

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

by
J. J. Guy

Neither of my two papers were written specifically for this workshop, and so I intend to summarise them very briefly in this introduction, and then attempt to pull together some of the ideas I put forward in them, and try and present what I see as the most fundamental features of pre-conquest Zulu society, for comparative purposes.

The paper "Production and Exchange in the Zulu Kingdom" was written for a workshop in Lesotho in 1976 and is fairly well-known and it is really presented for purposes of reference. It is a dry, rather uncompromising paper in which I tried to answer the questions "Who was working, with what, and for whom?" The first part deals with work and organisation in the homesteads of the kingdom, establishing the essential autonomy of the homestead system of production, and the importance of the kinship/lineage system in ordering this. The second part of the paper shows how the Zulu king extracted surplus, largely in labour from the homesteads, by means of a military system which ensured that the king could call on the labour of men, for about half of their mature years. The brief final section examines the underdeveloped nature of commodity exchange in the kingdom, and the crucial link provided by cattle as a means of storing or materialising labour, and their role in the reproduction of the whole society in that they could be exchanged for women. I will return to these points later.

The second paper "The Political structure of the Zulu kingdom" during the reign of Cetshwayo kaMpande" forms a chapter of my book "The Destruction of the Zulu kingdom". The diagrams were drawn firstly in an attempt to overcome my boredom, and also the frustrations of supervisors and editors who could no longer tolerate interminable sentences along the lines of "But just as the lineage reflected the basic structure of the homestead and contained within it the seeds of future segments we must conceptualise the spread of lineages or homesteads as reflections of the basic reproductive elements of the total

social formation and not forget that we are looking at ... &c &c". Thus we have five diagrams showing the building blocks out of which Zulu society was constructed - but I must add that these are dynamic blocks which come into being and disappear with the passage of time, and multifaceted blocks which can take on the appearance of wooden and grass structures, or working men, women and children, or dry abstractions, depending on the light in which one is examining them.

All Nguni societies were I think based on this structure - what I, following Monica Wilson, refer to as the chiefdom. However the Zulu kingdom added another level to this structure, the chiefdoms themselves were brought under the authority of another chiefdom - the Zulu, and this was done by adapting, but not changing, the essential building blocks characterised in these figures. And these blocks emerge more clearly in Zulu history the further one goes from the violence and disruption of Shaka's time. Here we have the king, his political power based on labour extracted from the young men of every homestead in the country, ruling with the selected chiefs of the most powerful chiefdoms in the country. Political authority was devolved through a host of State officials, the izinduna, who were not a discrete official caste, but, like every married man in the kingdom, homestead-heads, abanumzana.

* * * * *

I would now like to try and broaden this Introduction and make some general statements which might apply to Nguni societies generally. But first of all I must stress that I have deliberately selected categories which refer to production, the organisation of production, and the material bases of political power. There will be many other categories which people feel should be mentioned, especially in the realm of ideas, customs, ideology, but which I avoid. I do this not because

I think that they are unimportant, but because their importance can only be assessed within the context of a materialist conception of society.

I'd like to begin by referring to another meeting held in Grahamstown to discuss the structure of Nguni societies. This was in September 1881 when the Cape Native Laws and Customs Commission travelled to this town to collect evidence, and for three days interviewed a man with an immense knowledge of the subject, Sir Theophilus Shepstone. In his evidence before the Commission, Shepstone asserted that all African societies, from the Cape to the Limpopo and beyond, were essentially the same, but there were two basic variants, the "patriarchal" as he called them - the Cape Nguni, Natal Africans, and the "autocratic" the Zulu, Swazi, Ndebele and so on. Shepstone's patriarchal and autocratic are, it would seem, our chiefdoms and kingdoms - but however we would like to characterise them this is obviously a useful distinction, although I feel they should be considered as poles, marking the conceptual boundaries of a continuum.

Now, given these boundaries, what general statements can we make about the Nguni societies which are situated along the continuum?

First, all pre-colonial Nguni societies were organised primarily for the production of use-values, or to use that potent phrase, they were societies in which man was the aim of production, not production the aim of man.

Second, production took place within the homestead and was

Third, ordered by the kinship and lineage system and

Fourth, controlled by the homestead-head who lived on the labour of his

Fifth, ancestors, wives and children.

Now these points seem to me to have been shared by all Nguni societies. No one lived outside the homestead, there was no concept of the individual outside the homestead. This however does raise the problem of captives and slaves in societies which sprung from the Zulu and moved northwards, and the Mfengu, although it is clear that on many occasions these were brought into the homestead, and eventually established homesteads and therefore, lineages of their own. What I am saying is that all Nguni polities seem to have been made up of essentially the same elements - the differences between Nguni societies seem to have been permutations in which these elements are ordered, or perhaps in

the most extreme cases, developments of these elements. But I would stress developments - even within the Zulu amakhanda one can discern the principles of homestead/lineage production and evolution.

Sixth, wives were obtained by exchange, in normal circumstances (I think) for cattle. The significance of this exchange of cattle for women seems to be of crucial importance and obviously be a primary theme to be discussed at this Workshop. All I want to say now is that cattle served as a self-reproducing store of spent labour and labour-power because they could be exchanged for women, who were of course both producers and reproducers. And because Man was ultimately the aim of all production, social/political power was directly related to access to cattle. To approach this from another direction, access to cattle, as Professor Wilson has pointed out, is crucial to a chief's power. Cattle could be used to attract followers - through lending them out to clients who were able to use the cow's dairy products, and as bride wealth which increased the size of the lineage, and as gifts which enabled clients to increase the size of their lineages, and thereby wealth and social strength, through the acquisition of wives who produced - men and women. But this brings us into the realm of political power and all I want to establish here is that all pre-colonial Nguni societies seem to have been based on production within the homestead.

Now that the base line has been established we can move on to the second level - that of the chief. Homesteads and lineages were never discrete units, but were united under the political authority of the chief. Chiefly power seems to me to be an extension of the authority of the homestead-head, its material base being the chief's power to extract surplus from those under him. I would like to know more about the nature of this surplus extraction. That it existed, even in the centralised Zulu kingdom I have no doubt, but the evidence is scarce. In the chiefdoms there were of course the fees and fines they imposed, and I suspect formal and fairly extensive tribute labour at certain times of the year. But we need more information on this, particularly information on that crucial period in a man's life after puberty or initiation, and before marriage. It was this particular period in a man's life that the "autocracies" or kingdoms extended in

order to extract more surplus labour, and I think that comparative material on this would be crucial. John Wright in his paper provides important information on the induction of children into roles as workers within the homestead. Marriage signified the setting up of the homestead; many Nguni polities intervened between puberty and marriage to extract surplus labour - to what extent did this occur? Does the existence of massive intervention at this particular stage in a person's life provide a way into answering Professor Wilson's important question on the nature of the difference between chiefs and kings?

This brings us to the Third level - of which of course the Zulu were historically the first example. Homestead production formed the basis of the society, chiefdoms existed, but they were brought under the authority of a ruling chiefdom - and the polity usually referred to as a kingdom. In the Zulu case the material power of the king was based on his ability to draw on the labour of all men for something like twenty years of their lives. This labour was dependent to a large degree on the homesteads from which the men were drawn, and this withdrawal had to be compensated for. This was done by the king refusing to allow the men to marry, in other words he held up the creation of new homesteads, in other words he put a check on generalised homestead production, substituting production for the state. But while the Zulu kings could make history, they could do so only under certain conditions, and eventually men were allowed to set up homesteads of their own - making it possible for historians, I believe, to compare, once we have ordered the empirical data, the large number of African polities which we classify as Nguni, which stretched for thousands of miles from the Cape to Malawi, because, it seems to me that in their apparent differences, we are in fact only looking at variations on a single theme, surplus extraction, mainly in labour, from a common productive base in the homesteads of the polity.

PRODUCTION AND EXCHANGE IN THE ZULU KINGDOM

by
J. J. Guy

I

This paper attempts to isolate certain features of the Zulu social formation as they appeared towards the end of the kingdom's existence - that is about the time of Cetshwayo's reign in the 1870s - rather than the earlier period. At this time there were some 200 000 people who considered themselves members of the Zulu kingdom through their allegiance to the Zulu king who was supreme political, military and religious authority in the land. He ruled in association with a number of territorial chiefs (isikhulu/izikhulu) who, within their chiefdoms, delegated their authority to local administrators. There were a large number of other state officials (induna/izinduna) who had a variety of specialised duties. All adult males were members of the state army.¹

All Zulu belonged to lineages, membership being determined by their common descent through the male line from a founding ancestor. Segments of these lineages were dominant and there was a tendency for members of dominant lineages to fulfil important roles in the state authority structure, or for the state to intervene amongst lineage segments and create dominant lineages. However, the administrative divisions within the kingdom - the chiefdoms - were not kinship units and contained members of a variety of lineages, although there was a tendency for the members of the lineage of the leading official to predominate.

The lineage structure was given physical expression in the homesteads (umuzi/imizi) of the kingdom. Every man in Zululand on, or soon after, marriage would set up a homestead of his own. As homestead-head (umnumzana/abanumzana) he would rank his wives in segments within the homestead. In time these segments, under the eldest son of each segment, would break from the homestead and establish homesteads of their own. This process would be repeated in time. Thus every homestead in Zululand had sprung from a previously existing

one, and contained within it the seeds of new ones. This process of continual homestead formation gave physical expression to that much abused, but most useful concept, the segmentary, patrilineal lineage.

Labour power in the Zulu kingdom was principally expended in the creation of cereals, vegetables and animal products through farming; cereals by means of agriculture, vegetables by means of agriculture and gathering, and cattle, and through them dairy products and meat, by means of stock-raising. Cows as producers of dairy products, and as reproducers of stock, were kept for their use-value; oxen were raised for their exchange-value. Supporting activities included the manufacture of instruments of production by metal and wood-working, potting, grass-weaving, hunting, leather-working, and the erection and maintenance of homesteads. Land, as an instrument and the subject of labour, was the possession of the king but individuals gained rights over it as a condition of their giving their allegiance to the state. Instruments of labour such as the hoe, axe, spear and grindstone were individually owned or shared by members of the production unit. The source of productive energy within the kingdom was almost exclusively human.

Production in Zululand took place in the homestead and its immediate environs. There were different types of homestead, their size reflecting the status and the wealth of the homestead-head, but they were all organised on similar principles and we shall first consider the homestead of the "common man" - the homestead in which it has been estimated that 90 per cent of the population lived.² In this homestead lived the ummumzana, two or three wives each with two or three sons and daughters. The circular fence of the homestead contained the cattle-kraal in the centre, the hut of the homestead-head's first wife opposite the entrance of the homestead, near the homestead-head's private hut. The huts of additional wives and their children were placed to the right and the left of the first wife's hut, in a circle around the cattle-kraal. The position of each hut corresponded to the rank of the wife and her children within the homestead, the first wife being of the higher rank than those taken

later, and her eldest son was heir to the homestead.

Each segment (a wife and her children) formed a production unit within the homestead, the production community. The homestead-head provided each segment with milk cows, plots of agricultural land for their own use, and a place for storage of their grain within the homestead. Meals took place within the hut of each wife.³ Each segment was therefore able to provide its own means of subsistence while a portion of the surplus contributed to the subsistence of the homestead-head.

There was a rigid sexual division of labour within the production units of the production community. Except if there was heavy work needed in the clearing of agricultural land, women laboured throughout the agricultural cycle: they prepared the land, sowed, cleaned, reaped, stripped the cobs, winnowed or shelled, stored, ground and cooked the various cereals. Men were concerned with the other major aspect of production in the farming process - stock-raising. Boys herded and milked, while adult males were responsible for general supervision, veterinary work, slaughtering and the preparation of hides.

Subsistence consumption was based on the products of these major activities in the homestead; Zulu diet consisted of different cereals mixed or consumed with various forms of fermented milk, and vegetables. Meat was seldom eaten by the majority of Zulu; Bryant estimates that the commoner ate meat perhaps once every two months, usually as part of a ceremony or ritual.

In other productive activities, labour was also divided according to sex. Women collected water, firewood and the vegetables consumed in the homestead, and made pots, mats, and spun fibres. Men were responsible for the erection and maintenance of the material structure of the homestead, the manufacture of certain instruments of production like the hoe and spear blades, their shafts, sticks, and the preparation of clothing and shields. The allocation of these tasks was usually determined by a man's particular talents although there was a tendency for the more specialised and complex skills to remain within a family. There were also specialist

producers, tobacco growers for example, or a man might be particularly adept at hunting and trapping, or woodworking. Usually these tasks were performed as individual labour, or by a man together with his sons. These products were then either bartered with others, as use-values, or exchanged for goods or small-stock which had an exchange-value against cattle. This barter or exchange was carried out on an informal basis; Bryant described it in these terms:

"Generally speaking, all Zulu tradesmen were merely odd-jobbers. They did not manufacture their goods in bulk and wait for buyers. They made their wares on order, or when they saw a demand."⁴

Even the social hunt, which was organised on a number of different social bases, seems to have had a recreational or ritual function, rather than a productive one,⁵ although there were possibly local exceptions to this at different times in the kingdom's history.

There are some references in the source material which suggest a certain amount of large-scale specialisation in metal-working by particular groups who lived in the vicinity of outcrops of iron ore.⁶ There is some difficulty in assessing the importance of this because the smelting of iron virtually disappeared soon after the Zulu came into contact with settler Natal and iron, and industrially manufactured commodities, particularly hoes, became easily obtainable. The manufacture of spears by smiths seems to have continued, but we lack detailed information on this perhaps because of ritual secrecy involved in their manufacture.

Generally speaking then it seems as if the most important labour processes in the country were those which contributed to farming production. Social labour-time was concentrated in this field, and other productive activities, although possibly of crucial importance to the farming process, absorbed less labour time and depended more on individual labour, informally structured, and organised within the production community which was structured according to the direct requirements of agricultural production and stock-keeping.

Each homestead was to a large degree materially self-sufficient while those essential goods it did not produce could be easily obtained by barter or informal exchange. The exception to this self-sufficiency was the fact that the homestead did not produce wives. These had to be obtained by exchanging cattle for women from other lineages, while cattle could be obtained from other lineages for daughters of the homestead. In this manner, through the exchange of surplus from the processes of reproduction and production (daughters and cattle), the process of reproduction and production was continued. The ultimate materialization of surplus labour in cattle is an obvious consequence in an economic formation with few forms of storeable or alienable wealth.

The homestead-head did not usually involve himself in direct production, but assumed a supervisory and managerial role, drawing his subsistence from the cattle he received from his father, and the labour-power and reproductive capacity of his wives, and the labour-power of his children. On an ideological level this was represented in the defence and obedience his authority commanded from the occupants of his homestead. A Zulu once described the abanumzana as the "true kings of Zululand"⁷ and Bryant wrote that,

"The one great law that ruled in that little kingdom [the homestead] was the law of complete submission to paternal authority. Unquestioning, unanswering obedience to the supreme power was demanded without distinction of all alike..."⁸

The ummumzana controlled production amongst the segments within his homestead by allocating the instruments of labour over which he had control, and the means to obtain these instruments by distributing stock amongst his sons which, in time, they would use to found homesteads of their own. Yet even segments within the homestead had a certain autonomy; the segment had rights over a portion of the lobola cattle obtained for any of the daughters of that segment, and there were laws which made it difficult for the homestead-head to transfer property from one segment to another within the homestead.

Up to now we have been considering the homestead as an organic whole, the homestead-head descended from a segment of his father's homestead, his wives taken from homesteads of other lineages, his daughters and sons all destined in time to move to homesteads without, and within, the lineage. One is struck when examining Zulu society by the complex laws of kinship and marriage which ensured that, in the event of death or disaster, women who had been isolated from a productive community would be drawn into another. Men in the same situation could be accepted as clients in another homestead regardless of their lineage and there given the opportunity to resuscitate their lineage segment. The manner in which this was done was described to James Stuart, a description which should be considered as an analogy rather than an account of a specific event. In a discussion in which the economic and social isolation of Africans in colonial Natal was compared with their situation in pre-capitalist societies, Joseph Kumalo described the situation;

"Under the old Zulu regime [where] a poor man would have cattle given him to look after by his chief; the cattle would be sisad; he would look after them and, collecting the butter which he had made would cook it, skimming off the dross (?) etc., or allow it to bubble over and then pour the melted or cooking butter, in a highly purified (clarified) condition, into little gourds. These gourds he would then dispose of, bartering them for goats, and when he had got together ten goats he would purchase a cow, and this cow would be his personal property. In time his small beginnings would increase; he would ultimately get sufficient cattle to lobola a wife with, and then he would have children, girls and boys; the girls would be married off, and his property increase proportionally on account of lobola paid for them. He would then found kraals . . . in various directions, becoming still more prosperous and affluent."⁹

In this manner cattle obtained by clientship - ukusisa - were used to produce commodities which eventually were exchanged for cattle which were used in turn to establish the man as an umnumzana; that is the founder of a production community and a lineage segment.

There are many historical examples of this process. One of the most vivid is the case of John Dunn,¹⁰ There was also the example of Ndlela, a wanderer from the devastation of the Mfecane period who found favour as a soldier with Shaka, and who rose to a position of political authority within the kingdom. His descendants kept in favour with subsequent Zulu kings and, by the time Cetshwayo reigned, Ndlela's Ntuli lineage dominated much of the southern part of Zululand.

While the majority of homesteads were made up of a homestead-head, two or three wives and their offspring, it must be remembered that the kingdom was highly stratified and there was tremendous variation in the size and the wealth of the remaining homesteads in the kingdom. Nonetheless these large homesteads under men of status and authority were organised on the same principles as the commoner's homestead although there were a number of variations, most of them the result of the greater number of people and resources within these homesteads, and also because ranking and succession within these homesteads had political implications for the Zulu state. For example there were a number of co-wives under a head wife in each segment, and the laws of segmentation/succession were more complex: succession to the property of the homestead (as distinct from the property of the segments within it) and to the status of the homestead-owner was vested, not in the eldest son of the first wife, but in the eldest son of a wife taken later in life whose lobola was paid by the community.

Even the king, as a lineage head, organised his homesteads on similar principles. Wives were ranked in segments and placed over homesteads with their sons in all parts of the country. In the case of Shaka and Dingane who did not marry there was a variation however - the women in charge of royal segments were drawn from the Zulu lineage itself, and did not take husbands.

The correspondence between the way in which social production was organised at the level of the homestead and the kinship and lineage systems is striking. Production groups and lineage and kinship groups were virtually co-terminous: the productive community consisted of a father, his wives and their children; production units within the community consisted of ranked segments of wives and their

children; wives were introduced into the homestead through exchange of the homestead's surplus cattle; the homestead (productive community) had been a lineage segment (productive unit) within a previously existing homestead and each homestead contained incipient productive units. The laws regulating the distribution of property amongst segments within the homestead, and the inheritance of property when these segments became productive communities, were defined in terms of the segmentation of the patrilineal lineage.

In this section I have, for analytic purposes, attempted to isolate production and the social relations of production formed within the homestead from production at state level and the corresponding social relations there. Because there were crucial points at which these two forms of production combined and were interdependent, this deliberate separation has involved some degree of distortion. To my mind this is necessary if we are to appreciate certain fundamental features of Zulu (and possibly Nguni) social structure which are often lost by analysts who approach the subject of their study through the state or the kinship system: these are, firstly, that the "driving force" of the social formation was the surplus created by labour within the homestead, and secondly, that production within the homestead was given social expression in the patrilineal, segmentary, lineage, system.

II

We must now consider the forces which united the thousands of homesteads in which Zulu lived into a single polity under one ruler. What was the material basis of the king's power and, through him, that of his political officers? Fundamentally it was the labour power the king extracted from every homestead in the country by means of the Zulu military system. All men in Zululand, from the time they reached puberty and were recruited into an age-set "regiment" (ibutho/amabutho) until the time the king gave their regiments permission to marry - perhaps fifteen to twenty years later - laboured for the king. In his

service the rigid sexual division of labour did not apply. Young recruits tended the cattle the king attached to each regiment, while the older ones sowed and reaped the king's land, kept royal homesteads in good repair, served as a policing force within the country, and as an army externally.

The regiments lived in barracks (ikhanda/amakhanda) which were in fact homesteads of the royal lineage under a leading wife of a segment of the royal lineage. Nominally the soldiers were maintained by the king but in fact they were heavily dependent for their means of subsistence on food supplied by their own homesteads. Through the regimental system the king was able to draw on the labour power of all Zulu men for perhaps a third of their productive lives. And even when the regiment to which a man belonged had been given permission to marry and its members had established homesteads of their own they were liable to a certain amount of service every year.

Although the king's sons served in the army, the wives and children of the king were not required to labour for the homestead as was the case for most Zulu. Attached to each royal homestead were large numbers of girls (the umndlunkulu) who had been presented to the king by his subjects as a form of tribute and who produced the agricultural goods and performed the domestic tasks required to support the king's family. Thus while the king's homesteads bore a recognisable resemblance to the normal homestead, and the same instruments of labour (in the technical sense) were used to produce the same goods, the social relations of production were very different. Labour was carried out, not by kin, but by men and women drawn from the state as a whole. The regiments were involved in both agricultural production and stock-farming for the king, and the umndlunkulu for the maintenance of the royal family.

The army was also used to forcibly appropriate goods and products for the king. This would take place within the kingdom when fines were extracted from individuals or homesteads "eaten up" for offences against the state, and externally by raiding. In Shaka's day the forcible destruction of external communities and the appropriation of cattle

was fundamental to the creation of the Zulu state. By Cetshwayo's time raiding of this kind had ceased primarily as a result of the changing situation outside Zululand. However the collection of tribute beyond the borders of Zululand continued and this was made possible by the implicit threat posed by the existence of the Zulu army. It took place in those areas to the north-east of Zululand where the impact of colonialism was weakest, and was undertaken by state officials and was concerned mainly with the collection of skins and feathers of wild animals and birds which were needed to dress the Zulu army. Most of these were distributed by the king to regiments or selected soldiers who he wished to honour. ¹¹

The restriction on marriage not only allowed the king to divert labour power from the homestead into his service but also gave the king control over the process of reproduction within the kingdom. For associated with the male amabutho were female age-sets. Although they did not work for the king but remained within their fathers' homesteads they were not supposed to marry until the male regiment with which they were linked had been released from service. By delaying marriage in this manner the king was able to delay the whole process of homestead formation within the kingdom. This sanction not only gave him dominance over the productive process within each homestead but also had significant demographic implications for it gave him the power to control the rate of exploitation of resources in the country by restricting population growth. This feature should be closely analysed by those who believe that an important factor in any explanation of the social revolution which overtook the area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is "overpopulation."

Let us now turn from a discussion of production, expropriation and social control to that of distribution. An important aspect of the king's power lay in his ability to redistribute a portion of the resources made available to him. While royal authority was founded and perpetuated by the surplus the ruler extracted from his subjects, it was reinforced by the redistribution of products appropriated externally and extracted internally. This took the form of direct gifts of cattle, ukusisa, and

gifts of goods, like wild animal skins, which were in demand in the country. These goods were redistributed in carefully chosen directions, usually to the state officials who represented the king to the mass of the people.

The most important of these officials were the izikhulu - the territorial chiefs. They were nominally representatives of the dominant lineages in the kingdom. In fact their power was also the consequence of the favours they received from the royal house which concentrated material support - either in gifts of cattle or the means to obtain cattle - in their particular lineages. A good example of this was the Ntuli lineage mentioned above.

It should be noted that the king's authority was also limited by these izikhulu. They were rich men by right of the fact that they were considered by their people to be the representatives of the founding ancestor and held cattle, and possessed status, derived from their positions within the lineage. They also received tribute and fines from the inhabitants of the districts they administered within the kingdom. The king ruled in conjunction with these men; they met as the ibandla, the highest council in the land, and the izikhulu had the power to over-rule the king.

Looking at the kingdom as a whole we see that every married man, once he had established a homestead, was an indirect producer, drawing on the surplus created within his homestead. Much of this surplus was then redistributed amongst the various segments within the homestead, or exchanged for wives. Surplus was also extracted from the homesteads by the state, particularly surplus labour. This was used in the military system through which the king maintained his power and which created a surplus over which he had control. Much of this surplus was redistributed within the state, but it tended to follow channels of authority and therefore worked towards maintaining the state system by increasing the power of the king's officers.

I would therefore suggest that any attempt to identify modes of production within the kingdom should consider first the relations of production established within the homestead = lineage segments of the

nation, and then the relations of production established by the king in his homesteads. The most significant differences between the two types of productive processes, apart from the quantitative ones, appear to be that whereas the one was realised as a lineage system and kinship group in a direct productive relationship with the subject of labour, and the other was realised as a military system, based on age-sets, and founded on the surplus labour of the former type of production.

III

Finally let us examine some aspects of exchange within the kingdom. The exchange of goods produced within the kingdom with externally-produced commodities occurred in pre-Shakan times although lack of detailed evidence makes it difficult to assess at the moment. We know that there were trading links with Delagoa Bay over a long period of time, that copper and beads from Delagoa Bay became status commodities, and that ivory was collected by the Zulu for exchange. It has been suggested that attempts to control this trade were a factor in the rise of state systems in the area¹² but I feel that the attempts made to analyse what evidence exists to support this thesis are unconvincing. By the mid-nineteenth century however these older patterns of trade had been over-shadowed by trade with Natal where the "Zululand trader" was a well-known feature of colonial life. Beads, copper, manufactured blankets, and metal utensils, hitherto in the possession of only the wealthiest in Zululand could now be found in homesteads throughout the country. However the majority of goods introduced into the country were industrially manufactured versions of products already made in Zululand; with the exception of firearms¹³ no new products were introduced which came to be seen as essential to the Zulu way of life and which could not be manufactured by the Zulu if necessary. Moreover the Zulu exchanged cattle and hides for these goods, the commodities which were the main form of surplus product within the kingdom and therefore no changes in the existing processes of

production were required.

Control of trade from the centre appears to have been slight. The Zululand trader moved through the country from homestead to homestead looking for individuals with a surplus in cattle which they were prepared to exchange for the metal knives, hoes, blankets, cloth, trinkets or wild animal skins in the trader's waggon. As we have seen the exchange of material goods produced within the kingdom was informal, depending on local and seasonal needs. Traders from outside seem to have been forced into similar patterns of informal exchange with individuals.

The importance of cattle in Zulu society has been commented on frequently. In a society with few forms of storeable, alienable goods, cattle functioned as a "store of wealth". But this view can be developed further when one considers the implications of the fact that cattle were exchanged for wives, and daughters for cattle. As we have seen agricultural production and stock-raising formed the two branches of the farming process in which Zulu labour was concentrated. Female agricultural labour created the material environment which enabled reproduction and production to take place; stock-raising, the work of men, also contributed to the material environment as well as producing the cattle needed to bring women into the homestead as reproducers and producers. And so the process continued, a multi-dimensional interplay of factors characterised by the continual materialisation of human labour in the form of cattle (the most readily available, alienable surplus) which were then converted into human labour power. The movement of cattle in Zulu society, in exchange for women, as tribute, gifts, or to establish clients, was in fact the movement of expended labour and potential labour power.

In societies where the instruments of production are relatively undeveloped social energy is predominantly human. For this reason the Zulu kingdom was one of those societies "in which man always appears ... as the aim of production",¹⁴ or as the Zulu proverb has it, "Truly a Chief is a Chief according to the people, not according to the grass that he possesses ..."¹⁵ Social power, that is the power

to produce, control, coerce, is linked with the amount of human energy expended: there is a significant correlation between the power of a social group and the number of individuals making up the group.

Compared with other societies in southern Africa with roughly the same degree of development of the instruments of production, the demographic size of the Zulu kingdom was remarkable, and this feature lay at the root of its initial dominance of the region, its subsequent resistance to colonialism, and enabled it to put 30 000 men against the British army in the last quarter of the nineteenth century with such effect. It seems to me that, fundamental to this strength and resilience were the physical conditions which allowed a direct transformation of human productivity into cattle, and cattle into labour and further productivity. Cattle provided the link; they were not merely a "store of wealth" but a reproducing store of labour power. Students of southern African history would do well to study further the unique configuration of bioclimatic regions in which the Zulu kingdom developed and which created a physical environment particularly well-suited to the needs of cattle-keeping agriculturalists.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This paper was originally presented at the History Workshop on Pre-Capitalist Social Formations and Colonial Penetration in Southern Africa, held at the National University of Lesotho in July 1976. Most of the empirical data presented in the paper is drawn from Chapter 1 of my unpublished Ph.D. thesis "The destruction of the Zulu kingdom: the civil war in Zululand, 1879-1884" (University of London, 1975).
2. A. T. Bryant, The Zulu People as they were before the white man came (Pietermaritzburg, 1967), p. 438.
3. If one ignores the evolutionism and crude cross-cultural comparisons, Chapter 6 of Bryant's Zulu People, titled, characteristically, "Daily Life in Arcady" is an important account of the details of production and consumption within the homestead.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 377.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 265.
6. See for example the evidence of Baleni ka Silwana in C. Webb and J. Wright (ed), James Stuart Archive (Pietermaritzburg and Durban), p. 41.
7. *Ibid.*, evidence of Kumalo, p. 236.
8. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 185.
9. James Stuart Archive, evidence of Kumalo, p. 250.
10. Monica Wilson, "Changes in social structure in southern Africa" in L. Thompson (ed.), African Societies in southern Africa (London, 1969).
11. To my mind one of the most important statements concerning the Zulu kingdom in the James Stuart collection is the evidence of Bikwayo ka Noziwawa, tribute collector, like his father, to the Zulu kings. See James Stuart Archive, pp. 63ff.
12. A. Smith, "The trade of Delagoa Bay as a factor in Nguni politics 1750-1835" in Thompson (ed.), African Societies in southern Africa.
13. Firearms are something of a special case. They were imported in large numbers in the early 1870s and paid for by stock. The trade was in the hands of John Dunn, a white living in Zululand. They were for the most part obsolete weapons and after a few

years their value slumped as the Zulu lost interest in acquiring more. See J.J. Guy, "A note on firearms in the Zulu kingdom with special reference to the Anglo-Zulu war, 1879", Journal of African History XII, p. 4 (1971).

14. Karl Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations (New York, 1965), p. 84.
15. British Parliamentary Papers, C. 3466; No. 18, enclosure, p. 36.

THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE ZULU KINGDOM
DURING THE REIGN OF CETSHWAYO KAMPANDE

J. J. GUY

(i)

Clan, chiefdom and kingdom

When Cetshwayo kaMpande succeeded his father in 1872 at the age of forty he became ruler of some 300 000 people, most of them concentrated between the Thukela and Mzinyathi rivers and the valley of the Phongolo. The Colony of Natal and the South African Republic (Transvaal) were situated on the kingdom's southern and western borders while to the north lay the Swazi kingdom, and in the north-east the direct authority of the Zulu king shaded into the tribute areas of the Thonga chiefdoms.

There was only half a century separating Shaka's rule from that of Cetshwayo and many of the features of Shaka's kingdom could still be discerned in the kingdom ruled by his nephew. As successor to the founder of the kingdom Cetshwayo was held to own the land on which his people lived. Those who gave their allegiance to the king were given the right to occupy and work the land, and they could retain a substantial part of the fruits of their labour. Surplus was still extracted, largely through the labour all men gave in the royal army. There had of course been many changes: the area directly controlled by the king had been reduced and although the collection of tribute continued, this was restricted and raiding had ceased. Kinship ties were closely linked to the productive system and the people of the kingdom still saw themselves as members of clans and lineages whose origins could be traced to pre-Shakan times. This continuity was a reflection of the fact that the productive forces had not undergone radical changes in this period.

The Zulu kingdom can be seen as the social intergration of two systems, which although they must be analysed separately can only be understood in their coming from the productive units - the

