thrown out by the colonisers.

Sir George Grey (1812-1898), who became Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner of South Africa in 1854, epitomised those British imperialists who stood for the subjugation of the autochthons. He introduced new colonial policies which entrenched British rule and eroded Xhosa independence. Grey had to sell his policies to three different constituencies - the Colonial Office in London, amaXhosa, and the Cape Parliament in Cape Town. Among the strategies Grey used to justify his policies was the production of a handbook made up of a number of texts which included some Xhosa history. Selected writings on Xhosa history highlighted undesirable practices in the life of amaXhosa. Xhosa legal practices were condemned as barbaric; Xhosa

women were portrayed as slaves; Xhosa society was said to have been ruled by superstition, and despicable sexual mores. All this seemed to justify the attempt to transform Xhosa society that Grey embarked on during his term of office from 1854 to 1861.

Two publications are central to this phase. In 1858 Colonel Maclean compiled *A Compendium of Kafir Laws and Customs, Including Genealogical Tables of Kafir Chiefs and Various Tribal Census Returns*.⁴ The other is *The Past and Future of the Kaffir Races*⁵ by WC Holden, a Wesleyan minister. The *Compendium* is a 169-page collection of texts. It was never meant to be a Xhosa history. However some of the component pieces were writings about the Xhosa past. Holden claimed that he wrote his book “for the benefit of the Kaffir races.”⁶ Another important aim was “To furnish information which may be useful to Government authorities in the various momentous questions which may come before them from time to time.”⁷ Holden had also expressed a wish that his work would be “referred to as a reliable authority on every important question relating to the Kaffir races.”⁸ To a large extent the two texts shared the same sources. These writers were continuing a tradition of colonial and missionary writers constantly circulating information among themselves. Repetition of such information tended to add authenticity to texts. The Dugmore article of 1846 which was reprinted in the *Compendium* was also included in *The Past and Future*. Holden admitted that he had used Maclean’s book “to obtain correct information upon all points of Kaffir custom and jurisprudence, for the guidance of magistrates.”⁹ Holden believed that the contributors to the *Compendium* had lived among amaXhosa and were therefore authorities on Xhosa history. Holden also saw his book providing information to the public both in South Africa and Britain, as he noted that the *Compendium* was scarce.¹⁰ In both books there is evidence that the writers collected some of their evidence from oral sources. It appears as though the majority of informants belonged to the royal class.

Up to the middle of the nineteenth century written texts on Xhosa history emanated mainly from the pens of missionaries and those associated with the missionary enterprise.¹¹ By the mid-1840s, however, missionary zeal was being dampened by the perceived continuing obstinacy of amaXhosa.¹² After twenty years or more of hard work missionaries had very little to show in terms of number of converts.¹³ Individual missionaries were bitter at having been duped by some *iinkosi*¹⁴ who relentlessly resisted colonial intrusion and missionary teaching. At times converts

would desert mission stations and join their countrymen against the colonial forces.¹⁵ The wars of 1846-47 and 1850-53 seem to have convinced the majority of missionaries of their limitations in the task of civilising the “Kaffirs”. From that period onwards there was closer collaboration between the missionary sector and colonial officials. Maclean and Holden represent that partnership.

The missionary influence on the writing of Xhosa history did not disappear. Missionaries, with their wealth of experience and information about the indigenous people, were absorbed into the task of designing rules and regulations for the new colonial order. It was important to colonial officials to establish effective rule as a follow-up to military conquest. A number of missionaries offered their services to the colonial government.¹⁶ Some, like Dugmore and Holden, remained as ministers but produced writing that was used by the colonial service. Some children of missionaries who had grown up among amaXhosa in time became the backbone of the colonial service. Such individuals brought along knowledge of isiXhosa, and a supposed understanding of Xhosa culture.¹⁷ To govern effectively consideration had to be given to pre-existing laws and customs. During the missionary phase Xhosa history had been written for missionaries to understand the people they were trying to convert. During the colonial phase, the focus was on law and custom - how justice had been administered by *iinkosi* and their councils.

Before launching into an analysis of texts on the Xhosa past, it is important to make a brief sketch of the growing colonial presence in the Xhosa world. An important political development was the recall of Harry Smith to the Cape as governor during the latter half of 1847. Smith had come to the Cape with great “glory, rank, decorations, and praises of the land, [and] its Queen”¹⁸ because of his outstanding performance in the war against the Sikhs of the Punjab. Smith himself noted in his autobiography that the frontier was “delirious with joy”¹⁹ at his arrival. The same cannot be said of amaXhosa, however. Smith’s public humiliation of Maqoma on his arrival in Port Elizabeth did not bode well for amaXhosa.²⁰ In great haste Smith declared the country between the Keiskamma and the Kei Rivers as British Kaffraria. He appointed himself as *Inkosi Enkulu*, the Supreme Chief, and made *iinkosi* swear to abide by eleven rules that he presented to them. Smith’s new arrangements were ratified by the British government in March 1848. Brookes interprets this as the beginning of “that long process of governing black South Africa

by white South Africa.”²¹ British Kaffraria was divided into two large administrative districts occupied by amaNdlambe of Mhala and amaNgqika of Sandile. Two assistant commissioners, Captain John Maclean and Charles Brownlee, were appointed to the Ndlambe and Ngqika domains respectively.

British Kaffraria was a military unit, to be ruled through martial law - the only one of its kind in the British empire, Mostert observes.²² Under martial law the commissioner and his assistants could be as arbitrary as they wished. Peires describes British Kaffraria as “a monster which swallowed them [amaXhosa] up, tore them from their children, and squeezed them off their land onto the labour market.”²³ AmaXhosa had lost their independence and this impacted on the way Xhosa history was written. The very name British Kaffraria reflected flagrant disregard for indigenous society. The name was a colonial construction that ignored any indigenous voice. In declaring himself *Inkosi Enkulu*, Smith was not only making a caricature of an important Xhosa institution, he was also colonising it. George Cathcart replaced Smith as High Commissioner in 1852.²⁴ The latter was recalled because of his inability to bring the war to a close. At the conclusion of the war Cathcart drove amaNgqika out of their land. He however instituted colonial policies which respected the Xhosa judicial system. Cathcart was succeeded by George Grey in 1854.

Grey has drawn diverse assessments from scholars. By some he is seen as a great civiliser of the indigenous people. He built roads, hospitals, and schools²⁵ in British Kaffraria.²⁶ But, as he himself pointed out, by building the roads amaXhosa were themselves “conquering the country by opening up through their fastnesses available roads, which will be of equal use to us either in peace or war.”²⁷ Crais perceives Grey’s education policy as the colonisation of young Xhosa minds.²⁸ For others Grey was a rogue responsible for the collapse of Xhosa society in the late 1850s. Peires argues that “No Governor did more to break the independence and steal the land of the Maori and the Xhosa than Sir George Grey.”²⁹ A contradictory picture of Grey emerges: in Peires’ words, “a mixture of greatness and pettiness, breadth of intellect and dishonesty”.³⁰ These contradictions are discernible in his letters and dispatches which were “monuments of prevarication and deceit, exalting himself and traducing others and threatening the Colonial Office.”³¹ In this study the focus will be on how Grey’s policies for governing British Kaffraria

required knowledge about the Xhosa past.

The policy that was to revolutionise the lives of amaXhosa was formulated by Grey within the first six weeks of his arrival.³² His intention was to gain influence over African groups which included those “between the present north-east boundary of the Colony and Natal”.³³ In March 1855 he presented his “native policy” to the Cape Parliament. To Grey British expansion could not co-exist with the independence of amaXhosa. His policy was directed at curtailing the judicial authority of *iinkosi*, and bringing about a social revolution through the establishment of schools among amaXhosa. *Iinkosi* would continue to exercise some authority over the people, but would no longer be able to collect cattle fines. Magistrates would be stationed at the *komkhulu* of each *inkosi* and would act as advisers and assessors. Judicial fines would accrue to the Crown. As paid members of the colonial government, *iinkosi* would be dependent on their pay-masters. Headmen and sub-headmen would administer the villages. The ultimate aim of Grey’s policy was that “European laws will, by... degrees, take the place of their own barbarous customs.”³⁴

The first of the new magistrates began functioning in November 1855. The initial phase of Grey’s rule in British Kaffraria lasted until the end of 1856. During that period Grey’s policy was imposed on the existing political structure of *iinkosi* and *amaphakathi*. Although the administrators of the new policy were introducing a new order of “civilised” law, they were still utilising African institutions and custom, the history of which needed to be recovered and understood. Grey’s rule was a compromised form of direct rule as *iinkosi* still exercised their authority during the time he was putting his system into place. Rutherford points out that, “There was no open suggestion at this stage that European law would replace Kafir custom.”³⁵ During this phase *iinkosi* were gradually won over to Grey’s plans. Prospects for material gain seem to have undermined whatever misgivings they might have had. By March 1855 plans were afoot to build a watercourse for Sandile.³⁶ Others like Tola put in an application for a plough and Tyala, *iphakathi*, submitted a request for a watercourse.³⁷

Grey’s policy was not entirely in line with Colonial Office thinking which still aimed at protecting autochthons against colonists and also wished to reduce the financial burden incurred

through colonial expansion. In implementing his colonial plans in British Kaffraria Grey relentlessly misinformed the Colonial Office. During the first three years of his governorship at one moment he assured them of peace and tranquillity on the frontier.³⁸ Then when it suited him he would identify threats that the frontier faced.³⁹ At times Grey would push forward with his plans and inform London later.⁴⁰ In December 1855 Grey presented a report to Sir William Molesworth in which he gave a brief legal history of amaXhosa. He painted a picture of “chiefs” who enjoyed absolute power over their subjects.⁴¹ He further described the amount of suffering amaXhosa were subjected to because of witchcraft “smellings”.⁴² Grey’s approach to Xhosa legal history was to paint a dark and barbaric picture that justified his colonial policies. Grey also basked in the reputation of having brought about a peaceful settlement with the indigenous people in New Zealand during his governorship.⁴³

The task of putting the British system into operation fell on John Maclean⁴⁴ who had since 1852 been Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria.⁴⁵ Maclean was riding high in the eyes of the colonial authorities as he was perceived to have exercised a strong enough influence in keeping amaNdlambe neutral during the 1850-53 war.⁴⁶ Despite initial reservations about Grey’s policy,⁴⁷ Maclean managed to work with *iinkosi* of amaNdlambe and amaNgqika. Maclean was assisted by Charles Brownlee as Commissioner for amaNgqika. A number of factors made the implementation of Grey’s plan more feasible than would have otherwise been. As Grey pointed out to Maclean, “The prevailing cattle sickness will probably so far reduce the number of cattle in British Kaffraria ... that the present moment presents a most favourable opportunity for introducing a new system.”⁴⁸ Peires argues that it was this disease which necessitated cattle slaughter and in turn made amaXhosa open to the suggestion that they destroy their herds.⁴⁹ This resulted in the 1856-57 Cattle Killing which Peires has described as still being an open sore in the historical consciousness of most South Africans.⁵⁰ During the first phase of Grey’s governorship amaXhosa were at their weakest and in a most distressed state.

In February 1857 Nongqawuse’s prophecies did not materialise. The rest of the year was a time of severe famine and suffering for amaXhosa. Grey seems to have regarded that time as most opportune for proceeding further with his plans. His despatches to London about Xhosa threats grew louder.⁵¹ He inundated the Colonial Office and Cape Parliament with reports about the

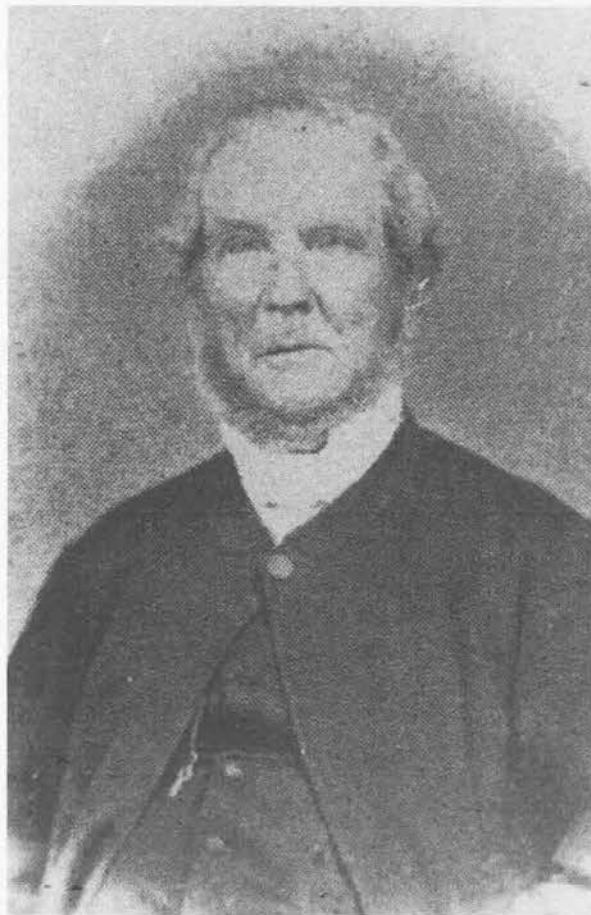
murder of innocent white men.⁵² At the same time he embarked on a concerted effort to round up *iinkosi* and have them tried by the magistrates he had installed at *Komkhulu*. This marked the second phase in the implementation of his “civilising” policy. In November 1857 the trial of Maqoma and nine men accused of murdering Fusani, a headman, began. The accused were sentenced to death in April 1858, later commuted to twenty years in prison.⁵³ By the end of 1858 a large number of *iinkosi* had been tried and sentenced. Maclean’s magistrates and the headmen became the major judicial officers in British Kaffraria. A police force responsible to the magistrates was to maintain order, thus strengthening the authority of magistrates. It was then that Grey instituted “a full-fledged system of direct rule over the Kafirs through magistrates and native assistants.”⁵⁴

In August 1855 Charles Brownlee had come up with the idea of a “code ... for the guidance of magistrates.”⁵⁵ Maclean then seems to have acted on the suggestion.⁵⁶ By then the two colonial officials seem to have fallen in line with Grey’s vision. In 1858 Maclean wrote to the High Commissioner, expressing satisfaction with progress made during the previous three years. He further stated his readiness to establish civil institutions.⁵⁷ It was also at that time that the *Compendium* was published. It would appear as though research Grey had undertaken among the indigenous people of New Zealand⁵⁸ influenced the approach followed in the production of the *Compendium*. Peires points out that although Grey had undertaken research in Maori folklore, he had no respect for Maori traditions and regarded them as “puerile”.⁵⁹ Peires goes on to argue that the only reason Grey was interested in Maori folklore was to be able to communicate more effectively with Maori chiefs.⁶⁰ Grey had also shown deep interest in early literature and publications in the Cape Colony.⁶¹ On completion, copies of the *Compendium* were sent to the Colonial Office by the governor.⁶² This was to expose British politicians to his (Grey’s) depiction of Xhosa society and to justify his colonial policies. This was necessary as there were signs of concern in London regarding Grey’s policies. In September 1858 Lytton warned Grey about expenses that would be incurred in embarking on an extensive scheme of “Kafir government and civilisation”.⁶³ In May 1859 Lytton wrote recalling Grey.⁶⁴

Du Toit notes that the *Compendium* “was the first attempt at a systematic study of native law in the country and proved a great value to officials administering native affairs.”⁶⁵ The *Compendium*



Sir George Grey
Courtesy of Cape Archives



Charles Brownlee
Courtesy of Albany Museum

was a collection of articles that covered a variety of topics, mainly ethnographic data on amaXhosa, including observations on their political, social and economic life. The *Compendium* also had population returns for British Kaffraria in 1857. There were also royal genealogical tables for amaXhosa and neighbouring groups. There was also some historical content.

The contributors to the *Compendium* were two missionaries, H.H. Dugmore and J.C. Warner, as well as John Ayliff, Charles Brownlee, and B. Nicholson. The first four had strong missionary links. Dugmore and Warner were Wesleyan Methodist ministers who had served at various stations among amaXhosa.⁶⁶ The other two were sons of missionaries. John Ayliff's father (also John Ayliff) had worked as a Wesleyan missionary in Butterworth, Peddie, Healdtown and Haslop Hills. At the time of writing the *Compendium* Ayliff was an auditor in British Kaffraria.⁶⁷ Charles Brownlee was a son of John Brownlee, a London Missionary Society representative and one of the founding fathers of the Tyhume mission station in 1820. Brinsley Nicholson had a medical and military background. He had served as a military surgeon in 1841, and again in 1846.⁶⁸ His background and experience on the frontier fitted Grey's plans for a new medical system for amaXhosa.⁶⁹ The contributors represent a chain that links missionary perspectives and military views to the colonial policies of the mid-nineteenth century. The partnership between missionaries and civil authorities in "civilising the Kaffirs" was stronger than ever. The *Compendium* reflects that partnership. Scholars generally agree that the missionary role was crucial to the implementation of Grey's policies. Weldon has made a study of the interaction and collaboration between the church and the colonial government during the era of Grey.⁷⁰

The contributors represent an array of colonial personalities who worked among amaXhosa from the 1850s to the 1870s. The inclusion in the *Compendium* of the "Dugmore's Papers",⁷¹ which had been published earlier in the *South African Christian Watchman and Magazine*,⁷² suggests that Maclean regarded work on Xhosa history as an important component of the book. Despite little formal schooling Henry Hare Dugmore had by the 1840s established himself as a writer and composer of hymns. After *The South African Christian Watchman and Magazine* was established in 1846 Dugmore became one of its regular contributors. Ordained at the age of 24 he soon mastered isiXhosa during his stay among amaXhosa at mission stations at Mount Coke, Wesleyville, Butterworth and Queenstown. He took part with other Wesleyan ministers and

interpreters in the translation of the Bible into isiXhosa.⁷³ He was widely respected by the colonists and was given the honour of delivering a lecture during the settler golden jubilee celebrations in 1870.⁷⁴ Grey was thus certain that Dugmore's work would be received in a favourable light by the colonists. Dugmore's contribution to the *Compendium* is the most substantial, forming almost a third of the book. His text also offers coverage of the Xhosa past. Dugmore had been the most comprehensive writer on Xhosa history up to then. The way he had listed the various Xhosa royal houses made his contribution valuable to magistrates who would have to identify chiefly lineages and inter-chief relations in British Kaffraria and beyond. Above all Dugmore provided a standard text on Xhosa royal history which magistrates would also need to know in their role as enforcers of colonial rule. The inclusion of Dugmore's contribution in the *Compendium*, what was otherwise a handbook for civil servants, gave an official stamp to the Dugmore history which has retained a central place in Xhosa historiography ever since.⁷⁵

Dugmore's discussion of the "Kafir law of succession" provided Maclean and other colonial officials with crucial information on an important aspect of the Xhosa political system. Dugmore went on to give a detailed breakdown of each of the various Xhosa royal houses and how the incumbent *iinkosi* came to power. Dugmore's text brought out the complexity of the Xhosa law of succession and showed how frequent changes were made to the supposed norm.⁷⁶ Of even greater importance is the fact that Dugmore was able to cite instances of changes that had been made to various laws.⁷⁷ Dugmore's account picked up the dynamic character of Xhosa law and custom. He thus was able to construct a history of amaXhosa tracing changes and developments that had occurred in the past. Previous writers, like Collins⁷⁸ in 1809 and Kay in 1825-26 had given reports on tours they had taken among African communities. Dugmore might have built his text on their reports. But they had not given a detailed analysis of the internal workings of Xhosa society as he was to do.

Dugmore's account of Xhosa royal history and laws of succession provided important information for those intent on establishing colonial rule based on an African political system. Grey's policy was aimed at setting up a new judicial system among amaXhosa based in part on the institution of *iinkosi*. By building a new colonial system upon an existing and respected institution Grey adroitly cushioned the blow of colonial rule and the loss of political

independence of *iinkosi*. A sense of continuity was created through the presence of *iinkosi* at their Great Places with the assistance of a few colonially selected *amaphakathi*. In running the new system the magistrates would maintain a facade of continuity. When the same magistrates sentenced and imprisoned some *iinkosi* for various “crimes” during the late 1850s,⁷⁹ Xhosa succession laws were used to fill in the vacancies created by the internment of *iinkosi esiqithini* (on Robben Island). In the *Compendium* Dugmore portrayed Xhosa society as dynamic and changing. Dugmore was a missionary writer who was able to trace social and political developments in the Xhosa world.

In using Dugmore’s writings on Xhosa laws and history Maclean obtained powerful allies in the Wesleyan missionaries. Maclean had arrived at the Cape in 1834 and had participated in the 1834-5 war. From that time he must have been keenly aware of the influence of Wesleyan Methodist missionaries in the colony. It would seem that he acknowledged the writing of missionaries like Dugmore and was intent on using it as the basis of the new task he was embarking on. He must also have been aware that the “Dugmore Papers” which had first appeared in 1846 in the *Christian Watchman*,⁸⁰ had become the accepted version of Xhosa history in the colony. Maclean was conscious of the mistakes of the past, especially⁸¹ Smith’s policies that had threatened the institution of *ubukhosi* (chieftainship). Maclean sought to build his system on a knowledge of the Xhosa past. He believed that, “All safe government of the natives must be conducted with due regard to their established habit.”⁸² Maclean therefore set up his administration of British Kaffraria using the Xhosa royal lineages laid out in Dugmore’s text. He organised his administration around a handful of *iinkosi*, and ignored some senior houses like imiDange, that were forced to attach themselves to those houses that had been given colonial recognition.

JC Warner was another Wesleyan contributor to the *Compendium*.⁸³ He had left full-time ministry to join the colonial service. Warner’s main area of work had been among abaThembu of Ngubengcuka. He had worked initially as a catechist from 1830. After his ordination in 1845 Warner continued as a missionary at Clarkebury. During the attacks by amaNgwane in the late 1820s Warner was a negotiator between the warring parties.⁸⁴ Later Warner seems to have played the role of spokesman for abaThembu in their dealings with the colonial government and other

white groups.⁸⁵ Opland suggests that some of the articles that appeared in issues of *Um-Shumayeli* were written by Haddy, Warner's colleague, or by Warner himself.⁸⁶ Nonetheless the inclusion of Warner in the group of contributors to the *Compendium* perhaps indicates that Maclean wanted to get as broad a picture of south-east Africans as possible.⁸⁷ Warner was a British imperialist who insisted on the involvement of the colonial government in Thembu affairs. In January 1858 he pointed out that the failure of Mhlakaza's promises provided an opportunity for the colonial government to "introduce ..definite stringent... governmental regulations..and that they ought no longer to be left entirely to the influence and management of their chiefs."⁸⁸ In April 1858 he reiterated the point when he wrote to Southey, another colonial official, pointing out how the colonial government was in a position to put in place "a much more efficient control over these people".⁸⁹

There are similarities between the topics Warner tackled and those covered by Brownlee. Nonetheless Warner followed an approach that was decidedly different from Brownlee's. From the outset Warner observed that "Kafir law is chiefly a law of precedents."⁹⁰ This observation had earlier been made by Kay.⁹¹ Warner further noted that *iinkosi* had power to make new laws, a right they hardly ever exercised. Warner was blind to any processes of change that might have taken place in African law. His treatise tends to be an account of static, rigid laws which he saw as "defective in many respects".⁹² His argument was also full of contradictions. He claimed that "eating up" and sentencing people to death were "arbitrary acts of the Chiefs."⁹³ At the same time he noted that, "The grand principle of Kafir Law is *collective responsibility*."⁹⁴

Despite a period of more than twenty years of interaction with the Thembu Warner was still ruled by ignorance and prejudice. His account does not describe any changes in Thembu society. He stated that the changelessness and inadequacy of the legal system made it "very desirable that it should be superseded by the introduction of a modified form of our superior laws."⁹⁵ His discussion of the African social system highlighted the negative aspects which would justify colonial intervention and the imposition of British law. Wilson notes that Warner "scarcely differentiated between the spread of the Gospel and the spread of the British Empire."⁹⁶ This picture of an unchanging, static society, the Comaroffs argue, was common among missionaries and was presented in order to enhance missionary enterprise.⁹⁷ In the colonial phase it was to

justify the institution of new colonial laws that curtailed the African system.

In his discussion of the Xhosa judicial system Warner presented *inkosi* as the sole beneficiary of cattle fines paid in cases of homicide, assault and other crimes. This was interpreted as meaning that the people “belonged to their chief.”⁹⁸ This observation was similar to one expressed by Grey to Sir William Molesworth in 1855: “All persons who were members of the tribe are regarded as the absolute property of the chief.”⁹⁹ Such a negative portrayal of African law and custom corresponded to Grey’s belief that the judicial system was enriching *iinkosi*. That view was the basis of Grey’s policy which sought to undermine the authority of *iinkosi* by forbidding them to exact fines. Crais observes that Grey believed that through his policies he would liberate the commoners from the oppression of chiefs.¹⁰⁰ Grey’s plan was to reduce the authority of *iinkosi* and weaken the Xhosa political system. That did not necessarily mean that commoners would be liberated. Instead all amaXhosa had new rulers in the form of magistrates, “chiefs” and headmen. In his eagerness to highlight the dictatorial rule of *iinkosi*, Warner omitted to mention the redistribution process that followed the collection of fines and *busa* (tribute)cattle.¹⁰¹ Mostert notes that in Xhosa society *inkosi* was “hemmed in by checks and balances upon his power.”¹⁰²

Charles Brownlee was the only one of the four main contributors who was not part of the Wesleyan Methodist circle.¹⁰³ As a son of a missionary he was nonetheless steeped in missionary thinking. Having been born at Tyhume station in 1821, he had grown up among amaXhosa. He had tasted frontier life fully. He had lived through three wars and had served in two.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, he had travelled into king Dingane’s country as an interpreter for Reverend Venables and was at the Zulu court on the day of the massacre of Piet Retief in 1838.¹⁰⁵ Brownlee entered the colonial civil service in 1846 when he became a clerk for Henry Calderwood who had been appointed civil commissioner of amaMfengu at Victoria Post in the same year. Calderwood had been a missionary serving the London Missionary Society before his appointment by Governor Maitland. Calderwood, like a number of missionaries of his time, wrote and published in isiXhosa on religious and secular matters. He may have had some influence on Brownlee’s later writings. Indeed, Calderwood published his own book *Caffres and Caffre Missions* in the same year as the *Compendium*. In 1847 Brownlee became an assistant commissioner. From that

year “Tshalisi”, as amaXhosa called him, was the person whom amaNgqika interacted with in their dealings with the colonial government. In studying Brownlee’s contribution to the *Compendium* it is important to bear in mind the relationship he had with amaNgqika. Golan points out that colonial officials were often deemed qualified for their roles because it was believed that they knew the indigenous people and their ways.¹⁰⁶ This was particularly the case with the sons of missionaries. The colonial civil service, both in the Cape and Natal, contained a high number of these missionary proteges. Brownlee’s biographer claims that he had “unrivalled influence with the Bantu.”¹⁰⁷ Such a sweeping statement however, obscures the difficult and complicated relationship Brownlee had with amaNgqika. It is questionable whether Brownlee could ever have identified with the aspirations and fears of amaNgqika. He does not seem to have understood Xhosa anger as it built up before the 1850 war.¹⁰⁸

In looking at the relationship between amaNgqika and Brownlee one has to consider how changing contexts impacted on it. The deposition in 1849 of Sandile by Smith and his replacement, initially, with Brownlee, thrust the latter into the centre of Xhosa-British conflict. Not only had Smith insulted amaXhosa by interfering with the institution of *ubukhosi*, but his installation of a twenty-nine year old white man, doubled the affront.¹⁰⁹ AmaXhosa expressed their indignation by seeking out Brownlee and mistakenly killing his brother James.¹¹⁰ In 1853 peace negotiations with amaNgqika to end the conflict were undertaken by Brownlee representing the colonial government. So when Brownlee was reinstated as commissioner for amaNgqika, his relationship with amaXhosa had thawed somewhat. It was in his capacity as commissioner that he worked with the chief commissioner, Maclean, introducing the magisterial system in the Ngqika section. This was also the time when Brownlee made his contribution to the *Compendium*.

Charles Brownlee’s treatise in the *Compendium* mainly covers the judicial system and Xhosa legal history. Brownlee represented Ngqika society as dynamic. He identified certain changes that had taken place in Ngqika legal practice over a forty-year period. He cited, as an example of such a change, one said to have been instituted by Tyhali.¹¹¹ The new law declared that, with the exception of the family of *ukumkani*, all royals would be subject to the laws that applied to the rest of the population.¹¹² This was a “levelling” law which is significant in view of the assumed

centrality and dominance of *iinkosi* in the Xhosa polity, as portrayed by Dugmore and others. Another change was said to have been initiated by Nqeno, *inkosi* of amaMbalu.¹¹³ According to Brownlee, Nqeno shortened the time during which women were to be regarded as unclean because of the menstrual cycle.¹¹⁴ There is more evidence that Nqeno had instituted some changes in law among amaMbalu before his death in 1846. Elsewhere Brownlee notes that, before his death, Nqeno had Stokwe, a minor son, appointed his successor, even though Doto was an heir apparent. Nqeno is said to have gone to Hintsá to request his ratification of the change. The significant role Nqeno had played in Xhosa legal history placed him in a central position in Xhosa society. This was contrary to the approach followed in missionary writing, according to which Nqeno had been a minor figure who belonged to one of the secondary Tshawe Houses. In highlighting changes in Xhosa law Brownlee may have been keen to show that new colonial laws could be grafted on to an existing dynamic legal system.

Brownlee's account also gave a glimpse of the social history of the Ngqika community. He cited an example of a custom, *uphundlo*, which had been practised before the time of Ngqika. Through this custom *inkosi* and his entourage would forcibly take virgins and sleep with them.¹¹⁵ According to Brownlee, Ngqika had abolished the custom. Brownlee also mentioned an instance where young men, most probably in defiance of missionary morality, claimed their right to revive a custom that had seemingly been neglected for some time. This was the practice of having young men and women sleeping together during *intonjane* festivities.¹¹⁶ According to Brownlee, in 1845 young men went about collecting girls who had not attended *intonjane*. They claimed it was *isiko* (custom) that they were following. Significantly, Sandile approved of their actions and in that way a custom was revived.¹¹⁷ Struggles in the social and legal arena also constitute an important part of Xhosa history. In looking at ways indigenous people confronted colonial power and conquest, Crais calls for an approach broader than the usual "socio-economic chronicle of conquest."¹¹⁸

Brownlee's background, as someone who had grown up among amaXhosa, made him more open in his discussion of Xhosa legal history. His approach was less vindictive than other contributors like Warner. His contribution focussed on changes that had taken place in Xhosa law and custom. Such knowledge would enable magistrates to initiate their own changes in Xhosa law.

Brownlee's discussion of the customs of *uphundlo* and *intonjane* showed the missionary influence in his thinking.¹¹⁹ The two customs were viewed by missionaries as examples of reprehensible morality. The young men's demands for the restoration of *intonjane* gave Grey justification to introduce colonial laws that would bring about "civilised habits" among amaXhosa. Grey's policy of building schools and promoting education among amaXhosa earned him much praise. Healdtown Industrial Institution under Rev Ayliff was established in February 1855, two months after Grey's arrival in South Africa.¹²⁰ Grey also funded training schools built by the Anglicans at the Great Places of senior *iinkosi* - Sarhili, Sandile, and Mhala.¹²¹ An even more daring plan in "civilising" amaXhosa was the establishment in 1858 of a school at Zonnebloem in Cape Town to which he sent daughters and sons of *iinkosi*.¹²²

Ayliff wrote "On the different kinds of food in use in Kaffraria".¹²³ It was a brief text of four-and-a-half pages and did not capture the changes Xhosa society had undergone in food production. Ayliff was silent on the changes that colonisation had brought to the subsistence economy of amaXhosa. Decreasing land meant less space for cultivation of crops. Hunting¹²⁴ had been adversely affected. Hunting belts, traditionally kept as reservoirs of game, came to be farmed due to land shortage.¹²⁵ The advent of colonists and their guns had depleted the game. The other important factor affecting food production, which Ayliff did not mention, was natural disaster - famine, drought or flood. Ayliff also overlooked the various technological changes in food production in Xhosa society. For example, there had been the adoption of the plough, which Kay had noted in 1825.¹²⁶

In the *Compendium* short biographical notes on twelve *iinkosi* were presented.¹²⁷ The writer concentrated on giving a profile of each of these Xhosa leaders. There was a particular focus on the relationship each *inkosi* had had with the colony in the past and in which of the colonial wars each had participated. Friends of the colony, like Kama, were described in positive terms, as someone who was a Christian and faithful.¹²⁸ Those who had resisted colonialism like Sandile, Maqoma, and Mhala were depicted in a bad light. Sandile was described as timid and "exceedingly sensual",¹²⁹ as weak and intellectually mediocre. Mhala was portrayed as shrewd. This negative image of *iinkosi* was a departure from the 'noble savage' image found in writings at the beginning of the century when *iinkosi* like Thole, and Ngqika were generally painted as

intelligent and fine figures. In colonial history what determined the image of each *inkosi* was his relationship with the colony. This history also appears to have influenced the level at which the remuneration of *inkosi* would be fixed under Grey's system.¹³⁰ For example, Phatho, who had remained neutral during the 1850-53 war was granted an allowance of ninety-six pounds,¹³¹ a sum equal to Sandile's allowance.¹³² This was despite the fact that Phatho was not the equal of Sandile; the latter was a direct descendant in the line of *ookumkani*, while the former came from a house which had been assimilated into the Tshawe line. Crais also points out that under Grey's policies, only the senior son was assured of becoming *inkosi*.¹³³ Minor royal sons were degraded to the level of headmen. From the 1850s onwards, though the theme of Xhosa royalty remained prominent in writings about the Xhosa past, it was not the same institution. Through Grey's policies the Xhosa political system was emptied of its authority and *inkosi* were chiefs in the service of colonial authorities.¹³⁴

In his book, *The Past and Future of the Kaffir Races*, Holden also discussed *inkosi* in relation to the rapid changes that had taken place during the period between 1846 and 1866.¹³⁵ To Holden that time had been particularly favourable for the colonists and tragic for amaXhosa. Holden made special mention of Maqoma, Phatho and Kama. What Holden could remember of Maqoma was seeing him with his "his retinue of wives...frequently supplied with intoxicating drinks."¹³⁶ The description of Maqoma as a drunkard was echoed by other writers at the time.¹³⁷ Holden and those writers chose to ignore other descriptions of Maqoma in colonial literature. For example, Maclean himself described Maqoma as "the greatest politician and best warrior in Kaffraria."¹³⁸ Soga quotes Maclean as having said of Maqoma that he "... is admitted by everybody to be an orator above the ordinary, and a warrior unrivalled among his Xosa compeers."¹³⁹ Historians generally agree that Maqoma was charismatic, brave and intelligent.¹⁴⁰ Holden's treatment of Phatho was also less than kind. He was depicted as a drunkard who frequented the canteens at Peddie. Holden also mentioned how Phatho was the last to submit during the 1846-47 war. Although Holden discussed the 1850-53 war he failed to mention the support the British obtained from Phatho during that war. Holden contrasted Phatho's tragic story with that of his brother, Kama. Holden's description of Kama was similar to that drawn by Wesleyan missionaries during the 1830s and 1840s. It was in line with the idea of a model christian *inkosi*. Holden then gave a brief account of Kama's political career as an ally of the British.

A table that appears in Maclean and Holden¹⁴¹ giving population returns for January and December 1857 condensed important data on amaXhosa during a particularly tragic period in their history. It is possible to get an idea of the demographic impact of the cattle-killing by comparing the figures for January and December 1857. The figures in the table however do not explain the drastic population decline between January and December 1857. In January 1857 there were 50 045 men and women in British Kaffraria while in December the same year the return shows 19 913, a loss of about 60%. The picture regarding children is worse. In January there were 54 676 children and in December 17 784, a loss of about 66%.¹⁴² Admittedly there had been a high loss of life through starvation. However, the huge fall in numbers between January and December can also be attributed to the exodus of surviving Xhosa to the colony to seek a living as labourers. Stapleton claims that by June 1857 Brownlee had removed 3 300 people from Sandile's area to the colony.¹⁴³ It would appear that civil servants in British Kaffraria were involved in this major task of placing Xhosa labourers in the colony. On 30 May 1857 R Southey, the Civil Commissioner for Albany, wrote to Maclean informing him that there were applications for 6000 "Kaffir" servants for employment.¹⁴⁴ This was in line with Grey's policy of forcing amaXhosa to participate in public works programmes as part of his civilising policy.

Holden's writing on the cattle-killing was mainly to highlight Xhosa folly and superstition. Like many observers at the time Holden blamed the incident on *iinkosi*.¹⁴⁵ He portrayed the British as benevolent rescuers of moving skeletons.¹⁴⁶ He recorded that between January and December 1857 the Xhosa population had decreased by 67,024,¹⁴⁷ numbering 37 699 in December. He did observe that the decrease had been likely the result of people moving, as well as dying. Seven years later in December 1864 statistics showed an increase in the Xhosa population, indicating a rise to 78,018.¹⁴⁸ Holden attributed the increase to the way the "Kaffir character ... quickly .. sets to work to repair the most serious injuries that can be inflicted upon it."¹⁴⁹ The 1864 table had the names of just four chiefs - Sandile, Kama, Anta, and Oba - as opposed to twelve in 1857. Instead, the return had seven names of magistrates and the districts over which they were in charge.¹⁵⁰ Holden was silent on the fate of *iinkosi* whose names had appeared in the 1857 returns.¹⁵¹ A new column depicted the ownership of commodities like waggons and ploughs. Another new column reflected a record of hut-taxes and horse-taxes. The population tables contained information that was outlined in columns, depicting what the writers had decided

needed to be known about amaXhosa at that time. By including official documents the writers of both the *Compendium* and *The Past and Future* were attempting to add authority to their texts.

By the mid-nineteenth century genealogical tables of *iinkosi* had become familiar texts. The *Compendium* would thus have been incomplete had it omitted what had become an important part of Xhosa historical writing. The “Genealogy of the Kaffir Chiefs.1858”¹⁵² had new and interesting features. It was no longer just a breakdown of the Tshawe House. Included were the genealogical tables of “Abatembu¹⁵³, Amampondumisi, Amampondo, Amaxosa”.¹⁵⁴ For each of these four groupings a royal genealogy was outlined. The text was an extension of the standard approach, that of identifying the history of a royal family with that of an ethnic group. This resulted in the exclusion of other histories of clans, women, and minorities, for example. However, the tabling of the four genealogies meant that the approach that had been used in the writing of Xhosa history had been extended to other groups in south-east Africa. Previously, reference to Xhosa neighbours had been made by early writers, but, up to then there had been no attempt to write their histories. An area that needs further research is the degree to which the approach to writing Xhosa history during the nineteenth century became a standard method that was followed in writing the history of other indigenous groups.

Nicholson presented a short discussion in point form on the “Genealogical Table of Kafir Chiefs”.¹⁵⁵ He estimated the date of arrival of amaXhosa at the Kei River to have been 1617, or even a little earlier.¹⁵⁶ Citing an informant, Qirana, Nicholson presented a brief history of amaMpondomise who claimed to be of a different descent line from amaMpondo and who further saw themselves as having been the first to occupy the region, without being specific, in south-east Africa. Qirana contended that amaXhosa and abaThembu had migrated thereafter into the region “several generations ago”.¹⁵⁷ Writing about Mhala, *inkosi* among amaNdlambe, Nicholson noted that he could not exercise full legal rights as he was not a true heir. Dugmore was the first to raise the question of Mhala’s status, claiming that he was the son of Ndlambe’s “concubine”;¹⁵⁸ he nonetheless had been made the successor of Ndlambe by *amaphakathi*. Nicholson was confirming the negative colonial image of Mhala. Nicholson also gave a brief history of imiDange. Again he cited an instance where an heir was replaced by a usurper.

Holden did not confine himself to writing about amaXhosa. He provided “a complete and connected account ... of all tribes and races from Port Elizabeth to Delagoa Bay.”¹⁵⁹ Holden again seems to have been influenced by the *Compendium*, as he made use of the “Genealogy of the Kaffir Chiefs. 1858”. This gave him the scope to write not just Xhosa history, but include a history of “Abatembu, Amampondumisi, Amampondo.”¹⁶⁰ Holden presented a new approach, according to which he ranked the “Kaffir Races”. He identified abaThembu as “paramount, being the oldest or great stock of the tree, from which the other divisions in remote periods have probably descended.”¹⁶¹ Next were amaMpondomise, followed by amaMpondo. AmaXhosa then followed lower down the line.¹⁶² Holden’s claim that abaThembu were “paramount” was intended to place amaXhosa in a junior position with less claim to the land than the other groups. In the mid-nineteenth century writings amaXhosa were being marginalised. Holden was identifying abaThembu as the senior chiefdom with whom the British could form an alliance. He claimed that Xhosa power had been greatly reduced. Holden’s remarks on amaXhosa were designed to justify the appropriation of Xhosa land and the institution of colonial rule.

Holden used the differing lengths of the genealogical tables to rank the “tribes”. Because abaThembu had the longest genealogical table, covering eighteen generations, they were deemed to be the most senior. Holden estimated that they could have settled in south-east Africa in about 1400.¹⁶³ Next in order of importance were amaMpondomise who were given 1445 as their arrival date, while amaMpondo were given 1500. According to Holden amaXhosa arrived at the same time as amaMpondo.¹⁶⁴ Holden’s attempt to date the origins of south-east Africans followed earlier attempts by writers like Thompson and Noyi.¹⁶⁵ Historians have continued to try periodising the history of southern Africans. Soga tried to present a time frame of Xhosa history by linking an oral tradition tracing the origins of “abeNguni” to a place called Dedesi with dates that were derived from sixteenth century Portuguese records in the Zambesi-Limpopo region.¹⁶⁶ Peires begins his calculation with Phalo who was a mature adult in 1736 and counts the years backwards to the eras of Sikhomo and Togu. He however admits the serious problems historians encounter when trying to calculate the dates of early *ookumkani*.¹⁶⁷

In the aggregation of “tribal” units there were groups that were being squeezed out, or were being compelled to attach themselves to the units that the colonial order had produced. In the process

their history was sidelined. There were other groups in the south-east African region, besides the four colonial “tribal” groups, who also had their own royal families. Examples of such groups are amaQwathi, amaXesibe, and amaBomvana. Their histories were left out of the texts on the four “tribes”. Their marginalisation is similar to the exclusion of Xhosa clan histories by writers who just focussed on Tshawe history.¹⁶⁸ In writing about amaBhaca and amaZelemu Holden adopted the approach used by writers of the 1820s to describe a mysterious people who were given the name *imfecane*. Early writers like Thompson and Kay reported that abaThembu were attacked and harassed by cannibalistic hordes.¹⁶⁹ Holden’s description of amaBhaca was similar to that of *imfecane* forty years earlier. They, just like *imfecane*, were described by Holden as “remnants of several tribes after the wars of Utshaka.”¹⁷⁰ He further portrayed them as fierce and predatory, “a tribe of robbers, and at one time cannibals”.¹⁷¹ Later historians adopted Holden’s image of amaBhaca. Soga recounted how they mercilessly attacked abaThembu and took away their cattle.¹⁷² It is possible amaBhaca were given this negative image because they had attacked abaThembu, who were being portrayed as superior people and friends of the colony by commentators like Holden. Holden likened abaThembu to Kama’s people who were favourably disposed towards the Gospel and had made advances in civilisation.¹⁷³

Holden reproduced a history of amaXhosa¹⁷⁴ which had first appeared in *The South African Christian Watchman* in 1846.¹⁷⁵ This was accompanied by the “Genealogical Table of AmaXhosa Chiefs. 1846”.¹⁷⁶ This was the same history to the one published in Maclean, although Holden added some Xhosa history after 1846. As a resident at Fort Beaufort between 1842 and 1846 Holden had experienced the severity of the 1846 war. He described the 1850-52 war¹⁷⁷ as having been bitter. Holden highlighted the folly of amaXhosa in challenging the superior British forces. In his account of the cattle killing he blamed amaXhosa for “their own vile superstition”.¹⁷⁸ Kama received special mention as one who symbolised progress.¹⁷⁹ Holden was not happy with the manner Kama had been treated by the British and feared that he (Kama) would be lost to the missionary cause. Holden’s history confirmed the colonial image of amaXhosa as foolish, superstitious and untrustworthy. His account was pro-British although at times showed irritation with the vacillation of the British government on land issues.

At times when nineteenth-century European writers tried to identify a place of origin of south-

east Africans, they mixed that up with biblical beliefs about human origins. For example, when Holden tried to identify the geographical origins of the “progenitors of the Kaffir and other South African Tribes,”¹⁸⁰ he claimed the south-east Africans must have originated from “the great centre of human life in the neighbourhood of Tigris and Euphrates.”¹⁸¹ Holden linked the presence of people in Africa to the biblical story of the dispersal. He subscribed to the view that Africans were descendants of Ham.¹⁸² Nicholson tried to reconcile the idea of a place of origin with a Xhosa *ibali lemvelo*; hence he noted that the area between Natal and Delagoa Bay was marshy.¹⁸³ AmaXhosa had a tradition which explained their origins as having *ukudabuka eluhlangeni*, having burst from Hlanga. The insistence on Hlanga was a contestation of European biblical understandings of human origins. The notion of Hlanga was totally alien to European thinking and therefore incomprehensible. Although there had been references to Hlanga as a source of origin in early writings¹⁸⁴ the notion was gradually supplanted by views that identified Xhosa as the progenitor.¹⁸⁵ The concept of Hlanga could not be fitted into Euro-Christian cosmology on the origins of humanity. This was a form of repression of African knowledge, bolstered by westerners’ belief that their knowledge system was supreme. The concept of Hlanga is consistent with certain beliefs in African religion and philosophy. It should be seen in the light of “force” or “spirit” which Tempels, a pioneer in the study of African philosophy, identified as, “the vital force...the essence of being.”¹⁸⁶

Holden’s writing on Xhosa history followed on themes that had been covered in earlier works, especially those compiled by Maclean. In pursuing the theme on Xhosa origins he suggested that a study of African languages could give possible leads in the quest to uncover the African past. Holden derived his ideas from observations that had been made by Rev Appleyard, a Methodist missionary among amaXhosa, who had classified African languages in southern Africa¹⁸⁷ into two groups: the click class and the alliteral class.¹⁸⁸ Holden suggested that somewhere in the interior of Africa or in southern Africa there was a parent dialect from which other dialects had sprung. Its location was more likely to be in the interior, where the progenitors of south-east Africans could have remained. Lichtenstein, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had first made the suggestion that a study of isiXhosa, which had borrowed Arabic words, could give a lead on the question of Xhosa origins.¹⁸⁹

A central argument in this study is that the production of Xhosa history during the nineteenth century was a process undertaken by a number of diverse participants in changing contexts. Colonial writing on Xhosa history in the mid-nineteenth century was dominated by colonial officials keen on entrenching and expanding British rule at the Cape. A lull in the publication of Xhosa newspapers between 1850 and 1862 resulted in a temporary dearth of historical writing by amaXhosa. During the 1860s amaXhosa were a bruised and dislocated people. *inkosi* and *amaphakathi* were paid colonial servants who had lost their authority. This was a period of transition in Xhosa society. The new order that was emerging brought about new spokespersons for amaXhosa. These were the mission-trained literate elite. The most famous of such persons was Tiyo Soga.¹⁹⁰ As the son of one of the leading *iphakathi* at the court of Ngqika, and later of Sandile, Tiyo Soga belonged to the Ngqika “aristocratic class”. From an early age he was in close association with missionaries and eventually educated and trained as a minister in Scotland.¹⁹¹ In recounting Xhosa history Soga and those who came after him interwove western approaches and African conventions. The publication of *Indaba* in 1862 presented another opportunity for Xhosa comments on the writing of their history. In the very first edition of *Indaba* in August 1862 a correspondent, Nonjiba Waseluhlangeni,¹⁹² who was to be a regular contributor to the paper, made a strong appeal to Xhosa readers. In essence, he was inviting people to come forward and use the newspaper as *isitya* (a vessel) that would treasure Xhosa history, news, and stories. He wrote:¹⁹³

*Kwelopepa Lendaba ngati ndibona isitya esihle sokulondoloza imbali, nendaba, namavo asekaya. Izendo zohlanga zingaphezu kwenkomo, nemali nokudhla.... Ingwevu zakowetu nezaSembo mazizityande izisu ihlandzelwe pandle yonke into...Besingenazizwena kudala? Ipina imbali yazo...Besingenazi-Nkosina kudala? Bekungeko zidumileyona?...Bekungeko zimbongina kudala? Bezibonga obani?...Apina lomagora?...Ipina imbali yamaGora ebetwala esosivato esihle kunene? Mabavuswe o-Ngconde, no-Togu, no-Tshiwo, no-Palo, no-Rarabe, no-Mlawu, no-Ngqika, no-Ndlambe.*¹⁹⁴

This call by Tiyo Soga to his compatriots to spell out everything about amaXhosa represents a response to what had been written on Xhosa history by imperialist writers. At the same time Soga

himself focussed on royal history as early writers had done. Opland sees the call as having been for a “nationalism that transcends ethnic divisions such as those between Xhosa and Mfengu”,¹⁹⁵ and a direct challenge to the separatist tribal constructions found in the *Compendium* and *The Past and Future*. Soga, one of the most educated Xhosa men at the time, continued to exhort his compatriots, through the medium of *Indaba* to share and exchange ideas on their knowledge of history. It was twenty years later, when Soga was already dead, that there was a vibrant discussion and writing of Xhosa history through the newspapers.¹⁹⁶

Holden’s Xhosa history texts compiled by Maclean have been used as sources by historians and other scholars. Some have used these texts without due consideration to the circumstances prevailing when they were produced. On the other hand, texts collected in the *Compendium* and Holden’s book are sources which the historian has in hand and with which she/he has to work. Hodgson who has undertaken research on Xhosa religion during the nineteenth century has cited the contributors to the *Compendium*. In her discussion of Hlanga she refers to Nicholson who identified *uhlanga* as a cave of origin.¹⁹⁷ She further cites Holden whose discussion of Hlanga included both Zulu and Xhosa beliefs.¹⁹⁸ In his work on Xhosa history Crais refers to Dugmore and Warner. Using Dugmore as a source, Crais gives the number of wives “of wealthy chiefs and the paramount” at about twenty.¹⁹⁹ Crais should have taken into consideration that Dugmore had mentioned the number of royal wives to highlight the lust and immorality of amaXhosa, especially *iinkosi*. In discussing the position of men and women in Xhosa society Crais cites Warner, but does not interrogate Warner’s assertions about Xhosa women. Warner was making his observations in line with nineteenth century thinking. Crais simply accepts Warner’s contentions and describes the place of women among amaXhosa as “ambiguous and subordinate”.²⁰⁰ Crais also places “chiefs” in opposition to commoners - a view seemingly based on the missionary-imperialists like Warner who were keen to portray *iinkosi* as dictators.

Wilson took the Thembu royal genealogy from Maclean.²⁰¹ She also accepted without question Holden’s claim that abaThembu were a senior Nguni line.²⁰² Questioning the claim that Dedesi was a place of origin Wilson noted that early records of Xhosa genealogies had made no reference to Dedesi.²⁰³ In discussing the power of *iinkosi*, she cited Dugmore and Warner who described how the retinue of a young *iinkosi* was formed around the co-initiates.²⁰⁴ Writing on

Xhosa morality during the nineteenth century Mostert referred to Dugmore.²⁰⁵ In *The House of Phalo* Peires used Dugmore and Holden as sources. He cited Dugmore in discussing of the position and role of the king's sons,²⁰⁶ the role of kings in legal, military, and religious matters,²⁰⁷ the position of the Great Wife especially after the death of *inkosi*,²⁰⁸ and the practice of cattle-clientage in Xhosa society.²⁰⁹ Soga did not include Maclean and Holden in the bibliography for his book, *The South-Eastern Bantu*.²¹⁰ However, in view of the fact that Theal, Ayliff, and Whiteside are cited as some of Soga's sources, it is highly probable that his work was influenced by Maclean and Holden, as Theal's sources included Maclean's *Compendium*²¹¹ and Holden's writings.²¹² Theal's writing on Xhosa history was largely based on preceding texts and was consistent with the writings of missionaries and colonial officials.

Holden and contributors to the *Compendium* typify colonial writers whose works were written mainly to inform, justify and legitimise colonial policy. The works were a combination of historical material and ethnographic data. This writing was largely influenced by changing political circumstances during the nineteenth century. AmaXhosa had suffered heavily in the devastating war of 1850-3. It was however the cattle killing that seems to have sealed the fate of Xhosa society. The production of Xhosa history at this time was mainly for the purpose of justifying colonial policy and advancing British imperialism. These writers also carried over themes that had emerged during two previous phases. Both Holden and Maclean pursued the theme of Xhosa royal history. Holden used royal histories as frameworks around which the four "tribes" - amaMpondomise, amaMpondo, abaThembu, and amaXhosa - were taking form. Some of the "tribes" were identified as friendly to the British while amaXhosa were given a negative image. Such a division of south-east Africans encouraged the identification of some "good" groups like abaThembu and others, like amaXhosa as "depredators". Maclean compiled texts which provided information on Xhosa social, political, legal, and economic history. Some aspects of this history portrayed Xhosa society in a negative light and provided justification for the implementation of Grey's "civilising" policy. Such a policy included using "chiefs" as colonial agents. Holden separated those "chiefs" that had fought against the British from those who had been allies, representing the former as good and the latter as evil. Dugmore focussed on Xhosa royal houses and laws of succession. The magisterial residences that Maclean established were denoted as power centres of *iinkosi* whose varying positions Dugmore had explicated. Brownlee was able to identify changes in law that had taken place in Xhosa society.

Warner, who had worked mainly among abaThembu, was keen to expose the weaknesses of Thembu law and the need to replace it with the British legal system. Ayliff discussed food and its production in Xhosa society. For colonial officials such information was vital as it revealed the material base of Xhosa society. Maclean's compilation provided a basis on which colonial rule could be extended. The search for the origins of amaXhosa, a dominant theme in nineteenth-century Xhosa history, was continued by Holden. Deeply influenced by biblical stories, he saw amaXhosa as descendants of Ham, originally coming from the region of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Nicholson, in Maclean, made a passing reference to Hlanga as a source of origin. However, the notion of Hlanga as a factor in Xhosa history was all eradicated in colonial writing, exemplifying the way in which African knowledge was progressively replaced with a colonial-missionary understanding of reality. Maclean and Holden produced a Xhosa history designed to advance colonial rule and British imperialism. AmaXhosa, at their weakest at that time, made a limited contribution to the writing of that history.

1 . For example, George Grey served as governor of New Zealand and Australia before coming to South Africa. Harry Smith had spent some time in Jamaica and India. Maclean had also been to the West Indies.

2 . M. Foucault, *Power, Truth and Strategy* (Sydney: Federal Publications, 1979), 46-47.

3 . Switzer, *Power and Resistance*, 52.

4 . See Colonel Maclean (Compiler), *A Compendium of Kafir Laws and Customs, Including Genealogical Tables of Kafir Chiefs and Various Tribal Census Returns* (Mount Coke: Wesleyan Missionary Press, 1858).

5 . Holden noted that he started writing the book in 1854 but it was only published in 1866 after he had added events that had happened since the time he had started writing. See Holden, *The Past and Future*, iii.

6 . *Ibid.*, vii.

7 . *Ibid.*

8 . *Ibid.*

9 . *Ibid.*, v.

10 . *Ibid.*

11 . See chapter three.

12 . See Erlank, "Gender and Christianity Among Africans Attached to Scottish Mission Stations in Xhosaland in the Nineteenth Century", 55.

13 . Relationships between missionaries and the indigenous people went through a number of phases. The initial phase was that of curiosity, to be followed by a coming together during which the two parties explored each other's world. A third phase involved the baptism of a very small number of converts while the rest of indigenous society preferred to ignore the missionaries and even adopt a hostile attitude towards them. By the 1840s it seems the third stage had been reached among amaXhosa.

14 . For example, Rev Calderwood observed that during the 1840s, while he was stationed near Fort Beaufort, Maqoma had seemed interested in the word of God and would attend divine service and weep aloud. Despite this, Maqoma never showed any interest in Christianity. See H Calderwood, *Caffres and Caffre Missions: With Preliminary Chapters on the Cape Colony as a Field for Emigration and Basis of Missionary Operation* (London: Nisbet and Co., 1858), 65.

15 . There was always great disappointment among missionaries and colonists whenever Xhosa converts joined their compatriots against the British. For example, Stretch made a special entry in his diary when one of the Xhosa fighters was found to have been carrying a Methodist hymn and prayer book. See Le Cordeur (ed), *The Journal of Charles Lennox Stretch*, 70.

16 . For example, two Wesleyan ministers became colonial officials, Reverend Calderwood and JC Warner.

17 . From the mid-1840s the administration in the Cape and Natal Colonies was ably assisted by sons of missionaries who served as interpreters, clerks, and administrators. For example, the Shepstone, Ross, Brownlee, Chalmers, Kayser families had sons in the colonial civil service.

18 . Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, 219.

19 . G C Moore Smith, *The Autobiography of Lieutenant- General Sir Harry Smith* (London: John Murray, 1903), 586.

20 . Smith recorded in his journal that he had approached Maqoma, ordered him to kneel and proceeded to put his foot on Maqoma's neck. *Ibid.*

21 . E H Brookes, *White Rule in South Africa 1830-1910: Varieties in Governmental Policies Affecting Africans* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1974), 23.

22 . Mostert, *Frontiers*, 952.

23 . Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 169.

24 . Cathcart seems to have been invited to South Africa in order to bring the 1850-53 war to a close. Keegan points out that he was just a military man with no background in colonial administration. See Keegan, *Colonial South Africa*, 242.

25 . Note should be taken of how Grey, just as the consequences of the cattle killing movement were beginning to take effect among amaXhosa, in turn went about opening schools. For example, on 14 May 1857 he opened the Industrial Institution at Healdtown. See A 80(4), Cape Archives. For a discussion of a school for daughters and sons of *iinkosi/kgosi* at Zonnebloem, in Cape Town see Janet Hodgson, "Zonnebloem College and Cape Town: 1858-1870" (University of Cape Town: Unpublished Paper, 1981)

26 . See Brookes, *White Rule in South Africa*, 25.

27 . Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1170.

28 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 200.

29 . Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 46.

30 . *Ibid.*

31 . *Ibid.*

32 . J.Rutherford, *Sir George Grey: A Study in Colonial Government* (London: Cassell, 1961), 312.

33 . "Sir George Grey Despatches 1854-56", *Cape Town Archives*, Vol x, MS 17049.

34 . Grey to Sir William Molesworth , *Ibid.*, 89.

35 . Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, 334.

36 . Brownlee to Maclean, *Blue Books on South African Kafir Tribes and Kafir War 1852-57*, 45.

37 . Brownlee to Grey, *Ibid.*, 2.

38 . In November 1855 Grey informed Lord Russell at the Colonial Office that "Your Lordship may rest assured ... that peace now prevails throughout the whole extent of South Africa which is or was under British rule". See *Correspondence Between His Excellency Sir George Grey and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary for the Colonies*, 18.

39 . In February 1856 Grey noted in his despatch that "Fingoes" and the "Hottentots" were acting in a "suspicious" manner, implying that they could not be trusted. See *Cape Town Archives 1847-1860*, MS 17049. In October 1857 Maclean, Grey's most senior official in British Kaffraria, submitted reports to the Cape Legislature about the "Chiefs' Plot" to foment a rising against colonists. See *Cape of Good Hope Annexures*, 55-58.

40 . It was only in December 1855 that Grey informed the Colonial Office of his plans in British Kaffraria. See Grey to Molesworth, *Correspondence Between His Excellency Sir George Grey and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary for the Colonies*, 89.

41 . *Ibid.*, 87.

42 . *Ibid.*

43 . K Sinclair, "The Maoris in New Zealand History", *History Today*, Vol 30, July 1980, 40-41.

44 . John Maclean had steadily risen in the ranks of the colonial civil service. In 1845 he had been appointed diplomatic agent among the "Fingoes" at Peddie. During the 1846-1847 War he was appointed commissioner for amaNdlambe and was credited with having successfully kept them and amaGqunukhwebe out of the war. For further biographical information see W.J. de Kock (editor) *Dictionary of South African Biography*, i (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1968), 490-492.

45 . Colonel Maclean was one of those professional colonial soldiers who had travelled the world serving British imperial interests.

46 . See for example Cathcart to Sir John S Pakington, 20 May 1852 in *Correspondence of Lieutenant-General, the Hon. Sir George Cathcart KCB Illustrative of his Military Operations in Kaffraria* (London: John Murray, 1856), 58.

47 . Initially Maclean, and even Brownlee, had serious misgivings about the chances of success of Grey's plan, for the reasons Maclean put forward. See "Maclean to Grey" in *Correspondence Between his Excellency Sir George Grey and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary for the Colonies*, 99.

48 . *Ibid.*, 91.

49 . Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 312.

50 . *Ibid.*, ix.

51 . There seems to have been a scare about an imminent Xhosa attack on the frontier in February 1857. John Ross, a missionary at Pirie noted how Grey found a deserted mission station during his visit there. See Rev John Ross at Pirie, MS 8168, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

52 . For example, Maclean assumed that the murder of Mr Wilson, a white man, had been perpetrated by amaXhosa. See Maclean to Grey, *Blue Books on South Africa: Miscellaneous 1858-1868*, 39.

53 . See "Trial of Maqoma and Nine Others", *Cape of Good Hope Annexures*, G4-'58.

54 . Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, 380-381.

55 . "Maclean to Grey" in *Correspondence Between his Excellency Sir George Grey*, 102.

56 . A letter from Maclean to Warner in February 1856 gives an idea how the former set about inviting contributors to the planned *Compendium*. See Maclean to Warner in Maclean, *Compendium*, 55-56.

57 . Maclean to High Commission, 28 June 1858, in Letters to High Commission 1854-1863, BK 373, Cape Archives.

58 . See Grey, *Polynesian Mythology*.

59 . Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 49.

60 . *Ibid.*

61 . Grey's interest in early literature can be seen in a notice sent out by Bleek, who then was librarian, to missionaries in various parts of South Africa, informing them that the governor had sanctioned the transmission of documents to Cape Town. See Letter from W.H.I. Bleek to Missionaries, G.38.b.5, South African Library.

62 . AE Du Toit, "The Cape Frontier: A Study of Native Policy with Special reference to the Years 1847-1866", *Archives Year Book for South African History*, i, 105.

63 . Lytton to Grey, September 1858, *Blue Books on South Africa : Miscellaneous 1858-1868*, 31.

64 . Lytton to Grey, May 1859, *Ibid.*, 35. Grey was recalled to London, but this was later reversed.

65 . Du Toit, "The Cape Frontier", 105.

66 . Fast contends that Wesleyans had always enjoyed a closer relationship with the colonial authorities than had other societies like the London Missionary Society or the Glasgow Missionary Society. See Hildegard Fast, "African Perspectives of the Missionaries and their Message: Wesleyans at Mount Coke and Butterworth 1825-1834" (MA Thesis: University of Cape Town, 1991), 24.

67 . See for example Ayliff's letter to Maclean asking for an assistant in his office as an auditor in November 1856. "Extracts from Schedule No.354 of Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria", *Blue Books on South Africa: Miscellaneous 1858-1868*, 11.

68 . See *List of the Officers of the Army and of the Corps of Royal Marines with an Index 1850-1851* (London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1850), 419 and 417.

69 . Through the work of Dr Fitzgerald at Grey Hospital from 1855 onwards, Grey was able to set up a health system among amaXhosa which would gradually replace the traditional doctors. See Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, 321-324.

70 . See CG Weldon, "The Interaction Between the Missionaries of the Cape Eastern Frontier and the Colonial Authorities in the Era of Sir George Grey 1854-1861" (M.A., University of Natal Pietermaritzburg, 1984), 55-72.

71 . See "Rev HH Dugmore Papers", Maclean, *Compendium*, 1-53.

72 . See *The South African Christian Watchman and Magazine*, Vol I, September 1846, 318-327.
- For a discussion of this article see chapter three.

73 . Dugmore's name appeared alongside other translators. See John W Appleyard, *An Apology for the Kafir Bible Being a Reply* (Mount Coke; Wesleyan Mission Press, 1867), 8.

74 . See F G van der Riet and L A Hewson (eds), *The Reminiscences of an Albany Settler* (Grahamstown: Grocott and Sherry, 1958), 67-76.

75 . For example the Xhosa royal genealogical table Dugmore produced and published in 1846, which was then republished in 1858 has been the framework for subsequent genealogical tables. A few changes were made by Wilson . See Wilson, "The Nguni People" in Wilson and Thompson (eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870* , i, 88. Soga however differed on a number of points from Dugmore. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu* , 80.

76 . For example, Dugmore gave an account of how Mhala, who had been the son of a "concubine", ended up being Ndlambe's Great Son. See Dugmore in Maclean, *A Compendium*, 20.

77 . For example, an historical account was given of how the House of Ixhiba came about. *Ibid.*, 13.

78 . Colonel Collins, "Journal of a Tour to the North-Eastern Boundary, the Orange River, and the Storm Mountains, in 1809" in Moodie, *The Record* .

79 . Mostert points out that by the end of 1858 there was a handful of *iinkosi* and *amaphakathi* like the following - Maqoma, Mhala, Siyolo, Xoxo, Stokwe, and Xayimpi. Phatho remained in hospital as he was too sick to be taken to the island. See Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1237. For a discussion of the harassment and eventual arrest of various *iinkosi* after Nongqawuse see Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 294-303.

80 . See Dugmore, "Kaffraria II. Its Tribes", *The South African Christian Watchman*, 318-327.

81 . Harry Smith had invested himself with the title *Inkosi Enkulu* (Great Chief). Later in 1849 he removed Sandile from his position and installed Charles Brownlee.

82 . Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1156.

83 . For an unpublished biography of Warner see "Joseph Cox Warner", SM 2067(c), Albany Museum, Grahamstown.

84 . AmaNgwane were simply referred to as imfecane in colonial literature. The final attack on amaNgwane was undertaken with the assistance of Somerset at Mbolompo in 1828.

85 . "JC Warner", SM 2067 (c).

86 . There are several articles in the copies of *U-mShumayeli* which have an H appended at the end. That could well have been Reverend Haddy. It is not clear how Opland comes to include Warner as well. See Jeff Opland, "Xhosa Literature in Newspapers, 1837-1909" in Johannes A Smit, Johan van Wyk, and Jean Philippe Wade, *Rethinking South African Literary History* (Durban: Y Press, 1996), 116.

87 . Maclean had been in regular contact with Warner, as the "Tambookie Agent". For letters between the two see BK 79, Cape Archives. Also, in 1857 Warner found himself involved in the cattle killing movement among abaThembu. This happened when he was part of the plan to bring

the colonial forces against Fadana, who had been a leader of *amathamba* (the believers). For an account of the events see Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 273-276.

88 . Warner to Maclean in *Cape of Good Hope Annexures 1858*, 1.

89 . Warner to Southey in *ibid.*, 7.

90 . Warner in Maclean, *Compendium*, 59.

91 . Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, 154.

92 . Warner in Maclean, *Compendium*, 59.

93 . *Ibid.*, 58.

94 . *Ibid.*

95 . Warner in Maclean, *Compendium*, 59-60. Warner's strong desire to bring about changes in Thembu society can best be seen in his plan to get a wife for Qeya, heir to the Thembu throne in 1863. The bride was to be Emma, the Zonnebloem educated Rharhabe princess. The plan failed when Qeya turned down the offer. See J Hodgson, *Princess Emma* (Craighall: Donker, 1987), 96-118.

96 . Wilson, "Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier" in Wilson and Thompson(eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i, 267.

97 . Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, i, 172.

98 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 202.

99 . Grey to Molesworth, 18 December 1855, *Correspondence Between His Excellency Sir George Grey and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary for Colonies*, 87.

100 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 200.

101 . In his account of the actions of Tshiwo, Noyi covered the system whereby *iinkosi* distributed stock among retainers. See Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 4-5.

102 . Mostert, *Frontiers*, 199.

103 . Nonetheless he was not a complete stranger among Methodists as he had been educated at a Methodist school at Salem. See Brownlee, *Reminiscences of Kaffir Life*, 23.

104 . Some of his adventures during the 1846-7 war are recounted in his brother's diary . See Alastair GK Brown, "The Diary of James Brownlee" (MA Thesis, Rhodes University, 1980).

105 . See "Career of Charles Brownlee", MS 86.36.9.12. NELM, Grahamstown.

106 . Golan, *Inventing Shaka*, 139.

- 107 . De Kock (editor-in-chief), *Dictionary of South African Biography*, i, 126.
- 108 . He observed that, "The Kaffir will never again make war upon the Colony". See letter from Brownlee to an unspecified person, MS 14314, Cory Library.
- 109 . AmaXhosa were well aware that Brownlee was a commoner. Mostert quotes Botomane, a Mdange *inkosi*, saying, "We chiefs like to be associated with chiefs", on the occasion of being given a magistrate. See Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1176.
- 110 . For an account of the death of James Brownlee see BJ Ross, *Amabali Emfazwe Zakwa-Xosa*, second edition (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1931), 10-17.
- 111 . Tyhali, the son of the Right Hand House of Ngqika, and a leading *Ngqika inkosi* up to his death in 1842.
- 112 . Brownlee in Maclean, *Compendium*, 113.
- 113 . Nqeno, generally known as Eno in colonial literature, belonged to the House of amaMbalu. According to Brownlee he was an old man by the 1840s. He died just before the outbreak of the 1846-7 war. He seems to have brought about a number of changes in Xhosa law. See Charles Brownlee, *Reminiscences of Kaffir Life and History and Other Papers* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1896), 330-331.
- 114 . Brownlee in Maclean, *Compendium*, 125.
- 115 . *Ibid.*, 126.
- 116 . *Intonjane* is a ceremony amaXhosa observe to mark girls coming into womanhood.
- 117 . *Ibid.*, 126-7.
- 118 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 2.
- 119 . Grey perceived indigenous women in Australia as subjugated to men. With such preconceived notions he came to consider the position of African women . See LR Hiatt, *Arguments About Aborigines: Australia and the Evolution of Social Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 86.
- 120 . For an account of the establishment of Healdtown see Ayliff, "Journal of the Industrial Institution" 80 (4a), Cape Archives.
- 121 . See J Rutherford, *Sir George Grey: A Study in Colonial Government* (London: Cassell, 1961), 318.
- 122 . For an account of Zonnebloem see an unpublished paper by J Hodgson, "Zonnebloem College and Cape Town: 1858-1870" (University of Cape Town, 1981).
- 123 . J Ayliff, "On the Different Kinds of Food" in Maclean, *Compendium*, 152-156.

124 . Early travellers noted how hunting was an important social and economic activity among amaXhosa. Alberti described a hunt for game. See Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 74-77.

125 . For a discussion of aspects of the Nguni economy see Wilson, "Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier", 253-254.

126 . Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, 418.

127 . See Maclean, *Compendium*, 128-135.

128 . *Ibid.*, 128-129.

129 . *Ibid.*, 132.

130 . For a table showing the salaries of eleven *iinkosi* see Grey to Maclean, *Correspondence Between his Excellency Sir George Grey and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary for Colonies*, 92.

120 . In comparison to others, Phatho was favourably treated by Grey. When he was arrested in 1857 he was sick, kept in hospital and continued to receive a stipend, which was however reduced to sixty pounds. See *ibid.*, 379.

132 . See Grey to Maclean, 17 September 1855, in *Correspondence Between his Excellency Sir George Grey and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary for Colonies*, 92.

133 . Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 202.

134 . To highlight the changes that had taken place in Xhosa society Rutherford observed, "Sandile thus became a paid officer of the Government." See Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, 380.

135 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 158.

136 . *Ibid.*, 159.

137 . Cole noted in his book that when he visited Maqoma the latter begged for sixpence with which he bought liquor. See Alfred W Cole, *The Cape and the Kafirs Or Notes of Five Years Residence in South Africa* (London: Richard Bentley, 1852), 176-177. Also see Calderwood, *Caffres and Caffre Missions*, 71.

138 . Maclean, *Compendium*, 133.

139 . Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*. 170.

140 . See Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 15.

141 . In Maclean there is no page given, it is an appendix. Also see Holden, *The Past and Future*, 160.

142 . Maclean, "Appendix", *Compendium*, npg.

143 . Stapleton, *Maqoma* , 187.

144 . Southey to Maclean, 30 May 1857, BK 11, Cape Archives.

145 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 293. Warner, the Thembu agent vociferously accused *iinkosi* of having plotted a rising against British rule. See “Copies of Certain Communications from the Agent with the Tambookies” in *Cape Of Good Hope Annexures, 1858, A: 40-58,1*.

146 . In colonial history an impression about British benevolence was always created in situations of disaster that had befallen the indigenous people. For example, after the Battle of Lattakoo in 1823 Rev Moffat was the man who saved women and children from being killed and he collected many of the ‘wretched victims’ which were later seen in Cape Town. See Thompson, *Travels and Adventures*, 147-158.

147 . This was 30 000 higher than Maclean’s statistics.

148 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 160-161.

149 . *Ibid.*, 160.

150 . *Ibid.*

151 . The cattle killing resulted in instability and in-fighting within Xhosa communities. Grey had systematically arrested *iinkosi* who had been *amathamba*, levelled charges against them and despatched many to Robben Island. See Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 297-303.

152 . See B Nicholson, “Genealogical Table of Kafir Chiefs” in Maclean, *Compendium*, 166. This also appeared in Holden, *The Past and Future*, npg. Also attached as Appendix 5.

153 . The tabling of the Thembu royal genealogy explains the inclusion of the Thembu Agent, Warner, as a contributor.

154 . *Ibid.*

155 . Although Nicholson’s “Kafir” has a single ‘f’, whereas the table in Maclean has a double ‘f’, it is highly likely that Nicholson was commenting on the same genealogical table. See B Nicholson, “Genealogical Table of Kafir Chiefs” in Maclean, *Compendium*, 166-168.

156 . *Ibid.*, 166.

157 . *Ibid.*, 167.

158 . Dugmore, “Kaffraria”, *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*, 325.

159 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, III.

160 . *Ibid.*, 142.

161 . *Ibid.*, 142-143. This line of argument was pursued by Charles Brownlee in a paper he delivered at the Jubilee Celebration in honour of Rev Thomson in 1872. See MS 8730, Cory Library.

162 . Switzer suggests that amaXhosa were most probably in the vanguard of “Nguni expansion”. Switzer, *Power and Resistance*, 33.

163 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 143. Sihele also propounded the claim that abaThembu were the first to move into south-east Africa. See Sihele. “Who are abaThembu?”, 7. He further gives an arrival date of abaThembu as 1307 AD. *Ibid.*, 12.

164 . *Ibid.*

165 . Thompson estimated that 1670 was the possible date of Togu’s migration across the Kei River. See Thompson, *Travels and Adventures*, 2&3, 191. Noyi, on the other hand gave 1670 as the date of arrival of Tshiwo at Nxaruni, across Kei/Nciba River. See Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.

166 . See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 91-92.

167 . Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 17.

168 . In chapter 4 of this thesis there is a discussion of Xhosa clan histories and how these were gradually submerged under a dominant Xhosa royal history.

169 . For example see Thompson, *Travels and Adventures*, i, 180-187. A similar description was given to amaQwabe of Nqetho who were said to have disturbed peace near Morley Mission Station. The chaos they are said to have created was similar to the disturbances that were attributed to amaBhaca by Holden. See Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, 382-388.

170 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 144.

171 . *Ibid.*

172 . For an historical account of the birth of amaBhaca and their military exploits see Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 435-446.

173 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 164.

174 . *Ibid.*, 146-158.

175 . This history is discussed in chapter three.

176 . *Ibid.*, 142.

177 . *Ibid.*, 159.

178 . *Ibid.*, 160.

179 . This echoed similar views that had been made about Kama by missionary writers.

180 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 2.

181 . *Ibid.*, 5.

182 . *Ibid.* It is significant that Holden's views were still informed by an eighteenth century biblical classification of people. See Curtin, *The Image of Africa*, 38-39. Also see Pieterse, *White on Black* , 44.

183 . Nicholson associated the marshiness with the cavern from which amaXhosa believed life emerged.

184 . The concept of Hlanga in Xhosa religious beliefs is also discussed in chapter 4.

185 . For example in Dugmore's 1846 Xhosa genealogical table. See Dugmore, "Kaffraria", *The South African Christian Watchman*, 318.

186 . Tempels in John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1975), 39.

187 . Holden, *The Past and Future*, 1.

188 . *Ibid.*

189 . Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 302.

190 . Reference is again made to Tiyo Soga in chapter 7.

191 . For a biography of Tiyo Soga see JA Chalmers, *Tiyo Soga: A Page of South African Missionary Work* (London: 1877). Williams has edited the journal and letters of Soga. See D Williams(ed), *The Journal and Selected Writings of The Reverend Tiyo Soga* (Cape Town: AA Balkema, 1983.). Also see GM Khabela, *The Struggle of the Gods: A Study in Christianity and the African Culture* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1996).

192 . Nonjiba Waseluhlangeni was a pseudonym used by Tiyo Soga whenever he submitted articles to *Indaba*. The name has some significance as Waseluhlangeni meant one from Hlanga, from the source or beginning of life. For a Christian minister to have adopted such a pseudonym again reveals the two worlds Soga lived in.

193 . See Nonjiba Waseluhlangeni, "Ipepa le-Ndaba Zasekhaya", *Indaba*, Vol I, No. I, August 1862, 9-11.

194 . Translation: In *Indaba* I see a beautiful vessel for preserving historical narratives, news and anecdotes of the people. National events are more important than herds of cattle, money and even food....Xhosa veterans and those from eMbo must disgorge all they know..... Did we not have different nations in the past? Where is their history? Did we not have *iinkosi* in the past? Were there no famous ones? Were there no bards in the past?... Whose praises did they sing? Where are the brave ones?... Where is the history of the brave who used to be draped in their special attire? Let us bring back to life Ngconde, Togu, Tshiwo, Palo, Rarabe, Mlawu, Ngqika, and Ndlambe. For a full translation of the article see Donovan Williams (ed), *The Journal and*

Selected Writings of the Reverend Tiyo Soga (Cape Town: A A Balkema, 1983), 152-153.

195 . Opland, "Xhosa Literature in Newspapers", 119.

196 . That is the central theme for chapter seven.

197 . See Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 18.

198 . *Ibid.*, 23.

193 . See Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 18-19.

200 . *Ibid.*, 20.

201 . M. Wilson, "The Nguni People" in Wilson and Thompson (eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i, 94.

202 . *Ibid.*, 95.

203 . *Ibid.*, 88-89.

204 . *Ibid.*, 119.

205 . See Mostert, *Frontiers*, 960.

206 . Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 21.

207 . *Ibid.*, 28.

208 . *Ibid.*, 29.

209 . *Ibid.*, 40.

210 . See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, xxi-xxiii.

211 . Theal produced his own *Compendium* three editions of which were published in 1874, 1876, and 1877.

212 . See GM Theal, *Compendium of South African History and Geography* (first edition) (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1874), iv.

CHAPTER 6

GEORGE McCALL THEAL AND THE WRITING OF XHOSA HISTORY

A study of Xhosa historiography would be incomplete without reference to George McCall Theal's work. In acknowledging Theal's place in South African historiography Smith notes, "No other historian has stamped his authority on the study of South African history to the same extent as George McCall Theal."¹ Brookes highlights the indebtedness of South African historiography to Theal by observing, "No book on any aspect or period of South African history can fitly close without a tribute of thanks to the Master of research... Dr Theal."² Even with all the criticism of his work,³ for Saunders Theal still comes out as "the pioneer, the father of South African historiography."⁴ Such a title is accorded Theal because of the sheer volume of his work on southern African history. More than seventy volumes were published during his life time.⁵ Theal was able to cover a wider range of topics on South African history than anybody else up to the time of his death in 1919. Through the many volumes of his *History of South Africa* he presented what he perceived to be an overall study of South African history.⁶ In addition, he tackled the histories of various groups, such as the "Basothos and Kaffirs", as well as producing treatises on the "Bushmen and Hottentots"; and he made a contribution to the writing of Xhosa history. Theal's pioneering work lies mainly in his wide use of archival sources. He scoured the archives in cities like London, The Hague, Lisbon and Paris, locating archival repositories that held documents on the southern African past.⁷ Theal also collected and made wide use of oral sources. Saunders' reference to Theal as a "local pioneer in the collection of oral history"⁸ is however not a correct picture in view of earlier work that had already been undertaken by amateur historians like Alberti, Dugmore, Noyi, Kaye, and others.⁹

Theal's writing on Xhosa history can be broken down into phases. During the first phase, from the early 1870s to the close of the same decade, Theal followed the colonial-missionary approach to the writing of Xhosa history. From the late 1870s Theal pursued innovative research which saw him collecting Xhosa oral traditions. While staying at Lovedale and in other parts of the eastern Cape Theal was close to amaXhosa and he seems to have collected new evidence and wrote Xhosa history as part of a broader history of the aborigines of southern Africa. The third

phase of Theal's writing was precipitated by political changes in the wider South Africa which had a major impact on his general outlook towards history. In particular he came to believe that boer history was in need of a re-assessment. In addition he used the records of Portuguese shipwreck survivors to consolidate his ideas about the recent arrival of amaXhosa in the region east of the Kei River. Theal used history to legitimise colonial land claims.

It is important to consider the political and economic circumstances of amaXhosa when Theal began to write their history during the 1870s. In 1866 British Kaffraria was annexed to the Cape Colony and, as Mostert puts it, "the name [British Kaffraria] vanished into the history books."¹⁰ What did not vanish however was colonial rule over amaXhosa west of the Kei River. According to Bundy, the cattle-killing movement, the progressive appropriation of Xhosa land, together with Grey's civilising policy, all accelerated the absorption of amaXhosa into the Cape economy.¹¹ East of the Kei *kumkani* Sarhili (known as Kreli in colonial circles), had been driven across the Mbashe by George Grey. In 1864 Cape Governor Wodehouse announced a willingness "to receive him [Sarhili] again into favour"¹² by allowing him to re-occupy his former lands. He was also to be given an annual allowance. A British Agent, EJ Warner,¹³ who was to control and regulate Sarhili's actions, was appointed.¹⁴ Theal referred to Sarhili's region east of the Kei as "Semi-Independent Kaffirland".¹⁵ Theal therefore wrote about amaXhosa at a time when they had almost lost their political and economic independence. Theal's initial interaction with amaXhosa from the early 1870s was with mission-educated students at Lovedale. It was only during the 1877-1878 war that he lived among Oba's people. Even then, he had moved in as a government agent.

Theal's writing on Xhosa history was built on work that had appeared during the preceding phases of Xhosa historiography. For example, he adopted the colonial racial classification of the indigenous people. He also pursued similar themes to those that had been followed by earlier writers. This point is generally overlooked by Theal's biographers.¹⁶ That there was significant work that had been undertaken before Theal is in line with Saunders' point that historiography is "cumulative".¹⁷ Despite this, Saunders' short biography of Theal makes very little reference to work that had appeared before Theal. Rather, it is I D Bosman in his thesis on Theal who presents a brief discussion of "Suid-Afrikaanse geskied-skrywig",¹⁸ which begins with the work

of J Suasso de Lima in 1824. He then follows with a discussion of the works of amateur historians like J C Chase on the Cape, G Louts on the Great Trek, Cloete also on the Great Trek, and E B Watermeyer who in 1857 had “The Lectures on the Cape of Good Hope under the Dutch East India Company” published.¹⁹ With reference to historical work on Africans, Bosman cites the work of J S Orpen, “History of the Basutos of South Africa”, which was also published in 1857 in Cape Town. Bosman further mentions Holden’s work on the *History of Natal Colony* as well as Reverend Callaway’s research and writings on Zulu folklore.²⁰ However Bosman makes no reference to pre-Theal works on the Xhosa past. The influence of earlier writings on Theal remains a problem as Theal did not always acknowledge his sources.

Theal’s biographers make hardly any reference to his contemporaries and the influence they may have had on him. Theal read and was influenced by those around him. He made a number of contributions to the *Cape Monthly Magazine*²¹ which at times published articles on Xhosa history. Other writers of note at the time who published historical works on indigenous people were F. and J.M. Orpen. There was also the German missionary, Kropf, who wrote Xhosa history in German.²² Theal’s earlier writings, before he had access to the archives, were in all probability based on the works of some of these writers. In the preface to the first edition of his *Compendium*, Theal made it clear that he had relied on material that had been published in the colony. He mentioned “newspapers, magazines, gazettes, and bluebooks”²³ as his sources.

Theal, a Canadian by birth, arrived at the Cape colony in 1861. During his first ten years in southern Africa he had exposure to various communities in the region. By 1871 Theal had had contact with a wide range of people and communities. His stay in Knysna gave him an opportunity to learn Dutch and to get to know boers and their thinking. This experience was further enriched by a stay in Maclear where Theal was part of a community of British farmers and Dutch trekboers living side by side.²⁴ It was at Gatberg lands (later Maclear) that Theal tried his hand at publishing in Dutch in *Het Hollands Nieuwsblad*.²⁵ While at Gatberg lands, and later in East London, Theal may have made his first direct contact with amaXhosa. As an editor in Gatberg lands, and later an owner of a newspaper in East London, Theal was initiated into writing for a South African readership. Even though Theal’s attempts to run newspapers²⁶ in East London were not successful, he nonetheless had been introduced to various frontier themes.²⁷

Saunders observes that “Theal became a historian via journalism and by a set of fortuitous circumstances.”²⁸ *The Kaffrarian Record*, a newspaper which Theal edited in East London in 1863 and was intended to specialise in shipping news, struggled to take off.²⁹ By 1864 Theal seems to have started tackling frontier concerns. In an article that appeared in February 1864 he reported that “The country seems to be infested with natives wandering about without passes and committing depredations whenever an opportunity offers.”³⁰ Theal was beginning to slip into a typical colonial discourse. He was also getting to know the African leaders in the region, especially royalty. Then Theal founded his own weekly paper, *The Kaffrarian*. He promised his readers that he would cover East London and King Williamstown. Indeed, his intention was not to ignore “any other part of Kaffraria”.³¹ It was from this time that Theal began to write articles about the Xhosa past. For example, he wrote an article on the way Walter Currie chased and harassed Sarhili, the Xhosa monarch, who had had to leave his territory, fleeing from the British.³² His report of meetings between Ngqika chiefs and Brownlee³³ is evidence of Theal’s interest in Xhosa politics and history. An article about a “Fingo Show” upheld the colonial view that “Fingoes” were progressive and hard-working people. Theal portrayed amaNgqika, on the other hand, as people who were essentially bellicose.³⁴

Saunders contends that Theal’s move to a teaching post at Dale College, King Williamstown, gave him an opportunity to read secondary sources on southern African history.³⁵ His wide reading bore fruit in the form of his first publication, *South Africa As It Is*.³⁶ The work marks Theal’s transition from journalist to amateur historian. It is not a history book as such, but rather a geographical-historical treatise on the region south of the Limpopo River. Nonetheless Theal grouped together the various political units³⁷ among which was Kaffraria, a region occupied by amaXhosa. In his book Holden had discussed amaXhosa and their past within a context that included other African groups in south-east Africa.³⁸ Theal went a step further and presented a broader picture which incorporated a number of ethnic groups in the interior of southern Africa such as Sotho-Tswana, which Holden had not included in his work.

Theal’s writings during the 1870s on south-east Africans, and on amaXhosa in particular, were with few deviations in line with existing thinking as expounded in colonial and missionary writings. His move to the Lovedale mission in 1871 brought him new writing opportunities.³⁹

At that time the journal *Kaffir Express*, edited by Dr Stewart, was started at Lovedale.⁴⁰ The *Kaffir Express* followed in the tradition of newspapers and journals which catered mainly for African readers. Whenever Stewart was absent from Lovedale, Theal took charge of the school and supervised the Lovedale printing works.⁴¹ These Lovedale publications reflected a paradox - writers and readers were encouraged to express and develop their thoughts, but at the same time such publications were subject to censorship by missionaries.⁴² The *Kaffir Express* echoed dominant missionary thinking, with an emphasis on pulling African people out of barbarism.⁴³

Theal is likely to have been exposed to the thinking of literate Africans' thinking on Xhosa history. They were beginning to use newspapers as forums for exchanging ideas about history. SiXhosa-speaking writers submitted articles to *Isigidimi SamaXosa*, the Xhosa supplement to the *Kaffir Express*. Interest in Xhosa history was expressed in an article⁴⁴ that appeared in 1871 in *Isigidimi* entitled "UmXosa".⁴⁵ The author, using a pseudonym "Kokela", wrote:

*KumXosa ovelayo ndiyabuza, uyazazi na izinto zakowenu. Uyabazi oyihlo bako. Wabuze kumaxego namaxegokazi amavo ezinto zakowenu. Buza kunene uze ubalise konke okwaziyo ngohlanga lwakowenu. Ndihlaba umkosi wamavo ezinto zamaXosa zakudala. Abo ke ndibahlabela lo mkosi ndiyakubaqalela ngokubanxibelela. Ummlibo (his) weenkosi zamaXosa.*⁴⁶

Kokela challenged his readers on their knowledge of family or clan history. He referred those who did not have that kind of knowledge to their family sages. Kokela implied that those who were knowledgeable about their family histories would also be familiar with the broader national history. The article ended with an outline of Xhosa royal genealogy. Kokela's genealogical table differed slightly from the one Dugmore had produced in 1845. Kokela included Ngcayiya in the Ntinde House and went on to explain how Tshatshu had been placed in that House after the death of Ngcayiya. The article challenged amaXhosa to take oral tradition seriously in writing their history. That message got through to Theal as in his later writings he made reference to "Kaffir antiquaries"⁴⁷ as sources.

It was in the complex world of Lovedale that Theal first published his *Compendium*⁴⁸ in 1874. Bosman said of this publication that, "*Die Compendium was die vollediste werk van soort oor die land tot die tyd.*"⁴⁹ By 1877 a third edition had been produced. According to Theal "the first edition was read by some hundreds of natives among whom were many teachers at mission

schools on the frontier.”⁵⁰ Theal’s Lovedale links must have helped in publicising the book among former students, many of whom were scattered over southern Africa.⁵¹ Also his association with Lovedale gave the publication status. The book enjoyed a distinct advantage over other works at the time as it touched on the history of almost every ethnic group in southern Africa. There were other strengths to the *Compendium*. In the first edition Theal pointed out that he had made an effort to spell Xhosa words correctly. He consulted Reverend Tiyo Soga, a Scottish-trained Xhosa ordained minister. This helped, Theal argued, to create an impression that the text was “correct from a Kaffir point of view.”⁵² On this point Saunders aptly observes, “One may say in fact that Theal was the only white South African historian for a century to have written with an African readership in mind.”⁵³ That there might have been some reservations about Theal among literate Africans can be found in a remark attributed to John Knox Bokwe,⁵⁴ who is said to have written “Good Riddance”⁵⁵ on hearing of Theal’s resignation. It was possibly no coincidence that Africans decided to write and publish their history at the time of the publication of the three editions of the *Compendium*.⁵⁶

Theal’s style of writing is heavily criticised by modern scholars, partly because he did not always acknowledge his sources. Theal believed that, “To have quoted them [sources] at the bottom of pages...would have required greater space, without any counter-balancing advantages.”⁵⁷ So he simply drew up a detailed list of his sources. Theal claimed to have made every effort to produce “accurate” work - a problematic claim as Theal himself was later to declare some of his own writing inaccurate.⁵⁸ He sought and identified “authentic”⁵⁹ sources for his evidence. The positive reception of his work, especially among the colonists, naturally increased his confidence in the accuracy of his methodology and authenticity of his sources. In the second edition of the *Compendium* he noted that he had expanded his “Kaffir” history and had been assisted by Robert Godlonton⁶⁰ who had given him “a thoroughly reliable history,”⁶¹ making the work more complete. He also acknowledged the oral history he had obtained from “various antiquaries throughout Kaffirland.”⁶² He further noted that he was able to compare oral evidence he had gathered with written accounts of writers like Colonel Collins, Barrow, and Lichtenstein.⁶³ Although Theal still had no access to archival records during the early phase of his writing, he nonetheless made attempts to expand his sources by collecting oral history and traditions. He was not the first writer to use oral evidence. His innovation lay in the manner in which he made use

of oral evidence and compared it with existing written texts.

Theal's Xhosa history, as it appeared in the *Compendium*, represents his earliest thinking on the subject. Theal's work in the three editions of the *Compendium* was a synthesis of earlier historical themes. In writing about the aborigines he defined two geographical spheres for two main groups. "Hottentots and Bushmen" were aborigines of the western portion of southern Africa, while the "Kaffirs" were found to the north-east of Cape Colony and south-west of Natal. Theal was aware that the appellations he was using for the aborigines were European names that had been imposed on a number of clans that had otherwise differed from one another. He acknowledged that the original names had been lost. In describing the autochthons Theal tended to focus on those features that highlighted their differences from Europeans. Theal's descriptions of "Hottentots and Bushmen" were in many ways similar to observations that had first appeared in the writings of eighteenth century travellers. In 1797, however, Barrow had observed that the name "Hottentot" had been imposed on a number of clans who had used the name "Quaiquae" to describe themselves.⁶⁴ As earlier writers had done, Theal highlighted the enmity between "Hottentots and Bushmen". This theme can be traced back to traveller writings of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. After a hundred years Theal's description of the aborigines replicated some of the thinking that had appeared in eighteenth century writings.

Theal wrote a separate chapter on "Kaffirs".⁶⁵ Following Holden's classification,⁶⁶ he divided siNtu-speaking people of south-east Africa into four "tribes" - "the Amampondomisi,⁶⁷ the Amampondo, the Abathembu, and the Amaxosa."⁶⁸ Theal also wrote about the fissiparous nature of the Xhosa community, noting that amaXhosa had recently been separated into two great sections, amaGcaleka, who resided east of the Kei River, and amaRharhabe who were found west of the Kei. The account of the split between Phalo's sons can be traced back to William Paterson, an eighteenth century traveller. It had been repeated in subsequent writings. Then Theal dealt with the Xhosa political system. His approach again followed established thinking, focussing on royalty which was traced back to "one ancient house."⁶⁹ He described the Xhosa form of government as despotic. He, however, also recognised the importance of counsellors, whose advice the ruler was compelled to listen to. Theal had shifted slightly from a perception that *iinkosi* were autocratic rulers. He probably had picked up the idea of counsellors or

amaphakathi from earlier writers like Lichtenstein.⁷⁰ Theal's discussion of the laws of succession in Xhosa society seems to have been based on Dugmore's 1845 article.⁷¹ Theal's description of the Xhosa character and physique carried vestiges of eighteenth century notions of the noble savage. He described amaXhosa as warlike and brave.⁷² Some early nineteenth century writers had echoed sentiments expressed in the travellers' texts. Barrow, for example, had described Xhosa men as "the finest figures I ever beheld...tall robust and muscular."⁷³ Theal, taking the idea of a noble savage a little further, noted that the reasoning powers of Xhosa men were equal to those of a European.⁷⁴

In writing about amaXhosa Theal followed the approach taken by linguists such as Bleek and the subsequent work that was done by his (Bleek's) sister-in-law, Miss Lloyd.⁷⁵ Bleek had studied and written extensively on "Bushman" languages. He perceived San languages to be old languages that could help in unravelling the human past.⁷⁶ He believed that through the study of languages knowledge could be obtained about the "descent and mixture of different nations inhabiting South Africa."⁷⁷ He published the *Origins of Languages* in 1869.⁷⁸ where he traced the development of speech. Lloyd had also recorded San traditions. Theal studied isiXhosa and began to analyse different influences on the language. He further noted the *hlonipha* custom by which Xhosa women used a different vocabulary from other siXhosa-speakers. Theal perceived the presence of clicks in isiXhosa as a form of degradation that had been caused by the introduction of "Hottentot" words.⁷⁹ While Theal recognised that amaXhosa and the Khoisan had lived together in the past and had impacted on each others' language, he still operated within a colonial racial framework, separating the two groups into racial categories and rating the "Hottentots" as an inferior people who had "degraded" isiXhosa through their clicks. Theal also recorded *iintsomi*.

Further ethnographic discussion of Xhosa society focussed on dress, pastoral life, agricultural practices, and religion. Theal identified Qamata as the Supreme Being among amaXhosa.⁸⁰ The name usually employed in writings on amaXhosa was Thixo,⁸¹ a name used by Christians for God.⁸² Theal described Qamata as a being who did "not interfere with the destinies of men."⁸³ Qamata was thus being portrayed as different from the Christian Thixo who was believed to be involved with the everyday life of humans.⁸⁴ In order to explain some of the religious practices

amaXhosa engaged in at the time of writing, Theal made reference to the ‘spirits’ of the deceased who were from time to time “propitiated with sacrifices”.⁸⁵ This was the same idea of *iminyanya* as it appeared in “Gesimilo Senvelo”.⁸⁶ It is also important to note Theal’s silence on Hlanga, a name that had appeared in earlier texts by missionaries and travellers during the 1820s and 1830s.⁸⁷

Theal portrayed Xhosa society as unchanging. He was silent on the missionary impact on amaXhosa. His depiction of amaXhosa seems to have been influenced by the Warner approach in Maclean’s *Compendium*.⁸⁸ As Warner and other missionaries had done in the past, Theal depicted Xhosa sexual norms as licentious and degraded. He further echoed generalisations about Xhosa women being drudges saddled with the cultivation of fields. As his predecessors had done, Theal misread the place of women among amaXhosa. Like missionaries, he painted a picture of benighted souls who needed to be liberated.⁸⁹ At the same time Theal described Xhosa men as powerful beings who lorded over their families. Erlank perceives the description of Xhosa men and women as presented by Theal as part of the dyadic tropes involving positive and negative elements which dominated missionary discourse.⁹⁰ In Xhosa society there were different sectors of women with a number of roles and positions. Distinct groupings of female and male roles ignored the heterogeneity and plurality that characterised Xhosa society.⁹¹

Theal’s discussion of political history followed an established tradition in emphasising the history of the Xhosa royal house. Thus he began his account by tabling the “Descent of great chiefs.”⁹² Theal’s royal genealogical table contained some of the names that had appeared in the Dugmore as well as the Kaye versions. There were slight differences, however. In Dugmore’s and Kaye’s genealogical tables Tshawe came second to Xhosa. For Theal he came fourth, as a son of Nkosiyamntu. From the table he drew, it became possible to calculate Tshawe’s reign to the sixteenth century. Such a calculation would fall in line with the claim Theal was making that amaXhosa had moved southwards from the north just as the Dutch were spreading westwards from Table Bay. Theal’s royal Xhosa genealogy excluded Cirha and Jwarha although he had their names in the narrative.

Then followed an *imbali* on the rise of Tshawe which was in some aspects different from the one

that had appeared in Kaye's "Kaffir Legends and History".⁹³ Although Golan is of the opinion that the recording of oral traditions leads to their ossification,⁹⁴ there are some advantages that accrue from recording. For one thing, several recordings provide researchers with a number of versions. For this significant event in Xhosa history, the different versions provide room for a wider discussion of the *imbali* itself. Theal's version of the rise of Tshawe excluded the story of a hunt that led to a quarrel between the sons of Nkosiyamntu. The Kaye version was constructed around the hunt and quarrel motif which is commonly used in African tradition to narrate the rise of new rulers. On the other hand Theal's version seems to lay emphasis on the claim that Tshawe had grown up among his mother's people, abaMbo.⁹⁵ The motif of a hero growing up away from home was also popular in African tradition.⁹⁶ Theal's version claims that the tradition of having a Great Wife as well as a Right Hand Wife, was introduced by Nkosiyamntu, the father of Tshawe.⁹⁷ Such a claim depicted Tshawe as a son who had no royal House to belong to, and who thus had to flee, leaving his brothers Cirha and Jwarha to fill positions in the two Houses.

By identifying abaMbo⁹⁸ as Tshawe's mother's people, "among whom Tshawe grew,"⁹⁹ a new element was introduced in *imbali* about the rise of Tshawe. Theal was linking abaMbo and Xhosa royalty. In the colony the word abaMbo was another name for "Fingoes". This linkage then brought amaXhosa and amaMfengu together. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century unity among African groups in south-east Africa had become an important theme and this is evident from writings in newspapers like *Isigidimi*. For example, in an article entitled "AmaXosa naba-Mbo",¹⁰⁰ Rev Charles Pamla presented a genealogy which showed "Xosa" and Ndlovu [of the Mbo group] to be descendants of the same father, Msi. It thus is not surprising that such a desire for unity found expression in a version of *imbali* on the rise of amaTshawe. It is also possible that Theal or his informants could have obtained the idea of migrants coming from eMbo from a tradition in Kaye's collection, one of which traces the origins of the first family from eMbo.¹⁰¹ In 1799 Van der Kemp identified "Imbo" as a neighbouring group who resided north-east of "Cafferland".¹⁰²

Another innovation in Theal's version of Tshawe's rise is a claim that on his return from his mother's people, abaMbo, Tshawe defeated his brothers by using "assegais hitherto unknown to Amaxosa."¹⁰³ Tshawe's rise is associated with a technological innovation. The introduction of

assegais could have implied new fighting tactics requiring new military strategies. Assegais could also have become a cultural tool that separated Tshawe's followers from those who used other weapons like bows and arrows. Assuming that the introduction of assegais also implied use of iron, Peires questions the suggestion that Tshawe's success was due to the use of assegais. He argues that the use of iron did not necessarily result in political dominance. He concludes that the claim is simply an "attribution of a useful commodity to a folk hero."¹⁰⁴ The association of Tshawe with assegais may also be a reference to his military prowess and the manner in which his rise had been achieved through military conquest. *Iziduko* (clan praises) of amaTshawe stress the significance of iron to the clan. In the praises the descendants of Tshawe are referred to as *ubutsolo bentonga* (You, sharp tip of a stick). In many African societies iron was a form of currency. Even among amaXhosa gifts or tribute are still referred to as *imikhonto* (spears). Theal also observed that during the latter part of the nineteenth century there were certain clans who were accepted in their communities as smiths.¹⁰⁵

In Soga's version Tshawe's military success over his "brothers" was due to his ability to attract adherents. From his mother's people he is said to have drawn a body of retainers who accompanied him when he returned to his paternal home.¹⁰⁶ During the actual battle, Tshawe was saved from defeat by the intervention of amaRudulu who came from the "tribe of Pondomises".¹⁰⁷ AmaRudulu were later assimilated into Tshawe's kingdom and given a new name, amaNgwevu (Grey-beards). It would appear Soga preferred to depict the progenitor of amaXhosa, Tshawe, as a diplomat who built his power through alliances and assimilation rather than through conquest only.

Theal also addressed the question of Xhosa migration and their arrival in south-east Africa. He echoed observations made by earlier writers about the absence of information on Xhosa monarchs before Togu¹⁰⁸ Theal observed that amaXhosa had reached the Kei during Togu's reign.¹⁰⁹ This claim was first made in missionary writings during the 1830s.¹¹⁰ According to Theal the first Xhosa group to cross the Kei was under Gwali, the son of Tshiwo. Gwali, with the assistance of amaNtinde, another Xhosa clan, settled among "Hottentots" under Hintsati. Theal estimated the first Xhosa crossing of the Kei to have been at the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹¹¹ Theal's view on Xhosa migration was formulated through a partial selection of

evidence from earlier writings. He ignored an observation by Kay that Xhosa clans under 'Koocha' [Ketshe] and Ntinde had purchased land from the Gonaqua up to the Sundays River.¹¹² Ketshe was the son of Ngconde, and he therefore was three generations before Gwali.¹¹³ Moreover, Noyi in *Iziqwenge* had claimed that it was Tshiwo who first crossed the Kei, rather than his son Gwali.¹¹⁴ The date of the crossing which both Kay and Noyi gave was 1670.¹¹⁵

Theal repeated the account of the crossing of the Kei by a Xhosa prince in his story about Rharhabe, the son of Phalo.¹¹⁶ Theal further argued that the territory across the Kei belonged to "Hottentots" who lived amicably with small "Kaffir clans". In Theal's account the arrival of Rharhabe in the region traversed by the Keiskamma and Buffalo/Qonce Rivers triggered fierce resistance from the "Hottentots" who eventually succumbed to Rharhabe. Rharhabe expanded his territory up to the Nxuba/Fish River. "Thus if the Dutch had appeared on the scene twenty years sooner," concluded Theal, "they might have fixed the Kei as the eastern boundary, without meeting with any resistance from the Kaffirs, so recent was the occupation by these people of the territory westward of that river".¹¹⁷ So keen was Theal to push his thesis about the recent arrival of amaXhosa across the Kei that he ignored his own account of Gwali's earlier crossing. Instead he emphasised Rharhabe's crossing as having been the first Xhosa crossing. The two accounts of Gwali and Rharhabe crossing the Kei are so similar that Theal could have put in the names Gwali and Rharhabe in an existing storyline.

Theal also tackled the theme of Euro-Xhosa contact from the 1780s, emphasising friction and conflict. Theal portrayed amaXhosa as having been the cause of conflict through their tendency to steal.¹¹⁸ In portraying amaXhosa as thieves Theal perpetuated a colonial image that had been created by disillusioned missionaries and colonial policy-makers. Theal's text was new in that he presented a full narrative of the frontier wars. He collated scattered narratives of these wars into one account. He also wove in *iimbali* that eye-witnesses could still recall. But he selected those traditions that were in agreement with the settler history that he was writing. During the 1870s there was still a handful of old personalities, black and white, who had been active in early colonial events and reminisced about their experiences.¹¹⁹

It is difficult to assess the impact of the *Compendium* on South African historiography at the



G.M. Theal
Courtesy of Cape Archives

time of the publication of the three editions in 1874, 1876, and 1877. The fact that three editions were published within a space of three years suggests a positive reception of the work. Announcements in *The Christian Express* indicated that copies were becoming sold out.¹²⁰ The *Compendium* was not the first book to contain an account of Xhosa history. What was new was that a history of indigenous people, though in separate chapters, was included in a book on South African history. From the 1880s there was a strong awareness among literate Africans for a need for books on African history. African intellectuals at Lovedale took the lead in making the calls for African history. By 1885, with *Isigidimi* under a new editor, W.W.Gqoba, the time was ripe for a series of articles on African history written by Africans. Such articles would be published in the two Xhosa newspapers, *Isigidimi* and *Imvo Zabantsundu*.¹²¹ It is possible that Theal's work encouraged some African intellectuals to write African history.

An important contribution by Theal was his collection of oral traditions. This marked an innovative phase in his writing of Xhosa history. He noted that amaXhosa had a rich folklore. Even though this included stories about man-eaters, Theal felt obliged to explain that amaXhosa were not cannibals.¹²² At the same time he believed that some of the stories referred to actual past events.¹²³ His interest in Xhosa oral tradition may have come about during his stay at Lovedale. In 1877 he wrote an article in *The Christian Express* inviting readers to join him in the collection and preservation of the tales of "native races".¹²⁴ In the same article he laid out plans for publishing a collection of stories. Theal aroused a public interest in the importance of oral tradition, and the need for its preservation.¹²⁵ In another article he noted, "It has been found that a knowledge of the traditionary tales of a people is a key to their ideas and a standard of their powers of thought."¹²⁶ Theal may have been influenced by the work of Bleek among the San. Dr Bleek, a German scholar and a widely travelled man, had come to southern Africa in the company of Bishop Colenso of Natal. During his stay in Natal Bleek collected and published Zulu stories.¹²⁷ From there he had proceeded to the Cape where he was appointed curator of the Grey Collection.¹²⁸ The work of collecting aboriginal literature in southern Africa had been initiated by Sir George Grey who had invited missionaries in the region to begin collecting aboriginal texts. In addition to folktales Bleek recorded the histories of two San families, /A/ Kunta and Ka, who could trace their past to their great grandparents.¹²⁹ By the time Theal arrived in southern Africa research had already been undertaken into aboriginal folklore.

Similar work had been initiated by Dr Henry Callaway among amaZulu. Although Callaway had been trained in medicine, he sought to understand Zulu “habits, traditions and beliefs.”¹³⁰ Six years after his arrival in southern Africa he had accumulated hundreds of pages of manuscripts on Zulu tales, myths and customs. Callaway was aware of the need to avoid contaminating African traditions with European versions. So in his *Nursery Tales*¹³¹ he explained that he had recorded the stories as they were told by his Zulu informants. This sometimes “included things that were not fit for the public generally.”¹³² Callaway believed that “these simple children’s tales are the history of a people’s mind in one phase of their existence.”¹³³ In 1879 the South African Folklore Society was founded at the Cape together with a folklore journal. One of the objectives of the journal was to “secure...anything approaching to a representative collection of the traditional literature existing among the South African aboriginal races.”¹³⁴ The first issue, which appeared in January 1879, contained a number of articles, one of which was *intsomi* recorded by Theal.¹³⁵ Theal’s collection of aboriginal tales appeared in a number of publications. The collection, recording, and publication of *iintsomi* and *iimbali* by Theal began while he was still at Lovedale.¹³⁶

*Intsomi*¹³⁷ is an oral text that tells about events that happened in a world where animals talk and trees walk. Scheub claims that there is a close link between history and fiction, with *iintsomi* being part of fiction. He claims that his Xhosa informants, while relating their oral texts, mix what would otherwise be regarded as fiction with accounts of events that took place at a certain place and a particular time.¹³⁸ In *iintsomi* the past and the present meet. Besides using everyday language which can be understood by young listeners, the performer will also introduce unusual or ancient words no longer in regular use in isiXhosa. Theal did not just collect *iintsomi*. He analysed them and picked up themes that reflected the beliefs of owners of the tales.¹³⁹ For example, in “The story of Tangalilibo,”¹⁴⁰ Theal noted that the narrative touched on “Kaffir ideas and customs”¹⁴¹ like beliefs about water spirits, as well as religious beliefs pertaining to the appeasement of such spirits in pools. Theal was able to identify popular tales as well as those that were unfamiliar. Interviewing Lovedale students from different parts of southern Africa Theal was able to associate certain types of oral text with particular regions or people. At times he also retained the Xhosa words that would lose meaning through translation. For example, in a tale about animals, Theal gave Xhosa names with English words in brackets¹⁴². Theal had

problems with handling what he referred to as “obscenity”, as was the case in the story about “The Runaway Children and the Wonderful Feather”.¹⁴³ Unlike Callaway, Theal censored some of the tales for the benefit of “sensitive” ears.

In 1882 Theal published *Kaffir Folk-lore*, a collection of *iintsomi*, proverbs and figurative expressions.¹⁴⁴ *Kaffir Folk-lore* was not the first published collection of *iintsomi*,¹⁴⁵ but it was the most extensive yet. It contained 21 *iintsomi*. Theal had come to appreciate isiXhosa as a language “adorned with figurative expressions”.¹⁴⁶ He went on to analyse the historical background to some idioms. He explained that the expression “*Njengomdudo kaMapasa*”, (something that does not come to an end) referred to Mapasa’s¹⁴⁷ marriage festivities which were said to have carried on for a year.¹⁴⁸ Another expression, “*Ukuza kukaNxele*,”¹⁴⁹ means something that was long expected but never occurred. The history behind the saying pointed to the life of Makana/Nxele, who had died in 1821 while trying to escape from Robben Island prison. It is said amaXhosa never accepted his death, and for a long time awaited his return.¹⁵⁰ Theal recorded another interesting idiom: “*Umona wasemlungwini ubandeza icitywa ungaliqabi*” (European envy causes them to forbid people access to red clay pits even though they [Europeans] had no use for it). This saying related to how amaXhosa lost access to *imbola* (red ochre) because of new colonial boundaries.¹⁵¹ In collecting and interpreting these proverbs, Theal highlighted how events and experiences were captured and retained in the public memory through pithy idioms and proverbs.¹⁵² Reconstruction of the past was an ongoing process that belonged to the public domain. These traditions reveal general beliefs as well as the history of specific events.

Theal seems to have continued to solicit feedback on his work from African intellectuals with whom he had been in association at Lovedale. In a letter written in May 1882 to Theal, Bokwe congratulated Theal on *Kaffir Folk-lore*, a “handsome book which was useful and interesting.”¹⁵³

*Izibongo*¹⁵⁴ (poems) were another important oral genre which also served as sources for historians. Theal’s failure to identify the significance of this tradition was a serious omission in his study of oral sources in Xhosa history. Initially Theal’s understanding of *izibongo* seems to have been limited. He referred to *izibongo* as “rude chants which bards [sing].”¹⁵⁵ He further

saw *izibongo* as just praises of chiefs or praises for special occasions. This observation could have been the result of performances by *iimbongi* (bards) especially *Komkhulu* (at the Great Place). For example, when Rev Shaw visited *kumkani* Hintsá he noted in his journal, “The fool or jester repeatedly cried aloud his usual pronouncements...consisting of the pedigree, title, virtues and glorious deeds of the chief”.¹⁵⁶ It was the duty of *iimbongi* to register events of importance that could be linked with the ruler for the fuller awareness of her/his people and for the benefit of posterity. *Izibongo* were not for royalty only. Ordinary people could, through deeds of valour, be mentioned in *izibongo*, as Theal pointed out.¹⁵⁷ *Izibongo* were not just about people, but could be comments on current events. As Jordan argues, through *izibongo* listeners “are able to see through the eye of the African bard, encroachment of the white man on the land of Africans.....the undermining of the power of the chief by missionary and magistrate.”¹⁵⁸ *Izibongo* could reveal processes of change. Later, by the beginning of the twentieth century, Theal appears to have had a broader understanding of *izibongo* and even a more open outlook. He admitted that amaXhosa had a rich store of poetry.¹⁵⁹

Theal also recorded reminiscences of people who were eye-witnesses to certain historic events. His informants included the nameless “Kaffir antiquaries” he often made reference to. One of his informants was a war veteran who had participated in the frontier wars since 1818.¹⁶⁰ Theal was also in touch with boer informants as he lived in the same neighbourhood as the nephews of the Bezuidenhouts.¹⁶¹ At Lovedale Theal had access to grandsons of “chiefs Moroko, Molijsane, and Sikonyela as well as near relations of all the neighbouring Kaffir, Fingo and even Pondo chiefs”.¹⁶² Some of the accounts he collected from these informants were published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. There was an account of the life of Nehemiah Moshoeshoe, sixth son of Moshoeshoe.¹⁶³ This included BaSotho history. Another article by “an old Kaffir” gave recollections on Xhosa history.¹⁶⁴ There is no certainty that these articles were written by Theal as the authors used pseudonyms, but it is possible that some of these articles may have been written through his influence.

Theal’s collection of tales progressed to the extent that he was able to identify different genres of Xhosa tradition. He was further able to demonstrate that such traditions were living texts, forever changing. It is in his attempts to interpret oral texts that the importance of his work lies.

He identified oral tradition as a possible source of evidence in the writing of history. As Bosman put it, “*Met Kaffir Folklore wou hy lig werp op die lewe van ‘n volk’* who differ from us in many respects, besides degree of civilisation.”¹⁶⁵ This was a major development in Xhosa historiography. But perhaps Theal was ahead of his time. The place of oral tradition in African history has been a focus of research from the 1960s. In the case of African communities in South Africa such research has remained peripheral.¹⁶⁶ Only in the last quarter of the twentieth century has the place of oral tradition in the writing of Xhosa history been explored by Peires in his book, *The House of Phalo*.¹⁶⁷ Subsequent works by Stapleton¹⁶⁸ and Peires have shown the potential for using oral traditions as historical sources.¹⁶⁹

From the late 1880s Theal’s historical writing began to cover wider themes than before, and to change direction and emphasis. Theal explained the shift as resulting from his use of archival material in Cape Town and European cities like London, Lisbon and The Hague. His change of attitude, which saw him being more sympathetic towards the boers, was precipitated by exposure to missionary documents.¹⁷⁰ He conceded that the *Compendium* had been a product of secondary sources that had failed to give a full and accurate picture. Thus, Theal argued, with new information at his disposal, he was “obliged to pronounce my former work defective and incorrect in many respects.”¹⁷¹ This change in outlook marks the beginning of a settler history for which Theal is well known in South African historiography. From then Theal concentrated on writing a history of the two white groups in South Africa - the British and the boers. The shift in Theal’s views had implications for Xhosa history. From that time Theal treated the history of indigenous people as an adjunct to the main story of white settlers.

It is unlikely that Theal’s change of views resulted from his gaining access to archival records. Several possible reasons have been advanced to explain the source of Theal’s new ideas. Firstly, both Saunders and Babrow argue that the South African politics of the day had an influence on him. Theal had come to identify with the cause of European settlers. He was keen to “promote good relations between Boer and Briton within the country”,¹⁷² and history seems to have been a ready tool for that task. Schreuder argues that Theal, “Came to identify strongly with an entity he termed ‘South Africa’ and which he took to be founded not alone by the British, but first of all by the Dutch.”¹⁷³ He abandoned his earlier and more sympathetic view of the

indigenous people. Babrow, however, goes further. She points to events before Theal's change. The appointment of Leibbrandt as a Colonial Archivist, a position which Theal had coveted, left him a disappointed and bitter man. It was a "crisis in his life".¹⁷⁴ Theal's future, however, took a turn for the better under a new Afrikaner Bond government. He immediately received recognition and was invited by the government to collect, arrange and publish "all the authentic records that could throw light upon the history of the Basuto tribes."¹⁷⁵ His new position with the government compromised his outlook towards his research. Babrow argues that, "[Theal] presents facts contrary to the evidence which he had, distorts his material, misrepresents the issues and repeatedly ignores a massive quality of....documents with which he was familiar,"¹⁷⁶ to pursue his political outlook.

In 1897 Theal published his *History of South Africa*¹⁷⁷ in which there was a chapter entitled, "History of the Xosa Tribe".¹⁷⁸ This chapter will be the last of Theal's works to be analysed in this study. Although Theal repeated some of the contentions made in his earlier writings on Xhosa history, he also introduced new evidence. A meeting with Cecil John Rhodes, then Prime Minister of the Cape, in 1895, opened new avenues in his history research. Rhodes wanted information on a Portuguese expedition into Mozambique that had been led by Francisco Barreto during the sixteenth century.¹⁷⁹ Theal's prompt response to the request induced Rhodes to give him further instructions on areas for research. He was asked by Rhodes to complete his Dutch version of the history of South Africa. He was also to investigate early "migrations of the Bantu."¹⁸⁰ The possibility of undertaking research in Cairo and even east Africa was mooted. In 1896 Theal proceeded to Europe where he collected Portuguese manuscripts on south-east Africa and translated them into English.¹⁸¹ From the Portuguese documents Theal obtained new evidence which he used in writing the history of south-east Africans, whose origins he traced to east Africa. His main concern was to calculate when the "Bantu tribes" moved southwards to the region of the Kei River. Theal steeped himself in the records of Portuguese shipwreck survivors, concentrating mainly on those of the seventeenth century, searching for evidence that cast light on where amaXhosa were at that time.¹⁸²

Theal tried to align the oral history of Xhosa royalty with the evidence he could glean about amaXhosa from Portuguese documents. His main objective was to find evidence from the written

documents that would fit into the Xhosa royal genealogical table.¹⁸³ At the same time Theal operated from the premise that amaXhosa had not become an identifiable group by the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁸⁴ His main argument was that the greatness of Tshawe as told through oral narratives was exaggerated. He argued that Portuguese shipwreck survivors who travelled from various points on the south-east African coastline north-eastwards towards Delagoa Bay at the end of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries made no mention of the name Tshawe. Theal also highlighted the landing places of the Portuguese castaways which, according to his thinking, revealed how far south amaXhosa had migrated.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a number of ships foundered along the south-eastern coast. Some of the survivors left journals which recounted their experiences as they travelled among indigenous communities in their attempts to make contact with Portuguese settlements. In 1552 shipwreck survivors from the *Sao Joao* may have landed a little south of where Durban stands.¹⁸⁵ Another Portuguese ship, the *Santo Alberto*, was wrecked in 1593.¹⁸⁶ The survivors of this wreck, according to Theal, landed not far from the mouth of the Umtata River.¹⁸⁷ Equally important is the journal left by Francisco Vaz d'Almada of the *Santo Joao Baptista*, a ship wrecked off the south-eastern coast, "probably a little way east of the Fish River",¹⁸⁸ in 1622. The text was a record of the Portuguese experiences from their place of landing until they reached Sofala four months later. Another ship, the *Nossa Senhora de Belem* was stranded off the east coast in 1635. Wilson suggests it could have been at the Xhora mouth.¹⁸⁹ Its survivors spent about six months with local inhabitants. More detailed information about indigenous communities came from the survivors of the Dutch ship, the *Stavenisse*, which was wrecked in 1686.¹⁹⁰

In using the journals of shipwreck survivors in the chapter on Xhosa history in his *History of South Africa* Theal omitted some evidence and selected information which fitted in with his thesis. For example, he used evidence from the *Santo Alberto* shipwreck text of 1593 selectively. At the time of writing in 1897, he was aware of the text as the *Alberto* journal is one of the Portuguese documents he had started copying and translating from 1896. Theal reckoned that the *Alberto* survivors landed at the Hole in the Wall, not far from the Umtata River mouth. Moreover, he classified the indigenous people who looked after the survivors as "mixed Bantu

and Hottentots".¹⁹¹ The name of the African leader who welcomed the Portuguese was given as Luspace who was described as of good stature and light brown in colour. Theal argued that Luspace's complexion suggested that he was of mixed "Bantu and Hottentot" blood. He went on to argue that the conditions near Umtata in 1593 were similar to those at the Nxuba/Fish River two centuries later where the Gonaqua intermarried with amaXhosa.¹⁹²

Theal's main reason for using evidence selectively was that some information about the indigenous people in south-east Africa in the *Alberto* records contradicted his thesis that amaXhosa in their southward migration had not reached the Umzimvubu River by the sixteenth century. For that reason Theal tried to establish that the indigenous people the *Alberto* survivors met near the Hole in the Wall in 1593 were of mixed "Bantu and Hottentot blood". In refusing to consider Luspace to have been a "Bantu" because of his complexion, Theal was contradicting himself. In his *South Africa*, published in 1896 he had claimed that many "Kaffirs" were fair complexioned, possibly because of Asiatic blood.¹⁹³ In the *Alberto* journal it was further recorded that Luspace's people were agriculturalists who sowed crops and herded cattle. Such a description accommodated the "Kaffir" and "Hottentot" way of life according to colonial thinking. There was also evidence from a copper earring that Luspace's people were engaged in external trade or had knowledge of smelting metal.

However, evidence from the *Alberto* journal strongly suggests that the indigenous people were siNtu-speaking settled farmers. They appear to have had a political system that fell under the leadership of *iinkosi*. Contrary to Theal's claim that the *Alberto* survivors encountered no chief of note, evidence from the documents used by Theal indicated otherwise. Luspace seems to have been a respected leader who could have been *inkosi*.¹⁹⁴ But what is more fascinating about the Africans the *Alberto* survivors met in 1593 was their language. A few of the words uttered were recorded. On approaching what must have been very strange people, Luspace is said to have exclaimed, "*Nanhata, Nanhata*". The greeting was most likely to have been, "*Bayethe, Bayethe*", a salutation that is still used by siXhosa-speakers. Theal noted that the language of Luspace's people was a dialect "in use by all the people of Kaffraria, and their chiefs like petty rulers in the country to the north, was termed an *Inkosi*."¹⁹⁵ Reference to the north was a further contradiction in his analysis of the *Alberto* journal.

Theal also relied heavily on the *Santo Joao Baptista* journal of 1622, written by shipwreck survivors. He calculated that the survivors came ashore between the Kei and Nxuba/Fish Rivers. Axelson places the point near the Keiskamma River.¹⁹⁶ Theal asserted that the survivors encountered “Hottentots”, a claim based on the fact that the Portuguese described the people as light skinned, armed with assegais. The language spoken by the indigenous people could not be understood by the African slaves in the company of the Portuguese. Theal was assuming that the African slaves, some of whom were from Mozambique and spoke a siNtu language, would have understood siXhosa, but not a “Hottentot” language that consisted of clicking noises.¹⁹⁷ On their journey the castaways were attacked by autochthons using arrows. Theal identified the attackers as Bushmen.¹⁹⁸ According to Theal it was only after five weeks of travelling that the Portuguese came to “Bantu kraals”.¹⁹⁹ Axelson accepted Theal’s claim that the autochthons the *Santo Baptista* survivors met were “Hottentots”.²⁰⁰ Wilson however noted that west of the Umtata River the survivors met people who could communicate with some of the slaves,²⁰¹ possibly through siNtu languages. In Theal’s text the Portuguese only met “the greatest chief”²⁰² two days west of a river he estimated to have been the Umzimvubu.

Theal was still trying to prove that by the seventeenth century amaXhosa had not expanded beyond the Umzimvubu River. From the record of the *Santo Baptista* survivors Theal made a number of claims. Firstly, he argued that the territory along the coast was thinly populated. Secondly, he identified two groups of people, “Kaffir” and “Hottentot” according to the standard classification. He went on to argue that at the time of the *Santo Baptista* in 1622 Tshawe and his followers were still east of the Umzimvubu in their southward march,²⁰³ citing the claim that Tshawe’s mother was from the abaMbo group who were believed to be somewhere in the east. He conceded that there were “Bantu” west of Umzimvubu in 1623 who could not have been Xhosa.²⁰⁴ Theal suggested that abaThembu had preceded amaXhosa in their southward migration, a claim that had first been recorded by Holden.²⁰⁵ Theal could concede the presence of abaThembu west of the Umzimvubu, but not the “Kaffirs”.

Two other sets of seventeenth century shipwreck records were sources of evidence for Theal. These were the *Nossa Senhora da Atalaya* and the *Sacramento* which went aground twenty-five years after the wreck of the *Santo Baptista*. Theal gave their landing place as having been

between the mouths of the Nxuba/Fish and Kei Rivers.²⁰⁶ The survivors again marched along the coastline to Delagoa Bay and a few reached the Portuguese settlement. Theal is brief on the encounters of the *Atalaya* and *Sacramento* survivors. Theal's estimations about the landing place of the *Atalaya* survivors have been challenged by Bell-Cross who is of the view that the landing place for *Atalaya* was Cintsa Bay, some way west of the place that had been identified by Theal and confirmed by Axelson.²⁰⁷ There was another ship, *Nossa Senhora de Belem* which met its fate between the Mthatha and Mbashe Rivers in 1635. Theal excluded this account from his *History*. According to Wilson the survivors of *Belem* spent six months building themselves a boat. They interacted with local people who used words that are still used in siXhosa like *umlungu* (white person) and *umkhulu* (big).²⁰⁸ Moreover the *Belem* survivors met a man who had been left behind by the *Santo Alberto* party in 1593 with Luspance. Another remarkable omission in Theal's text is the evidence on the indigenous people which came from the survivors of the *Stavenisse* in 1687. Theal takes no account of this information from observers who actually lived in African communities for close on two years. The only reference he makes to the *Stavenisse* is when he identifies *inkosi* whom the *Stavenisse* castaways met as Togu, the great son of Sikhomo, the grandson of Tshawe.²⁰⁹ Accounts by survivors of the *Santo Alberto* and *Belem* shipwrecks had been selectively used in Theal's text because they had revealed the presence of siXhosa speakers in the Nxuba/Fish River region at the end of the sixteenth century. Theal had been aware of the *Belem* journal as he had recorded the account of the *Belem* survivors.²¹⁰

Theal identified Togu,²¹¹ the great grandson of Tshawe,²¹² as the one whom the survivors of the *Stavenisse* shipwreck named as a senior chief in 1687. In line with the thinking Theal was pushing, he claimed that the people who had been identified as siXhosa-speaking at the mouth of the Qonce/Buffalo River by the *Stavenisse* survivors, had been a clan that could not have been of importance.²¹³ The date of 1687 and *kumkani* Togu became the central points around which Theal built his Xhosa history. Although the claim that the *Stavenisse* survivors had met Togu was disproved by Peires²¹⁴ it continues to survive in the works of some contemporary writers.²¹⁵ Theal also collected oral traditions which helped to identify the residences and burial places of *ookumkani* (monarchs) who came after Togu. Theal contended that Togu and his descendants lived in the region east of the Kei River, implying that amaXhosa had not reached the Kei River by the second half of the seventeenth century. During the early 1820s Thompson had stated that

Togu had settled “on the Great Kei”,²¹⁶ and not east of that river. Theal noted that the residence of Ngconde, the son of Togu, was on the western bank of the Umtata River and that Ngconde was buried on the banks of the Ngwanguba (probably Ngcwanguba).²¹⁷ He further observed that after Ngconde’s death, amaXhosa moved quickly westwards. Theal said nothing about the settlement of the two brothers of Ngconde, Ntinde and Ketshe, between the Chalumna/Tsholomnqa and Buffalo/Qonce Rivers.²¹⁸ Even though Theal said Thompson’s book was “one of the best that had been written upon South Africa”,²¹⁹ there is evidence that he manipulated information from early texts like that of Thompson.

Through a selection of oral traditions Theal provided evidence to support claims he was making about Xhosa history. His argument was that amaXhosa had moved into “Hottentot” territory and absorbed them. Theal, as he had done in the *Compendium*, focussed on traditions about early intermarriage between amaXhosa and Khoikhoi. One narrative was about Ntinde, the son of Ngconde. Theal contended that Ntinde’s mother was “Hottentot”.²²⁰ He went on to suggest that she might have belonged to the Damaqua, who were later absorbed by amaXhosa. The name of Ntinde had first appeared in an 1845 text by Dugmore, in which it was stated that there were different views about who Ntinde’s mother was. One version identified her as a junior wife of Ngconde. Another claimed that Ntinde had been adopted by a senior Xhosa royal woman because she had been barren.²²¹ Theal built the story of the absorption of the Damaqua around a theme in Xhosa history - the assimilation of groups into the Xhosa polity. Another tradition about the assimilation of amaGqunukhwebe into the Xhosa fold was first recorded in missionary texts.²²² Theal also included this tradition in his work, “The Xosa Tribe”. The story centred around “smelling out”²²³ activities through which a number of people were condemned to death.

Relations between the indigenous people of south-east Africa were not as straightforward as Theal presented them. In his argument he portrayed amaXhosa as having been immigrants who had swept in and swallowed up Khoisan groups. On the contrary it seems the south-east African region was for a long time a frontier region where two or more cultural groups co-existed. There were oral traditions that reflected a maze of complicated and shifting relations between groups. There were accounts of how amaXhosa were swallowed up by Khoisan families as was the case with Gando’s followers.²²⁴ Another tradition recorded by Thompson recounted the flight of the

followers of Ketshe, son of Togu, who were said to have moved northwards after being defeated by Tshiwo.²²⁵ As a small band they could have easily got absorbed by the Khoisan. In 1809 Collins noted how Nzwane, the brother of Ndlambe, had moved to the Orange/Gariep River with a small band of followers and had been killed by the San²²⁶. That however did not deter other small Xhosa groups, those under Galata²²⁷ for example, from migrating to the Orange/Gariep region which was dominated by the Khoisan.

Theal's account of Phalo's reign mainly covered civil wars that involved his elder brothers Gwali and Mdange. As a result of the wars Gwali and Ntinde had crossed the Kei, Theal observed. In his 1897 text he went on to claim that, "tradition points these [Gwali and Ntinde and their followers] as the first compact bodies of Bantu to cross the Kei,"²²⁸ in 1702. According to Noyi it was Tshiwo who had crossed the Kei in 1670.²²⁹ There is another tradition that was recorded in 1880. According to Juju Pantsi, Kwane was the first Xhosa to cross the Kei and he was soon followed by Rharhabe.²³⁰ It is difficult to know how and why the crossing of the Kei River seems to have been an important event in Xhosa oral tradition. From the beginning of the nineteenth century *ukumkani* Hintsa, and later Sarhili had lived on the eastern side of the Kei. It seems for a long time in the settler-autochthon relations the Kei River was a major dividing line. The Kei could have become a generic name around which traditions of migration were narrated. Theal built his history on a literal interpretation of the traditions and ignored their obvious contradictions, evident from the different characters in the traditions.

The second half of Theal's "History of the Xosa Tribe"²³¹ was derived from the journal of Ensign August Frederik Beutler,²³² who led an expedition in 1752 from Cape Town into the interior, beyond the borders of the Cape Colony. Forbes describes Beutler's journal as "a cornerstone in the foundation of the history of the eastern Cape".²³³ Theal used evidence from the journal to round off his chapter on Xhosa history. Beutler's entourage reached the Keiskamma River on 5 June 1752. Beutler's diarist contended that up to the Keiskamma River the Dutch party had only met "Hottentots". In the journal the Keiskamma River was identified as a boundary between the "Hottentots" and amaXhosa. That view was in line with Theal's thesis that amaXhosa had only spread as far as the Kei River during Togu's reign in 1687, and had only moved across the Kei during the reign of Tshiwo, his grandson. Theal also noted that he would not repeat the

names of the various clans that had been given in the journal as many were no more in use at the time of writing.²³⁴

The Dutch party regarded the territory across the Keiskamma as belonging to the “Bantu tribes”.²³⁵ The entourage travelled as far as the Qora River, which was reached five days after crossing the Kei. Across the Keiskamma, Beutler made contact with Bange²³⁶ who was described by the diarist as the chief of amaNtinde. The party never actually met Phalo. They however sent presents to him, and in turn messengers who purported to be from Phalo made contact with the Dutch travellers and sold them an elephant’s tusk. Soga identifies the burial place of Phalo as the banks of the Tongwane River, a tributary of the Gcuwa River.²³⁷ This is in line with the claim of Beutler and Theal which places Phalo near the Kei River. But the location of the burial place does not give clarity as to the geographical extent of Phalo’s territory: nor is there evidence on the relationship Phalo had with the people on the western side of the Keiskamma.

The Beutler journal, published a century and a half after it was written, was edited by Theal.²³⁸ It was one of the earliest texts to give an eye-witness description of the autochthons in the Gamtoos/Maxelexwa-Kei River region. It made crude assumptions about the occupation of territory. It was claimed, for example, that “Caffer” territory began across the Keiskamma River. The scribe of the Beutler journal obtained his information from two groups who had their own interests to serve. The first were the interpreters who were usually autochthons. When the claim was made that the land from “*Gamtousch rivier het damasquas land tot Stadens rivier*”²³⁹ (From Gamtoos/Maxelexwa River the land [was] the Damasonquas’ to Stadens River) it did not mean that other ethnic or lineage groups were excluded. In a pre-colonial setting there was no racial segregation. Moreover, occupation of land was not exclusive to a particular group as the Beutler diarist implied.

The other group of informants in the writing of the journal were the Dutch colonists. The eastwards expansion of trekboers into the lands of indigenous communities had been taking place steadily. By the beginning of the eighteenth century there is evidence that some Dutch hunters and raiders had made contact with amaXhosa. By the time Beutler and his entourage reached the

eastern part of the colony the Dutch colonists had already established a presence. They had named places and people.²⁴⁰ If we follow Newton-King's thesis, the 1750s were years of renewed conflict between the Dutch trekboers and the indigenous communities.²⁴¹ Proclaiming the land as belonging to "Hottentots" was advantageous to the trekboers. They had already started controlling those people they called Hottentots. Indirectly, therefore "Hottentot" land was Dutch land. The identification of the Keiskamma as a boundary dividing amaXhosa from the "Hottentots" should be seen in the context of Dutch expansionism.

Theal discussed Beutler's encounter with Xhosa royalty. He noted that Beutler's party did not meet Phalo, *ukumkani*. There was indirect contact through an exchange of presents. No reasons were given for Phalo's reluctance to meet the Dutch visitors. The Xhosa monarch may have had a negative view of the Dutch. He may have been in fear of his life as the Dutch party travelled with a detachment of thirty-seven soldiers. However, the Dutch travellers did make contact with Gcaleka, son of Phalo.²⁴² The cautious stand of Phalo towards the Dutch travellers may have resulted from earlier contact with the Dutch colonists. Theal noted that Beutler made no mention of Rharhabe, Phalo's Right Hand son. The absence of Rharhabe from the Beutler journal contrasts sharply with the pre-eminence colonial writers accorded Rharhabe. In claiming that in 1752 Rharhabe was at the zenith of his power,²⁴³ Theal is following what had become the standard colonial view of Rharhabe as a pre-eminent Xhosa prince.

Using evidence from Beutler's journal Theal pursued his favourite theme - identifying Xhosa territorial boundaries. Beutler had identified the Keiskamma as the dividing line between the Gonaqua and amaXhosa. Theal declared that in 1775 "the whole Xosa tribe was then living between the Kei and Fish rivers".²⁴⁴ Theal may have chosen the Nxuba/Fish as the limit of Xhosa territory so that he could authenticate the Plettenberg "agreement" of 1778. According to this "agreement" the Nxuba/Fish River was the dividing line between the colony and Xhosaland supposedly agreed to by Xhosa *iinkosi*. Theal accepted this even though he was aware from Thunberg that amaXhosa lived along the Gamtoos/Maxelexwa River in 1772.²⁴⁵ Beutler's text was used by Theal to provide information on areas which Portuguese documents did not cover. Beutler supplied evidence on the region between the Gamtoos/Maxelexwa River and the Kei. Theal was thus able to continue expounding the view that amaXhosa had migrated from the north

into land occupied by “Hottentots and Bushmen”. From his reading of Portuguese documents and eighteenth-century texts like the Beutler journal, Theal discerned “no progress in knowledge or in morals during the two hundred years between Xosa and Kawuta”.²⁴⁶ He depicted Xhosa society as unchanging. Ironically, Theal went on to mention the adoption of maize as an innovation by amaXhosa.²⁴⁷ In the earlier phase of his writing Theal had actually been complimentary about the skill and ingenuity amaXhosa displayed in metal-working.²⁴⁸ The remark about the lack of progress shows how Theal’s writings had shifted from perceiving the indigenous people in a positive light, to an approach that portrayed them in less complimentary terms. The claim that African people had made no progress was used as justification for taking their land.

Theal outlined a Xhosa royal genealogy which began with Ngconde.²⁴⁹ This seems to have been based on the Xhosa genealogical table in Maclean.²⁵⁰ Theal included Getani²⁵¹ in Ntinde’s line, and also had Koba²⁵² instead of Kobela. Theal estimated the dates of the deaths of royal personages like Gcaleka, Kawuta, and Rharhabe, and went on to identify the burial places of some of these figures. He recounted the story of Xhosa monarchs, notably Phalo, Gcaleka, and Khawuta, whose residences were in the vicinity of present day Butterworth, Qumra, and Tsomo. Theal’s main point in identifying such residences was to show that they were far from the Nxuba/Fish River, and that amaXhosa had not reached that boundary in their migration from the north. What Theal did not mention was the fact that *ookumkani* had several Great Places. Khawuta, for example, had a residence on the Birha River which Paterson visited in 1779.²⁵³

The identification of Xhosa history with that of the main Xhosa ruling house excluded the histories of those Tshawe Houses distant from the ruling line, such as amaNtinde (Theal’s interest in amaNtinde was their “Hottentot” link) and even amaGando,²⁵⁴ whom Theal did not even mention. No history of commoner clans was written. Theal reiterated the view that there was no Xhosa history other than royal history. He noted, “Their whole attention is devoted to the chiefs, and a list of names of past rulers....constitute a stock of historical information which they are able to impart.”²⁵⁵ After a hundred years of historical writing an idea of Xhosa history had formed among the colonists. The emphasis was on the history of the Tshawe House. Clan histories, retained and recalled through *iziduko*, remained a history which amaXhosa passed

orally among themselves.

JH Soga who wrote extensively on amaXhosa and their history followed Theal's approach. Soga emphasised the centrality of the Xhosa ruling house. He argued that the core of the Xhosa "tribe is composed of the direct descendants of Xosa."²⁵⁶ Soga described certain clans as outsiders who had attached themselves or intermarried with amaXhosa. Other clans, Soga argued, had joined amaXhosa as refugees.²⁵⁷ Jabavu in 1952 began an extensive collection and recording of *iziduko* of Xhosa clans and those attached to amaXhosa.²⁵⁸ Ncwana followed with a much more detailed collection of *iziduko* of clans from e-Mbo.²⁵⁹ Ndawo's collection of *Iziduko Zama-Hlubi*²⁶⁰ provided valuable historical information for those Hlubi clans that had moved into Xhosa territory.

Theal's pioneering work in South African historiography included some Xhosa history which was peripheral in his writing.²⁶¹ He would devote a chapter or two to the indigenous people and then carry on with the history of whites in South Africa. As Smith observes, in Theal's work "The history of South Africa was the history of the whites and their efforts to open up and bring civilisation and Christianity to a wild and untamed country."²⁶² Saunders notes that Theal could write as though blacks did not exist.²⁶³ As the central figure in the settler school, Theal's influence came to bear upon later generations of historians. The first phase of Theal's writing was mainly a collation of existing writings about Xhosa history. He followed the tradition of separating Xhosa history from South African historiography which had been started by missionaries and colonial officials. In Theal the Xhosa royal theme was dominant. He gave an account of the rise of Tshawe which differed only slightly from the one that had appeared in the texts compiled by Kaye. His treatment of *iinkosi* and their political system was similar to that of missionary-colonial writers. Theal failed to capture the changes the institution of *iinkosi* had undergone, especially during Grey's governorship. He depicted a fixed image of the chiefly institution. In his discussion of Xhosa society Theal portrayed women as drudges while the men were lazy. Such stereotypes abounded in nineteenth century writing. Theal also touched on a theme which he would later pursue in greater detail - the migration of amaXhosa across the Kei and their appropriation of the land of the "Hottentots". A study of Theal's writing during the early phase of his work during the early 1880s, shows new areas of research which he followed

in his work on Xhosa history. Theal did not just repeat what he had inherited from his predecessors. Probably influenced by the works of Bleek and Callaway, Theal collected and recorded *iintsomi*, Xhosa idioms and proverbs. His was a new approach to the search for relevant sources in the writing of Xhosa history. More than a hundred years later, historians still need to explore the place of oral tradition in the production of Xhosa history as well as other indigenous groups. Theal deserves credit for the pioneering work he did in collecting Xhosa oral traditions. He aligned evidence from written texts with oral sources. A distinct phase in his writing is identifiable from the late 1880s. During this phase there was a notable change in his approach to South African history. He became more sympathetic to the two white groups and this change of attitude had an impact on the way he wrote Xhosa history. Theal also accessed archival material and traveller journals. Major changes are discernible in his 1897 *History of South Africa* in which he devoted a chapter to the “Xosa tribe”. He began to adopt a more sympathetic approach to the boers, and a more critical outlook towards missionary sources. Theal searched for evidence to prove that amaXhosa had migrated from the north and that they were recent arrivals in the area between the Gamtoos/Maxelexwa and Kei Rivers. He used evidence from Portuguese documents to bolster his thesis. Theal selected information that would show how amaXhosa had moved across the Kei River just as the Dutch were expanding eastwards from their settlement at Table Bay. Theal highlighted material that suggested that the shipwreck castaways encountered “Hottentots” rather than amaXhosa. By selecting evidence from the *Santo Baptista* and the Atalaya shipwreck survivors Theal pushed forward his ideas about the migration of amaXhosa into south-east Africa. He ignored those texts from the *San Alberto* of 1593 from which there was clear evidence that the survivors had interacted with siXhosa-speaking people during the sixteenth century. Theal tried to align Xhosa royal oral traditions with the evidence of shipwreck survivors. According to one claim, which lived on for more than a hundred years, Togu was a Xhosa *kumkani* reigning in 1687 at the time of the Stavenisse survivors. Theal also used the Beutler journal, an account of a 1752 expedition, to push his claims that the “Hottentots and the Bushmen” had spread far eastwards. Once again Theal selected his evidence and ignored information that would disprove his thesis. He argued that at the time of Beutler’s expedition amaXhosa had spread as far as the Keiskamma River. He ignored evidence that indicated the presence of mixed Xhosa and Gonaqua communities all along the Gamtoos/Maxelexwa up to the Keiskamma River. Theal also developed further themes that

had appeared in earlier texts on Xhosa history. All his works were based on the division of indigenous people into three racial groups. Theal's work on Xhosa history is characterised by an ambiguity that resulted from his continuation with established Xhosa historiography as well as the innovative research he undertook on oral tradition and history. His work contains both pioneering and stultifying elements.

1. Ken Smith, *The Changing Past: Trends in South African Historical Writing* (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers, 1988), 31.

2. Edgar H Brookes, *The History of Native Policy in South Africa 1830 to the Present Day* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers, 1924), 11.

3. A major critic of Theal has been Merle Babrow, "A Critical Assessment of Dr George McCall Theal" (M.A. Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1962).

4. Christopher Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past: Major Historians on Race and Class*, (Cape Town : David Philip, 1988), 29.

5. R F Immelman, "George McCall Theal : A Biographical Sketch" in *South African Pamphlets*, Vol I, 103, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

6. Initially, Theal's South Africa covered the area south of the Limpopo River. After he had accessed Portuguese records, however, Theal expanded his geographic spread to include territory south of the Zambezi River. See George McCall Theal, *The Portuguese in South Africa: With a Description of the Native Races Between the River Zambesi and the Cape of Good Hope During the Sixteenth Century* (London: T Fisher Unwin, 1896), preface.

7. During the first fifteen years of his writing Theal did not have access to overseas archives, and he made use of what information was available in South Africa.

8. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, 11.

9. Work by these writers has been discussed in chapters two , three, and five of this thesis.

10. Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1236.

11. Colin Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* (second edition) (Cape Town: David Philip, 1988), 44.

12. Governor Wodehouse to the Right Hon. Edward Cardwell, *Blue Books on South Africa: Miscellaneous 1858-1868: Correspondence in Relation to the Annexation of British Kaffraria to the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope* (London: George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1865), 13.

13. As British Agent to amaGcaleka Warner established his headquarters at Idutywa.
14. *Ibid.*
15. George McCall Theal, *South Africa As It Is* (King Williamstown, 1871), 59.
16. Babrow admits that in her work she made no reference to pre-Theal historical writings even though she was aware of their existence. See Babrow, "A Critical Assessment", 192.
17. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, 5.
18. I D Bosman, *Dr George McCall Theal As die Geskiedskrywer van Suid-Afrika* (Amsterdam: Swets en Zertlinger, 1932), 10.
19. *Ibid.*, 13-24.
20. *Ibid.*, 31.
21. Some of these will be discussed below.
22. See for example, A Kropf, *Das Volk der Xosa-Kaffern* (Berlin, 1889).
23. Theal, *Compendium of South African History and Geography* (1876), Preface to first edition.
24. See DM Schreuder, "The Imperial Historian as 'Colonial Nationalist': George McCall Theal and the Making of South African History", in Gordon Martel (ed), *Studies in British Imperial History: Essays in Honour of AP Thornton* (London: Macmillan Press, 1986), 107.
25. *Ibid.*
26. In East London Theal worked with more than one paper. See below.
27. For a brief account of Theal's early life see, among others, Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, 10-12. Also see Immelman, "George McCall Theal", 1-3.
28. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, 10.
29. See *Kaffrarian Record*, 15 August 1863.
30. *Ibid.*, 6 February 1864.
31. *The Kaffrarian* , 14 May 1864.
32. *Ibid.*, 24 May 1864. From 1857 onwards Walter Currie's correspondence shows that one of his greatest ambitions was to capture Sarhili. See, for example, Currie to Southey, 9 November 1861, SM 1022 (2), 101, Albany Museum, Grahamstown.
33. *The Kaffrarian*, April, 1865.

34. This observation was made by Theal in spite of the fact that two of Sandile's *amaphakathi*, Tyala and Soga, stood for peace.

35. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, 10. Indeed, Theal acknowledged the help he had received from archdeacon Kitton of King Williamstown who let him use his library.

36. Theal, *South Africa As It Is*.

37. These included the Colony of Cape of Good Hope, Colony of Natal, Basutoland, Orange Free State, Transvaal, Kaffraria, Zululand, Griqualand, Betjuanaland, Adamastor.

38. Holden, *The Past and Future*.

39. For a discussion of Theal's stay at Lovedale see Saunders, "George McCall Theal and Lovedale", *History in Africa*, 8 (1981), 155-164.

40. The publishing of the journal later became the responsibility of Theal. See Saunders, "George McCall Theal and Lovedale", 157.

41. Immelman, "George McCall Theal", 2.

42. Switzer, *South Africa's Alternative Press*, 25.

43. *Kaffir Express*, 1 September 1871.

44. This article echoed an earlier call that had been made by Tiyo Soga through rhetorical questions in *Indaba* in 1862. See Unonjiba Waseluhlangeni, "Ipepa le-Ndaba ZaseKhaya", *Indaba*, August 1862.

45. *Ibid.*, 4 January 1871.

46. Translation: This question is directed to any mXhosa, do you know anything about your family history? Do you know about your forebears? Do persist, so that you may be in a position to narrate all you shall have heard about your nation. I am sending out a challenge on knowledge about matters related to amaXhosa of old. To those who will respond to my challenge, I will pave the way by informing them about the genealogy of *iinkosi*.

47. It is possible that Theal had picked up the concept of Kaffir antiquarians from Dugmore who had made reference to "antiquarians of Kaffirland". See *The South African Christian Watchman and Christian Magazine*, 319.

48. Theal, *Compendium of South African History and Geography* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1874).

49. Bosman, *Dr George McCall Theal*, 41. The *Compendium* was the most comprehensive publication of its kind at that time in the country.

50. Theal, *Compendium*, (second edition), preface, npg.

51. In his book Shepherd noted that by the 1870s Lovedale students came from far off places like Livingstonia and Blantyre, Delagoa Bay and Barolong territory. See Shepherd, *Lovedale South Africa*, 196.

52. Theal, *Compendium*, (second edition), preface, png.

53. Saunders, "George McCall Theal and Lovedale", 160.

54. John Knox Bokwe was a leading African intellectual at the time and worked at Lovedale. On the life of Bokwe see S.E.Rune Mqayi, *U-Bomi Bom-Fundisi u John Knox Bokwe* (Lovedale: Lovedale Institution Press, 1925).

55. *Ibid.*

56. The publication of the African history series in *Isigidimi* and *Imvo*, between 1885-1888, is discussed in chapter seven.

57. Theal, *Compendium*, (first edition), preface.

58. The shift in Theal's thinking and the declaration of some of his writings as inaccurate, especially the *Compendium*, will be discussed below.

59. It would seem colonial writers would claim that their views were based on authentic sources. See R. Godlonton, *A Narrative of the Irruption of the Kafir Hordes into the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope 1834-35: Compiled from Official Documents and Other Authentic Sources* (Grahamstown: Meurant and Godlonton, 1836).

60. Robert Godlonton had been a leading colonist on the frontier. As editor of the *Grahamstown Journal* he wielded a lot of influence among colonists. His paper was a mouthpiece for colonists and was never short of words to propagate his anti-black outlook. It therefore is important to note what kind of "reliable" sources Theal had access to. See R Godlonton and Edward Irving, *Narrative of the Kaffir War 1850-1851-1852* (Cape Town: C Struik, 1962).

61. See Theal, *Compendium*, (second edition) preface.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid.*

64. Barrow, *Travels into the Interior*, i, 101.

65. He stuck to the name despite the fact that Lichtenstein had at the beginning of the nineteenth century pointed out the abhorrence amaXhosa had for the name. See Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 309.

66. Holden, *The Past and Future*, 141.

67. Theal even misspelt amaMpondomise the way Holden had done in his book.

68. Theal, *Compendium*, 109.

69. *Ibid.*, 110.

70. See Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, 352 and 356.

71. For a discussion of Xhosa laws of succession by Dugmore see chapter 4 of this study. Also *ibid.*, 354.

72. Theal, *Compendium*, 115.

73. Barrow, 1, 119.

74. Theal, *Compendium*, 111.

75. See one of the articles Bleek published at the time of writing the *Compendium*. W.H.I. Bleek, "Bushman Researches", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, X1, 1875, 106.

76. See WH Bleek, "South African Philology", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, III, January 1858, 23.

77. See Otto H Spohr, *Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek: A Bio-bibliographical Sketch* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Libraries, 1962), 25.

78. Bleek, "On the Origin of Language", G.17.d.7. S.A.L.

79. Theal could also have picked up such a view from Holden, *The Past and Future of the Kaffir Races*, 1.

80. Theal, *Compendium*, 114.

81. Makana/Nxele had come up with other names for God - Dalidiphu and Tayi. The use of these names seems to have been confined to the followers of Makana/Nxele. See "Gomtu Ongu Tsikana umxosa wokuqala ukwazi ngelizwi lika Tixo kobako emva konxele", in Wm K Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History". G. 10.C.13(16), 93.

82. The name Thixo had Khoi origins. Van der Kemp had assumed that there was no word for God in isiXhosa and had adopted the Khoi appellation instead. See Van der Kemp, *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*, 1 (1804), 397.

83. Theal, *Compendium*, 114.

84. However, Hodgson claims that Qamata was conceived by amaXhosa as capable of causing rain. Hodgson, *The God of the Xhosa*, 77.

85. Theal, *Compendium*, 114.

86. See "Gesimilo Senvelo" in WK Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History", G.10.C.13(16), Grey Collection, South African Library, 15.

87. For a discussion of Hlanga see chapter five.

88. See Colonel Maclean (compiler), *A Compendium of Kaffir Laws and Customs, Including Genealogical Tables of Kaffir Chiefs and Various Tribal Census Returns* (Mount Coke: Wesleyan Missionary Press, 1858), 57-109.

89. Some scholars have argued that missionaries were liberators of African women. See M. Donaldson, "Missionaries and the Liberation of Women: A Case Study from Southern Africa", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 53, (1985), 4-12.

90. Erlank, "Gender and Christianity among Africans Attached to Scottish Mission Stations in Xhosaland in the Nineteenth Century", 44-45.

91. De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 17.

92. Theal, *Compendium*, (second edition), 117.

93. Kaye's version has been discussed in this study in chapter 4. See Wm Kekale Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History", 172C Grey b10, Hahn Catalogue, SAL.

94. Golan, *Inventing Shaka*, 59-61.

95. At the time of Theal's writing the word *abaMbo* was used to refer to the "Fingoes". Among amaXhosa it seems it referred to people from the east.

96. In the tradition about the birth of Nxele the hero grows away from home in exile with his mother. See "Ati Maxosa enbalini yawo", Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History", 57-73. The same story motif is found in the story of Shaka's early life.

97. Theal, *Compendium*, (second edition), 118.

98. In Kaye's version of the rise of Tshawe no mention is made of *abaMbo*.

99. *Ibid.*

100. See *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 27 April 1887.

101. See "Ati Maxosa Enbalini yawo", Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History", 61.

102. Van der Kemp, "An Account of the Quadrupeds of Caffraria", *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*, 411, 463.

103. Theal, *Compendium*, (second edition) 118.

104. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 18.

105. Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, 25. Even in contemporary times there still are Xhosa clans that are regarded as traditional smiths. For example, amaQoco, Zikhali are one such clan.

106. Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 104.

107. *Ibid.*, 105.

108. See for example an entry that was made by Reverend Shaw in his journal in 1827. Hammond-Tooke (ed), *The Journal of William Shaw*, 91. In 1838 a similar observation was made in Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.

109. Theal, *Compendium*, 118.

110. For example see Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 108.

111. Theal, *Compendium*, 119.

112. Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 108.

113. See the genealogical table in Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 80.

114. Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.

115. *Ibid.*, and Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 108.

116. Theal, *Compendium*, 119.

117. *Ibid.*, 120.

118. It is significant that Theal referred to the military engagements between settlers and amaXhosa as Kaffir or Native wars.

119. In the *Cape Monthly Magazine* Theal submitted a narrative entitled "A Story of Native Wars by an Aged Fingo", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, Vol XIV, 1877, 248-249.

120. See announcements on "South African History and Geography" in issues of *The Christian Express*, from January to December 1876. Advertisements for Theal's *South Africa* appeared in the issues of 1877 and 1878.

121. For a discussion of the writing of African history by Africans during the last quarter of the nineteenth century see chapter seven of this thesis.

122. Theal, *Compendium*, 111.

123. *Ibid.*

124. See GM Theal, "Stories of the AmaXhosa", *The Christian Express*, 1 October, 1877, 16.

125. Theal's letter may have encouraged a correspondent in the following issue of *The Christian Express* to make a call for the development of "native literature". See K, "Native Literature", *The Christian Express*, 1 December 1877, 2.

126. Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, preface.

127. See WHI Bleek, *Zulu Legends* (Pretoria: J L van Schaik, 1952).

128. Initially Bleek was employed as Grey's interpreter and it was only in 1862 that he was appointed curator of Grey's Library. See Spohr, *Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek*, 22-23.

129. See J. Deacon and T. Dawson (eds), *Voices from the Past: /Xam Bushman and the Bleek and Lloyd Collection* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1996), 30

130. See Marian Benham and Canon Benham (eds), *Henry Callaway: The First Bishop for Kaffraria: His Life History and Work* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1896), 225.

131. Henry Callaway, *Nursery Tales, Traditions and History of the Zulu in their Own Words with a Translation into English Notes* (Pietermaritzburg: Davis and Sons, 1868).

132. Callaway was referring to instances where there was use of language that was not acceptable to Victorian morality. *Ibid.*, preface.

133. *Ibid.*, 20.

134. *Folk-lore Journal*, Vol 1&2, 1879-1880, i.

135. It can be assumed that T of Victoria East was Theal. See *Folk-lore Journal*, Vol I, January 1879.

136. See G M Theal, "Imbali Yentaka eyenz 'amasi", G 38 b 69, SAL.:

137. For a discussion of *iintsomi* see chapter four.

138. Harold Scheub, *The Tongue is Fire: South African Storytellers and Apartheid* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), xviii.

139. The place of *iintsomi* in the development of an understanding of the past among *iintsomi* listeners is a topic that needs further investigation. Scheub's study focusses mainly on *intsomi* as a literary creation.

140. See Theal, "The Story of Tangalilibo", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, XIV, 1877, 345-348.

141. *Ibid.*, 348.

142. See for example *intsomi* Theal recorded, "The Story of the Hart", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, XV 1877, 57-59.

143. Theal, "The Runaway Children and the Wonderful Feather", *Ibid.*, X, May 1875, 376-378.

144. Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*.

145. There was, for example, *Incwadi Yeentsomi* (Gwatyu, St Peter's Mission Press, 1875).

146. Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, 180.

147. Mapasa was a nineteenth-century Thembu prince.

148. Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, 180.

149. *Ibid.*, 187.

150. Kay related how when he visited Ngqika in 1825 the latter would not accept the news that Makana/Nxele had died in Cape Town. See Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 44.

151. In his reminiscences Stubbs, an 1820 Settler, observes that soon after his arrival on the land his family had been allocated, about 500 Africans came to get red clay from what he called their place. See WA Maxwell and RT McGeogh (eds) *The Reminiscences of Thomas Stubbs* (Cape Town: Balkema, 1978), 81.

152. For another discussion of proverbs and their origins see GM Theal, *The Beginning of South African History* (Cape Town: T Maskew Miller, 1902), 61-64.

153. Bokwe to Theal, "Bokwe Letter-Book 1882-1887" MIC/F 134, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

154. For a detailed study of Xhosa poetry see Jeff Opland, *Xhosa Poetry: Aspects of a Black South African Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

155. Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, 14.

156. Shaw, *The Story of My Mission*, 480. Rev Boyce, the Methodist missionary had a similar experience in 1830 when he visited Faku of amaMpondo. See Boyce in Steedman, *Wanderings and Adventures*, ii (London: Paternoster, 1835), 266. It was also the experience of Kay when he visited Ndlambe in 1826. See Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 75.

157. Theal, *Kaffir Folk-lore*, 14.

158. A C Jordan, *Towards an African Literature: The Emergence of Literary Form in Xhosa* (Berkeley: University of California, 1973), 60.

159. Theal, *The Beginning of South African History*, 64. Some *izibongo* were included in a collection that was compiled by Rubusana and published in 1906. See W.B. Rubusana, *Zemk'iinkomo Magwalandini* (London: Butler and Tanner, 1906).

160. Letter to Mr Noble, 1 February 1877, MS 7359, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

161. The Bezuidenhouts were leaders of frontier boers who led a rising against British rule in 1815.

162. Letter to Noble, MS 7359, Cory Library.

163. Herodotus Australis, "A Little Light from Basutoland", *The Cape Monthly Magazine*, Vol 11, January to June 1880, 221-233.

164. "Reminiscences of an old Kaffir", *Ibid.*, Vol 11, July to December 1880, 289-294.

165. Bosman, *Dr George McCall Theal*, 42.

166. The work of John Henderson Soga, in the form of two publications, during the 1930s, received no back-up from "mainline" historians at universities. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu* as well as *The Ama-Xosa*.

167. Peires, *The House of Phalo*.

168. Timothy J Stapleton, *Maqoma: Xhosa Resistance to Colonial Advance 1798-1873* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1994).

169. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*.

170. Theal, *History of the Emigrant Boers in South Africa* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1888), 1X.

171. Theal, *Catalogue of Books and Pamphlets*, 295.

172. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, 22.

173. Schreuder, "The Imperial Historian as 'Colonial Nationalist'", 115.

174. Babrow, "A Critical Assessment", 188.

175. GM Theal, *A Fragment of Basuto History 1854 to 1871* (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co., 1886), iv.

176. Babrow, "A Critical Assessment", 87.

177. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*.

178. *Ibid.*, 110-138.

179. For further information on this expedition see Eric Axelson, *Portuguese in South-East Africa 1488-1600* (Johannesburg: C Struik, 1973), 152-164.

180. Immelman, "George McCall Theal", 8.

181. Theal, *The Beginning of South African History*, vi.

182. For Theal's discussion of the shipwrecks see *ibid.*, 277-301.

183. Theal tabled the same genealogical table he had presented in the *Compendium*. See Theal, *Compendium*, (second edition), 117-118.

184. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 110.

185. For an account on the fate of the *Sao Joao* and her survivors see Theal, *The Beginning of South African History*, 295-301. Also in *History and Ethnography of Africa South of the Zambezi*, i, (London: Sonnenschein and Co., 1907), 383-388 as well as C.D. Ley (ed), *Portuguese*

Voyages 1498-1663 (London: Dent, 1947), 248.

186. Theal, *The Beginning of South African History*, 277-281.

187. Wilson believes the landing base could have been a promontory, west of the Bushman's river. See M. Wilson, "The Nguni People" in Wilson and Thompson (eds), *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i, 79-80.

188. *Ibid.*, 81.

189. *Ibid.*, 82.

190. For a report on the travels and experiences of some of the *Stavenisse* survivors see Captain Wiken Knyff's report in Moodie, *The Record*, 415-428.

191. Theal, *The Beginning of South African History*, 297.

192. *Ibid.*, 297-298.

193. GM Theal, *South Africa: (The Cape Colony, Natal, Orange Free State, South African Republic and All Other Territories South Of the Zambesi)* (London: T. Fisher Unwin [third edition], 1896), 5.

194. See the description of Luspace in Theal, *The Beginning of South African History*, 297.

195. *Ibid.*

196. Axelson seems to have kept close to Theal's calculation in the identification of landing sites. Axelson, *Portuguese in South-East Africa*, 197. Calculations by later scholars have thrown up new landing sites for the shipwrecks. For example, the landing site for the *Baptista* castaways has been located in the Alexandria vicinity. See Patricia Storrar, *Drama at Porta Delgada* (Johannesburg: Lowry Publishers, 1988), viii.

197. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 114.

198. Theal was working according to a racial classification of the eighteenth century in which the Bushmen were portrayed as the people who were at war with all other groups and fought with arrows.

199. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 115.

200. Axelson, *Portuguese in South-East Africa*, 197.

201. Wilson, "The Nguni People", 82.

202. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 117.

203. *Ibid.*, 120.

204. *Ibid.*

205. See Holden, *The Past and Future*, 142.
206. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 120.
207. Bell-Cross, "The Strandloper Trail", in Pamphlets, Box 26, Cory Library, Rhodes University.
208. Wilson, "The Nguni People", 82-83.
209. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 121.
210. See Theal, *Records*, 8, 206.
211. According to Soga, Togu lies buried at Qokoma, in the Ngqeleni district. *Ibid.*, 111.
212. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 110.
213. *Ibid.*, 121.
214. Peires, *The House of Phalo*, 17.
215. Wilson also built her discussion of Xhosa history around a view that Togu was *ikumkani* in power during the time of the Stavenisse survivors. See Wilson, "The Nguni People", 84. Switzer makes the same mistake. See Les Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society*, 39.
216. Thompson, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*, ii and iii, 191.
217. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 121-122. Soga, however gives Cumngce as their burial place for Ngconde. Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 111. Incidentally, these places are close to one another.
218. Thompson, *Travels and Adventures*, ii and iii, 192.
219. Thompson, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*, i, xxi.
220. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 122.
221. For a fuller account of Ntinde's identity see *The South African Christian Watchman*, 323-324.
222. See "Kaffraria. II. Its Tribes", *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*, 326.
223. Missionary documents were full of accounts of what they perceived as the abominable activities of traditional doctors. In colonial literature smelting out was depicted as an act of barbarism from which amaXhosa were to be rescued.
224. See Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 6.
225. See Thompson, *Travels and Adventures*, ii and iii, 192.

226. Colonel Collins, "Journal of a Tour to the North-Eastern Boundary, the Orange River, and the Storm Mountains", in Moodie, *The Record*, 16.

227. *Ibid.*

228. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 124.

229. Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 3.

230. "Reminiscences of an Old Kaffir", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, Vol 111, July-December 1880, 289-290.

231. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 126-138.

232. Beutler was commissioned by the Council of Policy in 1752 to lead an expedition into the interior. For an account of that expedition see Theal, *Belanrijke Historische Dokumenten*.

233. Forbes, *Pioneer Travellers*, 7.

234. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 129.

235. *Ibid.*, 130. Again the observation about tightening security was in line with the colonial view that amaXhosa were bellicose.

236. The name of Bange appeared under the table of the House of Ntinde in *The South African Christian Watchman*, 318.

237. Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 123.

238. The journal is also published in Molsbergen, *Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollanse Tijd*, 265-336.

239. Theal, *Belangrijke Historische Dokumenten*, 24.

240. The naming of places seems to have been an arbitrary exercise that followed no specific system. The Dutch would use their names, commemorate an event, or corrupt an indigenous name. Forbes, also had no idea how such names like Zwartkops, Bushmans and Sundays came about. Forbes, *Pioneer Travellers of South Africa*, 13.

241. Newton-King argues that after the defeat of the indigenous people in 1739 in the north-eastern region of the Cape, there was a measure of quiet for almost fifteen years. It was during that time that the colonists then spread and set up farms. The Dutch also made a habit of setting up indigenous leaders as "captains" who would be faithful to them. See Newton-King, *Masters and Servants*, 70-72.

242. On 28 June 1752 Beutler and his party halted at Gcaleka's residence west of the Xwenurha. This is important information on Gcaleka as there seems to be little eye-witness evidence in written texts about him. Even his date of death is unknown. Theal gives it as 1790. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 136. Soga give 1792. See Soga, *The South-Eastern*

Bantu, 140. Crais gives the date of Gcaleka's death as 1778. Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order*, 27. Significantly in their genealogical table of Xhosa royalty, Wilson is silent on the date. See Wilson, "The Nguni People", 88.

243. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 134.

244. *Ibid.*, 136.

245. *Ibid.*, 133.

246. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 137. Theal estimated the death of Khawuta to have occurred in about 1804.

247. *Ibid.*

248. Theal, *Compendium*, 116.

249. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 137.

250. The Xhosa genealogical table in Maclean is discussed in chapter five.

251. *Ibid.*, 137.

252. *Ibid.*

253. Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 87-89.

254. Noyi had written a history that covered the story of amaGando during Tshiwo's reign. This is discussed in chapter three. Also see Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 5-7.

255. Theal, *History of South Africa Under the Administration*, 137.

256. Soga, *The Ama-Xosa*, 17.

257. *Ibid.*, 17-18.

258. See D.D.T. Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1952).

259. See K.K. Ncwana, *Amanqakwana Ngeminombo Yezizwe Zase-Mbo* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1953).

260. H.M. Ndawo, *Iziduko Zama-Hlubi* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1939).

261. See Smith, *The Changing Past*, 38.

262. *Ibid.*

263. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, 29.

CHAPTER 7

THE AFRICAN HISTORY SERIES

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century there was a core of educated African men, and to a lesser extent women, who were poised to make a mark in the political and social life of the Cape. Such people, products of mission schools, were ready to try out new strategies of survival in the face of colonialism. Some began to respond to the call of Citashe,¹ *imbongi* (bard), who in 1882 exhorted his compatriots:²

<i>Zimkile! Mfo wohlanga,</i>	Your cattle are gone, my countryman,
<i>Phuthuma, phuthuma;</i>	Hurry rescue them
<i>Yishiy' imfakadolo</i>	Leave the breech loader
<i>Phuthuma ngosiba:</i>	Resort to the pen
<i>Thabath' iphepha neinki,</i>	Take paper and ink
<i>Likhaka lakho elo.</i> ³	That is your shield

This poem⁴, described by Switzer as an icon of an era,⁵ is perceived as marking the passing of the phase of military resistance.⁶ From the 1880s a new group of Africans took the centre stage, carrying their pens. From this sector there emerged writings in both siXhosa and English covering a variety of topics and themes. Scholars of colonial African literature in South Africa find the period a particularly rich one for writings by siXhosa-speakers.⁷ This is not surprising. The last three decades of the nineteenth century were a culmination of fifty years' work by missionaries among amaXhosa since isiXhosa was first translated into written form by Glasgow missionaries in 1824.⁸ Most of the influential literate Xhosa men and women were graduates of the Lovedale mission institution which since 1841 had provided higher training and produced evangelists, teachers, artisans and interpreters. By the 1870s Africans were striving to attain higher levels of learning and were looking out for new job opportunities besides those that had become traditional posts for mission institution graduates.⁹ Africans were not just content with imbibing what was given to them by their missionary overlords. They became producers of knowledge for themselves and their children.

Such stirrings were manifest within the church. There was a thirst for a more free Christian experience outside the confines of the mission station. During the 1880s this was expressed through the Ethiopian movement, whose birth is usually associated with Nehemiah Tile.¹⁰ Odendaal defines this movement as a “philosophy of religious independence which manifested itself in the rise of African separatist churches.”¹¹ It needs to be pointed out, however, that the description of the Ethiopian movement as “separatist” or “breaking away from the mainline churches” takes away the essence of the movement. Ethiopianism was a claim by Africans to the Christian religion. However, not all Africans who wished to have a greater say in matters of religion and worship left to found their own churches. A number remained and worked for change from within. Many of the leading figures, whose work will be discussed in this chapter, operated within church structures.¹²

Political consciousness manifested itself in many ways among amaXhosa. The most obvious was exercising the right to vote in the Cape parliamentary system. This involved a struggle against white politicians who continuously sought ways of reducing or excluding black voters from the voters’ roll. Resistance to such manoeuvres necessitated alliances across the colour line. It also required Africans to unite and work together. The call, “*Yibani Yimbumba, koda kubeninina!*” (Unite, now is the time) was the battle cry of the time. Most associations of the period had *umanyano* or *imbumba* in their titles. For example, Umanyano Ngemfundo, also known as the Native Educational Association (NEA),¹³ founded in 1876, was the first society launched by Africans through which African teachers organised and elevated themselves.¹⁴ Its stated aim was “to take a special interest in all educational matters, in schools, in teachers and all others engaged in similar work, the aim of which is the improvement and elevation of native races: to promote social morality and the general and domestic welfare of the natives.”¹⁵ Imbumba YamaNyama (South African Aborigines Association), founded in 1882, was “an explicitly political organisation which aimed to unite Africans in political matters.”¹⁶ Unity was an undergirding principle.

Africans in the eastern Cape increasingly began to participate in discussions and debates, especially through newspapers.¹⁷ Africans had gradually begun to take control of certain newspapers. When *Isigidimi SamaXhosa* came to be published independently of the *Kaffir Express* in 1876, Elijah Makiwane¹⁸ was appointed as its assistant editor. This marked an important development in the

history of the South African press. The appointment in 1881 of John Tengo Jabavu,¹⁹ “a brash young man”²⁰, as the first African editor of *Isigidimi* was another important development. Citashe’s call, “*Phuthuma ngosiba*” (Resort to the pen), was being realised. The next step was the formation of an independent newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, in November 1884, with Jabavu as founder and editor. *Isigidimi* however continued under a new editor, William Wellington Gqoba.²¹

No Xhosa history book came out during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Nonetheless several contributors to the two newspapers, *Isigidimi* and *Imvo*, submitted articles on Xhosa history. There was a variety of texts through which the Xhosa past was recalled. There were articles written in prose form. Songs and *izibongo* were also used as vehicles for passing on historical information. In using various genres the writers/bards were adapting traditional Xhosa oral modes for recounting the past. Mzamane points out that black South African writers operate and adapt, consciously and unconsciously, oral and literary modes of expression.²² In these texts writers combine western and African conventions in writing history. This was inevitable as the writers themselves were products of missionary schooling. In this chapter the focus will be on some of those texts in which the writers recollected and reconstructed Xhosa history in articles published in *Imvo* and *Isigidimi*.²³

These texts were influenced by earlier historical writing, which had largely been produced under missionary influence and by colonial civil servants. Analysis of the new texts will focus on the continuities and innovations in writing on Xhosa history. The challenge to write Xhosa history at the time lay in the hands of mission-educated men who had become the new leaders and spokespersons in their communities. Equipped with the necessary writing skills, they became the voices of the colonised and the dispossessed. As the new community of intellectuals they also took it upon themselves to search for answers to puzzles and problems that Africans faced. For people in a state of transition the past was of particular importance. It would help to ground psychologically a people who had been dislocated and removed from their land through conquest. Moreover the new religion introduced a new cosmology about the origins and the past of humanity, almost supplanting what amaXhosa had always believed in. Further, colonial ideologies sought to portray amaXhosa as having recently arrived in south-east Africa and thus having no claim to the land. Colonialism also produced new identities and divisions within Xhosa communities. There were a number of

dichotomies, like Kaffir/Fingo, Christian/Nonbeliever, school/red, which caused cleavages. New ideologies had to be constructed by amaXhosa in response to the circumstances they found themselves in.

Jabavu, a leading African opinion-maker from the 1880s, was one who took the challenges facing African intellectuals in his stride. His career explicates trends that were becoming apparent in African communities. His Methodist schooling and faith placed him firmly in the missionary circle.²⁴ According to the colonial classification he was an Mfengu who belonged to the Jili clan.²⁵ His earlier career as a teacher at Somerset East placed him in the career path of young intelligent Africans operating under the colonial system. He was the second African to obtain a matriculation pass. His assumption of the post of editor of *Isigidimi* at the age of twenty-two is further confirmation that Jabavu was an extraordinary young person. But, as editor of *Isigidimi* he was not free of missionary control.²⁶ The tension between Jabavu and Dr Stewart during his editorship can be seen as symbolising the wider tension between educated Africans and their former guardians. Jabavu's bold move in founding a newspaper, *Imvo*, was symptomatic of a new spirit among educated Africans. The first issue of *Imvo* was received with great excitement and acclaim by Africans.²⁷

Switzer sees *Imvo* as helping the modernising Christian African elite "articulate and unify [their] interests."²⁸ On the other hand Ngcongco perceives *Imvo* as "filling in the gap between missionary journals and white newspapers."²⁹ *Imvo* was to be a major channel for African opinion well into the twentieth century. Jabavu used it effectively in his political battles on behalf of Africans.³⁰ For example, in numerous articles and editorials *Imvo* protested against the Parliamentary Voters' Registration Act of 1887. Referred to as *Tung'umlomo* by Africans this Act extended the franchise to the Transkeian Territories but refused to recognise communal land tenure as a basis for the franchise property qualification.³¹ Largely encouraged by *Imvo*, Africans organised meetings to protest against the bill in eastern Cape towns and villages. In its political stand *Imvo* was supported by a group of liberal parliamentarians like James Rose Innes, Sauer, John Merriman.³²

The support of "friends of the natives" compromised Jabavu's independence. As he broke free of missionary fetters, he came under the umbrella of liberals. Jabavu saw himself as part of an elite that

was helping to bring fellow Africans up to civilisation. Ndebele points to the dangers of liberal ideology which “seeks to domesticate its potential allies by defining them in its own image.”³³ Jabavu was never entirely free of liberals, depending on their financial support. Up to the end of his life Jabavu was writing to white “friends” begging for financial assistance for *Imvo*.³⁴ In Jabavu’s scheme of things there was little room for African culture, which in liberal thinking was portrayed as backward and heathen.

The birth of *Imvo* inevitably had an impact on *Isigidimi*. The general view is that with the establishment of the former there was “a cold and antagonistic climate between *Imvo* and *Isigidimi*”.³⁵ Yet there were positive aspects which tend to be overlooked by scholars. The competition between the two newspapers was good for both. In all likelihood Dr Stewart of Lovedale felt constrained to be less restrictive in what was published in *Isigidimi*. So *Isigidimi* was able to produce articles that represented African thinking. But the man who had a major impact on the style and content of *Isigidimi* was its new editor, William Wellington Gqoba. Switzer describes Gqoba as “an accomplished essay writer and poet.”³⁶ He was a respected orator as well. Gqoba was an unassuming man, and in many ways a direct contrast to Jabavu. While Jabavu was a learned intellectual, Gqoba was a trained wagon-maker. Nonetheless, he soon left his trade and worked in various mission stations as a teacher and interpreter. Gqoba may have been inspired by his contact with Reverend Tiyo Soga at Mgwali to develop further in areas in which he had no formal training. One of these was writing African history. Although Gqoba worked within the missionary system until his untimely death in 1888, he never showed in his thinking an over-dependence on missionaries. It was in Umanyano Ngemfundo where his love for history was nurtured. It was from that association that Gqoba used *Isigidimi* as a platform for a new thinking among African intellectuals expressed through a series of articles on the African past.³⁷ It was this appreciation of what was African about themselves which led to a desire to search for their past. This was nascent Africanist thinking.

During the last years of his life Tiyo Soga had, through his writings, expressed pride in his African identity. His biographer, Williams, points out that Soga’s writings and the calls he made to his sons and countrymen for the preservation of African history represented Africanist thinking.³⁸ Khabela

also detects “the spirit of the Africanist Movement” in the songs Soga composed.³⁹ Gqoba and his colleagues were influenced by such thinking. Although in 1885 Tiyo Soga had been dead for almost fourteen years, it would appear the light he had lit in Gqoba was still glowing. Kobe Ntsikana had also had an indirect link with Soga. Kobe’s brother, Dukwana, had worked as an elder at Mgwali Mission with Tiyo Soga until the latter’s death in 1871.⁴⁰ The same Dukwana, a respected preacher and orator, left the mission station and joined the Xhosa forces during the 1877 – 1878 War and died defending Sandile.⁴¹

The two newspapers co-existed and survived for four years serving different, but complementary, purposes. *Imvo* presented a commentary on current affairs, especially on African political involvement at the Cape. *Imvo* is a valuable source for political history. Gqoba seems to have found a historical niche for his paper, taking his readers back to their roots. The spur was a motion put forward by William Kobe Ntsikana⁴² at a conference of Umanyano Ngemfundo at Pirie on 14 – 15 July 1885. His motion that “*Imbali zezizwe ezi Mnyama zishicilelwe ukuze zifundwe ezikuleni ze Ntsapo*”⁴³ (The history of black nations must be published so they can be learnt by schoolchildren) was adopted, and a sub-committee to find ways of implementing it was created.⁴⁴ At the same conference Peter Tyamzashe presented a paper in siXhosa on a comparative study of amaXhosa, past and present.⁴⁵ This paper gave a brief account of the history of amaXhosa from Tshawe onwards. The paper was commended by delegates for having been lucid and enjoyable, “eyicwangcise kakuhle iyolile.”⁴⁶ In the discussion following Tyamzashe’s paper, Gqoba displayed his knowledge of African history, amazing delegates.⁴⁷ The 1885 Umanyano Ngemfundo conference was a seminal gathering where a seed for African history seems to have been sown among African educationalists of the time. The four members of the African history sub-committee were to take a leading part in the writing of history articles in *Isigidimi* in subsequent years.

The four men shared a lot in common. They had, from birth, been closely associated with missionaries and their teachings. They were amaNgqika. While their kinsmen and age-mates had engaged the British in battles over a hundred years, they represented that sector of amaNgqika who had chosen to collaborate with the missionaries. Such people did not just collaborate with missionaries, they also struggled to make their voices heard within missionary discourse. The

formation of the history sub-committee should be seen as part of that struggle. Gqoba and WK Ntsikana, who were to be the most productive members of the history committee, had very few years of formal schooling in comparison, for example, to Mzimba.⁴⁸ But a look at their family background indicates some factors that contributed to their make-up. As a son of Ntsikana, Kobe was exposed from youth to Christian teachings. But, before conversion, Kobe's father had been a well-known orator and dancer. His sons Kobe and Dukwana must have imbibed the Xhosa world and its culture. Gqoba, was a grandson of Peyi, another associate of Ntsikana.

Gqoba's contribution to the African history series was a continuation of work he had started earlier. Throughout 1885 Gqoba submitted a number of articles to *Isigidimi*. He wrote short articles on a variety of topics and also composed poetry.⁴⁹ His outstanding work was the long poem he serialised from January to August 1885 – “Ingxoxo Enkulu Nge Mfundo” (A Serious Debate on Education). This was divided into seven parts, which totaled 1 801 lines.⁵⁰ “Ingxoxo” will be the first text to be analysed in this chapter. Other texts of note are a series of articles on the history of amaXhosa and abaMbo that appeared in *Isigidimi*, and to a lesser extent *Imvo*, during 1887 and 1888. The poem was written in the form of an allegory. The debate was about education. Discussions explored the manner in which Africans continued to be discriminated against and to be ruled harshly despite being educated. Another question the participants addressed was whether Africans had shown gratitude for all that “amagwangqa” (the white people) had done for them. One side in the debate extolled missionary work that saw the establishment of schools and brought light to Africans who had lived in darkness. The other side was critical of missionary teaching and bemoaned the loss of land and freedom which Africans were suffering in the land of their birth. There were twelve young men who participated in the debate in front of an audience that included adults.

Gqoba's debate in “Ingxoxo” may have been triggered by two articles that appeared in *Imvo* and *Isigidimi*. The first was written for *Imvo* by Langham Dale, Superintendent-General of Education at the Cape.⁵¹ Dale argued that “School Kaffirs” were hanging between states of civilisation and savagery. In January 1885 Rev. Makiwane in his presidential address at an Umanyano Ngemfundo conference cautioned educated Africans against seeing themselves equal to Europeans.⁵² Opland and Mtuze⁵³ suggest that Gqoba may have obtained the idea of using an allegory from Soga's *Uhambo*

Lomhambi.⁵⁴ They further point out that Gqoba followed a western poetic style with emphasis on equal lines in each verse, as well as rhyming. Gqoba may have adopted some western practices but the poem is steeped in African tradition.⁵⁵ Gqoba transmitted on paper what otherwise was ongoing oral discourse among amaXhosa. Indeed, the notion of *ingxoxo* is not just a debate, but also an opportunity to formulate new thinking. The poem is a literary form of two oral genres, *amavo* and *izibongo*. The former is an oral tradition in which participants engage in deep discussion on issues, drawing from the past in order to interpret and understand the present. *Izibongo* on the other hand is a popular medium for expressing lofty thoughts, including historical topics. Participants in “Ingxoxo” debated issues and used evidence from African history to explain and support their views. The poem was also a medium through which participants revisited the past using oral traditions.

In the first part of the poem participants responded to opening remarks by the chairman, Bedidlaba who expressed appreciation for the white man’s education. He however, despaired at the way educated Africans were discriminated against, deprived of opportunities, and were generally victims of jealousy and conceit.⁵⁶ These remarks generated a heated debate among participants. Those who supported Bedidlaba’s views gave examples of discrimination against Africans at schools. One speaker pointed out how African students knew no Latin or Greek and were struggling with English. There had been a debate going on in missionary circles about the proper nature of African education. At Lovedale Govan wished to continue to provide classical education for Africans, while Stewart believed in a general, broad-based education that would enable Africans to be literate enough to read the bible for themselves. Respondents argued that whites had provided funds for education, even for sending African students overseas.

The second part of the poem began with an account of Nyengane (Van der Kemp) who was said to have come to rescue Africans, “*sasifile bubudenge*”⁵⁷ (we were wallowing in foolishness). The speaker followed with a list of missionaries who had come after Van der Kemp in fulfilment of Ntsikana’s prophecy, giving Xhosa versions of their names: there was Buneli (Brownlee), Lose (Ross), Tshemese (Chalmers), Gaveno (Govan), Lanke (Laing). In just one stanza the author was able to give a brief overview of missionary history among amaXhosa. Then he proceeded to give an account of the Xhosa world before the arrival of missionaries. He also gave a list of *iinkosi* among

whom the missionaries had worked. Gqoba provided names other than the ones generally known in colonial literature. He referred to Hintsisa as SoRili (Father of Sarhili), and used Ndlambe's salutation, Lwaganda and Njalatya, for Maqoma. He also identified the names of the Houses to which *iinkosi* belonged. Buru, the brother of Hintsisa, belonged to the Tsojana House. The text contained historical material expressed in an oral mode through which information is collapsed and only key words are retained and used.

In the verses of "Ingxoxo", published in April 1885, the discussion focused on education and the treatment of Africans under colonial rule⁵⁸ Appreciation was expressed of the new order and the peace that had been brought by whites. This was strongly contested by those who regretted the fact that Africans had lost their land, were homeless beings who had to carry passes in the land of their birth, and were subjected to daily humiliation as "Bango Jeke, ngo Boi bonke"⁶⁰ (They are all [called] Jack, Boy). Moreover, the people of "John Bull" were accused of destroying blacks by supplying them with strong liquor. In the fourth part of "Ingxoxo" Gqoba tackled the economic impact of colonial rule. The narrator recalled how, when "*amagwangqa*" arrived, Africans nursed all kinds of hope. However, the reality was that they were paying for water, wood, and even grass. Darkness had descended on them. Even the mountains in the land, like Ndoda and Bukazana,⁶¹ were witnessing the suffering borne by Africans. Mountains like Lukanji in the country of Ngqungqushu, among amaMpondo would do the same. The mountains among abeSuthu would do likewise. The whole of southern Africa was witness to this suffering. When Africans were still independent they had never had to carry passes. There were no complications like title deeds. In response to this, it was stated that young Africans, because of education, were employed as teachers. Some were writers just like whites. Then the issue of land came up for further discussion. The audience was invited to recount the land loss suffered by amaKhwane, and amaNtinde, the first group to cross the Kei River. The narrator further recalled the loss of land suffered by Rharhabe, the father of Mlawu and Ndlambe. It was pointed out that those who had crossed first had to contend with "*amaLawo*"⁶² (Khoisan) who occupied the land from the Kei River to Cape Town. The Xhosa groups which crossed the Kei first had to fight their way through the Khoisan. Gqoba tackled the theme of land occupation which had been raised in various texts on Xhosa history. He presented two historical arguments about Xhosa rights to the land. There were amaXhosa who claimed that the land in south

east Africa, most of which had been appropriated by the colonists, had belonged to the autochthons since time immemorial. The other view, which had mainly evolved from colonial writing, fixed the limit of Xhosa territory at the Kei River.

In response to the complaint about the harshness of colonial rule the poet identified instances of harsh treatment within African groups themselves. He made reference to amaMfengu who had to flee to the Colony because of the harsh treatment they had received from amaNgwane, amaNgqungqushe and amaGcaleka.⁶³ He further cited the case of amaNtinde and amaMndluntsha who, he contended, also had to cross the Kei in flight. The conflict between amaNgqika and amaNdlambe, resulting in the Battle of amaLinde of 1818, had been caused by friction over land and pastures. The narrator gave details of the war between Ngqika and Ndlambe, including the names of leading men on both sides. The conflict, according to the narrator, escalated when Ngqika sought help from whites. The latter then came in force and proceeded to Hintsas's territory, where they killed him. In this account some features of oral history are discernible. For example, the narrator collapses the Battle of amaLinde and the death of Hintsas into an event that happened at the same time, whereas there was a gap of 17 years. In response to the complaint about taxes, the narrator pointed out that even under the rule of *iinkosi* subjects were still expected to give tribute in the form of elephant tusks, leopard skins, buffalo breast and skins of *inamba* (python).⁶⁴

More information on Xhosa history appeared in the June series of "Ingxoxo". The narrator drew the attention of listeners to *imfecane*. It appears as though Gqoba associated *imfecane* with Matiwane of amaNgwane.⁶⁵ In colonial and missionary writings Matiwane was presented as a marauder who terrorised abaThembu and posed a threat to the colony. Gqoba followed that line of thinking as he reminded his listeners about the British attack on amaNgwane at Mbholompo in 1828. The British were shown to have been saviours to abaThembu who had been subjected to Ngwane raids. While Gqoba's account was in some respects similar to colonial-missionary accounts, he also broke away from the colonial image of Matiwane, as a leader of merciless marauders. He showed how amaNgwane were received as allies by amaNgqungqushe, whose *iziduko* (clan praises) he then sang. The use of *iziduko* was a quick way of giving a short family history of a person, tracing her/his

genealogy. Accounts of co-operation among indigenous groups were rare in colonial writings. By bringing *iziduko* into the poem Gqoba was using an oral convention.

The debate returned to the question of Xhosa rights to the land in view of the claim that the region west of the Kei had been occupied by Khoisan. Gqoba resorted to *iimbali*. He referred to the escapades of Gando and Tshiwo who, when they fought their way across the Kei River, found land that was unoccupied. There were not even San there, the poet observed. At that time “amaChwama” (Khoi) were under Hintsati at Somerset [East], where Gando later sought refuge. The narrator then explained that from intermarriage between the Khoi and amaXhosa, amaKwayi and amaRanuga came into being. Gqoba observed, “*Lo mhlaba (sic) ngoka Xosa*”⁶⁶ (this land belongs to Xhosa), up to Nqweba/Sundays River. The narrator conceded that most of the rivers were named by the Khoisan but that did not necessarily mean that the land belonged to the Khoisan.

In the sixth part of “Ingxoxo” Dutch colonists came into the picture.⁶⁷ The poet reminded listeners how the British had rescued “Malawo” (Khoisan) from enslavement at the hands of the Dutch colonists. He further reminded the audience how whites had suffered loss with the killing of Yantolo (Stockenstrom)⁶⁸ and Mkelele (Cuyler).⁶⁹ Speaking through the voice of a Xhosa soldier, Gqoba briefly recounted some of the major battles amaXhosa had engaged in during the nineteenth century – Nxele (1819), Malinde (1818), and Mgwangqa (1846). The poet wondered how Africans would have fared under Dutch colonists had the British not arrived. He also pointed to the suffering endured by Africans under African rule. They faced being “smelt out” and tortured. Reference to Dutch colonists reminded one of an individual who had been an associate of Ntsikana. The man, Runqa, had bought land from the Dutch and paid with cattle. One night he had been killed by the same colonists. For the discussant experiences at the hands of Dutch colonists made “*amagwangqa*” preferable. The Nongqawuse disaster, when amaXhosa had slaughtered their stock and burnt their crops, was given as another instance where “*amagwangqa*” had come to the rescue of amaXhosa; therefore they [amaXhosa] needed to be grateful to whites.

In the seventh and last part of the poem a summary was provided by Bedidlaba, who had opened the debate.⁷⁰ His tone was conciliatory as he re-visited the issue of Xhosa-Mfengu relations. He argued

that amaMfengu had been refugees who had been well received by Hintsá – even though he was later accused by amaMfengu and whites of ill-treating these refugees. He called on amaMfengu to be grateful to Hintsá for having given them a place to live, as well as cattle. He argued further that whites, through education, had protected Africans from wars, famine, and other disasters. He concurred with those who were complaining about the ingratitude of Africans. Through education, Africans had a say in parliament. He advised the young to be more persistent in their search for education.⁷¹ In this poem, which took almost a year to write, Gqoba was able to put a verbal debate on to paper. He was also beginning to write African history. It was not a history untainted by colonial history, but he did help to bring to the fore the voice of African people who at that time were a conquered nation.⁷² From writing the poem Gqoba's confidence as a writer must have grown. From that period, until his death in April 1888, Gqoba's pen never went dry. He poured out his ideas on paper and cajoled his readers and countrymen to do the same. In the poem the reader is introduced to issues and concerns that faced Africans as they wrestled with colonialism.

“Ingxoxo” shows the degree to which colonial history had permeated and influenced the writing of Xhosa history. The poem also reveals *izibongo* as texts through which historical events could be recalled and as vehicles for passing on information to a younger generation. “Ingxoxo” was published at a time of creativity among African writers and composers. Gqoba's poem was followed by the publication of a collection of *amaculo* (songs).⁷³ *Amaculo Ase Lovedale*⁷⁴ was the first publication of its kind produced by an African. Songs and poetry share common features as oral texts. They are both forms of entertainment. They can also be used as vehicles for deep emotional and intellectual expression and for historical reconstruction.⁷⁵ “Ingxoxo” revealed Gqoba as someone knowledgeable about African history. It was therefore no surprise when a project to write African history was entrusted to Gqoba.

An editorial in *Isigidimi* on 1 October 1885 entitled, “Imbali Yohlanga Oluntsundu” (African History), signals the beginning of the work of the history sub-committee. The editor specifically dwelt on the need for Africans to begin to write and publish their history in the same way as other nations were doing. Africans were also a nation, “Siluhlanga”, Gqoba argued, and there was a past that could be remembered. He briefly outlined various national activities that could be used as

African Writers



Tiyo Soga



John Knox Bokwe



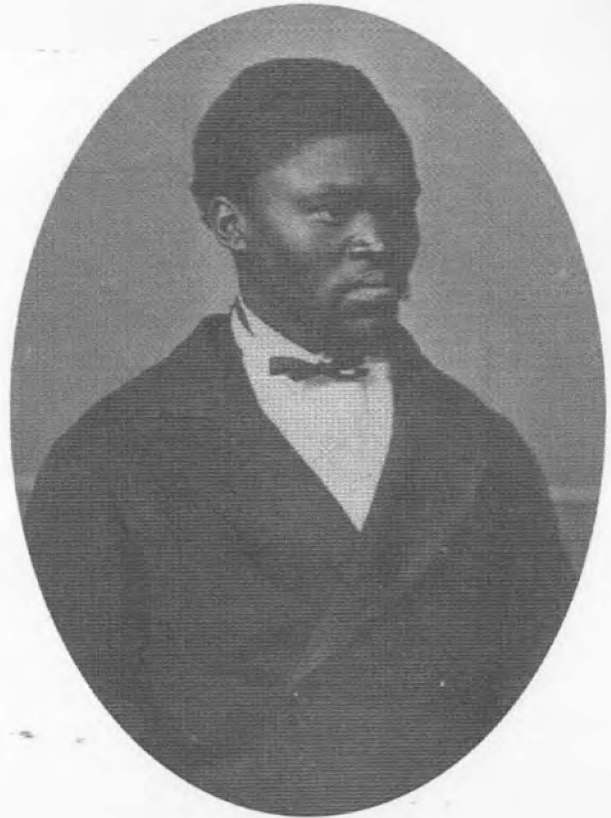
JT Jabavu

All pictures courtesy of Cory Library

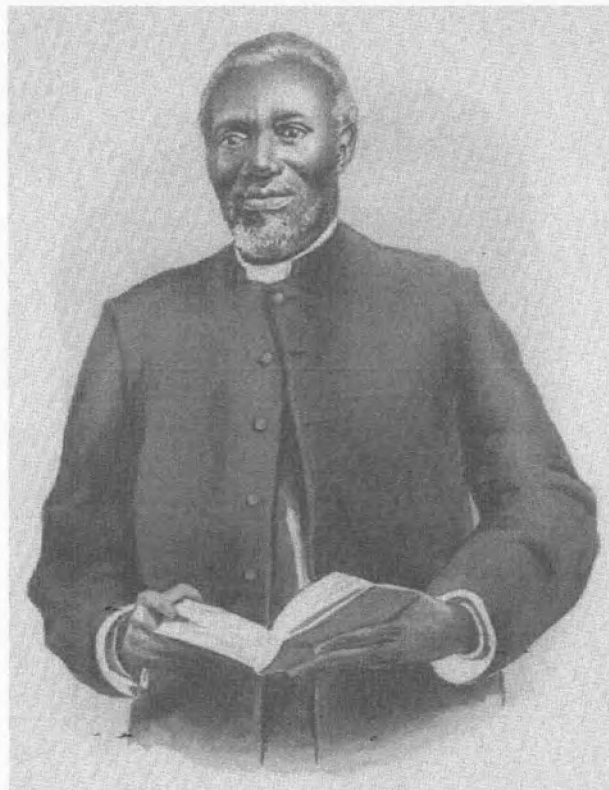
African Writers (continued)



Rev E Makiwane



Rev PJ Mzimba



Rev C Pamla

All pictures courtesy of Cory Library

channels to the past. He referred to customs associated with marriage, death, and mourning, and reminded readers how oral narratives on hunting escapades, healing, and festivals could be used in the writing of history. There were also stories of war and peace. All these, Gqoba argued, should be put down in writing for future generations as a national history.⁷⁶ He issued a call, “*Sicela imbali maxhego akowethu nonke. Sifuna ezaseBunguni zonke. Sifuna ezaseMbo zonke. Sifuna ukwazi ngalamarwintsele akhoyo pantsi kweli gama liti ‘Abambo’. Kanti akutetwa Mamfengu onke, njengoko inxenye ihlala inqwena ukunga kungatshiwo.*”⁷⁷

Gqoba’s call set in motion the task the history sub-committee had been given at the Umanyano Ngemfundo conference in July 1885. Gqoba believed that African history should come from Africans themselves; the plea was directed at the community sages whose knowledge had been neglected. Gqoba’s confidence in amaxhego (sages) suggests his respect for African culture. Moreover the African history that Gqoba and the committee were working on should be broadbased, bringing in various sectors of the community. Gqoba’s call touched on problematic historical issues. He wished to be enlightened on the history of abeNguni and abaMbo and the make-up of the Mfengu group. Some of the issues Gqoba had already made reference to in “Ingxoxo. Others he was to tackle in greater detail in subsequent articles which will be discussed below. Gqoba’s love for Xhosa culture can be seen in the same editorial where he pointed to the corruption of isiXhosa by speakers who already threw in English and Afrikaans phrases. He pointed out,⁷⁸ “*Lenteto yakowethu inzulu, ipuhlile, izinzile, inencasa. Ayishiywa kuyapi yile yaseMlungwini.*”⁷⁹

The challenge to Africans to capture and record their culture and their past was not new. Tiyo Soga had made the call in *Indaba* almost twenty years earlier.⁸⁰ But concern about the teaching of African history in schools was a new development. Gqoba became the standard bearer for this call. During the years 1885 to 1888 there was a significant output of historical writing by Africans. These texts appeared mainly in *Isigidimi* and to a lesser extent in *Imvo*. It would appear as though the tension between *Isigidimi* and *Imvo* did spill over into this project. There is a report in the minutes of an Umanyano Ngemfundo conference directing criticism at the editor of *Isigidimi* for his failure to carry out the task he had been commissioned to undertake as a member of the history sub-committee. It

appeared as though such objections came from Jabavu's group.⁸¹ Most articles were a continuation of earlier themes emphasised by missionaries.

However, with the passage of time new topics came to be developed. Obituaries of leading figures would be published when they died. These included life stories of leading African Christians, politicians and *iinkosi*. When Noyi died in September 1872 an article was published in *The Kaffir Express*.⁸² The author, JD, gave a brief account of Noyi's life as a convert which spanned close to sixty years. According to JD Noyi first heard the good news from Rev. Joseph Williams between 1816 and 1818.⁸³ When Rev. Brownlee went to work among amaXhosa in 1820 Noyi was one of those Williams converts who had continued teaching the gospel to amaXhosa. JD's account mainly highlighted the conversion of Noyi and his faithful service working with missionaries. Sometimes biographies of political leaders of Xhosa royalty were published. A report on the death at Robben Island of Maqoma, eldest son of Ngqika, also carried a brief overview of the period of Maqoma's life.⁸⁴ The writer highlighted Maqoma's role in the wars of 1835 and 1850-3, blaming him for the wars and claiming that if Maqoma had worked towards uplifting his people, amaXhosa would not be the heavy drinkers they were. But the writer also gave recognition to Maqoma's leadership qualities. He paid tribute to Maqoma, who had died a colonial prisoner on Robben Island, saying, *Akukho ubefika kuMaqoma ngokuqonda nokwazi ukwenza izinto.*⁸⁵ (There was none like him in knowing and doing things). The writer recognised Maqoma's outstanding character but was also critical towards him. Another article recounted the discovery and reburial of Jotelo Soga's skeleton. Jotelo, a leading *phakathi* of Ngqika, and the father of Tiyo, had died in the 1877 - 78 war fighting against colonial forces.⁸⁶ Jotelo Soga had been a leading and respected commoner among amaNgqika who, from the 1820s, had interacted with the missionaries and had participated in the struggle against colonialism.

In the September 1885 issue of *Isigidimi*⁸⁷ there appeared a short article entitled "Ingxabano kaNdlambe no Ngqika" (the quarrel of Ndlambe and Ngqika), by John Muir Vimbe.⁸⁸ Vimbe was not a member of the history sub-committee. At first glance the text can be seen as continuing the theme of fission and inter-group conflict. Nonetheless the article was innovative in some respects. The writer was at pains to introduce himself as mNgqika of the Leta, Mtakwende clan.⁸⁹ For his

history Vimbe used *iimbali* that had not been published before. He recorded how *Kumkani* Khawuta had visited amaRharhabe and anointed Ngqika as *inkosi* instead of Ntimbo, who was Ngqika's brother.⁹⁰ In Vimbe's text Khawuta was portrayed as a uniting force who moved in to quell differences in the Xhosa polity. Vimbe's article also filled in the background to the Ndlambe-Ngqika conflict. This was hardly referred to in earlier texts. This is probably because texts were written by writers who identified with Ngqika, who collaborated with the colonists, rather than Ndlambe, the leader of the resistance. Vimbe contended that Ndlambe had a claim to authority in the Rharhabe House not just as a younger brother of Mlawu, but because Rharhabe had instructed Ndlambe to *ngena*⁹¹ (take as wife and bear children) Mlawu's wife after Mlawu's death.⁹² Such an explanation threw a different light on the Ndlambe-Ngqika conflict. Vimbe also claimed that Ngqika had been the son of Mlawu's *shweshwe* (mistress). Vimbe's claim that Rharhabe instructed Ndlambe to *ngena* Mlawu's wife elevated the status of Ndlambe from being a younger brother of Mlawu to father of Ngqika.

Another article in the African history series was by Wm D Soga,⁹³ about Sutu, the mother of Sandile.⁹⁴ Five years earlier there had been an article about Sutu in *The Christian Express* of 1 September 1880.⁹⁵ In that narrative Reverend Cumming, as part of his annual report, had given a short write-up about Sutu and her daughter, Makazi. Cumming's report emanated from Sutu's Christian baptism. The two articles allow for a comparison between an Africanist approach and a missionary style of writing. There was a sense of triumph in Cumming as he noted, "God had been pleased to honour our mission.....by bringing Sutu, the mother of Sandile, the greatest woman of the Gaika nation, within its influence."⁹⁶ Cumming went on to relate how a destitute Sutu, "without a single hoof,"⁹⁷ had been brought to the mission station for safety by her son, Sandile at the outbreak of the 1877-8 war. Sutu, who had been the Queen Mother of the once powerful amaNgqika, had been reduced to living on a government pittance, sharing a single hut with her daughter. In such a state, Cumming added, she awaited a better mansion in the sky. Cumming's article on Sutu was styled after the missionary approach that portrayed indigenous people as destitute and in want until accepting Christ. It was a story of a non-believer's journey towards salvation.

Soga's article about the same Sutu shows how the missionary approach differed from Africanist writing.⁹⁸ Soga's article, entitled "Imbali Yenkosi uSutu" (The History of Queen Sutu), was a eulogy to the Queen Mother. Soga noted that Sutu was the daughter of Mvaxeni, an mThembu; she had married Ngqika just before the battle of amaLinde [1818]. She was then installed in the Great House.⁹⁹ Soga narrated Sutu's married life among amaNgqika. He touched on the power struggles at court between Ngqika and Sutu who had become popular with *amaphakathi*. In retaliation Ngqika married Ngubengcuka's sister, also an mThembu, but of a higher status than Sutu. Ngqika appealed to Hintsisa to confer recognition on the newly wedded woman, but Hintsisa stuck to an earlier decision that had declared Sutu the senior wife of Ngqika. Soga's reference to women at Ngqika's court gave finer details which were missing in earlier writings on Xhosa royalty.¹⁰⁰ Soga further touched on the heavy responsibility Sutu carried as a regent during Sandile's minority. Sutu had been a widow for close to sixty years.¹⁰¹ But, writings on Xhosa history had hardly made reference to her or any other women who had exercised authority in African society at that time. Soga also mentioned other royal women like Notonto,¹⁰² Maqoma's mother, and Heka, Tyhali's mother. Whereas Cumming had claimed that Sandile had brought his mother to the mission station, Soga stated that Sandile had taken his mother to Festiri Soga, who was a convert and the son of Jotelo, one of Ngqika's senior *amaphakathi*. Soga's *imbali* also revealed the role of *ukumkani* (monarch) in resolving royal family disputes. In writing the article Soga was carrying out his duty as *iphakathi* at Ngqika's House, using new methods of notifying amaXhosa about the death and burial of the Queen Mother.

In 1887 *Isigidimi* carried an article by Gqoba entitled, "Imbali Yama Xosa - Umkhondlo Wenkosi"¹⁰³ (The History of amaXhosa - The Royal Genealogy). This text, which was serialised in subsequent issues, was the first substantial response to the call for African history. Gqoba's account began with a creation story. He was following a tradition of earlier writers who had included *amabali emvelo* (creation stories) in their Xhosa history.¹⁰⁴ He noted the problem of inadequate information about the myth that humanity *wavela eluhlangeni* (came out of Hlanga). Gqoba suggested that Ntu was the progenitor of amaXhosa. Ntu was then said to have had two Houses from which Zulu and Xhosa were born. It was the first time that Ntu had been identified as the progenitor. Gqoba analysed the House of Xhosa, breaking it down into the various sub-houses that branched off from the main root,

Xhosa. This article of about 700 words was the most detailed ever to have been produced on Xhosa royal history.

Since 1846 the tendency had been to place “Xosa” at the head of the Xhosa royal genealogy,¹⁰⁵ In presenting a genealogical table Gqoba followed the same format used by Dugmore and later by Maclean and Holden. A major difference was the replacement of “Xosa” with Ntu at the head of the genealogical table. Gqoba accommodated the Judaic myth that proclaims Adam as the first person.¹⁰⁶ Gqoba used Ntu to present a broader narrative through which he could trace common roots for two ethnic groups in southern Africa. Gqoba claimed that Zulu came from the Great House of Ntu and Xhosa from the Right Hand House. The claim of a common ancestry for Zulu and Xhosa and their descendants was an attempt to use history to promote unity. Gqoba’s approach was in line with calls by Africans for cooperation and unity among themselves. The theme of common ancestry was further pursued in the article. Gqoba claimed Xhosa had fathered Malangana, Zizi, and Sutu. This then placed amaZizi and abeSuthu within the Xhosa House and gave them junior positions as younger sons of Xhosa. Gqoba did not expand on this claim. But again, his reconstruction seems to have been influenced by a desire to show common roots for Southern Africans. AmaZizi, who had appeared in colonial literature as homeless refugees and later emerged as “Fingoes”, were being placed in the family tree together with abeSuthu. In the article Gqoba confronted rigid tribal appellations that defined separate and distinct units. Through a shared ancestry Gqoba tried to produce a common history.

Gqoba continued with the genealogical line of Malangana and proceeded to the tradition of Tshawe which has been discussed earlier in this study.¹⁰⁸ Gqoba came up with historical figures that had not appeared in earlier royal genealogical tables. Malangana, son of Xhosa begot Ncwangube, the father of Nkosiyanane, who begot Nkosiyamntu, the father of Cirha, Jwarha, and Tshawe. The genealogical table had grown longer with the addition of new names. Gqoba traced the descendants of Tshawe although he had stated that Tshawe was *iqadi* (support house) to Cirha in the Great House. Gqoba also made a new claim that Ngcwangu, in Tshawe’s Right Hand House, was the father of Thembu. He thus was suggesting that abeThembu were descendants of Tshawe. This was possibly aimed at disputing an earlier suggestion by Holden who placed abeThembu in a position senior to other

groups in south-east Africa.¹⁰⁹ Gqoba seems to have been determined to challenge some of the claims of missionary-colonial writing on amaXhosa.

In tracing the history of Tshawe's Great House Gqoba followed previous versions of Xhosa history, but he displayed more knowledge than the earlier writers. In his narrative he included names of Queen Mothers like Senzangakhona,¹¹⁰ mother of Ngconde, Sizakwana, mother of Tshiwo, and Sivanxa, Phalo's mother.¹¹¹ He also mentioned the names of princesses and who they married. This expanded Xhosa history beyond the genealogical line of the Great House. Gqoba's account of Tshiwo who was born after the death of his father, Ngconde, is similar to the narrative about Phalo, who also is said to have been born after the death of his father, Tshiwo.¹¹² Both Tshiwo and Phalo had to face strong elder brothers who challenged their succession as *ukumkani*. The two Xhosa leaders both regained their places through the assistance of other brothers. In both narratives about Tshiwo and Phalo the themes of fraternal division and alliance were present. Gqoba also identified issues of disagreement between Xhosa oral historians. For example, there were diverse views about Gwali. Some claimed Gwali was the son in the Right Hand House of Tshiwo. On the other hand Gqoba declared that he was the son in the Right Hand House of Ngconde.

Gqoba's narrative expanded on Xhosa laws of succession beyond what had been given by Dugmore in Maclean's *Compendium*. Dugmore had discussed the formation of *ixhiba* during Ngqika's time.¹¹³ Gqoba cited various occasions when individuals were placed in positions above their birth and assumed a new status. In one instance Mdange replaced an elder brother, Hleke, because the latter had a dull personality. Langa, the son of Phalo, *wamiselwa* (grafted into a House) into the Right Hand House of Tshiwo. This House had had only a woman, Tiso, who could not head a House. The same is said to have happened to Mdushane, son of Ndlambe, *wamiselwa* into the Right Hand House of his grandfather Rharhabe. The placing of princes in Houses with a status higher than their birth was contrary to the rigid genealogical tables that had been drawn up by writers. Such genealogical tables, used by historians as basic frameworks for reconstructing Xhosa history, assumed a rigid and unchanging form and could not adequately capture the political dynamics of the Xhosa polity.¹¹⁴

Xhosa history written before the 1880s had made little reference to Gcaleka.¹¹⁵ Gcaleka and his descendants were settled further east, away from the colonial glare. Gqoba's discussion of Gcaleka partly filled that vacuum. Gqoba began by listing the sons of Gcaleka, besides Khawuta who was the one best known. Buhru, the son of Khawuta, was also mentioned. So was Mbune, another son of Khawuta and the father of Mxoli, who was a central figure in the outbreak of hostilities during the War of Ngcayechibi of 1878.¹¹⁶ Although Gqoba did not give a detailed discussion of the Gcaleka House and its descendants, his mention of their names suggests that they had greater involvement in Xhosa affairs. Even though Gqoba's account of the House of Langa repeated what had appeared in earlier texts, there was new information that included the Queen Mothers of the House of amaMbalu, Langa's House. The substitution of Tole for Nqeno as the leader of amaMbalu was explained through a story about the inhospitable nature of Tole's mother whose son was removed from a senior position and replaced by Nqeno whose mother was said to have been generous. This process was legitimised by asking for permission from Rharhabe and eventually from Gcaleka himself. The story reveals the chain of authority in the Xhosa polity. There was much deliberation on the succession to Nqeno before amaMbalu agreed on Stokwe as the successor. The history of amaMbalu is full of instances where merit seems to have been the stronger factor in deciding who was to take up a senior position. This may be because the role of the Right Hand House was mainly to provide military leadership. AmaMbalu, imiDange, amaJingqi, amaNdlambe were all Right Hand Houses and they had to bear the brunt of confronting colonial militarism. In such Houses it was important to identify those who had military prowess. In tracing the descendants of Mdange Gqoba added more detail than Collins provided in his 1809 table.¹¹⁷

The House of Gando had not been included in the Xhosa genealogical table of 1846, nor in Maclean's table of 1858. This was despite the fact that in 1838 Noyi had written about Gando and his rebellion against his brother Tshiwo.¹¹⁸ The exclusion of Gando's House, to which Noyi belonged, could have been inspired by Dugmore, a Methodist, who did not want to portray Noyi, a convert of the Scottish Missionary Society, as belonging to Xhosa royalty. Instead Dugmore had inserted the House of Khwane, which had no direct link with Tshawe's descendants. This was possibly because the Methodists had managed to convert Kama, of the Khwane House, whom they wanted to invest with a royal status. Gqoba was restoring the Right Hand House of Ngconde to its

rightful place in Xhosa royal genealogy.¹¹⁹ The history of the Gando House is a story of internal division. Some of Gando's people decided to join amaDama, and became the Gonaqua, amaRanuga.¹²⁰ Those who remained among amaXhosa were the descendants of Paxima, who begot Gciniswa, the father of Noyi. The House of Noyi opted for collaboration with the missionaries rather than play the traditional role of a Right Hand House providing military leadership.¹²¹ After his conversion and baptism Noyi, with the English name Robert Balfour, aligned himself to the church. From then the history of this House became closely entwined with missionary history.

Gqoba's history followed a loosely defined sequence. His narrative began with creation. This was followed by the phase of Ntu, the progenitor. If we use Okpewho's periodisation the two phases fall under mythical time.¹²² Ntu's descendants are represented as the progenitors of ethnic groups. This era can be classified as remote; at this time names like Zulu and Xhosa appear.¹²³ Then appear the progenitors of the Zizi and Suthu ethnic groups. This phase was followed by a remembered past with familiar names and identifiable placenames. Gqoba's account mixed an African periodisation with western notions of time. Gqoba gave names of *iinkosi* who had become familiar in mid-nineteenth century writings, confirming the Tshawe line as the central house in the Xhosa polity. His emphasis on Tshawe royalty reinforced earlier approaches by missionary and colonial writers which identified Tshawe history with Xhosa history to the exclusion of other possible histories.

Gqoba next tackled "Imbali YaseMbo"¹²⁴ (The History of Mbo), although he confessed to have very little knowledge on the subject. He went on to encourage men like Captain Foltman,¹²⁵ Mr Mazamisa¹²⁶ and others to join him in writing the history of abaMbo. Gqoba began his account with the advent of European settlers carrying the Bible. He then identified various groups of amaBhele among whom strange people had been seen carrying a book. These strangers are said to have died mysteriously. Gqoba included mythical stories that were narrated about the strangers and their deaths. Stories were told of how the bones of the strangers would not go dry. Then Gqoba related how chaos and confusion broke out, followed by division, fission and dispersal, as was revealed in earlier writings about abaMbo. It would seem the break-up of communities led to a loss of historical information. This may be the reason why myths were incorporated into an historical account. From the time of the arrival of nameless settlers the narrative moved to a period of identifiable figures

during the first two decades of the nineteenth century - such figures as Jobe, the father of Godongwana (also known as Dingiswayo).

A second part of “Imbali Yase Mbo” was published in the 2 May 1887 issue of *Isigidimi*.¹²⁷ It would appear Gqoba was struggling to obtain evidence as he noted, “*Ndibetwa kukuti imbali enkulu nelusizi kangaka ingabi nabani oyibhalayo nakwintsapo zalo ncutakalo. Okwenjenje kucela yona kumaxego asekoyo. Sendipelelwe mna kwandisaqala nje.*”¹²⁸ Despite his misgivings Gqoba put together a history of abaMbo which began with Shaka’s flight to Godongwana, who is described as Shaka’s maternal uncle. Gqoba’s writing seems to have been based on earlier missionary writing which emphasised internecine warfare, supposedly started by Shaka. The story of the rise of Shaka is framed according to a motif in oral tradition whereby the early life of a future hero is spent in exile under difficult circumstances.¹²⁹ The narrative of Shaka’s early life is similar to the story of the rise of Tshawe, who also grew up among his mother’s people and only returned as an adult to assume power at his father’s place. In the second part of his text Gqoba started providing dates. He gave 1810 as the year of the rise of Shaka under Dingiswayo. In his history of abaMbo Gqoba shifted between the African motifs and the western emphasis on chronology and dating. In some instances Gqoba negated claims that had appeared in missionary and colonial writing on Shaka. Writers like Ayliff and others had emphasised the dispersal and destruction of clans and other ethnic groups under the impact of Shaka’s wars.¹³⁰ Gqoba however argued that a number of *izizwe* (ethnic groups) submitted to Shaka’s authority, and were left where they had been by Shaka.¹³¹ Gqoba then produced a brief history of amaNgwane under Matiwane, giving 1818 as the date of their dispersal and flight until they reached “Mampondweni Embolompeni”.¹³²

A third part of “Imbali Yase Mbo” by Gqoba appeared on 1 June 1887.¹³³ He re-iterated his call for contributions on African history, noting that Africans had been taught Greek, Roman Egyptian and English histories.¹³⁴ He admitted that it was “*ikwele lobuzwe*”¹³⁵ (national pride) that spurred him on with his research. This third article was dominated by the activities of *iinkosi* of various groups like amaNgwane, amaHlubi, amaQwabe, and others. Gqoba used the same story outline that had been constructed by earlier colonial and missionary writers even though he had additional evidence, possibly from *iimbali*. Gqoba included elements that were mythical and *ntsomi*-like, even though

he was covering events from the remembered past. For example, there was an account of Nomagoza who was blown away by wind that took her to unknown communities. There was another story of a man who was blown away and later returned to his people.¹³⁶ Gqoba's text was clearly influenced by oral conventions which allowed the inclusion of mythical accounts. Tonkin notes that what "seem unrealistic ways of representing the past" are part of historicity.¹³⁷ She suggests that some of these mythic or *ntsomi*-like texts sometimes encode actual happenings. This is achieved through the use of symbolic language to convey perhaps a sense of chaos and even pain which people had experienced in the past. Gqoba gave detailed accounts of the wars between Matiwane and Mpangazita - these were likely to have been based on *iimbali*. Gqoba's history of Matiwane followed earlier texts which had shown him to be the major factor that led to the chaos in the Thukela region and the area across the Kwahlamba mountains.

A fourth and final part of "Imbali Yase Mbo" by Gqoba appeared in the *Isigidimi* issue of 1 July 1887.¹³⁸ In this text Gqoba did not stray far from an approach that portrayed the history of the people in the region along the Thukela, Mzinyathi, and Mfolozi Rivers as one of unending strife and destruction. He gave no dates in these accounts. He focussed on the history of amaHlubi, amaNgwane and amaReledwane, highlighting military encounters between Matiwane and Mpangazita of amaHlubi. The two leaders represented opposing forces in the highly militarised world in which they lived. The use of magic was a factor in the skirmishes. At one time Matiwane asked for assistance from Zulu, who, through his magic is said to have lured Mpangazita into an Ngwane trap. After Mpangazita's death amaHlubi were led by Bungane. Then new battles ensued. Mahlapa-hlapa, leader of amaMvulane, engaged in a military encounter with Bungane. More accounts of battles between Mahlapa-hlapa and Lutshaba of amaReledwane were given.¹³⁹ The narratives capture the story of a people who were highly militarised. The names and praises of the leading figures convey the military mood. Mahlapa-hlapa's army was led by a man whose praises were - "Goba-ntshuntshe" (the assegai bender) and "Umkhont' omhle" (beautiful assegai). There was also Ntongayivikwa (Stick you can not ward off). Gqoba did not discuss the causes or results of the military confrontations.

Gqoba did not give any indication as to who his informants were. He seems to have been in touch with an unnamed Hlubi who lived at Bedford.¹⁴⁰ It is possible that some of his informants were descendants of military leaders who participated in the wars in the Thukela region, some of whom had settled at Peddie.¹⁴¹ Gqoba's informants came from the "Fingo" community whose history was built around internecine wars.¹⁴² It is likely that the bulk of Gqoba's oral evidence was second- or third-hand. His informants could have been people who had lived in the colony for about fifty years. They could have obtained their stories from eye-witnesses. Their versions of Zulu history could also have been influenced by accounts put together by missionaries like Ayliff, Shrewsbury and Shepstone as well as colonists like Fynn.¹⁴³ Gqoba's histories of amaXhosa and abaMbo followed on approaches adopted in colonial writing. As most of his predecessors had done, Gqoba reconstructed Xhosa history according to a royal genealogical table. He presented a history of Xhosa royals as the central pillar in the Xhosa polity, although he did include others, like women and leading commoners. Gqoba was silent on the Xhosa-British wars. The fact that he was under missionary influence may have contributed to a decision not to tackle a controversial topic. In his history of abaMbo, Gqoba echoed the warlike representations that had appeared in missionary-colonial writing.

The "Imbali Yama Xosa" series was continued by Ntsikana. Ntsikana added more meat to the framework that had been constructed by colonial officials like Charles Brownlee. In an article entitled "AmaFolotwane kaRarabe"¹⁴⁴ Ntsikana gave a brief account of the eighteenth century *inkosi*, Rharhabe, identifying his place of residence as Bolo and relating certain anecdotes about his life. Rharhabe had lived a hundred years before the time of writing, hence there was vagueness in Ntsikana's article. The next article was about amaHleke¹⁴⁵ whose history, Ntsikana argued, had been overshadowed by imiDange.¹⁴⁶ Nonetheless in his research he had uncovered sufficient evidence on the descendants of Hleke to produce an article that was published in *Isigidimi* in May 1887. Ntsikana argued that Hleke was overshadowed by Mdange because the former never left his father's *Komkhulu*, and thus did not establish himself as a semi-independent *inkosi* with his own followers. Ntsikana lived at Pirie, a mission station under Reverend John Ross¹⁴⁷ that had been established among amaHleke. Ntsikana's interpretation leaves out other factors responsible for the preeminence of Mdange. Mdange and his followers obtained notoriety in colonial documents mainly because they

confronted boer intrusion as early as the 1770s.¹⁴⁸ Ntsikana's narrative provided a history of the House of Hleke which had been largely excluded in colonial writing. Ntsikana's "Imbali Yama Xosa"¹⁴⁹ followed a new approach. He gave a detailed account of a cattle raid by amaHleke on Diko. The narrative, peppered with short poetic verses, is unusual in so far as actors in the story included commoners, contrary to most writings which concentrated on royalty.

In his history of amaXhosa Ntsikana recounted the War of Thuthula¹⁵⁰ between amaNdlambe and amaNgqika¹⁵¹ - a civil war that broke out between Ndlambe and Ngqika over a woman. Like Gqoba, Ntsikana consolidated his narrative by using *izibongo*, a popular mode among oral performers. One verse ran:

Uqubek'embekeni nakoninakazi nako Tutula

Isilw'eswudl'umzi siwukanyela

*Sisith'udliwa ngu Makabulekile*¹⁵²

In the same article he included an account of the arrival of Nyengane¹⁵³ among amaXhosa. This must have been a favourite topic among amaHleke as Nyengane eventually set up a mission station at Mqgakhwebe, an amaHleke area.

Gqoba and Ntsikana, the main contributors to the African history series, had written a history along ethnic lines. There was a Xhosa history and a history of abaMbo. These two streams were however, given a common source through the tradition of Ntu. But, when it came to the known past they were treated as separate entities. There seems to have been a contradiction in African history¹ between, on the one hand, an approach that stressed common roots and a common identity, and on the other hand, one that highlighted ethnic fragmentation and division. Reverend Charles Pamla's¹⁵⁴ article, "AmaXhosa naba-Mbo" which appeared in *Imvo* in April 1887¹⁵⁵ seems to have followed the former approach. He outlined the kinship links between amaXhosa and amaMfengu. He argued that the division between the two groups had been caused by the position amaMfengu had taken in supporting Europeans against Xhosa-led forces. Pamla went on to attack the myth that the "Fingo" had been badly treated by amaXhosa. He denied that amaMfengu were ever treated as slaves,¹⁵⁶ noting that there had been intermarriage between amaXhosa and amaMfengu. In addition amaMfengu had been made clients of amaXhosa through the *nqoma* system. Pamla also made the

point, which hardly ever featured in missionary reports about amaMfengu, that some amaMfengu remained behind in Hintsas's territory after the Ayliff exodus of 1835. He further noted that one senior *phakathi* at Sarhili's court was Dotwana, an Mfengu.¹⁵⁷ Pamla concluded by noting that Ayliff liberated amaMfengu from sin and ignorance by teaching them about Christ. As an ordained minister, he may have felt obliged to add the last remark in case he was seen as having not been appreciative enough of missionary work.

Pamla was forthright in claiming, "*Amangesi alahlekisa ngokuthi amaXhosa enza amaMfengu amakhoboka*"¹⁵⁸ (The English are misleading when they claim that amaXhosa enslaved amaMfengu). Pamla blamed amaXhosa and amaMfengu for allowing hostility to take root while they shared the same ancestry. Pamla gave a genealogical breakdown, previously unpublished, which began with a progenitor called Mhobe who begot Flatel' ilanga, who begot Sidwaba, who begot Masoka, who begot Mhlanga, father of Msi whose sons were Ndlovu and Xhosa. Pamla, as Gqoba had done earlier, presented a genealogical table that outlined common origins. Pamla's story told of the split between the two brothers, Ndlovu and Xhosa. Xhosa is said to have gone on a hunt in search of ostrich feathers. The Xhosa group never returned to their original home. A main reason for not returning was that, during their absence from home, the Xhosa group had degenerated morally and girls had borne illegitimate children. Pamla further traced the roots of amaMpondo, amaXesibe, amaBhaca, and abaThembu to amaXhosa. Pamla's version was completely at odds with Dugmore's view of the origins of south-east African groups. Dugmore, later followed by Holden and others, had depicted separate and independent genealogical lines. Pamla, himself an Mfengu, was using history for his own ends. Pamla saw the writing of African history as a means to bind Africans together and create *imbumba* (unity). Pamla's article was written at a time when the editor of *Imvo*, Jabavu, was working on Umanyano Ngemfundo, proposing a new constitution and hoping to enhance African unity.¹⁵⁹ Pamla's story about Xhosa origins elicited protests from amaXhosa. B. Mama questioned Pamla's suggestion that amaXhosa were descendants of illegitimate unions.¹⁶⁰ Such responses indicate that there was a wider participation in the writing of history beyond the writers themselves.

Pamla's article is significant because he himself was classified an Mfengu. His biographers trace his birth to Butterworth in 1833 or 1834.¹⁶¹ At that time the mission station at Butterworth was under

John Ayliff.¹⁶² He had established it next to *Kumkani* Hintsa's *Komkhulu*. Pamla's parents would then have been among the converts that congregated under Ayliff. Pamla's parents would probably have been involved in the conflict that developed between Ayliff, together with his mission people, and Hintsa. The latter complained that Ayliff was forming a party in opposition to him.¹⁶³ When the 1835 war broke out and Hintsa was killed, Ayliff and a people he called Fingoes went to join the British military camp under D'Urban, taking along herds of cattle that belonged to amaGcaleka.¹⁶⁴ Pamla's family was most likely among the "liberated Fingoes". Charles Pamla himself grew up in the colony and went to school at Healdtown, a Methodist centre which at one time was under Ayliff.¹⁶⁵ Pamla's writing therefore represented a new history. The African history series had the potential to bring forward other versions of history, especially those of the less powerful.

Pamla's article was one of few that appeared in *Imvo* in the African history series. *Imvo* did not embrace the call for the writing of African history with the same enthusiasm as *Isigidimi*. Jabavu, the editor of *Imvo*, did not regard the writing of African history as a priority. His primary concern was to mobilise Cape African voters and watch over African interests with regard to policies pursued by the Cape government. Another possible reason for the tepid response of *Imvo* to the African history challenge may be what Ngcongco refers to as "a cold and antagonistic climate between *Imvo* and *Isigidimi*."¹⁶⁶ It would appear each newspaper had its own delineated areas. The African history series had fallen firmly in *Isigidimi*'s arena.

1887 had been a particularly productive year in the writing of African history in *Isigidimi*. The tempo was maintained the following year. P J Mzimba opened with an article which continued the :Imbali Yase Mbo: series.¹⁶⁷ The article was a revision of an earlier version. Mzimba observed that researchers had to contend with diverse views from their informants. He admitted that even the version he was presenting was likely to be full of mistakes.¹⁶⁸ Mzimba's article broke down into smaller units those who had been defined under a generic term, abaMbo. He also abandoned colonial notions of Mfengu identity. The clan groupings that Mzimba discussed were quite different from those "Fingo" lists that had been drawn up by the colonial government with the assistance of missionaries, especially Ayliff. "Soon after the 1835 war Ayliff had noted the existence of seven "tribes" - amaHlubi, amaZizi, abaseKunene, amaBele, abeSuthu, amaQwathi, imiHlanga.¹⁶⁹ In

another list amaReledwane were added.¹⁷⁰ A much more comprehensive list of “Fingo tribes” was submitted by Ayliff to George Carthcart, Governor of the Cape in 1854.¹⁷¹ Mzimba traced the history of imiVemve, abakwa Msi, amaDlamini, and amaMbanguba.¹⁷² He was able to provide individual clan histories, and linked the different clans from Natal with certain families at the Cape. In discussing imiVemve, for example, he was able to show the connection with a certain Mazwi who was a minister of religion at Tabase. Mzimba’s use of clan histories followed an African conversion in reconstructing history. Clan histories co-exist with an over-arching ‘national’ history. In colonial history clan histories were superseded by ‘national’ histories usually based on royal genealogical tables.

In the *Isigidimi* issue of February 1888 Mzimba continued with his “Imbali Yase Mbo”¹⁷³ He focussed on the history of amaDlamini, breaking them into smaller units. From the nature of the detail given he must have used *iziduko* as sources. His history was reconstructed from information on different clan segments or family trees. He traced the history of the various houses among amaReledwane.¹⁷⁴ Mzimba provided information on the origins of some Mfengu clans. For example, he gave the Maduna people Sotho roots.¹⁷⁵ According to *imbali* about the incorporation of the Maduna into amaHlubi, it is said that one Hlubi leader picked out a Sotho outcast called Mayi, while out on a hunt. The outcast was taken to his *Komkhulu* and later became an influential *phakathi* who built his own following. Mzimba traced the descendants of Mayi, some of whom had settled in the colony.¹⁷⁶ Mzimba also wrote about the Msimanga people, whom he identified as descendants of the San.¹⁷⁷ Mzimba’s use of oral traditions, like *iziduko* (clan praises), enabled him to produce new histories of different families and clans.

Ntsikana’s next essay, about Makana/Nxele,¹⁷⁸ was published in February 1888 under the title, “Imbali Ka Makanda Ogama Limbi Lingu Nxele”.¹⁷⁹ Ntsikana described Makana as one mXhosa who responded to Christian teachings fairly soon after contact with missionaries in about 1816. According to Ntsikana, Makana/Nxele taught his followers that, “*Inkosi zimbini zisemanzini, amagam’azo ngu-Tayi, noDalidip*”¹⁸⁰ (There were two lords who dwelt in water, their names were Tayi and Dalidip). He commanded his followers to salute the two lords. Ntsikana recounted Makana/Nxele’s complex theological teachings which he delivered between 1816 and 1820.

Makana/Nxele had taught his followers about Tayi, whom he substituted for Jesus Christ and Dali, a short form for Mdalidiphu, a Xhosa name for God.¹⁸¹ Makana/Nxele's teachings spread among amaNgqika and amaGcaleka. Ntsikana portrayed Makana/Nxele in a positive light, arguing that he had been an influential person among amaXhosa. This was contrary to the missionary image of Makana/Nxele as an impostor who used Christian teachings for his own political ends. In one of the earliest school books, written by Reverend Bennie in 1839, Makana/Nxele is accused of having tried to make himself God.¹⁸² Ntsikana also corrected the common view regarding Makana/Nxele's parentage. Makana/Nxele, Ntsikana claimed, was the son of Gwala of the Cwera clan, not Balala of the Ngwevu clan. Makana/Nxele had gone as a young man to Balala's homestead where his mother was.¹⁸³ Again the motif of a young man who leaves his home and follows his mother can be discerned in Makana's story. Makana seems to have been a controversial figure even among his own people and there existed many traditions about him.

In the same article, W K Ntsikana wrote about his father, Ntsikana, the son of Gaba. In colonial literature¹⁸⁴ Makana/Nxele, was always contrasted with Ntsikana. The two were shown to represent different African responses to Christianity. Ntsikana was portrayed as the ideal African Christian. In the 1839 book by Bennie, Ntsikana the prophet corrected the teachings of Makana/Nxele.¹⁸⁵ This is in line with Shepherd's claim that "no figure among the Xhosa people is more revered than is Ntsikana, the prophet."¹⁸⁶ However, among scholars there is a revision in the way the two figures are perceived. There are those who depict Ntsikana as representing the "accommodationist tradition,"¹⁸⁷ while Makana/Nxele is perceived as having revolutionised Christian teaching.¹⁸⁸ W K Ntsikana gave an account of his father's conversion, an event for long recounted in colonial literature.¹⁸⁹ Ntsikana brought forward new information about some of the people who were there on the day his father had his first vision. One of these was Peyi, the father of Gqoba.¹⁹⁰ Moreover it was Peyi and one Kupa who went forth to tell the people about Ntsikana's vision and conversion. Such detail had not appeared before in written work.

In March 1888 Gqoba began a new series on the Cattle Killing. His article, "Isizatu Sokuxelwa Kwenkomo NgoNongquase"¹⁹¹ (the reason for the slaughter of cattle during the Nongqawuse episode), broke a thirty-year silence on the part of Africans about the tragic Cattle Killing of 1856-

57. It had mainly been colonial officials like Brownlee, Ayliff, and Grey who had written on the Nongqawuse episode. Gqoba put forward an African version of the events. Instead of pointing to external factors, Gqoba tried to trace certain supernatural incidents within African communities which confirmed Nongqawuse's instructions that stock be slaughtered and crops destroyed.¹⁹² Such incidents,¹⁹³ Gqoba argued, had helped to strengthen claims by Nongqawuse who was later supported by another young woman, Nonkosi. The two girls claimed to have been visited by two men, who had died some time back. The two told Nongqawuse and Nonkosi to tell amaXhosa to destroy their stock and crops because they were in unclean hands.¹⁹⁴ This perspective was different from colonial accounts of the episode. The dire consequences of the destruction of stock and crops were further discussed in a subsequent article. Gqoba challenged colonial claims that the Cattle Killing movement was nothing but a plot by *iinkosi* to drive European settlers out of the country. He argued that the people had never been coerced by *iinkosi* but had voluntarily gone to Mhlakaza's place to listen for themselves. Gqoba further suggested that those Africans who echoed the "chiefs' plot" thesis were mainly *amagogyta* (the stingy ones, the non-believers) who were keen to curry favour with Europeans and ridicule their fellow Africans.¹⁹⁵ Finally, Gqoba invited those readers who supported the view that chiefs had been engaged in a plot to come forward with supporting arguments.

It is important to note one of the responses to the African history articles in *Isigidimi*.¹⁹⁶ M Kinass of Mount Ayliff, observed, "*Ezi mbali zakowetu zokuzalana kohlanga, namakosi akowethu, zitsho kamnandi, uhi umzimba ube namahlwantsi, ndive nam ndizibona ubuntu, nditsiba ngaphaya kobumfene ndibushiye ngemva.*"¹⁹⁷ On such an encouraging note Kinass went on to request the editor of *Isigidimi*, Gqoba, to put African history articles into book form and publish them, as such a publication could be used for the teaching of history in schools.¹⁹⁸ Kinass' letter was published at the same time that a progress report on an African history writing project was submitted by Ntsikana at the Umanyano Ngemfundo conference held at Lovedale in April 1888.¹⁹⁹

There were a number of hurdles and handicaps that confronted those wishing to write African history. There was a need for financial backing. There is no indication that such help was forthcoming from the colonial government or any other source. The production of knowledge is tied to power. While Ntsikana encountered financial problems in his research, Theal had been granted

finance and personnel to assist him. Moreover the African market for published books was too small to support writers. Although there is no evidence that the colonial department of education was opposed to the idea of African history, it is highly unlikely that it would have given Africans support for such an endeavor. Langham Dale, in charge of African education during the 1880s, pursued a policy that encouraged industrial education for Africans. It is also possible that Africans themselves were not united in the call for African history. Even at the Umanyano Ngemfundo conference of 1888 Ntsikana's report elicited no debate.²⁰⁰ There were among educated Africans those who saw the search for an African past as regression towards "barbarism". The death of Gqoba in April 1888, after a short illness,²⁰¹ dealt a blow to the African history project. The loss was summed up by Mtakati in his *isibongo: Mntaka Gqoba sihlwempuzekile* (son of Gqoba we are completely impoverished).²⁰²

After the death of Gqoba *Isigidimi* continued to appear until the end of 1888, carrying several articles on African history. The debate on the Nongqawuse episode continued. There was a vigorous discussion between those who, like Gqoba, questioned the colonial thesis based on the idea of a "chiefs' plot". Philip of Gwaba argued that there would have been no sense for amaXhosa to have destroyed crops and stock if they had been preparing for war, as had been claimed by among others, Mrs C Brownlee.²⁰³ Philip also claimed, in an article entitled "Impendulo ngoNongqawuse"²⁰⁴ (a response to Nongqawuse), that the destruction of stock and crops was rather an act of God to destroy cattle which amaXhosa "worshipped".²⁰⁵ The debate on the Cattle Killing had a special significance beyond the topic itself. After thirty years of silence Africans came to face and discuss a tragic event in their history. For the first time a strong stand was made against a colonial interpretation of events. Gqoba took the lead, and offered another perspective. Up till then, South African historiography had been dominated by missionary and colonial perspectives. The debate on the Cattle Killing was an instance where an African perspective was put forward and publicly interrogated. Even more important was the fact that a spirit of enquiry had been aroused. "*Sisafuna ukhanyiselo*"²⁰⁶ (we are in need of further enlightenment), Tol'Ixalanga observed.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the African voice was being heard in historical debates, *Isigidimi* being the platform. However this voice seems to have had a limited impact. The

writings on African history were in siXhosa, and were confined to a small sector of Xhosa readers. It was not just a matter of language. In colonial society amaXhosa had little power. One of Gqoba's last contributions was to suggest that some of the articles on the Nonqawuse debate be published in *The Christian Express*, in English, for a wider audience. This does not seem to have happened. The African history initiative folded when *Isigidimi* ceased publication at the end of 1888.

Isigidimi gave Africans an opportunity to express their views on history beyond the shadow of missionaries. The bid to write African history, with the aim of eventually teaching it at schools, was a form of resistance that has not been given the attention it deserves. The tendency is to highlight the military struggle and define all else as accommodationist. Even though Gqoba and his colleagues operated from within the missionary domain, and even embraced missionary views on Xhosa history, they still were able to break new ground in their writing. They were able to use African convention as they produced their history. They also accessed evidence that had escaped the attention of earlier writers. The African history series published in *Isigidimi* also shows that Africanist thinking was beginning to manifest itself during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1865 Reverend Chalmers wrote an article in which he expressed concern about the imminent demise of "Kaffirs". Tiyo Soga's response to this revealed strong Africanist sentiments in which he showed his people as belonging to the broader African family. Challenging Chalmers, Soga argued that Africans had a history that went back to the days of Assyrians.²⁰⁷ He further observed that Africans as created by God, awaited fulfillment before they became extinct. He quoted the biblical text that: "Ethiopia shall soon stretch her hands to God".²⁰⁸ In Soga's argument Africans stretched across southern Africa and included those in north-east Africa. There were also those who through slavery were found in "West Indian islands, in Northern and Southern America, and in the South American Colonies of Spain and Portugal".²⁰⁹ Dwane observes that the Ethiopian movement of the 1880s showed a strong affinity to Soga's Africanist views.²¹⁰ It would appear as though during the 1880s there was search for unity across tribal divisions. In *Isigidimi* of September 1884 there appeared an article entitled "Imbumba Entsha".²¹¹ The writer reported on the formation of an association, the Stockenstrom Original Africander Association, which would bring together "zonke intlanga ezintsundu" (all African groups). The writer went on to express a hope that branches would be formed in places like the Colony, Transkei, Kimberley and Basutoland.²¹² When the organisation spread to other parts [of

southern Africa] it came to be named “Native South African Association”.²¹³ Odendaal discussed the formation of this association observing that the new association was political in nature.²¹⁴

Texts written in siXhosa have been underused by historians. The articles that appeared in *Isigidimi* and *Imvo* during the last quarter of the nineteenth century are important sources that have had a limited impact in mainstream historiography.²¹⁵ Researchers who have looked at nineteenth century newspapers are mainly concerned with journalism²¹⁶ and literary studies.²¹⁷ There are, however, a few historians who have used some of the documents of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Odendaal, in his *Vukani Bantu*,²¹⁸ relied mainly on Xhosa newspapers like *Imvo* and *Isigidimi* in tracing the growth of political mobilisation and protest politics in the eastern Cape at the end of the nineteenth century. Peires used two of Gqoba’s articles in his book *The Dead Will Arise*.²¹⁹ Peires, however did not pick up the full debate covered in the *Isigidimi* columns. Some of the articles in *Isigidimi* have been published in a collection put together by Mtuze and Opland.²²⁰

This chapter has focussed on history texts produced by African writers during the 1880s, a period of major social and political change in African communities. The African intelligentsia strove to express their aspirations through writing. Thus access to the press was crucial. John Tengo Jabavu took a lead in the struggle for press control, against missionaries who had enjoyed a monopoly. Jabavu was appointed editor of *Isigidimi* in 1881. Before his contract expired Jabavu resigned and founded an independent newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, in November 1884. *Isigidimi* was then taken over by William Gqoba as its new editor. For four years the two Xhosa newspapers existed side by side. While Jabavu used his paper as a vehicle for African political mobilisation, Gqoba was less involved in contemporary politics. He used his paper as a platform for general news on educational and religious matters. From the beginning of 1885 Gqoba wrote widely, publishing short stories and poems, including “Ingxoxo Enkulu Ngemfundo”, a poem of 1800 lines. Through this poem, Gqoba brought up issues that Africans were wrestling with during the 1880s, as well as writing about past events. The poem introduced Gqoba to the African community as a writer and historian. When a motion was tabled at an Umanyano Ngemfundo conference, that members should begin to write history books for schools, Gqoba was one of the four to be elected to a history committee. The other three were Ntsikana, Tyamzashe, and Mzimba. Between 1885 and 1888²²¹ a number of African

history articles were published in *Isigidimi* and one or two in *Imvo*. Some of the articles covered themes that had already been tackled in colonial history. In some instances they even followed approaches that had been adopted in missionary-colonial history. Writers like Gqoba and Ntsikana followed the approach of building Xhosa history around royalty by drawing a genealogical table. In writing about the history of abaMbo, Gqoba followed the colonial-missionary approach that emphasised the wars and chaos among African communities in the Thukela, Mfolozi and Mzinyathi region. In some accounts, however, new evidence was included. For example, the narrative on the Ndlambe-Ngqika conflict offered a new perspective when the point was made that Ndlambe had actually been instructed to *ngena* Mlawu's wife. The history series also included themes that had been overlooked in the writing of colonial history. The latter had focussed mainly on settler-indigenous conflict, as well as colonial political history. The writers of the history series encouraged debate and feedback from the broader African community. Thus, by 1888 there was a lively debate in *Isigidimi* on the Cattle Killing. On this topic, Gqoba broke a thirty year silence on the part of amaXhosa. AmaXhosa had the opportunity to question the colonial version of the event and to come up with their own side of the story. Reverend Pamla wrote an article on the history of amaXhosa and abaMbo, arguing that the two ethnic groups had a common ancestry. Pamla attacked colonial history and accused its writers of causing division among Africans. In his history of abaMbo Mzimba broke away from the theme of war and conflict which characterised earlier writings. Mzimba used *iziduko* as sources. He produced a history of various clans and broke with the tradition of collapsing diverse groups into one "Fingo" history. Historical articles in *Isigidimi* should be seen in the light of an Africanist element which called for unity among Africans in southern Africa. By 1888 there were calls in *Isigidimi* that the history articles be bound and made available as books in schools. The death of Gqoba in April 1888 dealt a blow to this initiative. When *Isigidimi* folded at the end of 1888 the production of African history also came to a temporary halt. The articles, written in siXhosa, had a circulation among siXhosa readers only. A hundred years later, the articles have still to be fully tapped by researchers.

1. W W Citashe, also known as Isaac William Wauchope, was an influential member of the African intelligentsia during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century. For further comment on this poem and the context in which it was written see Opland and Mtuze (eds), *Izwi Labantu*, 85.

2. Citashe to the editor, "Inkosi Zakwa Xosa", *Isigidimi*, 1 June 1882.
3. The irony of Citashe's pacifist call lies in the fact that he was one of those who died when the ship Mendi sunk off the French coast in 1917. He had served as an army chaplain during World War I. For reference to Citashe/Wauchope see N.Clothier, *Black Valour: The South African Native Labour Contingent, 1916 - 1918 and the Sinking of the 'Mendi'* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1987), 19 - 20 and 96 - 98.
4. This poem is also used by de Kock at the opening of his second chapter. See de Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 29.
5. Les Switzer, "Introduction: South Africa's Alternative Press in Perspective", in Les Switzer (ed), *South Africa's Alternative Press: Voices of Protest and Resistance, 1880 - 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 26.
6. Andre Odendaal, "African Political Mobilisation in the Eastern Cape, 1880 - 1919" (PhD. Thesis, Cambridge University, 1983).
7. For example see Tim Couzens, "Widening Horizons of African Literature 1870 - 1900", in Landeg White and Tim Couzens (ed), *Literature and Society in South Africa* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1984), 60 - 80.
8. For a brief account of the development of written Xhosa literature see Jeff Opland, "Xhosa Literature in Newspapers 1837 - 1909", in Johannes A Smit, Johart van Wyk and Jean Philippe Wade (eds), *Rethinking South African Literary History* (Durban: Y Press, 1996), 110 - 128.
9. See a call by Mama to Africans to begin to explore other occupations, like judges, lawyers, as well as magistrates. See *Isigidimi*, 1 December 1879.
10. For a comment on the Ethiopian Movement and Tile at the beginning of the twentieth century see "Ethiopianism and the Bantu Race", *Izwi Labantu*, 23 September 1902.
11. Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu: The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1984), 23.
12. A number of biographies have been written of African churchmen who dominated the religious, educational, and sometimes even the political scene in the eastern Cape during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, such as Bokwe, and Rubusana. See Mqayi, *U-Bomi Bom-Fundisi u John Knox Bokwe*. For Rubusana see Songezo J Ngqongqo, "Mpilo Walter Benson Rubusana 1858 - 1910: the Making of the New African Elite in the Eastern Cape" (MA Thesis, Fort Hare University, 1997).

13. The name Native Educational Association was not a correct translation of Umanyano Ngemfundo. The latter could have been better translated as "Unity through Education".
14. It had been started in 1877 by John Gawler who was supported by MK Mtakati. See *Isigidimi*, 1 August 1885, 58.
15. Couzens, "Widening Horizons of African Culture", 67 - 68.
16. Odendaal, "African Political Mobilisation in the Eastern Cape 1880 - 1910", 59.
17. There were regular and influential correspondents like uHadi Waseluhlangeni, whose contributions livened and informed debates on issues that affected African communities. Education was one such theme that writers and readers often wrestled with. For example see uHadi's contribution to a debate on education in "Uhadi Nemicimbi Yelizwe", *Isigidimi*, 1 March 1884.
18. For a short biography of Reverend Elijah Makiwane see J Stewart, *Lovedale: Past and Present, A Register of Two Thousand Names* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1887), 163 - 164. See also RHW Shepherd, "Reverend Elijah Makiwane", in *Bantu Literature and Life* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1955), 70 - 73.
19. A full biography of Jabavu still has to be written. His son's work has been dismissed as hagiography. See DDT Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu: Editor of Imvo Zabantsundu 1884 - 1921* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1922). Also see a short biography in Shepherd, "John Tengo Jabavu", *Bantu Literature and Life*, 90 - 93.
20. Opland, "Xhosa Literature in Newspapers 1837 - 1909", 119.
21. For short biographical notes on Gqoba see Stewart, *Lovedale*, 22 - 23. Also "In Memoriam", *The Christian Express*, 1 May 1888, 65.
22. Mbulelo Mzamane, "The Uses of Traditional Oral Forms in Black South African Literature", in White and Couzens, *Literature and Society*, 148.
23. Some of the texts were specifically on Xhosa history. Increasingly however writers were constructing a broad African history which went beyond narrow ethnic lines.
24. Jabavu was born at Healdtown and his early schooling was at the hands of Methodists. Indeed, he was a leading Methodist throughout his life. As a young man he expressed his devotion and attachment to the church when he was threatened with censure for his political writings. He wrote, "I'd sooner scatter to the four winds any political creed I own than see the ties which tie me to my church severed". See Jabavu to Briggs, MS 15281, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

25. AmaJili fall under amaKhuze. Their praises run- Jili, Masingawothi, Maseng' asileke. See Ncwana, *Amanqakwana Ngeminombo*, 61.
26. Jabavu seems to have come up against missionary censorship over a long time. As early as 1879 he was writing a letter to a certain Reverend A Briggs, promising him to desist from "contributing political articles to colonial newspapers". See Jabavu to Briggs, MS 15281, Cory.
27. See Leonard D Ngcongco, "Imvo Zabantsundu and Cape Native Policy 1884 - 1902" (MA Thesis, UNISA, 1974),36.
28. Les Switzer, "The Beginnings of African Protest Journalism at the Cape", in Switzer (ed), *South Africa's Alternative Press*, 60.
29. Ngcongco, "Imvo Zabantsundu", 33.
30. De Kock cites an instance when Jabavu argued that the African form of government was based on representation. See De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 108.
31. Odendaal, "African Political Mobilisation", 119.
32. Switzer, "The Beginnings of African Protest Journalism", 61.
33. Njabulo Ndebele, *Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Essays on South African Literature and Culture* (Johannesburg: COSAWU, 1991), 77.
34. See Jabavu to Walters, BC 715, A.5. University of Cape Town Libraries.
35. Ngcongco, "Imvo Zabantsundu", 42.
36. L Switzer, "Introduction: South Africa's Alternative Press in Perspective", 25.
37. See discussions on the African past at the Umanyano Ngenfundo conference. See "Intlanganiso Yomanyano Ngenfundo", *Isigidimi*, 1 August 1885, 59.
38. See Williams, "*Umfundisi*" *A Biography of Tiyo Soga* 1829 - 1871, 96 - 99.
39. Khabela, *Tiyo Soga*, 33.
40. See Tiyo Soga's Letters, Howard Pim Library, Fort Hare University.
41. See Opland and Mtuze, "Dukwana Ntsikana, Endlwini kaThixo", in *Izwi Labantu*, 66 - 68.

42. William Kobe Ntsikana was the son of the legendary Ntsikana. During the 1880s he was an elder of the Free Church at Pirie Mission. He had gone to school at Lovedale from 1864 to 1867. For further reading see Stewart, *Lovedale: Past and Present*, 291. Kobe Ntsikana's name also appears in the list of the members of the Christian commune that was made up of Ntsikana's followers who lived together after their founder's death in 1821. See Opland and Mtuze, *Izwe*, 39.
43. See "Intlanganiso Yomanyano Ngemfundo", *Isigidimi*, 1 August 1885, 58.
44. The following were elected: Rev. Mzimba, Messrs. W W Gqoba, Peter Tyamzashe, and W K Ntsikana. Jabavu was not elected to the sub-committee.
45. Peter Tyamzashe, "Isimo Sama-Xosa angapambili nesangoku", *Isigidimi*, 1 August 1885, 58 - 59.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. At the time Mzimba was elected to the African history committee he was an ordained minister of the Free Church of Scotland, the first African to assume that position. Mzimba was a descendant of early converts at Burnshill Mission. For further reading on Mzimba see Stewart, *Lovedale: Past and Present*, 251 - 252.
49. For example see "Izifundo ZeSabata" *Isigidimi*, 1 October 1885, 75. Also 2 November 1885, 85.
50. Opland and Mtuze counted one thousand one hundred and fifty lines. See Opland and Mtuze, *Izwi Labantu*, 92.
51. See L Dale, "Heaven of Civilisation", *Imvo*, 24 November 1884.
52. "Umanyano Ngemfundo", 2 February 1885.
53. *Ibid.*
54. This was a Xhosa translation, by Tiyo Soga, of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.
55. *Izibongo* (poetry) was an important oral form in African communities. It was a medium for the reconstruction of history. It was also used to provide running commentaries on current affairs. See Opland, *Xhosa Oral Poetry*.
56. Gqoba, "Ingxoxo", *Isigidimi*, 1 January 1885, 4.

57. *Ibid.*, 2 March 1885, 20.
58. *Ibid.*, 1 April 1885, 27.
60. *Ibid.*
61. Bukazana mountains are, according to Kropf, two peaks between the heads of Tyhume and Keiskamma Rivers. See A Kropf, *A Kafir-English Dictionary*, (second edition) (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1913), 498.
62. *Ibid.*, 1 May 1885, 35.
63. Gqoba, "Ingxoxo", *Isigidimi*, 1 May 1885, 35.
64. For a discussion of taxes and tributes paid among amaXhosa see Soga, *The Ama-Xosa*, 32 - 34.
65. Methodist missionaries during the late 1820s and 1830s linked "imfecane" or "Ficani" with Matiwane. Ayliff referred to Matiwane as a "Ficani chief". See Ayliff Papers, MS 15 276, Cory Library. On the other hand amaBhaca, who were Ncapayi's followers were also referred to as "Ficani". See the journal of Rev. Boyce in Steedman, *Wanderings and Adventures*, ii, 269.
66. "Ingxoxo", *Isigidimi*, 1 June 1885, 44.
67. "Ingxoxo", V1, *Isigidimi*, 1 July 1888, 54.
68. For a short account of the ambush and death of Stockenstrom (senior) see Mostert, *Frontiers*, 384 - 385.
69. The poet is probably referring to an incident when Jacob Cuyler was ambushed by amaNdlambe in December 1811, but survived. See Ben MacLennan, *A Proper Degree of Terror: John Graham and the Cape's Eastern Frontier* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986), 100 - 101.
70. "Ingxoxo", *Isigidimi*, 1 August 1885, 61 - 62.
71. *Ibid.*, 62.
72. Khabela, *Tiyo Soga*, 5.
73. "Incwadi Entsha Yengoma", *Isigidimi*, 1 September 1885, 65.
74. John Knox Bokwe (compiler), *Amaculo Ase Lovedale* (third edition) (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1910).

75. *Amaculo Ase Lovedale* will not be discussed in this study as the focus is on historical texts that were published in *Isigidimi* and *Imvo*. The songs need a deeper analysis for which there will not be enough space in this study.
76. "Imbali Yohlanga Oluntsundu", *Isigidimi*, 1 October 1885.
77. Translation: We appeal to our sages to tell us our history. We wish to hear about Nguni history. We also would like to know something about the history of abaMbo. We would like to have clarity on the confusion about the word "Abambo", which happens not to refer to all amaMfengu, as some would like it to be the case.
78. Translation: Our language has depth, it is explicit, grounded [and] is rich. It is in no way inferior to the European languages.
79. *Isigidimi*, 1 October 1885.
80. For a full text from where the excerpt is taken see "A National Newspaper" in Williams, *The Journal and Selected Writings of the Reverend Tiyo Soga*, 151-153.
81. See "Amabal'engwe", *Isigidimi*, 1 April 1887. No issues of *Isigidimi* published in 1886 have been found.
82. "Death of Noyi, One of the Earliest Converts of the Kaffir Mission", *The Kaffir Express*, 1 September 1872, 2.
83. Noyi could have been born either at the beginning of the nineteenth century or at the end of the eighteenth century.
84. "Ukububa kuka Maqoma", *Isigidimi*, 1 October 1873, 1.
85. *Ibid.*
86. "Idlaka likaSoga Umfo KaJotelo", *Isigidimi*, 1 February 1884, 5.
87. John Muir Vimbe, "Ingxabano Ka Ndlambe on Ngqika", *Isigidimi*, 1 September 1885, 70.
88. John Muir Vimbe was a convert of the Burnshill Mission. He was one of the first students to attend Lovedale when it opened in 1841. For a long time he worked with missionaries like Reverend Laing at Burnshill as a teacher. For reports on some of his work see "Minutes of Caffraria Presbytery", MS 9039, Cory Library. See also Stewart, *Lovedale: Past and Present*, 376.

89. The praises of Mntakwenda are Leta, Libele, Kwangeshe, Nkomo-zimnyama, Gqush'egqubeni. See Wandile Kuse, "The Traditional Praise Poetry of the Xhosa: IzidukoIzibongo" (MA Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1973), 20.
90. Vimbe gave no date for Hintsá's visit. The likely date is mid-1790s as Barrow, who visited Ngqika in 1797, found him *inkosi* by then. See Barrow, *Travels into the Interior*, i, 120.
91. Soga strongly denies that the custom of *ukungena* was practised by amaXhosa and attributes it to abaMbo. See Soga *The Ama-Xosa*, 139. There are, however, examples of this custom even among amaXhosa.
92. Vimbe, "Ingxabano", *Isigidimi*, 1 September 1885, 70.
93. Wm D. Soga, "Imbali Yenkosikazi U Sutu", *Isigidimi*, 1 December 1885.
94. Sutu, the mother of Sandile and therefore the Queen mother of amaRharhabe was a Thembu princess.
95. Cumming, "Mother of Sandili and her daughter", *The Christian Express*, 1 September 1880.
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Ibid.*
98. Though Soga had a strong missionary background, through the influence of his father, Tiyo Soga, he was conscious of his African background.
99. As an mThembu woman she was the traditional bearer of the heir to the throne.
100. Van der Kemp in his journal made repeated references to Ngqika's mother, MamThembu, and sister at Ngqika's court. Thereafter there was little reference to women as political activists.
101. Sutu's husband, Ngqika, had died in 1829.
102. Stapleton makes a brief reference to Notonto, the mother of Maqoma. See Timothy J Stapleton, *Maqoma: Xhosa Resistance to Colonial Advance 1798 - 1873* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1994), 21-22.
103. W W G, "Imbali Yama-Xosa", *Isigidimi*, 1 January 1887.
104. See the discussion on the place of creation stories in history in chapter 4.
105. See *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*, 319.

106. W W G, "Imbali Yama Xosa", *Isigidimi*, 1 January 1887, 5.
108. On a discussion of Tshawe in Xhosa history see chapter 4.
109. See Holden, *The Past and Future*, 142.
110. Coincidentally this was Shaka's father's name as well.
111. W W G, "Imbali Yama Xosa", *Isigidimi*, 1 January 1887, 5.
112. The account of the birth of Phalo is related in Theal, *Compendium of South African History and Geography* (second edition), 119.
113. For a discussion of the various princes and their placements as *amaxhiba* in their grandfathers' Houses, see "Rev. H H Dugmore's Papers", in Maclean, *A Compendium*, 19-20.
114. Soga's detailed genealogical table attempts to represent the relations in the complicated Xhosa royal genealogy. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 80.
115. For a short history of amaGcaleka and *izibongo* see Rubusana, *Zemk'inkomo*, 226-240.
116. For details on the outbreak of that war see Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 254-257.
117. Collins, "Journal of a Tour", in D Moodie, *The Record*, Part V, 1808-1819, 9.
118. See Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 5-6.
119. In his genealogical table of amaXhosa Soga depicts Gando as the direct descendant of Ngconde. Soga does not include amaGqunukhwebe in his table. See Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 80. Wilson includes neither amaGando (amaKwayi) nor amaKhwane (amaGqunukhwebe). See Wilson, "The Cape Nguni" in Wilson and Thompson, *A History of South Africa to 1870*, i, 88.
120. W W G, "Imbali YamaXosa", *Isigidimi*, 1 January 1887, 7.
121. The story of Noyi, one of the early converts is discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis.
122. Okpewho, *Myth in Africa*, 68.
123. *Ibid.*
124. See W W G, "Imbali Yase Mbo", *Isigidimi*, 1 April 1887, 30.

125. Captain Feltman Bikitsha had led amaMfengu in assisting colonial armies in their fight against amaXhosa during the War of Ngcayechibi 1877-1878. So, within ten years Gqoba was calling on the leader of amaMfengu to join him in the writing of the history of amaMfengu. See Odendaal, "African Political Mobilisation", 80 - 81.
126. These were two leading men among amaMfengu. There was a Mr Mazamisa who worked in a store at Hlobo. See Stewart, *Lovedale: Past and Present*, 196.
127. W W G, "Imbali YaseMbo", *Isigidimi*, 2 May 1887.
128. Translation: I am distressed that such an important and sad history has no one who is taking it upon herself/himself to write it down even those who actually belong to the families that dispersed. Through this I am appealing to the sages who are still alive to come forward. Personally I have already run out of ideas.
129. This is the motif where a future leader grows up among strangers, usually his mother's people, and then returns later to assume power.
130. See John Ayliff, "History of the Wars Causing the Dispersion of the Fingoes," MS 15 544, Cory Library, 2- 4.
131. Increasingly, scholars are arguing that the power of Shaka was not based on dissolving groups and absorbing them into Zuluism, rather of leaving the groups as they were and creating "client polities" or "satellite kingdoms" from which he exacted tribute and recognition. See John Wright, "Political Transformations in the Thukela-Mzimkhulu Region in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries" in Hamilton (ed) *The Mfecane Aftermath*, 171 - 177.
132. W W G "Imbali Yase Mbo", 2, *Isigidimi*, 2 May 1887, 37. Gqoba was mistaken to associate Mbholompo with amaMpondo. It was abaThembu who were assisted by British forces against amaNgwane in 1828 at Mbholompo.
133. "Imbali Yase Mbo", 3, *Isigidimi*, 1 June 1887, 46.
134. W W G "Imbali Yase Mbo", *Isigidimi*, 1 June 1887, 46. For example, when Elijah Makiwane and Mpambani Mzimba trained for their ministry they were examined on Scottish church history. See "Minutes of Caffrarian Presbytery", MS 9041, January 1875, Cory Library.
135. *Ibid.*
136. *Ibid.*
137. Elizabeth Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of Oral History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 8.

153. The nickname Nyengane which amaXhosa gave to Van der Kemp, literally means granite. This could have referred to his stubbornness or perhaps his toughness. The history of Nyengane had appeared in a number of texts before. See, for example, 'Ngembali Yokuqaleka Kokwazeka kwelizwi likaTixo' in Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History", 45 - 48. English translation, "Tradition respectation (sic) the first intelligible acquaintance with God's Word by the Kafirs" (translated by Ayliff), Kaye, "Kafir Legends and History", 49 - 54.
154. For a biography of Pamla see George Pamla, *Amabalana Ngobomi Buka Reverend Charles Pamla* (Palmerton: Palmerton Mission Press, 1934).
155. C Pamla, "Ama Xosa naba Mbo", *Imvo*, 27 April 1887.
156. This had been an argument strongly put forward by, among others, Reverend Ayliff. See "Ayliff Papers", MS 15380, Cory Library, Rhodes University.
157. Pamla, "Ama Xosa naba Mbo".
158. *Ibid.*
159. Unfortunately Jabavu's initiative was snubbed and at its annual conference Umanyano Ngemfundo refused to pass the constitution that Jabavu had proposed. See "Intlanganiso Yomanyano Ngemfundo", *Isigidimi*, 1 August 1887, 60.
160. B Mama, 'Ukuzalana Kwethu', *Imvo*, 31 August 1887.
161. Pamla, *Amabalana Ngobomi*, 2 - 3.
162. This mission station was founded in 1827 by Reverend Shrewsbury who named it Butterworth. See Shrewsbury, *Memorial of the Reverend William J Shrewsbury*, 240 - 277.
163. "Ayliff Papers", MS 15544, Cory Library.
164. "D'Urban Papers", 1, MS 2033, Cory Library.
165. Pamla, *Amabalana NgoBomi Buka Reverend Charles Pamla*, 6.
166. Ngcongco, "Imvo Zabantsundu", 42.
167. P J Mzimba, "Imbali Yase Mbo", *Isigidimi*, 2 January 1888, 5.
168. *Ibid.*
169. J Ayliff, "History of the Wars Producing the Dispersion", MS 15276, Cory Library.

170. "D'Urban Papers", 1, MS 2033.
171. J Ayliff, "To His Excellency Sir Geo Cathcart - Governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope", MS 15 543, Cory Library, Rhodes University.
172. Mzimba, "Imbali YaseMbo", 5.
173. "Imbali Yase Mbo: No. 2", *Isigidimi*, 1 February 1888, 14.
174. AmaReledwane appeared in Ayliff's original "tribes" as falling under amaHlubi. See "Durban Papers", MS 2033, Cory Library. Also see DDT Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1952), 42.
175. Mr Myoli of Grahamstown, of the Maduna clan, pointed out that his clan still uses a sheep for family religious ceremonies because of their Sotho roots. Myoli interviewed by N Tisani, July 1992, Grahamstown.
176. Mzimba, "Imbali Yase Mbo", 15.
177. In Jabavu's collection of clan names, one of the praises of Msimanga is, "Abatwa (San) abalutuli". See Jabavu, *Imbumba Yamanyama*, 43.
178. Ntsikana used the name Makanda, which means stamper, and also seems to have been the correct Xhosa name as opposed to colonial names like Makana, Nxele or Lynx.
179. Ntsikana, "Imbali kaMakanda", *Isigidimi*, 1 February 1888, 13.
180. *Ibid.*
181. For a discussion of Makana/Nxele's religious teachings see Tisani, "Nxele and Ntsikana: A Critical Study of the Religious Outlooks of two Nineteenth Century Xhosa Prophets and their Consequences for Xhosa Christian Practice in the Eastern Cape", 167 - 173.
182. See Bennie, *Eyesibini Inncwadana Yokufunda*, 103.
183. Ntsikana, "Imbali ka Mkanda", 14.
184. For example see Bennie, *Eyesibini Inncwadana Yokufunda*, 95 - 103.
185. *Ibid.*, 95 - 97.
186. Shepherd, "Ntsikana", in *Bantu Literature and Life*, 18.

187. Khabela, *Tiyo Soga*, 48.
188. *Ibid.*, 55.
189. Bokwe, *Ntsikana*, 8.
190. Ntsikana, “‘Imbali Ka Makanda”, 13.
191. W W G, “Isizathu Sokuxelwa Kwenkomo NgoNongqause”, 1, *Isigidimi*. 1 March 1888, 22.
192. For an in-depth discussion of the Cattle Killing Movement see Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*.
193. For example, when the people who had been sent by *iinkosi* went to the river to listen to the voices, huge rocks from a precipice started rolling. Also the people perceived what looked like an army at sea which did not approach the shore. Nongqawuse claimed to have got a message from the army telling the people that they should slaughter their cattle. In some instances people believed that they saw horns of cattle that were rising, and even heard their lowing.
194. W W G “Isizathu”, 1, *Isigidimi*, 1 March 1888, 22.
195. Peires contends that there was neither a “Chiefs’ Plot” nor Grey’s Plot. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, preface.
196. M Kinass, “Imbali ZabaNtsundu”, *Isigidimi*, 2 April 1888, 29.
197. Translation: These accounts of national history that tell of our national links and also about our royalty are really exciting, which excitement runs through my body, and I am made to feel human, and stop being like a baboon.
198. Kinass, “Imbali”, 29.
199. See “Umanyano Ngemfundo”, *Isigidimi*, 1 May 1888, 36.
200. “Umanyano Ngemfundo”, *Isigidimi*, 1 May 1888, 39.
201. Gqoba died a week after the death of Mr Govan Koboka, another outstanding member of the Lovedale community. See “Imiphanga Yase Lovedale”, *Isigidimi*, 1 May 1888, 33 - 35.
202. M K M Mtakati, “William Gqoba”, *Imvo*, 16 May 1888.
203. Wm Philip, “Imbali KaNongqause”, *Isigidimi*, 1 May 1888, 40.
204. Philip, “Impendulo NgoNongqause”, *Isigidimi*, 1 June 1888, 46.

205. *Ibid.*
206. *Ibid.*
207. See Williams, *The Journal and Selected Writings*, 180.
208. *Ibid.*, 181.
209. *Ibid.*, 180.
210. S Dwane, *Ethiopianism and the Order of Ethiopia* (Cape Town: Creda Communications, 1999), 14.
211. "Imbumba Entsha", *Isigidimi*, 1 September 1884, 4.
212. *Ibid.*
213. *Ibid.*
214. Odendaal, "African Political Mobilisation", 89 - 90.
215. A few of the articles were reprinted in Rubusana. For example "Imfazwe KaTutula" by WKN and "Ukufika Kwe-Lizwi Kwa-Xosa" by Vimbe. See Rubusana, *Zemk'inkomo Magwalandini*, 1-2, and 192 - 196.
216. For example, Switzer, *South Africa's Alternative Press*.
217. See White and Couzens, *Literature and Society in South Africa*.
218. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!* and "African Political Mobilisation".
219. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*.
220. See, for example an extract from W W Gqoba, "Ingxoxo enkulu ngemfundo" and W K Ntsikana, "Imbali Kagxuluwe kaGcagana" in Opland and Mtuze, *Izwi Labantu*, 92 - 97.
221. In my research I have not been able to trace any 1886 *Isigidimi* issues.

CHAPTER 8**CONCLUSION**

The writing of Xhosa history was a dynamic process that went through a number of phases during the nineteenth century. A variety of factors impacted on the production of Xhosa historical writing. These included century-long economic, social, and political developments in south-east Africa. From the end of the eighteenth century European travellers, then missionaries, and later colonial officials began producing written accounts which included Xhosa history. Each of these groups had certain understandings of what constituted the history of the indigenous people. They also operated from standpoints peculiar to their time and mission. Africans also participated in the writing of Xhosa history. The participation of Africans and Europeans brought together different conventions for the production of history. Xhosa history written during the nineteenth century is a product of African historiography as well as European historical methodology. At the beginning of the nineteenth century amaXhosa had a major input into the writing of their history as writers then depended on oral tradition. As amaXhosa gradually lost their independence, their contribution diminished. Missionaries and later colonial officials gradually became the key figures in the writing of Xhosa history. Certain historical themes became dominant in Xhosa historiography, some of which are identifiable throughout the nineteenth century. Others underwent shifts and changes in accordance with the changing world of amaXhosa. For the reconstruction of history in pre-literate societies scholars rely heavily on these early texts. Recent criticism of such texts has highlighted the impact European writers had on their production. Some scholars perceive these early texts as largely colonial productions that reflected the minds of the European writers. Such perceptions undermined the contribution and influence of indigenous people in the production of these texts.¹ Hamilton argues for an approach that recognises African participation in the production of these texts.² In addition, the degree of African input in the production of early African history was influenced by the changing power relations between the coloniser and the colonised.

When European colonists arrived in south-east Africa they established their own racial classification

of indigenous people. In colonial literature “Hottentots” and “Bushmen” were treated as distinctly different from “Kaffirs”. As writers began to produce Xhosa history they focussed on the people referred to as Kaffirs in colonial society. The institution of “chiefship”, especially the Tshawe dynasty became the core around which Xhosa history was written. IsiXhosa, which was “reduced”³ to a written form by missionaries, became a tool for creating a rigid ethnic identity for siXhosa-speakers.⁴ There were certain assumptions held by European. There was a view that autochthons had no history. Such thinking was in line with the notion of emptiness with which travellers and some colonists regarded the world of indigenous people.⁵ Thus these writers perceived their task as beginning from nothingness. They saw themselves as cutting through virgin forest. This apparent lack of history was however not consistent with the wealth of historical information which the writers were given by indigenous historians and informants. The writing of Xhosa history was a site of struggle between the settlers and the autochthons for the control of the African past. This was characterised, as in other areas of the anti-colonial struggle, by rejection and at times a merging of indigenous and European notions, concepts, and approaches.

A dominant theme through the various historiographical phases is that of Xhosa royalty. From the outset early European travellers identified Xhosa royals as key figures to make contact with. The travellers were transient figures who made superficial contact and presented brief histories of Xhosa royalty, whom they referred to as “Kaffir chiefs”. Sparrman made some vague references to “Pharoa”, otherwise Phalo, *kumkani* who died in 1775.⁶ Paterson’s report on a visit to *kumkani* Khawuta’s place was a better informed account of Xhosa royal history.⁷ Paterson wrote a short history of Phalo and his sons Gcaleka and Rharhabe.⁸ Paterson’s history also provided information on the sons of kings, internal conflicts, and the dispersal of Xhosa communities. Paterson’s analysis of Xhosa life under Khawuta marked the beginning of Xhosa social and economic history. Paterson painted the Xhosa monarch as a powerful figure. This was one of the earliest written texts to place Xhosa royalty at the centre of the polity. This would become an enduring theme in Xhosa history.

More substantial writing on Xhosa history was produced by four writers at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Their work forms the second phase of this study. All four centred their Xhosa

history around the lives of Xhosa monarchs and their sons. The writers presented different royal genealogical tables. These versions could have been due to differences between informants, or might have reflected diverse views on history among amaXhosa themselves. Van der Kemp, who interacted with amaXhosa for a longer period than any of his contemporary writers, produced a detailed history, albeit one riddled with mistakes and confusion. It is possible that Van der Kemp's writings were based on evidence from diverse informants. There were "Hottentot" interpreters on whom Van der Kemp relied for communication with amaXhosa. There were also Ngqika's *amaphakathi*, deserters from the colony, Ngqika himself, and his mother, MamThembu. In staying at Ngqika's place and coming under his wing Van der Kemp was exposed to a particular royal discourse. Contradictions in Van der Kemp's text may have reflected struggles at the royal court and the existence of diverse histories among the functionaries. Van der Kemp could also have made mistakes in recording the oral information that he was supplied with. The two Dutch writers, Lichtenstein and Alberti, as colonial administrators were keen to understand the royal past as a way of getting to understand Xhosa politics. It is thus not surprising that their historical accounts also centred on Xhosa royalty. Collins, who undertook extensive research during his travels, interviewing senior Xhosa royal figures, was able to present a better argued and clearer text than the other three. In his report about amaXhosa he placed the royal figures at the centre. Most of the writing on Xhosa royalty during the nineteenth century was built around the framework created by these writers.

In setting up stations next to *komkhulu* missionaries were exposed to the world of Xhosa royals as well as royal discourse. Like their predecessors, writers from mission stations structured their writings around the Xhosa dynasty. For Rev Kay's text on Xhosa history members of the royal family were the chief informants.⁹ The texts were also getting longer and more detailed. Kay's royal genealogy began with the beginning of life, with "Thlanga".¹⁰ Starting history from the very beginning of life appears to have been a convention in the production of history among many African groups. In Xhosa historical narrations remote and remembered times were collapsed together. It would appear that Kay's royal informant was claiming that the Xhosa royal family had a direct link with the earliest humans. Royal informants perceived the emphasis on their history as giving them an edge over other histories within Xhosa society.¹¹

Centrality of the royal theme in Xhosa history during the nineteenth century was constant and thus ensured continuity over a century. However, attitudes and perceptions about royal figures were constantly changing. Such changes can be attributed mainly to the growing conflict between the colonisers and the autochthons. Moreover, in some missionary quarters there was increasing disillusionment at the slow pace at which amaXhosa were responding to the Good News and the lack of support missionaries were receiving from royalty. This resulted in a change of attitude among certain missionaries towards amaXhosa and *iinkosi*. The negative image of Hintsa created by Methodist missionaries exemplifies the shift that had taken place in the minds of missionaries towards Xhosa royalty. This was different from the writings of earlier writers who had portrayed royal figures like Ngqika as “noble savages”, brave, handsome, and honourable. Some of the descriptions of Hintsa were similar to the images of Shaka Zulu who was portrayed in a negative light by the Natal “traders” after 1825.¹² The writing of *Iziqwenge Zembali YamaXosa Ezishicilelweyo* by a Xhosa historian, Robert Balfour Noyi, in 1838, can be seen as a reversal of the negative attitude that missionaries had depicted towards royals like Hintsa, Sandile, and Maqoma.¹³ Noyi was a Xhosa convert who had been baptised at Tyhume in 1824. He worked with missionaries, especially Rev Bennie. Although Noyi also made the royal theme central in his writing, he nonetheless adopted a different approach. He wrote about *kumkani* Tshiwo, about whom little had been recorded before. He represented Tshiwo as a humane ruler who strove for law and order in his kingdom. Noyi told how Tshiwo had looked after the destitute in his kingdom.¹⁴ Tshiwo was also depicted as a ruler who sometimes consulted women on national issues.¹⁵ Noyi also recounted how Tshiwo had two senior councillors, who had served him faithfully, assimilated into the royal rank.¹⁶ Although this account was still about the strengthening of the royal house, Noyi’s text gave an account of Xhosa expansion through peaceful absorption rather than war.

Rev Dugmore was another writer with a missionary background who wrote a Xhosa history centred on royalty.¹⁷ Dugmore concentrated on the different sub-houses within the Tshawe House, presenting short histories of the leading royal figures of the time. Dugmore augmented his text with a much longer genealogical table depicting the ruling house as well as supporting houses. The name of Xhosa at the head of the table, followed by that of Tshawe, appeared for the first time in a

genealogy. These two names had not appeared in Kay's detailed genealogical table even though he claimed that the son of Gcaleka had been his informant.¹⁸ The continued pre-eminence of royal history could have been due to evidence supplied by royal apologists. This was inevitable as missionaries always attached themselves to royalty. On the other hand at a time of increasing military conflict between the colonisers and the Africans, the Tshawe House, which was then in power, needed to strengthen its position by giving their progenitor a key place in the genealogical table. Dugmore's narrative included the history of amaGqunukhwebe, mentioning how a Gqunukhwebe leader, Khwane, was assimilated into Tshawe royalty. This narrative could have been presented by amaGqunukhwebe themselves with the encouragement of Methodist missionaries. AmaGqunukhwebe would have wanted to affirm their claim to royal status which seems to have been at times challenged by amaTshawe.¹⁹ On the other hand Methodist missionaries had obtained a strong foothold among amaGqunukhwebe through the conversion of their prince, Kama. They would have been keen to depict Kama as a royal figure because he had embraced Christianity. They probably hoped that a model Christian prince would have an impact on other Ngqika and Ndlambe princes.

Texts in the mid-nineteenth-century Kaye collection were mainly based on Xhosa traditions. Some texts carried accounts of specific events about royal figures. One recounted the overthrow of Cirha and the rise of the Tshawe dynasty, suggesting a direct line between the Xhosa rulers of the nineteenth century and the legendary Tshawe. It is remarkable that this tradition about Tshawe was only recorded for the first time in the mid-nineteenth century. This could have been another Tshawe strategy to strengthen their political position in the wider Xhosa community. This was necessary because groups like amaGqunukhwebe, and even amaMfengu since 1835, were receiving missionary support as well as favourable treatment from the colonial authorities. In one of the traditions collected by Kaye reference was made to the existence of independent *izizwe* (nations), whose history went back before the rise of Tshawe. This implied that there were other sectors in Xhosa society which had independent and separate histories.

After the tragic events of the 1850s amaXhosa were left broken,²⁰ and the hold of the coloniser was

strengthened. History became a tool to reinforce colonial rule. Colonial policies pursued during the governorship of George Grey were superimposed on Xhosa institutions and history. Judicial policy was implemented through using *iinkosi*. Under the new dispensation *iinkosi* lost their right to collect fines. In addition *iinkosi* were to exercise their authority in collaboration with a magistrate who would serve as an adviser and assessor. *Iinkosi*, as members of the Tshawe family, with a history that had been written since the beginning of the nineteenth century, were being sucked into the colonial machine as pawns. Grey's strategy was to soften the loss of judicial authority which had been enjoyed by *iinkosi* by letting them continue to occupy their judicial seats, though emptied of authority. Grey and his colonial administrators produced a handbook based on Xhosa legal and social history to inform those who were to institute the new order. Certain aspects of Xhosa social life were deemed barbaric by Grey, and some practices were used as pretexts for interfering with Xhosa institutions. Members of the Tshawe House, whose history had been projected to the centre of Xhosa history and had also gained prominence in colonial texts, were drawn in as co-implementers of the colonial system.

Holden was another mid-nineteenth century writer who produced history to inform and justify British imperialism. His book, *The Past and Future of Kaffir Races*²¹, was the first to provide "tribal" histories of indigenous groups in south-east Africa. These he based on the royal genealogical tables of abaThembu, amaMpondo and amaMpondomise. In colonial writing by the mid-nineteenth century, south-east Africans had been packaged into tribal groups with royal families at the centre. The royal theme had been the basis for the crystallisation of these "tribes". The writing of "tribal" histories of the four groups also meant the marginalisation of the histories of other groups in the region that did not belong to the big four. Groups like amaBomvana, amaQwathi, amaXesibe were marginalised. For the British imperialists, the identification of political units with their own royal families around which their histories were produced, facilitated the extension of British rule. Colonial officials, could work with identifiable political units. Royal informants had always played a key role in the production of royal histories. The interest of writers in royal histories had led to the exclusion of other histories. AmaXhosa had been greatly weakened by the tragedies of the 1850s. They were in no position to resist Grey's corrosive policies. It appears that some Xhosa royal figures

began to compete with one another over access to Grey's 'largesse'. The Xhosa political and social system, built on history and tradition, was collapsing as one junior *inkosi*, like Phatho, was for a moment being made the political equal of Sandile. Holden's ranking of the "tribal" groups may have been influenced by a desire to accord seniority to those groups that had been co-operative with the British. It is also possible that royal informants, representing different dynasties, came up with evidence to prove that their genealogies were older and more authentic than others.

Theal based most of his historical writing on works that had been produced by earlier writers. In his Xhosa history the royal theme was also central. For his royal genealogy he seems to have combined the Kay and Dugmore versions. In his table he included Malangana, who only appeared in Kay's list, while the rest was similar to Dugmore's table. But Theal's Xhosa history was also based on a number of traditions about royal figures. He recorded the story of the rise of Tshawe which had appeared in the Kaye collection, although the two versions were slightly different.²² The story of Phalo, who was born after the death of his father Tshiwo, was recorded for the first time.²³ The loss of political independence by amaXhosa and other groups during the second half of the nineteenth century saw an increase in the number of traditions about the past. As the royal houses were staking claims to seniority, they came up with greater details on their past and also produced histories that would support their claims. In the second phase of his writing Theal sought to prove that amaXhosa were recent arrivals who had no legitimate claim to the land west of the Kei River. Through a selective use of Portuguese texts Theal built an argument that denied the presence of amaXhosa in south-east Africa during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. He claimed that Portuguese shipwreck survivors had made no reference to Tshawe, nor had they met any members of the Tshawe House. Theal's thesis was based on the movement and location of the descendants of Tshawe and he equated that with the movement of amaXhosa.

When African writers began producing histories during the 1880s they also followed the tradition of highlighting Xhosa royalty. By then the history of the Tshawe dynasty had become synonymous with Xhosa history. But Gqoba and his colleagues also brought in new ideas. They produced additional information on the history of the junior Tshawe houses. In writing the history of abaMbo

Gqoba echoed the approach that had been taken by missionary writers like Ayliff. In depicting the history of the people in the Thukela- Mfolozi region Gqoba painted a picture of military conflict and destruction. Rev Mzimba, however, broke away from the royal theme in writing the history of amaMfengu. He used evidence from *iziduko* and was able to trace the history of commoner clans and families.²⁴ Another writer of the time, Pamla, sought to bridge the division between the “Kaffirs” and the “Fingoes” and other groups by providing common ancestors for them all.²⁵ Some African writers were using history to unify the different tribal groups that had evolved during the nineteenth century. The African historians produced and published their articles in siXhosa. Their circulation was limited to a Xhosa readership. That also curtailed the impact their initiative could have had in the writing of history during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

A noticeable feature of colonial Xhosa historiography during the nineteenth century is the good/evil binary. In the different phases of Xhosa historiography, the portrayal of amaXhosa shifted from the positive to the negative. At the beginning of the nineteenth century “Kaffirs” were portrayed as “a fine race of men...tall, stout, muscular, well made, elegant figures.”²⁶ In the writings of Barrow and Lichtenstein Ngqika, the young son of Mlawu of the Tshawe House, was the very epitome of a “noble savage”, described as intelligent. AmaXhosa were seen by Europeans as being at a higher level of civilisation than other African groups as they were cultivators and pastoralists. They also had an identifiable political system centred on “chiefs”. On the other hand the Khoisan were the “depredators”, the enemy of the herders. The early writers were silent on the history of the Khoisan, preferring to produce Xhosa history. In the second phase, from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the 1820s, there was a noticeable shift. Although the “Bushmen” were still a nuisance, the colonial writers began to identify other “depredators” from within the “Kaffir” group. ImiDange, amaMbalu, and amaNdlambe²⁷ were portrayed as hostile groups while Ngqika was the good “Kaffir” with whom the English could co-operate; he was even declared the paramount chief of the “Kaffirs”. After Rev Kay, Young, and Davis visited Ndlambe in 1826, they referred to him as “the celebrated schelm”²⁸ who had spread terror on the frontier.

The good/evil dichotomy is discernible in mission texts on Xhosa history. During the early 1820s the

missionaries wrote positively about the indigenous groups among whom they worked.²⁹ Initially, from the early 1820s evil was embodied in a people who were called “Ficane”.³⁰ These were presented as marauders and “depredators” who threatened African communities as well as the colony. AbaThembu were said to have been harassed by the “Ficane” during the late 1820s.³¹ In his journal Shaw mentioned the threat posed to the colony and “Cafferland” by “Ficane” who were refugees from the interior.³² In 1830 Rev Boyce identified Ncapayi of amaBhaca as the “Ficani Chief”.³³ According to Ayliff the cycle of violence that engulfed south-east Africa was ignited by Shaka when he attacked Matiwane, who then became a “Ficani Chief”.³⁴ However, the war of 1835 turned the attention of some missionaries like Ayliff, Dugmore, and colonists like Godlonton, together with Harry Smith, on to amaXhosa who were now represented as evil. Good Africans, who were provided with a history that separated them from amaXhosa, came into being and were known as Fingoes. The missionaries were once again at the forefront in the creation of the “Fingo”. These were mainly people who had attached themselves to mission stations. Some of these “Fingoes” were amaXhosa who opted for a Fingo identity and history. After their “liberation” in May 1835 “Fingoes” attached themselves to the colonial government and put themselves at their service.³⁵ The creation of the “Fingo” people was consolidated by the production of a “Fingo” history. The “Kaffirs” were represented as “depredators”, plunderers, and thieves. The image of “bad Kaffir” was accorded particularly to royal figures like Hintsa, Maqoma, and Sandile.

But the most celebrated pair that represented good and evil in missionary writings were Ntsikana and Makana/Nxele.³⁶ The two Xhosa men represented different Xhosa responses to Christianity at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Through their teachings, they both commanded followings among their people. However, the missionaries condemned the teachings of Makana/Nxele, who insisted that amaXhosa should not give up their culture on converting to Christianity. Makana/Nxele also fought to rid his country of the threat posed by European settlers when he led amaXhosa in a military attack against the British in 1819. Ntsikana’s conversion included a rejection of those cultural practices that were frowned upon by missionaries. His orthodox Christian outlook received approval and support from the missionary sector. From the 1830s missionaries like Bennie wrote about the two Xhosa men, depicting Ntsikana as a good Christian who founded a Christian commune and composed

hymns. Makana/Nxele was represented as an impostor who met an ignoble death as a prisoner while trying to escape from Robben Island. By the mid-nineteenth century writers were producing “tribal” histories which were based on royal genealogical histories. Good and evil ethnic groups once again emerged in colonial writings. Holden observed that from traditions abaThembu were a senior house in south-east Africa and the first to move into the region.³⁷ The positive image of abaThembu, unlike amaXhosa who had fought “most of the desolating wars on the eastern frontier”,³⁸ was enhanced because they had not gone to war against the colony and had co-operated with the missionaries. After the wars of 1835, 1847, and 1850-53 amaXhosa were portrayed as an intransigent and aggressive group in missionary writing.

Nineteenth century writers of Xhosa history tried to identify the origins of amaXhosa. Alberti recorded a story of origin which stated that the first “Kaffirs” had emerged from a cavern.³⁹ Some writers linked amaXhosa with north Africa though there was no unanimity about which group they could have descended from. Lichtenstein questioned Barrow’s claim that amaXhosa were descendants of Bedouin tribes, suggesting instead that amaXhosa could have descended from people of Asiatic origin.⁴⁰ Subsequent writers of Xhosa history like Kay would claim either Bedouin origins⁴¹ or identify Asiatic ancestry for amaXhosa.⁴² Some writers based their ideas about Xhosa origins on biblical beliefs. Holden suggested the origins of “Kaffirs” could be linked to the “dispersion at the confusion of tongues when humanity scattered all over the earth.”⁴³ He also contended that amaXhosa could have spread southwards as descendants of Ham. Holden also resorted to ancient history, tracing the origins of amaXhosa to “the great centre seat of human life in the neighbourhood of the Tigris or Euphrates”.⁴⁴ In explaining their origins amaXhosa relied on *amabali emvelo* (creation stories) and their religious beliefs, rather than the speculations of European observers. AmaXhosa believed that Hlanga was the source of being, marking the beginning.⁴⁵ Later as Christian teachings were taking root, Xhosa traditions adapted to biblical accounts on the origins of humanity.

The migration theme also runs through nineteenth century writings on Xhosa history. In all probability biblical stories of wandering tribes and the migrations of Germanic tribes in European history influenced the development of the theme. On the other hand amaXhosa themselves had a repertoire

of migration stories. The popularity of migration history among amaXhosa could have been due to their transhumant pastoralism which necessitated movement to fresh pastures from time to time. AmaXhosa kept *amathanga* (cattle outposts) that meant large numbers of people and cattle moving from place to place. Sons of the Right Hand House also often broke away from the monarch's residence to found a new settlement and a new chiefly line. Such a migration would mark the beginning of the history of that particular group. Paterson noted that after a civil war between the sons of Phalo, Gcaleka and Rharhabe, the latter migrated with a following and established a new settlement elsewhere.⁴⁶ More traditions covering the time of Phalo were recorded by Van der Kemp. He observed that migrants had settled between the Nxuba/Fish and Keiskamma Rivers.⁴⁷ A number of writers seem to have attached great significance to the flight of Rharhabe. Kay recounted the migration of Rharhabe who founded a settlement around the sources of the Keiskamma and Thyume Rivers.⁴⁸ Rharhabe had lived during the second half of the eighteenth century, therefore traditions about his migrations were still fresh in the public memory.

The Xhosa historian, Noyi, presented other migration stories. One was about Tshiwo who, after a hunting party moved away from his father and settled on the western side of the Kei at Nxaruni.⁴⁹ It seems that stories about royal sons moving away from the main royal centre with a retinue of followers formed an important theme in Xhosa traditions. It formed the basis of a history of Xhosa expansion and territorial claims. Noyi also wrote about a migration by Gando after a fight with his brother Tshiwo.⁵⁰ Noyi was a descendant of Gando. After his flight from *Komikhulu* Gando lived in exile and he and his followers were later excised from the Xhosa royal line.⁵¹ The account of the Gando migration represented a non-royal history which was usually kept by lineages or clans. From the various stories it comes out that migrations were triggered by a host of factors, including the founding of new settlements. But these migration stories were accounts of groups that moved in different directions and not expansion stories about amaXhosa from the "north".

A central issue in colonisation is the struggle for land. The theme of land rights and shifting boundaries runs through nineteenth-century Xhosa history. In the texts there is a constant setting and redrawing of boundaries. Writers consistently noted boundaries that divided amaXhosa from the

European settlement. In 1774 Thunberg observed that the Gamtoos/Maxelexwa River was the boundary between the Dutch settlement and amaXhosa.⁵² In 1778 Plettenberg claimed to have come to an “agreement” with two Xhosa “chiefs” that the Nxuba/Fish River would henceforth be the dividing line between the settlers and amaXhosa. Paterson⁵³ and Sparrman also confirmed that the Nxuba/Fish River was the official boundary between the Cape Colony and amaXhosa. In view of the fact that the works of the two travellers were published after the 1778 Plettenberg “agreement”,⁵⁴ their identification of a boundary between amaXhosa and the colony could have been informed by that “agreement”. Although Van der Kemp noted that the issue was still clouded in controversy,⁵⁵ the recognition of the Nxuba/Fish River as a boundary was central for colonial writers like Collins.⁵⁶ Significantly, writers from mission stations like Noyi and Dugmore were silent about boundaries. This may be indicative of the desire by the writers to produce a history that would accommodate colonial land claims. At the same time their silence can be interpreted as an attempt to maintain a neutral stance on an issue that was central to the conflict between the indigenous people and the settlers. Theal, pursuing his thesis about the recent migration of amaXhosa into south-east Africa, wrote at length about Xhosa migration and the demarcation of boundaries between amaXhosa and the colony. He opted for the recognition of the Nxuba/Fish River, basing his argument on the agreement between Xhosa “chiefs” and Plettenberg. African writers under the leadership of Gqoba touched on the question of boundaries between the colonists and the indigenous communities. Their exposure to western thinking on boundaries seems to have influenced them. They engaged with the concept of fixed boundaries, drawn along rivers according to colonial thinking.³ However, the notion of fixed geographical divisions and private ownership of land was alien to amaXhosa.⁴

Writers of Xhosa history during the nineteenth century moved between western methods of writing history and African conventions of recalling and recording the past. This was because initially the writers were European while the informants were African. African influence is discernible through the use of motifs and metaphors often used in oral history. The biographies of historical figures like Tshawe, Shaka, and Nxele bear a resemblance which can be attributed to a motif often used to describe outstanding figures in oral history. Through that motif the birth and early life of a hero is often dominated by rejection and ill-treatment. Later, the hero triumphs against odds and becomes

a powerful figure. Stories of Xhosa migration also seem to have followed a standard storyline about conflict and fission between royal sons followed by the flight of the defeated party. In some texts there was a collapse of mythic time and remembered time. Creation stories would be put together with remembered events. It was an African convention to trace an event back to a remote beginning, sometimes even to creation. This collapse of time was however not peculiar only to African convention. Nineteenth century European writers sometimes connected Xhosa history to biblical times. As the century progressed writers like Theal attempted to periodise Xhosa history using the reigns of rulers for his calculations. He tried to align oral traditions with evidence he obtained from the earliest records on south-east Africans.

During the 1880s literate African men, under the leadership of Gqoba, published a series of African history texts which they intended for use in teaching at schools. The approach of these writers accommodated African methods of producing history and western conventions of historiography. Gqoba and his colleagues used a number of oral genres as sources, as well as historical texts. *Izibongo*, of which the most outstanding was “Ingxoxo Ngemfundo”, were texts through which Xhosa historians produced history. Other oral narratives like *amabali emvelo* carried general comments about the past while *iimbali* covered specific events. In producing Xhosa history the African historians made use of *iimbali* about wars, men and women, and episodes like the Nongqawuse tragedy. Mzimba made use of clan histories to produce the history of groups who had been in the Thukela-Mfolozi region and had later moved into the south-eastern region. Operating from a context that was dominated by colonial-missionary writings these African writers nonetheless staked their right to write their history and to influence what was passed to future generations. Their effort was part of a strategy of missionary Africans to continue resistance to colonialism by taking “Paper and ink, that is your shield”.⁵⁷ In the face of the dominance of English as a language of the literate, the writers wrote and published in siXhosa.⁵⁸

The development of Xhosa history writing during the nineteenth century took place as South African historiography was also evolving. From the beginning, Xhosa history was treated as separate, and not integrated into the wider historiography. Such an approach may have been responsible for the

production of other “tribal” histories that covered other ethnic groups in southern Africa. Theal, who wrote settler history which incorporated “Briton” and “Boer”, left out “Bantu” from mainstream history. His writings on amaXhosa were mainly separate chapters in his history of South Africa. It is possible that the manner in which histories of other African groups were later written was largely on the model of Xhosa historiography. Saunders observes how Theal, in his account of frontier history during the 1880s and early 1890s, was silent about Nehemiah Tile who was a dominant figure through his religious and political activities among abaThembu at that time.⁵⁹

AmaXhosa were the first sedentary indigenous society that the Dutch and British colonisers had prolonged contact with. The struggle at the military level is a well documented saga which lasted a hundred years. What has not been given attention by scholars is the writing of Xhosa history, a process which began as soon as contact was made between the literate Europeans and the south-east Africans. This study has shown that the writing of Xhosa history was undertaken by individuals who were operating under different conventions of creating history. From this thesis it also emerges that as colonisation grew stronger, the same process was taking place regarding the production of Xhosa history. The study of Xhosa historiography also reveals the intellectual colonisation of amaXhosa in the way their past was interpreted by their colonisers. However, this was not a straightforward process as what also comes out in this study is that Africans collaborated with missionary and colonial writers in the writing of their history and therefore influenced the process. There were also times when amaXhosa resisted intellectual colonialism by producing their own history.

This study has traced the production of Xhosa history during the nineteenth century. It has revealed the factors and influences behind the continuities and shifts that took place in the production of that history. Further research could reveal the degree to which the approach adopted by early historians and the themes that became dominant in Xhosa history were adopted in the writing of the histories of other indigenous groups by colonial writers during the nineteenth century. Such research might also show the extent which nineteenth century Xhosa historiography has had an impact on contemporary South African historiography.

1. Cobbing, Golan, Wylie and others have put forward an argument that the image of Shaka was an invention of white adventurers in Natal. Cobbing in particular contends that the Natal “traders”, in an attempt to hide their illegal activities, were responsible for the negative image of Shaka . See Cobbing, “The Mfecane as Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo”. Also see Wylie, “White Writers and Shaka Zulu” (Ph.D., Rhodes University, 1995).
- 2.This is a major point Hamilton pursues in her book in relation to the history of Shaka Zulu. See Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty*.
- 3.The Comaroffs refer to the production of Setswana as a reduction of the language into one form. See Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, i, 223.
- 4.The Comaroffs argue that the transcription of African languages into written form helped create separate and closed ethnic groups. *Ibid*.
- 5.Pieterse writes about “absences” as characterising the nineteenth century “savage” in European thinking. See Pieterse, *White on Black*, 35.
- 6.On the two occasions Sparrman mentioned Phalo, *ukumkani*, he did so in negative terms. During his first visit in 1772 he noted that Phalo had killed traditional doctors who had failed to cure his sore eyes. The second time, in 1775 he entered in his journal that Phalo had killed himself with liquor. See Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope* , i & ii, 10 and 210.
7. Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 90-95.
- 8.*Ibid.*, 92-93.
9. Kay, *Travels and Researches in Caffraria*, 149.
- 10.*Ibid*.
- 11.Life stories, clan histories and natural phenomena were important history topics among amaXhosa.
- 12.There were links between Methodist missionaries and the Natal traders. Wylie has pointed out that some of the material in Kay’s book had been plagiarised from Isaacs’ publication. See Wylie, “White Writers and Shaka Zulu”, 110.
- 13.See Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 1-7.
- 14.*Ibid.*, 4-5.
- 15.*Ibid.*, 7.

16. *Ibid.*

17. See "Kaffraria. II. Its Tribes", *The South African Christian Watchman and Missionary Magazine*, Vol. I, September, 1846, 318-327.

18. Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 149.

19. In 1809 Collins had pointed out the dubious status of members of Chungwa's House, the Gqunukhwebe royal family. It would also appear that by the middle of the nineteenth century amaTshawe wished to confirm that amaChungwa were of a different house by sending Tshawe princesses as brides.

20. There was the devastating war of 1850-53 during which amaXhosa suffered great loss of life and cattle. They further lost large tracts of land. The Cattle Killing of 1856-7 destroyed the already ailing Xhosa economy.

21. Holden, *The Past and Future*.

22. See Theal, *Compendium*, 118.

23. *Ibid.*, 119.

24. See P.J. Mzimba, "Imbali Yase Mbo", *Isigidimi*, 2 January 1888, 5 and "Imbali Yase Mbo : No 2", *Isigidimi*, 1 February 1888, 14.

25. See C. Pamla, "Ama Xosa naba Mbo", *Imvo*, 27 April 1887.

26. Barrow, *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa*, i, 157-158.

27. Alberti described amaNdlambe as a deserter horde that were responsible for cattle stealing. See Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 99. Van der Kemp identified "Modankians" (imiDange) as hostile "Caffres" who caused great consternation among the colonists. See Van der Kemp, "First Attempt to Enter Caffraria", in *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*, i, 384-385 and 467.

28. Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 68.

29. These were mainly Scottish missionaries among amaNgqika and Methodists who spread from amaGqunukhwebe, amaBomvana, abaThembu, and amaGcaleka.

30. The writers at the time spelt "Ficane", "Ficani", "Fikani" differently.

31. *Ibid.*, 298. Holt devotes a chapter to the "Mfecane menace" as he discusses John Brownlee's work at Tyhume during the 1820s. See Holt, *Greatheart of the Border*, 54-62.

32. Hammond-Tooke (ed), *The Journal of William Shaw*, 84.

33. Boyce in Steedman, *Wanderings and Adventures in the Interior of Southern Africa*, ii (London: Longman and Co., 1835), 269.

34. "Ayliff the Apostle of the Fingoes", MS 15 276, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

35. Rev Ayliff was at the forefront in the whole episode of the separation of the "Fingo" from amaXhosa and their departure to the colony.

36. For a contemporary account of the two see "Imbaliso KaNtsikana", *Ikwezi*, Inani iii, February 1845, and Inani iv, December 1845, 39-49.

37. Holden, *The Past and Future*, 142-143.

38. *Ibid.*, 143-144.

39. Alberti, *Account of the Tribal Life*, 13.

40. Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 302-303.

41. Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 107.

42. See Theal, *Progress in South Africa in the Century*, 20.

43. Holden, *The Past and Future*, 4.

44. *Ibid.*, 5.

45. See Kay, *Travels and Researches*, 149.

46. Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 92-93.

47. Van der Kemp, "History of Caffraria", *Transactions*, 466.

48. *Ibid.*, 151.

49. Pike, *Iziqwenge*, 1.

50. *Ibid.*, 5.

51. Soga narrates the circumstances that led to the lowering of the status of amaGando to commoners in Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, 112.

52. Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape of Good Hope*, 236.

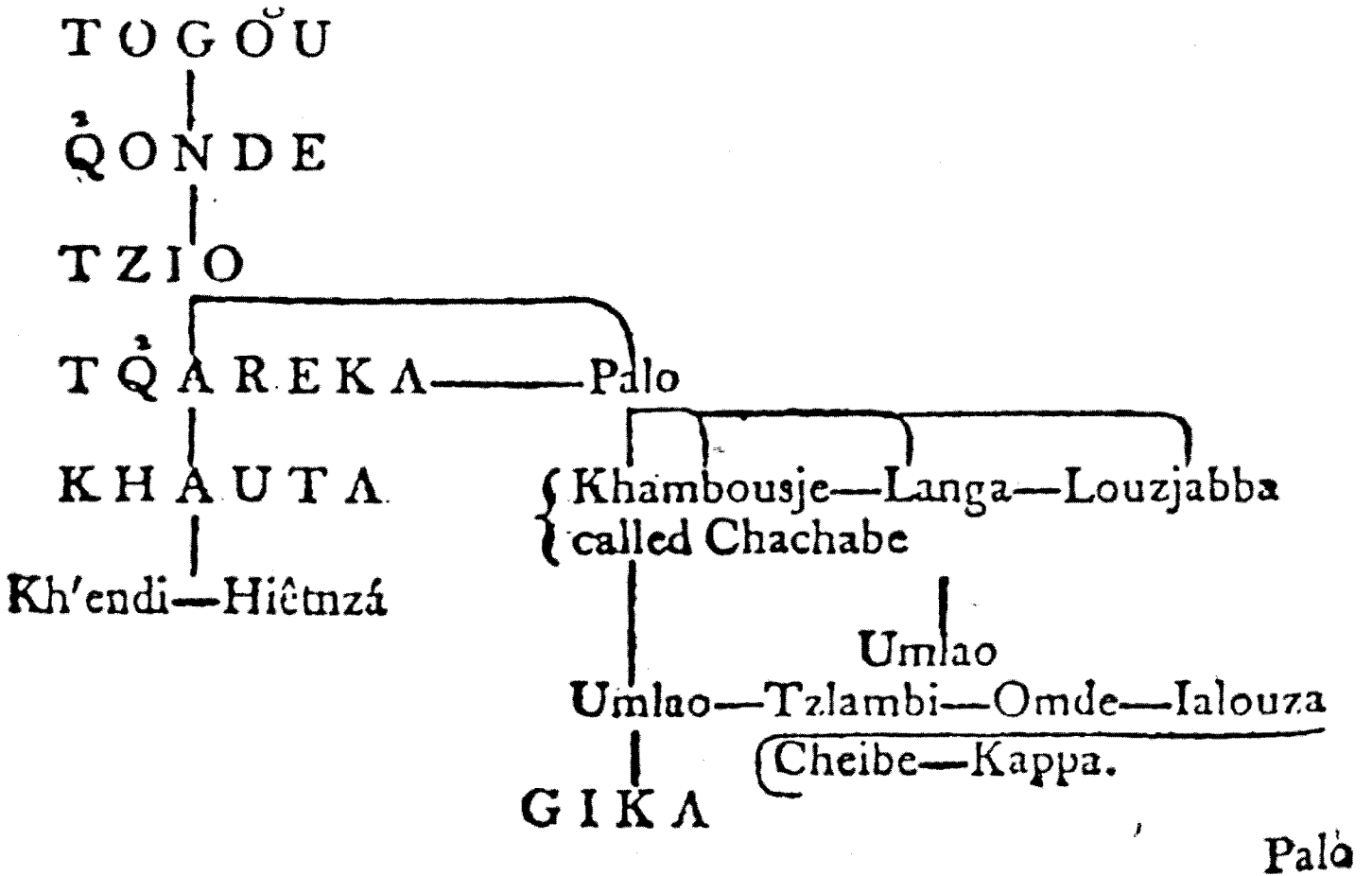
53. Paterson, *A Narrative of Four Journeys*, 152.

54. Sparrman's publication came out in 1786 and Paterson's in 1790.

55. Van der Kemp, "History of Caffraria", *Transactions*, 466.
56. Collins, "The Journal" in Moodie, *The Record*, Part V, 17.
57. My translation of Citashe's poem. See chapter 7.
58. On English as a "master code" in the colonial context see De Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, 3.
59. C.C. Saunders, "Tile and the Thembu Church: Politics and Independency on the Cape Eastern Frontier in the Late Nineteenth Century" *Journal Of African History*, xi, 4 (1970), 553-570.

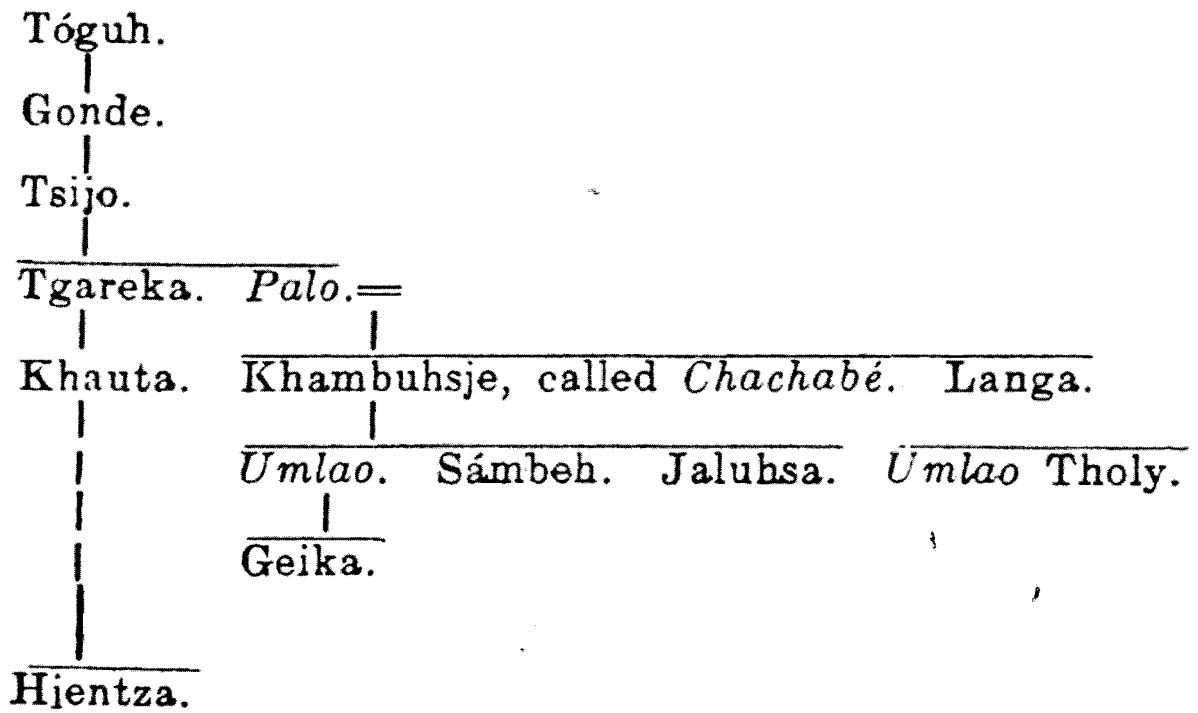
Appendix 1

Xhosa Royal Genealogy in Van der Kemp, *Transactions*, 464.



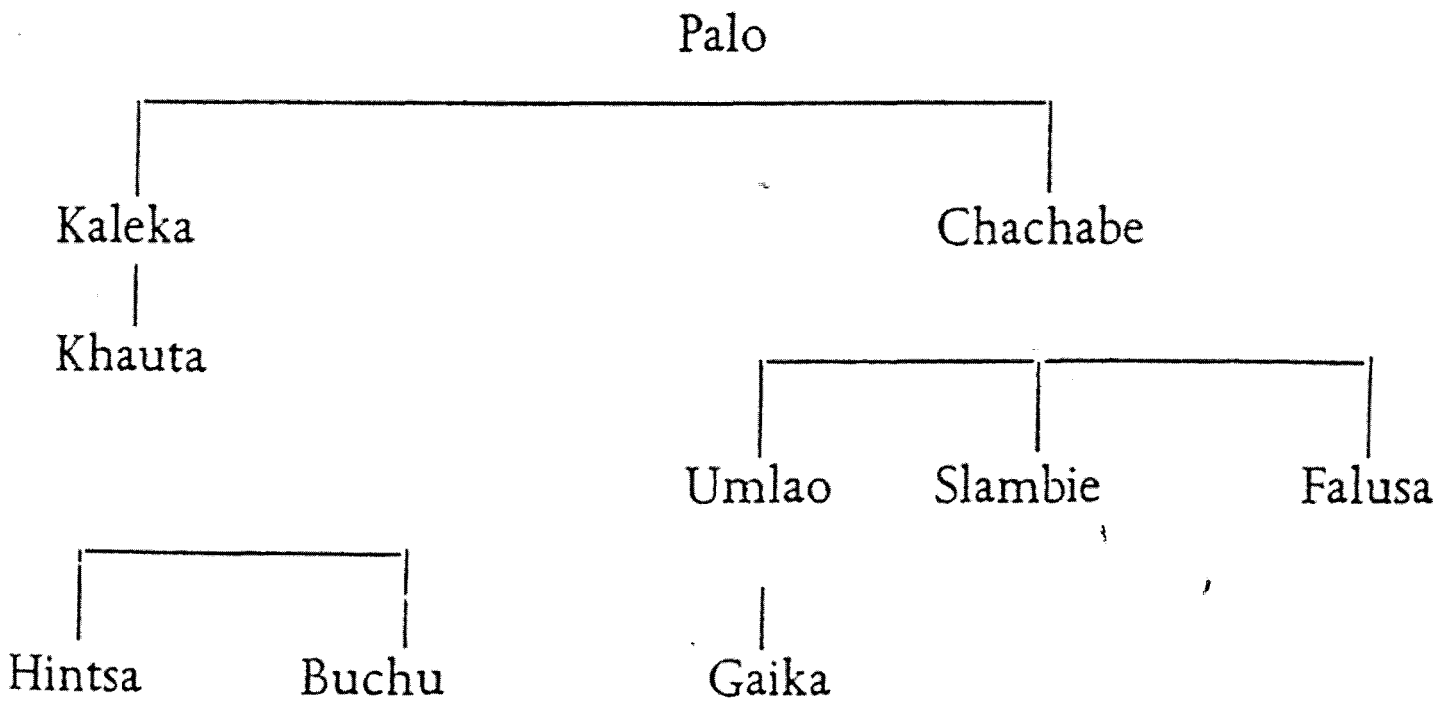
Appendix 2

Xhosa Royal Genealogy in Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, i, 357.



Appendix 3

Xhosa Royal Genealogy in Alberti, *Account*, 98.



Appendix 4

Xhosa Royal Genealogy in Collins, "Journal", 8-9.

Togow.
Gonde.
Tzeeo.

Palo.
Galeka, Hahabee, Langa.

Mandankec.
Mahota.

Posterity of Galeka.

Khowta, (Father of Hinsa, Boohoo, &c.)—Odessa.—Walkela, &c.

Posterity of Hahabee.

Omlao, (Father of Gyka,) Zlambie, Oonooqua, Yaloosa, Tzatla, Sikkoo, Zonie, &c.

Posterity of Langa.

Malouw, or Kyno, Kama, Tolie, Kaza, Galeba, &c.

Posterity of Mahota.

Jalamba, (Father of Dlodlo,) Olela, Foona, Koba, &c.



bum bi IN KO MO zon ke ze zi ka-Ti-
 pam bi xo: un gum ni ni zo ye na. Kun-
 dun ga ga bi ko nūm tu o zi ci ta yo. I pi-
 ten da we gu ye i mi fi si, ne mi ti yon-
 gom so ke zi ya pila ga yo; a pi we na-
 kam be man zi e zi wa se la yo. Yim vu-
 kan ti me yom ni ni zo u ku ba zi kon-
 vim ba ze ti na 'ban tu in ko mo; zi ya-
 fun da si kon za go ko. Za pi wa in ko-
 zem ka mo ku-No wa, na ku ti gu-Ti xo
 sen ga um ni ni zo, u ku ze si zi xē le, si-
 ham ba pi le ga zo; zi xē li we go ko. Zi-
 lin da xē li we in ko mo, go ku ba e vu-
 nam pa me le ne na zo um ni ni zo; go ko
 nan ga si na so i si xa so e si ku lu e si pi-
 wam bi la ga so. Zi ya nika i ma zi za-
 yim bi ko we tu lo ma si e si wa se la yo
 can da a da li we yo gu-Ti xo. Si nen gu-
 qon da bo, nem va ba, ne zin to e zi nin-
 tem ba zi ge zi kum ba zen ko mo ze tu.
 jin ga Zi da li we in to e zi nin zi ga be-
 kan da lun gu ga ma tam bo en ko mo,
 kon xa nem pon do za zo. En zi we lo-
 tam ba ma ba la on ke e zi na wo in ko mo
 yon ke gu-Ti xo um ni ni zo.

4.

J. B.

Reproduction (half size) of Xhosa reading sheet printed by
 John Benze at Gwelo in 1822.

From: South African Pamphlets
 Vol. iii, Cory Library, Rhodes University

Appendix 7

GENEALOGY OF THE KAFFIR CHIEFS. 1858. W.C. Holden, *The Past and Future of the Kaffir Races*, npg.

	Present Chiefs and Chieftains.	Nations, Tribes, and Sub-tribes.
I.—ABATEMBU.		
Zwidi, Umbekidi, Injany, Malaudela, Umgoti, Zende, Bomei, Cedami, Tool, Xetwa, Danakari, Hale, Nadibi, Taro, Zosa, Vovani, Gubresenka, Umicira	Great Wife Noneni (regent) QEYA (minor) Joyi (regent) *	ABATEMBU
II.—AMAMPONDUMISI.		
Zangwa, Cira, Cwini, Poodamisi, Majala, Sabe, Umoti, Qongobe, Gwanya, Pabla, Umqosi, Umzambi, Umyeki	UMBALI	AMAMPONDUMISI
.....Voelo, Diko	QIBANA	
III.—AMAMPONDO.		
Makanga, Pondo, Kondwana, Chidini, Caba, Bala, Cwawa, Dayeni, Tshili, Nyanza, Qungube	IAKW	AMAMPONDO
.....Qiya, Cema, Pata, Matai, Makalo, Pabla, Hale	Qoda	
.....Biba, Sango, Depa, { Sons by a Getani, { andie women } Bajala	Majimbane (sub tribe)	called Abelanga
IV.—AMATOSA.		
Zosa, Tshawa, Newanga, Sikomo, Toga, Gonda, Tshiro, Pata, Gonda, Kanta, Hinta	KHILI	AMATOSA
	Umikhakha	Amagaleka
	Bukhu	
.....Velolo	Gwaha	Amavelo
.....Ukhakhe, Umban, Nyaka	SANBILI	Amangyika
	Mqoma	These and the following tribes, being all on this side the Kei, are, as a general name, termed Amakhakha by the Amagaleka
	Fini	
.....Nyimbo d. s. p.	Ola	
	Hanta	

Cabo, Dushane d. s. p.	Siwani	Imidubane
.....given as representative of Cabo	Fundini, alias Qawana	
.....Seyolo	Hangi	
.....Dhlanbe	UMBALA	Amakhlanbe
.....Umqai	Jali	
.....Nakwa, Gwaha	Tshu	
.....Ulanga, Nqomo	CANCA (minor)	
	Tuyise (regent)	
.....Gwaha, Titi, Kobela, Mhade	Strockwe	Amamhale alias Amalanga
	Soslo	
.....Hakwe	Zwani	Amagwani
.....Umdaga, Mahote, Fano, Ceya	Hilini	
.....Mankla	MADOLO	Imidango
.....Tinde, Getani, Bango, Cika, Tshatshu	Tola (lately regent)	
	Botman	
	JAN TSHATSHU	Amantide
Gqunukweli, Sakhala, Urtibana, Langasa, Tshu, Kwar, Tyakha, Tshaka, Cwaga	PATO	Amagqunukweli alias Amakwase
(Kwase first Chief, Councillor of Tshu)	Kama	
	Kobi	
V.—AMABACA. †		
Late Chief, Umqai	Umdotrase	

* Qeya is now paramount, and Noneni and Joyi are no longer regents (1865).

† Editor.

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